

## And the Cornerstone Award goes to Chris Robert and the Samuel Slater Experience



By Rod Lee

Not just anyone could undertake the formidable task of creating a museum—"an experience"—dedicated to the achievements of Samuel Slater.

Only an individual with the same kind of visionary spirit as that possessed by the father of the American Industrial Revolution would be able to tackle such a project.

Enter Christopher Robert.

By founding Webster Museums, Inc., a nonprofit, and seeing through to completion his concept for an interactive tribute to Samuel Slater's life and work, Mr. Robert was presented with the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's Cornerstone Award at the organi-

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## Mirrored Beauty reflects experience and customer loyalty

By Janet Stoica

Who really knows how partnerships and true success begin, but co-owners Jess Recko and Jessica Stoddard of Mirrored Beauty Salon in the Friendly's Plaza in Webster are surely a testament to true teamwork, resiliency, and tenacity.

Their acquaintance began eight years ago when both began working at the former Fusion Salon at this same location. When COVID reared its ugly head last year, Fusion was forced to close, and the owner decided not to re-open when health restrictions were lifted.

When Jess and Jessica were notified of the closure, they immediately set their sights on re-opening as partners in the stylin' business. Besides, who wants to relocate if you've had faithful clients coming to the same location for eight

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Jessica Recko and Jessica Stoddard, owners of Mirrored Beauty.

"I wanted to create a fun, immersive, historical experience" for visitors to the museum dedicated to the life and work of Samuel Slater, Chris Robert tells the 43rd annual meeting of the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce after accepting the Chamber's Cornerstone Award.

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## CORNERSTONE AWARD

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zation's 43rd annual meeting at Pleasant Valley Country Club in Sutton on November 17.

The highlight of the meeting was a keynote address by Massachusetts Gov. Char-

lie Baker, who shared his personal thoughts on the extraordinary and successful measures his administration in collaboration with the State Legislature initiated to usher the Commonwealth through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Samuel Slater Experience, which will celebrate a

grand opening at the former National Guard Armory in the town of Webster tentatively in January, is just the latest example of the foresight that has defined Chris Robert's approach to doing business in the Blackstone River Valley of Central Massachusetts—emulating Samuel Slater's.

It would be hard to imagine anything less than his best effort from a "serial entrepreneur" who has already given the region Indian Ranch, the Samuel Slater Restaurant and the Indian Princess paddleboat.

Fittingly, Mr. Robert was saluted on the same morning that his daughter Suzette Raun Coppola stepped forward to accept recognition for Indian Ranch on the occasion of its 75th anniversary.

Anticipation for the unveiling of the Samuel Slater Experience to the public is running high for good reason. When it was pointed out during remarks offered on Mr. Robert's behalf that he had invested \$2.5 million of his own money to outfit the property and to hire professional museum designers to create the exhibits, he received a standing ovation from those in attendance in the ballroom at PVCC.

In accepting the award, Mr. Robert acknowledged that his main objective in establishing the Samuel Slater Experience was to create a place with a "Disneyesque" touch and that would offer students of all ages the chance to experience history and technology in a way they would remember.

The Samuel Slater Experience represents something of a coup for the town of Webster—an appropriate location for the museum. Samuel Slater established thirteen mills powered by Lake Chaubunagungamaug (Webster Lake) and the French River. He carved an area from Oxford to Dudley to form the town of Webster, naming it after his friend, Sen. Daniel Webster.

Samuel Slater is buried in Webster.

When in partnership with the Chamber no suitable building could be found to house the museum—including any of the former Samuel Slater mills—the town of Webster asked Mr. Robert to consider the armory. Built in 1935 on land once owned by Samuel Slater, it was



**Suzette Raun Coppola was recognized for Indian Ranch on the occasion of its 75th anniversary. She is pictured with Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Jeannie Hebert.**

deeded to the town in 2005 and used by the Webster fire and police departments to store their vehicles and equipment. Town of Webster officials fully supported Mr. Robert's plan and leased the building to him for thirty years at one dollar a year.

Renovation and restoration of the 17,000-square-foot building was not easy. Though structurally sound, there was an abundance of asbestos. The wiring, plumbing and heating dated back to the 1930s. The roof leaked. The windows were unsealed and broken.

Local contractors were employed in bringing the building back.

Members of the Webster Dudley Business Alliance got a sneak peek of the new Samuel Slater Experience at their 15th annual meeting on October 26. That evening, Mr. Robert offered a brief synopsis of what inspired him to pursue his dream of honoring Samuel Slater and the town of Webster in its heyday.

At that meeting, the following officers and directors were elected: Lucas Perzan of Insation Technologies, president; Carl Kaliszewski of 511 Financial, vice president; Kim Labbe of The Smart Shopper, treasurer; Mark Marzeotti of The Mar-

zeotti Group, secretary; and Deb Horan of Booklovers' Gourmet, Halina Jachimczyk of Webster First Federal Credit Union, Erica LaBonte of B Kind Café, Jessica Sabine of The Rose Room, Tamara Taft of The Smart Shopper directors.

Nancy Healy of the Citadel Company was elected an alternate director.

Exiting board members Caryl Savard of Caryl's Studio & Creative Design, Deborah Keefe of DAK Property Management and Bill Sabine of The Rose Room were acknowledged and thanked for their service.

Afterwards, attendees were treated to a grand tour of the museum, which features a replica ship and water wheel, mill housing and machinery, artifacts, holographic displays with full audio-visual effects and a full-size streetscape of "Boomtown Webster."

Mr. Robert had some words of advice for BV Chamber of Commerce members and guests as he accepted the Cornerstone Award.

"If they ever offer you another building, take the asbestos out first!" he said.

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.



**A re-created full-scale working water wheel powers pulleys and machinery at the Samuel Slater Experience in Webster, part of an array of exhibits and videos visitors will be able to enjoy when the museum opens in January.**

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## MIRRORED BEAUTY

Continued from page 1

years? The spot has plenty of accessible parking with one-step up and you're inside the salon.

The partners began their new venture as Mirrored Beauty in June 2020. Their salon is bright, airy, and full of life, welcoming new and existing customers. These two ladies know their business and what their clients' wants and needs are.

Their salon services include specialized coloring, haircuts, foiling, manicures and pedicures, professional spray tanning with a Glo Body expert, and esthetician services for facials and body waxing. Featured product lines include L'anza, Verb, Joico, Redken, and Pulp Riot.

Newcomers are always welcome. They prefer to work by appointment to make life easier for their clients and themselves and to accommodate customers as needed.

"In high school I worked on lots of my friends' hair-styles," said Jess. "On the morning of our high school's Victory Dance, I was working on 10 other friends' hair-styles before getting myself ready. I've always enjoyed creating the styles that look good on my clients." Jessica also honed her hair designing skills in high school. "It's all about making people

feel good about themselves. When they leave our shop, it's always with a smile," Jessica said.

"Once we rebranded our salon (the name derives from Jess' sister's suggestion that since the partners' first names were the same, they "mirrored" each other), it was all about the best sanitation we could provide for our customers and ourselves," Jessica stated. "We were closed for 10 weeks last year and opened two weeks after Memorial Day once our licenses were approved, our shop was inspected, and new supplies were brought in.

"We were very diligent about cleanliness and still are," noted Jessica. "We kept our door locked between appointments and took only one client at a time. We will always be grateful to our loyal clients who stayed with us through this pandemic. We and our clients used face masks and we wiped down everything around us after

each client to prepare for the next. It made our days longer as we couldn't do haircuts on one client while another was having a color application so it was one color app instead of two every two hours. It was quite an experience and has made us experts in sanitation."

Salon customers come from every age group, from five-year olds to an eminent 93-year-old who enjoys a wash, set, and style weekly.

The services repertoire includes perms, with the latest ask being side shaves and permed curls on top of their crowns. Other requests include buzz cuts on the sides of their head with longer styles on top, Mohawks, and wolf cuts, which is a modern-day layered look (think shag) for young ladies.

Some of the fluorescent hair color requests include pink for Breast Cancer Awareness month (October), blue, and green, as well as splashes of three or four

different colors. "Our young lady clients like to keep up with the trends," says Jessica. "Whatever's on the internet is what they request!"

Now that fall is here many of their clients are looking for changes to their hair color. "They're asking us to darken their blondes, reds, and mahoganies" said Jessica, "a bit of darker shade for the fall. Some of the new shades are really beautiful."

Mirrored Beauty, 131 East Main Street (Friendly's Plaza), Webster. Hours are Tuesday - Saturday by appointment. Phone: (508) 461-6109.

Contact Janet: jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com



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Grand Marshal of the 2021 Veterans Day Parade was Francis John Mikolajczak. A certificate of appreciation was presented by Webster-Dudley Veterans Council Commander Victor Jankowski.

# Veterans Day 2021



Pictured above, veterans and organizations parade through Main St., Webster to the Court of Honor in recognition of Veterans Day on November 11.



A monument honoring the United States Merchant Marines (left) is now complete and stands proudly in Webster's Court of Honor. It was completed recently with the placing of a painting on top of the granite stone. Aparecido daSilva of Imperial Granite in Dudley donated and installed the granite for the painting. The project was spearheaded and designed by local veteran George Bibeau and completed in time for Veterans Day.



The dramatic painting atop the Merchant Marines monument in Webster's Court of Honor was done by local artist Dave Laabs of The Airbrush Shack.



Pictured (l to r) Air Force veteran Lucy Rosemlund and Air Force Nurse Corps veteran Anita Hickey placed the wreath on the women's monument.



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The Webster Dudley Business Alliance gathered for their 15th annual meeting on October 26, at the new Samuel Slater Experience located at 31 Ray Street in Webster. Members and guests enjoyed light fare provided by Big Belly Café. Carl Kaliszewski, vice president, was master of ceremonies and introduced guest speaker Chris Robert, founder of the SSE, who gave the audience a brief synopsis of what inspired him to pursue its creation, not only to honor Samuel Slater, but also as an homage to the town of Webster in its heyday.

After reviewing the past year's events, updates and news, president Lucas Perzan announced that "Millie the Shop Local Sheep," sponsored by The WDBA, would be available to member businesses for display at their location on a rotating basis. A sign-up sheet was provided for anyone interested. Members who were not in attendance but would like to add

All local businesses are invited to join the WDBA as we move forward in our mission to support and promote each other by keeping revenue in the local economy. For a full list of member benefits or for an application, visit [www.thewdba.org](http://www.thewdba.org).

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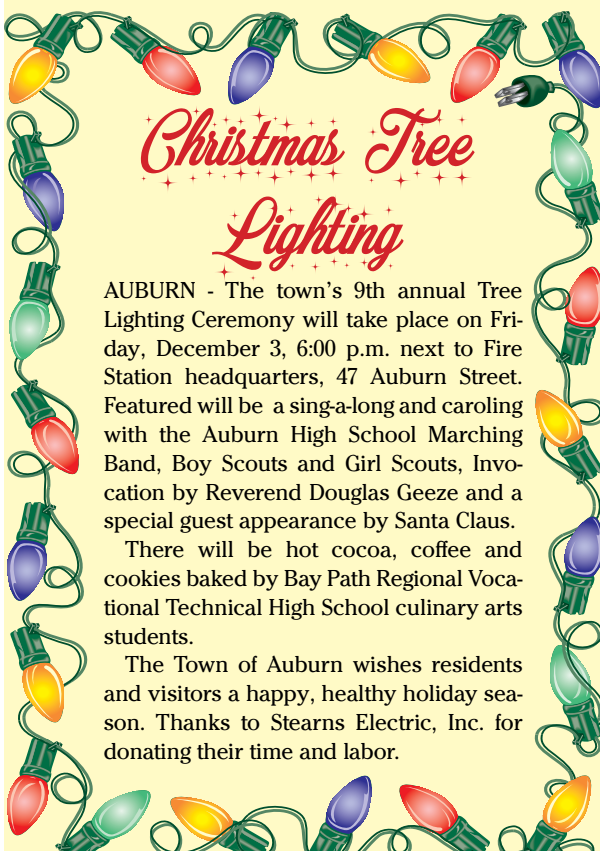




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**Christmas Tree Lighting**

AUBURN - The town's 9th annual Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place on Friday, December 3, 6:00 p.m. next to Fire Station headquarters, 47 Auburn Street. Featured will be a sing-a-long and caroling with the Auburn High School Marching Band, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts, Invocation by Reverend Douglas Geeze and a special guest appearance by Santa Claus.

There will be hot cocoa, coffee and cookies baked by Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School culinary arts students.

The Town of Auburn wishes residents and visitors a happy, healthy holiday season. Thanks to Stearns Electric, Inc. for donating their time and labor.

## bankHometown elects new board chairman, vice chairman

OXFORD — At its recent meeting, the bankHometown board of directors elected Brian E. Galonek as its chairman and David E. Surprenant as vice chairman.

Galonek was first appointed to the bankHometown board in 2008 and chaired the Audit/Budget Committee and the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) Committee before serving three years as vice chairman. He is president and owner of All Star Incentive Marketing in Sturbridge, a leading national provider of employee engagement programs, and holds the designation of Certified Professional of Incentive Management (CPIM). Galonek earned a bachelor's degree in Marketing from the UMass Amherst Isenberg School of Management, and is active in the community, having served as a board member of both the Tantasqua Education Foundation and Tantasqua American Youth Football, and as president of Sturbridge Little League. Over the past 15 years, he has helped raise more than \$1.5 million for The Jimmy Fund and the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute through his membership on the board of the Cohasset Jimmy Fund Classic charity golf tournament as well as his participation in

10 Pan-Mass Challenge bike-athons. Galonek and his family live in Sturbridge.

Surprenant was first appointed to the board of trustees of Millbury Savings Bank in 2013 and joined the bankHometown board of directors when the two banks merged in 2019. He is an attorney and managing partner of the Worcester-based law firm, Mirick O'Connell. Surprenant is a graduate of Boston College with a bachelor's degree in accounting and received his juris doctor from Boston College Law School. He is a member of the board of directors and Audit & Finance Committee of the Worcester Business Development Corporation and continues to serve as a trustee of the United Way of Central Mas-



David E. Surprenant



Brian E. Galonek

sachusetts, having previously served as the chairman of that board. He has been a incorporator of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Worcester for more than 30 years, previously serving on the board of directors and as board president. Surprenant also

is a member of the Catholic Schools Stewards Foundation and previously served as chairman of the Charter and Bylaw Review Committee and chairman of the Finance Committee for the Town of Sutton. He and his family reside in Sutton.

## Bay Path nursing students participate in Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts

DUDLEY - The 29th Annual Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts was held recently. Along with over 125 New England crafters and artisans with top-quality handcrafted items, raffles and food trucks, the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy Class of 2022 participated. Professor Sarah Watson, MSN Ed, RN of Worcester led the volunteer practical nursing students with blood pressure and finger stick blood sugar screenings. "It's a wonderful opportunity for the students," said Watson "I am glad to be joining Shepherd Hill's Festival again." Watson led a group of student volunteers in the past but missed the event last year due to the pandemic.

Suzanne Taylor, MSN, RN invited Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy and coordinated the practical nursing student's participation. "We are grateful that Professor Taylor invited us and continue to give our practical nursing students the opportunity to be of service to the community," stated Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy.



Photo shows Rebecca Lorre of Oxford, Felisters Mburu of Shrewsbury, and Evalyne Njoroge of Southbridge volunteers at the Shepherd Hill's Festival of Crafts.

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 Festival has nearly 5,000 people attending annually. The celebration highlights the community. Vendors are looking forward to next year's celebration. For more about the Shepherd Hill's Festival of

Crafts visit: <https://www.facebook.com/shepherdhillfestivalofcrafts/>

Bay Path Practical Nursing is a 40-week, (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam.



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## Living well and looking good

## The problem with playing pharmacist

By Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: My wife has been diagnosed with atrial fibrillation. Doctors tried an electrical cardioversion, but it came back after a few days. She is taking metoprolol and Eliquis. We have read about the supplements red clover, turmeric, omega-3 and hawthorn. Should she discontinue the pharmaceuticals and take supplements instead? – J.C.

ANSWER: Please don't do that, and let me explain why. Atrial fibrillation is an abnormal heart rhythm. The goal of treating it is first to relieve symptoms, such as fast heart rate and dizziness, and second, to reduce the risk of stroke. Blood clots can form inside the heart when the atria are fibrillating (a chaotic, non-coordinated muscle movement). Those clots can break off and go into the blood vessels of the brain, causing cell death and loss

of function in that part of the brain. That's a stroke.

Your wife is taking metoprolol to slow the heart rate. Atrial fibrillation causes the ventricles to go too fast, causing a sensation of fast heart rate and palpitations. Metoprolol, a beta blocker, protects the heart from damage from a too-fast heart rate, in addition to relieving symptoms. Apixaban (Eliquis) is a powerful anticoagulant, reducing the risk of clot formation.

Red clover is usually used in herbal medicine for its estrogen-like activities. Unfortunately, estrogens INCREASE clot risk, so this herbal medicine absolutely should not be used by someone at risk for clots. Sweet clover hay is the source of warfarin (Coumadin), another often-used anticoagulant in people with atrial fibrillation: This may be the source of confusion. However, warfarin needs to

be dosed precisely, with frequent blood-level checks.

Turmeric is an antioxidant that does have some mild anticoagulant properties. However, it is not remotely powerful enough to do the job of protecting your wife adequately from stroke.

Omega-3 fish oils were once thought to reduce risk of atrial fibrillation; unfortunately, a 2013 study showed no benefit.

Hawthorn has two potential benefits: To a slight extent, it acts as a beta blocker (like metoprolol) as well as an anticoagulant. However, no trials have proven its effectiveness. It may interfere with both her medicines. The metoprolol and Eliquis have much more safety data. DR. ROACH WRITES:

In a recent column, a reader

noted she had a history of irritable bowel syndrome and described intermittent sharp rectal pain. My answer discussed control of her IBS. When I saw the column printed in the newspaper, weeks after I wrote it, I realized instantly that

the diagnosis was probably proctalgia fugax, which is a spasm of the muscles of the anus. It is thought to be related to nerve compression.

I learned from my predecessor of this column, Dr. Paul Donohue, that sitting on a baseball or tennis ball can sometimes stop the pain instantly, and that creams and sometimes oral or inhaled medications can be effective in harder-to-treat cases.

I also want to point out that I fell victim to something called an anchoring heuristic error. I read about my reader's irritable bowel and became "anchored" to that diagnosis. Admitting an error and trying to understand why it happened are critical to reducing the likelihood of making the same error again. Anyone can

make a mistake; it's important to learn from them.

*Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. (c) 2021 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved*

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Dudley Womans Club Pocketbook Bingo

Earlier this month the DWC held a very successful Pocketbook Bingo at Point Breeze Restaurant. Bingo with upscale handbags as prizes and a 50/50 and unique item raffles were on tap, resulting in several very pleased ladies. Since the Dudley Womans Club is a non-profit charitable organization, all proceeds from this event will be dedicated to the betterment of our local communities. A big shoutout and thank you to all our sponsors, contributors and attendees.



MAPFRE's Volunteering Program

MAPFRE Insurance employees pose for a photo on a sunny fall day at Webster Lake, where they picked up litter and debris around Memorial Beach. The event was part of MAPFRE's Volunteering Program, which provides opportunities for employees to give back to the community. Pictured from left to right: David Caña, Kris Meunier, Bonnie Kapitanyan, Jonathan Moore, Hannah Manca, Robert Roache, Kim Farrell, Angela Todd and Marianne Sroczenski.

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For more information on how you can help, please contact Kayla Krause at [KKrause@thecenterofhope.org](mailto:KKrause@thecenterofhope.org) or call us at 508-764-4085. Thank you for your help this holiday season!

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T	L	D	M	E	E	A	R	I	I	F	E	D
8	3	8	3	5	4	2	8	4	2	4	6	4
T	U	I	L	E	E	L	C	V	E	A	E	L
6	4	7	6	7	5	6	7	4	6	7	5	7
T	I	D	I	V	A	N	I	D	G	C	S	E

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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## Thanksgiving Turkey Baskets for veterans

On Thursday, November 18, American Legion Post 184, under the direction of Commander Ron Handelson, delivered many turkey baskets to the Dudley Veterans Office. The donated turkeys and fixings came from the generous support of the American Legion members along with Webster Price Chopper who is always eager to support veterans in our Community.

Volunteers from the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 654 of Webster and Dudley assisted Dudley Veterans Services Officer Stephen Rogerson in distributing the Thanksgiving baskets to those veterans and families needing a little extra at this time.

As this is a time of giv-

ing thanks, please remember the veterans who have served and those who are serving still. Keep in mind that the communities of

Webster and Dudley have a very large veteran population for which we should be proud and grateful.

*Stephen Rogerson, VSO, Dudley*



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## Event at Senior Center

OXFORD - Singer/entertainer Tommy Rull will perform his December Holiday Show, Classic Christmas Songs and songs from his show "A Musical Journey through the Years" at the Oxford Senior Center, 323 Main St. The date is Friday, December 10, from 12:45 to 1:45 p.m. This is a free event.



L-R: Dick Norton, VFW Post Vice Commander; Stephen Rogerson, VFW Post Commander; Jim Brinker, Post Surgeon.



L-R: Stephen Rogerson, Scott Bennett



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## Healthier baking in the Blackstone Valley

### Nutritious Oatmeal Chocolate Chip cookies

By Christine Galeone

At Thanksgiving, we give thanks for all of the blessings in our lives. For most people, including me, faith, family and friends tops that list. But what about good health?

Good health is certainly a blessing to be grateful for. On

Thanksgiving, however, it's not always something we think about. Most of us tend to overindulge during the holidays, especially on Thanksgiving.

But amidst the pecan pie, the cheesecake and the cannoli – and after the mashed potatoes and gravy – can be a healthier dessert to either provide an alternative to the sugary sweets or to create some sense of balance. This recipe for oatmeal chocolate chip cookies is one that will produce that type of dessert.

If you bake cookies regularly, you know how many recipes call for an obscene amount of sugar. And many of them produce a relatively small amount of cookies. It's just not necessary.

These cookies are packed with nutritious ingredients. The oats are healthy for your heart. The dark chocolate chips provide antioxidants. And the pumpkin spice, which generally consists of cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger and allspice, provides antioxidants, antimicrobial properties, fiber and minerals along with a warm holiday flavor.



#### Oatmeal Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients:

**3 cups of old-fashioned or quick oats**

**1 cup of dark chocolate chips**

**1 ½ cups of flour**

**½ cup of brown sugar**

**½ cup of granulated sugar**

**2 large eggs**

**1 tsp. of baking soda**

**½ tsp. of salt (omit if using salted butter)**

**1 tsp. of pumpkin spice**

**1 tsp. of vanilla extract**

**1 cup (2 sticks) of unsalted butter (slightly softened)\***

Directions:

- In a large mixing bowl, mix together the dry ingredients (except the oats and chocolate chips).
- In a separate large mixing bowl, cream the butter, brown sugar and sugar together.
- Add the eggs and vanilla to the butter mixture, and mix well.
- Gradually combine the mixed dry ingredients with the mixed wet ingredients.
- Fold in the oats and chocolate chips.
- Use a cookie scoop to scoop the cookie dough onto a baking sheet.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 11-12 minutes.
- Remove from oven and let cool for a couple of minutes before transferring to cooling racks or plates.

Makes about 60 cookies.

\*If cholesterol is an issue, you can use a plant-based butter like olive oil butter.

These cookies are even more delicious than they are healthy. And they're easy to make. Happy (healthier) holiday baking!

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### Holiday tree lighting in Oxford



Join us for the annual Holiday Tree Lighting at the Oxford Bandstand on December 5 at 5 p.m. Enjoy music by the OHS band, refreshments, a visit from Santa and the official lighting of the tree.



# FOOD AND FUN PULL-OUT SECTION

PULL OUT  
SECTION

*Save these pages as a guide to area dining and things to do*

## Paintings on display at Booklovers' Gourmet

Paintings by Anne M. Tisdell will be on display and for sale December 1-31 at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 East Main Street, Webster. Hours for viewing the show are Tuesday-Saturday 10-5, Wednesdays 10-6, Sundays, December 5, 12 and 19 12-4, Mondays December 13 and 20 10-5. A meet the artist reception will take place on Saturday, December 11, from 1-3 pm. For more information email [deb@bookloversgourmet.com](mailto:deb@bookloversgourmet.com) or call 508-949-6232.

The artist's statement: I have dabbled in art all my life with sketching and drawing. I grew up in Swampscott, an oceanside community north of Boston. Professionally, I have worked as an RN and a

Women's Health Nurse Practitioner for 45 years. I had a few courses in art as a teen and took 2 courses at Montserrat School of Art in Beverly, in pastels and watercolors with artist/teacher, Mimi Johnson. Retiring in 2016, I have had the time to pursue my interests in art, music, dance and photography.

Many of the paintings that I create are based on my photographs or the photographs by friends with their permission. Artist, Elaine Griffith taught classes at Holden Senior Center in acrylic painting which I started in October 2017. Since then, I have exhibited in various places in Central MA. I started Art Classes with Bill

Griffiths at the Worcester Art Museum in 2018, which brought me to a new level as an artist. He has taught in all mediums and students work in the medium of their choosing. I have exhibited at the Museum's Adult Student Art Exhibit and at Arts Worcester. In 2018, I started watercolor classes with Charlie Grey in Rutland, a local well-known artist who has been instrumental in improving my watercolor technique. In July 2021, I participated in an intense workshop under the direction of Artists Mimi Johnson and Mark Hayden in multiple art forms. I am also a musician and singer and have sung in choruses and church-



es in Greater Boston. I studied voice with the late Pauline Maher of Lynn.

The Pandemic in 2020 cut into my exhibition time. Booklovers Gourmet was my first exhibit of 2020. I am happy to return December of 2021 with a mix of landscapes, birds, animals and flowers for all to enjoy.



Come out to see Santa drive through Webster on Saturday, December 11 beginning at 5 p.m. (times approximate). The parade will start at Memorial Beach, travel all of East Main St. to South Main, and continue on through Main St.



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<b>FRIDAY</b> Baked Haddock Baked Meatloaf American Chop Suey	<b>SATURDAY &amp; SUNDAY</b> Roast Turkey Dinner Pot Roast 14 oz. Prime Rib \$16.99 Sat. & Sun. Dinners Served All Day	<b>LUNCH PORTION</b> (not available on weekends) <b>\$10.99 +TAX</b> <b>DINNER PORTION</b> <b>\$13.99 +TAX</b>

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## Holiday events at Booklovers' Gourmet

Booklovers' Gourmet is hosting a poetry reading and book signing on Saturday, December 4, at 1 p.m. with Joe Fusco, Jr. for his latest book "Pondering the Pandemic During the



Rust Years." The event is free and books will be available for purchase. RSVP to deb@bookloversgourmet.com or 508-949-6232. Free beverage for all attendees who register in advance thanks to sponsor D'Errico's Markets.

Joe Fusco Jr. is a well-seasoned poet/humorist from Worcester. He is the author of three books of semi-amusing poems and essays: "Hm... That's Different" (2020);

"Three Score" (2014); and "The Lost and Found Essays" (2012).

In his new book "Pondering the Pandemic during The Rust Years," Joe muses about growing old uncomfortably during the pandemic. Joe's musings have appeared in Damfino Press, Ballard Street Poetry, Worcester Review, Asinine Poetry, and the naughty ezine Clean Sheets. He was a co-winner of the Jacob Knight Poetry Award in 2002 and was named Best Poet by Worcester Magazine readers in 1999 and 2002.

Joe is still a frequent contributor to Worcester Magazine and the last Worcester Mega-Slam winner in 2017.

Joe has lived in lovely Worcester with his better-half Cyndi and their large family for thirty-five years. He is a registered Independent and sleeps with one eye always open.

Join us for some unicorn & drawing fun on Sunday, December 12, 1-3 p.m. at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 East Main

Street, for a book signing event with illustrator Ralph Masiello and his latest in a series, The Unicorn Drawing Book. Ralph will teach you how to draw along with him. Please RSVP to deb@bookloversgourmet.com or 508-949-6232. The event is free but you must pre-register. Books will be available for purchase. Appropriate for ages 6+. Children must be attended by an adult.

Ralph Masiello—affectionately known as "The Icky Bug Man"—has illustrated several children's books including The Icky Bug Alphabet Book, The Yucky Reptile Alphabet



Book, and The Flag We Love. His oil paintings are remarkably rich and realistic and bring to life the subjects of his books—be they bugs, flags, dinosaurs, or well-hidden messages and secret drawings.

A graduate of Rhode Island School of Design, Ralph has produced numerous works of fine art for galleries in addition to picture book illustrations and magazine covers for Omni and Tennis. He is twice the recipient of the Society of Illustrators Certificate of Merit. But it is his visits with school children that give him the most satisfaction. "Adults are very subdued. They say, 'Isn't that lovely?'" But children will go, "That's so cool, dude!" That's better than any award." Along with discussing the technical aspects of book making, Ralph tells his audience about his own education, stressing reading and library skills as they relate to the research and development of an accurately illustrated book. Audience participation and spontaneity is highly emphasized and always leads to boisterous, but stimulating and educational, fun for kids. For years, children have benefited from visits from "The Icky Bug Man."

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## Craft and vendor fair

GRAFTON - Grafton Recreation will hold its annual Craft and Vendor Fair on December 5 as part of the Grafton Celebrates the Holidays.

The fair will be held in the Grafton Municipal Center gymnasium, 30 Providence Road, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Items for sale from local artisans will include jewelry, charcuterie boards, wreaths, ornaments, soaps, self care products, clothing, knits, coasters and more.

## Christmas Festival

WORCESTER - St. Christopher Church, 950 West Boylston St., Worcester will hold its annual Christmas Festival on Saturday, December 4, from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. The festival will feature food, raffles, flea market, crafts, jewelry, baked goods and much more. No admission fee. Come start your Christmas shopping while enjoying the festivities. For more information, call the parish office at 508-853-1492.

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## Holiday Craft Fair

AUBURN - The Auburn Recreation and Culture Department will present its 8th annual Holiday Craft Fair on Saturday, December 11 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Auburn High School. Snow date is December 12.

More than one hundred fifty craft vendors will help get you into the spirit of the holiday season. Santa will be making an appearance from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. so bring the kids. There will be activities, food, drawing, face painting and much more. The schedule of events is listed on [www.auburnguide.com](http://www.auburnguide.com). For information [kpappas@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:kpappas@town.auburn.ma.us).

## Christmas bazaar

AUBURN - St. Joseph's Parish Annual Christmas Bazaar will be held Saturday, December 4, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at the St. Joseph's Parish Center, 68 Central Street, Auburn.

Come and enjoy an old fashioned Christmas Bazaar and check out the collectibles, attic treasures, plants, jewelry, knit goods, holiday decor, toys, candy and baked items, and so much more. Take a chance on one of the many raffles. There is something for everyone. Free admission. Free parking. Handicap accessible.

## Christmas Fair

CHARLTON - The Charlton Helping Hand Society, Inc. presents its annual Christmas Fair at the Dodge Chapel, 81 Hammond Hill Road, Charlton. Catch the holiday spirit (and bargains) on Saturday, December 4, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Enjoy the huge assorted cookie table, Santa's Village shopping room, raffle table and raffles for gift cards, cash, services, etc. Winners for the raffles will begin to be drawn at 1 p.m. Come to shop, come for the fellowship and spirit of the holiday and come to "help us to help others."

## Open house

OXFORD - An Open House will be held at the Oxford Community Center, 4 Maple Rd., on December 23, from 1 to 4 p.m. sponsored by the Smolenski/Millette Charitable trust. Stop by for hot chocolate, make some reindeer feed, color a picture to leave for Santa, and make an ornament to hang on the tree or window. All ages welcome.

## Holiday Bazaar

DUDLEY - St. Andrew Bobola Holiday Bazaar will be held in the church hall at 54 West Main St., Dudley on December 4, from 10 a.m. til 5:30 p.m. The Rosary Sodality and Parish Council are joining forces to host an Indoor Yard Sale, a Bake Sale, a Basket Raffle and a Lottery Tree Raffle. Frozen Polish Food will also be available for take out: cabbage and cheese pierogi, golabki (stuffed cabbage), kapusta and kielbasa. All ready to defrost, heat and eat for your holiday festivities. Come and join in the fun, find a unique treasure you just can't live without, take a chance or two on the raffles, take home some home-baked goodies and frozen Polish food for your traditional Christmas dinner.

## Holiday dinner

WHITINSVILLE - Parishioners and volunteers from the Blackstone Valley United Methodist Church would like to cordially invite the community to a traditional turkey dinner with all the usual holiday meal favorites: potatoes, vegetables, squash, stuffing, and cranberry sauce. This year's meal will be served on Saturday, Dec. 25, from 12 noon to 2 p.m. at the church, 61 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville. The dinner is open to everyone free of charge. We ask that you wear masks while you are not eating and maintain social distance where possible. Please come join us for a joyous Christmas celebration that will include holiday fun, food, and fellowship with many from the community. For more information, call the church office at 508-234-2275.

## Christmas bazaar

OXFORD - St. Roch's church, 332 Main St., Rt. 12, will hold a Christmas Bazaar in the church hall on Saturday, December 4, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Featured will be a themed baskets raffle, handcrafted gifts, bake sale, someone else's treasures, lunch. A special Kids Christmas Shoppe will be open from 2-3 and all gifts are priced \$5 and under in this "adult-free" zone. Santa's helpers will assist each child in shopping and offer free gift wrapping.

## Greens sale

SOUTHBRIDGE: The Southbridge Garden Club will hold its annual Greens Sale at the Ruth Well Center for the Arts at 111 Main Street in Southbridge on Friday, December 3, from noon to 7 pm and on Saturday, December 4, from 9 am to 2 pm.

The sale will feature a variety of handcrafted items, including decorative wreaths, holiday centerpieces, swags, cemetery boxes, and assorted decorations and greens. All items contain different types of live, fresh greens.

Visitors to the Greens Sale will also have an opportunity to purchase raffle tickets for a basket filled with gourmet foods, specialty items and holiday accessories.

The Southbridge Garden Club is a non-profit organization and proceeds from the Greens Sale support various programs, scholarships and local beautification projects. For more information, please contact Paige Szugda at 774-230-7330, [pszugda@gmail.com](mailto:pszugda@gmail.com) or Sally Anderson at 508-207-6882 at [sally.h.anderson@outlook.com](mailto:sally.h.anderson@outlook.com).

## Grafton celebrates the holidays

GRAFTON - Celebrate the holidays in Grafton on December 5 and enjoy family fun while supporting participating businesses, churches, and non-profit organizations. You'll find more than 20 Frosty Stops, plus a Craft & Vendor Fair with local goods, a map of decorated homes and businesses for viewing and voting, Santa's arrival on the common and more holiday fun. Enjoy, stay safe, and happy holidays from Grafton Recreation.

Event highlights: Craft & Vendor Fair: 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.; Frosty Stops: 12 - 4 p.m.; Santa's arrival on the Common: 4:30 p.m. Special Events on the Common 11:30 a.m. - 12 p.m.: Performance by the Beatz Dance Studio Performance Team; 12 - 4 p.m. Grafton Boy Scout Troop 107 will be selling hand decorated wreaths as a fundraiser; 2 - 4 p.m. Holiday jazz by Grafton Unitarian Church's Three Kings of Swing; 2 - 5 p.m. The Mooving Cow food truck will be on-site selling cocoa, peppermint stick ice cream, and more, grab a treat; 4:15 - 4:45 p.m. holiday music by the Apple Tree Arts Community Singers; 4:30 p.m. Santa's arrival on the common by fire truck.

Events, activities and times are subject to change. Please visit [GraftonRec.com](http://GraftonRec.com) for updated information.

Grafton Recreation welcomes the participation of individuals of all ages and abilities in our events.

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## Holiday Harvest



**Kim Larkin of Klassic Krations Gourmet addresses participants at Gladys E. Kelly Library Holiday Harvest event on November 9, 2021.** (photo credit: Evan Hale)

WEBSTER: On November 9, the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library hosted "Holiday Harvest." Kim Larkin of Klassic Krations Gourmet presented a timely program on entertaining buffet style. Three tables put together and draped in fall themed tablecloths showcased her ideas. The colorful display inspired our minds and eyes. The samples for participants included a variety of chocolates – Larkin is a licensed commercial chocolatier, cheeses, and a unique ginger beer cider with a touch of pomegranate to arouse our taste buds. Recipes for some of Larkin's favorites were shared including Simply Healthy Butter-nut Squash Soup, Apricot Walnut Bread, and Chocolate Harvest Bark. We also took home a suggested shopping list for an Ultimate Charcuterie Board.

It was a delightful evening sponsored by Friends of the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library. Now that we are freer to enjoy being among vaccinated and/or mask-wearing friends post-COVID pandemic, Webster's library is a great town resource. Check the library website ([www.gladyskellylibrary.org](http://www.gladyskellylibrary.org)) regularly to stay current on opportunities for the whole family.

– Nancy Sullivan

## Dudley Senior Center news

**Urgent:** The Dudley COA needs a few dedicated volunteers for our COA Board. We meet once a month on the third Tuesday on the month, 3-4 p.m. Sept. to December, and March to June. Your great ideas and participation could benefit the seniors of our community. Please contact us if interested @ 508-949-8015 Please leave a message and contact number and we will get back to you. OR, E-mail us if you'd rather @ [coadirector@dudleyma.gov](mailto:coadirector@dudleyma.gov) Thank you!

### Weekly Schedule:

**Mondays 11:30 a.m.** Dudley Lunch Club. Please reserve your meal through Inge Gassner, at 508-949-9081 Please leave message to reserve a meal at least two/three days in advance.

**Tuesdays at 1 p.m.** in the dining room: card players pitch league, also Dudley senior women knitters at 1 p.m.

**Wednesdays 10 a.m.** craft workshop with Delores Cowden is on a short leave and will hopefully resume her workshop soon. Over the summer, with Craft Instructor Dolores, we learned watercolor techniques, acrylics, decoupage, creating/sewing fabric pumpkins and more. Please stay tuned for the re-start of this fun arts and crafts workshop. Also on Wednesdays, Dudley Lunch Club at 11:30 a.m. Please contact Inge at number listed above. Also meeting 1 p.m. Dudley senior women knitters.

**Thursdays 9 a.m. to 12 noon,** machine sewing for fun and crafts with Linda Prest. Weekly projects and costs will vary from \$5.00 to \$15.00 depending on project and supplies needed. All supplies and expert instruction included in price. If you have a portable sewing machine, you are welcome to bring it to the weekly workshop. If interested, please leave your name and number Dudley COA 508-949-8015 to sign up. Newbie new machine sewers are always welcome too.

**Fridays 11:30 a.m.** Dudley Lunch Club, Friday Game Day will start up again after lunch if there's interest. Pre-pandemic we enjoyed board games such as Scrabble, Up words, Super Boggle, and Scattergories. We'd love to bring this activity back, tell your friends, better yet bring your friends.

### Dudley Senior Center events planned

**Friday, Dec. 3, 10 a.m.** Tina Bemis workshop creating a beautiful holiday boxwood tree. \$20.00 space is limited, please RSVP to Margaret by Nov. 24 508-949-8015.

**Friday, Dec. 10, 12:30 p.m.** after lunch club. Pied Potter Rick Hamelin will be here for a workshop presentation: All about Poets and Potters. Writers have alluded to clay and the potter at work in numerous poems and stories throughout time. Massachusetts' Poets, Longfellow, Whitman, Thoreau and Gibrán celebrated the potter in their writings, and reflected on the forming of clay as a metaphor for life in many ways. In this one-hour program, Mr. Hamelin demonstrates "throwing" at the pottery wheel while exploring verses and the historical connections of

Massachusetts' potters to these poets. Anyone who may be interested is welcome to attend. Come join us for this FREE program. Please note: Artist requests that audience please wear a mask. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Dudley Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. For more information, contact Margaret Bussiere, COA Director @ 508-949-8015.

**Thursday, Dec. 16, 3-5 p.m.** Common Ground Memory Café and senior Christmas party. Free program, light meal, refreshments included. Music entertainment by our great friend, Fran-nie Mik. Please bring one wrapped gift for the swap and one new un-wrapped gift for the Salvation Army. (ideas: HBA items, shampoo, soap/body wash, towels, socks, hats, gloves, etc.) Donations are also accepted and greatly appreciated for the memory café if you'd like to help support this program which began in 2016 and continued to an outside audience throughout the pandemic at senior housing/Joshua Place (while the weather agreed). This memory café is supported by local donations from the community. Thank you for helping us make this important, non-judgmental, socially inclusive, come as you are, dementia friendly program free to the community.

Best wishes for a blessed and happy holiday season for you and yours, including health, peace, kindness, compassion, and love for the New Year 2022. – Margaret

## DAR celebrated with a Day of Service



**Pictured left to right:** Anne Marie Safae of Dudley, Carolyn Laval-lee of Uxbridge, Noveline Beltrair of Pascoag RI, Betsy Ryder of Whitinsville, and Sylvia Gamache of Dudley. Not pictured Susan Perkins of Douglas.

The Captain Job Knapp Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution celebrated the anniversary of the founding of the DAR, with a Day of Service to the American Red Cross Blood Drive at Milford Hospital on October 21.

Blood is urgently needed by the Red Cross and the Chapter encourages the public to get involved and give blood at their local blood drives.

## Pet Photos With Santa

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Photos provided by Jennifer Lynn Photography, Bellingham, MA

**December 5th, 12:00 – 4:00**

**Gibson's Natural Pet Resort, 139 Upton St. Grafton, MA**

Photos provided by Jennifer Lynn Photography, Bellingham, MA

*Safety guidelines for this year:*

- ☛ Upon arriving please make sure everyone in your group is wearing a mask.
- ☛ Masks may be removed for pictures
- ☛ Hand sanitizing stations will be provided upon entering and exiting
- ☛ All pets must be on a leash or in a carrier
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**HOLIDAY WEEK**

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## DAR presented Quilts of Valor



Captain Job Knapp Chapter of the DAR recently held its annual Veterans Day reception for three veterans who served during the Vietnam War. Each Veteran was given a handmade quilt designed and made by Louise Zygmuntowicz. They also received a certificate of appreciation for their service to the United States. Quilts were given to Ronald J. Fournier, US Air Force, Nicola J. Trifone, Air Force, and John Croall, Marines.

The Captain Job Knapp Chapter meets in Douglas at the First Congregational Church. Women belong from Douglas, Webster, Dudley, Northbridge, and Uxbridge as well as from Rhode Island and Connecticut. The National Society Daughters of the American Revolution was founded in 1890 to preserve the memory and spirit of those who contributed to securing American independence. Any woman 18 years or older, regardless of race, religion, or ethnic

background, who can prove lineal descent from a patriot of the American Revolution is eligible for membership. DAR is one of the world's largest and most active service organizations with nearly 180,000 members in approximately 3,000 chapters worldwide. These members passionately carry out the timeless mission of promoting historic preservation, education and patriotism. To learn more about the work of today's DAR, visit [www.dar.org](http://www.dar.org).

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# Legislators see war between Amazon and Walmart heating up

By Rod Lee

There was good news and bad news for businesspersons attending the Webster-Dudley-Oxford Chamber of Commerce's legislative breakfast at Samuel Slater's Restaurant in Webster on November 6, as State Reps. Joe McKenna and Peter Duran and State Sen. Ryan Fattman offered candid appraisals of the health of the region and the Commonwealth.

The legislators (Rep. Paul Frost of Auburn was not able to attend) covered a host of topics, including the economy, redistricting, unemployment insurance, American Rescue Plan funding, the hiring crisis, affordable housing and more. A robust Q&A session followed.

Speaking first on a sunny morning with his back to Webster Lake in the restaurant's dining room, Sen. Fattman said Massachusetts "for the most part is in a fairly strong" position even though "this has been a very challenging time period."

Referring specifically to the toll the coronavirus pandemic has taken on the local economy, Mr. Fattman said "we have moved beyond that, thankfully. The injection of stimulus money" helped local industries, especially restaurants, which were "hit hard. We changed laws, we passed drinks-to-go."

Likewise, when it became apparent during real-estate

transactions that "people couldn't go into homes to conduct fire inspections, we found ways to do it virtually—and some of these changes should probably stay in place."

With the growth of the state's population, which Sen. Fattman described as a positive, "I used to have fourteen communities, now I have eighteen, but I lost Milford and Bellingham and I spent a lot of time in Milford," he said, with a tone of regret.

Some of his constituents may not realize how large Sen. Fattman's Worcester and Norfolk district is, a tall order in terms of a commitment to coverage for a legislator with a growing family (a new baby is on the way). "Blackstone to Upton to Monson, 61 miles, it takes two hours to go from Wales to Upton," he said.

He termed a bill under consideration on Beacon Hill on how \$3.8 million in American Rescue Plan funds would be used, "a dream bill for some," particularly since a portion of that will go towards unemployment insurance. But there is also "a once in a million opportunity to address infrastructure concerns, especially water," he said.

Tax revenues "are up, we're in good shape, some of that money should go back to the people, we should consider

giving people a tax break," he asserted.

With redistricting, "my district didn't change much," Rep. McKenna, following Sen. Fattman, said. "Oxford is still split between Paul Frost and me."

"It will be good to finally get this (American Rescue Plan) money out the door. There is a small amount for companies that didn't qualify for PPE money, which is good, some businesses that started during COVID-19 didn't qualify" the first time around.

(At his table, Todd Donahue of bankHometown, presenting sponsor of the breakfast, said "we arranged PPE loans of \$1400 to \$1.3 million, and those businesses that got the lower amount were just as happy").

Rep. McKenna raised a warning flag on unemployment. "Some families received a ton of money and are now getting letters saying they owe thousands. We are looking at a waiver" to deal with that, he said.

He pointed out too that with Amazon moving aggressively to set up operations in Charlton and Uxbridge, jobs will be created but "some communities don't need a thousand new jobs. This makes for an interesting paradox."

"There will be good and bad impacts," Rep. Durant,

next in line to speak, agreed. "We are watching that closely."

Sen. Fattman is paying close attention to Amazon's inroads, too. "Amazon spent \$8.5 million for 120 acres in Uxbridge, on the old Serendipity land, which puts Amazon right in direct competition with Walmart and they will go to war, Walmart has its own plans for expansion" in the same territory, he said.

Rep. Durant's 6th Worcester District "doesn't change one bit," he said. With creation of an overlay district in Webster and Dudley, "both towns benefit," he said. In an announcement that came as news to some, he said the former Stevens Linen factory on the Webster-Dudley line is at long last being eyed for "a major redevelopment, housing, meeting space, weddings. It will help revitalize that waterfront. We need housing to support people coming in for work. The overlay is the first step."

All three legislators expressed puzzlement over the reluctance of many people to go back to work, and with the frustration of some businesses, like the VNA, not being able to compete with companies offering \$25 an hour (Sen. Fattman said Blair House in Milford finds itself paying a nurse \$90 an hour in



A war for territorial dominance in South County between Amazon and Walmart that will have both a good and bad impact makes for "an interesting paradox," State Rep. Joe McKenna tells a crowd gathered for the Webster-Dudley-Oxford Chamber's annual legislative breakfast at Samuel Slater's Restaurant in Webster on November 6. Sen. Ryan Fattman, seated, and Rep. Peter Durant also took part.

some cases "because of the upward pressure and this is tough work, it's not \$16.50 an hour to pour coffee").

Sen. Fattman struck a sobering note as well in concern over the rising cost of goods and services.

"The inflationary component over the next ten years is very scary," he said.

Not as frightening, however, was the situation he encountered on a recent family road trip when he walked into a gas station in Wyoming masked

"and the woman attendant thought I was robbing her!"

Sen. Fattman generated laughs, though, when, in response to a query about whether people who refuse to go with a mandate for vaccinations will be able to get unemployment he said "I don't think I've ever met anyone in Massachusetts who is not eligible for unemployment!"

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

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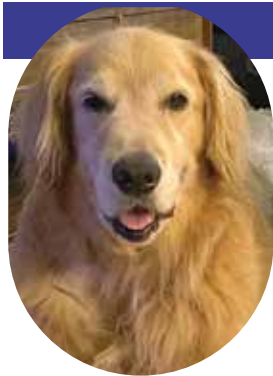
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By Amy LeClaire

Lincoln was a socialite. He loved the old and young, the plump and thin, the dark and light, the tall and small. He loved unconditionally and unabashedly. "You are the coolest person ever! Let's celebrate you! Allow me to play with your gloves!" He would gallop around our front lawn with a new friend's gear, thoroughly pleased with his sudden luck. A person had arrived! A typical Golden, Lincoln was social by nature—but there was one exception.

He didn't care for Santa Claus. The discovery announced itself, rather darkly,

## Living ON with Lincoln

### Who needs Santa?

at PETCO in Auburn, a public pet store created for all things doggie. December Christmas shopping, I had thought, would be even more fun this year. "Lincoln can come, too!" I spoke his language and he responded with a wiggle and search for the closest ball available, just as he had on the final day of his life. Like a leopard's spots, joy was a part of who Lincoln was. A tumor, tragedy, or illness would fail to take this quality from him. He found a way to concentrate on all that was good in his life. He wore rose colored glasses and, in doing so, kept pain at bay. Amongst all that I admire about Lincoln, his ability to choose joy over pain is what I'll treasure the most.

"You have to be easy." I put the car in park and reviewed the shopping rules. He stared out the window at the store front then shot a glance back to me, as though needing more detail. "We're going to

see the other doggies." A dirty towel hung from his mouth like an oversized mustache while he celebrated his good fortune and did the math. A



Joyful to be with Daddy

parking lot, a store front, dogs. Life couldn't get any better than this.

"Santa!" Somehow, it got worse.

"Look, Lincoln – it's Santa!" Lincoln did not want to look at Santa, let alone take a picture with him. "Let's just get one picture for Daddy." Lincoln's Daddy, my husband, had never cared about dog pictures with Santa. Yet I found myself clinging to empty promises like a frayed mother with a toddler. "You look so handsome." I pulled him towards a hired Santa whom, I must confess, was not overly gleeful. He sat stiff and angular, coupons resting upon his lap while Lincoln hid his face be-

tween my legs. I pulled him forward. His head flattened like a deflated tire while he stiffened in protest and tried to free himself from a loose collar.

"Let's just get one picture, Lincoln." He turned his head away from me. "Dislike." I can't recall exactly how I managed to pull my largest male of the litter to Santa's side, but I'm thinking junk food may have been involved. "Say – Happy Holidays!" The photographer stayed the course and did his job. By virtue of being a dog (they smile when nervous) Lincoln cooperated and smiled with a tongue hanging out. The camera's flash captured the odd couple that became us, Anxious Dog and Proud Mom. "One more in portrait mode?"

My mind conjured the image of a confident Lincoln pictured within the perimeter of an 8 x 10 frame, a twinkle in his eye while he looked down on us from the fireplace mantel. I pet his head softly. My pedigree was so handsome. He lifted his chin, looked up at me, and revealed a harsher truth. "I'll be joyful, but I cannot stand this man."

I needed to get Lincoln out of there, and fast. An 8 x 10 portrait for only \$7.99 felt suddenly selfish. "Thank you so much but we're going to pass." Had Lincoln sensed a phoniness in Santa that kids, drawn to the prospect of presents alone, had failed to discern? Or was it a beard



Joyful about going to sleep

that sagged a few inches shy of reality that turned him off?

"You're such a good boy, Lincoln." In any event, the incident became a distant memory as we found ourselves immersed in his favorite aisle. I laid out a colorful row of balls, all different shapes and sizes. He sniffed. He browsed. He perked.

An extra-large neon-bright tennis ball captured his attention. He nuzzled it with cautious curiosity, as though a bird may have been nestled inside the ball. "I don't think I've ever seen a ball this big." He pawed it, rolled it forward, then covered it with big paws, as though protecting a baby.

I knew before I knew. The neon ball was cheap and hollow. Given Lincoln's fierce grip on the ball's flimsy shell, this one would not stand a chance. He'd crack it open like an egg, just as he had so many others. I picked it up. His gaze followed my hands. "What are you going to do with that ball?" Entranced, his eyes followed my hands. "I

promise this time I'll protect the ball. I'll just hold it. I won't break it. I'll just hold it. I'll go easy. Can I just play with that ball, please?"

"Do you have a card with us?" The cashier wore a festive Santa's hat with bells. "That will be eight dollars and seventy-five cents."

She bagged the ball while Lincoln sat charmingly patient. (He adored cashiers).

"Is that the dog in the paper? Here you go, Lincoln!" His status earned him a few extra treats. He gulped and chewed while I ripped the tags off of the ball so that he could play in the car. He trotted by my side and followed the ball's journey. We settled in. I started the car and handed him an early Christmas gift. He wedged it between his paws, looked up at me and broke into his typical joyful smile, a gift to me.

Who needs Santa?

*Tell me your Christmas dog story. Write me at amy@leclaire@hotmail.com*



## Paws corner

### Dog won't stop licking his paws

By Sam Mazzotta

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My hound dog "Charlie" licks his front paws nonstop, and sometimes his back paws, every time he lies down. He'll lick the top of his paws and in between the pads. The skin on top of his paws is starting to get raw. I've checked his paws and can't see any cuts or ticks. Why is he doing this, and how can I stop it? – Lee F.

DEAR LEE: Go ahead and schedule an appointment with the veterinarian. Charlie could be licking his paws for a few reasons. One, a physical injury or infestation – which you wisely checked for first. Two, an underlying condition that is causing Charlie discomfort, like a muscle or bone injury, or arthritis. Three, a compulsion to lick his paws.

The vet should do some bloodwork to rule out underlying disease. He'll do some other tests to determine if arthritis is a factor. And he'll check for allergies, which can cause itchy skin in dogs. Depending on what he finds (or doesn't find), the vet will help you plan a course of action to stop the licking.

It's important to stay on

top of this because dogs who keep licking or biting at the same spot can develop lick granuloma. This is a red patch of skin that is sore and itchy, and a dog's licking just makes it worse. Eventually, it can turn into a red lump of skin. The granuloma can become infected, requiring antibiotics to resolve. And if the granuloma doesn't heal or gets really large, it may need to be removed surgically.

Work with the vet to find the cause of Charlie's discomfort and resolve it. Treatment may take a month or more, but it will be worth it.

Send your tips, questions or comments to ask@pawscorner.com. (c) 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.

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Pictured (l to r) Laura Friis, activity director Accord Adult Day; Stephen P. Rogerson, Veterans Services Office Town of Dudley and Joe Rizzo, executive director Accord Adult Day Center.

On Tuesday, Nov. 2, and on Friday, Nov. 5, the Accord Adult Day Center hosted an emotional ceremony to award the Quilt of Valor to thirteen veterans of all branches of the military. Accord is a beautiful, clean and homey environment where those with health or mental needs can spend the day in order to give caregivers some respite. It allows family members to remain working without fear that their loved ones are not able to care for their needs. I personally witnessed much happiness and many activities being enjoyed by the elders.

Massachusetts State Senator Ryan Fattman attended with his young son and Massachusetts State Representative Joseph McKenna attended the ceremony as well and presented Certificates of Appreciation

for their military service from both the Massachusetts Senate and the Massachusetts House of Representatives. Several members of the VFW came to show their appreciation and many family members and friends of the veterans who received the Quilts of Valor from the Quilts of Valor Foundation came as well.

The mission of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to cover service members and veterans touched by war with comforting and healing Quilts of Valor. The presentation of the Quilt was done by Foundation representative, Theresa Perreault and Stephen Rogerson, Veterans' Services Officer for the Town of Dudley. Thank you for your service one and all.

*Stephen P. Rogerson*  
Director of Veterans' Services

## Quilt of Valor ceremony at Accord Day Health Center



Group photo of veterans, friends, family, and presenters.

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## Chief's corner

## FCC 911 information; Goods for Guns take-back program December 11

By Chief Steven J. Wojnar  
Dudley Police Department

Some important information was brought our attention from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). It is some important information about your mobile phones and devices. Changes in the technology will make some phones obsolete soon and they could even be incapable of dialing 911. I wanted to bring the FCC information to everyone and encourage you to reach out to your provider to determine what, if anything, you many need to do in your situation.

As mobile carriers seek to upgrade their networks to use the latest technologies, they periodically shut down older services, to free up infrastructure to support new services. As a result, mobile carriers are shutting down their 3G networks, which rely on older technology, to make room for

more advanced services, including 5G. As a result of this shut down, many older cell phones, and other mobile devices, will be unable to make or receive calls and texts, including calls to 911, or use data services. This will affect 3G mobile phones and certain older 4G mobile phones that do not support Voice over LTE (VoLTE or HD Voice). According to the FCC, the transition can impact many other industries and technologies, such as medical devices, home, and commercial, security systems, monitored fire alarms, personal emergency alert devices, and vehicle SOS systems, and other technologies.

This process may begin as early as January 1, 2022, depending on your service provider. They recommend you consult your mobile provider or their website for the most up-to-date information.

AT&T announced that it will finish shutting down its 3G network by February 2022. Verizon will be by December 31, 2022. T-Mobile / Sprint's 3G can happen as soon as January 1, 2022. Many carriers, such as Cricket, Boost, Straight Talk, and several Lifeline mobile service providers, utilize AT&T's, Verizon's, and T-Mobile's networks, so it is important to check with your provider.

It is important to plan now so that you don't lose connectivity, including the ability to call 911. Some carrier websites provide lists of devices that will no longer be supported after 3G networks are shut down. You may need to upgrade to a newer device, or possibly install a software update to enable VoLTE (HD Voice) or other advanced services, to ensure that you can stay connected. Some carriers may be offering discounted or free upgrades to help consumers. Visit the FCC website <https://www.fcc.gov/consumers/guides/plan-ahead-phase-out-3g-cellular-networks-and-service> for more information about the 3G phase out, suggested next steps for consumers, and resources to help stay connected.

On Saturday, December 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., our department will join numerous police departments from the area and participate in the

"Goods for Guns" take back program. The Dudley Police will be taking part in this effort for the fourth time. We did not participate in this last year, due to the COVID situation. We are glad to see this program back. I wanted to provide some background information for those interested.

The 20th Annual Goods for Guns program is sponsored by UMass Memorial Medical Center's Injury Prevention Center and the Worcester County District Attorney's Office. It is designed to prevent injury or death from unwanted or unsafe guns in local homes. Many people have older or unused firearms in their residence. These may have belonged to a deceased relative or are simply no longer used. People may have a desire to dispose of these in a safe manner. This program will provide an opportunity for residents to turn in functioning and non-working guns, ammunition, and firearm accessories for disposal. Registrations or licenses for these weapons are not necessary during this time and the program is anonymous. Free gun locks are also available.

People who turn in operable firearms will receive gift cards to local stores. It is important that all guns turned in during this program are to be unloaded and wrapped in some packaging material or contained in

a bag. If there is anyone who cannot bring these weapons to the department, arrangements can be made for an officer to pick up these items at your home. We ask you to contact our station at 508-949-8023 if you wish to schedule a time. The goal of this program is like drug take back events. It is a way to rid homes of unwanted firearms and ammunition. This prevents injuries and reduces the opportunity for these weapons to find their way to unauthorized individuals. I encourage anyone with these unwanted weapons to take advantage of this worthwhile effort. If there are any questions, please feel free to contact me. More information can be also found by following the link: <https://www.umass-memorialhealthcare.org/umass-memorial-medical-center/services-treatments/injury-prevention-center/goods-guns>

Our department in the process of collecting Christmas gift donations for local families in need. New and unwrapped toys and clothing can be brought to the Dudley Police Department at 71 West Main Street. Of need in the past were gifts for children between the ages of 10 - 17 years old. Monetary donations are also accepted. Checks should be made payable to the "Dudley Police Association" with a special note for the Holiday Drive. All contributions are

for Dudley families, and anything left over is given to local charities, such as Webster-Dudley Food Share. The Dudley Police thank everyone in advance for their continued generosity. Anything you can give will help bring some happiness to those who would otherwise go without during this holiday season.

We believe our Facebook issue has been resolved. It was necessary for us to deactivate our old account and open a new one. It can be found at <https://www.facebook.com/dudleypolice>.

Thanks again for your questions and comments. Please send them to me at the Dudley Police Department 71 West Main St. Dudley, Ma. 01571 or email at [swojnar@dudleypolice.com](mailto:swojnar@dudleypolice.com). Opinions expressed in this weekly column are those of Chief Wojnar only and unless clearly noted, do not reflect the ideas or opinions of any other organization or citizen.

Thanks again for your questions and comments. Please send them to me at the Dudley Police Department 71 West Main St. Dudley, Ma. 01571 or email at [swojnar@dudleypolice.com](mailto:swojnar@dudleypolice.com). Opinions expressed in this weekly column are those of Chief Wojnar only and unless clearly noted, do not reflect the ideas or opinions of any other organization or citizen.



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# Lt. Karlowicz appointment

On Monday, November 22, The Dudley Board of Selectmen appointed Sergeant Marek Karlowicz to be the next Dudley Police Department Lieutenant. Pending successful completion of the employment conditions package, the new lieutenant will assume his duties on January 7.

In addition to Sergeant Karlowicz, three other members of the department, Sergeants Dean Poplawski and Paul Cepetelli, and Detective James Annese, completed a written examination and participated in a day long promotional Assessment Center. The process included several real-life exercises designed to challenge them and determine their ability to perform in this management position. All four successfully passed and Chief Wojnar congratulates them all and recognizes this significant accomplishment.

Marek Karlowicz has been a Dudley resident for most of

his life, after emigrating here with his family from Poland. He has been a member of the Dudley Police Department for 21 years. He was appointed as a reserve officer in November of 2000. He became full time in November of 2002 and was appointed to sergeant in July of 2019. He serves in several roles within the department, including as a firearms instructor. He will make a fine lieutenant with the department. This position has been vacant for over sixteen years.

Chief Wojnar thanks the Board of Selectmen and Administrator Jonathan Ruda for supporting this position and the further advancement of the police department.



Pictured new Lieutenant Marek Karlowicz (front center) along with his wife Krystyna and members of his family at the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Monday, November 22.

# Nichols College promotes two to associate dean



Robin Frkal, PhD

DUDLEY – Nichols College has named Robin Frkal, PhD, to the position of associate dean for the Graduate School of Business and Professional Studies, and Allison McDowell Smith, PhD, to associate dean for the Graduate School of Liberal Arts.

Frkal, associate professor of human resource management, has been at Nichols for three years. She is program chair for the BS in human resource management and has been the director of the Master of Science in Organizational Leadership (MSOL) program. In her new role, she will oversee three of the four Nichols master's programs: MBA, MSOL, and Master of Science in Accounting.

"Our current graduate business programs bring exceptional ROI for students. I look forward to working with staff and faculty to continue to innovate our graduate programs and get the word out that Nichols is the business school of choice," said Frkal.

Prior to joining the Nichols faculty, she was an assistant professor of management and directed the MBA program at Assumption University. Her research has focused on why women opt out of corporate leadership and on women's leadership development programs. Understanding the critical career moments and underlying themes behind women's decisions to leave corporate leadership has practical human resources value for organizations focused on retaining female talent.

A resident of Dudley, Frkal holds a BA in foreign affairs from Assumption, an MS in communication from Clark University, and an MS and PhD in human and organizational systems from Fielding Graduate University. She also has a Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in the Workplace Certificate.



Allison McDowell Smith, PhD

McDowell-Smith, associate professor of criminal justice and counterterrorism, will oversee the Master of Science in Counterterrorism (MSC) Program. She has been at Nichols for seven years, serving as the program chair for the BA in criminal justice and BS in criminal justice management and the founding director of the MSC Program, the first graduate program in the U.S. with a focus on violent extremism and leadership.

"As an interdisciplinary researcher and educator, I strive to identify and advance criminological approaches that may be relevant to violent extremist and terrorist thought and violence, offering unique perspectives on the often-overlooked relationship between the two," said McDowell-Smith. She has spearheaded pioneering innovative approaches to shape understanding of violent extremism and terrorism globally while pursuing data-driven policy security solutions and tackling unique proficiencies needed to understand the field of study at both private and public sector levels.

A resident of Ashford, Conn., She holds a BS in criminal justice from Rochester Institute of Technology, an MS in criminal justice administration from Niagara University and a PhD in business administration with a concentration in homeland security, leadership, and policy from North-central University.

McDowell-Smith is the co-founder and deputy director of the American Counterterrorism Targeting and Resilience Institute (ACTRI), a cross-disciplinary, nonprofit research organization focused on the broad spectrum of transnational extreme-right, extreme-left, and militant jihadi political violence. She is also a contributor to Homeland Security Today.

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	<b>GE Front Load Washer</b> GFV550SNWW <b>\$899<sup>99</sup></b> Was \$999.99	<b>GE Dryer</b> 65Y2EASJW <b>\$599<sup>99</sup></b> Was \$699.99	<b>Amana Dryer</b> MED4655EW <b>\$479<sup>99</sup></b> Was \$599.99	<b>Maytag Dryer</b> MEDC465HW <b>\$599<sup>99</sup></b> Was \$649.99	
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1. Which Ismail brother had more NFL career receiving yards: Raghib "The Rocket" or Qadry "The Missile"?
2. In what U.S. city would you find the historic Blue Horizon boxing venue?
3. Georgia Bulldogs Heisman Trophy winner Herschel Walker played for what USFL team from 1983-85?
4. "Bad As I Wanna Be" is a 1996 autobiography by what five-time

5. The Daphne Akhurst Memorial Cup is presented to the women's singles champion of what tennis tournament?
6. Name the standout wide receiver for the University of Richmond Spiders and 1986 NFL draft pick by the Detroit Lions who flew two missions onboard Space Shuttle Atlantis?
7. A metatarsophalangeal joint sprain is an athletic injury commonly known as what?

Answers  
1. Raghib with 5,295 yards (Qadry had 5,137).  
2. Philadelphia.  
3. The New Jersey Generals.  
4. Dennis Rodman.  
5. The Australian Open.  
6. Leland D. Melvin.  
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By  
Peter  
Coyle

# Remember the glory days of Thanksgiving

Hope your Thanksgiving holiday was a memorable time with family and loved ones. Mother Nature certainly gave us perfect weather on Thanksgiving Day, one for the ages for sure and "glory days" celebrated another year. Took advantage of the great 52 degree weather and attended the Southbridge at Bartlett football game in Webster. The Veterans Memorial Field was in excellent condition on upper Ray Street and all things being equal, one couldn't ask for a more spectacular setting. The "glory days" fans who anticipated this longtime tradition between Webster and Southbridge couldn't have scripted the 9:45 a.m. arrival time any better.

The Bartlett green uniforms and the Southbridge red were a magnificent backdrop to the blue sky above. One for the ages for sure. To the players who suited up for this 100-plus year traditional battle, this space gives you credit for keeping this tradition alive and hopes of a game next year. The player product was thin in roster numbers on both sides, but to those who put the uniform on this past Thanksgiving, your courage to do so should be commended. And you gave the fans an exciting game.

Times have changed for sure over the years and this year's Bartlett-Southbridge game has taken on a whole new meaning to Thanksgiving Day schoolboy football. Despite the perfect weather conditions, attendance was sparse and limited. My contemporaries will tell me I am

generous in estimating the number of fans at 200.

The real tragic numbers are that both the Bartlett and Southbridge roster numbers were between 20-25. The dwindling rosters in both schools have been spiraling downward over the past five years. The Thanksgiving rivalry between the Indians and Pioneers has lost its appeal over the past five years as well.

Bryce Patterson of Bartlett was the talk around the Webster faithful for his passionate and desirable play on Thanksgiving morning. It was the productive Patterson, in true Patterson family bloodline, who scored all of Bartlett's 12 points and had 101 yards rushing on six carries. That's almost 17 yards a carry. He should have carried the pigskin every time. Like Noel Lefebvre did for Bartlett in 1972 and 1973. Patterson could have done like Lefebvre did with no problem. Ride the Patterson horse on the last game of the year. Southbridge led at halftime 16-14 and eventually pulled away to a 28-14 victory.

Both teams entered this rivalry in 2021 winless at 0-8. The truth is both of these traditions took their pre-game warm-ups on life support. Southbridge had to forfeit twice because of safety issues and Bartlett banded their way through this 2021 season.

We are not going to survive this sport of high school football in towns like Webster and Southbridge in 2022 unless we up those roster numbers to 35 per team. Seeing this on Thanksgiving morning is no fun for anyone. Bringing back a tradition nowadays is tough. The cookie is already crumbled, kids don't like football anymore and this Thanksgiving morning wasn't a good look. Is building up the rosters to 35 and bringing back a solid junior varsity only wishful thinking?



Bryce Patterson sails into the endzone untouched in the first quarter of the game.



Brothers #12 Ben and #11 Michael Karontang travel down field with blocking from #35 Bryce Patterson.



Kick by Sean Baca with blocking from Dylan Greenwood.



Ben Karontang on the interception for the Indians.

## Andy's is back

On a great positive note, Andy's is back. Let's welcome back Andy's, a longtime all time favorite in Webster after a 40 year hiatus.

Yes, one of the all time favorite restaurants is coming back and keeping it in the family as Jessie and Bill Sabine relocate behind the Webster Post office as Andy's.

Jessie is a 4th generation Stefanik who is the daughter of Babe Stefanik, who is the son of John Stefanik, who brought his family up on top of Andy's back in the

50s, 60s and 70s on East Main Street in Webster. Great memories always of John's family's hospitality.

Jesse and Bill invite everybody down to the new Andy's to enjoy the new atmosphere and new look.

Good luck to Andy's and here's hoping for another Andy's softball team in the making.

Finally, a special Christmas thanks to Cookie Pizzetti who delivered another fine rendition of Christmas carols that he mastered of all his own singing. Cookie, your singing talents are appreciated and



they make the holiday spirit enjoyable. Thank you and enjoy the Christmas spirit.



Pictures from the past of Andy's on East Main Street, Webster.

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## Programs and events at the Pearle

Join the Pearle L. Crawford Library, 40 Schofield Ave., Dudley for one of the virtual programs at the Pearle. To register go to [www.crawfordlibrary.org](http://www.crawfordlibrary.org) or call 508-949-8021

**Knit and crochet group** Thursday 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. and Friday 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. All stitchers are welcome for this informal group, meeting weekly in the Fels Room.

**Toddler time**, Wednesdays 11:00 a.m. Come join us for Toddler Time. We will have a different theme each week with stories and songs. This is geared for ages 18 months to 3.

**Baby time**, Fridays, 11:30 a.m. Join us for a Baby Time story time. We will be doing songs, fingerplays, and reading to our babies. This is geared for babies 0-15 months.

**Pre-K power storytime** Tuesdays 11:00 a.m. Join Miss Lida for Pre-School Story Time. We will be exploring a new letter each week starting with A and ending in the spring with Z.

**Dungeons and Dragons group** Mondays 5:00 p.m. Have you ever wanted to learn to play D&D or are you a player looking to join a group? We have an experienced DM starting a group on Monday Nights at the pearle. If you have a Player's Handbook or dice bring them with you. We will have extras for anyone who needs them. Free; registration required.

**Pokemon Club**, Tuesdays 3:30 p.m. Calling all Pokemon fans! Children ages 7 to 14 are invited to join our club. This meeting will be a great opportunity to meet other players and share ideas. Please make sure you bring your trading cards and anything else you would like to share and discuss.

**Lego challenge** Wednesdays 3:30 p.m. Come join us each week for a different Lego challenge, from writing your name in Legos to making a Lego zipline. Ages 5+

**Adult craft workshop: make a holiday craft**, Saturday, November 20, 10:30 a.m.-noon. Join Library staff for a fun crafting workshop where you'll have the opportunity to make a variety of holiday crafts. All supplies will be provided – just bring your creativity. Free, but space is limited, so please register. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment

**Baubles and bling sale**, Friday, December 3, and Saturday, December 4. Support the Friends of the Library and do some holiday shopping at the Baubles and Bling sale, featuring a wide assortment of new and gently used jewelry including necklaces, bracelets, brooches, rungs, earrings, and jewelry boxes.

**Youth Advisory Council**, Monday, December 6, 5:00-6:00 p.m. All tweens and teens in grades 6-12 are invited to join. You will gain valuable leadership skills. You can meet new people. You can earn volunteer hours (please bring your form). Pizza and drinks will be served. Free; Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

**Heating oils of the Bible**, Thursday, December 9, 6:00-7:45 p.m. In the Bible, there are more than five hundred references to aromatic plants. Join us as anthropologist Christal Whelan presents the plants most valued in the ancient Middle East through relevant passages in the Bible. Essential oils extracted from these key plants were used for religious ceremonies, anointing kings,

healing the sick, embalming the dead, and as perfumes and ointments. Participants will have the opportunity to sample twelve therapeutic-grade essential oils chosen to highlight the rich diversity of cultures, races, and ethnicities of the Biblical world and each participant will receive a kit with their own samples of oils to enjoy. Free, but space is limited; registration required. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

**Make a gingerbread house**, Saturday, December 11, multiple sessions. Come make and decorate a gingerbread house. We'll have everything you need to create your own unique house. Free, but space is limited, so please register. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

**Make a holiday centerpiece with Bemis Farms**, Saturday, December 11, 10:00 a.m. Join Tina from Bemis Farms to make a beautiful holiday centerpiece for your table. All materials are provided for this free workshop. Space is limited and registration is required. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment

**Deb's sing-and-swing**, Thursday, December 16, 10:30-11:00 a.m. Join Deb Hudgins for this thirty minute interactive program featuring singing, guitar music, dancing, stories, and more! This program will be held via Zoom. Registered participants will receive the link 24 hours before the program. Free; registration required. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library

**Teen candy bingo**, Monday, December 13, 6:00-7:00 p.m. All teens are welcome to come play candy bingo. We'll have pizza and soda too. Free; open to ages 13-18, sponsored by the Hugh W. and Harriet K. Crawford Endowment.

**Wiggles and giggles**, Friday, December 17, 11:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Music, songs, and movement designed for ages 3-6. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment

**Youth Advisory Council**, Monday, January 3, 5:00-6:00 p.m. All tweens and teens in grades 6-12 are invited to join. You will gain valuable leadership skills. You can meet new people. You can earn volunteer hours (please bring your form). Pizza and drinks will be served. Free; sponsored by the Hugh W. and Harriet K. Crawford Endowment.

**Yoga with Julie**, Saturday, January 8, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. All ages are welcome at this beginner-friendly yoga class led by Julie St.Francis. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

**Lego Master builder Dan Steininger**, Monday, January 10, 6:00-7:00 p.m. Dan Steininger is one of only eight official LEGO Master Builders in the entire world and he wants to share what it's like to have his dream job. He uses humor, great storytelling, and hands on building to entertain and inspire. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Hugh W. and Harriet K. Crawford Endowment.

**Reducing pain naturally**, Thursday, January 13, 6:00 -7:45 p.m. Do you find yourself thinking: when will this pain end? Why do I still have this pain? or how can I get rid of this pain? Brad and Pamela Thompson will introduce some of the most recent breakthroughs in our understanding of pain and introduce a powerful and natural pain-reducing technique. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

**Jewelry Jam with Kim Larkin**, Thursday, February 3, 6:00-7:45 p.m. Make a gift for your Valentine at this jewelry-making workshop for teens and adults and create a mixed-media necklace on colorful cord using a decoupage technique with scrapbook paper or text. Kim will bring an assortment of materials to inspire your creativity. Free, but space is limited; registration required. Sponsored by the Hugh W. and Harriet K. Crawford Endowment.

## Gladys E. Kelly Public Library calendar of events

The Gladys E. Kelly Public Library in Webster. 2 Lake St., Webster, 508-949-3880, has listed the following calendar of events. All programs are scheduled to be held outside on the Library lawn (unless otherwise noted), weather permitting.

### Adult Programming

**Indoor Movie Night** – Third Thursday of the month, next on December 16, at 6:00 p.m. Join us monthly on the third Thursday of each month as we show a new release film. We'll make theatre-style popcorn for you to enjoy. The film selection changes each month, call the Library for this month's title: 508-949-3880.

**Book Discussion Group** – December 20, 6:30 p.m. The Gladys E. Kelly Public Library Adult Book Discussion Group meets at 6:30 pm. New members are always welcome. Stop by the library, or reach out by phone to 508-949-3880, or by email to [ehale@cwmar.org](mailto:ehale@cwmar.org) for inquiries.

### Children's and young adult programming

**Songs and Stories Storytime** – Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Join Miss Emily Wednesday mornings at 10 a.m. to read books, sing songs, and do rhyme games. Meet other children and caregivers at this community event. After stories, catch up with other community members over a simple craft. This Storytime is best for children 0-5, but all ages are welcome. Masks are required for everyone in the children's room over the age of 2 years. Disposable masks will be available.

**LEGO Club** – Thursdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. LEGO Club is back, and we're so excited to have you build with us again. Stop by the storytime room every Tuesday at 3:30 to freeplay with our bucketloads of LEGOs or try out our weekly challenge. Masks are required for everyone in the Children's Room over the age of 2 years. Disposable masks will be available.

**Drop in Paint Hour** – Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. It's time to break out the paintbrushes. With a variety of paints and paper available, bring your artist of any age to join in the fun. Masks are required for everyone in the Children's Room over the age of 2 years. Disposable masks will be available.

**STEAM Kids** – Thursdays, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Join Miss Emily in a weekly STEAM event. That is Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics. Each week there will be a new project to tackle from slime making and catapult challenges, to board game development and bath bombs. Every week contains some take home element. These events are best for children 7-12, but siblings are always welcome. Some events may have a limited number of places, in this case children between 7-12 will have preference. Caregivers must remain for the duration of the event. Masks are required for everyone in the children's room over the age of 2 years. Disposable masks will be available.

## Prayer



Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil (intention), Amen.

If you pray three times a day, three consecutive days, you will receive your intention, no matter how impossible it may seem. Praise and Thanksgiving please the Heart of God.

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Tales from beyond

# The unfortunate Hannah Robinson

By Thomas D'Agostino

The story of Hannah Robinson is one of love, tragedy and a haunting. It is one of New England's most famous and endearing legends. To this day a small park, tower, ledge and rock bear the name of the young unfortunate Hannah Robinson.

Rowland Robinson, born in 1719, was the oldest son of Governor William Robinson. A wealthy farmer and member of the local government. Robinson, though portly, stood tall and erect, with a clear blonde complexion and light hair. He was known to be fair in temper and manners, having the disposition of an old country gentleman.

On December 3, 1741, Rowland married Anstis Gardiner. They had three children: Hannah, born in 1746; Mary, born in 1752; and William R., born in 1759. Mary and Hannah grew to be exceedingly beautiful, especially Hannah, who stood above medium height possessing a clear complexion, with a delicate tint of rose that only served to complement her dark hazel eyes. Her auburn hair fell in ringlets about her, and her speech, manner and carriage made her all the more irresistible to the gentry both near and far.

In her youth, Hannah found a place where she could sit and contemplate, or just enjoy the scenery of the Narragansett Bay. The area, known as McSparran Hill, was steep and bore forth a rock ledge that admitted a clear view of the bay. Hannah spent many hours looking out over the beautiful scenery the ledge afforded her.

The Robinson family spared no cost in the education of their children. Hannah was placed in the care of her aunt in Newport, where she attended the finishing school of Madame Osborne, a well-respected and widely known instructor of politeness and grace for young ladies. It was during her studies with Ma-

dame Osborne that Hannah met M. Pierre (Peter) Simons, a young tutor under the employ of Osborne. From the moment they met, a certain affection ripened between them and before long, they were in love.

Both were well aware that a person of his station in life would certainly not meet the expectations of her father as a proper suitor. Two books—*Recollections of Olden Times*, by Thomas Robinson Hazard and Willis Pope Hazard from 1879, and *The Robinsons and Their Kin Folk*, by the Robinson Family Genealogical Association, written in 1906—tell the tale with very little variance. The 1906 version reads:

"Fortune seemed to favor the young people. Hannah's uncle, Col. William Gardiner, educated his children at home, and in looking about for a private tutor, engaged Pierre Simons to go with him to his Narragansett home and occupy that position in his family. The lovers enjoyed many opportunities of seeing each other, especially as Col. Gardiner, who was of a kind and easy disposition, on becoming aware of the love which existed between his beautiful niece and her former tutor, sought rather to promote opportunities for interviews between the lovers than otherwise.

The mother's suspicions were aroused, and Hannah confided to her the secret of her love.

After trying for months, in vain, to persuade her child to discourage her affianced lover, and finding that nothing would induce her to dismiss him, Mrs. Robinson forbore further opposition.

Thus encouraged by the mother's tacit consent, if not approval of his suit, it was mutually arranged by the lovers that Pierre should occasionally walk over from Col. Gardiner's of an evening, and upon the appearance of a signal light in Hannah's

window approach the house and secrete himself in a large lilac bush which grew beneath it, where love messages might be easily passed. In fact, so emboldened did the lovers become by the unbroken success that attended their stratagem, that they finally arranged for occasional meetings in Hannah's room; her mother lending her presence and countenance to the dangerous adventure, rendered all the more critical because of its being the undeviating practice of Hannah's father to bid her "good night" before he retired, even if it required his going to her own room or elsewhere. It was necessary to have a convenient place in which Hannah's lover might retreat on untoward occasions such as a place—a cupboard—was in the room."

One evening, Rowland happened to step outside the home and saw Hannah reaching out her window to the young Simons. He recognized the man right away as the music teacher employed by his brother-in-law, William Gardiner. He gave chase to Simons, flailing his cane at him, but was unable to catch the fleet-footed young wooer. From that moment on, Hannah's every move was watched—if she walked, she walked with spying eyes. When she rode, a servant accompanied her. Her father became obsessive in keeping her under his watch at every waking moment. It became the whisper around town that many would like to see the young woman be with her love and began to prepare for an elopement, especially her mother and aunt, Mrs. Ludowick Updike, sister of Rowland.

A great ball was planned at the Updike home, now known as Smith's Castle. It was arranged that the two sisters, Mary and Hannah, would attend the ball and stay overnight with the Up-

dikes. Rowland had no idea it was a plot to bring his daughter into the arms of Simons. Hannah went about her way in a composed manner until it was time to leave for the ball. The Robinsons and their Kin Folk notes:

"On Ridge Hill, a thickly wooded spot, Hannah and her companions encountered the lover with a closed carriage, into which the affianced bride hastily stepped and was driven rapidly away, on the road to Providence, in spite of the frantic appeals of Prince, the attendant. Miss Simons—Pierre's sister—assisted Hannah with a necessary wardrobe, and with the aid of the pastoral services of a minister of the Episcopal Church, the lovers were married."

When Mr. Robinson learned of his daughter's elopement, he became angry beyond comprehension. He offered a reward to anyone who would come forth with any information on those who assisted in her escapade. Much to his disappointment, no one ever came forth.

Simons and his bride moved to Providence. From that point, the story takes on two separate lives. One version paints Simons as a greedy money grabber. As

time passed, Simons began to realize that Hannah would never see a penny of her family's fortune. This caused him to become passionless to his wife's affections. He began to have affairs, became reckless in his habit and eventually turned a complete cold shoulder to her.

Hannah, already unstable in spirit, took a turn for the worst. She became gaunt, pale and her beauty began to fade.

Her father, upon hearing of her rapid decline in health, rode to Providence in the hopes of bringing her home, but under his terms. If Hannah would tell him who was responsible for her elopement, she could come back to the warmth and care of her family home. Hannah was honorable but also possessed the same stubborn streak as her father. Hannah refused his wishes, causing Mr. Robinson ride away in a huff.

Then came the day that Mr. Robinson finally agreed to let Hannah come home. When he entered her chamber he beheld his daughter, frail, white, and almost lifeless. He began to cry like a baby and completely dismissed the thought of asking Hannah to divulge the accomplices of that fateful evening. Instead,

he held her cold, bony hand and promised to take her home. Mr. Robinson had Hannah placed in a carriage carried by hand called a litter for safe travel back to Narragansett.

The carriers, called "chairmen," lifted the litter with Hannah inside and set out for home. When they reached Old Ridge Hill, where Hannah had met with her lover that fateful night, she covered her eyes and cried. As they passed McSparran Hill, Hannah begged for them to stop so she could see the ocean once more. There on the ledge, just past a great square boulder, Hannah rested, staring out at the bay just as she did many times in her youth. The chairmen rotated the litter so that she could get a glimpse of every angle afforded to her from her traveling bed. A servant plucked some flowers growing alongside the great rock and handed them to Hannah, who held them close to her breast.

*Thomas D'Agostino and his wife Arlene Nicholson are seasoned paranormal investigators, authors, and co-organizers of Paranormal United Research Society. You can find out more about them by visiting [www.tomdagostino.com](http://www.tomdagostino.com).*



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## Fuller's Collision Center grant approval for continuing education and training

AUBURN – Fuller's Collision Center of Auburn, MA is proud to announce that it recently received approval for a \$104,000 grant from the Massachusetts Workforce Training Fund with the assistance of Human Power Solutions (HPS), a learning and development company that specializes in improving skills, culture and technical capabilities within an organization.

As a fourth-generation organization, Fuller's Collision Center has continued its commitment and dedication to its stakeholders and customers alike over the years. Receipt of the Workforce Training Grant represents a two-year specialized training commitment for Fuller's Collision Center, through which the shop will participate in "Advanced Prin-

ciples of a Safety and Health Management System," led by Safety Trainers (Worcester, MA), in addition to receiving training through HPS on negotiation and a variety of other "soft" skills.

According to Joshua Fuller, owner of Fuller's Collision Center, "Today's collision repairs are very complex, and in order to deliver exceptional customer service and compete in the industry, our business must learn soft skills, such as communication and organization, which help us prioritize our repair jobs and enable us to continue being effective day to day."

The grant also includes continuing education and training through I-CAR, the standard of excellence in the auto collision industry. I-CAR's ongoing training programs ensure that shops are

educated in the most current and up-to-date processes and procedures relating to collision repair.

"The I-CAR technical vehicle repair training is a requirement in our industry to ensure that we have the knowledge to repair vehicles both, safely and properly," Fuller says. "In addition, we take pride in providing a work environment in which our stakeholders can continue to grow themselves both professionally and personally. The funding from this grant focuses on specific areas which do exactly that, such as leadership, communication, customer service, and team building. Even in difficult economic times, it is essential to continue to invest in our people and our culture, and the financial assistance we are receiving from the state shows that they also realize how important it is to invest in our team."

Fuller's Collision Center is part of Fuller Automotive Companies, which was founded in 1914. Located on Rt. 20 in Auburn, they also have an Auto and Tire Center for all mechanical repairs and tire replacement packages. For more information, visit [www.fullerautomotive.com](http://www.fullerautomotive.com).

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## Q & A with The Car Doctor

John Paul is AAA Northeast's Car Doctor. He has over 40 years' experience in the automotive business and is an ASE certified master technician. He will answer reader's questions each week. You can find the Car Doctor podcast at [www.johnpaul.podbean.com](http://www.johnpaul.podbean.com) or other popular podcast sites. Email your car questions to [jpaul@aaanortheast.com](mailto:jpaul@aaanortheast.com). Follow John on Twitter @johnpaul and friend him on facebook [mrjohnpaul](https://www.facebook.com/mrjohnpaul)



**Q.** My son has a 2021 Honda HR-V, with all-wheel-drive. He is interested in adding a hitch with a Thule bicycle carrier. He recently purchased an electric bike that weighs about 85-92 pounds. Does this vehicle have enough towing capacity to carry an e-bike of this weight?

**A.** According to Honda the towing capacity of the HR-V is 1500 pounds, and the tongue weight is 150 pounds. In this case the trailer tongue weight (the weight on the hitch itself) is the more important number. Factor in the weight of the bike carrier which is about 50 pounds and the 90-pound bike, the combined total weight is close to the limit but still under the 150-pound maximum tongue weight.

**Q.** I purchased the Hyundai Kona EV new a little over two years ago and it has been a good car for me. I consulted with you before purchasing and a Charge

Point charger for our garage as well. Hyundai recalled my EV battery a while ago. They asked us first to charge the car outside and not in a garage and then after a visit to the dealer to reduce the charging capacity to 80 percent (and we could resume charging inside) while they figured things out. The dealer now wants me to return to have the battery retested. What do you know about this situation? I certainly would prefer to have a battery at 100 percent capacity, and a safe one to boot. Is this a negotiable situation or do I follow their lead?

**A.** At this point you need to continue to work with the dealer and Hyundai. You purchased a car with a certain range (battery degradation accepted) and recharge capability and that is what you should have. Limiting the battery charge to 80 percent (similar to Level III high speed charging) is kinder to the battery and assuming safer. Combined with Hyundai extensive powertrain warranty and lifetime battery warranty I would be patient and let Hyundai find the proper solution to the battery issue.

**Q.** My 2015 Subaru outback will not go back to idle once it is fully warmed up if I coast in neutral. It stays at 1500 RPM until I come near to stopping. If the A/C is on, it will go to 1000 RPM coasting. Before warmup it goes to 750 RPM coasting.

**A.** Is this something new with the car? Many cars will hold a higher idle to keep vehicle emission lower and improve battery charging. When the throttle is

closed quickly, vehicle emissions go up and alternators provide less charging output. Keeping the engine speed a little higher until the vehicle speed slows down minimizes this. The idle speed is only measured when stopped, with the engine fully warmed up. The idle speed in neutral without the A/C on is 700 RPM-plus or minus 100 RPM. With the A/C on the RPM is about 900 RPM. If this is something new, then the issue could be a sticking/damaged throttle plate.

**Q.** My Chrysler 300 gets 19 miles per gallon and I'm currently paying about \$3.99 per gallon for 91 octane gasoline. Now that I am driving back and forth to work, what can I do to improve fuel economy and lower my weekly fuel costs?

**A.** The old adage of easy on the gas and brake are still true. Anytime you accelerate quickly or brake aggressively you are wasting energy/fuel. Maintenance is also important. Check tire pressure at least once per month. According to the EPA, keeping tires properly inflated can improve fuel economy by up to three percent. Speeding also reduces fuel economy, reducing your speed by five to ten MPH can improve fuel economy by 7-14 percent. Combine trips to be more efficient and look at your overall driving habits and try to save 10-15 miles per week, the fuel saving adds up. Finally, if your car's manufacturer recommends and doesn't require premium fuel, save money and use 87 octane.

*Happy Holidays from The Car Doctor*



\*On Dec. 11, 1872, already appearing as a well-known figure of the Wild West in popular dime novels, Buffalo Bill Cody makes his first stage appearance in a Chicago-based production of "The Scouts of the Prairie."

\*On Dec. 12, 1901, Italian physicist and radio pioneer Guglielmo Marconi succeeds in sending the first radio transmission across the Atlantic Ocean, disproving detractors who said the curvature of the earth would limit transmission to 200 miles or less.

\*On Dec. 6, 1917, a devastating blast occurs when the Mont Blanc, a French munitions ship, explodes after colliding with another vessel in Halifax harbor in Nova Scotia. The Mont Blanc was packed with 2,300 tons of picric acid, 200 tons of TNT and 35 tons of high-octane gasoline.

\*On Dec. 7, 1941, a swarm of 360 Japanese warplanes descends on the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii in a ferocious early morning assault. The surprise attack devastated the U.S. Pacific fleet and drew the United States into World War II.

\*On Dec. 9, 1950, Harry Gold, who confessed to serving as a courier of top-secret information on the atomic bomb, is sentenced to 30 years in prison. Gold implicated his brother-in-law and sister, Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, who were later executed for espionage.

\*On Dec. 10, 1967, soul legend Otis Redding dies in a plane crash in Wisconsin. "(Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay" would be released in its "unfinished" form several weeks later. The whistled verse was a placeholder for additional lyrics that Redding had yet to write.

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## Tips on financial planning



Dennis Antonopoulos

Your employer-sponsored retirement plan is a valuable asset. But sometimes things happen that can affect the status of your plan. So, for example, if you work for a hospital that changes ownership, and you have been participating in a 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) retirement plan, what should you do with it now?

## Managing your retirement plan under a new employer

Basically, you have four options:

- Cash out your plan  
You can simply cash out your plan and take the money, but you'll have to pay taxes on it, and possibly penalties as well. So, unless you really need the funds and you have no other alternative, you may want to avoid liquidating your account.
- Roll your account into your new employer's plan  
If it's allowed, you can roll over your old 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) plan into your new employer's plan. Before making this move, you'll want to look at the new plan's investment options (which should be numerous) and

fees (which should be low). If you move the money directly to the new plan, you won't be taxed at the time of the transfer, and your funds can continue to grow tax-deferred.

- Leave your plan with your old employer

If your account balance is above a certain level, you may be able to leave your plan with your old employer's plan administrator. You won't be able to contribute any more money to the plan, but if you like the investment options you've chosen, keeping the money in your old plan might be a viable choice.

- Move your account into a traditional IRA

One possible advantage to

moving your 403(b), 457(b) or 401(k) into a traditional IRA is you'll open up a world of new investment options, because you can fund your IRA with virtually any type of vehicle, including stocks, bonds, mutual funds, certificates of deposit (CDs) and exchange-traded funds. And if you already have a traditional IRA, you can combine the new funds with the old ones, making it easier to track your holdings. As is the case with leaving your money in your old employer's plan or transferring it to a new plan, you'll continue to benefit from tax-deferred growth. Keep in mind, though, that IRAs have costs, too, possibly including

transaction costs to buy or sell new investments. (One more thing to keep in mind: When you want to move a retirement plan to an IRA, you may want to make a direct rollover, so the old plan's administrator moves the money directly into the IRA, allowing you to avoid immediate taxes. If you were to make an indirect rollover, you'd get the money yourself, but your old employer would have to deduct 20% for federal taxes, and you'd have to deposit the entire balance, including the withholding, into your IRA within 60 days.)

Which of these choices is best for you? There's no one "right" answer for everyone.

You'll want to consider all the options and possibly consult with your tax advisor and financial professional. But do all you can to protect your retirement plan – you've worked hard to build it, and you'll need to rely on it to help you pay for your years as a retiree.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert Street, Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com. Edward Jones Member SIPC*

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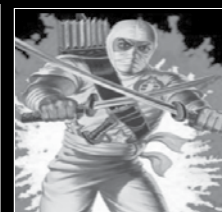
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## RE: Real Estate



Mark Marzeotti

The deals are real, but there are risks involved.

If you're searching for a house to buy, and you're looking for a deal, a foreclosure may be an enticing option. Foreclosed properties, which have been taken back by a lender after the homeowners defaulted on their loan, usually sell for significantly less than similar homes on the traditional market.

The lower price tag has a few strings attached, though. Buying any house can be complicated and a foreclosed house especially so, with its own unique set of risks and challenges. Learn more about how to buy a foreclosed home to decide if it's a good option for you.

*What is a foreclosed home?*

Foreclosures have been seized by the lender because the homeowner was no longer able to pay the mortgage. Most lenders will begin the foreclosure process when the owner falls three to six months behind but has been longer as of late.

Foreclosures vary by lender, state and the homeowner's specific situation, the ultimate outcome is largely the same: The lender seizes control of the property and looks to resell the home as quickly as possible to minimize or recoup any losses. To speed up this process, foreclosed homes usually come at a discount and are often sold "as is," which means that lenders may be reluctant to make repairs.

For a buyer, the primary difference between purchasing a foreclosure and a traditionally listed property is that you're buying from a lender and not the homeowner. This changes the dynamics of finding a

## Buying a foreclosed home: Where to search, how to buy and what to watch out for

home, making an offer and negotiating a contract.

Before you start looking for hot foreclosure deals, it's important to understand the process and what you should expect.

One tricky aspect of buying foreclosures is the number of ways you can buy them. These include:

- **Short sales:** With a short sale, a lender agrees to accept a sale price that's lower than what's owed on the loan. When a homeowner owes more on their mortgage than the equity they have in the home, sometimes known as "being underwater," lenders may agree to this type of sale if they believe they'll recoup more from short-selling than a full-blown foreclosure. Short sales are listed openly on multiple listings services and are relatively easy to find with your realtor.

- **Auctions:** If a foreclosure is inevitable, the bank may let the homeowner take their property to auction. Home auctions are typically administered by a county or municipality-level agency. Buyers at auction should be prepared to make a full-cash offer and be ready to stomach some risk; the property's condition and who holds the title may be uncertain.

- **Direct from lender:** Properties that have completed the foreclosure process and are released to the lender become bank-owned or real

estate-owned homes. Banks tend to take their time with what are called real-estate owned homes in order to find the most profitable offer. As a result, buying an REO (real estate owned) home can take a long time, depending on the number of foreclosures the bank is handling. Sometimes, it can take months for a bank just to respond to your offer.

- **From the government:** Agencies such as the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Veterans Affairs also sell foreclosures on loans they guaranteed. You can find listings online at the various agency websites but must work with a real estate agent/Realtor to make an offer.

- **Pre-foreclosures:** Homeowners in the pre-foreclosure stage have received notice from their bank that foreclosure is looming. They will have a specified period to catch up on payments and late fees but will often look for a buyer who will pay the right price for their home to save them the financial trouble of foreclosure. Pre-foreclosures can be harder to find since they're not officially on the market.

If you're thinking about buying a foreclosed home, choose your real estate agent/Realtor carefully.

An agent who knows how the process of buying a fore-

closed property works will be very helpful. Understanding the process allows the agent to manage buyer expectations. An agent with a lack of foreclosure experience can make the transaction a bit challenging. Marzeotti Group is experienced and can help.

Get Pre-approved: Securing your mortgage preapproval is an essential step for any prospective buyer, but it's critical when targeting foreclosures. The most successful foreclosure buyers make all-cash offers, which immediately gives them a leg up on anyone who still needs to secure financing. A preapproval letter proves that you can back up your offer and close the deal.

You may also want to investigate alternative loan options that work well for foreclosures. The FHA 203(k) loan, for instance, lets you finance up to \$35,000 in repairs or upgrades into the loan, which is particularly helpful since foreclosure properties often need a lot of work.

An experienced agent should have no trouble helping you find foreclosure listings. Good luck and call if you need help!

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