

## Tuttle Post 279 in Auburn celebrates a phoenix-like rebirth

By Rod Lee

Bill MacLean was flicking on overhead TV screens in the lounge of the recently reconstructed Chester P. Tuttle Post 279 on Bancroft St. in Auburn the morning of January 24 when the visitor he'd been expecting arrived.

"You startled me," he said, as he turned to offer a greeting.

Mr. MacLean has been finance officer for Post 279 for more than twenty years. A Vietnam War-era veteran who is now in his seventies, he comes across as accommodating and personable. He smiles easily. This is even truer right now, as a beautifully rebuilt Tuttle Post enjoys a reopening after being struck by a catastrophic fire the evening of March 15, 2019.

"There was a lightning storm and a rainstorm that night," Mr. MacLean said, taking a seat at one of the tables in the lounge, which seats one hundred people. "We had a full house, three hundred-plus people. A firefighter was here and he smelled smoke and said 'you've got a fire in the ceiling.'"

Fortunately, everyone got out before the roof collapsed. In further good news, firefighters saved "all our plaques of past Post commanders, flags, even that Budweiser sign," he said, as he pointed to an object that has been a prized possession of the Post for many years.

"Anyone who comes to the Post knows that sign," he said.

A portrait of Chester P. Tuttle, for whom Post 279 is named, also survived.

In 1909 Mr. Tuttle, who was born in Needham, moved with his family from a farm in New Hampshire to Auburn and worked on what is now the Adamsky Vegetable Farm until enlisting in the Army in Oc-

tober of 1917. He was wounded in France a year later and died the following day. He was buried in France.

In 1921 his body was brought home and services were held at the First Congregational Church, to which Mr. Tuttle belonged. He was interred in the Tuttle lot of Hillside Cemetery.

In July of 1922, a group of men, all veterans of "The Great War," whose vocations after their combat days varied from chauffeur to engineer, met at the Stoneville schoolhouse and voted to establish an American Legion post in town.

With this history behind them, Mr. MacLean and members of Post 279 are genuinely proud of what was built "from the ground up" over the past two-and-a-half years. The result is stunning, consisting of the Tuttle lounge, a separate spacious banquet hall and "seating for forty on the deck," he said.

"This building is almost twice the size of what we had and the kitchen was set up to provide food for both the lounge and the banquet hall," Mr. MacLean said. "It can serve both sides."

A huge basement is available for storage, he said, in conducting what he calls "the nickel tour."

Funding for the rebuild came from insurance "and generous donations from the community." Nameplates on the back of stools at the bar in the lounge were sponsored by various individuals and are indicative of the support Post 279 has received.

Back in operation at full tilt, Post 279 is now the site of a range of daily activities and events in the lounge and banquet hall, including

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These are heady days for Finance Officer Bill MacLean and members of the Chester P. Tuttle Post 279 in Auburn; the facility is fully reopened and fully operational just under three years after being destroyed by a fire.

### ANDY'S NEIGHBORHOOD

#### CANTEEN

Good drinks, people, times  
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### DINING 2022

Restaurateurs upbeat  
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### WEBSTER LAKE COMES ALIVE

Hla and fire dancers  
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## The Samuel Slater Experience announces March 4 grand opening

WEBSTER - The Samuel Slater Experience, a historic museum featuring state-of-the-art 4-D digital technology to tell the story of Samuel Slater, the beginnings of the American Industrial Revolution, and the founding of Webster, Massachusetts in the early 19th century, announced it will be opening its doors to the public on Friday, March 4, 2022 for its first self-guided tours. A team of specialists have been busy working on the former National Guard Armory building in Webster since 2018 and are thrilled to reveal the new experience to the community and museum-goers from around the world.

The Samuel Slater Experience comprises more than twenty unique, immersive exhibits that transport the audience back to the early 1800s as the seeds of the American Industrial Revolution were sown. The museum starts with a young and conflicted Samuel Slater and his immigration to America, his success during the era and his impact on the geographic area. Guests will explore Slater's unique factory model that would transform manufacturing in America. The museum then takes you forward a century, recreating downtown Webster in the early 1900s, which has become a hub of commerce and industry.

Samuel Slater (1768 - 1835) was referred to by some as the "Father of the American Industrial Revolution." In 1811, Slater moved to Massachusetts and built new cotton mills as well as one of the first woolen mills in America, all powered by the French River and Lake Chargoggagogmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg, in what was then called Oxford and later renamed Webster after Senator Daniel Webster. Slater brought innovation to textile manufacturing and introduced the "factory system" that attracted workers to the region



You will observe the children working in the mill.

and established the infrastructure that made Webster a thriving "boomtown."

"It has been our vision to bring an interactive and dynamic experience that would engage students and families alike back to the roots of this town and area," says Samuel Slater Experience founder Christopher Robert. "We are thrilled to bring this new concept of learning to students and visitors in the same light that Samuel Slater brought technological innovation to textile manufacturing - The Samuel Slater Experience will allow visitors to become immersed in life as it once was, to feel the waves crashing on a boat crossing the Atlantic, to hear the bustling of massive machinery in the heart of a full-scale New England mill, and see life on Main Street in Webster at the turn of the 20th Century."

With the assistance of Webster town officials, museum and industrial era curators, Doug Mund's museum

Continued on page 2

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## TUTTLE POST 279

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weddings and bridal showers, meetings, darts, trivia nights, bike nights, karaoke, "one of the largest meat raffles in Central Massachusetts" on Saturdays, lunch and dinner Wednesday-Saturday and an all-you-can-eat brunch on Sundays.

Catering is provided by

Karol Lebrun and her husband Tom of Leicester. Construction was handled by John Riel of J.R. Associates in Sutton.

"We've had a very, very positive response from the public," Mr. MacLean said. "We had a tough nut to crack. We had to consider it a new business, with new hires."

As demolition of the remains of the old Post start-

ed, "we said to ourselves, 'we are going to be bigger and better' but then came the delays. Weather, the cost of materials. We had a lot to contend with."

Post 279's veterans remain active on many fronts. "We do the Memorial Day parade, we are involved with the Scouts, we sponsored Legion baseball for fourteen years, we place cemetery flags, we serve as a color guard for funerals. We just signed a contract for a golf tournament in September at

Blackstone National."

Mr. MacLean smiles in relating that "I lost the slip for the paint color" for the walls of the lounge. Going through samples at the paint store, he was shown one that "looked like pickles and I said 'I like pickles!'"

The resulting light green tint wasn't everyone's favorite to begin with.

But it grows on you, he said.

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



The Tuttle Lounge at Post 279 seats one hundred and is available for lunch and dinner Wednesday through Saturday. The Post hosts an all-you-can-eat brunch on Sundays.



A Budweiser sign, a portrait of Chester P. Tuttle and other artifacts were salvaged and repositioned with the rebuilding of the Post.



## SAMUEL SLATER EXPERIENCE

Continued from page 1

design expertise and his firm dmdg2, digital production mastermind Bob Noll and Boston Productions Inc., Webster business owner and philanthropist Christopher Robert has brought this state-of-the-art facility to life.

"The overall construction of the building, including many of the exhibit environments, were completed by local builders and craftsmen," says Doug Mund of dmdg2. "Only the very special props, such as the ship, were fabricated and installed from our design by museum specialty fabricators. Various other props were largely fabricated on-site by local craftsmen. Significant acquisition of period-correct artifacts were sourced for the project, many being donated by the local community."

Robert founded Webster Museums Incorporated in 2017 as a 501 (c) (3) to foster public knowledge about the history of the American Industrial Revolution in New England. The non-profit organization's first project is the completion of the Samuel Slater Experience.

Masks or face coverings will be required by all museum visitors, following state and town recommendations for COVID-19 safety protocols. Safe social distancing will be maintained throughout self-guided visits.



Visitors will be able to create their own personalized newspaper in the Webster Times office.

The fundamental purpose of the 17,000-square-foot Samuel Slater Experience is to educate, and with that, the exhibits are designed in coordination with curriculum directors from the local school districts, aligned with approved curriculum standards in both social studies and STEM fields.

The Samuel Slater Experience received generous support from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and the Janet Malser Humanities Trust.

*Hours of Operation*

The Samuel Slater Experience is open to the public year-round.

Daily Schedule:  
Friday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Saturday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
Sunday: Noon to 4 p.m.

The museum is also open on some Monday holidays and school vacation weeks. The museum is closed on New Year's Day, Easter Sunday, Thanksgiving Day, Christ-

mas Eve Day, and Christmas Day.

Private events and group visits can be scheduled for other days and time periods.

Visitors should plan to spend an hour to an hour-and-a-half for their tour.

*Tickets and Pricing*  
Tickets may be purchased in advance online or onsite in the gift shop.

*General admission:*  
Adults \$16; Students \$7; Seniors (60+) \$10; Children 4 and under Free; Members Free. Student school trip price \$10.

Ticket purchases for school trips, private events, and groups can be arranged directly with staff. Call 508-461-2955 or email [admin@samuel SlaterExperience.org](mailto:admin@samuel SlaterExperience.org)

For more information and tickets, visit [samuel SlaterExperience.org](http://samuel SlaterExperience.org)

Samuel Slater Experience is located in the Old Webster Armory 31 Ray Street, Webster.

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## Affordable Housing and Services Collaborative acquires properties

WEBSTER - Affordable Housing and Services Collaborative, Inc. (AHSC; www.ahscinc.org), a nonprofit organization that owns and develops affordable rental communities, recently closed on four buildings that were purchased from the Women's Institute for Housing and Economic Development. Three of the properties are located at multiple scattered sites in New Bedford, and the remaining one is located at 10 and 41 Prospect Street in Webster.

Affordable Housing and Services Collaborative has submitted a funding application with the intent of completing a full-occupied renovation of the Webster property to update the communities and provide en-

hanced services. The Webster property is a total of 25 one- and two-bedroom units, with 11 in one building and 14 in the other. Anticipated renovation plans include roof repairs, window replacements, new unit flooring, new appliances and cabinetry, door replacement, new common area flooring, laundry room upgrades, and sitework improvements, among other initiatives. AHSC will also be adding management and resident service space to one of the buildings to improve on-site management.

AHSC also plans to consolidate ownership of the three New Bedford properties so as to reposition and refinance the communities, making operations more efficient long-term. Together, the three New Bedford properties comprise 48

units; two of the buildings geared toward families have a mix of one- and two-bedroom units (12 units at Acushnet Commons, 19 units at Ingraham School), and the Grinnell Mansion, which offers coordinated supportive services for elderly individuals, also features 17 studio apartments.

"Given how closely our missions align, it only made sense for us to step in and help with the revitalization of these projects," said Michael Mattos, executive director of AHSC. "We look forward to our work in both of these communities throughout 2022, to sustain affordable housing and provide refreshed units with more enhanced coordinated service models for those who truly need it."

## DA offers funds to support safe school events

WORCESTER - District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr. is inviting local schools and parent groups to apply for mini grants to support post-prom and post-graduation events designed to keep students safe and prevent drunken driving crashes.

"This time of year is supposed to be a celebration for students and their families, but too often we see tragedies," Mr. Early said. "We're hoping these grants will assist more schools in offering safe options for students."

These events, organized and overseen by adults, offer safe drug- and alcohol-free alterna-

tives to high-risk activities that often follow end of the year celebrations for high school students.

"While none of us know what the status of school activities will be in the spring of 2022 due to the COVID pandemic, we are cautiously optimistic and accepting applications for funding requests," Mr. Early said. "Some celebrations looked different in 2021, but we were proud to continue supporting these efforts and providing students with the fun and safe events they deserve."

This is the fourth year the office has offered grants

thanks to the support of the Massachusetts Office of Victim Assistance Drunk Driving Trust Fund. Prior to that, Mr. Early supported local post-prom and post-graduation events at high schools across the county through his drug forfeiture funding.

Schools and parent groups can apply for these grants to either support existing events or to assist in establishing new events. Applications for funding requests are due by February 17.

To request a grant application, contact Ellen Miller at ellen.miller@mass.gov.

## Nichols College board names new chair, vice chair

DUDLEY - At its January 27 meeting, the Nichols College Board of Trustees elected Randy Becker as the new chair and Carolyn Burke as the new vice chair of the 29-member board.

Becker, who earned a BSBA at Nichols in 1983 and an MBA in 1996, has been on the board since 2006, most recently serving as chair of the Finance Committee. He succeeds John Davis, of Longmeadow, Mass., a 40-year member of the board who was chair for the past six years.

Becker is the retired executive vice president and chief financial officer of MAPFRE USA Corp., who continues to serve as director and board chair. A resident of Webster, he is a philanthropic and community leader who is currently chair of the Webster Board of Selectmen, director and chair of Harrington Hospital, and director and treasurer of The Health Foundation of Central MA, among several other roles.

"It's an honor and a privilege to follow in John's footsteps as chair," said Becker. "I look forward to working with my fellow board members and Nichols President Glenn Sulmasy in continuing Nichols' success in transforming our students into tomorrow's leaders."

Burke earned an MBA at Nichols in 1992 and was elected to the Nichols board in 2015, currently chairing the Recruitment and Retention Committee. She succeeds Tom Hall, of Niantic, Conn., the board's vice



Randy Becker  
chair since 2011.



Carolyn Burke  
Directors and chairs the College Relations Committee. She resides in Sutton, Mass.

"I am deeply honored to serve as vice chair and first female officer on the Nichols College Board of Trustees," said Burke. "These are exciting times for Nichols, and I look forward to positively impacting our future success. We are 'on the move' to becoming a regional and national business college of choice."

Lake Chaggaggoggmanchaggaggchaubunagungamaugg



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# Andy's Neighborhood Canteen... good drinks, good people, good times

By Janet Stoica

The place is downright cozy, with low ceilings, polished wood bar and seating, along with a small area set up for musicians. Two pool tables await those who are ready to try their cue ball skills on the felt playing fields.

Andy's Neighborhood Canteen opened on November 18 with little fanfare, but inquisitive newcomers have now become regulars, mixing with all age groups, enjoying the easy-going atmosphere.

The weekend entertainment schedule is published 12 weeks in advance. Thursdays are for trivia.

Bill and Jessica Sabine, owners of The Rose Room on East Main Street in Webster, saw another opportunity in town to offer customers an enjoyable and entertaining evening experience. Judging from the Canteen's customer numbers, it appears to be another wonderful success.

Andy's Neighborhood Canteen was named for Jess's great-grandfather, Andrew Stefanik, who owned the former Andy's Restaurant & Bar, which was located at the present site of KFC/Taco Bell in Webster. Jess's uncle, Jeff Stefanik, visited Andy's Neighborhood Canteen 40 years to the month after the original Andy's Restaurant had closed shop. "He closed up the original place and was the last one to leave," said Bill Sabine, "and when we opened on November 18, he was the first one here!"

Bill's background centers on fine dining and bar management. He has managed several brewery distilleries and restaurants and he definitely knows his beers, which is very evident from the varied and impressive list of brews his new canteen offers.

The range includes from kolsh-style beers to bocks,

lagers, IPAs, and ciders. Draughts include Night Shift, Whirlpool IPA, Timberhitch Red Ale, and Nite Lite, to name a few of the 12 varieties available. Canned beers offered are Narragansett (making a comeback), Miller Highlife, Troegenator Double Bock, and Jack's Abbey from their list of 19.

Red and white wine are on tap too, along with a non-alcoholic kombucha.

One of the specialty registries is named Happy Meal Combos, a listing of five shots and beers with the most popular being a Gansett and Fireball. You will have to visit to see the rest of the list.

Andy's also has a refreshing batched cocktail on tap, Paloma, which is made with tequila, fresh-squeezed grapefruit juice, triple sec, and soda, along with popular slushies of Mai Tai and Gin Rickey. Standing out from the crowd of libations is a Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamauggshotski named for the skiing resort towns where it gets its second name "shotski." There are four shot glasses attached to an actual wooden ski. A shot of a foursome's choice is poured into each shot glass and the shots are consumed in tandem. Interesting indeed.

Side snacks include four Pa-



Bartender Matthew Lavergne and owner Bill Sabine prepare a Shotski.

nini sandwiches (freshly made to order): turkey Reuben, a tasty Cubana (ham, roasted pork, Swiss cheese, pickles, and mustard), veggie, and cheese. Additional snacks: pretzels and house-popped popcorn varieties of plain, salt & oil, or cinnamon sugar.

The Canteen's large outside seating area will be used in the warmer weather. Outdoor heaters, corn-hole tossing, and outdoor musical entertainment will be part of the scene.

Andy's second floor is available for group functions.

Parking is available on both sides of the facility.

"The area is very quiet and away from traffic," said Bill, "being next to the French River Park and the tranquility of the river lends itself to peacefulness. We want our customers to enjoy themselves in a

laidback setting." He notes that Thursday's Trivia Night questions consist of music, entertainment, music, and sports, and he does not expect their friends here to be experts in any of these subjects. "It's just fun and a great time. We invite all age groups to come and experience our new place; we think they'll enjoy it."

Andy's Neighborhood Canteen is at 9 Frederick Street (behind the post office), Webster. Phone: (508) 461-7512. Hours: Thursday/Friday 4:00 p.m. - late; Saturday 12 noon - late; Sunday 12 noon - 7:00 p.m. [www.andysneighborhoodcanteen.com](http://www.andysneighborhoodcanteen.com) Instagram: @andysneighborhoodcanteen and also on Facebook.

Contact Janet: [jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com](mailto:jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com)



Andy's Neighborhood Canteen, an inviting environment overlooking the French River in Webster.

## Webster welcomes Richard LaFond as Town Administrator

The Town of Webster is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Richard LaFond as its new Town Administrator. At its Tuesday, February 1, meeting, the Webster Board of Selectmen unanimously approved an employment agreement with Mr. LaFond with an initial term through June 30, 2025. Mr. LaFond began work February 9, with a brief transition period with Interim Town Administrator Gregory Balukonis.

Mr. LaFond has a long and distinguished career in municipal governance, with more than two decades acting in a similar capacity for the towns of Carver and Abington.

"We are thrilled to welcome Rick to our community and look forward to his leadership and experience in working with our residents, businesses, town employees and the Board," Webster Board of Selectmen Chairman, Randy Becker commented. "Based on Rick's background, the Board is confident he will be an excellent fit for our Town."

Mr. LaFond commented that he felt he "would be a very good match and we'll find that to be the case for a long time." He also thanked the Board of Selectmen, the members of the Screening Committee and Search Consultant Kevin Paicos for their support and confidence.

The Board would also like to express its thanks and gratitude to Interim Town Administrator Balukonis who has done a truly admirable job for the Town of Webster for the past five months.

## Politicians announce \$2.8 million Massworks Grant for Oxford

BOSTON - State Senator Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton) and State Representatives Joseph McKenna (R-Webster) and Paul Frost (R-Auburn) announced that the town of Oxford is the recipient of a \$2.8 million grant from the highly competitive MassWorks Infrastructure Program that is administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development (EOHED). The grant will be used to support the Route 20 Sewer Extension and Improvements project that is ongoing in the town.

Since the MassDOT Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) will proceed as planned, EOHED Secretary Michael Kennealy approved the grant for the town of Oxford this year. Once EOHED receives final written approval of the project design by MassDOT, all required permits and approvals are issued, and verification that all needed match funds for the full project budget have been secured, the town will be able to contract with the state for the \$2.8 million grant.

"The Route 20 reconstruction has been a long-discussed and planned project in the town of Oxford," said Senator Fattman. "Seeing how the reconstruction project has already been scheduled, it is excellent to see that the state acknowledges the value

this area brings to our region by making this commitment through MassWorks. The Oxford legislative delegation has advocated for these improvements to the area, and this continued commitment from the Administration demonstrates their alignment with our advocacy that the region is a great place to work and call home."

"I am very happy that the Administration has taken advantage of the timing of the already scheduled reconstruction of Route 20 in Oxford - a long time priority of the entire legislative delegation - to provide significant investment to allow for utility upgrades. This sizable commitment to the community will provide residential and business improvements that will allow for additional homes and busi-

nesses to continue to target Oxford as a great place to live and do business."

"The state legislative delegation for Oxford has worked hand in hand with Town Manager Jen Callahan, the Board of Selectman, Town Engineer and all town officials who have advocated tirelessly, past and present, to get the sewer project incorporated into the major public safety redesign of Route 20 in North Oxford. The Baker/Polito administration, the Office of Housing & Economic Development and MASSDOT have come through once again to make sure this economic development opportunity for Oxford didn't go to waste. It makes perfect sense to tackle the placement of sewer lines in conjunction with the Route 20 improvement project instead of years later. I'm very happy to see this officially moving forward as I am with the bigger public safety reconstruction project."

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# Restaurateurs upbeat about a strong dining scene in 2022

By Rod Lee

Talk to local restaurateurs and they will say the industry is maintaining surprising strength on the cusp of a new year, despite the lingering effects of the pandemic.

"Things are good," Josh Suprenant of Samuel Slater's Restaurant at Indian Ranch in Webster said on January 5. "We just rolled out a new menu, we hired a new chef in

September and we have a lot of events scheduled, including monthly beer and wine functions. We are firing on all cylinders."

"We had one of our best Decembers," Steve Londregan of Chuck's Steakhouse in Auburn said. "We were encouraged about the number of gift cards customers purchased and some functions

have come back. We hosted a lot of company Christmas parties, only two of about fifteen of those cancelled because of the virus."

Steve Bingham of Bentley Pub in Auburn expressed cautious optimism about 2022. Coming out of the holidays, "some days are good, some aren't, that's the restaurant business," he said.

Mr. Bingham wants the public to know that Bentley Pub "follows all the protocols" relating to the virus, "more even than most" establishments.

Michael Glick at The Publick House in Sturbridge said "our big issue is staffing. Over the past six months we've seen more demand from customers wanting to come here to dine. Our need is for more cooks and servers. This week, the first week of January, is slow but we're looking forward to what next week will bring."

The Publick House is also eagerly anticipating wedding season.

Mr. Suprenant said Samuel Slater's under the direction of Chef Josh Brown is satisfying the palettes of patrons with "elevated comfort food" and "we're having fun with classic dishes."

Southern-style barbecue, "a nice little shepherd's pie" and southern fried chicken are mainstays.

"We have a big smoker outside" that has helped the restaurant keep pace with what customers want, he said.

"With any new business especially a restaurant, you have to find where you fit," Mr. Suprenant said. "We still do steaks, people can come in and grab a beer and a burger at the bar and watch the game."

Josh Brown was formerly

executive chef at Prezo Grille & Bar in Milford. "We got to talking over the summer and he liked my vision" for Samuel Slater's, Mr. Suprenant said. "He's been in the industry; he's a very welcomed presence here."

Like its counterparts in South County, Samuel Slater's was dealt a blow by the pandemic; "2020 came out of nowhere, like a left hook," he said. "We have had to evolve and adapt. We wait for them to tell us what to do."

Speaking of which, the Westborough-based Massachusetts Restaurant Association recently pushed back against new vaccination requirements for certain industries in the city of Boston. MRA President Bob Luz objected to "a one-size-fits-all mandate" in that it does not take into account "the day-to-day nuance of individual circumstances." Businesses, including restaurants, "should be able to make their own decisions," he said.

In Auburn, with a nearly 10,000-square-foot restaurant, Chuck's benefits from being able to separate customers" and keep them safe, Mr. Londregan said. "We didn't steer away from the original COVID-19 protocols" either, he said.

"Absolutely we are concerned" about the new surge. "Every day one of the employ-



Steak is a staple at Chuck's in Auburn, and one reason why the restaurant is celebrating almost forty-four years in business.



"Elevated comfort food" is drawing patrons to Samuel Slater's Restaurant in Webster for dinner 4:00 to 9:00 p.m. Thursday through Sunday.

ees comes in contact with someone so we educate staff on what to do."

In terms of masking, "all we can do is encourage our people to be masked. The town of Auburn doesn't require it.

"We have a large supply of rapid tests on hand. No one is taking it lightly. We are almost back to our numbers from 2019," thanks to gift cards and the loyalty of Chuck's customers, he said.

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

## Lt. Karlowicz takes oath

"Marek Karlowicz was officially sworn in as Dudley Police Lieutenant at the Board of Selectmen's meet-

ing on Monday, January 10. Town Clerk Lori Smith administered the oath to Lieutenant Karlowicz in front of his fam-

ily, several members of the department, and others in attendance.

Lt. Karlowicz has been with the department since November of 2000, starting as a reserve officer and dispatcher. He was promoted to full time in November of 2002 and attended the Western Massachusetts Police Academy in Agawam. He was appointed as Sergeant in July of 2019 and Lieutenant this past November.

Lieutenant Karlowicz has been an outstanding officer and performs multiple duties in the department, including serving as one of the department's firearms instructors. He was also one of the officers conducting the annual holiday drive over the years. The department congratulates him on this achievement and wishes him well in the future.



Lt. Karlowicz administered the oath of office by Dudley Town Clerk Lori Smith.



Lieutenant Karlowicz and members of his family with the Dudley Board of Selectmen.

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# Carole Marchand and crew bring Webster Lake alive with Hula and Fire Dancers



Carole Marchand, Webster's Recreation Director.

**By Janet Stoica**  
Hold onto your hula skirts! Webster's Recreation Director Carole Marchand, the Recreation Committee, along with the Webster Cultural Council, are hosting their first February Luau

event at Webster Lake Memorial Beach on Saturday, February 19, from 3 – 6 p.m. (Rain date: February 26). Yes, you read that right, it's a hula and fire dancer event that promises to be memorable.

Complete with food trucks with pulled pork sandwiches, hot coffee, and cocoa, an Ugly Hawaiian Shirt Contest, limbo contest, and kids' take-home craft kits, families are encouraged to hula their way to fun.

Ms. Marchand applied for and received a grant from the state's cultural council to hold a winter event in Webster. Collaborating, the town's Cultural Council and Recreation Committee decided that a summer event would be held in the win-

ter and what better venue than the town's Memorial Beach? "There are plenty of Christmas in July events so why not a Summer in Winter event?" she said.

Polynesian Fusion of East Greenwich, Rhode Island, was contacted and the wheels were set in motion.

"It'll be Christmas in July in reverse," said Ms. Marchand, "and we're hoping it'll be a great success. The dancers just purchased new body suits and were only too happy to wear them again. We're looking forward to lots of people coming out to enjoy themselves. The fire dancers should be fascinating. We'll also be handing out leis to our attendees."

Carole Marchand has been Webster's recreation director for more than four years now and has made a big dif-

ference in bringing new and exciting community events to town. Her enthusiasm and upbeat attitude have made a world of difference for local families looking for local events. "One of the smartest things I've ever done was to take this position," she said. "I thoroughly enjoy what I do, working with our town groups, and I hope that Webster is happy with me."

Other activities on the 2022 recreation activity schedule include a wrestling night in March, sponsored by the Webster Police Department. In April, events include the annual Easter Egg Hunt at Memorial Beach, which will feature a children's' Easter Egg Hunt with prizes and a visit from the Easter Bunny, and an Earth Day Cleanup on Saturday, April 23, when volunteers will help to improve local streets and roads by cleaning up litter.

"We are very grateful to Pratt Trucking for providing trash bins for litter disposal," said Ms. Marchand. "They've always been very generous to us. Our Webster Police Department also greatly assists us by picking up bagged litter on the streets we clean." A Rev3 Triathlon (swim, bike, and run) will be held again too.

From March through May, Ms. Marchand will be busy interviewing and hiring beach personnel in prepa-

ration for opening day at Memorial Beach. "Our staff has to be put together and ready to go for Memorial Day weekend," she said.

In May, the Webster Fire Department will be holding its Tri-State Meet and on May 26/27, Jet Ski Races will entertain lake spectators. The town's annual fireworks display is scheduled for Sunday, July 3, along with pre-fireworks' music at Memorial Beach and food trucks with fried dough, snacks, French fries, soda, and ice cream.

The French River Concerts commence on Wednesday, July 6, and every week thereafter for 5-6 weeks. Ms. Marchand hopes to have some new and exciting performers added to the schedule this year. "There'll be something for everyone," she said. "It's always a fun get-together in the River Park." Of course, many of the above events are health-permitting, as in COVID and its variations. Townspeople are encouraged to check the town website for updates: [www.webster-ma.gov](http://www.webster-ma.gov) as well as the Facebook page listed below for Recreation Department updates.

Looking ahead to the 2022 holiday season, the committee is reviewing displays. New street decorations were installed on Church Street this year. "We have limited



Easter bunny prize 2021.

opportunities for displays on Main Street," said Ms. Marchand, "as there are no electrical connections on the streetlight poles, making it a challenge. We did install banners on the poles but delivery trucks have damaged the flags and banner hardware. We hope to find a solution."

Carole Marchand also wants to invite any Webster citizen to participate in and contribute to helping make the town's surroundings and recreation activities more enjoyable for all. "I always welcome new suggestions and ideas," she said. "I can't promise that we can do it all but if our townspeople want to join in and make it happen, they are always appreciated."

Contact Carole Marchand at (508) 949-3800, Ext. 1023. Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster. Find them on Facebook: Webster Arts/Recreation Group.

Contact Janet: [jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com](mailto:jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com)

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## Dean's List Honors from MassBay Comm. College

WELLESLEY HILLS - The following local residents have been named to the MassBay Community College Dean's List.

- Fatima Nadeem, of Oxford, achieved this outstanding academic honor for the fall 2021 semester.
- Jaclyn Wenc, of Webster, who studies Medical Coding, achieved this outstanding academic honor for the fall 2021 semester.
- Julia Bileau, of Webster, achieved this outstanding academic honor for the fall 2021 semester.

To be eligible for the MassBay Dean's List, students must complete at least six credits of college-level courses, be in good standing with the College, and earn a grade point average of 3.5 or higher.

## Webster Senior Center news

WEBSTER - The Webster Senior Center, 5 Church Street, (508) 949-3845, is open Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Email: [SeniorCenter@Webster-MA.gov](mailto:SeniorCenter@Webster-MA.gov). Like the Webster Senior Center Facebook page to view photos, news and announcements.

Tri-Valley lunches are served Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays at 11:30 a.m. Please call (508) 949-3845 at least 48-hours in advance to reserve or cancel your meal.

New - The Bomba Beauty Salon at the Webster Senior Center is open from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Please call the Senior Center at (508) 949-3845 for more information.

Mondays and Wednesdays: Exercise classes with Forty Arroyo - chair dancing 9:30-10:30 a.m. Cost: \$3.00 per class.

Mondays: Knitting/Crochet social 10 am-12 pm.

Bingo: every Tuesday, starts promptly at 1 p.m. Please plan to arrive by 12:30 p.m. to allow time to buy your bingo sheets.

Progressive Pitch 1 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays, 13-card Pitch on Thursdays and 9-card Pitch on Fridays.

Mahjongg group meets every Friday at 1 p.m.

Please call the Senior Center at (508) 949-3845 or stop in and pick up our monthly newsletter for a complete list of additional activities and upcoming events.

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Chief's corner

# Reminder that driver's license expires on your birthday

By Chief Steven J. Wojnar  
Dudley Police Department

I recently had a discussion with a resident about driver's license renewals. The question involved the "on-line" or in person renewal process, particularly, as it pertains to drivers aged 75 and older. I was asked to provide some further information.

It is important to note all licenses will expire on your birthday in a given year. They are valid for five years from the birthday in the year of issue. Renewing your license can be done at any registry office, a AAA office for members, and on-line when applicable. Currently, on-line renewals are allowed once every 10 years. If you can renew on-line, you should receive your license in the mail within 7-10 days. Anyone seeking the "Real ID" license, to use for travel etc., must appear in person and bring the correct documentation (proof of residency, etc.). There is no initial on-line process for this. Due to the pandemic, the deadline to obtain your Real ID was extended until May of 2023. If you are age 75 or older, you cannot renew "on-line." This must be done in person. This is required primarily for vision and other screening. Good news for all drivers is, whether you renew your license on the computer or in person, you can do this any time within one year of expiration. This enables people to take care of this at a time when it is convenient. The pandemic has impacted RMV operation hours in some ways, so it is important to check with the Registry to make the proper arrangements.

Drivers age 75 and over can find more information on this process at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/older-drivers>, by email at [MassDOTRMVSeniors@dot.state.ma.us](mailto:MassDOTRMVSeniors@dot.state.ma.us), or by calling 857-368-8005. Special hours for seniors aged 65 and older are designated by the

RMV on Wednesdays. Check with them for more details.

Remember your license will expire on your birthday in a given year. It is important as that date approaches to check your license as well as other important documents (passports, etc.). You do not want to experience the unfortunate situation of not having a valid license at a critical time, say when an accident occurs. If you need a reminder to check the date for your license expiration, consider this it.

### Elder driver decisions

A person's decision to give up their driver's license, particularly for seniors, is a very difficult one. Family members, medical professionals, and police officers are often involved in these cases. This is one of the most difficult aspects of my job; filing a petition to take a person's license away. One possible option to consider is the voluntary surrender of a license. Someone who plans to discuss this situation with a family member, was seeking information to assist them with the process. There are several reasons why a voluntary license surrender is a good option, and many people may not be aware of this program.

In addition to the obvious travel restrictions, the two greatest concerns that I hear when it comes to surrendering a license is (1) not having a valid government issued ID and (2), if personal circumstances change, being unable to regain their license once it is turned over. The positive is a person who gives up their license voluntarily, can reaply. They will be most likely asked to provide medical documentation stating they are competent to receive a license. The Registry may also require a road test if the situation warrants. Therefore, a voluntary surrender of your license is not permanent unless it is

necessary. Information can be found on the Registry web site at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/massachusetts-registry-of-motor-vehicles> or any RMV branch.

As far as the concern of having no formal identification, there is an answer for that as well. Since this is needed for medical care, banking, and other functions, it is important to maintain a valid ID. According to the Registry, anyone who voluntarily surrenders their driver's license can receive a Massachusetts Identification card free of charge. A person can complete what is called a Voluntary Surrender Affidavit form located at any Registry branch or online at <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2018/03/21/MAB110%20-%20Voluntary%20Surrender%20Affidavit.pdf>. By completing this process, a person who voluntarily surrenders their license, is entitled to a free identification card. This is a valid, state issued ID. Two important reminders. Many AAA branches handle a variety of Registry functions. Unfortunately, they do not provide this service. It will need to be done at a Massachusetts RMV location. Also, with the COVID-19 restrictions, an appointment may be necessary. More information on this process can be found at the web sites listed above. If you live in Connecticut, or other states, check with those departments for similar programs.

People who have difficulty driving face the tough decision of giving up their license. This is not easy, as people sacrifice a great deal of freedom when this privilege is lost. Many people need to self-assess their ability to safely drive a motor vehicle. This is especially true as we age and if medical restrictions are present. No one wants to be a danger to themselves or others while traveling

on the roads. If a person has any apprehension about maintaining proper identification without a driver's license, they have this valuable program to assist them in making the decision to surrender their license, just a bit easier.

### Cell phone service

Several questions continue to be asked about the shutdown of some cellular networks. Several months ago, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) reported some important information about your mobile phones and devices. I provided information on this near the end of last year. Changes in the technology will make some phones obsolete and they could even be incapable of dialing 911. I wanted to remind everyone of the FCC information 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 has begun as early as January 1 of this year, depending on your service provider. It is recommended you consult with 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 this month (February). Verizon will be complete by December 31. T-Mobile / Sprint's 3G may have already occurred. 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 act 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.

The increase in COVID cases remains a concern. For those still seeking vaccination information, it can be found at [www.dudleyma.gov](http://www.dudleyma.gov) or by calling 508-949-8036. We encourage everyone to be safe. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. During these challenging times, we, at the Dudley Police Department, greatly appreciate the support we receive from our community.

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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- 3 LBS. BEEF POT ROAST OR 3 LBS. BONELESS PORK ROAST
- 3 LBS. BONELESS CHICKEN BREAST OR 1 PKG. ( 1 1/2 LBS.) MARINATED CHICKEN BREAST OF YOUR CHOICE
- 1 LB. WHOLE CHICKEN (3 LBS. AVERAGE) OR 1 LB. SAUSAGE OF YOUR CHOICE

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Living well and looking good

# Risk to chemotherapy patient from healthy cat is small

By Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: My neighbor is battling cancer for the third time. The medical personnel she sees when she goes for her chemotherapy treatments are urging her to get rid of her two cats. They claim the cats are a danger to her health. Wearing gloves and a mask while cleaning litter boxes will not help. Why? What do the cats have that can hurt someone going through chemotherapy? - S.C.

ANSWER: Cancer chemotherapy frequently causes damage to the body's immune system. Many types of chemotherapy

work against fast-growing cells, and while cancer cells are fast-growing, your neighbor's healthy immune system cells, especially white blood cells, are also fast-growing and can be damaged by the chemotherapy. Avoiding potentially infectious agents is therefore wise advice for people going through chemo.

There are several potential infections that can be transmitted from cats to humans. The one we worry about most is probably toxoplasmosis, a protozoan infection. Toxoplasmosis is a big concern in

people with HIV, but also can be an issue in people who have recurrent chemotherapy or have a more prolonged reduction in immune system function. However, toxoplasmosis can be effectively avoided by wearing gloves while changing the litter box, keeping the cats indoors and feeding them only high-quality cat food and never raw meat.

Cat bites or scratches can be very serious, especially to someone with an immune system that is less than perfect. If her cats occasionally bite or scratch, that would be a problem.

There are a few other uncommon zoonotic diseases (ones that can be transmitted from animals to humans) that might be of concern. Her cats' veterinarian would be a useful resource to find out more. The cats should, of course, be thoroughly evaluated.

Allergies, not infection, might be the issue, but allergies are usually less of a problem during chemotherapy.

The risks from a healthy indoor cat are very small. Risks must always be bal-

anced against the very strong feelings people have for their pets, especially at a vulnerable time. I would not recommend separating a person from her cats without very good reason, and would want to know exactly why, since it's not clear to me in this case.

**Heart "prebeat"**  
DEAR DR. ROACH: I am an 80-year-old man with Type 2 diabetes. I have been told that I have a heart "prebeat" but that I should not worry unless it becomes random and misses beats. I do not have atrial fibrillation and have passed several stress tests. I can feel a rapid heart rate, especially at night. I can usually stop it by heaving my chest. Am I at risk for a serious event? - R.G.B.

ANSWER: Premature heart contractions can come from either the top chambers of the heart (premature atrial contractions) or the bottom (premature ventricular contractions). Both are common, but neither is usually the sign of serious heart disease. The fact that you have found a

way to stop them suggests to me that you are more likely having premature atrial contractions, which can come in runs of multiple beats (runs of premature ventricular contractions is called ventricular tachycardia and is very serious).

Evaluation of this common concern often includes a long-term electrical study of the heart, such as wearing a Holter monitor, a 24-hour recording of every heartbeat. If that has not been done, and you remain concerned, it might be reason-

able to ask your doctor about obtaining one. If you have had one, and it showed nothing serious, then you are at no increased risk above the not-insignificant risk of an 80-year-old man with diabetes.

*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) 2022 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved*

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## Hannah Harwood Fund scholarship applications available

Oxford - The Oxford Board of Selectmen announced the availability of Hannah Harwood Fund Scholarship applications. The Hannah Harwood Fund Scholarship has provided aid to Oxford students pursuing degrees in medicine and allied health fields for many years. The Fund was established through the 1902 will of Charles Harwood in memory of his late mother, Hannah.

Oxford residents may come to Board of Selectmen Office, Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Wednesdays 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. and Fridays 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. to receive application materials. The Town Hall is located at 325 Main Street. Application materials will also be available on the Town's website at <https://www.oxfordma.us/board-selectmen>. Completed applications are due to the Selectmen's Office April 1, by 12:30 p.m.

The Board of Selectmen will select the recipient of the scholarship. To qualify for the scholarship, the student must be a resident of Oxford and entering their undergraduate freshman year, enrolled in the field of medicine or allied health. Economic need and grade point average or class rank will be considered in the decision.

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bankHometown's Sutton Ave., Oxford office Assistant Vice President, Branch Officer Jo-Anne Bussiere (right) presents a check to Christine St. Martin of Food Share, Inc., one of 14 pantries receiving donations from the bank's Neighbors Helping Neighbors fundraising campaign.

## Baker-Polito Administration provides 292 air sensors to 39 communities

BOSTON - In an effort to increase awareness of fine particulate matter (PM2.5) pollution levels, the Baker-Polito Administration today announced that 292 air sensors have been awarded to 39 communities across the Commonwealth. The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) will utilize \$81,468 in grant funding to purchase the small air sensors and provide them to municipalities to measure PM2.5 levels in their communities for a period of one year.

"Particulate matter can be a significant airborne pollutant that affects the public health in communities throughout the state," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides.

PM2.5 is a mixture of solid particles and liquid droplets found in the air and is so small that it can be inhaled deep into the lungs and may even enter a person's bloodstream. Breathing PM2.5 in the air can lead to adverse health effects, including aggravated asthma and other respiratory and cardio-pulmonary illnesses. By receiving sensors through MassDEP's grant program, municipalities will be able to work with residents, schools, and community groups to measure PM2.5 levels and increase awareness of local air quality conditions and identi-

fy ways to better protect public health. As part of its commitment to advancing equity, diversity, and environmental justice (EJ), MassDEP prioritized projects with sensor placements in or near communities with EJ populations, as well as projects partnering with residents, schools and local organizations that work on public health and EJ issues. Out of all the projects receiving sensors, 56 percent are in communities with EJ populations that often experience disproportionate effects of air pollution.

The following municipalities will receive sensors to monitor air quality in their communities: Buckland, Chatham, Dalton, East Longmeadow, Egremont, Milton, Northborough, Oak Bluffs, Oxford, Sheffield, Southborough, Templeton and Uxbridge - 5 air sensors each; Granby - 6 air sensors; Billerica, Braintree, Longmeadow, Marblehead, Middleborough and Peabody - 7 air sensors each; Acushnet, Clinton, Lynfield, Medway and Saugus - 8 air sensors each; Westfield - 9 air sensors; and Boston, Free-town, Greenfield, Holbrook, Lancaster, Lawrence, Leicester, Milford, Needham, North Adams, Plymouth, Somerset and West Springfield - 10 air sensors each.

"I am grateful for the Baker-Polito Administration and MassDEP for their continued

support of our public health as it relates to the environment," said State Senator Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton). "These sensors are critical to detecting fine particulate matter that can aggravate health issues in individuals. By providing these sensors to communities, MassDEP is empowering our municipalities to be proactive while monitoring the PM2.5 pollution levels."

"Oxford has always shown commitment to the health and well-being of all of its residents," said State Representative Joseph McKenna (R-Webster). "This grant from the Massachusetts DEP provides another tool to further that mission by ensuring that Oxford has clean, unpolluted air to breathe."

The "PurpleAir" sensors being distributed through the grant program are used by a variety of governments, private organizations, and citizens to measure outdoor PM2.5 levels. Once installed, the sensors measure PM2.5 levels in "real time" and sensor data is transmitted to the PurpleAir Map, where it can be viewed through any smart device. The sensor data also can be viewed on the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's AirNow Fire and Smoke Map together with data from state-operated regulatory PM2.5 monitors.

## bankHometown raises \$39,200 for local food pantries in fundraiser

OXFORD - Robert J. Morton, president and CEO of bankHometown, announced that the bank's 18th annual Neighbors Helping Neighbors fundraising drive raised \$39,200 for local food pantries. This brings the total amount raised over the 18 years the program has been in place to \$264,900.

The annual appeal is part of bankHometown's charitable giving program, called The Giving Tree, which reflects the bank's commitment to making a real difference in the neighborhoods it serves. Throughout the month of November, the bank invited customers, employees, and members of the community to donate funds at bankHometown

branches. All donations received were matched, dollar for dollar, by bankHometown and the total divided among food pantries in Central Massachusetts and northeast Connecticut communities the bank serves. Each of these pantries received \$2,800 to help feed families in need:

- Massachusetts:
- Athol Salvation Army Food Pantry
  - Auburn Youth and Family Services, Inc. Food Pantry
  - CARE Food Pantry - Clinton
  - Food Share - Southbridge, Charlton & Sturbridge
  - Friendly House Pantry, Worcester
  - Friends of the Millbury Seniors
  - Ginny's Helping Hand, Inc. -

Leominster

- Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf
- Sutton Senior Center's Michael A. Chizy Food Pantry
- St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry - Webster Connecticut:

- Community Kitchens of Northeastern CT - Killingly
- Daily Bread - Putnam
- Friends of Assisi - Killingly
- Thompson Ecumenical Empowerment Group (TEEG)

"bankHometown would like to thank everyone who selflessly donated to our Neighbors Helping Neighbors campaign," said Morton. "We're pleased that these food pantries will receive much-needed funds in time for the holiday season."



bankHometown's Southbridge St., Auburn office Vice President, Branch Officer Tina Puzo (left) presents a check to Sally D'Arcangelo, director of Auburn Youth & Family Services, Inc. Food Pantry, one of 14 pantries receiving donations from the bank's Neighbors Helping Neighbors fundraising campaign.

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Pictured left to right are Timothy Garvin, president and CEO of the United Way of Central Massachusetts; Robert J. Morton, bankHometown president and CEO; Tina Puzo, vice president and branch officer of the Auburn office of bankHometown and the bank's workplace campaign coordinator; Mary O'Coin, executive director of the United Way of South Central Massachusetts; and Kory Eng, president and CEO of the United Way of North Central Massachusetts.

## bankHometown donates \$23,000 to United Way

OXFORD –bankHometown and its employees recently made donations totaling more than \$23,000 to three United Way organizations in Central Massachusetts.

Employees pledged more than \$20,000 of their own funds in support of the bank's United Way workplace campaign. Combined with the bank's direct contribution, the campaign total of \$23,740 will be divided among the United Way organizations of Central, North Central, and South Central Massachusetts as determined by the employees. The campaign provides employees with the opportunity to donate and direct funds, advocating for causes that are most important to them.

As a long-time contributor to the United Way, the bank and its employees have donated nearly \$97,000 to United Way organizations in Central Massachusetts through both the workplace campaign and direct support of other events and campaigns in the last five years alone. The United Way is a volunteer-driven organization that serves residents through its own programs and services as well as those of its partner agencies. The organization works to advance the com-

mon good by focusing on the building blocks for a good life – education, financial stability, health, and basic needs.

"United Way helps improve the quality of life for our friends and neighbors throughout Central Massachusetts," said bankHometown President and CEO Robert J. Morton. "bankHometown and our employees are proud to support the organization because, together, we can help people in these communities unlock their full potential."

## Students receive training grant from MassHire Worcester Career Center



Rebecca Lorre and Sarah Garcia.

CHARLTON – MassHire Worcester Career Center announced the awarding of \$8000 in training grants for each Bay Path RVTHS Practical Nursing Academy students Sarah Garcia of Charlton and Rebecca Lorre of Oxford.

Garcia is an energetic and compassionate Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) whose knowledge is based on the accumulation of close to ten years of hands-on experience as a personal care attendant, home health aide, and CNA. She obtained her nursing assistant certification through the American Red Cross in 2011. Most recently she completed a course on domestic violence. Garcia is a member of the UNICEF Club, helping raise funds and spread awareness for children's advocacy. She participated in the recent Walk to end Alzheimer's in Worcester and the Out of the Darkness Walk in Natick for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP).

Lorre is an experienced school bus driver and holds a current CDL. She was with Durham School Services of Oxford. She holds an associate degree in communications from Becker College. Lorre is an officer of the UNICEF Club, spearheading fundraising activities and spreading awareness for children's advocacy. Recently, Lorre joined the PN Class of 2022 Mock Code Team (MCT). The MCT is a simulation-based interprofessional team training to ensure high quality, safe patient care during code scenarios. Initiated in 2017, the Mock Code Day Program is a collaborative effort between faculty and communities of interest (volunteer nurses, alumni, EMTs, and Paramedics) to enhance communication and care in emergencies by practical nurses. The Mock Code Day Program consists of small-group simulation-based sessions organized by faculty and engages practical nursing students in a variety of roles. The program is unique because of its interprofessional nature and scheduled sessions.

As practical nursing students at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy, both Garcia and Lorre have completed their Mental Health First Aid certification and Dementia Care certification. Both have also completed COVID-19 Contact Tracing through Coursera and Johns Hopkins University.

"We're grateful for the continued support of the MassHire Worcester Career Center," said Bay Path RVTHS Practical Nursing Academy Director, Getheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN. "MassHire helps many of our practical nursing students consistently. The grant will help them through the ten months of rigorous training and ensure that they stay motivated and inspired to give their best."

Training grant funds encourage economic growth in the state and allows for additional training for workforce. The Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, and Commonwealth Corporation encourage businesses to address workforce training needs. Interested parties are encouraged to visit [www.comcorp.org/wtfp](http://www.comcorp.org/wtfp) to learn more.

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## Living ON with Lincoln

# Patience and OPGs

**By Amy LeClaire**

It's getting real. My puppy, the first of a projected two, is on its way this year. Well, almost. We are number eleven on a list we were fortunate enough to be placed on last June, thanks to Lincoln. Just as he had squared his head to the Dunkin' Donuts servers at the drive-through window, he made his presence known, again, while my husband relayed our Golden history to Cloverdale's owner. We came to find out that Lincoln's genes are actually entwined with those of her dogs. He was a Twin Beau D pup, son of Tickle and Sox, grandson of the remarkable Sir, a champion in his day. Twin Beau D and Cloverdale dogs had collaborated in the past to breed the healthy, widely admired and sought out show dogs we're about to join hands with. You're doing the right thing, Mom. This is my family. These puppies are my cousins. Of course, there's only one Lincoln, but you can do this again. You have my blessing. Just please don't give him the light blue ball.

We sent our deposit in last June and, since then, have practiced the fine art of patience while living vicariously through OPGs, that is, Other People's Golden retrievers. "Hello sweet girl!" I visited my neighbor's sweet Golden, Ellie, and made friends with the magnificent Henry of Cloverdale

(a distant cousin of Lincoln's) who came over to visit. I even became tempted (last summer) by OPL, Other People's Litters.

"Let's do it!" I took a ride with a neighbor who had recently lost her girl to check out a Golden litter just born. The experience confirmed for me the importance of researching breeders and avoiding the temptation to purchase in haste. "We can get our pups together! A friend of a friend at work says there are a few available! We're so lucky!" There was something suspiciously quick and easy about the sudden litter upon me. "I'll pick you up at noon!" But the thought of puppy playdates and puppy smells and all things puppy led us through winding, desolate back roads and, finally, to an overcrowded dog home, the stench and squalor of which has yet to leave my mind.

Don't get me wrong. An immaculate home does not necessarily translate to a happy home, for dogs or humans. Dogs are messy and hairy. So aren't people. I've seen enough college dormitory rooms (and bathrooms) to deem the lifestyle of a college student to be a public health hazard. But I'll say this. Feces does not belong on a frying pan. I have a soft spot for dogs (after all, my first column written here happens to be Why I Like Dogs More than Humans) and share the Dog Person belief that dogs love us unconditionally and deserve the same back. Amid a life that is heartbreakingly short, our pets are not stuffed animals to squeeze when we need a hug, or leave when we need to be elsewhere. They deserve attention, training, resources, and

the healthiest of nutritional practices. They don't deserve to be twenty-five pounds overweight (the stud of the litter we had inspected, the Puff Daddy, was unhealthily puffy) or confined to a lifestyle designed for human needs alone. They don't deserve to be anxious and rambunctious due to improper training and attention. They deserve our best.

My neighbor and I left enlightened. The backyard breeder came with too many questions, stench, and a family tree more gangly than a skeleton. Who was the Daddy again?

Awakened by a better attitude - to be patient - I chose to live vicariously through Golden retrievers on the loose (breweries are notably full of them) which are easy enough to hang with. I held the paw of Draper, a reddish Golden from Pennsylvania, swapped Golden stories with the owner of Mable, a feisty girl from New York, and learned about Lucky, a rescue from Connecticut who found his forever home. Golden retrievers are socialites. They'll lift their chins and smile while we talk about them, as though to say,

"Aren't we the best?" They listen to you. "Lincoln sounded like so much fun. I like balls too. But I'm more of a Frisbee guy."

OPGs have kept me a believer.

My husband, a technologist, copes with our dogless household by watching (and sending me) reels upon reels of video clips featuring Golden retrievers with a larger Instagram following than the president. "Look at this one!" A Golden Daddy hovers at the edge of a pool while a puppy, possibly his own, paddles and learns to swim for the first time. Another happy Golden trots across a lawn with the swaddle-hammock of a new puppy clutched in his mouth. One walks along a treadmill above a tank of water. Then came my favorite, that of two adult Golden retrievers making friends with a baby fawn in the woods. Instagram Golden retrievers are remarkable, I think to myself, but my puppy will be better. My puppy will be almost as good as Lincoln, and that's still saying a lot.

We live in an era allowing a moment in time to be caught,

saved and stored. Given the appeal of the breed, taking advantage of the ability to create a snapshot to be relived over and over again is not surprising. Golden joy is contagious! Ironically, while Golden popularity grows, so do waiting lists. Patience remains the operative word. All good things take time, and all puppies deserve our best. All puppies deserve

to live as Lincoln did. "I second that," he tells me from the sky. I smile and whisper back to him, "He'll never be you, but he'll have an extraordinary life. And he'll be loved. Oh, how he'll be loved, Lincoln."

Stay tuned for more on Living On with Lincoln and updates on puppy news!

Write to me at [amyleclaire@hotmail.com](mailto:amyleclaire@hotmail.com)



A visit from Henry.



Other people's Golden retrievers.



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## Tales from beyond

## The Equinox

By Thomas D'Agostino

The story of the Equinox Resort in Manchester, Vermont dates back to 1769. It originally was a tavern ran by William Marsh. It was there that Ira Allen, Ethan's younger brother held a special meeting proposing the confiscation of properties owned by British sympathizers, better known as Tories, to help fund the Green Mountain Boys. Ironically, Marsh, a British sympathizer, was the first to have his property taken.

The 200-room resort opened as the Equinox in 1853 under the ownership of Franklin Orvis. He named the inn after the tallest mountain of the Taconic Mountain Range that towers behind the structure at 3800 feet above sea level. Since then, a long list of prominent people have stayed at the Equinox. Presidents Ulysses S. Grant, Theodore Roosevelt, William Howard Taft, and Benjamin Harrison were but a few.

In 1864, President Abraham Lincoln's wife, Mary Todd Lincoln and their children stayed at the inn. They enjoyed the hospitality and quaint Vermont lifestyle so much, they made reservations to spend the next summer there with the president as well.

A special suite was constructed for the accommodation of the first family. All precautions were made so that the president and his family would have a grand time during their stay in the Green Mountain state. The visit was not to be, for on April 14, 1865 the president was assassinated. The Lincoln family never forgot the wonders and tranquility of the area. Robert Todd Lincoln, son of Abraham and Mary, built his summer estate, Hildene just down the road from the Equinox.

Time took its toll on the inn, and at one point the building became rundown and completely abandoned. By 1972, the Equinox was boarded up. Francesco Galesi purchased the inn and performed extensive renovations. In 1985, the Equinox reopened as a year round resort. In 1991, the Equinox opened the Charles

Orvis home to guests and in 2007, the 134-guest room 1811 House became another part of the inn's accommodations. This was the home of Abraham Lincoln's granddaughter; Mary Lincoln Isham and her husband Charles from 1905 until her death in 1939.

Such a prominent and luxurious resort would not be complete without a few notable figures still roaming its corridors. The ghosts of Mary Todd Lincoln and her son Tad still frequent the hotel. Guests and staff have heard the sound of a child crying and a mother comforting it. Some have actually witnessed the ghostly pair in one of the guestrooms. Witnesses recognized Mary and her son based on a portrait. She seems to favor rooms 241 and 242, which were once combined into one suite to accommodate the Lincoln family.

The Lincolns are not the only spirits thought to still tenant the resort. Some believe that William Marsh has come back to his old inn. Perhaps he is attempting to reclaim the land that was taken from him when he sided with the British during the war. Maybe it was his angry entity that rips the



pillows and blankets from the bed and tossing them all over the room shortly after the chambermaids finish cleaning. This would seem plausible, as the name of the room is called none other than the Green Mountain Suite.

Others believe that the spirit of George Orvis, son of Equinox founder Franklin Orvis also haunts the inn. George was successor to the hotel after his father passed. In 1918, he strolled out to the pond to either go fishing or have a swim, no one knows for sure. Either way, he never returned. People have heard footsteps come up from behind and will move aside to let the person pass. The footsteps pass them followed by a cold wind but no physical entity is seen.

One night the front desk received a distressing call from Room 329. Security and staff went up to check out the

situation. When they entered the suite, they witnessed the lampshades slowly turning on their spindles and the rocking chairs swaying to and fro with no physical being to manipulate them. The guests were hastily and happily removed to an "unoccupied" room for the rest of the evening.

There are so many stories circulating in regard to the Equinox that it seems hard not to have a paranormal experience. Stay a weekend or enjoy dinner at one of their several restaurants. You never know who you might meet from the Equinox's past.

*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).*

## Student qualifies for National Technical Honor Society



CHARLTON - Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy student and P.E.O. grant recipient Sarah Garcia of Charlton will be inducted into the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) on an in-person ceremony to be held in the Spring. The outside event will mark the 7th annual induction ceremony for the Academy.

Garcia is an energetic and compassionate Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) whose knowledge is based on the accumulation of ten years of hands-on experience as a personal care attendant, home health aide, and CNA. She obtained her nursing assistant certification through the American Red Cross in 2011. She is certified in Dementia Care, completed a course on domestic violence and is Mental Health First Aid certified. Garcia is a member of the UNICEF Club, helping raise funds and spread awareness for children's advocacy. She participated in the Walk to end Alzheimer's in Worcester and the Out of the Darkness Walk in Natick for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP).

Last October 2021, the P.E.O. organization honored Garcia with the PCE (Program for Continuing Education) grant in the amount of \$2,000 for the 2021-2022 academic year. The scholarship was presented to Garcia by Georgeanne Roe, Jane Flynn, Barbara Smith, and Pam Thomas-Nielsen all from Chapter R.

Each year, practical nursing students eagerly look forward to the NTHS induction ceremony, according to Academy Director, Getheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN. "Making it through nursing school is an achievement, being inducted into the NTHS is another feather in their cap! The PN students juggle school, work, and family life, it is quite a feat to be inducted to the NTHS," said Bolandrina, who has been organizing the induction ceremony for the last 6 years.

Eligibility for induction to the NTHS is based on a minimum 3.0 grade point average, faculty recommendation, character, leadership, involvement in extracurricular activities, and clubs. These characteristics reflect the member attributes of the National Technical Honor Society which are skill, honesty, service, responsibility, scholarship, citizenship, and leadership.

"It's amazing how kind, wonderful and resilient our practical nursing students are," added Bolandrina. "They navigated the rigorous program through these challenging times and even managed to participate in many volunteer activities to help the community." Other members of the PN Class of 2022 NTHS candidates will be announced in the succeeding weeks.

## The Outlaws to perform at Indian Ranch June 11

WEBSTER - The Outlaws will return to Indian Ranch in Webster, as part of the Mike's Hard Lemonade Summer Concert Series on Saturday, June 11. Tickets are on sale at [www.indianranch.com](http://www.indianranch.com).

Formed in Tampa in 1972, The Outlaws - known for their triple-guitar rock attack and three-part country harmonies - became one of the first acts signed by Clive Davis (at the urging of Ronnie Van Zant) to his then-fledgling Arista Records. The band's first three albums *The Outlaws*, *Lady In Waiting* and *Hurry Sundown* - featuring such rock radio favorites as 'There Goes Another Love Song', 'Green Grass & High Tides', 'Knoxville Girl' and 'Freeborn Man' - would become worldwide gold and platinum landmarks of the Southern Rock era. Known as 'The Florida Guitar Army' by their fans, The Outlaws earned a formidable reputation as an incendiary live act touring with friends The Allman Brothers, Lynyrd Skynyrd, The Marshall Tucker Band and The Charlie Daniels Band as well as The Doobie Brothers, The Who, Eagles and The Rolling Stones. Henry Paul left after the group's third album to form The Henry Paul Band for Atlantic Records, and later co-founded the multi-Platinum country trio Blackhawk. Over the next 20+ years, The Outlaws would experience rampant personnel changes, tonal missteps, ill-fated reunions and bitter trademark battles that left fans - not to mention Paul and Yoho - frustrated and saddened. And with the tragic deaths of co-founding members Frank O'Keefe and Billy Jones in 1995, and espe-



The Outlaws.

cially songwriter/vocalist/lead guitarist Hughie Thomasson in 2007, it was feared that The Outlaws' trail had come to an end.

Along with founding members Paul and Yoho, the band features several of Southern Rock's most respected veterans: Keyboardist/vocalist Dave Robbins is a co-founding member of Blackhawk and has written hit songs for artists that include Restless Heart, Kenny Rogers and Eric Clapton. Long-time Outlaws' bassist/vocalist Randy Threet has performed with Trisha Yearwood, Pam Tillis and Blackhawk, and is familiar to TV audiences from USA Network's 'Nashville Star'. Lead guitarist Steve 'Grits' Grisham was a member of the Soldiers Of Fortune era Outlaws, as well as a noted songwriter whose tracks include The Henry Paul Band's Top 40 hit, 'Keepin' Our Love Alive'. Co-lead guitarist Dale Oliver is one of Nashville's most versatile producers/songwriters/musicians and was formerly Blackhawk's lead guitarist and bandleader for more than 10 years, co-writing their hit 'Almost A Memory Now'.

The Outlaws' live shows - vividly captured in their 2016

double album *Legacy Live* - are blazing 2+ hour tributes to the band's rich history and fiery rebirth. Classic tracks and fan favorites from the first three albums - as well as The Henry Paul Band's definitive 'Grey Ghost' - share the spotlight with new songs that are already being embraced by audiences. "I think our new material goes back to those first three classic albums, when the band was proud of its influences from country, blues and jazz," says Paul. "Plus, Steve and Dale have honored and maybe even stepped up the legacy of the 'guitar army'." Fans are coming away from shows feeling a renewed part of the Outlaws experience.

"Our goal is to unite the fans and bring the band back into the light. In a way, this is like a second chance at my first love. It's about finishing what we started." For Henry, Monte, Dave, Randy, Steve and Dale, it's also about a band of brothers who love playing their own brand of rock, and who 40+ years ago first got the chance to share it with the world.

For The Outlaws, it's still about the music. And now more than ever, it's about pride.

Insiders Club memberships and GA Season Passes for the 2022 Summer Concert Series are on sale now. The Indian Ranch Insiders Club gives members exclusive access to buy tickets before they go on sale to the general public. GA Season Passes include a general admission ticket to every show in the Indian Ranch Summer Concert Series. Both programs come with an array of other benefits and are available at [www.indianranch.com/](http://www.indianranch.com/) memberships.

Indian Ranch offers music lovers a chance to see some of the greatest country, classic rock and pop bands steps from Lake Chauggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagun-gamaugg. Nestled between pine trees, the amphitheater offers the ability to see the stage from anywhere in the audience. More than a concert venue, Indian Ranch opened Samuel Slater's Restaurant and is also home to the Indian Princess paddlewheeler and Indian Ranch Campground. Already on sale are concerts with Trace Adkins on June 5, The Mavericks on June 19, Get The Led Out on July 8, Scotty McCreery on July 9, and ABBA The Concert on August 12. More shows will be announced soon.

Gates for The Outlaws will open at 11:30 a.m. and showtime is 1:00 p.m. Tickets are available online at [www.indianranch.com](http://www.indianranch.com), by calling 1-800-514-ETIX (3849) or at the Indian Ranch Box Office. All events are rain or shine. No refunds. Indian Ranch is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster. For more information, visit [www.indianranch.com](http://www.indianranch.com).

# Peek's Services offers auto detailing, tires, and oil changes

By Janet Stoica

Dudley resident Aaron Peek won't object to the label of perfectionist, at least when it comes to car detailing.

Mr. Peek thoroughly enjoys his work and came to car, truck, and motorcycle maintenance by way of Texas to Massachusetts. "When I was younger, I took my car to an auto detailer for the usual wash, wax, and vacuuming," he explains. "When I picked up my car and drove it home, I started looking at the work that was done. I wasn't satisfied with it so I took it back to the detailing company and went over the details they'd missed. I was hired by the owner to take over their detailing department and I found that it was something I enjoyed doing from start to finish."

After college, Aaron worked for a fiber optic cabling company that took him throughout the United States. In 1999, when his company was hired by Massachusetts to provide underground cabling conduits under and along the Mass. Pike, there was Aaron Peek. "I met and made a lot of good friends here, and when I came back to New England to visit, I ended up staying. I found that I really enjoyed the cold weather and the snow." He worked for Southbridge Tire Company, handling heavy equipment and truck tires. He also met his wife, Carmela, and settled in Dudley. The

couple has two sons and two granddaughters.

Four years ago, Mr. Peek decided to pick up auto detailing again in the evenings after work and his expertise soon became well known through word-of-mouth. His customer base expanded, and he found that the satisfaction of his younger days' accomplishments worked for him once again.

Peek's Services has now become his full-time profession. His enthusiasm is evident when speaking with him. "Auto detailing here is given the highest priority and we use high-grade products. We also do oil and filter changes for all vehicle makes and models," he said. "We mount and balance tires. If you have a specific brand in mind, just let me know and I'll get it for you. All oil is recycled through an approved vendor."

The detailing work includes buffing minor scratches, carpet shampooing, and ceramic coating, which is a product that gives another layer of protection over your vehicle's clear coat. The ceramic coating will last up to five years with proper maintenance. Clay bars are used in the detail process too. This removes tar, brake dust, and other road grime and makes the exterior as slick as glass. It's an annual maintenance recommendation. No detail goes un-noticed."

Vehicles he has detailed include RVs, boats, trailers, even tractor-trailers. Aluminum polishing is offered for truck tire wheels that includes a four-stage sanding and buffing process. He's also had the experience of washing, waxing, and buffing PBS' This Old House trailer. From Subaru, Chevys, and Toyotas to Maserati Quattroportes and Jaguars, Mr. Peek has the keen expertise to truly satisfy his customers with the final shine and gloss of their transports.

Typical auto exterior detail procedures begin with a hand wash with Meguiars Soap; blow dry; clay bar application; engine wash by hand with detailing using cotton swabs; Meguiars Tech 2.0 wax; and an F11 Top Coat. All wheels, tires, and fender wells are cleaned thoroughly as well. Interior details include cleaning of all door jambs, carpet shampooing, carpet blow drying, leather cleaning and conditioning, and air vent cleaning. Cotton swabs are always used for all the nooks and crannies. "Basically, everything that can be cleaned is taken care of," says Mr. Peek, "and we'll stand with our customer for their review and approval."

He also offers additional services like window tinting up to the 35% legal limitation and remote car starter installation. He snowplows commercially and residentially, power



Owner, Aaron Peek, stands near one of his detailed vehicles.

washes all types of home siding, including brick, vinyl, and wood clapboards. For new customers, Peek's Services is currently running a \$10 off oil change offer when you have your vehicle detailed.

With his charity work for the American Legion Riders for the last six years, Mr. Peek gives back to the community by detailing the riders' motorcycles for \$65/each and then returning 100% of his earnings to the Legion. He has also done charitable work for the Holyoke Soldiers Home, American Legion Post Lego Ride, UMass/Memorial Children's Cancer Unit, Southbridge's Eagle Riders Group,

Leicester's Cherry Valley Riders, Worcester's Vernon Hill Riders, and the Sutton and Auburn Riders.

Peek's Services, 7 Johnathan Pass, Dudley. Phone:

(903) 900-0813. Appointments required. [www.peaksdetailing.com](http://www.peaksdetailing.com)

Contact Janet: [jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com](mailto:jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com)



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# Comedy returns to Samuel Slater's Hall with Paul D'Angelo and guests Feb. 18

WEBSTER - Live Comedy Friday, February 18, with a returns to Samuel Slater's triple featuring headliner Paul Restaurant in Webster on D'Angelo, special guest Steve

Bjork, and Emcee Dave Rattigan. Presented by On-Premise Entertainment, doors open at 7pm; show starts at 8pm. Tickets are on-sale now at www.samuelslaters.com.

Paul D'Angelo is a former assistant district attorney and criminal-defense trial attorney who simultaneously became one of the country's top stand-up comedians. Paul has been headlining A-List comedy clubs around the country for 35 years and has been the opening act for over sixty internationally known acts, in-



Comedians Paul D'Angelo, Steve Bjork and Dave Rattigan.

cluding Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, Tom Jones, Tony Bennett, The Beach Boys, Chicago, The Four Tops, The Temptations, Jerry Lee Lewis, Lyle Lovett, George Carlin and Dennis Miller, performing in famed entertainment venues ranging from the legendary Friar's Clubs in NY and LA and the Waldorf Astoria's main ballroom in New York City, to the main showroom at Harrah's Casino and Caesar's Palace. Paul also co-starred in the popular Showtime movie 'The Godfathers of Comedy' and is the author of several award-winning comedy books.

Steve Bjork has been described by the Boston Globe as "one of the top names" in New England stand-up comedy. He's come a long way from his nights of frying up mozzarella sticks in the back room of a popular Boston comedy club. He was a college student, using that part-time job to study the craft of stand-up comedy by catching glimpses of the performers on stage. Today, Bjork is a

polished veteran of the highly competitive Boston comedy scene with crisscrossing tours of the country under his belt. His material is intelligent and accessible, but first and foremost, it is funny. Bjork takes everyday life and turns it upside down in a way that every demographic in any given audience can enjoy. A longtime favorite in nightclubs and casinos around the country, Bjork is also a highly sought-after corporate entertainer.

Dave Rattigan added "actor" to his resume when he played a businessman who loses a cab to Red Sox field reporter Heidi Watney in a popular and funny Olympia Sports commercial in 2009. Prior to that, he collected fans with his Dave Rattigan: Thinks He's Funny CD, which received heavy airplay on XM and Sirius Satellite Radio and other syndicates. He's also written humorous columns for a wide variety of publications (including the Boston Globe and Christian Science Monitor). Live, he plays every type of gig, from opening for

The Beach Boys to acting as master of ceremonies at corporate shows and fundraisers, to headlining at venues such as Mottley's Comedy Club in Boston and Headliners in Manchester, N.H.

Samuel Slater's Restaurant at Indian Ranch offers a variety of events year round, along with seasonal concerts at Indian Ranch amphitheater, the Indian Princess paddlewheeler and Indian Ranch Campground. Upcoming events at Samuel Slater's in February include Tour of Spain Wine Dinner on February 23, and Alter Ego (band) on February 26t. More events will be announced soon.

Tickets for Comedy Night with Paul D'Angelo and Guests on Friday, February 18, are on-sale now. For tickets and more information on all the events at Samuel Slater's Restaurant, visit samuelslaters.com. Samuel Slater's Restaurant is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster, outside of Worcester and less than an hour's drive from Boston, Providence, Hartford and Springfield.

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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.** I have a Chevy Aveo and I am having issues with the P0420 code. Both oxygen sensors were changed. The wire connections are good. I use quality Shell gas. The car runs great and has 117,500 miles but the check engine light still comes on. What is wrong?

**A.** The code is looking at catalytic convertor efficiency. More than likely the convertor just can't perform properly and that is determined by the front and rear oxygen sensors. You are correct you won't notice any difference in engine performance, but the engine is producing higher than normal vehicle emissions. When you replace the catalytic convertor, buy a quality replacement. I have seen bargain converters work for a while only to have the same PO420 code come back.

**Q.** I have a 1985 Chevrolet Corvette with the 4+3 transmission and 48,000 miles. I recently had both hydraulic cylinders for the clutch replaced. Now the reverse lights and the overdrive indicator in the info center do not work. Both are obviously transmission related. Any idea what the issue could be?

**A.** When the transmission was removed the reverse light switch located on the side of the transmission needed to be disconnected. The overdrive switch is located on the shifter. I suspect that during the repair these items may have been left disconnected or perhaps even damaged. At this point go back to the shop that did the repair and have them inspect their work.

**Q.** What do you think of the new Ford Bronco and what about the Bronco Sport?

**A.** I have had the opportunity to evaluate both vehicles within 30 days of each other. Before driving them I expected to not like the Bronco Sport, since it is based on the Ford Escape platform, and love the full sized Bronco. In reality I liked the Bronco Sport a lot. It rode well,

had off-road capability and was quite functional inside and out. The full-sized Bronco was sharp looking, got plenty of attention and is an off-road champion but maybe because of all the hype I came away a little disappointed. The interior in places seemed a bit too plasticky and fit and finish was average. And then there was the price. The Bronco I drove was approaching the price of the off-road capable and more luxurious Land Rover Defender.

**Q.** I have a 2008 Toyota Avalon-which is the best car I have ever owned. I purchased it new but the one problem that I have is the high beam bulbs have shattered or blown out every few years. My mechanic said Toyota had sent a bulletin to the dealers about the problem. It is my understanding that some 2008-2010 models have a problem with the bulb housing, not the bulbs and the fix is to replace the housing. The problem is Toyota doesn't consider this a defect and only covered the issue for the original warranty that expired

nine years ago. To me it is a manufacturing or design defective, and the car should be recalled. The local dealer just shrugs and tells me it is an old car. To replace both headlight assemblies and bulbs will cost nearly \$1000. Any suggestions?

**A.** As you stated, there is a technical service bulletin that describes the problem. The repair does, in fact, require replacing the housing and bulb. My only "guess" is this isn't a recall since the low beam light will still function when the high beam light fails. At this time it couldn't hurt to file a complaint with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration on their website: [www.safercar.gov](http://www.safercar.gov). There are aftermarket replacement parts from online companies such as Rock-Auto and CARiD with the parts costing much less. Since this is the best car you have ever owned and it probably has some additional life in it, spending \$500 or even \$1000 on headlights to me is money well spent.

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## Dudley Senior Center February news and schedule

Please call Tri Valley Elders if you would like to speak with a SHINE counselor 508-949-6640 (TDD 508-949-6654), 1-800-286-6640. Their Website is: www.trivalleyinc.org email info@tves.org ELDER ABUSE intake Hotline for Mass., 1-800-922-2275, to report physical/mental/financial/abuse. Senior self-harm/neglect. (May remain anonymous in reporting suspected abuse). Dudley Senior center hours are 8:30 am-4:30 pm. Monday through Friday. Seniors are welcome to drop in for self-directed activities, cards, puzzles, movies, knitting, or just hang out w friends. Tri Valley Congregate lunches are served M,W, and F 11:45 am. Reservations for lunch must be made two days in advance, Call

office, and leave message to reserve your lunch. 508-949-8015. Lunch is \$3.00/donation. Tuesdays, 1pm Pitch league. Wednesday Creative Crafter Workshop, and Thursday morning sewing crafts class with Linda P. will be starting up again soon. Stay tuned. Thursdays, 1pm (a new day) for the Dudley Senior Women's Knitting group. Come join us if you're interested in creating groovy knitting projects which are helping to support our community.

Friday is game day, before or after lunch, for anyone who enjoys word games like Scrabble, Boggle, Scattergories etc.

The Common Ground Memory Cafe' is scheduled the third Thursday of the month, (weather permitting), 3-5 p.m., free program, featuring live music, a light meal, crafts. It's a fun come as you are, no-judgement social activity. This program is especially meant for anyone who is affected by cognitive decline/difficulties, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, Stroke, mild Dementia, forgetfulness, loneliness or feeling down, being together with friends, family, loved ones in an uplifting, caring, accepting, environment. Come join us at the Dudley Senior Center, we are Dementia Friends Certified.

Office Hours: M, W, and F 11:00 am-3pm (and third Thurs. of the month 1:00pm-6:30pm). Our new email is coadirector@dudleyma.gov. The COA phone # 508-949-8015. Please leave us a message with your return number. Open to all seniors; you are welcome to attend any of our programs and events no matter where you live.

Our Dudley COA Board Members are Jan Brady, Kathleen Cormier, Jim D'Auria. Welcome to our newest COA Board members, Cheryl Leyton, Charlie Marlborough, and Carmella D'Ambra.

Margaret Bussiere, COA Dir.

### Call for grant applications

## Janet Malser Humanities trust deadline April 1

The Janet Malser Humanities Trust is now accepting applications for the 2022 grant cycle. Ms. Malser set up the charitable Trust in order to support the arts and humanities, community service and conservation in the towns of Dudley, Oxford, and Webster.

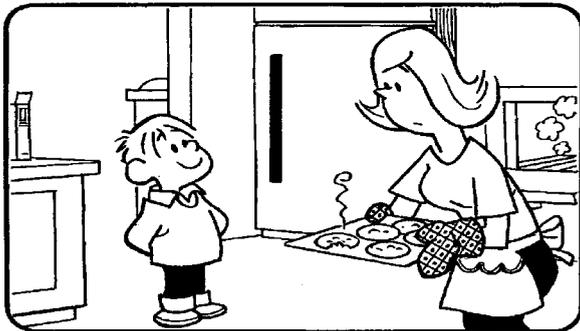
The causes for which funding will be considered include: "the restoration and preservation of historic sites; the furtherance of art and music in the schools, both public and private; public concerts with an emphasis on classical music; the improvement and growth of public libraries; the support of church work aiding the indigent, homeless, aging citizens and needy children; beautification through planting and the preservation of park areas and cemeteries; the improvement of service and equipment at the Hubbard Regional Hospital [now Harrington Healthcare at Hubbard], and the environmental protection of Webster Lake."

Trustees make awards annually to verified tax-exempt organizations meeting the charitable purposes of the Trust. Prior recipients are eligible to apply so long as proper follow up status reports have been filed; otherwise they will not be considered.

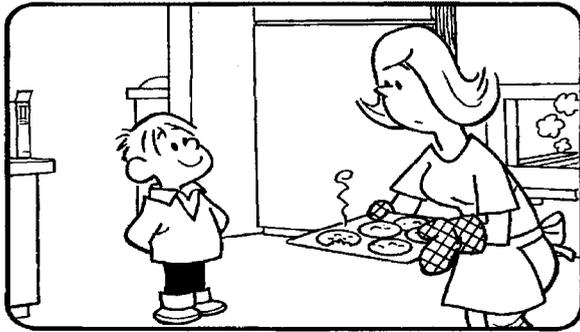
Applications and additional instructions including filing final reports are available at www.janetmalsertrust.org. All applications must be postmarked by April 1.

### HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Cabinet is moved. 2. Neckline differs. 3. Handle is missing. 4. Apron is different. 5. Apron is different. 6. Apron is different. 7. Apron is different. 8. Apron is different. 9. Apron is different. 10. Apron is different. 11. Apron is different. 12. Apron is different. 13. Apron is different. 14. Apron is different. 15. Apron is different. 16. Apron is different. 17. Apron is different. 18. Apron is different. 19. Apron is different. 20. Apron is different. 21. Apron is different. 22. Apron is different. 23. Apron is different. 24. Apron is different. 25. Apron is different. 26. Apron is different. 27. Apron is different. 28. Apron is different. 29. Apron is different. 30. Apron is different. 31. Apron is different. 32. Apron is different. 33. Apron is different. 34. Apron is different. 35. Apron is different. 36. Apron is different. 37. Apron is different. 38. Apron is different. 39. Apron is different. 40. Apron is different. 41. Apron is different. 42. Apron is different. 43. Apron is different. 44. Apron is different. 45. Apron is different. 46. Apron is different. 47. Apron is different. 48. Apron is different. 49. Apron is different. 50. Apron is different. 51. Apron is different. 52. Apron is different. 53. Apron is different. 54. Apron is different. 55. Apron is different. 56. Apron is different. 57. Apron is different. 58. Apron is different. 59. Apron is different. 60. Apron is different. 61. Apron is different. 62. Apron is different. 63. Apron is different. 64. Apron is different. 65. Apron is different. 66. Apron is different. 67. Apron is different. 68. Apron is different. 69. Apron is different. 70. Apron is different. 71. Apron is different. 72. Apron is different. 73. Apron is different. 74. Apron is different. 75. Apron is different. 76. Apron is different. 77. Apron is different. 78. Apron is different. 79. Apron is different. 80. Apron is different. 81. Apron is different. 82. Apron is different. 83. Apron is different. 84. Apron is different. 85. Apron is different. 86. Apron is different. 87. Apron is different. 88. Apron is different. 89. Apron is different. 90. Apron is different. 91. Apron is different. 92. Apron is different. 93. Apron is different. 94. Apron is different. 95. Apron is different. 96. Apron is different. 97. Apron is different. 98. Apron is different. 99. Apron is different. 100. Apron is different.

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## QCC fall 2021 semester Dean and Merit Lists

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College has released its Fall 2021 Semester Dean and Merit Lists. A total of 537 students were named to the College's Dean's List and 881 students were named to the Merit List.

### QCC's Dean's List Fall 2021

Auburn: Tyler Camuso, Casey Clouthier, Gracie Curtis, Ezekial Diaz, Kiara Diaz, Colin Fitzgerald, Aidan Foley, Kevin Foley-Foster, Dawson Gemme, Jason Henry, Andy Ho, Muhammad Ibrahim, Priscilla Kot, Katelyn Pike, Dylan Tang, Meloney Thapa, David Zona

Charlton: Lauryn Dawson, Johnson Ebe, Vitor Kuhn Scariot, Jessica Lapierre, Rene Latino, Chase McKenney, Nicole Mulvey, Halle Sanchez, Dylan Smaltz

Dudley: Anthony Awad, Erin Bouffard, Nicholas Champagne, Parker Filo-Loos, Isabella Freitas, Deirdre Grubb, Joseph Guaragno, Grace Jocson, Montana Josey, Nicole Karp, Julia Leary, Baker Meece, David Pino, Anthony Rivera, Jade Shultz, Mehrael Towadros, Auguste Valley

North Oxford: Salvatore DeMalia, Gracyn Mauch Oxford: Kwabena Asiamah, Micaela Christenson, Holly Gigniliat, Kelsie Guarente, William Harvey, Amanda Listewnik, Kaitlin Littleton, Nicholas McElroy, Denise Otano, Dillon Palmer, Jared Torosian

Webster: Benjamin Ayres, Melissa DeLuca-Midgette, Alexander Delgado Casanova, Ashley Denham, Sean Flynn, Amber Hallaman, Anna Israeli, Trevor Jutras, Hanna Kunkel, Chime Lama, Elena Ralph, Alicja Rogalski

### QCC's Merit List Fall 2021

Auburn: Zahraa Alshammari, Gabriella Amoros, Dawn Bombard, Conor Carlson, Madison Cove, Dominic D'Amore, Uyen Hong Ha Dao, Lyndsey Delorto, Leesa Kamaru, Hailey Martell, Chanel Napoli, Kyle Nash, Ifeanyi Nwachukwu, Brian Smith Ayer: Michael Owen

## Webster Republicans to hold caucus

The Webster Republican Town Committee will conduct its caucus on February 17 at 6:30 p.m. at 4 Veterans Way, Webster, to elect delegates to the Massachusetts State Convention.

Any registered Republican who is interested in being considered as a delegate must attend the caucus. RSVP is strongly suggested. Contact Linda at 508-949-1218 or linpaqu@hotmail.com

The Massachusetts Republican Party will hold its State Convention on Saturday, May 21, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Mass Mutual Convention Center in Springfield.

The convention's purpose is to endorse the party's ticket for statewide office. Candidates for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general, secretary of state, state treasurer and state auditor will vie for the convention endorsement. To obtain the endorsement, a candidate must attain a majority vote of the delegates at the convention. This is an excellent opportunity for citizens to have a direct influence in state politics.

The Webster RTC meets monthly and is patriotic, supportive and faith-based. The RTC is very active and is working locally concerning the US Constitution, Bill of Rights and God-given rights. However, there is much work to do to support our local police, veterans, and freedom that many have taken for granted. — Linda Paquette

Charlton: Cameron Allard, Kimberly Beals, Leslie Chaves, Christopher Chute, Nicholas Cochran, Adrienne Courchaine, Ada Duruh-Nubuor, Riley French, Abigail Joesten, Cheyenne Kelly, Haley LaFortune, Jessica Marshall, Pedro Milian-Giles, Pedro Prieto, Katelyn Smith, Bryan Stearns, Ashley Steelman, Cady Stevens Dudley: Mia Bohanan, Elizabeth Catino, Jessica Clark, Shawn Coltran, Conor Fitzgerald, Heather Lamprey, Hannah Lombardo, Abigail Northrop, Maxwell Ober, Paige Oliver, Christina Richert, Molly Riley North Oxford: Antony Bradford, Nikita Igoshin, Julianna Marcoux, Hailey Mills Oxford: Izabella Bezak, Noah Buckley, Nina Cardoni, Emily Caron, Mark Cruz, Tommy Estevez, Wilfrid Fotso Tasse, Ariana Gelardi, Katie George, Elijah Gray, Nathan Hagopian, Colton Heerd, Kimberly Lindsey, Daniel Silver, Alexis Walsh South Grafton: Esha Batchu, Kathryn Branda, Vaishnavi Chebrolu, Veda Dave, Anthony Fisher, Nicholas Fobert, Thomas Fobert, Hanna Perron, Jesalee Roberts Webster: Eliezer Asamoah, Ernestina Atsugah-Habadah, Victoria Binney, Casmere Cournoyer, Alexandra Cowher, Audrey Ducharme, Timothy Dziedzic, Madeleine Grillo, Ramy Hakim, Kerri Heenan, Shania Knight, Tenzin Lama, Anne Marie Markiewicz, Nickolas Maxwell, Kristina Mlavsky, Hiranya Robles, Kimberly Rockwood, Amy Rosario, Nayane Saffae, Holly Scott, Brittany Singelais, Justin Smith, Peter Tadros, Apryl Vancellette, Rachael Watterson

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# Gladys E. Kelly Public Library calendar of events

The Gladys E. Kelly Public Library, 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

**Book Discussion Group** – February 28, 6:30 p.m. The Gladys E. Kelly Public Library Adult Book Discussion Group meets at 6:30 pm. New members are always welcome. Next month's book discussion meeting will take place via Zoom, and will be about the book *Such a Fun Age* by Kiley Reid. Stop by the library, or reach out by phone to 508-949-3880, or by email to ehale@cwmar.org for inquiries.

**Friends February Book Special** – Month of February. Get ready for romance. Stop by the Library's lobby and fill a bag of books for \$3.00. February's featured authors will be Danielle Steel, Robyn Carr, and Elin Hilderbrand.

**Yoga with Julie** – Saturdays through March 26, 10-11:15 a.m. Join Julie at the Gladys E. Kelly Library for a vinyasa yoga class for all levels. In Sanskrit, Vinyasa yoga translates to the "uniting of movement with breath". A typical class involves a centering of the mind with the breath, aromatherapy, movement of the body to release energetic blockages and, finally, a rest and relaxation. Classes are free for Gladys Kelly Library patrons.

**Before Brooklyn book discussion with Ted Reinstein** – February 24, at 6:30 p.m. Ted Reinstein from WCVB-TV's *Chronicle* will be at the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library to present his latest book, *Before Brooklyn*. This book tells the story of the little-known heroes who fought segregation in baseball, from communist newspaper reporters to the Pullman car porters who saw to it that black newspapers espousing integration in professional sports reached the homes of blacks throughout the country. There will be time for a brief Q&A after the presentation as well.

## 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.

**Build Night** – Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Every Tuesday in January we have Magnatiles for kids to create with. Building ma-

terials will change monthly, check back for more information!  
**YFCP Wiggles and Giggles** – Friday, February 18, 9:30-10:30 a.m. Join us for a free music and movement series created and facilitated by music teacher Laine Hanlon. Children, ages 2-5, with a parent/caregiver, will sing, move, play musical instruments, learn rhythm and listen to stories. "Wiggles and Giggles" fosters physical, cognitive, social and emotional learning through music and motion. Siblings are welcome. Space is limited and registration is required each week. You can register at the Events Page on the Library's website.

**Special Pajama Storytime** – Wednesday, February 23, at 10 a.m. Wear your favorite jammies or something comfy to this extra special storytime.

**February Vacation Week Programs** – February 22, 24, 25 and 26, – 3:30-4:30 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 22** – Wreck the Tech - Ever wondered what was inside a printer? We'll give kids screwdrivers and some old technology to take apart and explore. This program is best for ages 6 and up but all are welcome with a caregiver.

**Thursday, February 24** – DIY Slime - Slime was so popular this Fall, we're bringing it back. This program is for all ages.

**Friday, February 25** – Build Your Own Roadway - For all the vehicle-loving kids out there! Everyone will get a big piece of cardboard and a roll of road tape to create their own highway system. Hot Wheels provided for imaginative play after their creation is finished.

**Saturday, February 26** – Learn Ukulele for Kids - Join Julie Stepanek as she shows the fundamentals of ukulele playing. You'll learn how to tune, strum and read chords. After a short lesson, you'll be able to play some fun and easy songs. No experience necessary. Bring your own ukulele or borrow one of hers.

# 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.

**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+

**Wiggles and Giggles**, Fridays, 11:00 a.m. Ages 2-5 are invited to attend this fun, free program. Sing, move, play instruments, learn rhythm, and listen to stories with Laine Hanlon. Space is limited; registration required. Sponsored by the YMCA Community and Family Partnership.

**Adult book group**, third Thursday, 6:00-7:30 p.m. The adult book group meets for an informal discussion of the month's title, which is available at the circulation desk a month prior to the meeting. The first title is *Commonwealth*, by Ann Patchett. For more information contact Kathryn Ward at 508-949-0819

**Wingmasters**, Thursday, February 24, 11:00 a.m.-noon. Birds of prey are also known as raptors, and they are hunting birds char-

acterized by hooked beaks and powerful grabbing feet armed with sharp talons (the word raptor comes from a Latin word that means "to seize"). Raptors can also boast the best eyesight and the sharpest hearing in the animal kingdom. Raptors include hawks, falcons and owls, and this presentation, which incorporates 5 live birds of prey, all native to New England, gives an overview of these different categories. The program is designed to explain predation, the birds' place at the top of the food web, their different hunting adaptations and their status in a rapidly changing world. Because many birds of prey are declining in number, this presentation also features one or more of the endangered raptors that WINGMASTERS cares for, and explains why these species face an uncertain future. Free; sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment

**Houseplants 101**, Thursday, February 24, 6:30-7:45 p.m. Join the master gardeners from Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens to learn everything you need to know to successfully grow houseplants. Learn about several kinds of houseplants, and how to identify common plant-growing problems, so you can beautify your home and purify the air you breathe. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

**Deb's sing and swing**, Friday, February 25, 10:30-11:00 a.m. Join Deb Hudgins for this interactive program featuring singing, music, dancing, stories, and a variety of fun props ranging from a parachute to pom poms. Free; sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

**Sensory storytime**, Saturday, March 5, 11:00 a.m.-noon. Children with special needs and their families are invited to this special program. We will read books, sing songs, and dance together. Free; registration required

## Northeastern University Dean's List

BOSTON - Northeastern University is pleased to recognize those students who distinguish themselves academically during the course of the school year. The following local student was recently named to the University's dean's list for the Fall semester, which ended in December 2021.

•Dudley resident Brady Hobson, majoring in Data Science/Mathematics.

To achieve the dean's list distinction, students must carry a full program of at least four courses, have a quality point average of 3.5 or greater out of a possible 4.0 and carry no single grade lower than a C- during the course of their college career. Each student receives a letter of commendation and congratulation from their college dean.

The University Honors Program offers high caliber students the chance to further hone their studies and interests, live in special interest residential communities, participate in enriched, interdisciplinary courses, and engage in research and creative endeavors, service, and global experiences. Invitation into the University Honors Program is highly competitive and students must maintain a high GPA to maintain membership.



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## Tips on financial planning



**Dennis Antonopoulos**

Are you expecting a tax refund this year? If so, what will you do with it?

Of course, the answer largely depends on the size of your refund. For the 2020 tax year, the average refund was about \$2,800, according to the Internal Revenue Service. But whether your refund this year will be about that size, smaller or larger, you

# What should you do with a tax refund?

can find ways to benefit from the money.

Here are some possibilities:

- Contribute to your IRA. You've got until April 18 to fully fund your IRA for the 2021 tax year. But if you've already reached the maximum for 2021, you could use some, or all, of your refund for your 2022 contribution. Assuming you did get around \$2,800, you'd be almost halfway to the \$6,000 annual contribution limit. (If you're 50 or older, you can contribute up to \$7,000.)

- Invest in a 529 plan. If you have children or grandchildren, you might want to invest your refund in a 529 education savings plan. A 529 plan's earnings can grow

federal income-tax free, and withdrawals are federal income-tax free provided the money is used for qualified education expenses. If you invest in your own state's plan, you might get a tax deduction or credit. A 529 plan can be used to pay for college, vocational training and even some K-12 expenses in some states. Plus, if you name one child as a beneficiary, and that child's educational journey does not require the funds from a 529 plan, you may change the beneficiary to another eligible family member of the original beneficiary.

- Add to the "cash" part of your portfolio. It's generally a smart move to keep at least

a portion of your overall investment portfolio in cash or cash equivalents, because the presence of cash can help you in two ways. First, since its value won't change, it can help cushion, at least to a degree, the effects of market volatility on your portfolio. And second, by having cash available, you'll be ready to take advantage of attractive investment opportunities when they arise.

- Boost your emergency fund. You could use your tax refund to start or supplement an emergency fund. Ideally, this fund should contain three to six months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid, low-risk account.

(If you're already retired, you might need this fund to cover a full year's worth of expenses.) Without such a fund, you might be forced to dip into long-term investments to pay for costly housing or auto repairs or large medical bills.

- Reduce your debt load. It's not always easy to minimize your debt load, even if you're careful about your spending habits. But the lower your debt payments, the more money you'll have available to invest for your future. So, you may want to consider using some of your tax refund to pay off some debts, or at least reduce them, starting with those that carry the highest interest rates.

- Donate to charity. You could use part of your refund to donate to a charitable organization whose work you support. And if you itemize on your tax return, part of your gift may be deductible.

A tax refund is always nice to receive – and it's even better when you put the money to good use.

*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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**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. **Believer**

**RE: Real Estate**



**Mark Marzeotti**

If you're following along with the news today, you're probably hearing a lot about record-breaking home prices, rising consumer costs, supply chain constraints, and more. And if you're thinking about purchasing a home this year, all of these inflationary concerns are likely making you wonder if you should wait to buy. Economists explain that during a period of high inflation, prices rise across the board. And while home prices aren't immune from this increase, here's why inflation shouldn't stop you from buying a home in 2022.

Homeownership offers stability and security. Home prices have been increasing for quite some time, and experts say they're going to continue to climb throughout 2022. So, as a buyer, how can you protect yourself from rising costs for things like food, shelter, entertainment, and other goods and services? The answer lies in housing.

Buying a home allows you to lock in your monthly mortgage payment for the foreseeable future. That means as other prices rise, your monthly payment will be consistent thanks to your fixed-rate mortgage. This gives you the peace of mind that the bulk of your housing costs is shielded from inflation.

A fixed-rate mortgage allows you to maintain the biggest portion of housing expenses at the same payment. Sure, property taxes will rise and other expenses may creep up, but your monthly housing payment remains the same.

If you rent, you don't have that same benefit and you won't be protected from rising housing costs. As an added incentive to buy, consider that today's mortgage interest rates are lower than they have been in decades. While inflation decreases what your dollars can buy, low mortgage rates help counteract it by boosting your purchasing power so you can get more home for your money. They

## Why inflation shouldn't stop you from buying a home in 2022

also help keep your monthly payments down. This is especially important during an inflationary period because you'll want to protect yourself from the impact of inflation as much as possible.

If you have cash and are expecting inflation, you want to think through where you can put your money so it does not lose value. Housing is commonly looked at as a good in-

flation hedge, especially with interest rates so low.

Bottom line, the best hedge against inflation is a fixed housing cost. That's why you shouldn't let it stop you from buying a home this year. Not sure where to start? Connect with Marzeotti Group or a real estate professional so you have expert advice and help throughout every step of the home buying process.

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