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Thursday-Friday, September 4-5, 2025

Sturbridge sets single tax rate of roughly \$15.60

STURBRIDGE — On Aug. 25, Sturbridge was again the first town in the region to decide on tax classification for the coming year.

Selectmen voted unanimously to set a single rate for all properties, residential and business, with no exemptions. According to Assessor Ann Murphy, that rate will be approximately \$15.60 per \$1,000, meaning the average home valued at \$504,459 will get a tax bill of \$7869.56, assuming the state certifies their data.

Murphy said the last time Sturbridge had a split rate was her first year as assessor in 2014. The town "had it three or four years ... and lowered it a little bit every year to get it back to one rate." Mary Dowling and Mary Blanchard both recalled that, saying

Turn To **STURBRIDGE** page 10



The Ruth Wells Center for the Arts is holding a community flea market on the spacious front lawn, Saturday, Sept. 6 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. There will be many vendors selling a variety of household items, collectibles, records, electronics, antiques, furniture and much more. Chichiwows food truck will be part of the activity. Be sure to stop by- to find treasures at a reasonable price. The Ruth Wells Center is located at 111 Main St. in Southbridge. In case of rain, the flea market will be postponed to the following Saturday, Sept. 13.

Charlton Middle School welcomes new principal

CHARLTON — Charlton Middle School has a new principal, and the Dudley Charlton Regional School District welcomed a new Director of Public Facilities as the DCRSD School Committee made the announcements during its final meeting before the start of the new school year.

On Aug. 20, the School Committee

was introduced to the two new hires gional School District. confirmed by Superintendent Steven Operations Joseph DeSantis. Kristi-School as its new principal while Stephen Pusateri is the new Director of Facilities.

Speaking about Bogash, Lamarche commended her as a capable leader that brings plenty of experience to her new role in the Dudley Charlton Re-

"As a Charlton resident, Ms. Bogosh Lamarche and Director of Finance & brings both professional expertise and a personal commitment to our communa Bogash will lead Charlton Middle nity. We're very excited to have Principal Bogash here. She is going to add to our leadership and she's going to teach us as well. We're going to learn from

her, too," said Lamarche.

Bogash has previously served as a teacher, department leader, assistant principal, and Director of Curriculum and Instruction in other districts, most recently holding the position of Principal of Overlook Middle School in the

Turn To **PRINCIPAL** page 10

Council looking at RMV, airport leases, cannabis rule, bylaw review

BY GUS STEEVES

SOUTHBRIDGE - The next council meeting will likely address a couple of long-term property issues and bylaws, based on what the Aug. 27 General Government Subcommittee did.

The land issues involved a one-year extension to the Registry of Motor Vehicles lease on Larochelle Way.

Town Manager Jack Jovan said the RMV originally extended its lease about two years ago to give it time to seek a new

location, which it hoped to have by this June. But the state's Request for Proposal process netted only one response the first time, which the agency deemed unacceptable, and three the second time. Jovan said all three are in Southbridge, but RMV wants more time to negotiate a

He said they're now paying the town \$12.73 per square foot, but that doesn't include utilities or custodial services they often get elsewhere. In Webster, for example,

new lease.

they share space with the Sheriff's Office for \$19/square foot, all inclusive.

The existing lease came out of a very controversial process in which the RMV temporarily moved out of town to occupy a space in the Mass Pike's Charlton visitor center. Residents area communities protested that for the fact the new location required walking customers to cross truck access lanes to the center's gas

station and to get there Turn To **COUNCIL** page 10



Seeking golfers to play "fore" a great cause

to bring back for the fifth year its annual Hitchcock Golf Classic "Fore" A Great Cause. This year's event will take place on Sept. 21 at the Chicopee Country Club.

Established in 2021, the tournament is designed for golfers of any and all abilities who want to support the work of Hitchcock Academy. The day consists of 18 holes of golf and a delicious lunch and dinner, as well as a variety of fun contests - some free, some for an additional fee, and a raffle.

Chicopee Country Club with its rolling terrain, tree-lined fairway and fast, sloping greens is generally regarded as a fine championship course by area golfers. Through the years, the picturesque golf course has received accolades from publications such as Golf Digest, USA Today, and the New England Journal of Golf magazines. It has been touted as among the best public courses in Massachusetts and one of New England's top 100 golf courses.

Price is \$120/player with the option to sign up as a foursome or individual. Registration fee includes entry to the golf tournament, cart, lunch and

BRIMFIELD — Hitchcock is proud dinner, contests, snacks, and prizes. Play is in scramble format. Shotgun is scheduled for 12:30 p.m.; registration begins at 11:30 a.m. Players must sign up in advance on Hitchcock's Web site or by downloading a form to submit via mail or in person at Hitchcock.

Golf Classic sponsors include Safety Trainers, Collins Electric, The Soggy Dog Spa, The Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Morse Engineering and Construction Industries, LLC, SERV-PRO of Hampshire County, P. Remillard Contracting, Inc., Gomes, DaCruz & Tracy P.C., Michael Wales Painting, and JS Mortimer, Inc.

Additional sponsorship opportunities remain. Businesses who wish to support the tournament and Hitchcock can reach out to Cindy Skowyra, Executive Director of Hitchcock at execdirector@hitchcockacademy.org.

For more information, visit www. hitchcockacademy.org. Academy is a community center located at 2 Brookfield Rd. in Brimfield serving the community with educational, recreational, and cultural programming.

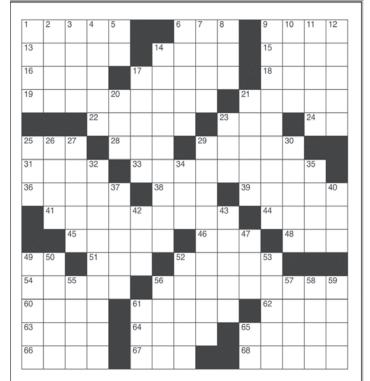


Opacum Land Trust holding Ninth Annual Southbridge Credit Union Tour Opacum

BRIMFIELD — Opacum Land Trust is excited to announce its annual charity bike ride, Southbridge Credit together, enjoy the outdoors, and support vital conservation Union Tour Opacum, scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 21 at the Brimfield Winery. The ride benefits Opacum Land Trust and local land conservation. This exciting event offers cyclists of all skill levels the opportunity to ride through scenic landscapes while supporting an important cause.

The ride features four routes: 100-mile full tour, metric century, half-metric, and the family friendly 10-mile X tour. Following the ride, riders and supporters are invited to a lively afterparty at Brimfield Winery, sponsored by Rapscallion Brewery. The celebration will feature live music, Rapscallion beer and Brimfield Winery wine, food trucks, and

www.thecapstone.group Located at Cornerstone Bank 200 Charlton Road (Suite B), Sturbridge, MA Visit our website to schedule your courtesy retirement checkup today!



CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Fairly large
- 6. Barrels per day (abbr.) 9. Cover the entirety of
- 13. Leafy appetizer
- 14. Showy ornament
- 15. Norse personification of old age 16. Athletes
- 17. Closes tightly 18. Attack via hurling items
- 19. Where the reserves stand
- 21. Sword
- 22. Begat
- 23. Damage another's reputation
- 24. Northeast 25. Turf
- 28. For each

Vipers

3. Slog

6. Bleated

Commoner

17. Begets

Frocks 23. Hill or rocky peak

20. Face part

dishonesty

26. About ear

- 29. Hours (Spanish)
- 31. Western state 33. One who offers help
- 36. Flanks
- 38. A woolen cap of Scottish origin

CLUES DOWN

2. Ancient city in Syria

4. Emits coherent radiation

7. Monetary units of Afghanistan

5. "Pollock" actor Harris

9. One who takes apart

11. Beat poet Ginsberg

12. Cave deposit material

14. Home energy backup

25. Giving the impression of

- 27. Male parents
- 29. Popular grilled food 30. Vaccine developer
- 32. Not conforming 34. Polite address for women
- 35. 1970 U.S. environmental law

39. Free from drink or drugs

49. Forms one's public persona

52. Small petrel of southern seas

62. Off-Broadway theater award

67. Derived unit of force (abbr.)

65. Small projection on a bird's wing

46. News organization

48. Steal something

Female fish eggs

54. Edible starches

61. Horse grooms

63. Chinese dynasty

64. Resembling a wing

66. Of the Isle of Man

68. Plate for Eucharist

60. In a place to sleep

(abbr.)

56. Historical

41. Tunnels

44. Mature 45. More dried-up

- 37. Astronomical period of 18 years 40. One who fights the government
- 42. Center for Excellence in Education
- 43. Watches discreetly
- 47. An electrically charged atom 49. Hymn
- 50. Arabic given name
- 52. Popular pie nut
- 53. City in Zambia
- 55. Species of cherry
- 56. John __, British writer
- 57. Be next to
- 58. Make angry
- 59. Give birth to a lamb or kid
- Я SOLUTION а 0 3 О 3 В \exists 0 Э 3 0 Я В M Τ В M 3 \forall Я 0 Я 3 D \forall 3 3 3 Ь A 0 Я 3 Ь S Ь Ь M

"This event is a fantastic way for our community to come date, Opacum has protected 4,095 acres efforts," said Laney Wilder, Executive Director at Opacum Land Trust. "Every mile pedaled helps protect our local land, water, and wildlife for future generations.'

All proceeds from the event will directly benefit Opacum Land Trust and its mission to protect local land, water, and wildlife for current and future generations. By supporting Tour Opacum, riders and sponsors promote conservation, education, and recreational opportunities right here in your community.

Opacum Land Trust would like to thank Southbridge Credit Union, the lead sponsor of our annual Southbridge Credit Union Tour Opacum charity bike ride, for their tremendous support of Tour Opacum and local land conservation. Since 1938, Southbridge Credit Union has been a cornerstone of financial support in our region. For the last 8 years, they've extended their community commitment by championing local land conservation efforts through sponsorship of this event.

We would also like to thank route sponsors St. Germaine Investment Management and Australian Natural Soap, rest stop sponsors Country Bank for Savings, Baystate Health, Cancelmo CPA, and Al Smith – Geoarchaeologist, partner sponsors The Centered Place, Guild Mortgage, George and Davis Law and Mediation, Jees Environmental Services, and Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, venue sponsor Brimfield Winery, afterparty sponsor Rapscallion Brewery, and SAG support provided by Southbridge Bicycle.

For more information about the event, sponsorship opportunities, or to register, please visit www.TourOpacum. org or contact our office at 508-347-9144 or TourOpacum@ OpacumLT.org. Online registration closes September 17, but walk-ins are welcome on the day of the event.

About Opacum Land Trust

Opacum Land Trust is a non-profit, mostly volunteer land conservation organization. Since its founding in 2000, Opacum Land Trust has worked to build resilient landscapes that protect our natural environment so that these special places will be protected for future generations. To

Tantasqua golf kicks off fall season

FISKDALE — The Tantasqua varsity golf team kicked off the fall athletic season last week with their first match against East Longmeadow at home. The final results were 152 to 158 in favor of the host Warriors. Players contributing for Tantasqua include Sam Pieczynski with a -1, 35 at Hemlock Ridge. Sophomore Connor Howe followed with a 38, sophomore Tyler Phillips with a 39, and junior Rory Herrick with a 40. Highlights include an eagle by Connor Howe on the par 5 #6. Tantasqua is now 1-0. East Long-

Th eteam faced Shepherd Hill at home on Thursday afternoon, Aug. 28. The final score was 154-183 in favor of the host Warriors. Medalist honors again go to Sam Pieczynski, who shot an even par 36 at Hemlock Ridge, followed by junior Andrew Weeden who shot 38, and sophomore Tyler Phillips who shot 39. Tantasqua improves to 2-0.

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Julie Clarke 508-909-4105 julie@villagernewspapers.com of land and wildlife habitat, with another 860 acres in the process of being protected.

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WALES: 413-245-9808 Weekdays 8:30 – 12:30 and 2:00 – 4:30 and Sat. 9:00 - 12:00

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 Central Baptist Church 256 Main St., Southbridge, MA 01550

Tel 508/764-6365; Worship 10:00 A.M. • Charlton Federated Church, 64 Main St., 508- 248-5550, Sunday worship 10:30 a.m. Summer worship is 9:30 a.m. www.fed-church.org • Charlton Baptist Church, 50 Hammond Hill Road, 248-4488, www.charltonbaptist.org, Sunday worship 10 a.m.

• Charlton City United Methodist, 74 Stafford St. 248-7379, web site: CharltonCityUMC.

Sunday worship and Children's church 10am
•St. Anne St. Patrick Church, 16 Church St.,

Fiskdale (508) 347-7338 www.stannestpatparish.com Saturday Vigil Mass at 4 pm, Sunday 8 am, 10

am, 12 noon, Youth Mass (September to May) 5 pm. Daily Mass Mon - Thurs 7:30 and 10 am, Fri and Sat 7:30 am • St. Joseph's Church, 10 H. Putnam Ext, 248-7862, www.stjosephscharlton.com, Saturday

Vigil Mass 4:30 p.m., Sunday Mass 8 a.m., Sunday Family Mass 10 a.m., Sunday LifeTEEN Mass 5 p.m., Weekday Mass Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday 8:30 a.m. • Wayside Church, 6 Haggerty Road, 248-5144 · Assemblies of God Southern New En-

gland District Headquarters, Route 20, 248-3771, snedag.org, Office hours Monday-Friday • Living Word Church of Charlton, 10 Main

Street - Grange building 1st Floor, Charlton, Ma 01507, Pastor Craig Bellisario, (508) 233-8349 Sunday Service 10:00am.

www.livingwordhcarlton.com in fo@living word charlton.com

• New Life Fellowship A/G, SNED Chapel, 307 Sturbridge Road, Rt. 20, Charlton, MA, Sunday Worship 10:00 a.m.

 Federated Church of Sturbridge and Fiskdale- 8 Maple St. Sturbridge, 774-304-1021 www.sturfed.org

Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m. • Bethlehem Lutheran Church- 345 Main

Street, Sturbridge, MA 01566 Phone 508-347-7297 Web: www.bethlehemsturbridge.org

Services - Sunday 9:00 am Pastor Dan Purtell Holland Congregation Church

"Where the Bible is preached." 11 Sturbridge Road, Holland, 413-245-9926 Hollandchurch.org

Sunday Service @ 10:00 am Pastor Dan Maketansky **Holy Trinity Episcopal Church** 446 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA 01550

Phone: 508-765-9559 Web: www.holytrinitysouthbridge.org Sunday Service 11:00 am

Pastor Dan Purtell

Climate, health advocates concerned about new solar and battery rules

REGION — As area towns face changing their bylaws to address larger solar and battery storage projects in light of state law passed last November, citizens are trying to figure out what the new laws actually mean, and how to face the issue.

Last week, several from across the state came together in an online forum under the auspices of Responsible Solar Massachusetts, with the big takeaway being that local Boards of Health (BOH) have a lot more authority to regulate, and even stop, such projects than many people think.

According to Mass Association of Health Boards' Government Relations Director Mike Hugo, local health boards have a different status than other boards.

"A health regulation is looked at by the court as a state statute," he said.

Courts often say other kinds of boards "did it wrong," but will only review a BOH decision to determine "whether it's arbitrary and capricious or not." If the BOH held public hearing(s) on the issue and can show they did due diligence to look at possible health harms, the courts typically uphold such decisions, he explained.

Such information

good news to other participants. They're concerned the new laws defining what's eligible for state alternative energy incentives - dubbed "Smart 3.0" – aren't actually very protective for land and communities.

Responsible Solar's Janet Sinclair said the law says developers "can't put solar in core habitat" or on "permanently protected land," but those are already prohibited. She's concerned it does too little to save the most important remaining forests, the ones that sequester the most carbon.

"For those of us facing forest clearcuts for solar, there's not really much here that helps us," she said, later adding, "we worked so hard to get better regulations."

Instead, she'd like to see the state adopt Audubon Society's proposal that would prohibit solar in the 40 percent of critical forests that aren't yet protected.

Katherine Harris agreed, saying the official restrictions would not prevent solar development of the coastal pine barrens of the southeast, in part because those pines are fairly short-lived.

To Faith Berry, it's "disconcerting" that many solar arrays and battery sites of that area are in cranberry wetlands and often above Plymouth County's key water sources. (That's a key is- "through having more losue for Oakham residents, cal siting hearings." too; their Planning Board rejected a battery storage site raised were impact on in part because it'd endanger Native American lands, the Quabbin watershed, but with Harrison observing the company appealed to the Natives "have stewarded

about how the state is cir- important Native cultural cumventing NEPA [National and sacred sites are in pri-Environmental Protection vate hands and some are Act] guidelines," Berry said.

companies have been adding land concerns through significant fees to customers' the public hearing probills to cover such projects, cess. She noted the Mass but the fees don't seem to be Environmental related to what their energy Act and Mass Historical

Sinclair said NEPA limits might not apply because most of the funding isn't federal money; most of it comes from those ratepayers via the "smart program" fees. The 2024 law requries the state to create regulations for such projects, with solar arrays of more than 25 MW and battery storage over 100 MW both going directly to the state's Energy Siting Board for hearings. Smaller ones go to local boards, but can be appealed to the state.

She described the problem as not illegal, just "really bad."

To Berry, "What we really need to focus on is how do we grasp some level of control locally?"

She sees that as happening

Other issues the forum this land for thousands "I have some concerns of years." But today, most "prime sites for solar," so She also noted the electric she urged raising Native

Commission require consulting with any affected Native tribes if the project requires a state permit or has state funding, and local boards can do that,

Hugo said BOH authority comes from the MGL Chap 111 "nuisance" statutes, which requires the board to take action if it determines something is a public health threat. That has been used to shut down long-running businesses and to kill projects even after other boards

Turn To **RULES** page 11



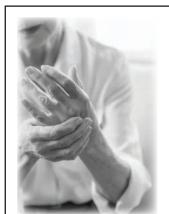
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Hitchcock speaker series returns with "Baseball Stories From Western Mass."

BRIMFIELD — Hitchcock's Brown Bag Speaker Series returns in September with its first installment for the fall, "Baseball Stories From Western Mass," with local Town Historian Mike DeFalco on Wednesday, Sept. 17 at 12:30 p.m.

Western Massachusetts has a long proud baseball history. Attendees will learn about the minor league teams from the area, the men who played major league ball and surprisingly Brimfield's connections to the sport. They'll find out what players were known as Happy Jack, Leo the Lip, Candy, Rabbit and Bunny, which ones made the Hall of Fame and who reached the pinnacle of their sport for just one brief day. If you're a fan of baseball or just interested in local history, this is a great introduction to the famous and obscure men who came from Western Mass and played America's game.

An optional lunch (\$10) will include a half sandwich, soup, and beverage. Participants may also bring in their own lunch. Lunch will be served at noon with the talk beginning at 12:30 p.m. The talk is offered for \$10 per person, or \$20 with lunch. Reservations are required (lunch registration closes Sept. 16 at noon).

"I love seeing this program come back to life, and especially enjoy the dialogue that takes place, with attendees sharing their own knowledge - it enriches the presentation, and the experience for everyone in the room," says Cindy Skowyra, Executive Director.

The Brown Bag Speaker Series is presented with support from The Shirley Frye Memorial Fund.

For more information, visit www.hitchcockacademy.org. Hitchcock Academy is a community center located at 2 Brookfield Rd. in Brimfield, serving the community with educational, recreational, and cultural programming.





REAL ESTATE

CHARLTON

\$515,000, 190 Stafford St, Caswell, Thomas, and Caswell, Sydney, to Haskins, James J, and Haskins, Cher-

\$380,000, 23 L Stevens Rd, Mcneaney, Joyce R, to Baker, Mary A, and Rielly, Michelle A.

\$82,500, Gould Rd #2, Saint Mark Coptic Orthodo, a beautiful day at the to Hansen, Christopher R, and Hansen, Krystal L.

HOLLAND

\$305,000, 32 Stony Hill Rd, Audrey B Leighton Lt, than 128 years ago. This and Leighton, Ronald L, to Ribeiro, Jennifer, and Ribeiro, Michael.

SOUTHBRIDGE

\$412,000, 228 Hillside Rd, Peck, Bradley, to Clem, Joseph, and Lyon, Sari L.

\$300,000, 111 Highfield Dr, Gomez, Edwin, to Acosta, Albeiro, and Calero, Lady M.

\$300,000, 77 Off Hamilton St, Yeade Sr, David J, and Yeade, Roslin S, to Jmt Holdings LLC.

\$189,900, 44 Maria Ave #104, J&r Re Holdings LLC, to Sheldon, Darlene E.

STURBRIDGE

\$835,000, 112 Westwood Dr, Wildgrube, Danial J, and Wildgrube, Marcia, to Pagnani, Sarah.

\$565,000, 42 Cricket Dr, Steiner, Emma, and Steiner, Andrew, to Lindsay, Alexander, and Lindsay, Sharleen. \$430,000, 129 New Boston Rd, Murphy, Lee, to Birtz,

\$389,000, 39 Mashapaug Rd, Joseph Paterak RET, and Maloney, Judith, to Ford, Dillon, and Ford, Jennifer.

Madison G, and Birtz, Alyxzandria M.

\$380,000, 91 Shore Rd, Bouchard, Richard P, and organizations, all kinds Bouchard, Susan J, to Carroll, Mark J, and Carroll, Anne M.

24th Masonic District participates at Old Home Day

BY BRO. JIMMY FALZONE QUINEBAUG MASONIC LODGE

CHARLTON — On Sunday, Aug. 31, it was Charlton Old Home Day festivities on the common in Charlton.

The tradition of Old home Day began more celebration is filled with fun entertainment, music, games, crafts and food vendors and of course the citizenship awards and parades. Two local lodges from the 24th Masonic rade with a lot of beau-District have been participating in this fun event for a decade now to set up to sell their goods. Quinebaug Masonic Lodge of homemade French fries. Masonic Lodge of Oxand exciting day trying to keep up with the demands of what the people wanted.

There were all kinds of food being sold, entertainment and activities for the children. The Charlton Old Home Day committee members announced activities that's going on and the live bands and music was awesome. I loved watching the Frog Jumping contest and watching the children trying to get their frogs to jump. There were various organizations, nonprofit of crafts, and many vendors selling their goods.



The lines got long in the afternoon for those fresh cut homemade French fries from the Quinebaug Lodge (on the right), and Oxford Lodge on the left with their lobster rolls going fast and children going wild over the snow cones.

tiful old cars, firetrucks and much more. Quinebaug Masonic Lodge was selling fresh hand cut Southbridge and Oxford The long lines of people waiting for those French ford had a very, very busy fries said it was worth the wait. The lodge went through many, many

Oxford Lodge was sell-

pounds of potatoes.

ing Lobster rolls, clam chowder, chili and snow cones. The delicious lobster rolls was a big hit and selling fast. The children were going wild, crazy over the flavored snow cones and the chili went fast. Both lodges at

times had long lines and people were waiting for their great, delicious, tasty treats. If you would like more information about Freemasonry and to find a lodge nearest you, visit our Web site at www.massfreemasonry.

Southbridge Cultural Council welcomes grant applications

SOUTHBRIDGE — The Southbridge Cultural Council announces that applications for the 2026 grant funding cycle will become available directly online to www.massculturalcouncil.org. The official submission cycle for 2026 begins on Sept. 2 and ends on Oct. 16 at 11:59 p.m. All applications are online, and no applications will be accepted after the official deadline established by the Massachusetts Cultural Council in Boston.

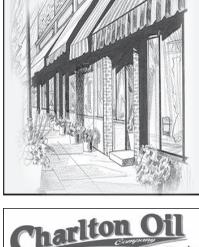
Officially required is that all 2026 applicants review and understand the Massachusetts Cultural Council guidelines and criteria online and the Southbridge Cultural Council-specific criteria online before submission of the application.

The Southbridge Cultural Council (SCC), a local agency, is part of the overall grant program of the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC), a state agency, providing grant allocations to each of the 351 cities and towns of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in support of cultural activities in their respective areas. The Massachusetts Cultural Council is funded by the Massachusetts Legislature and the National Endowment for the Arts.

For questions on the 2026 grant cycle, please call Michelle LeBoeuf, SCC Chair-At the end there was a paperson, at (508) 764-4803 or Ted Bartlett, SCC Treasurer, at (508) 764-7909.



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Overlook Visiting Nurse Association transitions home hospice services to Care Central VNA & Hospice

CHARLTON — The Overlook/Masonic Health System of MA, Inc., (MHS) located in Charlton, and Care Central VNA & Hospice, Inc., with offices located in Webster. Gardner and Greenfield, announced plans to establish a collaborative agreement, with MHS transitioning its Overlook Visiting Nurse Association, Inc. (OVNA) Home Health, Hospice and Palliative Care services to Care Central VNA & Hospice beginning Aug. 28.

The Overlook/MHS, parent corporation of OVNA, recently elected to move away from direct operations of its Home Health, Hospice and Palliative Care business lines, to refocus its core Mission on its Senior Living flagship campus, including Independent Living, a multitude of Campus Health Care Services, and a newly renovated and expanded Post Acute Short Term

Rehabilitation Center, scheduled to reopen in September 2025.

"For more than 25 years, OVNA has been privileged to care for thousands of Residents/ Patients, providing comfort, dignity, and support in their homes,"

said Tameryn Campbell, President & CEO of Masonic Health System. "We are heartened to find a mission-minded. non-profit organization in Care Central VNA & Hospice."

Care Central VNA & Hospice is a leading provider of community-based home health, hospice, private duty, and adult day care in Central Massachusetts. In collaboration with Overlook leadership, Care Central VNA & Hospice is coordinating a compassionate, well-structured transition of care for patients who choose to seamlessly continue with their home health

hospice services.

"Our foremost priority throughout this transition is to ensure patients and families continue to receive uninterrupted, high-quality care," said Holly Chaffee, President and CEO of Care Central VNA & Hospice. "We are also proud to welcome members of the Overlook team who share our commitment to compassionate, community-focused care."

Care Central has initiated onboarding efforts for Overlook clinicians and support staff, many of. whom will continue serving the same patients and service areas to preserve continuity and trust.

Patients and families continuing with Care Central will be personally contacted to ease the transition and provide updated information about their new care team.

"As free-standing nonprofit organization serving Central Massachusetts, we are thrilled to share a milestone moment in our history—we are doubling in size," said Holly Chaffee, President & CEO of Care Central VNA & Hospice. "With this expansion, our service territory will reach 128 towns, welcoming 30 new communities into our care. This tremendous growth

allows us to touch the lives of even more patients and families with the compassionate, high-quality care they deserve. Equally important, we are honored to welcome talented members of the Overlook team whose dedication to our mission will further strengthen our presence and amplify our impact across the nonprofit community."

antees that those we have health care and senior been honored to serve living services throughwill continue receiving out the Commonwealth. ty, compassionate care call 866-753-5429 or visit through a trusted organization that shares our values and unwavering commitment to our VNA & Hospice Overlook Residents and Team Members, as well as the surrounding community. Patients elect- vides home health, hosing to transition to Care Central VNA & Hospice, will not only experience continuity of care but will also be comforted by the familiar faces of staff they already know and trust," said Tameryn Campbell of Overlook

VNA & Hospice. For more information about Care Central VNA & Hospice or to inquire about services or employment opportunities, please visit www.carecentralvna.org or call 508-943-0612.

About Health System

Masonic Health System of Massachusetts, scam detection service. Inc. (MHS) is the parent corporation of two sub-Life Care Community and Overlook Health & Rehabilitation Center. Together, these organizations provide a fully

"This transition guar- integrated continuum of same high-quali- For more information, www.overlook-mass.org.

About Care Central

Founded over a century ago, Care Central VNA & Hospice propice, palliative care, and wellness services to residents across Central Massachusetts. With a team of compassionate professionals, Care Central is committed to helping individuals live safely and comfortably at home while receiving high-quality, personalized care.

Community invited to join focus group to help fight scams

DUDLEY — Tri-Valley, Inc., an Aging Services Access Point (ASAP) serving the southern Worcester County area, is partnering with SilverShield, a Masonic leading scam prevention organization, to host a community focus group dedicated to helping older adults and caregivers recognize and fight scams using a new

The focus group will take place on Thursday, Sept. sidiaries: The Overlook 25 at Tri-Valley, Inc., 10 Mill St., Dudley, with two available sessions: 10:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-2 p.m.

> Participants will have the opportunity to test a new anti-scam tool developed by SilverShield, which is designed for use via text and email, no app required. In addition, participants will share their experiences and offer feedback related to this new service.

> To thank attendees for their participation, all focus group participants will receive:

A free lunch

A free one-year subscription to the SilverShield

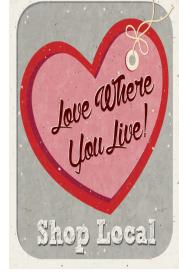
Entry into a gift card raffle, with the first four attendees of each focus group to check in receiving an

This event is open to the public and aims to bring care and advocating for community members together to help shape tools patients even as a PN that empower individuals to better detect and restudent. Boateng looks spond to fraudulent activity.

"Scams are becoming increasingly sophisticated nursing and harder to spot," said Joe Vaudreuil of Tri-Valteam and contributing ley, Inc. "We're excited to partner with SilverShield

and knowledge they

To sign up for a forms.gle/eLXiRfcz6UCDrnVz9.



Agawam South Rehab promotes Bay Path alum to Assistant Director of Nursing

CHARLTON — Agawam South Rehabilitation is proud to announce the promotion of Isabella Boateng, RN, to the position of Assistant Director of Nursing & Infection Control Nurse. In her new role, Boateng will help lead the facility's nursing department, ensuring continued delivery of high-quality, patient-centered care.

Boateng will be responsible for overseeing daily nursing opsupervising erations, and mentoring nursing staff, and leading the facility's vital infection prevention and control initiatives. She will collaborate with interdisciplinary teams to develop and implement comprehensive plans, serving as a key liaison between administration, healthcare



Isabella Boateng

providers, residents, and their families.

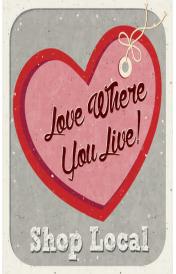
"Isabella is a natural leader whose dedication to patient-centered care is evident in everything she does," said Dr. Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, where Boateng graduated from with a Certificate in Practical Nursing in 2021. "Her clinical expertise, calm demeanor under pressure, and compassionate approach have made her an invaluable asset. I am thrilled to see her step into this leadership role and confident she will excel in advancing the mission of care at Agawam South Rehab."

Boateng's journey to this leadership position is marked by continuous professional growth. She recently earned her Associate of Science in Nursing from Capital Community College and became a Registered Nurse in June 2025. Her career includes valuable experience as a Clinical Nurse Liaison with Stern Consultants, where she honed her skills in care coordination and patient advocacy, and as a Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) with Genie Healthcare.

Boateng shared her excitement and feelings

of being honored for the Scam Detector service opportunity with Dr. Bolandrina, who recognized Boateng's focus additional raffle ticket on providing compashigh-quality sionate, forward to supporting Agawam South Rehab's exceptional to their continued suc- to equip our commucess in serving the com- nity with the tools

munity. With a strong founda- need to stay protected tion in geriatric treat- and informed. We're ment, dementia care, thrilled to offer this and regulatory compli- opportunity to older ance, Boateng brings adults and caregivers a wealth of knowledge in our community and a resourceful, en- to have their voices ergetic approach to her heard." new role. Her promotion reflects Agawam South Rehab's commitment to focus group, particrecognizing and foster- ipants can register ing talent from within directly at https:// its community.



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FRANK G. CHILINSKI
PRESIDENT/PUBLISHER

Brendan Berube

Editor

Back to school, back to community

As the first yellow buses rumble down our roads and the leaves begin their slow turn toward autumn, families across the region are preparing for another school year. For some, it's the excitement of a child stepping into a kindergarten classroom for the first time. For others, it's the nervous pride of watching a senior set out on their last first day. Whatever the stage, the back-to-school season is more than a turning of the calendar—it's a reminder of how deeply education is woven into the fabric of community life.

Our schools are more than buildings where lessons are taught. They are living centers of connection, growth, and shared identity. Friday night football games bring neighbors together across generations. Elementary school art shows brighten the walls of libraries and town halls. School concerts, plays, and robotics competitions showcase not only student talent but also the quiet dedication of teachers, parents, and volunteers who make them possible.

In a time when rural towns across Massachusetts face tough questions about growth, development, and how to preserve their character, investing in our schools remains one of the surest ways to safeguard our future. A strong school system makes our towns more attractive to families, sustains property values, and—most importantly—gives our young people the skills and confidence to succeed, whether they stay here close to home or venture farther afield.

But education is not only the responsibility of educators and administrators. It is the work of an entire community. Parents can play a part by attending open houses, volunteering in classrooms, or joining booster clubs. Local businesses can help by offering internships, sponsoring youth programs, or donating expertise. Retirees, too, can lend their time and wisdom—whether tutoring, reading to young children, or serving on school committees.

And it isn't just about giving. It's about showing up. When we fill the bleachers at a game, clap at a school play, or stop to congratulate a student we know in the grocery store, we send a powerful message: You matter. What you do matters. We are proud of you. That encouragement shapes character just as surely as any textbook.

This year, as the school doors open once again, let's make a renewed commitment to support our students and those who guide them. Let's remember that every investment of time, energy, and attention we give to our schools is an investment in the long-term vitality of our local communities.

Back-to-school is not just about the children returning to class. It's about all of us returning—returning to a sense of shared purpose, shared responsibility, and shared pride in the place we call home.

Letter submission policy

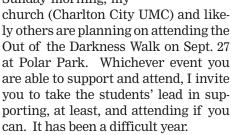
Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted.

It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

OPINION

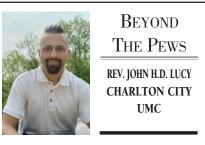
On suicide

I've written about suicide before, but it seems appropriate to do so again as the Shepherd Hill students prepare to lead the Tackle the Stigma 5k Walk/Run on Sept. 14 at 10 a.m. at the school. Since that is a Sunday morning, my



I am glad that the students of Shepherd Hill have teamed up with local organizations to help bring awareness and resources to suicide prevention. While churches and schools can't generally work together, I also want students, families, teachers, and community members to know that our local churches and clergy persons are ready to help with compassion. So in addition to encouraging participation in one of the two mentioned events, I'd like to share some tips for how we can all immediately lovingly support one another a little better.

Soul Shop, a faith-based suicide prevention workshop and network, taught me two easy changes we can make in our lives. First, we can normalize talking about suicide. Often, after a person dies by suicide, we say, "I wish I had known," or something similar. But also often, we make it impossible for a beloved to share that they are thinking about suicide because we don't exhibit comfort with



the topic. Suicide becomes taboo and then no one is able to express themselves.

S e c o n d , we can drop the phrase "commit suicide" from our lexicon. To "commit suicide" car-

ries the same connotation as "committing sin." Even if we believe suicide is sin we should drop the phrase. Again, we make suicide taboo, and in addition to the mental, emotional, and spiritual load causing a person to ideate suicide, we use language that causes shame and guilt as well. When in fact there is no shame in contemplating suicide: even Elijah and other famous biblical notables contemplated suicide. To instead say, "die by suicide," we acknowledge both the finality of the decision and the dignified humanity of the person ideating.

There are other steps we can take to help prevent suicide, of course. These two just get us started. Whatever we do, the goal is to provide a supportive community to each and every one of our loved ones and neighbors, to not just say, "Don't do it!" but to show that each person's life is worthwhile. As with Elijah, our low moments in the desert don't need to be a period on the end of our life, they can be a semi-colon, if we show and are shown that each of us is truly loved and worthy. In our own little circles of the world, let's ensure that no one feels as if they can't honestly express their identity and their trials, and ensure that no one feels abandoned.

Pourings & Passages: Books leading a local renaissance



READER'S JOURNEY

> GUS STEEVES

While education can lead to an intellectual renaissance, physical bookstores can do the same economically.

That, at least, could be said of Main Street in Danielson, where one of the earlier establishments was Pourings & Passages in April of 2021.

"Main Street was dead," but since then about a dozen stores and restaurants have opened in their neighborhood, store owner Jim Weigel said.

Unlike many stores, this one's entirely non-profit, with all of its 30 staff being volunteers, including Weigel, and all of the thousands of books being donated. But like many, it's a labor of love, something Weigel said he'd "always wanted" to do while spending 37 years as a school librarian. Over the years, he'd been running book sales for St James School, and a friend said "you have to get a brick and mortar. ... I've been learning constantly on the job."

These days, that seems to fly in the face of internet dominance of marketing, especially in books. He noted Amazon's rise led to the demise of most of the nation's independent bookstores, although there's been some resurgence in recent years. Now there are about 2400 indie bookstores nationwide – a "staggering statistic" when there are 2000 coffeeshops in Connecticut alone, he said

Pourings & Passages is part coffeeshop in the sense you can get a coffee from the coffeemaker if you want one. It doesn't have a counter for that purpose, although counters and displays around the store feature locally made jewelry, crafts from St James folks, giant seashells, half-done puzzles, Killingly students' art, fancy tableware, toys and teddy bears, among other things.

Those are interspersed with what Weigel's calls their "main mission" – the books themselves, shelved through



Gus Steeves

Jim Weigel, left, talks to a customer as a couple store volunteers look on.

(Below) The store as seen from the street corner.



seven rooms, one of them "The Man Cave." That's where automotive, firefighting, policing, and home repair books are.

Some visitors know that room once had a very different life. It was the fitting room for the site's previous incarnation as a bridal shop. It's become one of the various representations of Weigel's sense of humor on subtle display around the store.

As you'd expect with thousands of books, there's a broad spectrum of topics – pretty much anything from kids' earliest picture books to archaeology, local authors to famous world names, a fair amount of politics (which he noted doesn't move well right now), history, crafts, foreign languages, and loads of cookbooks, spiritual books, and children's books.

One of the latter stood out as the store's most successful author event: Allison Silver's "Book of Sam's Dreams" sold 72 copies in a couple hours. Like other local authors' books, that sells for the retail price, and Weigel noted many authors give the store a share of the

Turn To **BOOKS** page 11 L.L.C.

Life insurance: Protecting what matters most



FINANCIAL FOCUS

TREVOR NIELSEN

September is Life Insurance Awareness Month and the perfect time to consider whether you have adequate coverage to protect your loved ones. While no one likes to think about what would happen if they weren't around, doing so is an act of love.

Life insurance is fundamentally about protecting your loved ones should something happen to you. If you pass away, your family will not only face the challenges of grief and loss but they could also find themselves financially strapped. Life insurance can help provide them with financial security in the event you no longer can.

Who needs life insurance: You're a good candidate if you have a spouse or partner who depends on your income, or if there are children or other loved ones whom you support. Insurance protection can also be a solution if you have outstanding debts like a mortgage, credit cards or a car loan, or if you simply don't want to burden your loved ones with your final expenses.

Insurance through work: While many people have life insurance through their employers, this coverage may not be enough for you, depending on your situation. Among employers who offer group life insurance, only 2 percent offer more than two times the employee's annual salary — essentially just two years of income — according to the Guardian's 2023 Workplace Benefits Study. And remember that it's only good as long as you're employed there. With all this in mind, many people purchase individual insurance as a supplement to their workplace coverage.

How much: You might hear that you need life insurance equal to about seven to 10 times your pretax annual salary. That's not a bad "ballpark" figure, but not everyone is playing in the same ballpark. To get a true sense of how much of a death benefit is right for you, use the "L-I-F-E" guide to calculate your needs:

Liabilities: Will your family need to pay off a mortgage, credit cards, car loan or other debt?

Income: Will your family need to replace your income for a period of years?

Final expenses: Do you have the resources to cover funeral and burial expenses?

Education needs: Do you need to put children through a private school or college?

Which type: You can choose between two basic types of life insurance: term and permanent. As its name suggests, term insurance is designed to provide coverage for a designated period, such as 10, 15 or 20 years. In general, term insurance is quite affordable for most people, especially when they buy policies as young adults. On the other hand, permanent insurance, such as whole life or universal life, is usually considerably more expensive because in addition to providing a death benefit, your premiums build cash value. In choosing between term and permanent insurance, you'll want to evaluate several issues, such as how long you think you'll need coverage and how much annual premium you can afford to

Life insurance needs can change over time, so it's important to review your coverage every three to five years or after major life events like marriage or birth of a child. Consider working with a financial advisor who can look at your complete financial situation and help you choose a policy that truly fits your family's needs. Taking action sooner rather than later could be one of the most important gifts you give your loved ones.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Trevor Nielsen, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or trevor.nielsen@edwardjones.com.

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ANTIQUES, Collectibles & ESTATES **WAYNE TUISKULA**

It's been over a month since my last auction news update. As usual,

Latest auction news

there is a lot to catch up on beginning with some news from the United Kingdom.

Auction staffers found a rare book while appraising items in a Bristol, England estate. A book specialist was looking through a "run of the mill bookcase" when she spotted the rare book, according to the Smithsonian Magazine. She recognized the pale green book with mountains and a dragon as "the Hobbit." When

the book was first published in 1937 the author, J.R.R. Tolkien, designed the cover with eagles soaring over forests and mountains. Tolkien also created ten black and white illustrations. There were 1,500 copies of the first edition printed with a few hundred now currently known. The book was missing the dust jacket and had faded over the years. Despite this, it sold for nearly \$57,000.

It seems like every

year I write about a new sports memorabilia auction record. A new sports card auction record was set by the "2007-08 Upper Deck Exquisite Collection Dual Autographs Logoman Jordan & Bryant card, numbered 1-of-1" card. Collector Matt Allen and Canadian investor Kevin O'Leary (known as



for \$500 for five cards during their 2003-2004 re-"Mr. Wonderful" on the lease. This is one of the "Shark Tank" television first times that patches show) were the winning and signatures were used bidders. Upper Deck first with a card, according to issued "Exquisite" cards ESPN. The card sold for \$12.932 million, eclipsing the \$12.6 million paid for a 1952 Topps Mickey Mantle card in 2022.

In upcoming auction news, over 1,000 Hollywood props are hitting the auction block this week. One of the highlights of the auction is Tobey Maguire's Spi-Just as in the home, in the garden bed der-Man costume from cool colors seem to recede and warm col- the 2002 movie that is esEstimated at \$3 million. the "Star Wars" saber is sure to be the highlight of the auction.

We are offering some

film props and clothing in a one collector Laurel and Hardy memorabilia online auction that is currently running. The online Pennsylvania transportation museum auction ends on September 9th. A one collector Civil War memorabilia auction will be online next month. Future auctions will include gold jewelry, sterling silver, art, and advertising signs, along with a wide variety of other items from multiple estates. We are always accepting valuable pieces and collections for upcoming sales. Please visit our website https://centralmassauctions.com for links to upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/ Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com or (508-612-

Planting Bulbs this Season for Spring Flowers

Following a long New England winter, few signs of spring are more welcome than the first sprouts of green popping up in a barren garden. The promise of a season of beautiful blooms, the tiny shoots are the gardeners reward of a past autumn spent preparing and planting.

of flowers come spring.

bloom each year.

Choosing Choice Bulbs

Experts agree fall offers ideal conditions to plant

perennials. In fact, autumn is the preferred time

to plant spring blooming bulbs. Therefore, it's time

once again to review a beginner's guide to prepar-

ing, planning and planting bulbs now for a flourish

If you are selecting bulbs in bulk, such as loose

bulbs offered at discount garden centers, it's im-

portant to follow a few rules of thumb. Typically,

big bulbs produce the largest blooms and may yield

more flowers, therefore, it may be worth the cost to

pay a bit more for good sized, healthy bulbs. Howev-

er, if you are on a budget and have the time to wait,

smaller bulbs will eventually increase in size and

and plump. Hold them in your palm and select bulbs

that feel heavy for their size. Avoid bulbs with bruis-

es, spots or signs of mold. And steer clear of soft,

mushy and lightweight bulbs. Sprouting bulbs may

indicate a bulb that has been in storage for a long

When choosing a bulb, look for those that are firm



HINT **KAREN** TRAINOR

THE

TAKE

ors appear to come forward. To make a timated to bring between small garden area appear larger and more \$100,000 and \$200,000. The spacious, plant flowers in cool, light col- Batman suit worn by Miors. As a general rule white goes a long chael Keaton in the 1989 way in a garden bed, but if you use a lot of Batman movie is expectwhite flowers in an area, consider adding a dramated to bring from \$250,000

ic splash of bright red or bright pink or purple for to \$500,000. The bullwhip, visual contrast. And, remember, if you are growing belt, and whip holster flowers to cut and bring the blooms indoors, choose used by Harrison Ford in colors that will go with the decor of your home, as "Indiana Jones and the well as harmonize with one another in the garden. Last Crusade" also has a

a continuous burst of color.

Gardens, in fact, are often planned around col- \$250,000 to \$500,000 estior. The ambiance of your outdoor living space is demate. After some vetting, termined by color and your choices decide whether a lightsaber thought to your garden flowers contrast or complement each have been used by Darth other which can result in either a subtle hue of col- Vader was confirmed to or or a spectacular show of brilliant blooms. The beauthentic. The lightsaformer, which relies on soft pastels to make a state- ber was created from ment in the flower garden, is often achieved through a camera flash. Plastic monochromatic planning. Choosing flowers of all strips were added, and the same color family may offer a soothing garden it was modified to hold a setting. Interest is accomplished by providing vary- blade, according to CBS. ing textures and flower heights in monochromatic pastel gardens.

For a more showy garden, eye catching bright reds, yellows, purples and whites take center stage in a flower bed. Such contrasting colors can be often be achieved with little effort simply by matching up opposite colors on the standard color wheel.

Planting Prep: Planting time varies depending on location, but here in the Northeast it ranges from ments—the ones where September until as long as the soil can be worked, your blood goes from zero usually around the end of October.

Prepare your bed by making sure soil is proper-flat. You're cool, calm, and ly fertilized. Be sure to dig out the soil to the proper collected until you're not. depth. Loosen the soil and if you choose, add a bulb It could be the driver who booster to the soil. Bulbs should be planted with cuts you off or the co-workpointed side up. Place them firmly, yet gently, into er who sends a "quick the ground. Cover the bulbs loosely with soil, water email" at 4:59 p.m. Maybe lightly and add a layer of mulch. . Typically, bulbs it's that person with a difshould be planted three times as deep as the bulb is ferent political opinion wide. In sandy soils, you can plant a little deeper, and than yours. It's different for everyone, but sometimes in heavy soils you can dig a slightly shallower hole. we lose control! Bulbs should be spaced approximately a width twice the diameter of the bulb.

the effective life of the tulip bulb.

Forcing bulbs

Forcing bulbs indoors allows the impatient gardener to enjoy springtime blooms during the winter acinth lend themselves to forced budding.

To do: Drop a bulb into a glass jar and fill with to pet them. water and small pebbles until the water level reaches the base of the bulb. Position the jar in a sunny ter periodically.

Your tips can win you a great dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random system with stress signals, it hijacks the prefrontal drawing. One winner per month (or whenever I re- cortex—the part of your brain responsible for reaceive enough tips for a column) will win a fabulous soning, planning, and impulse control. That's why three course dinner for two at the renowned restau- you say things you regret, or make decisions that feel rant, located on Route 131 across the town common smart in the moment but dumb five minutes later. in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you read- on what you do over and over. Every time you snap, ers out there to share your best helpful hints!

worked for you? Do you have a question regarding ocation. household or garden matters? If so, why not share them with readers of Stonebridge Press newspacom. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for thing else. two at the historic Publick House Inn.

time. Planning a Flower Garden

A little thought and preparation go a long way in reaping the benefits of a successful spring and summer flower garden. The planning you take time for in the fall will be apparent when the flower garden plantings burst with color and texture next year.

Know your flowers before you plan to plant. While most bulbs require an area where there is full sun, other varieties such as the iris and crocus enjoy some shade after blooming. For best results select a location in full sun or sun with morning shade only. Well drained soil is a requisite for flower bulbs. If you have poor soil, raised flower beds may be an effective alternative.

For best results, design your garden with pen and paper first, mapping out the size of the beds and the flowers to scale. Keep in mind color, texture and fragrance are all important factors when deciding on a particular flower garden plan. Plotting a garden plan is an exciting chore, and there are some basic rules that ensure a pleasant mix of color for a showy display. Notice how a clump of daffodils and tulips are much more charming than a tidy row of the springtime flowers. The eye is drawn toward the burst of color when these flowers are situated in generous groups of plantings. Be sure to take an accurate bulb count of such large splashes of plantings. Your layout plan should also include using flower bulbs as accents in perennial beds, or to fill in rock gardens or as an interesting border to greenery. Be sure to plan for extra bulbs to fill in areas or to add as landscape accents.

For an interesting mix, merge short plants with tall specimens to give variety and depth as well as differing textures. And don't underestimate the power of fragrance. Nothing is more delightful than a pathway of floral scents welcoming visitors to your

You should also decide if you want to plan out every aspect of planting a semi formal garden, or if you choose instead to toss convention and bulbs to the wind, planting bulbs the natural way, thus creating a natural sprinkling of blooms.

Scaling plants to the bed is another important factor when plotting your plan. A simple rule to follow is to keep in mind the tallest plant in an island flower bed should have a mature height that is equal to about half the width of the bed. Place these plants in the center, so they can be viewed from all sides. Also remember to take into account plants that grow and expand quickly.

Color is another major consideration when planting your bulbs. If you want your garden to be a showcase all season, select a variety of bulbs that flower during early, middle and late spring and summer for

From anger to strength

We've all had those moto boiling in two seconds

MOORE

TOBY

Positively

There's a part of your brain called the amygdala— Note: Tulips should be planted one inch deeper two little almond-shaped clusters buried deep in your then indicated if the soil is not too heavy and their head, responsible for fight or flight mode. Whenever location is permanent as deep rooting can prolong you lose control, the amygdala presses the panic button. Stress signals flood your body. Heart rate spikes. Cortisol surges. Rational thought goes out the window, and you're in fight mode.

The amygdala is like a built-in alarm system, conseason. Certain bulbs, such as the narcissus and hy-stantly scanning for threats. It's the reason our ancestors ran from saber-toothed tigers instead of trying

You'd think letting it all out would make you feel window. Water must remain at the same level, so add better, like releasing steam from a pressure valve moisture as needed. To prevent mold, change the wa- but it's not really like that. After a moment of rage, your brain doesn't just cool off. It can stay locked in fight mode for hours. During that time, your logical thinking is foggy, you are emotionally reactive, and Win a Three Course Dinner for Two at the Publick even your memory and ability to learn drop dramat-

Why? Because when the amygdala floods your

The brain is like clay—it reshapes itself based you're carving a deeper groove in that "anger pathway." The more you use it, the stronger it gets. Which Do you have a helpful hint or handy tip that has means the next outburst comes faster, with less prov-

It's like lifting weights for the wrong muscle. The pers? Send questions and/or hints to: Take the more reps you put in, the bulkier that anger response Hint!, C/o the Southbridge Evening News, PO Box becomes. Or like watering weeds instead of flowers— 90; Southbridge, MA 01550. Or email KDRR@aol. pretty soon the weeds take over, choking out every-

Old Home Day returns to Charlton for 129th celebration

CHARLTON — Arguably the oldest tradition in Charlton continued to add to its legacy for the 129th year as Old Home Day returned for Labor Day weekend on Sunday Aug. 31. Combining new features with old favorites, Old Home Day celebrates the spirit of Charlton including a special ceremony to honor standout citizen who were previously announced in early August, a parade, and nighttime fireworks. This year's event was accompanied by beautiful weather for a perfect day filled with community pride.

(Right) The Friend of the Charlton Public Library provided access to free books encouraging townsfolk to visit their







Last year they moved their show onto the town green and continued that new tradition for through the center of town. 2025.

The Charlton Garden Club held their annual Flower Show in conjunction with Old Home Day. The Roaming Railroad has long been a staple of Old Home Day giving families a unique ride



The Charlton Lions celebrate 50 years in 2025, and were one of many organizations to serve as food vendors for Old Home Day.





Gus Steeves

A young mother and child wait for french fries.

Clay Tull holds his new daughter Daviana



Holdin' Back the '60s provided some of the early music at Old Home Day. As their name implies, they embraced the classics of the '60s in their set.



Gus Steeves



Gus Steeves

Two young women enjoy the sun.

Simone Germain sports one of her own facepaint creations.



The Charlton Fire Department met with locals helping spread awareness of safety initiatives.



Dudley Police Community Resource Dog Milkshake was on hand making friends, both human and canine.



Dan Dono handled colonial militia duties.

LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES BROOKFIELD

Brookfield Ecumenical Food Pantry St. Mary's Church

4 Howard Street, Brookfield, MA 01506 Distribution: Wednesday 9:30 AM-11 AM: Saturday 9:30 AM-11AM

CHARLTON

Chip - In Food Pantry McKinstry Building 37 Main Street, Charlton, MA 01507 Distribution: 3rd Saturday 9 AM-12 Noon

St. Joseph's Church, Charlton Tuesday 6:30-7:30 p.m. Wednesday 9-11 a.m. Everyone is welcome.

LEICESTER

Leicester Food Pantry St. Joseph-St. Pius X Parish 759 Main Street, Leicester, MA 01524 Distribution: Tuesday 5 PM-7 PM

NORTH BROOKFIELD

St. Joseph's Food Pantry Located in the church hall at 296 North Main St. North Brookfield Distribution is the 1st Thursday of the month from 5:00-6:30PM the 3rd Thursday of the month from 12 Noon-1:15PM

Any questions should be directed to the Rectory office 508 867-6469.

St. Joseph's Food Pantry is a community partner affiliated with the Worcester County Food Bank.

OXFORD

Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf Oxford Community Center 4 Maple Road Oxford, MA 01540 Distribution: Thursday 4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

ROCHDALE

The Lord's Cupboard Food Pantry Greenville Baptist Church 674 Pleasant St. Rochdale, MA Distribution: Every Monday from 12:00 -2:00 p.m. Open to everyone.

SOUTHBRIDGE

Saint Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry, Located in the St. Anne Church basement, 16 Church Street, Fiskdale, MA 01518 Stocked by donations Contact: 508-347-6398

SPENCER- EAST BROOKFIELD -

RESIDENTS ONLY

Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry 60 Maple St, Spencer, MA 01562 Distribution: Thursday 10 AM-12 Noon

STURBRIDGE

Saint Vincent de Paul Society Food Pantry, Located in the St. Anne Church basement, 16 Church Street, Fiskdale, MA 01518 Stocked by donations Contact: 508-347-6398

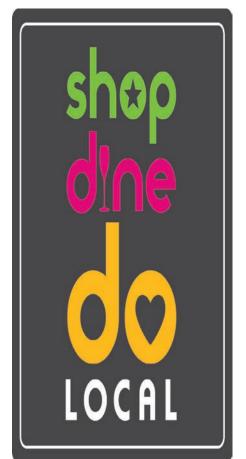
WEBSTER

Webster-Dudley Food Share 4 Church St #2 Webster, MA 0570 Distribution: Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30 -11:00 am. Open to Webster and Dudley residents. Please call ahead: 508-943-9171

WEST BROOKFIELD

Sharing Cupboard Food Pantry First Congregational Church 36 North Main Street, W.Bookfield, MA 01585 Distribution: Wednesday 10 AM-11:30 AM









42 W. Main St., Brookfield, MA Hours: Mon-Thurs 9-6 • Fri 9-5 • Sat 10-3

Experience the magic of Tiffany with guided tours of Tiffany windows at FCC Dudley

DUDLEY — Step into history and beauty at the Grange's Apple Festival and Black Tavern Craft Fairs (Oct. 4)! Join us for exclusive guided tours of the stunning Tiffany Windows at the First Congregational Church of Dudley (135 Center Rd.).

Led by educator and church member Tom Boyd. Church Historian. and his team of specially trained docents, these 20-minute tours will reveal the fascinating story behind the windows' creation — and the remarkable connection between famed inventor Hezekiah Conant and the legendary Louis Comfort Tiffanv himself.

Come hear the rich history of Dudley, marvel at the breathtaking artistry of the windows, and be part of an exciting effort to help preserve these irreplaceable treasures for the Church's 300th anniversary in 2032!

Tours begin at 10 a.m., and depart every half hour throughout the day.

No reservations needed — just bring your curiosity and sense of wonder!

Don't miss this rare opportunity to see, learn, and fall in love with a piece of living history!



* * Triday's Child



Sincere Age 10 Registration #7381

Sincere, who prefers to go by John, is an incredibly smart and thoughtful boy with a bright imagination. When asked what he wants to be when he grows up. John says he wants to be "brave" like a superhero—a reflection of his kind heart and strong spirit. John enjoys a variety of creative and enriching activities. He loves drawing, coloring, baking, swimming, playing video games, and going to church-especially because it means a trip for ice cream afterward. He does very well in school and is especially passionate about science, though he also has exceptional reading skills for his age. While John isn't interested in most sports, he thrives

in artistic settings and truly enjoys swimming. His creativity, intelligence, and gentle personality make him a joy to be around.

https://www.mareinc.org/child/22542013028

Can I Adopt?

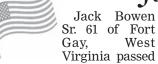
If you're at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples. As an adoptive parent, you won't have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with. To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org . Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.



OBITUARIES

Jack Bowen Sr. 61



away on June 25, 2025 at the Kings Daughters Medical Center.

He was born January 11, 1964 in Louisa, Kentucky the son of the late Ashley and Eva Fitch Bowen. In addition to his parents he is preceded in death by a brother Robin Bowen a niece Amanda Bowen and a nephew Ashley Farley.

He served in United States Army where he was stationed in Germany. Jack loved his work and was a great teacher, he was a Telecommunication Supervisor working in many states



across the country.

Jack was a devoted Father, grandfather, brother and Uncle. He left behind many memories for those that spent time with him. Survivors include two sons Jack Bowen Jr. and Paul Evan Rawlings; siblings David (Peggy) Bowen of KY, Anna Farley of AZ, Nora (Robert) Campbell of TN, Ricky (Debbie) Bowen of Southbridge, MA, John Bowen of CO, Marsha (David) Clifton of VA, and Patricia

(Marc) Labrecque of AZ.

A Celebration of Life was held Thursday, August 29 at the Fort Gay Veterans Memorial Park at 146 Doss Hill Road Fort Gay, West Virginia where he was laid to rest.

Kenneth P. Durand, 85

Charlton: Kenneth P. Durand, 85, of Masonic Home Rd., passed away peacefully on Friday, August 22nd, at the Overlook Masonic Home, Charlton, after an illness.

He leaves his beloved wife of 66 years, Eileen M. (Felton) Durand; his daughter, Debora L. Brassard and her husband Kevin of Charlton; three grandchildren, Laura M. Brassard and her husband, Jeremy Weiss, Dr. Sarah A. Brassard and Jeremy M.

Brassard and his wife Felicia; two cherished great grandchildren, Annelise E. Brassard and Jonathan L. Weiss.

Ken was born in Palmer the son of Harold P. and Veronica C. (Senecal) Durand. He graduated from Tantasqua Regional High School. He worked for



more than 31 years for the American Optical Company in Southbridge, starting as a setup man in the factory and rising to a plant manager. Ken also earned a certificate in Management from WPI during his time at American Optical. Ken enjoyed skiing, biking, hiking, and traveling with his wife Eileen. He was a devote catholic and active member of St. Anne St. Patrick's Parish in Sturbridge. A funeral Mass for Ken will

be held on Friday, September 26th at 10:00am in St. Anne Church, 16 Church St., Sturbridge. Burial will follow in St. Anne's Cemetery, Sturbridge.

There are no calling hours. www.morrillfuneralhome.com

STURBRIDGE

continued from page **1**

each year's votes were 3-2, with them as the two no votes.

Later, former Selectman Charlie Blanchard also recalled having one for a while when he was on the board, around 2004. At that time, he said, they did it because residential values "went way up, like 20 percent," while commercial values fell.

Murphy described the various codes they use to classify property. Anything in the 100s is residential; 200s used to be open space, now gone; 300s commercial; 400s industrial; 500s "personal property" (usually business equipment); with other codes for mixed uses and special cases. Last year, Town Meeting voted to do away with the "open space" category because it only applies when a town has a split tax rate and was causing problems with categorizing some parcels.

Under tax law, the term refers only to "chapter land" – land that's getting tax breaks under Chapter 61, 61A or 61B, which is normally considered non-residential but was treated as residential when the rates were split. That's different from how conservation and zoning law defines it, where it's almost any undeveloped property, she said. (There's often a lot of overlap between the

Murphy said overall property values have risen over the last 10 years, with "larger increases from 2022-25" that have since returned to the historical norm of 5 to 7 percent per year. Her charts showed single-family values have almost doubled since 2016, when the average was \$261,212.

Residences make up 85 percent of Sturbridge's tax base; the remainder is the "CIP" category – commercial, industrial and personal property.

Later, one resident asked if this tax classification choice ever goes to the voters, but Chair Jamie Goodwin said it doesn't. All the meetings leading up to it on both boards (selectmen and assessors) are posted and open to the public, although the assessors don't generally televise

theirs.

The way the state requires rates to be set, "there isn't much wiggle room," he added.

In other business, the board approved a \$48,365 contract for grading work at the landfill. Town Administrator Robin Grimm said that's going to be necessary for the closure process in a couple years anyway, so "it's that much less we'll have to do when we ultimately cap it."

Members also briefly revisited the regional dispatch idea, but haven't yet decided on it. Dowling requested a spreadsheet comparing costs and potential grants of keeping it local vs regionalizing. She also wondered if Sturbridge would have to "satisfy the financial obligations" the state is pledging to fund with regionalization (mostly for new communications towers) if Sturbridge later opts out of the new district. She noted towns have to do that with school districts.

Gus Steeves can be reached at gus.steeves2@gmail.com.

PRINCIPAL

continued from page **1**

Ashburnham-Westminster Regional School District. Lamarche said Bogash's past accomplishments include implementing programs that "promote social emotional well-being,

foster healthy peer relationships, and support families and educators in navigating the impact of technology and social media." He feels Bogash will be a present leader who can help facilitate open communication, strengthen community partnerships,

and bring innovation to the teaching and learning programs at the school.

The second hire was Stephen Pusateri who will serve as the new Director of Public Facilities. Pusateri brings 25 years of experience in the private and public sectors to the district that have helped him establish himself as a capable and trusted leader.

"He's been getting out there, taking a look at the facilities, getting accustomed with them, getting accustomed to our staff and doing a really good job so far," said District Director of Finance & Operations Joseph DeSantis. "We are confident that Mr. Pusateri will provide strong leadership for our distinguished Maintenance and Custodial staff, which is already very highly regarded,

and we look forward to the expertise he will bring to this critical role."

Pusateri most recently served as Interim Facilities Director for the Hopedale Public Schools before joining the Dudley Charlton Regional School District.

COUNCIL

continued from page 1

via a dangerous section of Route 20. That was proposed as part of a more general RMV consolidation plan, but the facility stayed there just a few months before moving to its present location.

The other lease is far more long term. It would approve a 20-year deal (with potential 20-year extension) to a private company to build a 100 X 100 hangar at the airport, for \$4,000 a year, plus annual increases of 2 to 5 percent based on the Consumer Price Index.

According to Airport Commission Chair Rick Clemence, the new building will house turbo-prop jets as part of the airport's master plan to extend the runway to 4,000 feet over the next 10 years. He said its 3500 feet can now land and launch such jets, but only if not fully loaded. Having some of them based here will make Southbridge's case for federal and state funding for extension and for expanding the fuel farm to include jet fuel stronger, he said.

Clemence noted the project will cost at least \$1 million, but FAA rules prohibit airports from using grant money to build income-producing buildings, so they need a private builder. The lease states it will become town property upon expiration or if the builder defaults on payments, he added.

He argued this project might encourage other outside entities to come here and build similar facilities on the airport's 10 available acres.

Joe Daou objected to the idea as "a big mistake; we're giving our land for free." He argued the town should take out a loan and build the hangar itself.

Scott Lazo disagreed. To him, the goal is less to make money than to have "a partnership to develop that airport" and hopefully bring in Worcester investors for it.

Clemence noted Worcester Airport is pushing general aviation out to smaller airports, and believes this "expands its footprint and makes it more of a place for people who want to come." He said the new master plan is now out for printing and should be available soon.

Cannabis and bylaw review

In other business, the committee discussed the fact the state is seeking either a bylaw or a policy outlining how towns will ensure cannabis licenses are distributed to "people who have had involvement in the legal system and are trying to come out of it," Jovan said.

Specifically, the Cannabis Commission sent letters to 30 communities that have high African-American and Hispanic populations to promote its "social equity" policies. Steve Kelly said the key issue is to ensure the process of distributing cannabis licenses is "fair" and takes into account that African-Americans make up about 13 percent, and Hispanics about 20 percent, of the population statewide, but each comprises 30-40 percent of the prison population, partly

because of marijuana laws before legalization.

He noted, however, that he sees the regulation as an "unfunded mandate" because the town will have to compile various statistics and file various reports that might require Southbridge to hire a part-time person or add it to someone's job description.

Jovan said the town has already given out its four dispensary licenses, so one won't be available until someone goes out of business. It did, however, recently issue a courier license on East Main Street, and just received a proposal for a courier/manufacturer on North Street. He recently renegotiated the host community agreements for five years.

The committee agreed to pursue doing that as a policy rather than as a bylaw after Jovan said he can adapt Framingham's policy to local use.

The other legal item will call for citizen involvement. The council will be seeking residents to be part of the Bylaw Review Committee, now that the recent charter changes have been finalized.

Jovan said there are several conflicts between the two documents that need fixing, and a few places where town boards that have long existed have somehow vanished from the bylaws. (He cited the Traffic Commission as an example.)

Anyone interested should contact Council Chair Scott Lazo.

Gus Steeves can be reached at gus.steeves2@gmail.com.

LEGALS

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P2887PO
TRUST CITATION
In the matter of:
Estate of Alan Gene Broden

To all interested persons:
A Petition has been filed by
Robert L Broden of Sturbridge MA
requesting Appoint a successor Trustee to serve as set forth in said petition,
and for such further relief as this Court
deems proper.

You have the right to obtain a copy of the Petition from the Petitioner or at the Court. You have a right to object to this proceeding. To do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this Court before: 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 09/16/2025.

This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance and objection if you object to this proceeding. If you fail to file a timely written appearance and objection followed by an affidavit of objections within thirty (30) days of the return day, action may be taken without further notice to you.

WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court. Date: August 15, 2025 Stephanie Fattman, Register of Probate September 4, 2025

TOWN OF CHARLTON INVITATION FOR BIDS WINTER WASHED SAND

Bid packages for Winter Washed Sand will be available on Monday, September 8, 2025, and must be obtained from the Office of the Town Administrator prior to the submission of the bid. Sealed bids appropriately marked "Winter Washed Sand Bid" will be received, publicly opened and read aloud in Meeting Room 1, Charlton Municipal Offices, 37 Main Street, Charlton, MA 01507 on Thursday, September 25, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

The Town Administrator in his capacity as Chief Procurement Officer reserves the right to waive any minor informality in the bids and reject any or all bids and to make awards in a manner deemed to be in the best interest of the Town. September 4, 2025

September 4, 2025 September 11, 2025 Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO25P2857EA
INFORMAL PROBATE
PUBLICATION NOTICE

Estate Of:
Timothy A Wentworth
Date of Death: August 6, 2023
To all persons interested in the above

captioned estate, by Petition of Petitioner

Catherine Wentworth of Southbridge

MA Catherine Wentworth of Southbridge MA

has been informally appointed as Personal Representative of said estate to serve without Surety on the bond.

The estate is being administered under informal procedure by the Personal Representative under the Massachusetts Uniform Probate Code without supervision by the Court. Inventory and accounts are not required to be filed with the Court, but interested parties are entitled to notice regarding the

administration from the Personal Representative and can petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including distribution of assets and expenses of administration. Interested parties are entitled to petition the Court to institute formal proceedings and to obtain orders terminating or restricting the powers of Personal Representatives appointed under informal procedure. A copy of the Petition and Will, if any, can be obtained from the Petitioner.

September 4, 2025

The Brimfield ZBA will hold a public hearing at 5:00 pm on September 22, 2025, at the Town Annex Clerk's Office 23 Main St Brimfield, MA 01010, on behalf of Patricia and James Roach of 262 Little Alum Rd, for their lot on Little Alum Rd, Assessor's Parcel 4-E-6.3. Deed recording book 17341, page 327. The applicants are seeking relief from the 1.5-acre minimum lot size required to build a single-family home, per Brimfield Zoning Bylaw 11.2. Abutters and members of the public are encouraged to attend and provide feedback.

August 28, 2025 September 5, 2025

BOOKS

continued from page 6

for a few bucks apiece.)

earnings or donate the copies entirely. (Most of the store's used books go

Although the place raises funds for St James – he aims to donate \$25,000 a year – Weigel noted that he's sometimes had people complain about a few of the books they offer, objecting they're not Catholic. He makes a point of saying Pourings & Passages is not a religious bookstore, and talked about some of his experiences with past efforts to censor books (which he strongly opposes, noting "The good guys never ban books").

One of them was Judy Blume's "Forever," which one parent of a school he worked in got the administration to require students to get parental permission to read. He recalled the students themselves got creative about circumventing that - they obtained

several copies and set up their own lending library for just that book.

"Every adolescent kid needs to read this because they shouldn't get their information from their friends or a back alley," Weigel said, describing the book as "extremely well written."

Since they rely on donations – and a couple boxes of them came in while we talked - and don't order books, they can't guarantee any particular book will be available, but do take a list of ones clients are seeking. Weigel noted he discards quite a few because of condition and refuses those that smell like the attic or basement. But he's also seen some unusual titles sell despite being in not-good shape, since the buyers were seeking their information.

"Whenever I open a box of books, I do my Snoopy dance," he noted.

To Weigel, although bookstores are "a very risky

business" normally, this one has the "perfect" business model, since it's all-volunteer and all-donation-based, in a place with "a very reasonable rent" for five years. He has started getting some calls lately from people seeking to sell books because of the slowing economy, but he turns them down, and noted even other places that normally do buy are refusing or only offering store credit.

Despite that, he said he thinks "used bookstores tend to do well in economic downturns because they can still afford to buy used books," and is looking forward to the store's 10th anniversary in November.

"I love when kids come in to get books," he added. "That's the best part."

Gus Steeves can be reached at gus.steeves2@ gmail.com.

RULES

continued from page 3 have approved them.

Regarding battery projects specifically, he said they pose various potential public

health risks, including noise from the industrial cooling fans. Others have cited the fact such facilities usually cannot be extin-

can only limit their spread while they burn and produce toxic gases.

To Hugo, "We can guished if they catch save this industry tons

fire; fire departments of money by putting the Boards of Health for health boards on in the process early. ... They should be going to the Board of Health first."

He said he's orga-

nizing a zoom forum right way, it works." this issue, noting, "If you're talking clearcutting forests, you're talking public health. ...If it's framed the

Gus Steeves can be reached at gus. steeves2@gmail.com.

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Tackle The Stigma program coming to Shepherd Hill

BY JASON BLEAU CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — The Shepherd Hill Regional High School cheerleading team is introducing a new fundraiser for 2025, the Tackle the Stigma 5K, helping raise awareness of organizations that fo- nering with them moving forward. It's really becus in spreading awareness of mental health ini-

Shepherd Hill cheerleading coach Loretta Andre credited students Paige Warner and Lucilia Tryba for leading the effort which will help support Break the Silence and Jak-L Foundation, mental health advocate groups that have worked with the district in the past. The run will take place on Sept. 14, utilizing sports fields and other properties at Shepherd Hill Regional High School.

Speaking to the School Committee in August, Players Theatre in Southbridge senior Paige Warner said they felt the event would be a great day of unity for the community supporting an important cause. Andre added how proud she was that this was a student-organized

"I feel like this event is going to become very mance dates are Oct. 4, 10, and 11 successful and we're looking to do this annually. That's our hope. I think this is very important and I love how these girls came up with this," Andre at Fellowship Hall of Elm Street

Superintendent Steven Lamarche echoed those St. in Southbridge. Entrance is on



The Ruth Wells Center for the Arts, 111 Main St. in Southbridge, is holding a backpack charms workshop for kids on Saturday, Sept. 13 at 10 a.m. This is free for paid family members, otherwise cost is \$5 per child. Advance registration is required, and form is found on the Web site, ruthwellscenter.com. The Center is committed to providing artistic and learning opportunities for the community. For more information, call 508-764-3341.

existing relationship with the benefiting organizations to continue the district's focus on the mental health and wellbeing of the students.

"It's really strengthened our relationship with Break the Silence and Jak-L. We're really partcause it was started by the students – It's going to help us put some things in place that will really

sentiments noting the event will help solidify the help our school and school community, not only for this year but for the future as well," the Superintendent said.

> The event will also include a vendor fair featuring other mental health resources in the area. Registration is now open for the race which is scheduled for Sept. 14 at 10 a.m. Those looking to register can visit tacklethestigma.racewire.com for full instructions.

Gateway Players present "The Clumsy Custard Horror Show"

SOUTHBRIDGE — Gateway presents "The Clumsy Custard Horror Show," written by William Gleason.

This is the fourth show of our 50th Anniversary Season. Perforat 7:30 p.m. and Oct. 5 and 12 at 2 p.m. The performances are held Congregational Church, 61 Elm Park Street (around the corner). Parking is available on Elm Street, or in the parking deck behind the Southbridge Town Hall. Directed by Mikey Dearn and Produced

by Stephanie Ruggiere. Presented by permission through special arrangement with Dramatic Publishing.

The Oct. 4 performance will be a Dessert Theatre. Tickets are \$25. and will include a variety of desserts and beverages served prior to the performance and during intermission. Tickets for the other performances are \$18 for adults and \$15 for seniors and youth under 18. Tickets may be reserved by calling Gateway at 508-764-4531. Online credit card ticket sales are available at https://www. ticketleap.events/tickets/gateway-players/clumsy-custard.

Synopsis: The Clumsy Custard Horror Show is a comedy where the audience gets into the act. King Dumb is ready for his daughter to select a husband and all the Knights of the Realm are anxious to claim her hand. But the sweet Princess Prince has fallen for a gentle yet courageous lad she assumes to be a pauper. Not so! Little does she know that this scruffy stranger is Swashbuck Valpariso, bearer of the magic sword and Master of Fast Feet. It's a "Princess Bride" kind of tale with a "Rocky Horror" feel.

The Ruth Wells Center for the Arts. located at 111 Main St. in Southbridge, opens the annual Members Show on Saturday, Sept. 6, noon to 4 p.m. The opening reception features refreshments and the gallery will be open Saturday and Sunday, noon to 4 p.m. throughout the month. Featuring works of local artists, this is always a much anticipated exhibit. Free and open to all- come and peruse the galleries filled with paintings, photos, sculpture and fabric arts. The Ruth Wells Center offers a variety of exhibits, workshops and festivals throughout the year. Don't miss this event. for more information, go to the Web site, ruthwellscenter.com, or call 508-764-341.



Local students named to President's List at Western New England University

SPRINGFIELD - Western New England University (WNE) takes immense pride in recognizing the outstanding academic achievements of more than 400 students who have been named to the President's List for the Spring 2025 semester. Students are named to the President's List for

achieving a semester grade point average of 3.80 or higher.

Ellen Butler Charlton

Jack Leland of Brimfield

Tess Chevalier of

Brimfield Kallie Laflamme of

Sturbridge Jaden Darnell Southbridge

Western England University (WNE) is a private, ranked. nationally comprehensive institution with a focus on preparing work-ready and world-ready graduates. Founded in 1919 in Springfield, Massachusetts as a division of Northeastern College. WNE's 215-acre suburban campus serves more than 3,700 students, including over 2,500 full-time undergraduates. More than 47,000 alumni have earned degrees through its more than 90 undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs at Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business, Engineering, and Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and School of Law. Students come from 39 U.S. states and territories and 23 countries. Of 45,104 living alumni, 30% remain within the region, residing in the four Western Massachusetts counties and northern Connecticut.

WNE is classified nationally

universities ranked in US News and World Report, and among the Top 100 Undergraduate Engineering programs, and in the Doctoral/Professional Universities category in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

Students named to Western New England University's **Spring Dean's List**

SPRINGFIELD — Western New England University (WNE) takes immense pride in recognizing the outstanding academic achievements over 790 students who have been named to the Dean's List for the Spring 2025 semester.

Thomas Andolina of Uxbridge Austin Ayotte

Charlton

Ellen Butler of Charl-

Brenna Chaisson of

Charlton

Jack Dalton of Charl-

Ashley Figueroa of

Charlton Sarah Johnston of

Uxbridge Jack Levesque

Charlton Lex Lovell of Ux-

Jeremy Okenquist of Uxbridge

Elise Palfreman of Charlton

Thomas Schreiber of Uxbridge

Braylon Casinghino of Brimfield

Tess Chevalier of Brimfield

Cole Crosby of Brimfield

Claire Hill of Brimfield Kallie Laflamme of

Sturbridge Jack Leland of Brim-

field Makenna Matczak of Wales

Emily Moran of Holland Evan Thomas

Wales Kaylin Tietz of Brim-

Jaden Darnell Southbridge

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four Western Massachusetts counties and northern Connecticut.

WNE is classified among nationally ranked universities in US News and World Report, and among the Top 100 Undergraduate Engineering programs, and in the Doctoral/Professional Universities category in the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Educa-

www.StonebridgePress.com





This position is the safest for a sleeping infant.

Answer: On their back

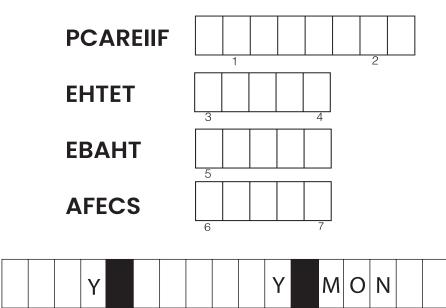
Creative Coloring

Color in this picture to create your own masterpiece.



Double Word Puzzle

Unscramble the individual words to reveal letters for the phrase.



Answer: Baby Safety Month

1846: Elias Howe is granted a patent for the sewing machine.

1937: Nine nations attend the Nyon Conference to address international piracy in the Mediterranean Sea.

1960: Abebe Bikila becomes the first sub-Saharan African to win a gold medal, doing so in bare feet.



OUTLET

a point in a wiring system where electricity can be accessed



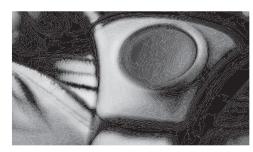
English: Protect Spanish: Proteger Italian: Proteggere French: Protéger German: Beschützen



Adults can block off dangerous areas in a home to protect young children.







Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

Answer: Car seat latch

Fun By The Numbers

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Solve the code to discover words related to the school year. Each number corresponds to a letter. (Hint: 6 = S)

26 18 25 21 20 7

Clue: Teach

B. 11 26 6 6 14

Clue: Plans for teaching

classroom 21 11 20 6 6 12

Clue: Where students gather

6 16 11 11 20 23 25 6 D.

Clue: Course outline

SUDOKU

5				6	2		appensons R	
	2	6	чровож	4	7	3		
7					5	2		
		7		agranase	6	4	8	
3					8		9	
	6				3	5	7	2
4	3				-geocoo	7		
Agronou N	7		6					
6		5		7			3	4

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Level: Beginner

Here's How It Works:

Answers: A. educate

B. lessons

D. syllabus

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

: **HANSNA**

Three ways to preserve the beauty of your summer garden

Fall is quickly approaching and as you prepare for the change of seasons, consider preserving some of your summer garden's beauty. Photograph, dry, or press a few of your favorite flowers to enjoy and share with others.

Cell phone cameras have greatly improved and allow even novice photographers the opportunity to capture the beauty of their gardens and favorite plants. Visit your garden in the early morning or evening when the light tends to like daisies, face down be perfect for taking pictures. Try focusing on a favorite flower, bouquet or garden that you down. Simply cut off love. Watch how plant shapes, colors and textures contrast and combine to create pockets of beauty in the garden.

Harvest and dry some of your favorite flowers for dried arrangements and crafts. Pick the flowers when they are at peak the flowers midday when they contain less moisture, reducing the dry

the stems above a set of healthy leaves. Remove services. the foliage and gather them into small bundles. Secure the stems with rubber bands. They will contract when the stems to hold the stems tightly. Use a spring-loaded clothespin to hang the bundles from a hanger, a warm, dark, dust-free region, officials said.



Lay flat-faced flowers, like these Shasta daisies, face down on a flat surface to dry.

Lay flat-faced flowers, on a flat surface to dry since they tend to close a bit when hung upside the stem and place the flowers face down on newspaper or craft pa-

per in a warm, dry location. Once dried, you can glue them in place or use florist wire to create stems for arranging.

Be sure to pick a few seedpods and seedheads from perennials and ornamental grasses. Allow them to dry on the plants, harvest and use them to add interesting texture and form to your dried flower arrangements and projects.

Try pressing a few flowers to use for making cards, gifts, and works of art. Just place the leaves and flowers between pieces of craft or similar paper in a flower press or heavy book. You can purchase or make your own flower press with wood, bolts, wing nuts, cardboard, and paper. Be sure to sandwich the flowers between sufficient layers of paper to protect the pages of your book.

Use freshly picked flowers at their peak of beauty for best results. Arrange the leaves and

petals as desired before pressing, since they will dry the way you place them.

Once your flowers are placed in between the paper and pages of the book, close it, and stack a few books on top for added weight. Or evenly tighten the flower press to apply needed pressure. Your dried flowers will be ready in about a month.

Store pressed flowers in paper envelopes or between sheets of paper. Place them in cardboard boxes in a dry location until you are ready to create your pressed flower project.

As your gardens transition into fall, look for other flowers, foliage and seed pods to add to

your dried flower collection. Continue to photograph your garden and enjoy the beauty every change of season provides.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, inthe Midwest cluding Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition and Small Space Gardening. She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine and her Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Regional Transit Authority celebrates milestone

REGION — The Worcester Regional Tranbloom and dry them. Cut sit Authority (WRTA) recently celebrated surpassing five million rides, a milestone that reflects growing ridership and a commitment to expanding access across the region.

The WRTA has long served as a critical Use a bypass pruner link for residents throughout Worcester or garden scissors to cut County, connecting riders to jobs, schools, medical appointments, and other essential

> "For those without access to a car, transit offers independence, consistency, and a reliable way to participate in daily life," read a statement released by the authority.

Since 2020, the WRTA has provided fareshrink and continue free service to riders, made possible through funding from the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act and the Fair Share Amendment.

Suspending fares has helped eliminate a clothesline or nail. Al- major barrier for riders, making public tranlow the flowers to dry in sit more accessible and equitable across the

"Surpassing five million rides is a pow-

transit plays in the lives of our residents," said WRTA Administrator Josh Rickman. "This milestone reflects the ongoing investments in service reliability, route efficiency, and community engagement. Our operators, contractors, and staff have worked hard to make transit more dependable, responsive, and aligned with the needs of the people we serve."

Doug Belanger, a Leicester selectman who also serves as the WRTA Advisory Board Chairperson, was thrilled to join fellow leaders in celebrating the recent milestone.

"This achievement shows what happens when we prioritize smart planning and consistent service delivery," Belanger said. "From expanding service hours to launching new initiatives, WRTA has stayed focused on building a transit system people can count on. Five million rides is proof that we're moving in the right direction."

Looking ahead, WRTA leaders are committed to investing in several additional service enhancements. These include service analyses and surveys; accessibility upgrades

for visually impaired riders; a central hub lobby renovation; bus stop improvements; and intelligent transportation systems (ITS) upgrades.

Officials are also planning to improve customer-facing technologies, including bus tracking and other services.

A community celebration to mark the five million rides is scheduled for Sept. 18 during the quarterly "Riders' Forum." Attendees can enjoy fun giveaways and have the opportunity to engage directly with WRTA staff mem-

Information about the upcoming surveys will also be available at the event.

"WRTA team members will be on site at the central hub to share details about new initiatives and gather valuable community feedback," read the statement released by the authority.

The event will take place from 9 a.m.

The WRTA is a regional transit system that serves Worcester and the surrounding 36 communities in central Massachusetts. The WRTA's bus fleet includes diesel-electric hybrid vehicles, as well as clean-diesel buses.

As the second largest regional transit authority in Massachusetts, the WRTA

All fixed routes and paratransit ser-

MOORE

continued from page 6

Over time, your fuse shortens. You become easier to trigger. People start tiptoeing around you, because they don't know also provides paratransit services for elwhat version of you they're going to get. To add insult to injury, chronic anger literally weakens the brain circuits tied to derly and disabled riders. empathy and self-control. The amygdala causes your fight response to grow more dominant, while the prefrontal cortex loses influence. The result? You become more impulsive, less compassionate, and stuck in a loop where anger trains the vices are free through June 2026. brain to get angrier.

But let's look on the bright side! When you pause, take a breath, and decide not to blow your top, you're doing more than just "holding it together"—you're actually retraining your brain. That moment of restraint activates your prefrontal cortex—the part of your brain responsible for judgment, impulse control, and higher reasoning. At the same time, it signals the amygdala to calm down, which lowers stress hormones such as cortisol and adrenaline.

The more often you do this, the stronger those calm, rational circuits become. You'll find yourself less over-reactive, more compassionate, and better at handling conflict. Neuroscientists refer to this as emotional regulation—your ability to feel the surge but not get swept up by it. It's like building a stronger inner pilot who can take back the wheel from that raging chimp in your head.

If the payoffs to restraint weren't obvious, there are other benefits as well. People tend to trust and respect those who stay steady when others lose control. Cooler heads don't just prevail—they lead.

Regulating your outbursts is essential, no matter what—but especially if you're leading an organization or a family. Keeping calm isn't just about appearances; it keeps your brain in an optimal state where you can make wise decisions, guide others with clarity, and earn respect that lasts. Have you noticed? The strongest leaders—the ones people trust most—are typically those who remain calm under pressure.

So next time your blood starts to boil, hit pause. Walk into the other room, close your eyes, and breathe for a few min- in the woods? Who built them, why and utes. That's how you train your brain for strength instead of weakness. Anyone can lose it—real power is staying calm.







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Historical Society hosting program on stone walls

SOUTHBRIDGE — Have you ever wondered about the stone walls you see

Join the Southbridge Historical Society on Wednesday, Sept. 10 at 7 p.m. to find out. Sturbridge Trail Committee member Rich Paradise will be talking about "The Stone Walls of Sturbridge" and other nearby towns.

A gift of Robert Thorson's book "Stone by Stone" started Richard on his stone wall journey. Different types of walls will be discussed, their locations, the reasons they were built, their age, and how to tell one type from another.

Find out there's a lot more to them than you would think in this free program at the Ruth Wells Art Center, 111 Main St., Southbridge.





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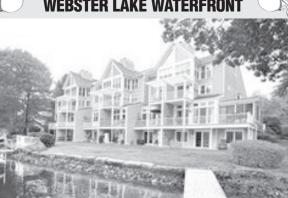
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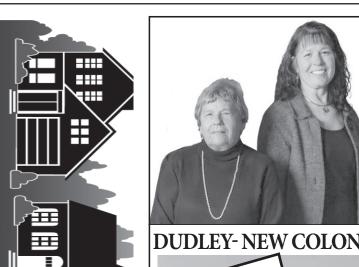
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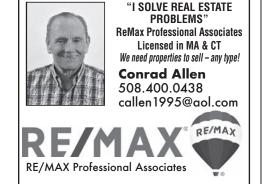


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Bay Path announces opening of new Diesel Technology program

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School is proud to announce the launch of its newest Chapter 74-approved program, Diesel Technology, beginning with the start of the 2025–2026 school year. Incoming freshmen will be the first to enroll in the program, making Diesel Technology the school's 23rd Career Technical Education (CTE) shop.

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education recently approved Bay Path's application to establish Diesel Technology as an official Chapter 74 program. The new offering was made possible in part through grant funding from the Skills Capital Modernization Grant, supported by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education.

vides a solid foundation in preventative maintenance, safety practices, diagnostics, and essential technical skills. Areas of study will include diesel engine systems, electrical and electronic fundamentals, hydraulics, braking systems, and other relevant topics. The program is designed to prepare students for both immediate entry into the workforce and advanced training opportunities in the diesel technology industry.

"We are incredibly proud and excited to announce the launch of our new Diesel Technology program at Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School. This is more than just a new program—it's a direct investment in the future of our students and our local economy. The demand for skilled diesel technicians is high and growing, offering our graduates access to high-paying, essential careers right here in our community. This program will provide our students with the hands-on skills and technical competencies needed to succeed in a rapidly evolving industry. By partnering with leading local businesses and using stateof-the-art equipment, we're ensuring our students receive an education that is both rigorous and relevant. We're preparing them for a meaningful career that will contribute to the strength and vitality of our region for years to come," said Kyle Brenner, Superintendent-Director of Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School.

The Diesel Technology program underscores Bay Path's mission to provide high-quality technical education that equips students with real-world skills and opens doors to meaningful careers.

Bay Path extends its gratitude to MassHire, our many sponsors, community partners, and advisory board members whose guidance and support made the launch of Diesel Technology possible, including: Advantage Truck Group, C.M.T.S. Truck Service, E.L. Harvey & Sons Inc., Massasoit Community College, Milton CAT, National Grid, and Volts, LLC.









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Students in Diesel Technology will embark on a four-year program that pro-

Lab School.

QCC's Children's School getting a start on leadership

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College's Children's School: Early Childhood Education Lab School has been promoting leadership through recent visits by guests, including Senator Robyn Kennedy and QCC Chief of Police Steve DiGiovanni.

In an effort to introduce young learners to positive leadership role models, both Kennedy and DiGiovanni held reading sessions and engaged in a discussion that educated the children on their roles in the community. The visit was part of the Children's School's ongoing commitment to providing enriching experiences that support early childhood development.

"Our focus with the children right now is on all the different roles it takes to make a community thrive," said Director of the Children's School/Early Childhood Education Lab Erin Roache. "These visits were a wonderful way to start. It was beautiful to see our diverse population of children given a connection to people in leadership whom they might not otherwise have the opportunity to connect with."

Both visiting leaders emphasized the importance of early childhood education and community investment in young people's development. The interactive format allowed children to ask questions and see leadership in action.

"Chief DiGiovanni and Sen. Kennedy were patient and took time to listen and respond to the children. Senator Kennedy even fielded a few tough questions about the current political climate. What a beautiful moment to see the children we advocate for become their own advocates with leadership," Roache comment-

Following DiGiovanni's visit, the children participated in a Touch-a-Truck style event, where they could explore various community service vehicles up close. The hands-on experience allowed children to learn about different careers in public service while fostering curiosity about their community helpers.

The Children's School serves as both a childcare facility for community families and a practical learning laboratory for early childhood education students at QCC. The dual purpose creates a unique environment where future educators gain real-world experience while children receive care and education.



