

# The Yankee Xpress

CROSTOWN ADS & BUSINESS NEWS

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January 6 - February 10, 2023



The former Anglo Fabrics buildings in Webster are soon to become the focus on a major redevelopment project.

## Webster's Anglo Fabrics area to undergo redevelopment

BY JANET STOICA

Yes, it's really happening. The former Anglo Fabrics mill buildings are on the verge of a renaissance right here in Webster. After a major clean-up effort by former owner, Chris Robert, the properties were recently sold to an investment firm of local business partners from the greater Worcester area. The plans sound fascinating and will be a definite positive for the North Village section of the town.

Rita Flagg of Meadow View Realty in Harvard brokered the transaction and is also scheduled to present the upcoming construction facts to the Webster/Dudley/Oxford Chamber of Commerce at the organization's

January meeting.

"It will be a four-phase development project," said Ms. Flagg, "the buyers who were interested in the area are developers who saw the future for the former Anglo Fabrics property. Mr. Chris Robert of Webster had done a major clean-up of the area and upgraded the buildings to make them suitable for development."

"In the 1980's I had lived at 13 Pearl Street with my mom," said Rita, "I had an affection for the area and when this parcel fell into my lap I was only too eager to see it brought to a great opportunity for the town of Webster. The buyers have a long-term commitment to see this project come to a great conclusion."

The new owners worked

with Edgewater Construction, a design/build corporation that caters to the needs of developers. Their strengths are in the areas of conversion of older buildings. Epsilon Consulting also plays a role in assisting to qualify the buildings for state and federal tax credits that then allow these monies to be re-used for refurbishing the projects they are involved with. Epsilon will help with loans and other needs as the project moves forward.

Phase One of the project is quite simple, a walking path that will take a route along the French River and around two sides of

### REDEVELOPMENT

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## Auburn town manager to retire, closing stellar career

BY JANET STOICA

After eleven years steering the ship of Auburn, Julie Jacobson will be saying goodbye to the town on January 30, 2023. Her triumphs and successes as town manager as well as any unfinished business will now be built on by her successor, Edward Kazanovicz, who is currently the town's chief financial officer and assistant town manager.

Formerly assistant city manager in Worcester, Ms. Jacobson assumed the leadership role of managing the town of Auburn's welfare in 2011. "Grant writing was one of my main goals to bring in new revenue to the town," said Ms. Jacobson. "I wanted us to aggressively seek and secure grant funding. We've applied for 391 grants worth over \$30 million and we've been awarded 340 of them totaling \$16 million. All departments write their own grants as we have no town grant writer. All department heads and employees are encouraged to actively seek grant funding and I'm proud of our department heads for accomplishing this. There has been no additional burden on the town's taxpayers."

Ms. Jacobson explained that if not for the grant funding the monies would come out of the town's capital improvement projects funds. All grants are tracked with Excel spreadsheets in a collaborative effort across all town departments. "Our employees have been just great at this," she said, "they are all educated in grant writing and have become very proficient."

Ms. Jacobson reviewed some of the town's accomplishments



Julie Jacobson has spent thirty-seven years in municipal government including the past eleven as town manager in Auburn. She will retire in January.

including the introduction of many new businesses and the startup of a business roundtable to bring together business leaders to listen to their concerns and suggestions. "We've seen great industrial growth in the past nineteen years," she said, "town bylaws were reviewed and modified to become more business friendly."

"We have a lot of exciting projects going on in Auburn right now too," stated Ms. Jacobson. "The former Julia Bancroft School on Vinal Street has been transformed into senior housing that includes 60 apartment units of affordable housing. Eight of those units will be offered at market rate. Our former Mary D. Stone School was converted into senior housing apartments as well and opened in 2021. The beautiful stone façade was nicely preserved and redeveloped with much thoughtful design accommodations, the original blackboards were preserved and even the children's coat hangers were

### JACOBSON

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**REDEVELOPMENT**  
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the development. The path will be animal friendly and offer the use of clean-up bags for those who choose to walk their furry friends. The walkway will wind along with river views and present a relaxing environment for all walkers. There will be beautiful landscaping and shade structures like pergolas for a peaceful respite.

Phase Two will consist of the major construction of 46 apartments to be leased at market rates. Two-bedroom apartments will encompass 70% of the construction, 20% will be one-bedroom apartments, and 10% will be three-bedroom. "Hopefully, a



bakery will be a major part of the project," said Ms. Flagg. "I want to bring the aromas of what I knew in my childhood. A bakery would be a wonderful addition to the neighborhood. We are looking forward to seeing a few attractive and appealing cafes and restaurants pop up along the riverfront.

"In Phase Three there is discussion of a small hotel to cater to the local area

of Webster, Dudley, and Oxford. It's very exciting to have such a project in this area. It will be a great asset to Webster and the local towns.

Phase Four, which involves a cluster of smaller buildings, will include shops and, hopefully, more apartments. Perhaps a small shopping district. These buildings will be no more than two stories with apartments above the

shops."

The general public will surely get a good review of the new Webster development plans at the next Webster/Dudley/Oxford Chamber of Commerce meeting this month when Rita Flagg will be the keynote speaker.

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

**JACOBSON**

*continued from page 1*

used as a nice touch and a nod to the past." If and when town seniors decide to down-size and perhaps become senior housing dwellers, their homes will be available for younger families seeking their first new residences. The timely circle of life's residencies will be fulfilled.

Ms. Jacobson remarked about the current \$5.4 million road project in Drury Square and elaborated that the improvements were primarily a state project but the town did pay \$1 million of the costs for street-scaping, benches, and walkways. "It's almost finished," she said, "The renovation of Goddard Park will be a great accomplishment too. We hope to get the Goddard Rocket Fountain into working order again, along with the cleanup of Auburn Pond by the library. We'll be building a pedestrian bridge and walkway from the library to Goddard Park and adding a much-deserved sunroom to the library. Of the park, pond, and library improvements, the total project cost is \$1.5 million. Auburn taxpayers will fund \$500,000 of the total with additional funding provided by the Pappas Foundation and other grant monies. These

improvements will go out to bid in spring 2023 with completion expected in 18 months.

"My retirement from the town of Auburn will be bittersweet," said Ms. Jacobson. "There have been so many good experiences and great people here but I made the decision to spend time with my family at this stage of my life. I have two grandchildren now and want to spend time with them. I want to enjoy family time. After thirty-seven years in government, it's now time for family. I love municipal government and would like to communicate my feelings of gratification and fulfillment to those young people who are considering their first employment choices after completing their schooling. Our towns and cities need the younger generation to know what great careers they would have if they consider working for their own municipalities."

Additionally, Ms. Jacobson noted that "The Select Board voted to appoint Ed Kazanovicz as the next town manager effective January 31st. Currently the assistant town manager/chief financial officer, Ed and I have worked together since I started in January of 2011. Ed has been with the town for twenty-seven years and has worn multiple

hats here, many simultaneously: assistant town manager, chief financial officer, town accountant (until one year ago), and as CFO he is the department head overseeing the Town Accountant's Office, Treasurer/Collectors Office and Assessor's Office. Over the past twelve years, Ed has worked closely with me on a variety of projects, initiatives and issues ranging from economic development to human resources to collective bargaining. He is responsible for all aspects of financial management, including preparation of the 5 Year CIP annually, the 5 Year Budget Forecasts annually, and the Annual Operating Budget. He is the acting town manager in my absence. Mr. Kazanovicz is an experienced, skilled professional who is well prepared to assume the role of town manager when I retire."

Bon Voyage, Julie Jacobson, the Town of Auburn thanks you for your great leadership! May the wind be always at your back!

"Often when you are at the end of something, you are at the beginning of something else."

- Fred Rogers

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

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# Xpressly Yours ... a letter from the editor

## The Oxford Free Public Library and bank robbers?



Thoughts written while awaiting Christmas breakfast at a granddaughter's home in Putnam, and a New Year's Eve dinner with close friends at Point Breeze in Webster.

Dan Prouty of the Oxford Business Association and the new "Gateway Park" in town is one of those people any journalist would love for the tips they pass along that turn into good story material. Recently, Mr. Prouty sent me this email.

"Try to read this about Oxford bank robbers from the 19th Century. When I was a kid, old-timers told me that the \$\$\$ for the library came from the Larneds who were infamous bank robbers. Thus the Larned library in Oxford. Several years ago I came across a short story about an 1850 bank robbery in Charlestown, NH (boyhood home of Carleton Fisk). The Larneds were supposedly tied to other robberies in NH, VT and NY State. Clara Barton's brother Stephen was an accomplice and a biography about Clara included in her correspondence about Clara having to reimburse an insurance company after the Larneds and her brother were accused of burning down a

textile mill... They were evidently great entrepreneurs..."

A separate email, forwarded to me by Mr. Prouty and headed "Moadnock Moments No. 34: The Bungling Bank Robbers—Historical Society of Cheshire County," describes an incident that occurred the evening of June 11, 1850, when "Abijah Larned and an

which were discovered by Horace Gee of Marlow, who returned the money to claim a reward.

"Abijah Larned was later arrested and agreed to return to Charlestown to stand trial, probably in part so that he could learn what happened to his carriage of riches. He asked to be taken before the bank officers where he confessed to the crime and apologized for

and was later arrested and jailed for robbing the bank at Cooperstown, New York."

In trying to pin this down, and Clara Barton's brother's actual role, I could find no mention of the Larned family in a "Centennial Celebration" report written by Gilbert Asa Davis for Windsor County, Vermont. The information was voluminous, however, so I might have missed it.

The only reference to the Larned family I have come across so far comes from The Oxford Free Public Library's own website, which states that Charles Larned, a former resident, donated money in memory of his mother, Clarissa Larned, for construction of what was called the Larned Memorial Library "on the former Hyde lot." The building opened in 1903 and featured a stained glass window at the top of the stairs in the front foyer, depicting the arrival of the Pilgrims with a caption "Let there be light."

I am not sure when the Larned Memorial Library became The Oxford Free Public Library. The library's director, Brittany McDougal Bialy, put me in touch with her catalog and technology coordinator, Jacob Potter.

Mr. Potter likes to do "historical sleuthing," she said.

I have not yet heard back from Jacob Potter.



A vintage photograph of the Oxford Free Public Library.

accomplice broke into the bank at Charlestown, New Hampshire. By midnight they had loaded nearly \$12,000 in gold, silver and bills into their carriage and drove peacefully out of town." The report goes on to say that eleven miles to the south they came to a long hill between Drewsville and Marlow and got out of the carriage so their horse would have less weight to carry. They somehow managed to lose the horse and the carriage,

the trouble he had caused. It was also discovered that the horse had turned off on a side road halfway up the hill and wound up at Mr. Gee's house.

"Larned's apology so impressed the local officials that they returned his burglar's tools and allowed him to leave Charlestown after posting a small bail. Needless to say, Larned jumped bail and never returned to stand trial. He did continue to use his burglar's tools, however,

Given Clara Barton's sterling reputation, which is enshrined at the Clara Barton Birthplace Museum in Oxford, it is hard to believe she had a brother who was up to such no good. The museum's website lists as family members her father, Capt. Stephen Barton (1774-1862), "a prosperous businessman, captain of the local militia and a selectman in Oxford;" her mother, Sarah Stone Barton (1783-1851), "an independent woman who

was known for her thrift, eccentricity and volatile temper;" and siblings Dorothea Barton (1804-1846), Stephen Barton (1806-1865); Capt. David Barton (1808-1888); and Sarah "Sally" Barton Vassall (1811-1874).

Which leaves Stephen Barton as something of a mystery man, in the scheme of things.

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

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# Webster Five, YWCA partnering on financial seminars

Webster Five announced recently that it has established an exclusive relationship with the YWCA

Central Massachusetts to provide financial seminars for domestic violence survivors the YWCA serves as part of its comprehensive

domestic violence program. The \$15,000 grant from Webster Five will provide the necessary funding to serve one hundred twenty-five people per year over three years. The seminars will be delivered in person, remotely, one-on-one, and in small groups as well as sessions conducted in Spanish. Participants will sign up for five-week sessions, which will include a one-hour seminar each week.

"We are very excited to partner with Webster Five to provide this critical financial information for the people we serve," Tara Huard, manager, community-based intervention services, YWCA, said. "Understanding how to manage and budget money is an important step in helping survivors reach financial freedom and stay safe after leaving an abusive relationship. We are grateful to the Webster Five facilitators, who will participate in a training themselves to recognize the signs of domestic violence, for sharing their

knowledge.

"It is important for everyone to build their financial confidence by learning more about money management, and this is especially important for domestic violence survivors who often are denied access to finances by their abuser," Donald Doyle, president and CEO of Webster Five, said. "We are proud to support this important initiative and hope it will make a difference in the lives of everyone who participates in the seminars."

The seminars will include such topics as saving, budgeting, protecting financial information, building and repairing credit, and first-time home buying programs.

In other news involving Webster Five, the bank was recognized recently as a 2022 winner of a BBB of Central New England Award for Marketplace Excellence.

The award celebrates businesses in Central Massachusetts and Northeast Connecticut that epitomize corporate responsibility



Pictured representing the BBB and Webster Five in recognition of the award Webster Five received for Marketplace Excellence in Central Massachusetts are Nancy Cahalen, president and CEO of BBB of Central New England, Brian McEvoy, SVP Sr. Retail Banking Officer, Webster Five, Donald Doyle, president and CEO, Webster Five, Bruce Varner, mortgage loan originator, Webster Five, and Michele Kasabala, board chair for BBB of Central New England.

and always do what's right by the customers. Honorees convey to the community of businesses that upholding the ethical standards of the BBB is the hallmark of a successful

business. Other winners for 2022 included Harbro Auto Sales and service and the Worcester Railers Hockey Club.

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# Conroy War Memorial pays homage to heroic family members

BY ROD LEE

Veterans Day 2022 carried more meaning than usual for Sheila Conroy and three generations of the Conroy family, as they gathered on November 12th at 516 Southbridge St. in Auburn for dedication of the Conroy War Memorial.

The Conroy family has

had a presence in the town of Auburn for many years, Ms. Conroy pointed out.

“The site of the monument is the small piece of land remaining after the sale and division of the family-owned ten-plus acres for the Mass Pike, I-290, the widening of Southbridge St., and the relocation of Leicester St. (now known as Water St.)” she said, prior to the event.

Work began after a go-ahead was obtained from the Auburn Planning Board, which offered its support as well.

Swenson Granite Works was helpful in choosing the right materials and lettering for the handsome monument, Ms. Conroy said.

Ruben Da Silva of New Image Landscape Construction was responsible for

the structural design of the retaining wall and finishing off the area with crushed stone and mulch.

**The family members from World War II remembered on the monument are:**

Ralph J. Conroy, pilot for Gen. Eisenhower and President Truman.

Robert Conroy, killed in Italy on patrol with his K-9 Kosky. It was just four days after his twentieth birthday. Earlier that day Robert saved his entire platoon from ambush. His mother Hannah was presented with the Purple Heart for Robert’s bravery.

Frederick Conroy returned home after serving in Germany.

**Family members from the Vietnam War are as follows:**

Robert T. Conroy, son of Ralph Conroy and Rita Conroy.

Robert A. Whitney, son of Austin and Emma (Conroy) Whitney.

Paul K. Wentworth, son of Kenneth and Ruth (Conroy) Wentworth.



The names of Conroy family members who served in World War II and Vietnam are etched in this handsome monument in Auburn. The Conroy War Memorial was dedicated last month.

“The Conroy family have been residents of Auburn since the 1870s, beginning their first business as a convenience store and gas station where the Auburn Water District is presently,” Ms. Conroy said.

“Conroy Construction Co. was owned and operated by Henry Conroy, father to Ralph, Robert, Frederick, Emma and Ruth. Henry invented one of the first paving machines, which was used in his heavy construction business, located near Water St.

“The sons worked for their father and continued the operation of the business after Henry’s death in 1944.

“The family owned a package store, Chieftain

Liquor, on Southbridge St., which is still in operation with new owners. Next to the package store was the family-owned bowling alley, which is now the home of Home Outlet building materials.”

Ms. Conroy said Ralph Conroy purchased the land on Washington St. which became the Auburn Airport. This was in operation until his death in 1955. It then became the Auburn Drive-In and is now the location of Home Depot and BJ’s Wholesale.”

“The monument is a reminder of the bravery and dedication of these men, who kept our country free for generations now and to come,” Ms. Conroy said.



Gary Conroy offers welcoming remarks at the dedication of the Conroy War Memorial on Southbridge St. in Auburn on November 12th.

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# The Trades: From styling/barbering to plumbing, masonry, and...

BY JANET STOICA

**Y**ou just love your haircut and style you say? Did you ever think about all the training and schooling it took your hair fashionista to reach that level of their professional cutting and styling? Whether it's barbering or hair styling or any other tonsorial name, your hair designer has spent many hours fluffing and buzzing manes and pates. Do you think you can cut like they do? Well then, you missed your calling.

As I sit in my hair stylist's chair studying my hair and what other style it might be trimmed in, my hair fashionista, Nanette Tetreault of Elite Hair Design

in Thompson CT, gets to work snipping and clipping my multi-colored locks. I watch her intently in the mirror as she measures and cuts each section of my hair by holding each portion and then using her wicked sharp scissors to cut across those sections. "How does the front section look to you," says Nanette, "do you want it trimmed more or less?" I tell her the length is just right and there's no need for an extra shortening. The end result is always just right and in two weeks my style always seems to receive the most compliments from people I know. You know, that "just right" look in between regular trims. Ms. Tetreault has been a stylist for many years and

I've been visiting her every four weeks for quite some time. Her training must've been excellent as she truly is a perfectionist. Not too many perfectionists around these days!

If you've ever had plumbing services then you know it's a craftsman who has visited your home. Who could even think of doing their own plumbing with all the new and innovative products out there now to save time, trouble, and headaches? One of the latest money-saving technologies is a combination heat pump and air-conditioning unit made by a leader in that technology area: Mitsubishi. According to Vic Waskiewicz of J.V. Mechanical of Webster, these reliable

and energy-efficient units are becoming one of the most-requested installation products for his company. "Mitsubishi is definitely the leader in this area," says Mr. Waskiewicz, "we've installed hundreds of these wall-mounted ductless units that not only provide air-conditioning but heat as well. The units are 36" wide by 12" high and come in white, stainless steel, and black. Their outside compressor is the heat pump which reverses its function for cooling."

J.V. Mechanical employs a crew of fifteen plumbers who are graduates of local trade schools like Bay Path Regional Vocational. "We actively recruit, train, and continuously educate our

employees," Vic said. "Currently, we have two of our plumbers in classes learning the latest technologies. We also have a new young lady who is a recent graduate of plumbing trade school who is honing her plumbing skills with us. We are proud of the fact that our employees are well-versed in their trade and courteous to our customers." Vic's father, Joseph Waskiewicz, was a plumber and took Vic on many jobs with him to learn the trade. "Although I didn't go to trade school, I appreciated the work that I saw my father do," Vic said. "My dad taught me to diversify. We do basic plumbing, both commercial and residential, and have also advanced to higher levels for all heating systems like oil, electric, and gas. Even the lost art of steam heating systems is part of our skill set."

Masonry. A tough and very physical job that is likened to all the famous sculptors of history: Rodin, Michelangelo, Bernini, Bourgeois. If you've ever watched a mason at work perhaps building a brick wall, you may observe their repetitious movements slapping the mortar onto the brick layer and then gently pushing each brick into the muck. It's an art, a science, a well-honed skill to ensure each brick is aligned to the previous brick. To me, watching their craftsmanship is mesmerizing. From brick to stone, block, veneer, gabion to composite and reinforced masonry, the true artist of these various forms of creativity has learned skills that cannot be measured but for their finished beauty. If you've ever needed a mason, you know darn well how difficult it is to find someone who works with the highest degree of finesse.

Don't touch that circuit breaker board for Pete's sake! Dealing with electricity is dangerous and I'm sure you don't want to suffer the consequences of being electrocuted and

lighting up like a cartoon skeleton. That's when you call in an electrical expert. Brian Wood of Brian Wood Electrical has been honing his skills for many years and recently has completed extensive training in solar panel installations with SunRun, one of the largest solar panel distributors and installers in the United States. "I'm a graduate of Bay Path Regional Vocational High School," says Mr. Wood proudly, "and I owe my trade choice to the advice of my grandfather, Hiram Wood. He was an electrical engineer at Heald Machinery in Worcester. I was very close to him and when I was exploring the different trades at Bay Path, he advised me to take the electrical courses and I haven't looked back except to think about how right my grandfather was in steering me in this direction."

"I've always had my own business after completing my apprenticeship on Nantucket then I spent twenty-eight years in Worcester learning even more."

Mr. Wood worked as the head electrician for a large swimming pool installer for fifteen years and presently works for American Custom Builders. Additionally, he has done electrical work for the Samuel Slater Restaurant in Webster as well as phase one work at the new Samuel Slater Museum in Webster. His specialties are in the residential and light commercial areas. Accent lighting, backup generator installation, EV charging stations, circuit breaker installations, electrical panel upgrades, and outdoor lighting installations are just some of Mr. Wood's many areas of expertise.

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

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# Are you SAD? There's a good reason for it

BY JANET STOICA

**D**o you have Seasonal Affective Disorder (otherwise known as SAD)? Although I am not a psychiatrist nor do I hold a medical degree, I wanted to write an article about the emotions we all experience during the holiday season. The term that has been used over the past many years to describe our low points has come to be known as SAD. It is a reference to the low energy levels and mood changes that occur when sunlight diminishes beginning in September. For some of us, this slowly encroaching low point in our states of mind happens once annually beginning in the fall season and lasting until the spring. The sun sets sooner, the days shorten, holidays approach, anxiety sets in, and maybe loneliness begins to nudge us during the early onset of the season's darkness. We become less active and staying in bed later seems like a better choice than jumping out from beneath those cozy blankets to greet the day.

Sydney Zatz of Rochester, Minnesota's ABC news interviewed Dr. Craig Sawchuk of the Mayo Clinic and wrote the following: "For some people, they may experience this in early fall in mid-late September when the weather is still fairly pleasant. For other people, this might not hit until mid-January," said Dr. Craig Sawchuk, a psychologist at Mayo Clinic. SAD happens because of a chemical change in the brain when your body naturally makes more melatonin because it's dark. Melatonin is a sleep-related hormone released by the pineal gland to the brain at night that has been associated with sleep/awake cycles.

"Some folks might be more vulnerable to that. In return, with more exposure to light, that helps to regulate the system more. Most are probably familiar with Winter Seasonal Affective Disorder, but it can also happen in summer. Those symptoms include trouble sleeping, weight loss, and increased irritability. But how do you know these feelings are seasonal, rather than a sign of long-term depression?"

"When it's more the seasonal pattern, usually what we see is this happening for a person over a course of two years so that starts to establish more of a pattern. And then what you do actually find are individual differences of when

these symptoms come on or the onset of those symptoms.

When those symptoms do hit, it's recommended you stay social, get regular exercise, and use light therapy. A light box mimicking outdoor light to help boost your mood. It can especially be helpful for those who work overnight shifts. They may experience more variability in their sleep patterns but if there's an opportunity to regulate those patterns that would be great. However, when you do wake up in the morning, having to go with the artificial light is the way to go. And having a good, established wakeup routine. It's normal to have days when you feel down. If you can't get motivated to do things you normally enjoy that's when you should see a doctor."

SAD is also experienced when we are completely stressed out by the holidays. You know the feeling. Rushing around to get tasks completed before a family gathering and even the stress of buying gifts for those who won't really appreciate them. Who among us hasn't returned at least one holiday gift we've received? Then, of course, as we grow older we lose family members who always gathered with us during the holidays. One by one the jovial, the comedians, the shy, and even the grumpy of the large family we remember from holidays past become the ghosts and tender emotional moments of our lives. Suddenly, we realize, the joyful family celebrations have evaporated. We can still replay those gatherings in our minds but those happy times certainly can bring on melancholy not to mention tears to our eyes. The smiles, laughter, and sounds of glasses clinking in toasts to the holidays are but a distant memory. It is just so difficult for some of us to get through this dark time but most of us do get through it with hopes and forward-looking thoughts of a new year and how spring is not far behind with its promise of crocuses poking their beautifully vibrant heads through the fresh damp soil, trees in bloom, warmer days, longer days, beautiful sunsets, and the traces of snow that are nearly melted away like the past unhappy moods of winter. Soon, the spring and summer sun will be smiling upon us once again.

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



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# NE Steak and Seafood evolves and grows with the times

BY ROD LEE

Today, more than ever, the Quirk family's New England Steak and Sea-

food in Mendon is not just about the fare in its name by which the restaurant has thrived for almost sixty years. Famous for its old-

tions is ongoing.

• The Villatico family has a good thing going at J Anthony's Italian Grill



New England Steak and Seafood has become a go-to source for holiday takeout meals.

fashioned atmosphere, New England Steak and Seafood is also becoming known for such things as partnering with the Mendon Police Department on a "stuff the cruiser" campaign to benefit struggling families in the Blackstone Valley. And, recently, "Christmas dinner to go," featuring Roast Prime Rib of Beef, pumpkin bread, cinnamon rolls and onion rolls. Whitinsville Realtor Jack Walker is among those who regularly frequent New England Steak and Seafood for lunch or dinner. Strong patronage is not uncommon!

• Anticipation continues to build for the opening of **Reunion Tap & Table's** second location, in the Whitinsville Plaza, in a spot formerly occupied by Jube's. Described by the Phantom Gourmet as "a big, fun eatery," Reunion's first restaurant in North Grafton was started by brothers Josh and Sean Briggs, Sargon Hanna and "lots of family and friends." The new Reunion site will be a smaller version of the first store but with many of the signature elements including the popular Pork Belly Poutine, Grilled Chicken Wings tossed in a house-made garlic parmesan sauce and French Onion Soup. Look for a launch this month or next; hiring for staff posi-

in North Oxford and part of the reason for that is the lounge where "Game Day" including the Patriots' regular season-ending game in Buffalo on January 8 will attract a throng—as will Red Sox games just around the corner. With a Garden Room, a Deck Room and a Terrace Room, J Anthony's is a popular choice for private events.

• Many area residents may not be aware that in addition to such staples as Fried Chicken and Short Rib Shepherd's Pie, **Samuel Slater's Restaurant** at Indian Ranch in Webster also plays host to events, like a celebration of Elvis Presley's 88th birthday on January 7th—and Comedy Night fun, which will resume the evening of January 26th.

• Nowhere is "Yankee hospitality" on better display than at the **Publick House Historic Inn** in Sturbridge, where outstanding cuisine can be accompanied by an overnight stay. The Publick House is also a favorite jumping off point for sightseeing, shopping for antiques, golf and skiing.

*Restaurant and food-industry news is welcome for this column. Please submit material to rodlee.1963@gmail.com, or call 774-232-2999.*

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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.**

opensky.org. To schedule a visit to the gallery, call 508-234-6232 or email Cristi.Collari@openskycs.org.

**THROUGH JANUARY 31ST**

• "Lights and Icons: A Study in Acrylics," paintings by Jim Wilton, will be on display and for sale



Photographer and Painter Jim Wilton is exhibiting samples of his work at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main St., throughout the month of January.

**JANUARY 13-FEBRUARY 24**

• ValleyCAST, the arts and culture arm of Open Sky Community Services, is partnering with the New England Sculptors Association for the second annual Inside and Out Exhibition. Seventeen sculptors from around New England have created over thirty works that will be on display in the Spaulding R. Aldrich Heritage Gallery, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville, and outside on the grounds of the Whittin Mill complex at the same address. The inside exhibit will open with a wine and cheese reception on Friday, January 13th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The public is also encouraged to attend the closing reception, which will include announcement of three People's Choice Awards, on Friday, February 24th from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Voting ends at the end of the day on Friday, February 17th and the exhibit will end right after the closing ceremony on February 24th. For more information visit

at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main St., Webster, during regular business hours, Tues.-Sat., 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the café gallery. A public reception with the artist will take place on Saturday, January 7th from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Artist's Statement: "I have been photographing and painting for years, in fact all my life. I'm mostly self-taught. I have photographed lighthouses as well as other subjects for inspiration for my art. I spent many years painting portraits but have switched it up to trying lighthouses after a hiatus to raise children but also found myself return to portraits. I began photography of outdoor scenes and wildlife in 2008 after finding digital photography, making it more accessible. A few years ago I began painting again after a friend painted from one of my photos, thus inspiring me to try again. I haven't stopped but also got into crafts such as seashell jewelry



boxes, Christmas trees and light-houses. I hope folks enjoy my work as much as I enjoyed painting it."

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 8**

• The New England Country Music Club presents the Al Carter Band at the Progressive Club, 18 Whittin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m. with dancing and live entertainment from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub.

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 20**

• Comedy Night at Samuel Slater's Restaurant, 200 Gore Road, will feature Frank Santorelli from "The Sopranos" with special guests Chris Zito and Mitch Stinson. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. and the show starts at 7:30 p.m. This is a 21+ event.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 22**

• The New England Country Music Club presents the Rhode Island Rednecks at the Progressive Club, 18 Whittin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 with dancing and live entertainment from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25**

• A Blackstone Valley Partnership Open House will be held at the shared offices of the Blackstone Valley Education Foundation, the Hub, and the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce,

Historical information about the "Father of the American Industrial Revolution" and the town of Webster is a main attraction at the Samuel Slater Experience on Ray St. in Webster. The SSE was recently accredited to participate in the Card to Culture program, a collaboration between the Massachusetts Cultural Council and several government agencies in providing assistance to eligible residents. Card to Culture partnerships enable arts, humanities and science organizations to offer free or steeply discounted admission to EBT, WIC and Connector Care cardholders. With presentation of an EBT card, for instance, a family of four receives admission at the discounted fee of \$3 per person. samuelslaterexperience.org

670 Linwood Ave., Whitinsville, at kkeaman@blackstonevalley.org. 5:00 p.m. RSVP by January 16 to

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SPORTS

# Oxford's Evan Remington savors dual-sport role

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

**E**van Remington has been playing baseball as long as he can remember and he will continue to do so on the next level come September of 2023 when he attends Assumption College in Worcester on a baseball scholarship. Although baseball has been his number one sport, the Oxford native also loves taking his game to the court for the Pirates.

"I began playing basketball in fourth grade for the travel team and haven't stopped since," Remington said. "It all began with a bunch of friends already playing and I thought that it would be cool to play with my friends on a travel team so I tried out."

The Oxford athlete quickly realized that he loved the game of basketball, although not as much

as baseball.

"The quickness of the game really got to me; baseball is a much more slowly paced game," he said. "Basketball gets your blood going running up and down the court."

When he entered high school Remington made the varsity basketball team as a freshman and although he only played occasionally he learned a lot about the sport that year including to be a part of post-season play with his Pirate teammates. When Remington did get into games during his freshman campaign he played the two, but since he has grown (he now stands close to 6'5" he's playing center for Oxford.

"We didn't have a bad season my first year on the team. It was an experience to play on a varsity team that got to go to the tournament," he said.

Following his fresh-

man season not only did Remington start to grow but he began working out to get stronger while working on his post moves, his free throws and all around shooting. However, while working hard to get more playing time as a sophomore, Remington and his teammates were hit with Covid and before they knew it their season was cancelled.

"It was heartbreaking. I was working so hard to get ready for the upcoming season and we lose it," Remington said. "It was really unfortunate as I was really looking forward to the season, but luckily I was only a sophomore."

During Covid Remington continued to work and hone his skills so he was more than ready when his junior year got underway. Individually the Oxford athlete felt he had himself a pretty solid campaign and improved on his rebounding, especially as he continued to grow. While the rebounding was getting better Remington found that he wasn't taking all that many shots.

With his coach looking for him to increase his shooting, Remington practiced his mid-range shooting during the off-season following his junior year. He noted that he was usually able to get into open space so he needed to be able to knock down more of those shots.

Getting ready to begin his fourth season with the Pirates, Oxford Coach David Aldrich would love to see his senior captain take his scoring to the next level.

"Evan is a complete player who does everything that is asked of him, he's a coach's dream," Aldrich said. "He works hard and teaches the younger players. I'd like to see him average about 15 points



**Evan Remington figures prominently in the Oxford High boys basketball team's hopes for success this winter.**

and 10 rebounds for us this season."

If he can move his stat line up just a little bit over last year's performance, Aldrich believes that he will not only be a key to Oxford's success, but he should once again be named to the All-Star team.

While his coach thinks that that he is capable of being that complete player all season long, Remington is hoping that he can knock

down a lot of shots and haul down his share of rebounds for the Pirates this season while guiding his team to win after win and another playoff experience.

Although when he leaves Oxford High School for Assumption College he will primarily be focusing on his baseball career, he hasn't ruled out basketball.

"I hope to continue playing basketball after high school; maybe join a men's

league," he said. "I might even try out for the team at Assumption, but I don't know if that is possible because of baseball."

Baseball may be on the front burner once he graduates from Oxford, but the senior captain still has the entire season to put forth his best basketball effort and get his team into the State Tournament.

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TALES FROM BEYOND

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# Peter Rugg's eternal search—Part II

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

The stage made it to Polly's Inn just as the storm hit and soon a wet peddler entered and sat by the fire. When conversation turned to the phantom chaise, he admitted that he had seen the spectral carriage and its occupants four times in four different states in the last few weeks. Each time, a serious storm followed the sighting. He then, half jesting, remarked how he needed to take out marine insurance on his merchandise if this was going to keep up. Dunwell would encounter the wraith one more time some years later in Hartford, Connecticut while on a business trip. He immediately recognized the glowing countenance, commenting to the alarmed throng that the ghost was further from Boston than ever.

A toll operator on the Charles Street Bridge in Boston had many run-ins with the ethereal carriage.

On several occasions, around midnight, the wagon raced through the booth never even slowing to pay the crossing fee. At one point the operator got so angry he threw his stool at the speeding rig. Imagine the look on his face when the stool passed right through the manifestation and bounced off of the guardrail on the other side of the road.

Mrs. Betsey Croft, who later owned the Rugg home, claimed that a man once came to her door soaking wet with a scared, pale looking child by his side. The sight gave her a start, as she knew he was not of the present. His clothes were at least a century old and he spoke in an old English dialect. As she glanced over his shoulder in the moonlight, she saw a decrepit antique carriage at the curb with a massive black horse harnessed to it. When the man asked for Mrs. Rugg she told him Mrs. Rugg died many years ago at a very old age, and

that she has owned the house for a half a century. The odd-looking man told her he was in haste and needed to get to Boston. She told him that he was in Boston, but he did not acknowledge her insistence on the matter. He spoke of roads and people from years past and maintained his need to get home. As she looked them over intensely she knew beyond any doubt by their eerie shade that they were not of this world, but instead, ghosts of the past revisiting their former home.

William Austin wrote the accounts of Peter Rugg from 1824 to 1826 and claimed to have met the ghost himself when Rugg flagged down his carriage. The man identified himself as Peter Rugg and asked for directions to Middle Street in Boston. When told he was near Hartford, Connecticut, Rugg became irritated and argued with Austin before speeding off in furious skepticism at Austin's statement. The

rig, horse and riders all vanished before the road turned.

Solid proof of Rugg's eternal journey exists in North Kingstown, RI where Route 1 crosses over Route 403, also known as Devil's Foot Road. It is there where Reverend Samuel Nickles encountered the wraith of Peter Rugg while returning to Providence from the village of Wickford. Near dusk, the preacher and his old nearsighted nag, Romeo, were caught in a sudden thunderstorm as they rode through Quonset. As they entered a narrow passage between a steep hill and a rock ledge, he heard the thunderous sound of hooves in front of him. He looked up and saw a man frantically pulling at the reins of an immense horse and a frightened child gripping his arm for dear life. The horse drawing the speeding chaise had eyes glowing red like coals from a blacksmith's fire.

The reverend's nag

became spooked and threw him from his saddle onto the great ghost bay. The preacher let out a scream of mercy and the horse bolted up the rock ledge in a flash of lightning, throwing the priest to the ground, unconscious.

When the preacher awoke, the sun was shining and Romeo was grazing in the grass nearby. As he glared at the rock, he saw cloven hoof prints embedded into the edifice. He sped from the sight but for years to come, people from all over flocked to see the rock with its footprints that still sits behind a row of

trees near a gravel parking lot immediately after the bridge on Route 1 South.

What holds Rugg eternally bound to wander the earth? A tavern keeper once suggested that Heaven has a way of setting trial or judgment on a man for his actions or words. Peter Rugg, when he failed to fulfill his oath, cursed himself and his daughter to eternally ride the New England roads searching in vain for home.

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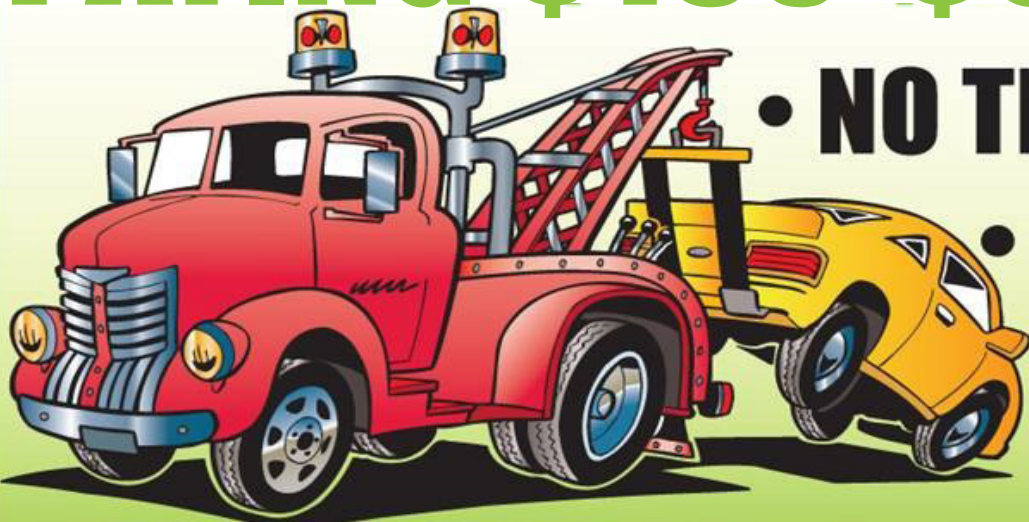
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# Luke finds the Merry in Grinchmas

BY AMY LECLAIRE

Christmas shopping 2022 has been interesting, especially alongside a puppy named Luke Valentino. The retail industry is short staffed, short fused, and short on certain sizes. Not enough help. Not enough patience. Not enough hours in the day to curb long lines of shoppers who sneeze into their elbows, yet still leave us suspicious. Which variant might she be carrying? This the season to stay home, I thought to myself one Tuesday, December afternoon, despite managing a To Do list that seemed do-able.

1. Return an oversized rug purchased at Amazon at Kohl's.
2. Shop for a few Christmas gifts.
3. Vacuum my car. (I've found the process of sucking up dirt and washing windows to cleanse my attitude as well).

Like most zealous Christmas shoppers, I wanted to Get Things Done. Little did I know that a series of unfortunate events were about to foil a well-laid plan.

"We can't take that rug back. You'll need to bring it to Michael's for the return. The label is for UPS." The Kohl's Sales Associate wore

a nametag claiming her title. She stated the rule with knowledge, though I couldn't help but notice the glimmer of smile at her lips. Perhaps, she secretly didn't want to help me. Truthfully, who could blame her? My fixation with area rugs (buying and changing) was becoming a problem.

"Okay," I sighed. The rug sagged heavily on my shoulder, compromising a reserve of energy I typically have for shopping mayhem. I felt like a scrawny Santa carrying a sack, and who was soon to ride in a dirty sleigh. Others waiting in line gazed up from their phones to eavesdrop. Their concern, I knew, lay in being first in line.

I hauled the rug back to the car, popped the trunk and stuffed it back in. Luke popped his head out of the sunroof and smiled. "I'm so glad you're back!" My puppy found joy simply upon seeing me. "We have to go to Michael's now, Luke."

Keys in ignition; I backed up and made my way to Michael's. Slow-moving pedestrians crossed the street. I waved them by and found a snug parking spot.

The 6' x 9' sack hung tiredly over a weakened shoulder. "I was just sent here from Kohl's," I huffed. "Apparently you're able to take returns with UPS labels?"

The employee, as one might guess, did not come with the softness of her store's silk flowers. "We can't take a rug without a box."

My eyes settled on her grey roots. My upper body slouched to the dead weight of an unwanted rug. More productively, my mind wandered to the Michael's storage room, where I imagined castles and castles of cardboard boxes stacked wide and high amongst spools of satin ribbon. The sales associate did not read my mind. Instead, she said, "I can't take that."

"You don't have one cardboard box to spare in this entire store?" With my free arm, I gestured to the store's abundant decorations. Hadn't these items been delivered to the store in boxes?

"Unfortunately we don't," she spat back. "You need to bring it to UPS and have it fully taped up. There's a UPS in Auburn," she added, as though traveling to a third location was helpful. I contemplated a third trip. Then I was struck by an ironic memory—that of my puppy attacking the missing box as would a lion his prey.

He enjoyed every moment of dominating that box as it popped and bounced about the floor like a geometric cartoon. Back then it was funny, but now— "Thank you," I said, and hauled the rug back to the car. Luke popped his head out of his box and smiled. "Hi there! It's such a nice day outside! Love you, Momma!"

It still was funny. "Guess where we're going, Luke?" I needed to align my attitude with my

puppy's optimism. His head squared. He smiled and listened intently.

"We're going to get Luke a present!"

"No way!" He did a puppy dance on the floor of his crate. He understood the majority of my message. "We're going to get Luke" was a phrase he knew, as was "going to get." Lastly,



Luke Valentino is perfectly fine with a photo op; here he poses for the camera while on a Christmas shopping spree.

he knew his baby name. "I can't believe this is happening!"

I drove to the opposite side of the Mall, parked, and walked my puppy to the Mall's sidewalk. The Cookie Crumb'l storefront sign sailed into view. We followed the warm aroma of freshly baked cookies to an outdoor bench and sat down.

"What's your puppy's name? Can I pet him? Oh my gosh, this puppy just made my day!" Person after person came over to pet Luke. I broke off warm pieces of a peanut butter cookie to share with my social pup. We told dog stories and laughed. Holiday music filled the air. Luke listened to every person, and lifted his paw. He understood. He validated. He loved unconditionally. The bitter edges of shopping turmoil crumbled away like pieces of cookie. Luke Valentino had offered the public a

special dog's gift, that of Presence.

Then came a Christmas miracle.

There, across the street, in front of Longhorn Steakhouse to be exact, I saw it with my very own eyes—a massive, brown UPS truck. My legs wobbled as I grabbed Luke's leash. Within seconds, the two of us floated towards the truck. The UPS driver, amused by us, rolled down his window. "That is the cutest pup I've ever seen!"

"Thank you." I struggled to breathe. "I'm so happy to have found you." Luke looked up at me, then at the driver. "We're so happy to have found you!"

"I have a rug," I huffed. "In my car. That way," I gestured. "We have a rug!" Luke said, sitting proudly at my heels. "I brought it to Kohl's, then to Michael's," I went on. "Wrong size. I was told I'll need a box in order to return it to you." My

problem spilled from me. He nodded to the back of his truck. "I don't have a ton of room back here."

My heart sank. "Wanna' play chase?" Then the driver chuckled like Saint Nick and his cheeks became rosy. "I can make room for your rug. Where are you parked?" "Seriously? That is so kind of you!" I said. "I have a stuffed cherry pie in the car!" Luke added, trying to keep up.

Minutes later, the three of us congregated at the trunk of my car, where we fumbled to squish the rug into a well-behaved square and seal the deal. "You know what? I can do this in my truck." The driver seemed skeptical of my packing ability. Nonetheless, the Saint Nick of UPS hopped back up into a tall seat and waved good-bye.

Meanwhile, Luke and I made one last stop. Shopping wouldn't be the same without a present for Luke Valentino.

The PetSmart sweater fit him perfectly, and the inscription said it best. "Merry Grinchmas!" Thanks to my puppy, I was able to put the Merry back in Christmas that day.

Write to Amy at amyleclaire@hotmail.com  
Find Luke on Instagram @livingwithlukevalentino

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# Honda battery disconnect, reconnect is tricky business



BY JOHN PAUL

**Q.** What is a decent price for a front-end alignment on a 2017 Toyota Corolla?

**A.** There was a time when most cars only had the front steering angles adjusted and when I first started repairing vehicles that price was \$19.95 (that was a long time ago). Today even on a relatively simple car like your Corolla both the front and rear wheels have adjustment angles that need to be checked and adjusted. I did a little research, and the typical cost of a four-wheel alignment is \$79.00 to \$129.00. As a rule, if suspension or underbody components have been removed/installed or replaced, front and rear steering angles should be checked and if needed adjusted.

**Q.** I was told by Honda to have my battery disconnected and then reconnected to fix the date issue on my 2011 CRV EXL with navigation. The date fixed itself at the beginning of December. The date advanced to 2003 from 2001. Still have nine years to go to get to 2022! Have you heard anything about this and would it even work? I have a service appt for them to see if it works and won't be a happy camper if it doesn't work!

**A.** The issue with the date on some Honda models came up this year. The electrical voodoo of disconnecting the battery and holding the cables together, essentially reboots the car's computer system. At the end of summer, Honda still didn't have a software fix for this issue. But a check online shows that once the GPS sends a new signal, at least in some models the date can be manually corrected. Let the dealer give it a try and let me know how you make out.

**Q.** We have a 2009 Volkswagen CC. The alarm which the dealer installed and still is working stopped beeping, when prior it would beep once when the key fob was pressed. Also, at about the same time the rear passenger window stays down about a half an inch and doesn't fully go up. Any ideas or suggestions before I take it to the dealer. A local shop looked quickly and said it's not a fuse.

**A.** This may be two separate problems even though they appeared at about the same time. The alarm may have a faulty module/relay that is not signaling the horn. The rear window may need to be reset. Sometimes this is as simple as from that

seating position, run the window down and hold the button for a few seconds and then up for a few seconds and the window will reset.

**Q.** I read one of your answers about a tire leak and wanted to relay my experience. I have a 2013 Honda Accord; last month my car's low tire light came on and I went to a service station. They put air in the tire and all was okay for two weeks and then the light was back on. I went to a big tire store. They said the front driver tire was low, then put the tire in soapy water and said no leak was detected. A few weeks later the low tire light came on again. I went to the tire store again and they inflated the tire and nothing else. A while later again the low tire light came on. I went to the tire store now for the third time at 3:40 PM and they stated, "they do not know if they can take care of the problem today because they close at 5:00 p.m." Isn't that a very nice service they provide? I waited in the waiting room for over an hour and forty minutes. Finally, a person came in took my car to the service area and came back a little later and told me they found a nail in the tire and now it is finally fixed. What do you think of all of this?

**A.** Finding a tire with a slow leak requires patience and in my experience a "dunk-tank" with clear water to look for bubbles. I have seen many shops just take a spray bottle with soapy water and spray the tire, that can

work for some leaks, if the leak is big enough. On your car it may have taken three weeks for the nail to make a little bigger hole for the leak to become more apparent. Regarding customer service, one of my first jobs was in a good-sized tire store and if we were in the building even after hours, we never turned down a customer with a flat tire. In fact, in most cases if it was after hours, we repaired the tire at no charge (the cash drawer was put away). The owner always said treat customers like family and they will come back, and he was right.

*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 questions to jpaul@aanortheast.com. Follow John on Twitter @johnfpaul and friend him on Facebook, mrjohnfpaul.*

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TIPS ON FINANCIAL PLANNING *dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com*



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

# Time for New Year's financial resolutions

ones?

Here are a few to consider:

- Don't let inflation derail your investment strategy. As you know, inflation was the big financial story of 2022, hitting a 40-year high. And while it may moderate somewhat this year, it will likely still be higher than what we experienced the past decade or so. Even so, it's a good idea to try not to let today's inflation harm your investment strategy for the future. That happened last year: More than half of

It's that time of year when many of us promise ourselves we'll go to the gym more, or learn a new language, or take up a musical instrument, or any number of other worthy goals. But this year, when making New Year's resolutions, why not also consider some financial

American workers either reduced their contributions to their 401(k)s and other retirement plans or stopped contributing completely during the third quarter of 2022, according to a survey by Allianz Life Insurance of North America. Of course, focusing on your cash flow needs today is certainly understandable, but are there other ways you can free up some money, such as possibly lowering your spending, so you can continue contributing to your retirement accounts? It's worth the effort because you could spend two or three decades as a retiree.

- Control your debts. Inflation can also be a factor in debt management. For example, your credit card debt could rise due to rising prices and variable credit card interest rate increases. By paying your bill each month, you can avoid the effects of rising interest rates. If you do carry a balance, you might be able to transfer it to a lower-rate card, depending on your credit score. And if you're carrying multiple credit cards, you might benefit by getting a fixed-rate debt consolidation loan. In any case, the lower your debt payments, the more you can invest for your long-term goals.

- Review your investment portfolio. At least once a year, you should review your investment portfolio to determine if it's still appropriate for your goals, risk tolerance and

time horizon. But be careful not to make changes just because you feel your recent performance is not what it should have been. When the financial markets are down, as was the case for most of 2022, even quality investments, such as stocks of companies with solid business fundamentals and strong prospects, can see declines in value. But if these investments are still suitable for your portfolio, you may want to keep them.

- Prepare for the unexpected. If you encountered a large unexpected expense, such as the need for a major home repair, how would you pay for it? If you didn't have the money readily available, you might be forced to dip into your long-term investments or retirement accounts. To prevent this, you should build an emergency fund containing three to six months' worth of living expenses — or a year's worth, if you're retired — with the money kept in a low-risk, liquid account.

These resolutions can be useful — so try to put them to work in 2023.

*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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REAL ESTATE

# Planning to retire? It could be time to make a move



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

If you're thinking about retirement or have already retired this year, you may be planning your next steps. One of your

goals could be selling your house and finding a home that more closely fits your needs.

Fortunately, you may be in a better position to make a move than you realize. Here are a few things to think about when making that decision.

Consider how long you've been in your home. From 1985 to 2008, the average length of time homeowners typically stayed in their homes was only six years. But according to the National Association of Real-

tors (NAR), that number is rising today, meaning many homeowners are living in their houses even longer.

When you live in a home for a significant period of time, it's natural for you to experience a number of changes in your life while you're in that house. As those life changes happen, your needs may change. And if your current home no longer meets them, you may have better options waiting for you.

Consider the equity you've gained. Also, if you've

been in your home for more than a few years, you've likely built up significant equity that can fuel your next move. That's because the longer you've been in your home, the more likely it's grown in value due to home price appreciation.

While home price growth varies by state and local area, the national average shows the typical homeowner who's been in their house for five years saw it increase in value by over 50%. And the average homeowner who's owned their home for

30 years saw it almost triple in value over that time.

Consider your retirement goals. Whether you're looking to downsize, relocate to a dream destination, or move so you live closer to loved ones, that equity can help you achieve your homeownership goals. NAR shares that for recent home sellers, the primary reason to move was to be closer to loved ones. Plus, retirement played a large role for those moving greater distances. Did you know that Marzeotti Group was licensed in

Florida!

Whatever your home goals are, The Marzeotti Group or a trusted REALTOR can work with you to find the best option. They'll help you sell your current house and guide you as you buy the home that's right for you and your lifestyle today.

Retirement can bring about major changes in your life, including what you need from your home. Connect with us or a trusted REALTOR to explore the opportunities.

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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**

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