

# WEBSTER TIMES

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Friday, November 29, 2024

## Selectmen postpone junk license, revisit museum plan

BY GUS STEEVES  
CORRESPONDENT

WEBSTER — Selectmen put on hold a local business's request to approve its junk dealers' license due to unresolved contamination issues cited by Conservation and the Board of Health.

"I can't see a reason to issue that until it's cleaned up," Chair Earl Gabor said, specifically citing the property's proximity to the Bigelow Well as a key issue.

The license in question is currently held by LaPlante Bros at 114 Worcester Rd, but Lomuscio Trucking seeks to claim it. The firm's owner Vito Lomuscio and his attorney David Dupont said they need the license to be able to sell some of the junk there to get some funds to fulfill the conservation issues.

"That stuff predates everybody in town," Lomuscio said. "It's been there 75 years." He said it's "not my sole focus. I'm going to address it and get it done, but I'm not there every day."

Gabor noted "that's been an eyesore for the town for quite a number of years" and "you've been the operational manager" for years, making him wonder "why it wasn't attended to" in that time.

Town Administrator Rick Lafond agreed, saying it's been subject to an enforcement order for more than two years.

"Until today [Nov. 18], there has been no conversation whatsoever with the agent or members of the Commission to forward this goal," Lafond said, noting Dupont did speak to Conservation Agent Joey Wigglesworth that day.

Mark Rogers said he sees the situation as "willful disregard for the town and the state." He added he might be willing to accept a "temporary solution" to allow for solving the problems, which have "too many unknowns."

That led to the board accepting Dupont's proposal of an extension of this hearing to the first meeting in January, which would technically be after the license lapses. Dupont said he needed such time to work out a plan with the various town boards.

Board members said they thought that was enough time to see the owner making an effort. As Gabor noted, Webster needs to see "what you can live with and what the town can accept."

Afterward, they got another update on proposed changes to the Samuel Slater Experience from museum director Barbara Van Reed. Over the museum's two and a half years in business, she said they've learned

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Courtesy

Congratulations to the following students who were selected as October Students of the Month at St. Joseph School: Pre-K 3-year-old Program: Divya Nasis; Pre-K 4-year-old Program: Sophia Dowd; Kindergarten: Isabella Valenti; Grade 1: Liam Buschle; Grade 2: Wrenna Shemansky; Grade 3: Logan Derry; Grade 4: Gabriella Powaza; Grade 5: Charlotte Rumsey; Grade 6: Jacob Manzi; Grade 7: Nell Kuznecki; Grade 8: Adam Wozniak. Students are awarded Student of the Month for their outstanding exemplification of Religion, Respect, and Responsibility. Keep up the great work!

## DCRSD reassessing three-year District Plan

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY/CHARLTON — The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District (DCRSD) is beginning to reassess its three-year plan to build off the success of the last three years while also establishing goals to help the district continue to progress.

During a School Committee meeting in November DCRSD Assistant Superintendent Kelly True provided insight into how the district has embraced the existing District Plan while also examining how the new plan may continue those efforts or introduce new ones into the district's long-term goals for success. The existing plan was approved in 2022, and contained three main goals: strengthen-

ing the continuum of learning by providing access and opportunities to all students, strengthening systematic practices and processes improving student achievement and outcomes, and strengthening family and community engagement, partnerships, and communication. True said she feels the district has made great strides towards accomplishing all three of those goals.

"We're going to be developing a new district plan based on where we are with these three goals. This will kind of feed into what our new district plan is, and we'll look at aligning our new district plan with DESI's (Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education) new vision that they came out with and what

DESI's plan and vision is so that we're aligned from DESI's vision to the district's vision to the school improvement plans all the way down so that we're in alignment and we're all kind of rowing in the same direction, which is the important part," said True.

Looking at each of the existing goals in the plan, True said their mission to strengthen the continuum of learning has included the embrace of universal design learning, reduced reliance on academic support classes, development of therapeutic learning classrooms, increased staffing and improved specialized support, and added support for academic and behavioral needs among other enhancements. The district hopes the new plan will continue

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## Dudley to maintain single tax rate

BY JASON BLEAU  
CORRESPONDENT

DUDLEY — Once again, Dudley is staying with a single tax rate as selectmen barely debated the concept of shifting more tax burden on businesses during their annual tax classification hearing in November.

The tax classification hearing is an annual affair that determines how Dudley seeks to delineate the tax burden. Like many communities in the area, Dudley is predominantly residential and while shifting some burden off taxpayers onto businesses would loosen the impact on residents, many officials fear such a move would negatively impact the town's economic growth and business friendly atmosphere.

That sentiment continued during the Nov. 18 hearing, where town Assessor Lisa Berg revealed that historical percentages show a growth in residential taxpayers in the town. She recommended that the share of the tax burden remain a single tax rate.

"There are 351 towns in Massachusetts. Only 125 of those towns have a split tax rate. Dudley has the 47th lowest tax rate in Massachusetts amongst the towns that don't have a split tax rate. We went from 57th last year to 47th this year," said Berg, who presented a look at surrounding towns revealing Dudley remains one

Turn To DUDLEY page A13

## A page-turning surprise lands at Chaffee Elementary!

OXFORD — Exciting news for Chaffee families! There's a buzz in the halls, and it's all about the brand-new Inchy's Book Vending Machine, proudly standing in the cafeteria. Thanks to the amazing work of the Chaffee PTO and the support of all Chaffee parents, this literary treasure trove is here to bring the joy of books to our students!

So, what exactly is Inchy's Book Vending Machine? Picture a traditional vending machine—but instead of snacks or sodas, it's filled with books! Yes, books! From colorful picture books for our youngest readers to exciting chapter books for older students, there's something for every budding bookworm.

This shiny, book-filled beauty isn't just about convenience; it's about inspiration. Students can earn special tokens as rewards for positive behavior, academic achievement, or acts of kindness. Those tokens can then be exchanged for a book of their choice.

That's right—students can take home a brand-new book to keep and treasure forever.

This fantastic addition to Chaffee Elementary wouldn't have been possible without the dedication of our PTO. Their hard work organizing fundraisers, like the Fall Festival and Fun Run, paid off big time. A huge thank-you goes to every single parent who contributed, whether you donated, volunteered, or cheered from the sidelines. Your support has turned a dream into reality!

Our PTO truly went above and beyond to bring this idea to life. They spent hours researching, planning, and coordinating to make sure this magical machine could find its home here at Chaffee. "We wanted to do something special that would directly impact students and encourage a love for reading," shared one PTO member. "Seeing their excitement makes it all worth it!"

A huge thank you to Lori

Martinez and Amanda Borbeau, and their team - Rachel Reilly, Katie Phelan, Madelyn Conover, Amanda Bolio and Lori McCassie.

When the vending machine was unveiled during an after-school assembly, the room was filled with gasps, cheers, and wide-eyed wonder. "I can't wait to use my first token!" said one first grader, clutching her backpack. Another student chimed in, "It's like a treasure chest full of books!"

Teachers are equally thrilled about this innovative addition. "It's a fantastic way to encourage reading while also celebrating our students' accomplishments," said a first-grade teacher.

The Inchy's Book Vending Machine is just the beginning of Chaffee's literacy journey. As students begin collecting books and expanding their home libraries, the PTO and school staff are already brainstorming new ways

to keep the excitement going.

So next time you're in the building, be sure to swing by and check out this marvelous machine. And don't forget to pat yourself on the back, Chaffee community—

you made this happen. Together, they're turning the page to an even brighter future for the kids.

Here's to more books, more smiles, and more learning



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# Bay Path Academy Director attends Books for Pinoy Foundation Gala

WARWICK, R.I. — Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN of Athol (formerly of Dudley and Douglas), Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton was joined by her husband, Joseph Bolandrina in the second annual Books for Pinoy Foundation (BFP) Nov. 9 Foundation Gala at University Ballroom of the Double Tree by Hilton. The mission of Books for Pinoy's Foundation (https://www.booksforpinoy.com/index.php) is to build a library which will serve as a hub to different provinces in the Philippines. BFP is a 501c nonprofit organization 87-1616616 designed to help educate children in the Philippines. BFP have been sending books to less fortunate children, schools, and libraries across the Philippines. BFP opened eight (8) libraries and have started taking applications to help other schools, libraries across the islands. BFP connects and works with different institutions in the USA including Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy to help facilitate collection of books, eBooks, and computers. BFP continues helping build libraries and explore the wonderful world of books.

Photo shows Joseph and Gretheline Bolandrina with the BFP backdrop. Joseph was the volunteer emcee for the event while Gretheline previously helped with the Authors Alley.

Gretheline stated, "The mission of BFP aligns with my belief in literacy advocacy and I fully support their efforts."

Funds raised at the Nov. 9 Foundation Gala help support BFP's literacy advocacy. Live music, dancing, photo booth, and fabulous prizes from raffles and silent auctions along with delicious food made for a memorable evening.

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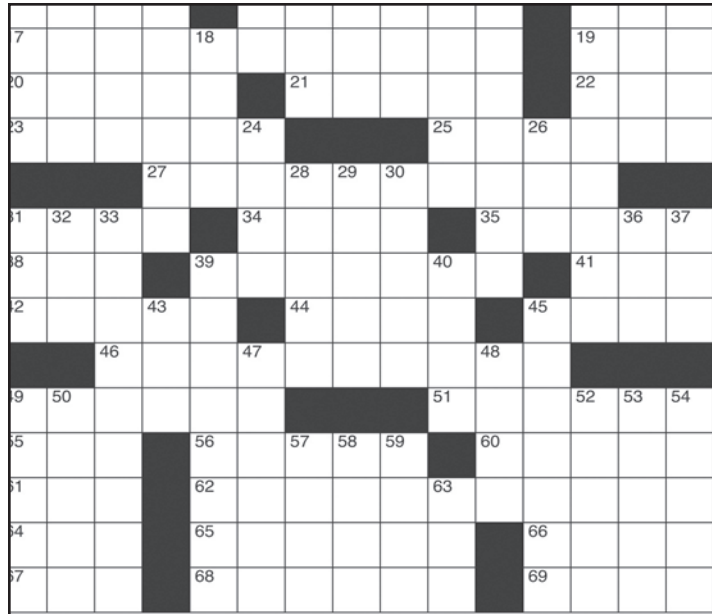
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**CLUES ACROSS**

1. Separate with an instrument
5. State clearly
11. One-time MLB speedster Gordon
14. Broad in scope
15. Lacking social polish
16. Amount of time
17. Frame
19. Automobile
20. Caps
21. High school dances
22. Utilize
23. Checked
25. One-sided
27. Having an extreme greed for wealth
31. Potted plants
34. We all have one
35. Lake north of the Kalahari
38. Unidentified flying object
39. Aging persons
41. Small amount
42. Mother of Perseus
44. Ornamental waist box
45. Officials
46. Uncertain
49. A cotton fabric with a satiny finish
51. Extensive, treeless plains
55. Your consciousness of your own identity
56. Consumer advocate Ralph
60. Notable Spanish sports club
61. Body part
62. One's responsiveness
64. Woman (French)
65. Ready and willing to be taught
66. Muslim ruler title
67. Unhappy
68. Gradually disappeared
69. Able to think clearly

**CLUES DOWN**

1. Brushed
2. Water sprite
3. Ones to look up to
4. Monetary units
5. We all have one
6. Marine invertebrate
7. One who institutes a legal proceeding
8. Outer
9. Parallelograms
10. Uncomfortable feelings
11. Cross to form an X
12. Remove
13. Some pages are dog-\_\_
18. Capital of Ukraine
24. A citizen of Denmark
26. Eighth month (abbr.)
28. Hindu queens
29. Acids structurally related to amino acids
30. Rider of Rohan in Tolkien
31. Wet dirt
32. Russian city
33. Observed
36. Irate
37. Travelers need them
39. Musical composition
40. Auction
43. Form of "to be"
45. Women
47. Inspire with love
48. Think Japanese ankle sock
49. Appears
50. Old World lizard
52. The lead dancer: \_\_ ballerina
53. Protein involved in motion
54. Rosalind Franklin biographer
57. Popular 1920s style art \_\_
58. \_\_ Blyton, children's author
59. Abnormal breathing
63. A place to rest

**JZZLE SOLUTION**

E	N	V	S		D	E	D	O	H	E		D	V	S	
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H	V	C			N	O	T	E	T	E	K	S	O	X	E

## REAL ESTATE

### AUBURN

\$920,000, 11 Whitetail Run, Langlois, Scott P, and Langlois, Amy L, to Thai, Long, and Bycenski, Kim.  
 \$615,000, 15 Brook St, Cox Mary Ellen Est, and Cox, Michael D, to Cipriano, David.  
 \$510,000, 17 Murray Ave, Croteau, Roland, to Norwood, Lauren V, and Haddad, Tyler E.  
 \$449,900, 5 Lorna Dr, Tessman 3rd, Henry B, and Tessman, Cindy L, to Neves, Natalie, and Cardoso, Joao P.  
 \$420,500, 284 Oxford St N, Ouellette, Clare R, to Farrell, Kevin, and Farrell, Matheus R.  
 \$405,000, 69 Appleton Rd, Campbell, Shawn S, and Armstrong, April B, to Samera, Joyce.  
 \$400,000, 242 Central St, Grinnell, Byron G, to Rosel-Morales, Heather.  
 \$385,000, 195 Pakachoag St, Falk, Blaise W, and Smarra, Sierra J, to Marshall, Devereux.  
 \$350,000, 52 Hampton St, Freemam, James P, to Day, Devon C, and Stanovich, Nicholas R.  
 \$338,000, 3 Perry Pl #3, Lowkes, Kara E, to Mensah-Essien, Rachel D.  
 \$335,000, 10 Inwood Rd, Grier, Kwame M, to Olson, Judith.  
 \$255,000, 11 Pinehurst Ave, Butrym Ft, and Roseberry, Laurie-A K, to Peters, Jerrika M.  
 \$248,000, 38 Elbridge Rd, Sarli, Gerardo A, to Khalaf, Adam N.  
 \$190,000, 347 Pakachoag St, Kulig Helen J Est, and Brady, Stephanie, to Royal House Invs LLC.  
 \$10,000, Brook St, Cox Mary Ellen Est, and Cox, Michael D, to Morse, Gregory.

### DUDLEY

\$880,000, 37 Lawrence Rd, 37 Lawrence Road Nt, and Conner Land TLLC Tr, to Khirallah, Ralph, and Khirallah, Sandra.  
 \$650,000, 1 Sophies Way, T Reardon Builders Inc, to Majka, Christopher J, and Majka, Lisa.  
 \$620,000, 241 Dresser Hill Rd, Bourgoin, Kristina, and Bourgoin, Chase, to Rorebeck, Cecile.  
 \$620,000, 31 Sunset Dr, Letourneau Jr, Andrew J, to Hollenbeck, Nicole M, and Hollenbeck 2nd, Enzo W.  
 \$512,000, 10 Duval Rd, Poole Lt, and Poole, William E, to Parsons, Scott, and Parsons, Estenia.  
 \$510,000, 154 Dudley Oxford Rd, Weinhardt, Donald R, and Weinhardt, Elizabeth M, to Upshaw, Derek J, and Machuca, Karla.  
 \$445,000, 56 Airport Rd, Lopez, Jorge A, and Lopez, Gladis D, to Gamil, Mina S.  
 \$407,500, 164 Corbin Rd, Mcdonald, Dana, and Leblanc, Shannon S, to Toohey, Alexander J.  
 \$375,000, 16 Dalessandro Ave, Spiewakowski, Walter F, to Woods, Brynn S, and Woods, Nicholas R.  
 \$60,000, Airport Rd, Shaw, Diane M, and Cashes, Marlene P, to Carmignani, Richard A, and Carmignani, Cathleen A.

### OXFORD

\$740,000, 3 Maple Ave, Virginia Maple LLC, to Brady, Sean.  
 \$590,000, 8 Founders Ct, Thai, Long, to Bessette, Joseph W, and Bessette, Michelle H.  
 \$490,000, 51-53 Wells St, Stevens, William J, to Cabrera, Manuel A, and Acosta, Ana J.  
 \$460,000, 15 June St, Mccullough, Gina, and Mccullough, Andrew, to Nobrega, Nayara, and Caetano, Luis A.  
 \$445,000, 60 McIntyre Rd, Gregoire Blanche H Est, and Ossene, Kathy A, to Meyers, Nathen.  
 \$430,000, 45 Church St, Denning, Mark P, and Denning, Ashley M, to Thibault, Charlene, and Thibault, Christine.  
 \$400,000, 427 Main St, Danforth, Michael J, to Hassani, Djaffar, and Bouchha, Samira.  
 \$375,000, 314 Main St, Cadml LLC, to Goyette, Hilary.  
 \$300,000, 66 Pleasant St #5, Land Of The Roses LLC, to Chalifoux, Olivia R.  
 \$275,000, 647 Main St #A, Rydzewski, Michelle D, to Rhinehart, Herbert L, and Caissie, Lynn.  
 \$268,500, 36 Old Southbridge Rd, Lorus Group LLC, to Sdb Homes LLC.  
 \$240,000, 10 Thayer Pond Dr #11, Marley Beverly A Est, and Lockwood, Michelle M, to Bucaro, Cynthia.  
 \$210,500, 5 Wallace Ct, Lawson, Gail J, to House Buyers Of Amer Inc.



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\$175,000, 158 Leicester St, Mallette, Catherine E, and Metropolitan Life Ins Com, to Edmunds, Keith A.  
 \$168,500, 38 Sunset Ave, Zaczek Jr, Michael E, to Revolution Dev LLC.

### WEBSTER

\$663,000, 95 Birch Island Rd, Strode, Scott A, and Strode, Kaitlin E, to Leverone, J D, and Friedman, Randi.  
 \$550,000, 16 Brookline St, Sciannameo, Barbara J, to Cherestal, Jean S.  
 \$520,000, 20 Cooper Rd, Arm Renovations Inc, to Appiah, Simon, and Appiah, Emmanuel.  
 \$460,000, 19 Grenier Ave, Majka, Christopher J, and Majka, Lisa, to Cooke, Rebecca, and Cooke, Michael.  
 \$454,000, 51 Rawson Rd, Farhat Imad Hussein Est, and Farhat, Samaher, to Gingrich, David, and Gingrich, Emma.  
 \$430,000, 11 5th St, Baniukiewicz, Katelyn, and Chabre, Mathew S, to Dawood, Salwan.  
 \$422,000, 22 Negus St, Greco, Andrea, to Wps Webster LLC.  
 \$395,000, 6 Ash St, Marcinczyk, Christine, and Osimo, Barbara A, to Perkins, Jared W, and Tremblay, Jordan.  
 \$355,000, 63 Park Ave, Chausse, Jean M, and Tkachuk, Dmytro, to Tkachuk, Oksana, and Tkachuk, Dmytro.  
 \$351,000, 11 Black Point Rd, Polymeros, Christian, to Cornell, Jace.  
 \$250,000, 34 Eastern Ave #P, Nunes, Tarcisio D, to Nunes, Danilo D.  
 \$240,000, 37 3rd St #A, Lebel, Tina, and Lebel, Amanda, to Troy, Jennifer.  
 \$160,000, 944 School St, Gordon, Donald W, and Lottridge, Christy L, to Horanzy, Shawn.  
 \$69,000, 29 Elm St, Shaw, Carol D, to Elm St Development LLC.

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# Bay Path nurse educator completes SIM workshop



Shannen Sherman

at Montgomery College and the co-chair of the Simulation Committee. Her dissertation topic is 'Faculty Competence in Facilitating Clinical Simulation,' a quantitative study that she undertook in Maryland. She also served as a Simulation Lab Support Facilitator for the Maryland Clinical Simulation Resource Consortium. She is a Certified Healthcare Simulation Educator. She was a participant of the National League of Nursing Leadership Development for Simulation Educators cohort of 2017. She was an Assistant professor of nursing at Fitchburg State University where she led simulation integration, and faculty development during the COVID 19 period. She helped faculty find clinical simulation to replace clinical. She also led the conversion of the Fitchburg State Student Health Center to a Sim Center in the Spring 2021. As a director of the lab, she has collaborated with faculty and staff to meet student learning needs. She has presented on Simulation locally and internationally."

WORCESTER — Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy full-time faculty Shannen Sherman, BSN, RN of Woodstock Valley, Conn. recently completed the workshop, Simulation Facilitation Training for Health Educators presented by the Massachusetts Rhode Island League for Nursing (MARILN) on Friday, Nov. 8 at the UMass Chan Medical School Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing.

The goal of the Simulation Facilitation Training for Health Educators workshop is "to provide faculty and educators with succinct yet high quality training for faculty and educators before facilitating simulation."

From the MARILN Web site, the presenter, "Dr. Rose Kronziah-Seme PhD, MSN, RN, CHSE is an Assistant Professor of Nursing and the director of the Simulation and Lab of the Graduate Entry Pathway (GEP) Program at the Tan Chingfen Graduate School of Nursing. Dr. Kronziah-Seme received a B.S. in Nursing from Howard University and an M.S.N and a Ph.D. in Nursing Education from Walden University. She has been involved in Nursing education and simulation since 2009 as a clinical instructor. She trained by the Train the Trainer program series called Maryland Faculty for Simulation Teaching (NSP11) in 2013. She was the simulation coordinator from 2012 to 2018

# Gladys E. Kelly Library celebrates grand opening of "The Nest"

WEBSTER — The Gladys E. Kelly Public Library hosted a crowd of around 40 people for the Grand Opening of their new grant funded space called "The Nest." The Nest is a collection of tools, technology, and resources for small business owners and entrepreneurs to help start and grow their businesses.

The event featured several speakers including Library Director, Sondra Murphy, who spoke about how The Nest came to be, Assistant Director, Evan Hale, who spoke about the technology that will be housed in the space, as well as some of the workshops that will be available for small business owners. Webster Town Administrator, Rick LaFond, and representatives from the Center for Women and Enterprise, and E for All also spoke. The event was capped off by Representative Joseph McKenna and Senator Ryan Fattman presenting the Library with citations to honor the opening of the new space.

Free headshots were provided by Renak Photography from Worcester, and food and refreshments were provided by The Rose Room Café in Webster.

Later that evening The Center for Women and Enterprise hosted an event in the space called "Steps to Start Your Small Business," hosted by Suzanne Graham Anderson who owns Positively Suzanne, a consultation firm in Worcester. There were 12 attendees who were thrilled with the presentation. Additional upcoming events for the Space include "Starting and Growing a Business" by the Small Business Administration on Monday, Dec. 16 at 6 p.m., and "Business Plan Basics" hosted by the Center for Women and Enterprise on Monday, Jan. 20 at 6 p.m. Visit the Library Web site for more details and to register.

# Dudley library to host Holiday Jewelry Sale

DUDLEY — The Pearle Crawford Library will hold a holiday jewelry sale Saturday, Dec. 7 from 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

We are liquidating our Baubles & Bling inventory! Shop for anyone who loves jewelry. This event is the perfect place for kids who want to shop independently for an affordable and special gift. Volunteers will be available to help young shoppers & there will be a gift wrap station too!

More than 1,000 unique vintage pieces will be available.

Proceeds go to the Friends of the Crawford Library. All items are \$2, \$3, or \$5. Gift wrap is \$1.

# Tri-Valley Inc. announces vaccination clinic

SEND US YOUR NEWS!!!



DUDLEY — Tri-Valley Inc. will offer a free COVID and flu vaccination clinic Tuesday, Dec. 10 from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. at 10 Mill St., Dudley.

All Massachusetts residents aged six months and older are eligible for vaccination, but parental consent is required for those under 18. No insurance or ID required. Walk-ins are welcome, but online registration is also available at <https://home.color.com/vaccine/register/cdrmaguire?site=tri-valley-inc>.

The first 100 people to be vaccinated will receive a \$75 gift card (please note that you must be 12 or older to receive a gift card).

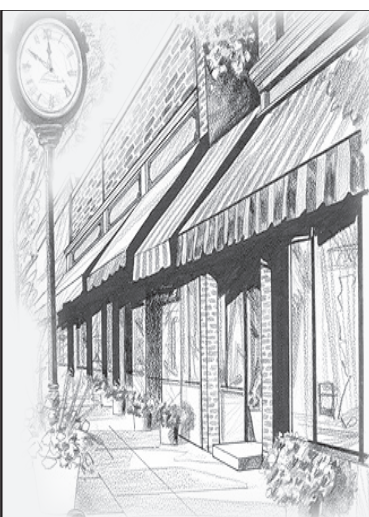
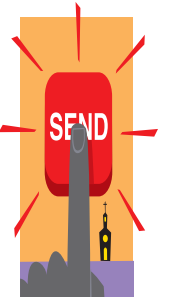
# Blood drive planned at Futures Room

DUDLEY — The Rhode Island Blood Center will conduct a blood drive Tuesday, Dec. 3 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Futures Room, located at 10 Mill St., Dudley.

Please sign up in advance at [ribc.org/drives](http://ribc.org/drives) using the code #M062.

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 EDITOR

**EDITORIAL**

# Rediscovering the lost art of handwritten recipes

In an era of digital convenience and instant gratification, some of life's most cherished traditions are quietly slipping away. Among these, the art of handwritten recipes. These are a tangible connection to the flavors of our past, the love of our grandmothers, and the warmth of family gatherings. In a world dominated by cooking apps and online recipe repositories, the simple act of putting pen to paper to share culinary secrets seems almost archaic. Yet, it's precisely this nostalgia and intimacy that make handwritten recipes a lost art worth preserving.

Handwritten recipes are more than just a list of ingredients and instructions; they are pieces of culinary history, infused with the personality and heritage of those who penned them. Each smudged, stained, and dog-eared card or piece of paper tells a story, a tale of generations passing down family traditions, the evolution of tastes and preferences, and the love and care that goes into creating a homemade meal.

The act of writing out a recipe by hand is an act of devotion. It's a moment where the cook imparts their wisdom, tips, and variations to the next in line. The penmanship, the flourishes, and the personal notes ("This one's always a hit at family gatherings!") add a layer of character that cannot be replicated by sterile digital text.

One of the most remarkable aspects of handwritten recipes is their adaptability. They are not bound by the limitations of standardized formats and measurements. Instead, they encourage creativity and experimentation. A pinch of this, a handful of that, and a dash of love, these imprecise yet heartfelt instructions allow each generation to put their own spin on the family classics, ensuring that the recipes remain dynamic and relevant.

In an age where convenience often trumps sentimentality, it's easy to overlook the value of preserving handwritten recipes. But as we flip through fading recipe cards and rediscover the treasures hidden in old recipe boxes, we are reminded that these handwritten culinary heirlooms are more than just instructions; they are a link to our past, a source of inspiration, and hold tradition.

## 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.

# VIEWPOINT

**THE DEADLINE** to submit letters to the editor and commentaries for next week's newspaper is Friday at noon. **SEND ALL ITEMS** to Editor  
 Brendan Berube at THE WEBSTER TIMES — news@stonebridgepress.news

## Giving thanks in all circumstances

"Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Listen to these words from Saint Paul - the will of God for us is to "rejoice always, pray without ceasing and give to give thanks in all circumstances."

God's will for us is to be connected with Him in prayer, and thus be filled with joy of the Lord and to give thanks at all times and in every circumstance. His will is not for us to complain about life, to grumble about what we don't have, to whine about our circumstances, or to compare how others may have something we don't. Our Lord Jesus wants us to face life with joy - His deep, inner joy that abides despite any disappointments and struggles. Christ wants us to confront life not with pessimism and negativity, but with thanksgiving and gratitude!

How beautiful it is to live lives of gratitude and thanksgiving. Living with such a spirit transforms our whole perspective on life. We won't focus on what we don't have, or on what others have. Instead, we thank God for each and every blessing and strive to share those blessings with those who don't have what we have! We understand life itself as the greatest gift given to us - the world around us with all its nature and beauty; the love of family and friends; our health and well-being; our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His beloved Church and the meaning of life our faith gives us; the opportunity to experience the Kingdom of God here and now. Life is the most precious gift for which we need to thank God daily.

Living lives of gratitude means even giving thanks to God when we face the unexpected and tumultuous challenges and tragedies of life. For when we face life's challenges with gratitude, we will learn new perspectives and grow to new heights.

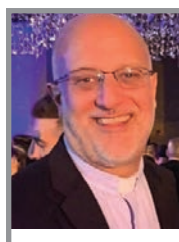
I remember watching some years ago a CNN Heroes program which highlighted a woman who was a breast cancer survivor. "When I faced this challenge in my life," she said, "I didn't ask God 'Why Me?'" but instead "What for?" And then I discovered how I could turn this challenge into a blessing for others!" She responded by realizing how many low income women don't have health insurance, and because of this, never do any testing to detect early stages of cancer. As a result of her own illness, she began mobilizing volunteers who went door to door throughout low income neighborhoods - to tens of thousands of homes - offering to these women free testing to help them detect early stages of cancer.

Not 'why me' but 'what for!' That reflects an attitude of gratitude! "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Here is an important secret of life, and an imperative attitude for the Christian journey. If we learn to rejoice always, and give thanks in all circumstances, then we will be people filled with a positive spirit. No problem will ever overwhelm us. Nothing will defeat us. We won't allow the negative and unexpected events of life to control us.

We will have cultivated an attitude of gratitude.

Of course, this isn't always easy. Our problem is that we forget to rejoice



### BEYOND THE PEWS

By FR. LUKE A. VERONIS  
 SAINTS  
 CONSTANTINE AND HELEN  
 GREEK  
 ORTHODOX  
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and give thanks in all circumstances. In fact, we often are tempted to do the very opposite. We complain. We worry. We get anxious. We become angry. We forget about God's role in our lives and ignore the greatest source of comfort and inspiration - our faith.

In order to cultivate gratitude as an ongoing perspective of live, however, we need to understand gratitude not as a spontaneous emotion, but as a spiritual discipline to be lived every day. As the spiritual writer Henri Nouwen taught, "The discipline of gratitude is the explicit effort to acknowledge that all I am and all I have is given to me as a gift of love, a gift to be celebrated."

Just like with any other spiritual disciple, it takes effort and it takes the grace of God. For example, Christ teaches us to forgive one another even up to 70 x 7. We are called to forgive and even love our worst enemies. This is surely one of the most challenging commandments and disciplines in our lives. If we forgive and love in such a manner, we won't simply respond to an emotion that naturally pops up in our lives. Absolutely not. It will take discipline to cultivate, and then to learn to forgive others even when our emotions don't agree with our actions. In fact, this is how we develop all our spiritual disciplines, whether the discipline of prayer, fasting, or almsgiving.

In like manner, we develop a daily discipline to look for ways to express gratitude. We develop "eyes of gratitude." We learn to see everything in life as a gift from God, and learn to thank Him continuously throughout the day for things both small and great. When we are tempted to look at something as a problem, a nuisance, a matter of great anxiety and worry, we instead put on our "eyes of gratitude" and thank God for whatever new challenge He places in our lives. Without God the problem may seem to be a serious issue. With God, we remember that all things are possible, and that He is with us in the midst of whatever we face. Thus, we express gratitude. We "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Let me conclude with an example of how to cultivate these "eyes of gratitude" from an example that Saint Basil the Great offered. He says remember the fly and the bumble bee. The fly goes into a garden with many beautiful flowers, and yet, if there is a pile of feces in the midst of the flowers, the fly will occupy itself with the feces. In contrast, the bumble bee can go into a garbage heap, with all kinds of rotting trash, and yet, if there is one rose or beautiful flower within that heap, the bee will fly to it and spend its time around what is beautiful.

The fly is attracted to the waste of this world, while the bee is giving thanks for the rose in the midst of the trash.

May we cultivate our own eyes to see the roses of life that are all around us. Let us constantly be aware and offer thanks for the blessings seen and unseen that surround us in our lives. And in this way, let us "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. Give thanks in all circumstances" remembering that this is "the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Happy Thanksgiving!

## Buying and selling at auction



Auctions had an inauspicious start when brides were first auctioned in Greece back in 500 BC. Thankfully, that practice ended, and auctions have evolved into a tried-and-true method for selling everything from diamond rings to factory buildings. I'll focus on antiques, collectibles, and estate auctions in today's column.

There are many reasons why people sell items at auction. One of the top reasons is that competitive bidding is an effective way to get fair market value for items. Auctions help a consignor do their due diligence if they have a financial obligation to an estate or trust.

For the types of auctions that we run, we're typically contacted by estate personal representatives or attorneys. The representative may request that we appraise an estate for IRS or Probate. However, we're typically contacted to see which estate items may be a good fit for our auctions. We handle higher valued items of all types ranging from smaller antiques and collectibles like gold jewelry to larger items like vintage automobiles.

Of course, not everything in a home is antique, collectible, or valuable. There are other auction companies that sell pretty much everything in a home from a sofa to pots and pans. Sometimes we handle the more valuable items and offer suggestions to the seller for the rest.

There are of course many other reasons why people might decide to auction their items. They may be downsizing. They may have inherited things that they don't collect and would like to convert those items into cash. Consignors often have items of value like gold jewelry, sterling silver, or coins that they don't want anymore. Peoples' tastes change and they may no longer want the old painting that hung in their living room. People often tell me that they are getting older and their families have no interest in their belongings, therefore leading them to auctions.

Auctions can be online or live. We were unable to run live auctions during the pandemic and switched to all online auctions. This has expanded our reach to bidders across the world, but other auctioneers are still finding success running live auctions.

Bidders can search multiple websites including liveauctioneers.com, invaluable.com, auctionninja.com, hibid.com, bidsquare.com, and others to find items that they collect.

There are tools available for online bidders. Many online auction sites offer bidders the ability to create a want list. They can enter search terms for whatever they collect. For example, you could enter "Waltham gold pocket watches" and get an email when watches meeting your criteria are being sold. If you see something that you like, many sites will allow you to follow that item and receive an email or text when your auction item is about to be sold. If it is something that you really want, you can place a proxy bid. You enter the maximum amount that you are willing to pay such as \$500. The bidding is competitive so you may get outbid, but you might also win it for less than your \$500 bid. Whether you're a consignor or a bidder, hopefully you'll be a winner at auction.

We are currently cataloging a large collection of Civil War memorabilia from a local estate as well as running an antique auction in a Beacon Hill Boston estate. We are accepting consignments of all types for future auctions. Please visit our Web site, <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 (508-612-6111)

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# Choosing a Holiday Tree

Now that Thanksgiving is in the rear mirror, many people are getting a head start on Christmas this year, and that means putting up the holiday tree. When it comes to choosing a trim worthy tree, for many the choice is steeped in tradition, for others, the question becomes whether to pick a fresh or artificial one. When determining which Christmas tree to choose, many factors come into play. Read on for some interesting information, as well as our annual guide to choosing a fresh tree.



TAKE  
THE  
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percentage of the population that is allergic to tree sap. In this case, the only real solution is to only purchase artificial trees for your home, and avoid close proximity to real Christmas trees.

**Environmental Impact:** If you're leaning toward an artificial tree, but concerned about the environmental impact of artificial trees, note this: Several years ago, PE International, a consulting company that studies environmental sustainability in numerous industries, did an analysis of the environmental impact of artificial Christmas trees, versus real trees. The study found that, depending on how a real tree is disposed of, an artificial tree would only have to be used for 3.6 to 4 years before there was a net benefit with regard to contribution to global warming. This means that if a household uses an artificial tree for at least 4 years, its carbon footprint (with regard to Christmas trees) will be smaller than that of a household that purchases a real tree every year.

In addition, the study found that with both real and artificial trees, no matter how they were ultimately disposed of, Christmas trees accounted for less than 0.1% of the average person's annual carbon footprint. This means that the environmental impact is negligible, and can easily be offset by other lifestyle changes, such as driving less, recycling more regularly, purchasing items that use less packaging, etc.

If a fresh cut tree is impractical, an artificial tree can be a good investment - if you choose wisely. Did you know a well made artificial tree can last a decade or more? Choose trees with many branch tips and multiple needles, thus creating a "fullness" that rivals the real deal. Look for easy to set up models with hinged branches for quick and easy set up. High end trees often come equipped with an abundance of lights. Make sure the tree stand is sturdy enough to hold a tree laden with heavy ornament and garlands. Lastly, consider a tree that can easily refold into a box or bag, for hassle free storage.

Read on for our annual guide to choosing a real tree:

Selecting a Christmas tree is a fun family tradition, but getting caught up in the festivities, one can overlook the

requirements of a successful pick. The first thing to remember is in a lot or on a farm, a tree can look much smaller than it will in your home. Rule number one is to always bring a tape measure to ensure a proper fit.

When choosing a freshly cut evergreen, look for nice, even coloring throughout the tree with no signs of browning. Also, beware of brittle branches, which are another sign of an old tree that may not last the season in a heated home. Look for flexibility in a bough.

To test freshness, pick a needle and bend it. A fresh fir needle will snap; a fresh pine needle will bend, but not break. The old "shake tip" really reveals a tree's freshness. Simply shake from the trunk, or wave a bough and observe how many needles fall off. If it is more than several, keep looking.

Live trees balled with the root and wrapped in burlap or containers (a.k.a. balled and bagged trees) are a great choice if you plan on planting the tree after the holidays. The most important consideration with a balled and bagged tree is to make sure the tree species can thrive in your climate zone.

Once you've chosen a holiday tree, it's necessary to prep it for inside enjoyment. If you're using a cut tree, when you get home make a fresh cut at the base. This will help the tree better take up water. It pays to keep in mind that a properly watered tree will keep about a month inside. Be sure to keep the water level above the base of the tree. To prevent fallen needles, add one of these to the base: three tablespoons glycerin; three tablespoons sugar; or a few crushed aspirin.

And after Christmas is over, the holiday tree will need to be properly disposed of. Check your city or town transfer stations for recycling options. Many municipalities recycle trees and grind them into mulch that is repurposed back into the community as such. Visit [RecycleYourChristmasTree.com](http://RecycleYourChristmasTree.com) for more recycling options.

Tree preservatives are pricey. Mix up this homemade potion for pennies: Combine one quart of fresh warm water; a half cup of light corn syrup, and a teaspoon of liquid chlorine bleach in a two-gallon bucket. Fill the water reservoir with this solution. How does it work? This mixture helps

keep trees moist because fresh-cut trees, which absorb and digest corn syrup as an energy source, don't have to waste as much energy converting stored sugar. Therefore, they can focus on staying green and beautiful!

\*Want your fresh tree to last longer? The lower the temperature and the higher the humidity, the longer your tree will last.

\*Placement is also important. Avoid setting up a tree near a heat source or in front of a window that gets direct sun.

\*Did you know? A freshly-cut tree can consume a gallon of water in 24 hours!

\*Want to avoid a trail of fallen needles to the back door? Before you set up your tree, place a tree disposal bag around the base of the trunk prior to placing it in the stand. At the end of the season, simply pull the bag up over the entire tree.

\*Check with your local transfer station or recycling center to find out if they offer a tree pick up.

\*Going artificial this year? You can still mimic the fresh scent of balsam, simply by sprinkling your carpets with a pine scented carpet freshener before vacuuming. Since smell is the most potent of our senses, visitors to a house that smells like the holidays will feel doubly welcomed!

Win a Three Course Dinner for Two at the Publick House

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 drawing. One winner per month (or whenever I receive enough tips for a column) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common 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 readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

Do you have a helpful hint or handy tip that has worked for you? Do you have a question regarding household or garden matters? If so, why not share them with readers of Stonebridge Press newspapers? Send questions and/or hints to: Take the Hint!, C/o the Southbridge Evening News, PO Box 90; Southbridge, MA 01550. Or E-mail [KDRR@aol.com](mailto:KDRR@aol.com). Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

Undecided on a real or artificial tree this year? The American Christmas Tree Association offers the following facts that could help you decide:

Allergies: If allergies are preventing you from going with a fresh tree, you should know the burst of warm weather in April and May triggers the reproduction cycle in many plant species, including tree species commonly used as Christmas trees. But by late November and early December, when such trees are harvested, pollen production has long since ceased. This means that most people with pollen allergies will not be bothered by real trees, except for those are sensitive enough to be bothered by trace amounts.

However, if you find yourself sneezing, or with an itchy nose or asthma symptoms when you bring in a fresh tree, According to the American Academy of Allergy Asthma and Immunology, you are likely allergic to mold spores in the tree, not the tree itself. The AAAAI advises to let it dry for a week in your garage or enclosed porch and then shake it thoroughly before bringing it inside. Try using a leaf blower on the tree outside to help rid it of unwelcome particles. A high-performance air purifier in the same room as the Christmas tree can also help keep mold spores in check.

Or, if you're more ambitious, the best way to deal with any dust, molds and fungi lingering in a fresh tree is by cleaning the tree before you bring it into your home. Use your garden hose to spray down the tree, and then leave the tree somewhere warm to dry for about 24 hours. Once it's dry, then you can bring it into your home. Again, as an added precaution, you can try running an air purifier in the room where the tree is located.

Additionally, there is a very small

## Growing moth orchids for months of beauty

Add exotic long-lasting orchid blossoms to your indoor garden. These living bouquets provide months of beauty with minimal care. Just provide the proper growing conditions and success is sure to follow.



GARDEN  
MOMENTS  
MELINDA  
MYERS

The moth or phalaenopsis orchid is the one best adapted to your home environment, making it the easiest to grow. It thrives in the same temperatures as people with night temperatures in the 60s and 70 to 80 degrees during the day. However, avoid hot and cold air drafts that can stress the plants and cause bud and flower drop.

Moth orchids are epiphytes, growing on but not parasitizing trees and other plants. They obtain water and nutrients from the air, rainwater, and plant debris that accumulate in their environment. They can be mounted on a board but usually are grown in an orchid mix made of peat, fir bark, and perlite. This or a similar combination retains water while providing needed drainage.

Place your plant in a bright location near an east-, west- or slightly shaded south-facing win-

dow. Your orchid will do best when it receives 12 to 14 hours of sunlight daily. Enlist the help of artificial lights if your orchids are struggling when natural light, especially during winter, is insufficient. Newer full-spectrum LED lights are more affordable, require less energy, and are longer lasting than the grow lights of the past.

Give your orchid a good watering about once a week with room temperature water just as the planting mix starts to dry. Pour off any excess water that collects in the saucer. Don't allow orchids to sit in water and don't water too often as this can lead to root rot and death of your plant.

Fertilize actively growing and flowering plants every third or fourth watering. Use an orchid plant fertilizer according to label directions. Skip winter fertil-

ization if temperatures are cooler; sunlight is limited, and the plants are not putting on new growth.

Improve the environment even more by increasing the humidity around the plant. Group them with other orchids and indoor plants. As one plant loses moisture, or "transpires," the others will benefit from the increase in humidity. Plus, you'll create a beautiful display while improving the growing conditions.

Or increase the humidity around your plants with humidity or gravel trays. Place pebbles in the saucer and set the pot on top of the pebbles. Allow excess water to collect in the pebbles below the pot. As the water evaporates it increases the humidity around your plant. It also eliminates the need to pour off the excess water that collects in the saucer.

You won't need to repot your orchid for quite a while. Wait to repot it until it is done blooming, the potting mix has broken down or the plant becomes pot bound. This is usually about every 18 to 24 months.

Enjoy a second flush of



Melinda Myers

The moth orchid also known as phalaenopsis orchid provides months of exotic blossoms with minimal care.

flowers with cool nights and proper post-flowering care. Leave the flower stem intact and the plant may produce a second flush of smaller blooms at the tip of the stem. Or you can cut the flower stem back between the second and third node from the bottom. For the best rebloom and to allow the plant to replenish energy spent on flowering, prune the flower stem back to about one-half inch above the

leaves and enjoy a second flush of flowers in about a year.

And if reblooming your orchid is too much work, treat it like a long-lasting bouquet. And if you can't stand to toss or compost it, give it to an avid gardener. There's always someone willing to adopt and try to rebloom your plant.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, includ-

ing *Midwest Gardener's Handbook*, 2nd Edition and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"* instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Myers' Web site is [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).

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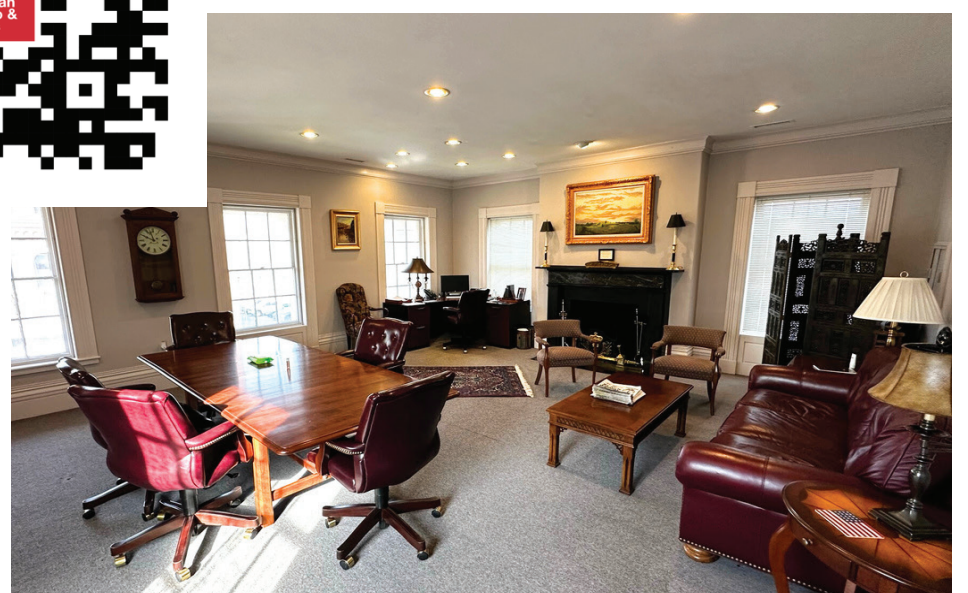


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# Thoughtful gifts for aging parents

Children typically want to treat their parents to something special during the holiday season. Parents do a lot for their children, and when those kids become adults, a desire to express their appreciation for Mom and Dad grows.

According to The Wrap Up: Snappy's 2022 Holiday Gift Report, the majority of Americans (64.2 percent) report they need help when it comes to holiday gifting. They may want to carefully consider a recipient's interests, as the report also discovered more than half of all Americans want a gift that reflects their personal interests and hobbies. When shopping for elderly

parents, it may not be as simple as identifying interests, particularly if Mom and Dad are experiencing age-related health issues. Consider these gift ideas that may be ideal for the aging adults in your life.

- Cozy blanket: Older adults may have trouble regulating their body temperatures, which can translate to feeling cold a lot of the time. A new blanket or throw for a bed or to cuddle up with in a favorite recliner might be the perfect gift.
- Family history book: Budding writers can interview their aging parents and jot down family stories. Those stories and anecdotes can be compiled into a book and combined with photos to make a family history log, which can be gifted back to the interviewee.
- Gripping slippers: Slips and falls can injure aging adults and put them out of commission for quite some time. Sturdy and secure slippers with anti-slip soles are good for getting around the house and

making quick trips to take out the trash or get the mail.

- Robotic vacuum: Keeping up with the household chores is easier with a robotic vacuum that automatically scours carpets and hard-surface floors. This eliminates having to wrestle with a cumbersome vacuum.
- Key finder: A key finder can help adults find their keys if they are misplaced. Some employ radio frequency, while others utilize Bluetooth technology and can be paired to a smartphone.
- Magnifying light: Older parents who like to do puzzles or close-up work like knitting or stitching can benefit from an LED lamp that also has a magnifying glass built right in.
- E-reader: Avid readers may enjoy an e-reader because they don't have to find spots to store even more books in their homes. E-readers can be customized so the print is the right size for the reader's

needs. Also, the devices are lightweight and easy to stow in a bag.

- Automatic card shuffler: Parents who are known card sharks around the community can use an automatic card shuffler to make card play even easier.
- Resistance bands: Resistance bands are like large rubber bands that exert force to strengthen muscles and improve flexibility. They can help aging adults stay in shape in a low-impact way.
- Dining gift cards: When parents do not want to spend additional time in the kitchen, they may opt to visit a favorite restaurant. A combination of a gift card to a favorite establishment as well as pre-paid taxi or ride share service ensures a good meal and a safe ride home.

Although they seem to have everything, aging parents still can benefit from some thoughtful gifts.

# 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. WO24P3700EA  
INFORMAL PROBATE  
PUBLICATION NOTICE**  
Estate Of:  
**Carolyn Milligan**  
**Date of Death: August 27, 2024**

To all persons interested in the above captioned estate, by Petition of :  
Petitioner

**Scott Milligan of Oxford, MA**  
a Will has been admitted to informal probate.

**Scott Milligan of Oxford, 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.  
November 29, 2024

**NOVEMBER 21, 2024**  
The Dudley Historical Commission is in receipt of an application for a demolition permit  
For 115 Baker Pond Road (Shed), Dudley, MA 01571  
A public hearing will be held as per section 12.04.00 of the Dudley MA Demolition Delay Bylaw, at the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main Street, Dudley, MA 01571  
On (day) Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 7 :25 pm, in Room 315. A representative of the property owner must attend.  
"Within forty five ( 45) days of the Commission's receipt of a copy of the application for a demolition permit, the Commission shall hold a public hearing on such application, and shall make a determination as to whether the structure is a significant structure under one or more criteria set forth in sections 12.05.00a, and 12.05.00b. The Commission shall give written notice of the time and place of the hearing, not less than seven (7) days prior to the hearing, to the owner by certified mail, and by posting and by publication once in a local newspaper. The Commission may conduct a site visit prior to the hearing."  
Respectfully,  
David Proulx, Secretary  
Dudley Historical Commission  
November 29, 2024

**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. WO24P3945EA  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR  
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**  
Estate Of:  
**Marlene Cashes**  
**Date of Death: 11/11/2024**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Michael J. Shaw of Dudley MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **Michael J. Shaw of Dudley MA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
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 12/17/2024**

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.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**  
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.  
**WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.**  
Date: November 18, 2024  
Stephanie K. Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
November 29, 2024

**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. WO24P3975EA  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR  
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**  
Estate Of:  
**Sean J DuShane**  
**Also known as: Sean James Thomas DuShane, Sean J. Dushane**  
**Date of Death: 04/27/2023**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of Intestacy and Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **William R. Miller of Bellingham MA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **William R. Miller of Bellingham MA** pointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
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 12/17/2024**

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.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**  
A Personal Representative appointed under the MUPC in an unsupervised administration is not required to file an inventory or annual accounts with the Court. Persons interested in the estate are entitled to notice regarding the administration directly from the Personal Representative and may petition the Court in any matter relating to the estate, including the distribution of assets and expenses of administration.  
**WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.**  
Date: November 19, 2024  
Stephanie K. Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
November 29, 2024

**Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
The Trial Court  
Probate and Family Court**

**Worcester Probate and Family Court  
225 Main Street  
Worcester, MA 01608  
Docket No. WO24P3328GD  
CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF  
PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF  
GUARDIAN FOR INCAPACITATED  
PERSON PURSUANT TO  
G.L. c. 190B, §5-304  
In the matter of:  
Aidan Patrick Mattson  
Of: Webster, MA  
RESPONDENT**

Alleged Incapacitated Person  
To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by

**Jennifer L. Mattson of Webster, MA** in the above captioned matter alleging that **Aidan Patrick Mattson** is in need of a Guardian and requesting **Jennifer L. Mattson of Webster, MA** (or some suitable person) be appointed as Conservator to serve **Without Surety** on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is disabled, that the protective order or appointment of Conservator is necessary, and that the proposed conservator is appropriate. The petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

**You have the right to object to this proceeding.** If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **12/17/2024**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
**The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.**  
**WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.**  
Date: November 19, 2024  
Stephanie K. Fattman  
November 29, 2024

**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. WO24C0605CA  
CITATION ON PETITION TO  
CHANGE NAME**

In the matter of:  
**Sarah B Hogan**  
**A Petition to Change Name of Adult** has been filed by **Sarah B Hogan of Oxford MA** requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:  
**Seamus Ezekiel Hogan**

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 12/17/24 at 10 a.m. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.  
**WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.**  
Date: November 15, 2024  
Stephanie Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
November 29, 2024

Public Notice  
**Public Meeting –  
MEPA Review for a Dock Structure  
PROJECT: 311 Thompson Road,  
Webster, MA - MEPA Project  
LOCATION: Gladys E. Kelly  
Public Library, 2 Lake Street,**

**Webster, Massachusetts  
PROPONENT: Lakeview Marine Inc.**

**TIME:  
Monday December 9<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 PM**  
**The proponent is preparing to submit an Expanded Environmental Notification Form ("EENF") to the Secretary of Energy & Environmental Affairs to be published in the Environmental Monitor.**  
This application is pursuant to the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act ("MEPA," M.G.L. c. 30, ss. 61-62L). **Lakeview Marine Inc. is seeking permitting on an existing dock structure on Webster Lake. The proponent is holding a public meeting in Room 207 (Local History) of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library at 6:00 PM on December 9<sup>th</sup>.**  
**Refreshments will be served.**

The Meeting will be hosted by Goddard Consulting, whose scientists will be present to help answer questions related to the project and record any comments given.

Requests for information about the project or associated upcoming public meetings can be made by contacting Sam Spelman via email at [sam@goddardconsultingllc.com](mailto:sam@goddardconsultingllc.com). This is an opportunity for all community members to place comments on the project and advocate for their feelings on the matter. Further public notice of the ongoing process will be published in the Webster Times when the project is ready to be filed.  
November 29, 2024

**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. WO24P3963EA  
CITATION ON PETITION FOR  
FORMAL ADJUDICATION**  
Estate Of:  
**Joseph E. LaPlante, Sr.**  
**Date of Death: 08/10/2024**

To all interested persons:  
A Petition for **Formal Probate of Will with Appointment of Personal Representative** has been filed by **Joseph E. LaPlante, Jr. of Lisbon Falls ME and Annette R. Runciman of Corona CA** requesting that the Court enter a formal Decree and Order and for such other relief as requested in the Petition. The Petitioner requests that: **Joseph E. LaPlante, Jr. of Lisbon Falls ME and Annette R. Runciman of Corona CA** be appointed as Personal Representative(s) of said estate to serve **Without Surety** on the bond in **unsupervised administration**.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**  
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 12/17/2024.**

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.

**UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)**  
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**WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, First Justice of this Court.**  
Date: November 19, 2024  
Stephanie K. Fattman,  
Register of Probate  
November 29, 2024

# 5 fun gift exchange ideas

Gift-giving is a significant component of the holiday season. Families can embrace traditional gift-giving, but those who want to add a touch of whimsy to gatherings with loved ones can consider these five creative and fun ways to exchange gifts.

1. Play the plastic wrap game. To

exchange small stocking stuffer gifts, compile gift cards, cash, small toys, candy, and even some larger gifts (all participants can chip in and one person shops for the gifts). The designated person in charge begins rolling up the gifts in the plastic, adding one every few rolls. Turning the ball 90 degrees while wrapping helps make a more round, finished gift ball. To play, the person with the ball puts on oven mitts and tries to unwrap as much as they can to access the gifts, while the person to the left is attempting to roll doubles on dice. When doubles are made, that person passes the dice to the left and starts his or her own attempts to get at the gifts in the plastic ball. The game ends when all the gifts are revealed, whether everyone has had a chance to unwrap or not.

2. Plan a white elephant gift exchange. A white elephant exchange is like a

secret grab bag. Everyone brings a wrapped gift, and then takes turns choosing a gift based on the number they've been given. When the gift is chosen, the person opens it. The next player can select a fresh gift or steal one of the presents that's already been opened.

3. Host a make-and-take craft party. With this type of exchange, participants will engage in some form of crafting for the duration of the event, whether it's pottery, painting, epoxy resin pouring, or even knit crafts. At the end of the night everyone can swap their creations with another or keep their own crafts as gifts.

4. Give the gift of a group outing. Instead of exchanging material gifts, focus on sharing experiences with friends and family. A trip to watch a sports game or a theater performance can be an excellent way to spend time

together, and something a person may not be inclined to do on his or her own. Certain venues will offer discounts on group tickets, so everyone can pool their resources.

5. Host a DIY cookie and cocoa exchange. Cookies, cocoa and the holidays are a perfect combination. A gift exchange where participants supply ingredients for these sweet treats, share their favorite recipes and then put together the finished products can make for an entertaining and festive afternoon. Each person can fill a cookie tin with baked cookies to take home and mason jars filled with homemade hot cocoa mix and marshmallows can be an additional gift to enjoy later on a chilly evening.

There are plenty of fun ways to exchange gifts during the holiday season.



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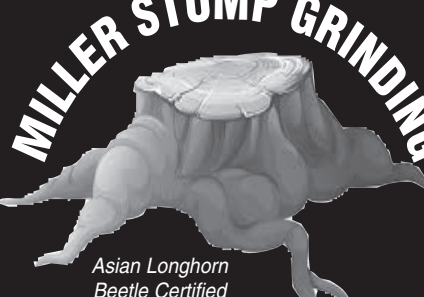
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# OBITUARIES

## Lorraine Dion, 93



Lorraine Dion, died peacefully on November 9, 2024 at her home in Thompson CT at the young age of 93. Lorraine was born on August 23, 1931 in Webster, MA. She is the daughter of the late Czeslaw and Alexandra (Krupinski) Stolarczyk. She was married to the late Raymond Dion until his death in 2010.

She is survived by her son: Michael Dion, wife Debby of Lakeville, MA; her daughter Jane Dion, wife Cindi Perugini of Portland, CT; and son-in-law, Joseph Holewa of Charlton MA. She is predeceased by her daughter Judy Holewa and great grandchild Sloane Marie Rickaby in 2024. Lorraine is predeceased by all her siblings: three sisters: Stasia Jaszur, Joan Plasse, Theresa Courtemanche, and four brothers: Chester, John, Victor and Vincent Stolarczyk. She leaves nieces and nephews.

Lorraine leaves 7 grandchildren Caitlin Rickaby (Michael), Brian Kiley (Katie Dragon), Danielle Bossi (Patrick), Chris Dion, Nicole Higgins (Joey), Laura Holewa and Colleen Holewa. Lorraine also leaves 3 great grandchildren Dante, Maverick and Matthew. Lorraine had many "grand pups" and "great grand pups" who will miss visiting her to receive a cookie.

She retired in 1995 from Hubbard Hospital as an Administrative Assistant in the Physical Therapy Department. Lorraine, known to her family as "Grandma or Gma", loved her family above everything else and was the "glue" connecting all of us to family goings-on. She and Ray enjoyed traveling together and occasionally "going south" to the casinos. Lorraine kept her brain as sharp as a tack by mastering crossword games, and in her late 80's, learning online word puzzles and scrolling/commenting on Facebook. She was very creative with arts and crafts, making many Christmas items, ceramics, and even a "Grandma O'Keefe" painting. She was a parishioner of St Joseph's Church in Charlton where she enjoyed a sense of community and connection to her faith.

A Mass of Christian burial will be held at St. Joseph's Church, 10 H Putnam Rd. Extension in Charlton, MA Saturday November 23 at 10 AM. Prayers to follow at the columbarium at St. Joseph Garden Of Peace Cemetery, Webster, MA. There are no calling hours. In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital at [www.stjude.org](http://www.stjude.org). Bartel Funeral Home 33 Schofield Ave. Dudley is assisting the family.

[www.bartelfuneralhome.com](http://www.bartelfuneralhome.com)

## Francis J. Manzi, 86



WEBSTER – Francis J. "Frank" Manzi, 86, passed away Tuesday, November 19, 2024 at UMass Memorial University Campus, Worcester after a brief battle with cancer. He leaves his wife

of 64 years, Anne L. (Buoncristiano) Manzi; 6 children, Mark J. Manzi and his wife Victoria "Tori" Manzi of Camden, ME, Janine M. Nadeau of Westborough, Luanne E. Manzi of Webster, Gerard A. Manzi and his wife Susan Manzi of Oxford, Jacquelyn L. Manzi and her fiancé Erik Desrosiers of Woodstock, CT, and Christopher F. Manzi and his wife Christine Manzi of Shrewsbury; 9 grandchildren, Kerri, Kyle and Seth Nadeau, Alyssa and Kathryn Manzi, Gina Manzi, Dominic Manzi-Knych, and Drew and Leah Manzi; 3 great-grandchildren, Nolan, Julianna and Olivia; a sister, Ann Flynn of Webster; sisters-in-law, Justine Manzi of Thompson, CT, Jane Manzi of Putnam, CT, a brother-in-law Charles Buoncristiano and his wife Diana; many nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his sister Joan Gerulis, his brothers Anthony and Richard Manzi, brothers-in-law John Flynn and Robert Gerulis. He was born on May 19, 1938 in Webster, a son of Joseph and Alice (Butler) Manzi and was a lifelong resident. He graduated from Bartlett High School

in 1956 and then went on to obtain his license in barbering. He was a United States Army veteran, serving during the Vietnam era. Frank was a barber at Manzi's Barber Shop as well as Brunos of Natick, he then operated independently until last April. He also taught the skill to others. For twenty years, he worked in maintenance for the Webster Housing Authority at Golden Heights and on Second Island Road, retiring as a supervisor. Frank was a member of Sacred Heart of Jesus Church. He enjoyed cooking for family and friends, relaxing in the sun and spending time at Memorial Beach alone or with his crew. His family was his treasure. The funeral will be held on Saturday, November 30, from the Sitkowski, Malboeuf & Hickey Funeral Home, 340 School Street, with a Mass at 11:30AM in Sacred Heart of Jesus Church, 16 East Main Street. Burial will be held privately at the convenience of the family. Visitation will be held from 9:00 to 11:00AM Saturday morning in the funeral home, prior to the Mass. Donations in his name may be made to either the Pan-Mass Challenge, 77 Fourth Avenue, Needham, MA 02494 or to the Webster-Dudley Veterans Council, 4 Veterans Way, Webster, MA 01570.

## DCRSD

continued from page A1

to build a framework to support teacher development and increase family engagements. The second goal, strengthening systematic practices and processes improving student achievement and outcomes, has been supported by added instructional supports and interventions attendance, recovery initiatives, data-driven instruction and benchmarking, creating academic and behavioral consistency across the schools in the district, and creating structured support blocks and enrichment programs and professional collaborations and continuous improvement. Future plans will include ways to refine the district's practices for instructional support teams to help provide interventions to students and enhance numerous systems. The

third goal of strengthening family and community engagement has seen the district prioritize fostering meaningful connections between schools, families and the broader community by developing new partnerships and engagement opportunities, increasing student internships and transitional job placements, and building on community participation workshops and programs like High Five Fridays to bridge the gap between the school district and the communities at large. They district hopes to expand on its internship programs to include more outside opportunities and maintain a districtwide community calendar for parents and other community members to stay in the know on what's happening.

While all three goals have shown great success over the years, True said there's always room for continued improvement

which will be the focus of the new plan.

"Our goal remains to strengthen the continuum of learning by providing all students access to the many opportunities we provide, improving achievement outcomes for all learners and fostering deeper community engagement. These priorities will remain central to our collective efforts as we evolve and refine our approach to learning and teaching ensuring that each student is supported and empowered to succeed in the Dudley Charlton Schools and beyond," said True.

As the district begins to form its new plan, True wants the focus to be on both sustaining what they've build and looking ahead to creating new opportunities and be proactive for the next steps to solidify the district's progress. The new district plan is expected to be finalized in 2025.

up there. They're not even close to us."

Berg's data showed that Charlton is the next closest town to Dudley in the local area sitting 112th on the list.

Board of Selectmen Chair Steve Sullivan said the data shows that Dudley still has a way to go in economic growth and that adding more

burden on existing businesses would not be ideal.

"We do this every year, but the pie chart says it all. It's 93.5 percent residential. That's a very sobering percentage," said Sullivan.

Selectmen decided unanimously to stay with the single tax rate, which equates to \$10.17 or an average tax bill of \$4,245.

ing it somewhat dangerous, she said. Sometimes, games next door fill all the nearby spaces.

"We knew when this was just a vision in the sky that parking would be a problem," Gabor agreed, also noting that a proposal to have an electrified bandstand could cause neighborhood issues. Van Reed said they're just running the electric lines there now, and will bring a separate plan to the town when ready to do the work. At this point, they're also seeking permits for signs, since "people are often lost and don't know they're actually at the museum," she added.

The board also approved a couple other

permits, continued discussion of their proposed town vision statement, and talked a bit about outreach to then Hispanic community.

Elaine Davies said the latter was sparked during her election campaign, when she was talking to a man with many ideas who wasn't on any town committees and thought "how much are we missing?" Over the last 20 years, the local Latino population has grown 300 percent, and Webster had also seen an influx of people speaking Portuguese, Arabic and other tongues.

Gus Steeves can be reached at [gus.steeves2@gmail.com](mailto:gus.steeves2@gmail.com).

## Mary Margaret Mailhot, 86



WEBSTER – Mary Margaret (Wehan) Mailhot, 86, of Webster, died peacefully in her sleep on Friday, November 15, 2024. She was predeceased by her husband of 66 years, Raymond

John Mailhot who died on October 1, 2024; and her sisters, Elva Wehan and Rosann Bojarski of Erie, PA. She is survived by three daughters, Brenda Jeffries of Auburn, Kathryn DiGiandomenico and her husband Paul of Mansfield, and Patricia Barry and her husband Thomas of Oxford; a brother, Albert Wehan of Erie, PA, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

She was born in Erie, PA, daughter of the late Albert and Anna (Rutkowski) Wehan. She was a graduate of Academy Catholic High School in Erie. One of her proudest moments was traveling to California with her high school marching band to perform in the Rose Bowl Parade.

Mary was an U.S. Air Force veteran. She met her husband Ray while stationed in Charleston, SC, at the same time he was serving in the U.S. Navy. They were married in Charleston, and it remained one of their favorite destinations.

Mary was very social and remained active throughout her life, going to the gym daily and attending Tai-Chi classes. She had a spirited personality and was always the life of the party. Together with her husband they would often "steal the show" with their humorous antics and contagious laughter.

Mary was an exceptionally thoughtful and creative woman remembering every holiday and special event with lovely homemade gifts and heartfelt cards.

Her favorite places included Ocean Beach in New London, CT, Charleston, SC, and Lake Manchaug in Sutton where she spent summers for 43 years. Her world centered around her beloved family and her Catholic faith.

The family would like to express their sincere gratitude to the caretakers at Lanessa Extended Care in Webster who adored Mary and cared for her with love and compassion.

Services will be held privately. Burial will be in West Sutton Cemetery in Sutton.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Catholic Charities Worcester County, 10 Hammond Street, Worcester, MA 01610.

Paradis-Givner Funeral Home in Oxford is directing the arrangements.

## DUDLEY

continued from page A1

of the lowest tax rates in the area. "Right now, if I take all the cities and towns that have single and split tax rates, we're in the 79th rank. If you look at Charlton and all the other towns, look at their ranks, they're way

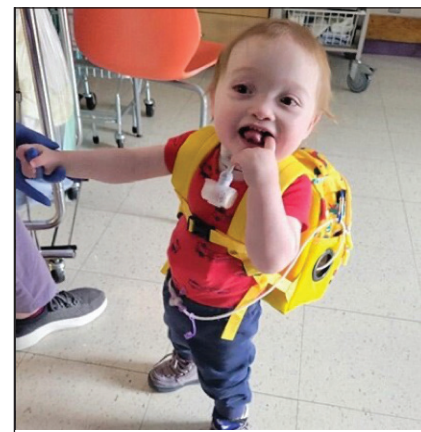
## WEBSTER

continued from page A1

"no museum can sustain themselves on ticket sales. They need other revenue as well." As an example, she said SSE needs 3-4,000 people "just to pay National Grid."

That's prompting the current project to expand parking and use of outdoor space, where she said they'd like to be able to host more events "somehow related to the story we tell." Several recent ones have been well attended (a Smithsonian night drew 120 people), but parking there is very tight and people have to walk behind the cars to get to the building, mak-

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<https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/9060>

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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](http://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.

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# How some popular holiday traditions got their start

Will you be baking gingerbread or hanging stockings by the fireplace this holiday season? Perhaps you'll be lighting the menorah or playing a game of dreidel? The holidays are steeped in tradition, some of which are older than celebrants may realize.

Individuals gather during the holidays and participate in various traditions that have withstood the test of time. Most people engage in these traditions or recognize symbols automatically, but it can be interesting to learn how these traditions came to be.

**Christmas caroling**  
The British traditions of wassailing and mumming and the Slavic tradition of koliada were some of the precursors to more modern caroling. People would go door-to-door and recite poetry or sing with the hope of bringing about good fortune or influencing a future harvest, according to Rutgers University. Carolers spread hope and good tidings through song during a time of year when sunlight was limited.

**Christmas trees**  
Pagans once displayed evergreen branches as a reminder that spring would come again, while Romans placed them



around temples to honor Saturn, the god of agriculture. Eventually the evergreen was used in conjunction with Christian Christmas celebrations. In the sixteenth century, German Christians put trees inside their homes as symbols of everlasting life.

**Santa Claus**  
Children who celebrate Christmas eagerly await the arrival of a jolly sort who goes by the name of

Santa Claus. His origin story stretches back to the third century, when Saint Nicholas became the patron saint of children. Saint Nicholas was a monk in what is modern-day Turkey. It is said that he traveled helping the poor and the sick. History.com says he is believed to have saved three impoverished sisters from slavery by providing them with a dowry so they could be married, and he also provided gifts

to children.

**Menorah**  
The menorah is a multi-branched candelabra used in Jewish religious rituals. The menorah is first mentioned in the book of Exodus when the design of the lamp was revealed to Moses by God on Mount Sinai. Many menorahs are seven-branched, but during Chanukah, an eight-branched menorah is used. The Chanukah

menorah is modeled after the Tabernacle menorah that corresponds to the eight-day festival. It was used to celebrate the rededication of the Second Temple. The available oil supply was supposed to light the menorah for just one day, but the candles actually burned for eight.

**Mistletoe**  
Kissing under the mistletoe is a holiday season tradition that can lead to

some red faces when couples are caught beneath the plant. Norse mythology paved the way for kissing under the mistletoe. Legend has it the gods used mistletoe to resurrect Odin's son, Baldur, from the dead. Baldur's mother, Frigg, the goddess of love, made the plant a symbol of love and vowed to kiss anyone who passed under it. Mistletoe blooms under cold conditions, which is how it became associated with the holiday season.

**Yule log**  
Yule logs were once part of winter solstice celebrations to bring good luck and fortune, but America is where a yule log really caught on as a holiday tradition. In 1966, the WPIX television station in New York City aired a continuous loop of a fireplace burning for three hours with holiday songs playing. It became an annual tradition, says History.com. Some people even serve a cake that looks like a yule log. The Bûche de Noël is a traditional Christmas cake that is especially popular in France.

Holiday traditions continue in full force. Traditions are an endearing component of celebrations and help to unite people from all backgrounds during this special time of year.

## Tips to make holiday dinners more affordable

"Eat, drink and be merry" is a familiar refrain come the holiday season. Hosting a holiday

dinner is a great way to welcome family and friends and encourage them to embrace the

festive nature of the season. However, the high cost of foods and other essentials may have

certain holiday hosts rethinking their menus and their guest lists this year.

sis, 68 percent of U.S. consumers expected rising food prices to impact their holiday meals in 2023. Similar concerns may prevail in 2024.



Stretching holiday entertaining dollars comes down to being savvy. With that in mind, hosts can consider these meal modification strategies this holiday season.

- Replace a high-cost protein with a more affordable alternative. Sometimes a holiday meal calls for pulling out all of the stops, and that may mean spending more on a special main dish. Rather than a luxury like beef tenderloin or prime rib roast, consider a less expensive dish, such as a pork tenderloin, roasted chicken or even seafood.

- Add extra side dishes. Incorporate an inexpensive item like rice, beans or an extra vegetable side dish into the meal so that plates can be filled with the less expensive foods and fewer high-cost items.

- Shop the sales. Plan meals around a supermarket circular. While you may have had one holiday dinner idea in mind, once you see what the stores are putting on sale you can stock up on those items and build the dinner around them. If you find a good deal several weeks away from the holidays, buy the items and freeze them until they're needed.

- Buy generic or store brands. Chances are no one will notice if you use generic or store brand ingredients, which can be considerably cheaper than their brand-name counterparts. Many are even manufactured in the same facilities that produce the name brand stuff.

- Make an affordable drink. Alcohol costs can add up when you try to cater to everyone's tastes and preferences. Make one or two bulk drinks, like a holiday punch or signature cocktail, so you can keep alcohol costs in check.

- Stretch the snacks. Instead of a charcuterie board filled with expensive cheeses and meats, opt for dips and raw vegetables or a low-cost cheese ball made with cream cheese and herbs with crackers. Keep snacks to a minimum; otherwise, guests may fill up and then not have room for dinner.

Holiday hosts can embrace various strategies to save money on family meals this season.

A 2024 Pew Research Poll showed Americans worried about the state of the economy cite the price of food and the cost of housing as their foremost concerns. More than 90 percent of Americans say they are "very" or "somewhat" concerned about the cost of food and consumer goods.

Average annual food-at-home prices were 5 percent higher in 2023 than in 2022, according to the USDA Economic Research Service. Inflation has been a key topic of discussion for much of the last three years. While data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics indicates inflation continues to cool off from all-time highs, consumers are still anxious about how food prices are affecting their bottom lines and their holiday entertaining plans. According to Farmdoc Daily, which offers agriculture-based data analy-

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# Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy participates in Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts



From left: John Martin Wanjiru, LPN, Dr. Adelina Healy, and Loise Ngigi, SPN.

DUDLEY — The 32nd Annual Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts was held at the Shepherd Hill Regional High School. A member of the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Class of 2025, faculty and alumni participated along with New England Crafters and Artisans with top-quality handcrafted items, raffles, and food trucks. The Bay Path Practical Nursing team was led by Professor Adelina Healy DNP, MSN, RN of Dudley. The Practical Nursing volunteers offered free Blood pressure screenings and first aid services. This year's practical nursing student volunteer was Loise Ngigi of South Grafton and alumni volunteers were John Martin Wanjiru, LPN and Hannah Lombardo, RN of Dudley.

"We are grateful that Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy has

been invited and continues to allow our practical nursing students to be of service to the community," stated Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy.

Professor Suzanne Taylor, MSN, RN, originally invited Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy and coordinated the practical nursing student's participation. The past two years, the invitation came from Chet Perea-Beaulieu.

"Great day at Shepherd Hill today! It is a wonderful learning opportunity," said Dr. Healy. "I am glad to be joining Shepherd Hill's Festival."

When the opportunity came, Dr. Healy did not hesitate to say, "count me in!"

Student volunteer Ngigi stated, "Thank you for the opportunity. It was

a wonderful experience, and Dr. Healy was amazing!" Wanjiru who stayed until 4 p.m. committed to volunteering weeks in advance and at the day of the fair was glad to arrive on time, and happy to report, "everything is fine, and so far, so good!"

The Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts is an annual event promoted by the Shepherd Hill Music Parents. Students from the music department sang and assisted with bringing food. The Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts has 5,000 people attending annually. The celebration highlights the community. Vendors look forward to next year's celebration. For more about the Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts, visit: <https://www.facebook.com/shepherdhill-festivalofcrafts/>.



## United Church of Christ announces free community Christmas party

WEBSTER — The United Church of Christ Federated invites the community to a free Christmas Celebration on Saturday, Dec. 7, from 1 to 3 p.m.

The day will include activities such as cookie decorating, crafts, face painting, games with free prizes (everybody is a winner!), a scavenger hunt, Christmas pinatas, and more! Refreshments will be available. Santa Claus will attend and will give gifts to all the children present! The Pulaski Brass Band will provide entertainment with an amazing sampler of Christmas favorites!

Everyone is welcome! The United Church of Christ is located at 4 Church St., across from Town Hall, 508-943-0061.

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Congratulations to the following students who were selected as September Students of the Month at St. Joseph School. Pre-K-3-year-old Program: Avery Lewandowski; Pre-K 4-year-old Program: Emilia Dziobak; Kindergarten: Magdalena Kosiorek; Grade 1: Danyka Mason; Grade 2: Madeline Kamangu; Grade 3: Maya Jackson; Grade 4: Samuel Brunnett; Grade 5: Armani Cedeno; Grade 6: Abigail Rubin; Grade 7: Tenleigh Dowd; Grade 8: Jada Jackson. Students are awarded Student of the Month for their outstanding exemplification of Religion, Respect, and Responsibility. Keep up the great work!

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