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December 2, 2022 - January 6, 2023

OBA's Gateway Park shaping up as a community gem

BY ROD LEE

A narrow, deep piece of land just east of the main traffic light in Oxford Center isn't attracting a whole lot of attention yet, but it will soon, Daniel M. "Dan" Prouty of the Oxford Business Association says.

Mr. Prouty and other members of the OBA are in the process of transforming the parcel into a "gateway park."

"We want it to be welcoming to people coming into Oxford," Mr. Prouty said on November 16th. Extensive work that has involved grading, plantings, fencing, paving, and construction of a post-and-beam pavilion over the past several months, is nearing completion.

Gateway Park, as the site has been unofficially dubbed, will be turned over to the municipality in the spring, subject to approval on the Town Meeting warrant.

The Oxford Business Association maintains a fairly low profile and its principal members are getting up there in years, but the OBA's contributions to betterment of the community are significant.

"Some of our guys are working on a rail trail with the conservation agent, next," Mr. Prouty said, noting that "there is a lot of money available for rail trails," which have grown in popularity.

Recently, motorists passing by the park could see all of the labor that has gone into the project already. Hundreds of flower bulbs—daffodil, tulip, crocus and hyacinth—were planted by members of Boy Scout Troop 147 and volunteers with two hundred more to go. Attractive fencing was installed. Landscaping was done. A split-rail fence running parallel to the parking lot is in the offing. The "true post-and-beam pavilion" has been finished with



A handsome post-and-beam pavilion will be one of the crowning touches to a gateway park being built in the area of Oxford Center by the Oxford Business Association.

"the average age of the people working on it being seventy-one," Mr. Prouty said.

"Good weather and my volunteer craftsmen showed up and we finished our task at hand which was to plank the post-and-beam pavilion roof and touch up the stain," Mr. Prouty said on November 10th. "New England Metal Roofing is donating the finished roof. We have some more plantings and fence work next week and (will) have everything waiting for spring."

A Christmas tree will be set up soon.

Still to be added are benches.

"A couple of us went out to Old Sturbridge Village to look at what they have there for benches," he said. "I'd like to do millstone instead of metal."

All of the comment Mr. Prouty

and his colleagues have received since summer "has been positive," he said. "That looks pretty good," people have been saying, since the paving got done.

Mr. Prouty is working on a thank-you list to acknowledge the many individuals and businesses that have contributed monetarily or with in-kind assistance. The project received an infusion of \$60,000 toward an approximately total cost of \$120,000-\$135,000 from the Cecelia J. Smolenski/Millette Charitable Trusts, an organization that provides grant dollars for projects and programs that promote and foster recreational and literary opportunities and activities for children in

OXFORD BUSINESS

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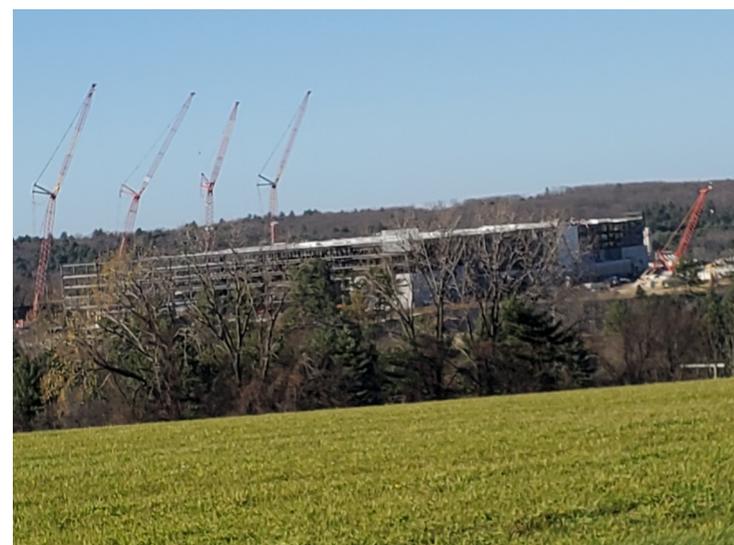
Amazon Building Rises in Charlton

BY JANET STOICA

Don't look now but the behemoth construction project going on in Charlton is progressing quickly. According to Charlton Town Administrator, Andrew Golas, the scheduled opening of the new Amazon

stations, pharmacies, and similar retailers will be one for the books, ledger books that is.

"The town negotiated a 10-year Tax Increment Financing plan," said Town Administrator Andrew Golas, "along with an allocation of \$650,000 for the purchase of a new fire and rescue truck suitable



Robotic Sortation Center located at 53 Sturbridge Road (Route 20 eastbound) will be late 2023 or early 2024. Driving along a quiet country road running parallel to the project brings a driver to a dead stop to stare at the four huge cranes and hectic activity surrounding the new building that can easily be seen from any satellite circling the earth.

The site surely must be the most expansive construction project in New England. Sitting on nearly 100 acres of former woodlands, the 2.8 million square foot building is expected to bring 1,000 jobs to the local area along with a bus stop scheduled by the Worcester Regional Transit Authority. The business that will be brought to Charlton's coffee shops, fast food emporiums, gas

for technical rescue operations as well as \$100,000 funding for fire operations. Since Amazon's building will be used as a first-line facility accepting manufacturer products, trailer trucks will be the main vehicles to this location with most arriving from and returning to Interstate 84."

According to the town's website information the 100-foot high warehouse will have 49 loading docks, 265 trailer parking stalls, and 1,250 car parking stalls on three surface lots. Projected net real estate taxes for the property will be \$18,995,250 over the 10-year term of the TIF not including personal property taxes. The town

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OXFORD BUSINESS

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Oxford.

Previous projects funded in whole or part by the Trusts include the Splash Pad, the NJROTC program at Oxford High School, the library pass program, the skate park, activities at Joslin Park, the Greenbriar

osprey camera, playground equipment, upgrades to the Little League concession stand, and activities at the Community Center.

“We are almost there,” Mr. Prouty said on November 16th.

“They’ll be calling this ‘park city.’”

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.

Harbro Auto Sales & Service: Family, faith, fifty years!

First of several articles leading up to Harbro Auto Sales’ 50th anniversary celebration, in 2023.

BY ROD LEE

That his family was destined to make its mark in the automotive business was apparent early on, Paul T. “Tim” Hare of Harbro Auto Sales & Service said on August 26th.

“When I was eight or nine, my brother and I took an engine out of a 1955 Ford,” Mr. Hare said, while seated at a picnic table at the waterfront cottage on Northwest Main St. in Douglas that he shares with his wife Jane as a seasonal retreat.

A friendly and engaging man, he spoke reflectively about the nearly half century Harbro has been in operation but also with the sunny disposition that he is known for. He even shared a printed historical timeline that dates from 1973 when Tim and Dave Hare rented space at 110 Linwood Ave.—where Crothers Tire is now located—to 1995 when Tim purchased “Harbro Auto Service” from Dave and noted, prophetically at it turned out, a desire then to buy “a new-car franchise if one becomes available in the Blackstone Valley or Webster area.” Which is exactly what

happened. The Webster facility on Rt. 12 opened in 1985.

Much has happened in the thirty-seven years since, of course. The “history of business” will have to be updated.

From the outset, Harbro (named thus for obvious reasons) was a venture the two brothers split right down the middle in terms of their respective responsibilities.

The business was incorporated in 1976 with Tim owning fifty shares and Dave owning fifty shares. In 1978, the company was divided into two divisions, Auto Sales and Auto Service, with Tim managing the Auto Sales and Dave managing the Auto

Service. “Each division to be a separate profit center with (each manager) having full control and compensation of profits.”

A bicycle division and Depend-A-Car Rental were added in 1981. Auto-glass replacement was added in 1988, computerized accounting and office systems in 1989. Also in 1989, Harbro was granted variances from the town of Northbridge allowing for the placement of a sixty-square-foot sign on the property, and permission to place eighty-six unregistered vehicles on the lot.

In 1990, auto detailing was introduced; in 1991, state inspections.

The growth continued, as it does to the present day with younger members of the family now involved.

In 1991, Harbro began a wholesale operation “to buy and sell used cars and trucks on the wholesale market, and to dispose of trade-ins which do not meet our quality standards.”

This emphasis on quality, and a conscientious, faith-based approach to providing outstanding customer service, has been a hallmark from the beginning—as evidenced by the contemplation of a then-revolutionary “30-day buyback program.” Under consideration, the history of business document notes, because “the biggest negative about buying a ‘used car’ is getting a lemon, and fear of warranties and ‘used-car dealers.’” Hence thought given to “[investigating] the feasibility of offering 30 day

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Xpressly Yours ... a letter from the editor

Coin celebrates a town's 250th, and a State Police icon



That creation of the new Massachusetts State Police Museum and Learning Center at Memorial Square in Whitinsville has been a labor of love for John H. "Jack" Crawford and associates is reflected in the extensive array of artifacts and memorabilia they have made available for viewing by patrons on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Crawford's work is not done, however. He is now busy promoting a freshly minted commemorative "challenge coin" as a way to raise monies for the museum.

"I already sold two coins at McDonald's this morning and one man gave me an extra five dollars, which throws my accounting off!" Mr. Crawford said on November 12th just after opening the door of museum, which is situated in the old Whitinsville Bank Building.

The handsome coin pays homage to both the town of Northbridge on its 250th anniversary (1772-2022) and to Samuel Judson Fletcher, an adopted native son, who served as a state

constable from 1867 to 1875.

The coin costs just twenty-five dollars and is available at the museum.

Mr. Crawford enjoys telling the story of Samuel Judson Fletcher. Born in Solon, Maine, Mr. Fletcher was educated at Brown University, graduating in 1857 with a degree in Engineering. He enlisted as a private with the Fifteenth Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry on July 12, 1861. His brothers, James Brainerd Fletcher and George Fergo Fletcher, and his cousin Edward Fletcher Chapin, all served with him in Company H of the Fifteenth.

Samuel was promoted to first lieutenant and was shot through the jaw at Antietam, but survived. He was promoted to first lieutenant in November of 1862. On July 3, 1863, he was wounded at Gettysburg while leading his men into battle and was presented with a "Sword of Bravery" by the regimental commander. He was then promoted to captain.

Samuel's brother James died at Antietam at the age of twenty-three, shot through the head; Samuel caught him as he fell. His brother George was killed in the Battle of Gettysburg at the age of nineteen.

Samuel was the only family member to return home alive.

On March 8, 1864, he married Emma A. Luther in Ashland. He mustered out of the Fifteenth on

July 28, 1864. Residents of Northbridge elected him to the Massachusetts State Legislature's Eighteenth Worcester District in 1865. He was appointed a state police deputy constable for Worcester County on July 26, 1867.

In May of 1870, Sam was stabbed and thought killed during a raid in Uxbridge. Several people were arrested and tried for assault.

He continued as a state constable until February of 1875 when the state detective force was established.

In April of 1875 he was appointed a constable in Northbridge.

He and his wife had four children, Nellie, Alice, Bertha and Edward.

Around 1912, the family moved to Gill, Massachusetts, where Samuel Judson Fletcher died at the age of ninety three on July 11, 1924.

He is buried at Pine Hill Cemetery in Sherborn, Massachusetts.

Mr. Fletcher is among those deputy constables of the Commonwealth featured in "The First to Serve," by Ronald J. Guilmette, who retired in 1999 as a lieutenant colonel in the Massachusetts State Police.

Mr. Guilmette's book was published in 2018.

The Massachusetts State Police Museum and Learning Center is dedicated to preserving the history and traditions of the nation's first state police organization. It has been made



Above, an image of Samuel Judson Fletcher graces one side of a commemorative coin that also celebrates the 250th anniversary of the town of Northbridge. The coin is available for purchase at the State Police Museum. Right, at the new Massachusetts State Police Museum and Learning Center in Whitinsville are, from the left, Paul Landry, Benji Feliciano and his wife Liz, Lisa Haley, Jack Crawford and Barry O'Connor and Mr. O'Connor's son Bailey.



possible by the generous support of a number of individuals and companies including Vincent Osterman, Access TCA and Sunshine Sign.

About thirty people have already ordered the commemorative challenge coin, of the one hundred that were initially minted.

For more information

about the museum, go to mspmlc.org.

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.

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is also expected to receive a host of additional funding that includes Routes 20 and 169 highway reconstruction, sidewalk replacement and improvements on Main Street and Masonic Home Road areas, STEM funding for Charlton schools, as well as recreation and arts investments.

Charlton voters at their recent special town meeting also just granted feasibility studies for a fire station sub-station as well as one for a community center/senior center.

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Holy Cats! You're needed at the Community Cat Connection

BY JANET STOICA

Volunteering isn't the most glamorous job at times but the satisfaction you feel from helping others, including animals, is truly immeasurable.

Volunteers are greatly needed at Webster's no kill cat shelter, Community Cat Con-

nection ("CCC"). The shelter has been a shining beacon for area towns and those individuals who must give up a furry feline due to an owner's inability to care for their furry companion or for someone who may have passed on. Their trap-and-release program capturing stray felines is also a large part of the job to benefit those cat owners

who allow their cats outdoor access. When a pet owner allows their feline outdoor access they may come in contact with stray tabbies who haven't been vaccinated for rabies, distemper, or a myriad of other contagious diseases. Your tabby could conceivably bring home an unwanted virus. Not good. The CCC's volunteers capture

strays and get them vaccinated before releasing them back to the wild as a valuable benefit to those house cats they may come in contact with.

However, for all the good they do, the CCC is desperately low on volunteers. Barbara Hassett is one of the dedicated volunteers who assists with the everyday care of the lovable critters. "This is my happy

place really," said Barbara, "it's so fulfilling knowing I'm helping these animals find good homes. My fellow volunteers also make it worthwhile to come here knowing all the good we are doing." Doris Bemis' volunteer job at the CCC is to seek out strays who are reported to them. She will scope out their habitats with capturing devices. Once in

Ms. Bemis' care, the cats are quarantined and then brought to clinics like Tufts or Second Chance in Worcester and North Brookfield for neutering or spaying. The furry bundles of joy are then vaccinated for rabies and distemper as well as given

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HARBRO

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'satisfaction or we will buy it back' guaranty."

This was subsequently implemented. "We have never promoted it properly," Tim says. "My hope when I put it in place was that it would change the industry."

Tim Hare recalls that by April of 1973, drawing on their mutual interest in automobiles, he and Dave Hare were doing "just gas and repairs" on Linwood Ave., at the address Crothers now occupies. Shortly thereafter, they relocated to Providence Road, which at that time was so quiet a stretch of highway that "you could play baseball in the middle of it," Tim said with a smile and a twinkle in his eye.

"We started out as service only. I worked for J&S as a teenager, Dave worked at Farrar's in Hopkinton, building fire trucks. I asked him if he wanted to go into business. Jane and I got married in 1974 and I wanted to sell cars. She had a 1972 Chevy Malibu that was paid off. 'If you let me sell your car' I said to her...I sold it for \$2200 and I bought her a car for \$1000. I lost money on that first car."

With mentoring help from



Above, brothers Dave and Tim Hare, who started Harbro Auto Sales & Service in 1973.

Gordon Hathaway—"and he was my competitor," Tim points out—the Hare brothers took a chance on the Providence Road site. "It was a cellar hole and a barroom," Tim says. "We saved the original foundation. I had an inspiration in the early 80s that every town needed a car dealership like ours but I didn't want to do it if work consumed me. I had a young family."

This devotion to family has stayed strong down through the generations. "At one time, seventeen family members worked at Harbro. My sister June worked there for years," Tim says.

Through the years, he said, "I've seen a lot of ups and downs." One of these came right away, in 1973, when the OPEC oil crisis hit. "The EPA controlled your allocation...in a day we were out of the gas business."

In 2008-2009 "there was a big shortage of used cars."

More recently there was the Covid-19 pandemic.

Today, as Tim's son Mike Hare notes, Harbro remains true to the business's core principles. This explains why

Mike and Mark Hare are carrying forward the tradition of brothers owning the business and shouldering the workload equally.

But they are not alone. Despite the loss of Dave Hare, who died earlier this year, family members are active in the dealership.

"My Uncle Dan, my mom's brother, still works with us," Mike Hare said. Mark's daughter Leah, Mike's sons Jonah and Emmet and Abram and Mike's nephew Jude (my wife's sister's son) all have roles.

"Other than mom and dad," Mike Hare says; can't forget Tim and Jane.

"I have thirty-two nieces and nephews and most of them have worked here," Tim Hare says. "This is the next best thing to a family farm. I am very thankful about the way it's worked out."

Harbro's golden anniversary will be observed with appropriate fanfare next spring.

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CONNECTION
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flea baths and de-worming treatments if necessary. They are also chipped and clipped as well as FIV-tested for immunodeficiency. Some of these kitties are then socialized and put up for adoption or they may be released back to their original environment.

Doris' job is a hardy one and not for the faint of heart. It's tough going out and trying to coax strays into a transport cage but Doris knows every detail and best procedure for helping these kits as she's a 15-year volunteer. She's an angel for sure but she needs more angels to assist her just like the CCC shelter does for the care, cleaning, and feeding of these beautiful pets. Doris related a story about an 18-year-old lovable tom cat who needed care during his last days. Tears came to her eyes as she described her time spent with the wonderful animal before he passed. When I visited the CCC, volunteer Dorothy Berard was diligently caring for the majority of the felines in the main caging room. She had her routine down pat and was enjoying her time spent with the adoring kits.

If you are looking for a satisfying volunteer job, the CCC needs you! If you are a high school student looking to beef up your credentials and resume by doing community service activity, here's your chance. If you love fuzzy and endearing creatures, you're the one they need. If you have a big heart and the desire to make a difference, they're waiting for your phone call. One day a week for 3 hours can make you a hero. Take your friend, relative, son, daughter, husband, wife with you and get the chores done in

half the time. You may be right and I might be crazy but you just might be the cat fanatic they're looking for. (Thanks, Billy Joel.)

"So many people just leave their cats behind," said Ms. Hassett, "it's a shame. They'll move out of an apartment or home and just leave the animal with no regret. Many of our cats here have the sweetest personalities and are the best companions. They are low maintenance and don't have to be walked outdoors in all kinds of weather. They are indoor creatures and are such good buddies. We had a little kitty that was abandoned in an apartment after its owner moved. The landlord found the kitty. He was such a sweet cat. How can anyone just abandon an animal like that? By the time we had him vetted he was even sweeter from having more love given to him while at our center." Barbara and her two daughters began their volunteering seven years ago when the girls were in high school and wanted to do community service. They've been volunteering every other Saturday since high school.

The CCC was the recent recipient of a \$1,000 Walmart Community Award for its service to the local area. Brett Bergeron, Walmart's Pharmacy Manager in Walmart's North Oxford store, presented the grant to the Connection's staff. The award funds will go toward the trap and release program.

Ms. Trudy Charette of Dudley was the founder of the CCC when it began. She used her Dudley home as the original site and then moved into a small storefront near the French River Bridge. The Community Cat Connection is also synonymous with its generous benefactor, Mrs.

Marilyn Fels. Without Mrs. Fels' benevolence and concern, the Connection's current building construction, maintenance, and upkeep would never have happened. Her caring and goodwill is an asset to the Town of Webster and surrounding communities.

As Charles Dickens wrote: "What greater gift than the love of a cat?" and there are quite a few beautiful cats waiting for you to choose them as your faithful and loving companion.

Potential volunteers may download Volunteer Forms from their website: www.communitycatconnection.org

Community Cat Connection, 289 Thompson Road, Webster MA 01570 (across from the former Colonial Restaurant). (508) 949-0779.

Open hours to the public: Thurs/Fri 12 noon - 3:30 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Find them on Facebook. Info@ccatconnection.org

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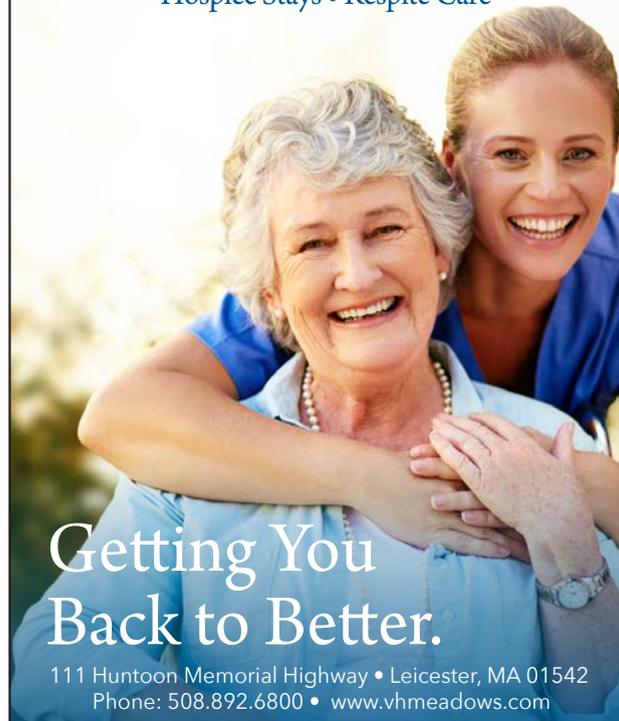
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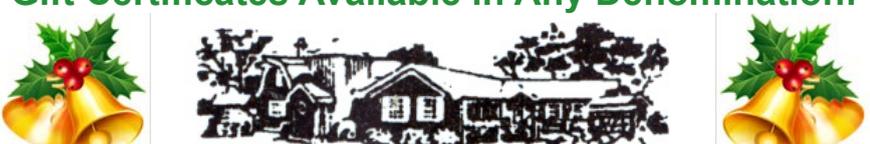

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BY ROD LEE

Lisa Moon has no previous experience in the food industry, but this would not be apparent from the strong start The Neighborhood Kitchen is enjoying on Church Street in downtown Whitinsville.

Lisa Moon aims high with The Neighborhood Kitchen

Open since January 5th, The Neighborhood Kitchen is building a clientele for dine-in or takeout on a menu of “American comfort food” for lunch or dinner.

The restaurant is closed on Tuesdays.

From such “Starters” as onion strings, clam cakes and buffalo chicken tenders to an array of noon-hour sandwiches (served all day) to Entrees like Pasta and Meatballs, Shepherd’s Pie,

Turkey Dinner, American Chop Suey, Meatloaf and Haddock and Hand-Cut Fries (Thursdays and Fridays only), the restaurant is “where family and friends gather to eat,” Ms. Moon said on November 17th.

She even has a kiosk at her husband Mark Moon’s nearby Sparetime Recreation so that bowlers can order food.

Arrangements with Door Dash, Uber Eats and Grub

Hub and “an amazing cook staff” are leading the way in establishing The Neighborhood Kitchen as the town’s most promising new restaurant.

The menu is complemented by several exotic “shakes.” Fruity Pebbles, Orange Dreamsicle, Cotton Candy Unicorn and Cup of Dirt—for example.

The interior of what was previously mostly a pizza place has been completely renovated and upgraded with tables crafted by Mr. Moon and a neighborhood-themed mural spray painted on one of the long interior walls. Ryan Gardell, an artist, did the honors and the mural is impressive.

Ms. Moon has set an



Lisa Moon, owner of The Neighborhood Kitchen, with DeShauna Bates and David Place Sr.

ambitious tone that even included “breakfast and pre-order your dinner go to for Thanksgiving, with a meal featuring fresh-roasted turkey, mashed potatoes, butternut squash, corn, stuffing, cranberry sauce, gravy and a roll-for \$14.95.

She is more than willing to take on any job necessary.

“I cook, wash dishes, clean, wait on tables. That’s what I think an owner should do,” she says.

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or roll-for \$14.95.

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THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL

Based on the series by: Stephen Hillenburg
Book by: Kyle Jarow

PERFORMANCE DATES:
MARCH 17, 18 & 19

*Performances at The Bradley Playhouse

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BRADLEY
THE BRADLEY PLAYHOUSE PUTNAM, CT

THE SPONGEBOB MUSICAL

AUDITION DATES:

WEDNESDAY, December 14 at 6PM – 8PM
or SATURDAY, December 17 at 5PM – 6PM
(possible call-backs on 12/17 6pm-7pm)

AUDITION LOCATION:

THE COMPLEX PERFORMING AND CREATIVE ARTS CENTRE
135 Main Street Putnam, CT

- Please prepare 16-32 measures of a song* to sing (* Song Options for characters are listed on audition link below)
- Be prepared to cold read from the script
- Be prepared to learn choreography
- Narrator Auditions should be prepared for cold readings
- All characters should be prepared for impressions and character voices

FOR FULL AUDITION DETAILS
AND ALL CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:
www.TheBradleyPlayhouse.org/auditions

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Happenings!

NOTE: Community bulletin board-type items are welcome for inclusion in the Happenings! section of the Xpress newspapers. Please allow enough lead time for publication. Email your calendar or event notice to rodlee.1963@gmail.com.

ONGOING

• The "Arsenal of Democracy" exhibit at the American Heritage Museum, 568 Main St., Hudson, celebrates the phrase FDR coined during a radio broadcast on December 29, 1940, to signal that the then-still-neutral United States would use all of its industrial might to build the weapons needed by the last struggling democracies to save themselves from fascism. The American Heritage Museum is open Wednesday-Sunday.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2

• The Oxford Senior Center's Senior Book Club meets at 12:45 p.m. to discuss "A Redbird Christmas" by Fannie Flagg; at the Senior Center, 323 Main St.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3

• St. Gabriel's Church, 151 Mendon St., Upton, will host its Christmas Fair from 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. with a variety of fresh balsam wreaths, cemetery baskets and table-top arrangements. Raffles available. A new gift boutique featuring new and "like new" items, Oldye Tyme Christmas decorations, gems, jewels seasonal décor will be included along with a Bake Table. Face masks are encouraged.
• The 25th anniversary of the Uxbridge First Holiday Night Celebration and Parade, a family

tradition, will be held. Volunteers are welcome for the event. Stop by the Mendon Street Kitchen for more information.

• The Uxbridge PSG 2023 is hosting a Jack-a-doo Holiday Vendor Fair from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Uxbridge High School, 300 Quaker Highway. More than thirty local vendors with unique gifts for the holidays. Contact PSG for more information at psguxbridge@gmail.com or check Facebook, UxbridgePSG2023-ParentsforSafeGraduation.

• The Sutton Chain of Lights: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., featuring family fun with free trolleys, boutique shops, local products, handmade gifts, specialty items and services for all the people on your Christmas list.

• "Christmas in New England" will return for a live concert with a performance at the Rockdale Congregational Church, 42 Fowler Road, Northbridge, at 7:30 p.m. Admission is \$15 at the door only. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Desserts and beverages will be available at intermission along with a Cookie Walk. For more information, visit www.christmasinnewengland.net or call 617-429-0347.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

• "Grafton Celebrates the Holidays" at the Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, from noon to 4 p.m., in partnership with Grafton

RISE. Girl Scouts Gingerbread Contest; Friends of the Library Bookstore; Henna artist; Central Massachusetts Foster/Adopt MA giveaways and activities; Girl Scouts singing holiday tunes.

• Visit the Baptist Church of Grafton, 1 South St., to view its annual Creche Display in the sanctuary as part of "Grafton Celebrates the Holidays." The display features a variety of manger scenes drawn from artistic styles from around the world—a truly international depiction.

• The New England Country Music Club presents the Rhode Island Rednecks at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge. Doors: 12:30 p.m. with live dancing and entertainment from 1-5 p.m. www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6

• The Webster Dudley Business Alliance's Holiday Party will take place from 5-7 p.m. at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main St., Webster.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7

• A Holiday Sing-a-Long with Diane Pollard is scheduled at 2:30 p.m. at the Northbridge Senior Center (Plummer Place), 20 Highland St., Whitinsville. Sign up in the main office.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8

• Explore the benefits of The Zentangle Method while unleash-

ing your inner artist and creative capabilities, at the Northbridge Senior Center (Plummer Place), 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, from 10:00 to 11:00 a.m. Did you know that Zentangle was developed right here in Whitinsville? Sign up at the main office.

• The Auburn Chamber of Com-

merce's annual Holiday Party - 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Realtor Association of Central Massachusetts, 492 Washington St., Auburn. Bring an unwrapped toy and a door prize. All donations will benefit

HAPPENINGS!

continued on page 10

Maxwell Luciano's
BANQUET AND CONFERENCE CENTER AT UNION STATION

Jay Gates Impersonates
New Year's Eve
December 31, 2022

Eddie Money
Rod Stewart
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Dancing to DJ Tony Arden

\$75 per person
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BAR ONLY: \$40 at door includes Champagne toast, danish and coffee (midnight)
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DECEMBER 16 • 8PM

BREAKFAST WITH SANTA
DECEMBER 18 • 9AM-12PM

New Year's Eve with **THE FLOCK**
DECEMBER 31 • 6:30PM

Elvis Presley's 88th Birthday Celebration with **DAN FONTAINE AND THE MEMPHIS SUN MAFIA BAND**
JANUARY 7 • 8PM

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AUDITIONS

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DIRECTOR: Josh Raymond
STAGE MANAGER: David Anderson

PERFORMANCE DATES:
February 24, 25, 26
March 3, 4, 5

THE GIRL ON THE TRAIN

AUDITION DATES:
SUNDAY, December 4 at 6:30PM – 8PM
or TUESDAY, December 6 at 6:30PM – 8PM

THE BRADLEY PLAYHOUSE
30 Front Street- Putnam, CT

Character age range: Male: 30-45 & Female: 30-45
Character requirements: British accent

Please plan to arrive at the start time and to stay until the end. Auditions will consist of group readings (which may include other selections from the script, in addition to the sides provided in advance. Audition readings will be available in the theater drop-box, located outside, on the wall, to the right of the front entrance doors, which can be picked up anytime.

FOR FULL AUDITION DETAILS AND ALL CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS:
WEBSITE: www.TheBradleyPlayhouse.org/Auditions
FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/TheBradleyPlayhouse

Webster Supt. Dr. Ruthann Petruno-Goguen looks to retirement

BY JANET STOICA

It seems like just yesterday when Webster's School Committee chose Dr. Ruthann Petruno-Goguen as its new superintendent.

Her six years as the town's school administrator have sped by like the crack of a lightning bolt. Superintendent Petruno-Goguen is retiring. Her last day as school manager will be

March 3, 2023. "It'll be a sad day and a happy day," said Dr. Petruno-Goguen. "My family will be happy but this community has become part of my heart and soul. I am

so proud of all the work everyone in our school system has accomplished as a team. Our teachers, aides, office staff, school committee, counselors, cafeteria personnel, maintenance crew, and especially our parents are all to be commended for their valuable part in making this school system the best it can be. Teamwork is key to helping our students get the best education we can give them."

Her influence and accomplishments will remain, however, for years to come. Time and hard work have passed quickly for Webster's school management, teachers, and support personnel and their achievements have been many. There has been an enormous amount of student development since Superintendent Petruno-Goguen has taken the helm. Among her many accomplishments are instructional practices and teacher development. The Bartlett High School building project is another positive achievement voted on by a majority of the town's residents who believe in a safer and better brick-and-mortar learning environment for their children.

"I'm grateful for my time here and for working to make change to benefit our students," said Dr. Petruno-Goguen, "it's a very hard position and I've been a superintendent for twelve years with six of those years here in Webster. We're a turn-around district and we've done great work. I'm

so very proud of all we've accomplished."

During Dr. Petruno-Goguen's tenure, there have been many changes in the areas of curriculum renewal with new instructional materials based on English, math, and the sciences; professional teacher development to meet diverse student needs; and improvement of high school student programs that provide many opportunities for college pathways. The superintendent was quick to point out that Webster's students, teachers, and support personnel went above and beyond during COVID with a much better than average student participation.

"Our Mapfre Insurance Company partnership for our junior and senior high school students is a great success," stated Dr. Petruno-Goguen, "our One Goal program, which works with students to help them achieve college degrees, has been very successful where 100% of those students moved on to college educations. Our community outreach through our North Village program, our teamwork with the Samuel Slater Museum, and our Mapfre alliance have been just some of our school system successes. Our innovation pathways in the bio-medical fields have been a great student accomplishment. Bartlett students participated in a STEM competition and took 3rd place in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts' dentistry field. We are proud of our students' accomplishments."



Dr. Ruth Petruno-Goguen's career as superintendent of schools in Webster is drawing to a close.

One thing's for sure, the halls of Webster's school system will be silent for some time after Superintendent Ruthann Petruno-Goguen's departure. She will be greatly missed for all that she's given to this town and its school system. Her stamina, strength, successes, efforts, and never-ending optimism for the goodness and well-being of all those she touched, student and staff alike, will now be added to the history of the Webster school system. We will miss you dearly, Superintendent Petruno-Goguen, and hope you will continue to have a very sweet finish here in Webster for all that you have given us. You've been through trials and errors, ups and downs, frustrations and joys, and your accomplishments have been many. We can only hope your successor will bring the same grace and professionalism that you have blessed our school system with. Best wishes for continued success through March 2023 and may all kindness and honor be yours for the future!

"Time flies over us, but leaves its shadow behind." ~ Nathaniel Hawthorne

Contact Janet: jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28 TH	12:00pm		
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29 TH	12:00pm		

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HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 9

Auburn Youth & Family Services.
• A book-folding workshop will take place at the Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13

• The Charlton Public Library, 40 Main St., presents the Shepherd Hill Choir Holiday Concert at 12:30 p.m. in Dexter Hall.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14

• A Grafton Ukele Musicians Jam:

Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15

• "All That Glitters is Snow," a holiday party, will be held at the Northbridge Senior Center (Plummer Place), 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, from noon to 2 p.m. A catered lunch will be served and there will be Victorian carolers. Tickets are \$5 and must be purchased at Plummer Place. Doors open at 11:45 a.m.
• A book-folding workshop will take place at the Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

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TALES FROM BEYOND *tomdagostino.com*

Otherworldly voices and forms haunt The Dover Mills

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

The Dover Mills still sits at the heart of downtown Dover, New Hampshire. The mill's history is ripe with tales of prosperity and woe. Perhaps that is why its walls are full of ghosts and ethereal noises passing through the time barrier.

The mills go back to the early days of the Industrial Revolution. John Williams and fellow investors formed the Dover Cotton Factory in 1812 along the Cochecho River. In 1823 the name was changed to Dover Manufacturing Company because they began manufacturing other items along with the cotton.

Factory life was hard. Mr. Williams paid his worker girls forty-seven cents a day. They received room and board and put two cents per day towards medical. The workers toiled for eleven to twelve hours a day. From March thru October, the workday ran from 6:30 AM to 6:30 PM with forty-five minutes for lunch.

John Williams moved to Boston around 1828, leaving James Curtis in charge of the business. He was harsh and insensitive to the woman

employees. He cut their wages from fifty-eight cents a day to fifty-three cents. He even imposed a fine of twelve and one-half cents for anyone who showed up late.

On December 30, 1828, about four hundred of the eight hundred female workers stormed off the job and took up a picket line in front of the factory. This was the first strike by women in the workforce of the United States. Unfortunately, the strike was a failure. The mill owners placed an ad for replacements, and the women were forced to return to their jobs on January 1, 1829, with a reduction in pay.

Expansion created another building to manufacture cloths and other related goods. This branch was named the Cochecho Manufacturing Company. The spelling error in the name was due to an oversight by the state clerk when recording the birth of the business. Even the river now bears the name with the missing "H."

Years passed, and the mill grew into several buildings. One building of particular interest was the new Building #1, built at the bend of the river, known as "The Beach." This

building is the site of the tragic fire that occurred on January 26, 1907. The fire broke out on the fourth floor at about 6:30 PM. Since the sprinkler system was down, the fire spread quickly. Workers had to leap from the windows, and many were injured. The firefighters fought the blaze for one and a half days in temperatures that plummeted as low as twenty-six degrees below zero.

In the end, four people were lost to the fire, and the building was gutted. They rebuilt the structure and by 1908, it was back in business.

In 1909 the factory was sold to Pacific Mills of Lawrence, Massachusetts. At the end of World War I, things took a turn for the worse. Then came the Depression, and in 1937, the great facility finally closed its doors. In 1940 the town of Dover bought the mill at an auction for the sum of fifty-four thousand dollars.

They rented the complex to small businesses, but the buildings had fallen into a sad state of disrepair. By the 1960s, only the ghosts inhabited the empty shells that loomed over the center of town. In 1984 the mill was purchased and renovated into office and business spaces. The building lives

once more with the advent of present-day industry and the revenants of the past.

People standing outside of the building after business hours have claimed to see strange glowing lights hovering around the upper floor windows. Voices of the long-dead still echo through the building as if calling out over the clamor of the machinery that once graced its walls. Other noises frequently

heard are the clanging of old machinery. The sounds resemble old looms and other manufacturing machines starting and stopping. A custodian working the night shift often heard the phantom machinery running while he was working.

Otherworldly voices and forms have been witnessed in one of the towers. Eerie lights sometimes emanate from the basement windows. This

would not seem so strange if it was not for the fact that the basement has been securely sealed for many years.

Could the workers of the past still be drawn to their duties long after their mortal time on earth? Is the machinery that maimed or claimed the lives also part of the spirit world; or is it just a byproduct of the ghost's never-ending tenure at the haunted Cochecho Mill?



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LIVING WITH LUKE

amyleclaire@hotmail.com

The stars align for Luke Valentino – parking lot peril

BY AMY LECLAIRE

Every Dog Mom relates. There's always one frightening incident, the dog story to be told and retold. The one that can't be topped. I thought losing Luke to the shadowy cave of the fox den last spring was my scary story, and the one to be placed up on a high shelf. He was a curious three-month old pup, still learning his boundaries, yet, incidentally, my smartest dog to date. Luke is a thinker and he aims to please.

"I'm coming, Momma! I just needed to sniff the muddy leaves across the street!" My puppy isn't perfect. He loves to explore but always comes back on command, and expects to be rewarded for good intentions. "How about a few blueberries since I listened so well?" My horror was

not surprising, then, when after a full ten minutes of searching the yard, I still couldn't find little Luke on that chilly, spring day. Worse, Daddy Fox had been checking him out on more than one occasion. I knew a clever carnivore when I saw one. Little did I know that my fear of losing the pup that stole my heart (even after losing King Lincoln) was about to rekindle.

We had just visited the dog park. After parking and guiding him to jump from dog crate (perched in the trunk) to ground, I allowed him to grab his leash and gallop up to the dog park gate. The park is safely located on a high hill at the end of a long, driveway flanked by woods. The small liberty offered, I've learned, has helped Luke to gain confidence with unfamiliar ground. He loves to survey the play scene before making a grand entrance. "My name is Luke Valentino and I'm

here to play! I excel in a defensive game of wrestling and/or chase, but preferably wrestling because I'm not built for speed. Oh, and my Mom might not let me play with you if you're a Pitt. Who's ready?" The spirit of the dog park, though fun and free, served as an unhelpful precedent to our next destination.

I had a lunch date planned with a friend at Panera, the outdoor café of which Luke had come to know and love. "How old is your puppy? He's so

well behaved! I once had a Golden that looked just like him!" Friend after friend came over to meet and greet my social (now) ten-month old puppy. His favorite server, Ryan, filled his water bowl and made sure to add enough ice (a recurrent Valentino request). The Panera experience had become a vision that danced through my puppy's head like a slab of moist chicken.

"Hey, I know this place! This is where I meet new adults and children! And Ryan brings me water! And



"More ice, please."



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my Mom gives me a slice of—"

After noting the scene through the backseat window, his four legs found the ground as they usually do, with his leash clipped and exuberant thirst for life turned on. I fumbled with his backpack, adjusted my keys to lock the car, and rushed to the unsafe speed of a puppy in a hurry, a puppy pulling me forward, a puppy who had suddenly broken free!

What happened next plays out now in my mind like a slow-motion film featuring someone else's pup. Luke, unaware of the vehicles surrounding him, galloped through the mid-section of the parking lot to then cross over the main road running parallel to the restaurant's front entrance. A car was coming. It wasn't speeding. But it wasn't moving slowly either. It was simply moving forward casually, a ship sailing to the motion of a breeze. The driver (though I'm not absolutely sure) seemed unaware of the puppy heading in front of her car. Likewise, Luke was unaware of the danger. I could not scream his name because stopping him in his tracks would have derailed the physics of what was to become a perfect storm. My heart sank in my chest and I screamed his name a thousand times while running forward to witness what stars look like when aligned. The exact speed of Luke's gallop had

aligned perfectly with that of the oblivious driver, so that the two moving parts, pup and car, had sailed seamlessly by each other. Had the driver accelerated a beat faster, Luke would have been hit. Had Luke moved a few steps slower, ditto. A small crowd had already formed on the patio to protect the galloping puppy.

"Oh my gosh." I made it to him and gasped while he sat regally, completely oblivious to what had just transpired. "Look at all of these amazing people to greet, Momma!"

For as long as I live, I don't think I'll ever forget the compassion shown in the eyes of a girl who came to our side. "It's okay. It just happened." She had bright, punk style hair and kind eyes.

"That was completely my fault," I said back, feeling dizzy.

"Sometimes things just happen and we don't know why. He's alright. Your puppy is going to be alright and so aren't you."

I've always said that dogs are better than people. But on that particular day, I learned that sometimes the stars align, and people are just as good.

Tell me your dog story. Write to me amyleclaire@hotmail.com

Follow Luke on IG: @livingwithlukevalentino

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BY JOHN PAUL

Q. My Ford Explorer with 321,000 makes a noise if I'm driving more than 45 miles per hour. When I accelerate it's fine, when I let off the gas, there is a loud fan-like noise. What could cause that?

A. Generally, the differential pinion bearing will make this type of growling noise. Typically, the noise gets louder the faster you drive. Four-wheel drive vehicles like yours can sometimes be a little hard to diagnose. As a general rule the front pinion bearing will be noisy when coasting and the rear pinion bearing will make noise under load.

Q. This isn't a car repair question; I would like to buy an American car, what cars are made in America?

A. There was a time that this was an easy question to answer. Ford, General Motors and Chrysler were all American cars, made for the most part in the United States or at least North America. Traditional import cars have manufacturing or assembly plants from the Carolinas to California. You could buy Honda Accord made in Ohio, a Toyota Camry made in Kentucky, Hyundai made in Alabama. The Last Buick I drove was made in China so it gets quite confusing. Although it even seems odd for me to say (might be a generational issue) Tesla may be the most American car company. Trucks from GM and Ford are very American as are the Chevrolet Corvette and Ford Mustang. As you are car shopping look at the window sticker, it will tell you where the car is made and the percentage of American parts.

Q. Gasoline is still too expensive, and my question is can tires actually save gas? I have been hearing about tires that can cause the car to use less fuel, is this true?

A. I have seen some comparison studies that found that low rolling resistance tires such as Michelin Energy Saver and Bridgestone Ecopia can actually save fuel. In a test with a Toyota Prius the difference between tested tires with the lowest rolling resistance and the highest, resulted in the savings of 21 gallons of fuel over 15,000 miles without any trade-offs for performance and tire life. Now of course this isn't a huge saving, but every little bit helps. Without spending more money on tires, keep the tires you have properly inflated, accelerate and brake gently and combine trips when possible.

Q. We love our Honda Odyssey because of its reliability, fuel efficiency, comfort and its quiet car-like ride. We need a vehicle like the Odyssey because of our kids, our dog and we are teachers and get the summer off and always plan long road trips. One of the other reasons we like the Honda is because of the built in vacuum. Do you think the new Honda is still a good choice?

A. I still believe that the Honda Odyssey is one of the best vehicles of its type on the market. It rides well, gets decent fuel mileage and is very versatile. The Toyota Sienna is also a good choice and stands apart from the mini-van crowd with all-wheel-drive. The Sienna as well as the Chrysler Pacifica also have hybrid options. I do have one bit of bad news about the Honda Odyssey, the last time I looked due to supply chain issues, the built in Honda-Vac was unavailable.

Q. I just bought a 2002 Lexus SC430 with 70,000 miles on it from a neighbor and it is in stunning condition. Most people who look at the car think it is a new model. Would you recommend due to age that I replace the timing belt and water pump? I think the manual recommends 90,000 miles but considering the car is 20 years old, I'm thinking it might be the right thing to do.

A. Considering the age of the car it would make sense to replace the timing belt

and belt tensioner as well as the alternator and power steering belts. Regarding the water pump, I would also replace it since it is an integral part of the timing belt system. The labor to replace the timing belt in just under five hours and it is only another 18 minutes to replace the water pump. When replacing the belts and water pump give the coolant hoses a good look too. In my opinion although a little costly replacing these items could prevent a costly breakdown and would be money very well spent.

John Paul is AAA Northeast's Car Doctor. He has over forty years' experience and is an ASE-certified master technician. He will answer readers' questions each week. Email your car questions to jpaul@aanortheast.com. Follow John on Twitter @johnfpaul and friend him on Facebook, mrjohnfpaul.

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REAL ESTATE



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

What's ahead for mortgage rates and home prices?

Now that the end of 2022 is close, you may be wondering what's going to happen in the housing market next year and what that may mean if you're thinking

about buying a home. Here's a look at the latest expert insights on both mortgage rates and home prices so you can make your best move possible.

Mortgage rates will continue to respond to inflation. There's no doubt mortgage rates have skyrocketed this year as the market responded to high inflation. The increases we've seen were fast and the average 30-year fixed mortgage rate even surpassed 7% at the end of last month. In fact, it's the first time they have risen this high in over 20 years.

Just one year ago, rates were under 3%. This

means that while mortgage rates are not as high as they were in the 80's, they have more than doubled in the past year. Mortgage rates have never doubled in twelve months before.

Because we are in unprecedented territory, it's hard to say with certainty where mortgage rates will go from here. Projecting the future of mortgage rates is far from an exact science, but experts do agree that, moving forward, mortgage rates will continue to respond to inflation. If inflation stays high, mortgage rates likely will too.

Home price changes will

vary by market. As buyer demand has eased this year in response to those higher mortgage rates, home prices have leveled off in many markets too. In terms of the forecast for next year, expert projections are mixed. The general consensus is home price appreciation will vary by local market, with more significant changes happening in overheated areas.

Basically, some areas may still see slight price growth while others may see slight price declines. It all depends on other factors at play in that local market, like the

balance between supply and demand. This may be why experts are divided on their latest national forecasts.

If you want to know what's happening with home prices or mortgage rates, reach out to the Marzeotti Group or a trusted realtor for the latest on what experts are saying and what that means for your local area.

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Roth IRA conversion right for you?



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

Depending on your situation, it might be appropriate to make some year-end financial moves. But there's one in particular that may allow you to take advantage of the current investment climate while providing potential benefits far into the future.

This move is called a Roth IRA conversion — the process of converting all or a portion of a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA. Traditional IRAs are often funded with pre-tax dollars, so contributions can lower your taxable income, and earnings can grow tax deferred. A Roth

IRA, however, is funded with after-tax dollars, so you get no immediate tax deduction, but earnings and contributions can be withdrawn federally tax free, as long as you meet several requirements, including holding your account for five years and not taking withdrawals until you're at least 59½.

If you're attracted to the prospect of tax-free withdrawals in retirement, you might consider converting some or all of your traditional IRA dollars to a Roth IRA. Yet, there's one major issue to address: taxes. Any deductible contributions to your traditional IRA, and the earnings generated by these contributions, will be fully taxable the year of the conversion. If you've invested in your traditional IRA for many years, this tax bill could be considerable.

But if you were interested in converting some of your traditional IRA funds

to a Roth in 2022, you might have one advantage, tax-wise — and that's the state of the financial markets. As you are no doubt aware, it's been a rough year for stocks, so the value of some of the investments in your traditional IRA may have fallen, perhaps substantially. If you were to convert these assets to a Roth IRA, your tax bill might be quite a bit lower than it would have been last year amid the lengthy bull market.

Still, lower taxes aren't the same as no taxes. Ideally, you probably don't want to take money out of the IRA itself to pay the taxes, since this might reduce some of the benefits. So, if you don't have another source from which you can draw, you may find that a conversion might not make as much sense.

However, you could lower this tax bill by making smaller conversions over several years. And you might ultimately find

this strategy worthwhile, because moving from a traditional IRA to a Roth IRA can offer some advantages. For one thing, since qualifying Roth IRA withdrawals won't be counted as income, they won't cause additional taxation of your Social Security benefits or bump up your Medicare premiums. (If you wait until retirement before making the conversion, the conversion itself could have these effects, at least for the years in which it takes place.)

Also, with a traditional IRA, you typically must start taking withdrawals once you reach 72, but a Roth IRA doesn't have this requirement. So, if you don't need all your Roth IRA funds to support your retirement lifestyle, you can pass the remainder, tax free, to your beneficiaries. Consequently, a Roth IRA can play an important role in your estate planning.

Whatever the benefits of a Roth IRA, it's essential

that you consult with your tax advisor before making a conversion decision. It's a big move — so you'll want to be sure it's right for you.

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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Webster town administrator offers updates on Lake Street, high school bonds

BY JANET STOICA

Rick LaFond, Webster's town administrator, stated recently that the Lake Street sewer project is progressing well.

"Our sewer project is coming along and is on schedule," said Mr. LaFond, "it has been substantially completed. In the meantime, our Highway Superintendent, Ken Pizzetti, will be working with the project contractor to assist with engineering to make

Lake Street safe for plowing this winter. The first layer of asphalt will be applied by mid-December and the final asphalt coat will be completed in the spring. Soon the street will be much easier for all commuters to navigate."

Lake Street is a main thoroughfare for much of Webster's traffic and the sewer project has made commuting a veritable nightmare for many residents with detours and road closures along the road.

Each day has brought new detours and re-routings. Residents will soon be rewarded with substantial improvements to the sewer system as well as a first-rate driving surface.

Webster has also applied for and received approval for a Qualified Bond Program administered by the Commonwealth which will allow the town to borrow funds at the same rate that the Commonwealth pays. Massachusetts' bond rating is AA+ and Webster's

bond rating is A+. "We'll be borrowing \$57 million at a better rate to pay for our high school's improvement project that has a total cost of \$101 million and we will also use the additional funds for our PFAs project for safer drinking water and new water meters. Massachusetts will pay for 51% of the total \$101 million school improvement price tag," said Mr. LaFond.

The town is looking forward to a higher bond upgrade rate. "Tim Bell, our

town accountant, deserves a huge amount of credit for getting this together," stated Administrator LaFond, "he has done a lot of research and due diligence."

Webster's Police Chief Michael Shaw was a recent graduate of the FBI's National Academy where he received 10 weeks of training at the University of Virginia with classes geared toward law enforcement disciplines in the areas of security and crisis intervention as well as officer

wellness. Only about 1% of law enforcement officers who apply are accepted into the program. Webster is truly fortunate to have Chief Shaw as head of its police department. Chief Shaw hopes to have other members of the town's police department apply to the FBI Academy.

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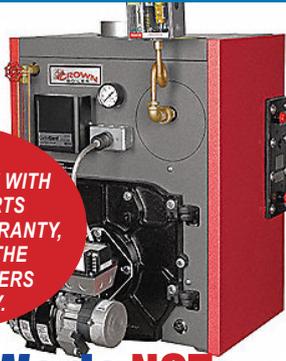
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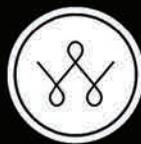
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