



Sheriff's Annual Winter Coat Drive Stops at Webster/Dudley Food Share

"The Sheriff's Department Annual Winter Coat Drive is one of my favorite weeks of the year," commented Worcester County Sheriff Lewis Evangelidis. "At every stop we make, we are amazed by the selfless charitable work that our community partner organizations do daily in our communities. This week, we distributed over 4,000 brand-new coats directly to community members and organizations throughout Worcester County. These coats will go a long way to help our underserved communities, the elderly, the homeless, and many more vulnerable populations."

Mascots from the Worcester Red Sox/Woo Sox Foundation, Woolster (left) and Smiley Ball, (right) were also on hand to greet volunteers and donors.

New Charlton Fire Substation and Amazon Facility on Track

BY JANET STOICA

Charlton voters might not have approved the Public Safety Complex previously requested but the Fire Department substation has proven to be more palatable. "With a community our size, our best option was a substation," said

ment Request for the site and a full proposal for debt exclusion will be brought before voters at the Spring 2024 Town Meeting for the approximately \$17 million investment. Apparently voters realize that the construction costs will never decrease and a better facility is greatly needed. "This substa-



Charlton voters approved a Design and Development request at a recent town meeting to build a new Fire Department substation.

Andrew Golas, Charlton Town Administrator, "Right now, our station on Power Station Road and the Quonset hut where we store our tower truck are the better facilities we have. Unfortunately, the old highway barn across from Town Hall is not the ideal place to be storing one of our fire engines, a rescue truck, our boat, and secondary apparatus pieces as it floods constantly. We hope to build a substation in front of our Heritage Elementary School on Oxford Road which is on town property."

At the recent town meeting, voters passed a Design and Develop-

tion will improve overall response times," stated Golas, "A study done from our \$150,000 state grant showed an improvement of two minutes' response time. Charlton consists of 46 square miles and a single station made sense at its inception but the town is growing" (Author note: if one has ever experienced a house fire as I have with a next-door neighbor's home, the time spent waiting for fire personnel and equipment to arrive seems

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Dudley's Economic Development, PFAs, and Bridge Update

BY JANET STOICA

“Having the funding approved by our townspeople for our schools, public safety, and library has been a weight lifted from our collective minds,” said Jonathan Ruda, Dudley’s Town Administrator. “Our new school (and town) budget is now being put together for the next fiscal year.”

Dudley’s latest project is a feasibility study grant for town-owned land behind the Dudley District Courthouse. “There are 56 acres behind the Courthouse,” said Ruda, “a biotech or industrial park situated there would help our tax base. We received a \$30,000 grant from the Commonwealth’s Community Compact Program to help us identify key areas of economic

development and would like to bring in focus groups to assist with identifying areas to develop in our town. I think it’s a positive that we have two grants to help pinpoint projects that will help generate revenue to increase our tax base. In November a new tax rate will be set and it is anticipated that it will be a low rate because of upcoming retired debt.” Areas of retired debt include highway department equipment, town hall building debt, and a few other short-term capital debts.

As with most all nation-wide cities and towns, Dudley is now dealing with water contamination in the form of PFAs (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances). PFAs are classified as “forever chemicals” that do not break down in the environment, many of which are toxic,



Ameresco employees installing equipment at Dudley's capped landfill

and accumulate in the food chain. PFAs are no longer used in products made in the USA but are used in other countries that we export products from. It’s what makes our clothing waterproof, our cosmetics waterproof, our non-stick cookware usable, our wall-to-wall carpeting stain resistant, etc. The town’s Ameresco Solar Array lease agreement proceeds will be used to address the PFAs issues. The solar array is located atop the town’s capped landfill where soil monitors and vapor recovery equipment is also situated. PFAs were found at the landfill property as well as near

the Gentex Corporation. Residents living in the Eagle Drive area must now have water protection systems installed for their own wells as a safety precaution per the Dept. of Environmental Protection. Dudley is also included in a class-action law suit against many of the major chemical companies in the U.S. that used PFAs in their manufacturing processes. The end result would be to install filtered town water lines into those neighborhoods that have been affected by the PFA contamination.

“We are also pursuing a Green

Communities Grant to improve energy efficiency in town-owned buildings,” said Ruda, “We currently have solar energy credits in the 90 percent range and are almost off all carbon fuels. We’re working on aggregate electricity purchasing for our citizens who may opt-in to the energy-saving program by using an energy broker to shop for the best deals to purchase electricity. No contracts are necessary. The broker

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Contact us:

Patty Roy, Editor: proy@theyankeeexpress.com
 Submit business news and community events to news@theyankeeexpress.com
 Request advertising information: ads@theyankeeexpress.com
 Jennifer Schofield, Advertising Director: jschofield@theyankeeexpress.com
 Diane Galipeau, Advertising Sales Manager: dgalipeau@theyankeeexpress.com
 Laura Gleim, Billing & Sales: lgleim@theyankeeexpress.com
 Bill Cronan, Blackstone Valley Sales: bcronan@theyankeeexpress.com

Kimberly Vasseur, Production Manager
 Sally Patterson, Graphic Artist
 Contributing Writers and Columnists: Tom D'Agostino, Christine Galeone, Amy Palumbo-LeClaire, Mark Marzeotti, John Paul, Janet Stoica, Christopher Tremblay

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will continuously search for the least expensive form of electricity generated whether it's solar, gas, nuclear, or wind. It'll be based on what the community wants and they'll broker it out. It's a good deal. Webster currently uses an aggregate energy-saving program. We are in process and are moving as quickly as possible to take advantage of this option that must also be approved by the Dept. of Public Utilities."

An Animal Control Officer position has also been wrapped into a dual role with one or more of the Dudley police officers to provide full-time animal control coverage in town. This is a hybrid position.

The Dudley bridge project that has always been a shortcut into Webster from Brandon Road to Webster's Hill Street will probably remain in limbo for several years to come.

"We've pursued and exhausted

every State program to try to get this repair and replacement done," said Ruda. "The former bridge has now been demolished using Chapter 90 funds. We've tried to gain funding from the small bridge program but the bridge is too big to qualify. We wanted to classify the trace as a culvert but it was deemed too large. We have now been placed on a TIP list (Transportation Infrastructure Program) but it may take three to five years before we see any further progress.

Diamond Communications will be installing a new cell tower on town-owned land situated on Schofield Avenue. Terms included a \$100,000 down payment and a \$22,000 annual payment to the town with a 3 percent payment escalation clause for the next 20 years. Dudley will also receive 50 percent of lease proceeds from each company that opts in for the cell tower usage.

Contact Janet: jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

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like forever. An improved response time of two minutes is a huge leap for public safety. My personal experience.)

The town also offers an active project page for the substation and residents are encouraged to visit townofcharlton.net/594/Fire-Department-Substation-Project.

"Our Amazon warehouse facility is moving along at a good pace too," Administrator Golas said, "and our population has hovered around 13,500 for the past 10 years but with Amazon bringing in 1,000 new jobs additional housing needs will be right behind the additional employee additions. This is an Amazon keystone project and is going full steam ahead. They are just finishing their electrical and mechanical work and probably in the next eight months all will be completed to get their systems operational. The company site will have two access points with

Route 20 being their main entry and Route 169 being the secondary entrance for employees only."

With Amazon funding, Charlton's Main Street sidewalk improvements should be on track as well. The town has begun reaching out to abutters for the sidewalk refreshment project. A big plus to improve the pedestrian network throughout town.

The Dudley-Charlton Regional School District budget is on track and the new fiscal year budget should be ready for voter review in the next two months. Schools do have to await the Chapter 70 state funds before finalizing their own budgets. "We were glad that Dudley voters eventually approved

their share of the regional budget. We all want the best education for our children," said Golas.

A round-table breakfast was recently held for Charlton small businesses and Golas stated that the town will now take the businesses' feedback into consideration and they hope to work together to improve the business climate with the town overall. Administrator Golas also mentioned that any business is welcome to reach out to him to discuss any ideas they might have. He may be contacted at 508-248-2202.

Contact Janet: jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

Dudley Senior Center

71 West Main St.
508-949-8015

Senior Center Hours as of Nov. 6, 2023
Monday through Thursday: 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Friday: 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.
(unless otherwise posted for an event)

Lunches are served Tuesdays and Thursdays at 12 p.m.

TriValley Congregate lunches are served Monday and Fridays 11:45 a.m. Donation \$3. Call for reservation 48 hours in advance.

Seniors are welcome to drop off for self-directed activities.

Tuesdays at 1p.m. Pitch league

****Wednesday Creative Crafter Workshop, and **Thursday morning sewing crafts class with Linda P. Will be starting up again soon. Stay tuned!**

Thursdays at 1pm (a new day) for the Dudley Senior Women's Knitting group. Come join us if you're interested in knitting projects which are helping to support our community. Friday is Game day, before or after lunch, for anyone who enjoys word games like Scrabble, Boggle, Scattergories, etc.

The Common Ground Memory Cafe' is scheduled the third Thursday of the month, (weather permitting), 12-2 p.m. This is a free program, featuring live music,

a light meal and crafts. It's a fun come-as-you-are, no-judgement social activity. This program is especially meant for anyone who is affected by cognitive decline/difficulties, such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, stroke, mild dementia, forgetfulness, loneliness or feeling down, just being together with friends, family, loved ones in an uplifting, caring, accepting, environment. Come join us!



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Webster's Campground, Water Projects, High School Renovation Project

BY JANET STOICA

According to Webster's Town Administrator, Richard LaFond, enforcement issues began over 10 years ago for Webster's campground business on Route 16. "A campground is a facility that must be inspected annually," states LaFond. "After this year's inspection the violations of health, safety, and zoning were documented again and enforcement began. The proper course of action after a property owner does not comply with local enforcement action is to go to court. This is not uncommon but a normal part of an enforcement process. In fact, we have one other property owner in

court at this time. In the original order it was actually the property owner, Mr. Michael Finamore, who invited the judge to personally inspect the property and the judge accepted the offer visiting the site with an engineer and a court officer. It was during this inspection that the judge determined that the property was uninhabitable and a campground occupant departure schedule was created for each group of occupants. As the campground owner has scheduled a water shutoff on October 25, all occupants' departures should be completed by this date."

The October 30 Annual Town Meeting will have seen the results of three water project articles. As of

this writing, the Town Meeting had not yet occurred. The first article concerns funding of \$3.8 million for the water meter replacement program. It has been determined that the town's water system is losing about 26 percent of revenues due to outdated meters. Two other articles on the warrant include funding of \$4.5 million for water main replacement/construction along Route 16, North Main Street, and Upland Avenue; transfer funding for security cameras at the animal shelter; new rules and regulations for Memorial Beach; purchasing and installing public safety boat docks at Memorial Beach; false alarm fines; May Street park renovations; and new bylaws

for historic buildings.

Webster's Bartlett High School renovation project has received permitting approvals from the town Conservation Commission and on November 13 will have a hearing with the Town Planning Board for approval of the site plan project according to Town Administrator LaFond. "The project has gone out to bid and the general contractor bids are due by mid-November, so hopefully we'll have shovels in the ground by year's end. Much has gone into this long road between the architects and our Town Engineer. We've put a lot of work into this. The Massachusetts School Building Authority funding along with our town funding will, for all intents and purposes, have made this 44-year-old school into a new building after renovations. Classroom space, vocational areas, just about everything will be state-of-the-art and built for our students of this era. It's a great time for Webster students, teachers, and administration."

Webster's Lake Street has now become the town's showcase of new travel. Two coats of asphalt have been applied to the roadway along with appropriate pavement markings. After months and months of new water and gas piping installations, the street is now complete



Webster's Planning Board will hold a site plan review for renovations to Bartlett High School on Nov. 13.

and is bound to make many drivers happier than they've been in years giving them the opportunity to drive on a clear and smooth surface compared to their past obstacle course frustrations.

Lastly, the town has met with its State Representative and Senator to discuss state assistance for the maintenance of Webster Lake since the body of water is state-owned. There is much ongoing maintenance necessary to keep the lake in great condition for its residents and summer visitors which includes algae and invasive plant species mitigation. LaFond stated that he is looking forward to a partnership between the town and the state. Over the years the Webster Lake Association has been greatly instrumental in the caretaking of the lake as a benefit for all citizens and state funding and assistance would greatly enhance their efforts.

Contact Janet: jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

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Sat.	9AM	3PM	4PM



Dudley Town Hall to re-open five days

Dudley re-opens its town hall to the public five days a week, effective November 6. Budget constraints caused by inflation and an insurmountable increase



questions. This resident support has afforded the re-hiring of some cut positions, and in turn, the reinstating of public hours in formerly understaffed offices. Effective 8

a.m. November 6, town hall will re-open to the public five days per week. The hours will be 8 a.m. through 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and 8 a.m. through 12 p.m. on Friday. Public access evening office hours will also

in public education costs led the Dudley Board of Selectmen to seek Proposition 2 ½ Override elections in April and June. Both were unsuccessful, which necessitated a decision to reduce staff and close town hall offices to the public three days per week. The reduction in public hours to 8 a.m. through 4 p.m. on Tuesdays and Thursdays only went into effect on July 25. Voters in a third Proposition 2 ½ override election in August approved three of five menu-style

be reinstated for the Town Clerk, Assessor and Treasurer/Collector offices. Monday hours for these offices will be 8 a.m. through 6:30 p.m. Some individual office hours may vary at times and some town officials are available beyond normal office hours by appointment. Visit www.dudleyma.gov for each department's webpage and information. Public board, committee and commission meetings are and will continue to be posted online at www.dudleyma.gov

WDBA Annual Meeting

The Webster Dudley Business Alliance held its annual meeting Tuesday, October 24, at the Samuel Slater Experience. The new slate of officers was elected along with board members and new members were welcomed.

Guest speaker was Kim Walker of "Basically Lean" whose presentation was "Unleash the Power of Your Team." Her program involved everyone in attendance to demonstrate how group cooperation helps produce a successful business.

An Italian buffet was prepared by Chef Manny of Monte Bianco. Beverages were provided by the Marzeotti Group and Citadel Company.

For more information or to join the WDBA visit thewdba.org.



Front row (l to r) Sheila Berger, 321 Hypnosis-new Board Director; Halina Jachimczyk, WFFCU Webster Branch-Board Director; Tammy Taft, Smart Shopper-new Vice President
Back row (l to r) Debra Horan, Booklovers' Gourmet-Board Director; Vickie Julian Hughes, Primerica-new Board Director; Carl Kaliszewski, 511 Financial-outgoing Vice President; Jessica-Lee Sabine, The Rose Room-Board Director; Reanna Kuzdzal, Samuel Slater Experience-new Board Director; Mark Marzeotti, The Marzeotti Group-Secretary; Kim Labbe, The Smart Shopper-new Treasurer.

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Pickleball Health 101: 8 Tips to Prevent Injury on the Court this Fall

SEAN LORDAN PT, DPT, OCS, CSCS

Pickleball, the sport that has been capturing the hearts of many in our community, is a fantastic way to stay active, burn calories, and have a great time this Fall. As a physical therapist, I understand the joy this game brings, but I also recognize the importance of preventing injuries. We have

seen a large influx of pickleball injuries of late in all of the clinics.

In this article, I'll share my insights on how to keep yourself safe on the pickleball court, and prevent common injuries that can occur as a side effect of too much activity.

1. Perform a Proper Warm-up: Before diving into your pickleball match, take a few minutes to

prepare your body. Start with light aerobic exercises like brisk walking or gentle jumping jacks to increase blood flow and warm up your muscles. Follow this with dynamic stretching, focusing on the major muscle groups you'll be using, such as your legs, shoulders, and arms. This will help improve your flexibility and reduce the risk of strains and sprains. If you are unsure how to perform dynamic stretches, consult your local physical therapist for a specific program for you.

2. Wear Proper Footwear: The right pair of shoes is your first line of defense against pickleball injuries. Choose court shoes with non-marking soles to provide optimal grip and support for lateral movements. Avoid using running shoes, which lack the necessary lateral stability, and treaded soles, which can increase the risk of slips and falls. My personal favorites are



“tennis shoes.”

3. Consider Protective Gear: While pickleball is generally non-contact, accidents can happen. Depending on your level of play, consider wearing protective gear such as knee and elbow pads, and wrist guards for extra safety during fast-paced rallies. Wrist guards will specifically keep repetitive strain away from the elbow complex—which is where the most pickleball injuries I see occur.

4. Technique Matters: Proper pickleball technique is key to preventing injuries. Work on your posture, grip, and swing mechanics to ensure you're playing with the correct form. Seek guidance from experienced players or even schedule lessons to hone your skills and reduce the risk of overuse injuries.

5. Stay Hydrated: This is a common theme in many of my articles regarding injury prevention! Dehydration can lead to muscle cramps and decreased performance. Before, during, and after your game, hydrate well with water, and consider replenishing electro-

lytes with a sports drink, especially while inside of a humid arena this Fall and Winter.

6. Respect Your Skill Level: It's natural to want to challenge yourself, but playing above your skill level can lead to injuries. Play with opponents who match your abilities, and gradually increase the level of competition as your skills progress.

7. Court Safety: Always be mindful of the court's condition. Loose gravel, uneven surfaces, or cracks can pose tripping hazards. Inspect the court before play and report any issues to the relevant authorities for prompt repairs.

8. Consult a Physical Therapist: A good physical therapist will screen you to provide you with the right stretches and exercises to perform to prevent injuries before they happen. Pay attention to your body's signals. If you feel pain or discomfort during the game, don't ignore it. This is your body's way of telling you that something is wrong.

In conclusion, pickleball is a fantastic sport that promotes health and social interaction in our community. By following these safety tips, you can reduce the risk of injuries and continue enjoying the game for years to come.

Stay safe, stay active, and have a great time on the pickleball court this Fall! If you ever have any questions or concerns about injury prevention, don't hesitate to reach out to a local physical therapist for guidance. Most often no referral is required and you can access physical therapy directly without having to stop by your PCP's office for a script.

*In good health,
Dr. Sean T. Lordan*

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Christmas is coming to OSV

Christmas By Candlelight at Old Sturbridge Village is kicking off its season early this year with pre-sale tickets available to members starting at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, October 13. The popular holiday event will return with dates in November and December, inviting visitors to step into the past and celebrate New England holiday traditions of the 19th century and today.

Christmas by Candlelight makes

ENCHANTMENT ABOUNDS

Old Sturbridge Village's 200-acre campus will be decorated for the holiday season. Guests can wander the Christmas Tree Trail and Christmas Wish Bridge or watch the evening come to life at a lighting ceremony every night at 4:30 p.m., ride in the horse-drawn carry-all around the Village Common, visit the 500+ piece nativity set in the Friends Meeting-house and view Christmas décor from

GET HANDS-ON WITH CRAFTS

There will be holiday craft activities for young and old, or try candle dipping for an additional fee. The households throughout the Village will feature various traditional craft demonstrations including making woolen ornaments, making marzipan treats, knitting Christmas stockings, baking cakes, punching tin lanterns, making pottery, and more.

HEAR STORIES OF THE SEASON

Listen to readings of The Nativity Gospel of Saint Luke and The Nativity Gospel of Saint Matthew in the Friends Meetinghouse or hear classic Christmas tales being told such as The Night Before Christmas, Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer, and How the Grinch Stole Christmas, and English and Spanish readings of Un Cocqui de Boriquen, a Puerto Rican children's story.

ENJOY LIVE MUSIC AND MAGIC

See historical musical performances around the Village including our costumed historians playing various instruments, The OSV Singers (on Sundays), and different local performers each night. There is also

a not-to-be-missed magic show with Bob Olsen in the Dennison Gallery!

FIND FESTIVE FOODS

Enjoy hot foods and beverages at various locations throughout the museum, including treats that you'll see being made in the Village. Sample mulled cider, gingerbread, and other favorites of the season. Visit the Bullard Tavern Café and Patio for hearty soups, hot sandwiches, festive desserts, hot and cold beverages, and specialty cocktails. Or enjoy a treat from one of our concession stands in the Countryside or on the Common. There's also the Ox & Yoke Café with soups, sandwiches, pastries, and beverages on your way into or out of the Village.

GINGERBREAD HOUSE CONTEST

An annual favorite, enter our Gingerbread house baking contest and put your creation on display. Families, professionals, home bakers are all welcome and guests can vote for their favorites!

HOLIDAY EXPRESS MODEL TRAINS

Come see what the Worcester Model Rail Roaders have in store this

year with their charming display of miniature trains.

VISITS WITH SANTA

Santa Claus will make an appearance each night for little ones to tell him their special Christmas wish. Come make a craft and meet with the jolly man himself!

HOLIDAY SHOPPING

This year we are proud to have expanded our offering of unique handcrafted holiday items available at the Miner Grant Store and the Ox & Yoke Mercantile each evening during the event. Find craft kits, books, clothing, bath and body, and Village-made ware for your gift-giving list.

NEW THIS YEAR!

Enjoy a members-only night on November 26! There will be a reduced capacity for the evening. Enjoy the Village with less crowds and more fun!

For more information and to order tickets, visit osv.org.



a great family activity while guests are in town, a way to get in the spirit after a day of shopping, or a fun way to spend the afternoon with the kids when they are on school vacation.

This year's event will see the return of many favorite holiday activities, always with a new spin. Start planning your visit today and save big while creating memories that will last a lifetime.

the 19th century. Thanks to special contributions from Oakwood Farms Christmas Barn in Spencer, the Asa Knight Store will feature the history of glass ornaments. Our cabinetmaker will be crafting wooden toys and gifts and the tanners will be punching tin lanterns. Take in the sights and smells of holiday baking at the Freeman Farmhouse, visit with the farm animals, and so much more!



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LIVING WITH LUKE

amyleclaire@hotmail.com

Luke and Bruno Reunite

BY AMY LECLAIRE

The first few minutes were less than graceful. Luke was so happy to see Bruno that he couldn't hold back a surge of testosterone. He smelled the signs. He saw the bags. He heard the news. "Sleep over!" Then he climbed on his friend's back and mounted him. "Luke! Please!" Of course, we redirected our one-year-old dog. Nevertheless, boundaries were in order and the two dogs, senior and young, would establish such.

"I love you, Luke, but I'm not into physical play." A few hours later, Luke suffered a bout of diarrhea while Bruno hacked up his dry dog food. Luke attempted to eat the mound of vomit, but I caught him in time. "Leave it." I yanked at his collar.

It's the life of a dog owner, chaotic and joyful all at once.

"Let's both get a drink of water!" The two pals—bonded by breed, temperament, and dog-parent-friends—drank and drank. I cleaned and cleaned. Bruno studied my moves. "Are you a professional cleaner, by chance?"

The dogs tap danced about the kitchen, grabbed stuffed animals, and followed me around the house. They did what dogs do. They stood at the door to go outside. They came back in. They settled



off for the leash law. "This is my neighborhood, Bruno." Luke pulled ahead while Bruno ponied forward like a dog half his age. He revealed in new sights and fun neighbors to greet. I could tell he felt at home in the neighborhood. "This is Bruno." I boasted of my senior Golden while Luke did the same. "This is my friend, Bruno. Doesn't he look so good for his age? We're having a sleep-over tonight."

Rosie, Luke's girlie BFF, stopped over one day and showed Bruno some sass. "That's my friend! You don't belong!" Luke mediated, baseball in mouth. "Let's just play chase and let it go, Rosie." Bruno sat at my husband's heel and waited to go back inside. "That Doodle's crazy."

Our love for the two Golden Retrievers swelled with the passing of each day. Bruno adored family nights while we all hung out in the family room to watch football games and snuggle. He added a special charm to our time together. World News was grim, but we had two Golden Retrievers in the same room. We were

living the dream. Luke shared his orthopedic bed but struggled to let go of his shin bones. "Luke, no hoarding." Bruno smiled and went with the flow. "No worries. I'll take the stuffed beaver."

The subtle fashion by which the dogs bonded, be it via walks, play time, or sleeping schedules, was something I'll always cherish as a Dog Person. They checked on each other and chose to stretch out and nap in the same spots. Luke stared at Bruno while he rested and licked his nose. He also became a role model, showing Bruno how he stays "at his spot" during mealtimes. "Bruno, if you sit and wait long enough, eventually my mom will give you a treat, but you must be consistent. I think it's the teacher in her."

Bruno stayed by my side and leaned into my lap. Kind and sensitive, he whimpered while I trotted up our (gated) staircase. "I'll be right down, Bruno!" Luke craned his neck up to the foyer. "They always come back. Let's go people-watch on the step outside."

Luke sustained his outdoor dog-watching routine while Bruno stayed inside with me, a loyal friend and gentle giant. He watched me practice dances and smiled up at me with adoration. He communicated his needs with patience and gratitude. "Thank you for taking care of me. I'm just so happy to be with you." A senior

down. "I'm thriving at 'ten' aren't I?" Bruno smiled up at me. I had earned his trust. Meanwhile, Luke fought to claim his Golden bestie.

"Let him off the leash, Momma! He's my friend and you're being a control freak!" Luke hollered at me on that first day while we showed Bruno our unfenced backyard. "We just want to hang out, No Parents Allowed." Luke had a point. He was being reasonable. Dogs are supposed to run free in a big backyard. Still, there was no way I could risk losing sweet Bruno, who buried his whitened face in my lap. "Help."

Luke acquiesced; especially given multiple walks offered, a trade-

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LUKE

continued on page 9

REAL ESTATE

Pricing your house right still matters today

While this isn't the frenzied market we saw like the past few, homes that are priced right are still selling quickly and seeing multiple offers right now. That's because the number of homes for sale is still so low. In June, 76% of homes sold, saw an



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

average of 3.5 offers. Source – National Association of Realtors

To set yourself up to see advantages like these, you need to rely on a REALTOR or real estate agent. Only an agent has the expertise needed to find the right asking price for your house. Here's what's at stake if that price isn't accurate for today's market value.

The price you set for your house sends a message to potential buyers. Price it too low and you might raise questions about your home's condition or lead buyers to assume something is wrong with it. Not to mention, if you undervalue your house, you could leave money on the table, which decreases your future buying power.

On the other hand, price it too high and you run the risk of deterring buyers from ever touring it in

the first place. When that happens, you may have to do a price drop to try to re-ignite interest in your house when it sits on the market for a while. But be aware that a price drop can be seen as a red flag for some buyers who will wonder why the price was reduced and what that means about the home.

It can be thought of this way; your house's market debut is your first chance to attract a buyer and it's important to get the pricing right. If your home is overpriced, you run the risk of buyers not seeing the listing . . . But price your house too low and you could end up leaving some serious money on the table. A bargain-basement price could also turn some buyers away, as they may wonder if there are any underlying problems with the house.

Think of pricing your home as a target. Your goal is to aim directly for the center – not too high, not too low, but right at market value. Pricing your house fairly based on market conditions increases the

chance you'll have more buyers who are interested in purchasing it. That makes it more likely you'll see multiple offers too. Plus, when homes are priced right, they still tend to sell quickly.

Lean on a professional's expertise to price your house right. So why is an agent essential in finding the right price? Your local agent has the skill, tools and the insight necessary to find the market value of your home. They'll use their expertise to determine a realistic listing price by assessing:

- The prices of recently sold homes
- The current market conditions
- The size and condition of your house
- The location of your house

Pricing your house at market value is critical, so don't rely on guesswork. Work with a trusted REALTORs like The Marzeotti Group or another professional to make sure your house is priced right for today's market.

This article is reprinted from earlier this year.

when there are two. Stay tuned for more on Living with Luke. Find him on IG @livingwithlukevalentino

Write to Amy
amyleclaire@hotmail.com



LUKE
continued from page 8

Golden is as warm and cozy as a cup of tea. Mornings were equally as gratifying with the two pups.

"Oh my gosh! Hello! It's a brand-new day! Can you believe it? Hey, how did you sleep? I'm loving the rug by the front steps, by the way. Let's go outside! I'm so excited for my breakfast! Hold on – I just need to pee. Don't forget, that's my dish. I'll take a water refill when you

get a chance. Who's that at the bus stop??!"

Positivity has become cliché, a word preached but not always practiced. Dogs are naturally positive without the flood of pop psychology and cheesy inspirational quotes. Dogs don't post a wish that you "Have a Blessed Day" on social media. Dogs give you a blessed day by waking up genuinely happy to see and be with you, with and without messes. I've given every dog I've owned my best, but they give back so much more, especially

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What should you know about RMDs?

You may spend decades contributing to various retirement accounts. But for some accounts, such as a traditional



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

IRA and 401(k), you must start withdrawing funds at a certain point. What should you know about this requirement?

To begin with, the rules governing these withdrawals — technically called required minimum distributions, or RMDs — have changed recently. For many years, individuals had to begin taking their RMDs (which are based on the account balance and the IRS' life expectancy factor) when they turned 70½. The original SECURE Act of 2019 raised this age to 72, and SECURE 2.0, passed

in 2022, raised it again, to 73. (If you turned 73 in 2023, and you were 72 in 2022 when the RMD limit was still 72, you should have taken your first RMD for 2022 by April 1 of this year. You will then need to take your 2023 RMD by Dec. 31. And going forward, you'll also need to take your RMDs by the end of every year.)

Not all retirement accounts are subject to RMDs. They aren't required for a Roth IRA, and, starting in 2024, won't be required for a Roth 401(k) or 403(b) plan. But if your account does call for RMDs, you do need to take them, because if you don't, you could face tax penalties. Previously, this penalty was 50% of the amount you were supposed to have taken, but SECURE 2.0 reduced it to 25%.

When you take your RMDs, you need to be aware of a key issue: taxes. RMDs are taxed as ordinary income, and, as such, they could potentially bump you into a higher tax bracket and possibly even increase your Medicare premiums, which are determined by your modified adjusted gross income. Are there any ways you could possibly reduce an RMD-related tax hike?

You might have some options. Here are two to consider:

- Convert tax-deferred accounts to Roth IRA. You could convert some, or maybe all, of your tax-deferred retirement accounts to a Roth IRA. By doing so, you could lower your RMDs in the future — while adding

funds to an account you're never required to touch. So, if you don't really need all the money to live on, you could include the remainder of the Roth IRA in your estate plans, providing an initially tax-free inheritance to your loved ones. However, converting a tax-deferred account to a Roth IRA will generate taxes in the year of conversion, so you'd need the money available to pay this tax bill.

- Donate RMDs to charity. In what's known as a qualified charitable distribution, you can move up to \$100,000 of your RMDs directly from a traditional IRA to a qualified charity, avoiding the taxes that might otherwise result if you took the RMDs yourself. After 2023, the \$100,000 limit will be indexed to inflation.

Of course, before you start either a Roth IRA conversion or a qualified charitable distribution, you will need to consult with your tax advisor, as both these moves have issues you must consider and may not be appropriate for your situation.

But it's always a good idea to know as much as you can about the various aspects of RMDs — they could play a big part in your retirement income strategy.

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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Road Test The Technology As Much As The Car

Q. You answered a question about my new 2022 Corolla LE over a year ago, and now I have another question about the car. The MPG rating for this car is 32 city and 41 highway. Under good highway conditions,



BY JOHN PAUL

I usually beat the number, getting 45 MPG or more. City driving, on the other hand, is a different story. Compared to what I see on the road, I drive better than a lot of people, meaning I drive around the speed limit, and I do smooth braking and accelerating. Yet, I consistently get around 20 mpg in city driving, and maybe around 25 mpg under very good conditions (not many red lights or stop signs). Do you know what could be going on here?

A. The EPA rates the urban/city cycle test using a dynamometer (treadmill for a car) and test for about 24 minutes of stop and go style driving. The average speeds are about 25-30 miles per hour with several stops and well as a slight burst to higher speeds. Since your highway driving meets or exceeds the EPA highway number this verifies the car is okay. It could just be that your style of city driving is not similar to the EPA loop. Also, if you average your very good highway MPG with your car's lower city 20 MPG the average is still about 32 MPG on average, close to the 35 MPG EPA average. EPA uses a 55/45 city highway split to determine the average miles per gallon. Based on this I would say your car and your driving habits and car are fine. Still, I would check the tire pressure each month with a gauge and continue your habits of easy on the gas and brake.

Q. I am buying what likely could be my last car and I'm not sure what I want or for that matter need. Also, over the years physically I have changed and I want a car that is easy to get in and out of. With so many makes and models as well as the technology, I feel somewhat overwhelmed. Any suggestions?

A. If you have a large used car lot, Carmax, Carvana or something similar that sells just about every make and model, although you may not be looking at used cars it is a good way to find a good fit without going to multiple dealerships. Spend some time getting in and out of the vehicles, look for blind spots and easy of using the controls. As a friend of mine says, it is as important to road test the technology as much as the car. And you never know, in the process you may find a slightly used car that fits your needs and budget.



might keep the car's electronics from fully shutting down.

Q. I am leaving a 2018 Maserati in my garage for two months, should I have the car started during my absence?

A. Ideally it would be best to have the battery on a maintainer, such as a Battery Tender or CTEK Smart Charger. These charger/maintainers will keep the battery fully charged, without overcharging. The other option is to have someone drive

the car every few weeks to keep the battery charged. Just starting the car and letting it idle just contaminates the oil and may actually take more electricity out of the battery than you are putting back in.

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 at mrjohnfpaul.

Q. When we pull face first into the driveway the next day the battery is dead, when we back up into the driveway the battery is fine the next day. Could there be something outside and draining the battery when the hood is facing in the driveway?

A. There wouldn't be any electronics outside that can drain the car's battery. Now some things such as LED light bulbs can interfere with radio signals but won't drain the battery. One possibility is if your car uses a proximity key-fob, and driving into your driveway puts the antenna closer to where you store your fob,

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TALES FROM BEYOND tomdagostino.com

The Spectre Leaguers: Part I

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

Everyone is aware of the Salem, Massachusetts witch trials that took place in 1692 but few have knowledge of an event that took place just north of the Witch City. This ghostly occurrence took place at the same time and it was believed by many to be closely related. Author Samuel Adams Drake wrote of the physical phenomenon that plagued the town of Gloucester, located on Cape Ann.

"It is gravely told in the "Magnalia Christi" of Cotton Mather, and on the authority of the Rever-

end John Emerson of Gloucester, how a number of rollicking apparitions dressed like gentlemen, in white waistcoats and breeches, kept Gloucester and the neighboring towns in a state of feverish excitement and alarm for a whole fortnight together.

In the midsummer time, in the year 1692, Ebenezer Babson, a sturdy yeoman of Cape Ann, with the rest of his family, almost every night heard noises as if some persons were walking or running hither and thither about the house. He being out late one night, when returning home saw two men come out of his own

door, and then at sight of him run swiftly from the end of the house into the adjoining cornfield. Going in, he immediately questioned his family concerning these strange visitors. They promptly replied that no one at all had been there during his absence."

Babson and the rest of Cape Ann would be besieged for a "fortnight" by what they deduced were ghosts or specters, perhaps even demons in human form sent by the devil to torment them. Drake, along with Mather and others also vouch for the authenticity of the event. Drake, in his writing states,

"But the fact that they were spirits, and no ordinary spirits at that, being so confidently vouched for, and by such high authority on such matters as Dr. Cotton Mather, would seem to dispose of all doubt upon the subject."

Mather's account was written shortly after the event and in his own words in the telling, yet the conviction of his narrative has warranted the tale to become an integral part of New England folklore. He relied upon the

sworn testimonies of those who actually fought with the unknown assailants who, in their conclusion, were not of this world. The men involved were of solid character and highly respected. For them to fabricate such a story would be detrimental to their caliber in society.

To continue the above narrative by Drake, Babson seized his gun and went in pursuit of the strangers. As he came upon a log, the two men jumped up and ran into the nearby swamp. As they ran, he heard one of them say, "The man of the house is now come, else we might have taken the house." In an instant, they were gone.

Stricken with fear of an attack by hostile enemies, Babson and his family took shelter in the nearest garrison. Upon entering, the sound of heavy footfalls resembling an army marching around the house was heard. Babson, along with a few other brave souls armed themselves and sallied forth to confront the enemy. Instead, they saw the same two men fleeing the scene. It was then that they deduced it may

have been French scouts and an attack was imminent.

The next night, Babson, being out of the garrison, saw two men once again who he thought to be Frenchmen as one of them had a bright gun, such as the ones used by the French Canadian, slung over his back. Both started towards him but Babson was able to make haste to the garrison where he got safely inside. Once again the heavy footfalls commenced as if a league of men were circling the safe house. Babson and a man named John Brown spied three men outside and took a shot at them. To their surprise, the men dodged their bullets like snowballs lobbed at them from a lame arm. For the next three nights, the three men, or what the towns people now thought were demons or devils, continued to mystically appear here and there in attempts to lure the inhabitants from their safe haven in the garrison.

Watch for Part 2 coming in the December issues.



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bankHometownSupports Local Food Pantries through 20th Annual Neighbors Helping Neighbors Fundraiser

Robert J. Morton, president and CEO of bankHometown, is kicking off the bank's annual Neighbors Helping Neighbors fundraising drive for 2023 to help support local food pantries. The annual appeal is part of the bank's charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, which reflects the bank's commitment to making a real difference in the neighborhoods it serves.

This marks the 20th year of the bank's annual appeal, which invites bank customers, employees, and community members to donate money between November 1 and November 30 to help fight food insecurity.

All donations up to \$2,500 per customer will be matched dollar for dollar by bankHometown and the total raised will be divided among participating food pantries across Massachusetts and Connecticut in communities the bank serves. In 2022, through contributions and matching donations, the campaign raised over \$66,000, and since inception has donated more than \$331,000.

Donations of any amount are encouraged. As an added incentive to give, the bank offers those who donate the opportunity enter a drawing to win a \$25 gift card, which will be awarded at each of its 16 locations.

"Neighbors Helping Neighbors shows how communities can come together to help others in need," said Morton. "bankHometown is proud to lead this annual giving tradition. We thank everyone who selflessly gives each year."

Those who wish to participate have until November 30 to make their donations. Checks should be made payable to "bankHometown Neighbors" and can be dropped off at any bankHometown branch or mailed to:

A total of 16 food pantries will be supported this year and include: Athol Salvation Army

Food Pantry, Auburn Youth and Family Services Food Pantry, CARE Food Pantry, Clinton, Food Share: Southbridge, Charlton and Sturbridge, Friendly House Pantry, Worcester, Ginny's Helping Hand, Inc., Leominster, Millbury Senior Center Food Pantry,

Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf, Sutton Senior Center Michael A. Chizy Food Pantry,

St. John's Food for the Poor, Worcester, and St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry, Webster.

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Milford Regional to Host Free Webinar on the Early Signs of ADHD, Depression and Anxiety in Children

Milford Regional's Community Benefits programming is hosting a free webinar for parents. "Opening Doors to Youth Mental Health; Helping Parents Identify the Early Signs of ADHD, Depression and Anxiety," will be held on Thursday, November 16 at 7 p.m.

This webinar is for parents and caregivers and will feature medical and mental health professionals who will focus on the early signs of ADHD, depression and anxiety while also recognizing what typical developing behaviors are in children. The webinar will mainly focus on the age range from pre-school to early school-age.

Presenting are Milford Regional Physician Group pediatrician and Director of Pediatrics Mary Lyons, MD; Family Continuity Programs and VAULT Director Kate Rose, LMHC; and Wayside Youth & Family Support Network Peer Support Specialist/Peer Mentor Destiny O'Connell, CPS. Milford Regional Medical Center Chief Quality Officer and Vice President Bert Thurlo-Walsh, MM, RN, CPHQ, will moderate.

Pre-registration is required. Visit milfordregional.org and select "Classes and Events" on the homepage and view "Webinars." A link will be sent to registrants 24 hours prior to the webinar.

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Holiday Guide and Kids Activity Pages

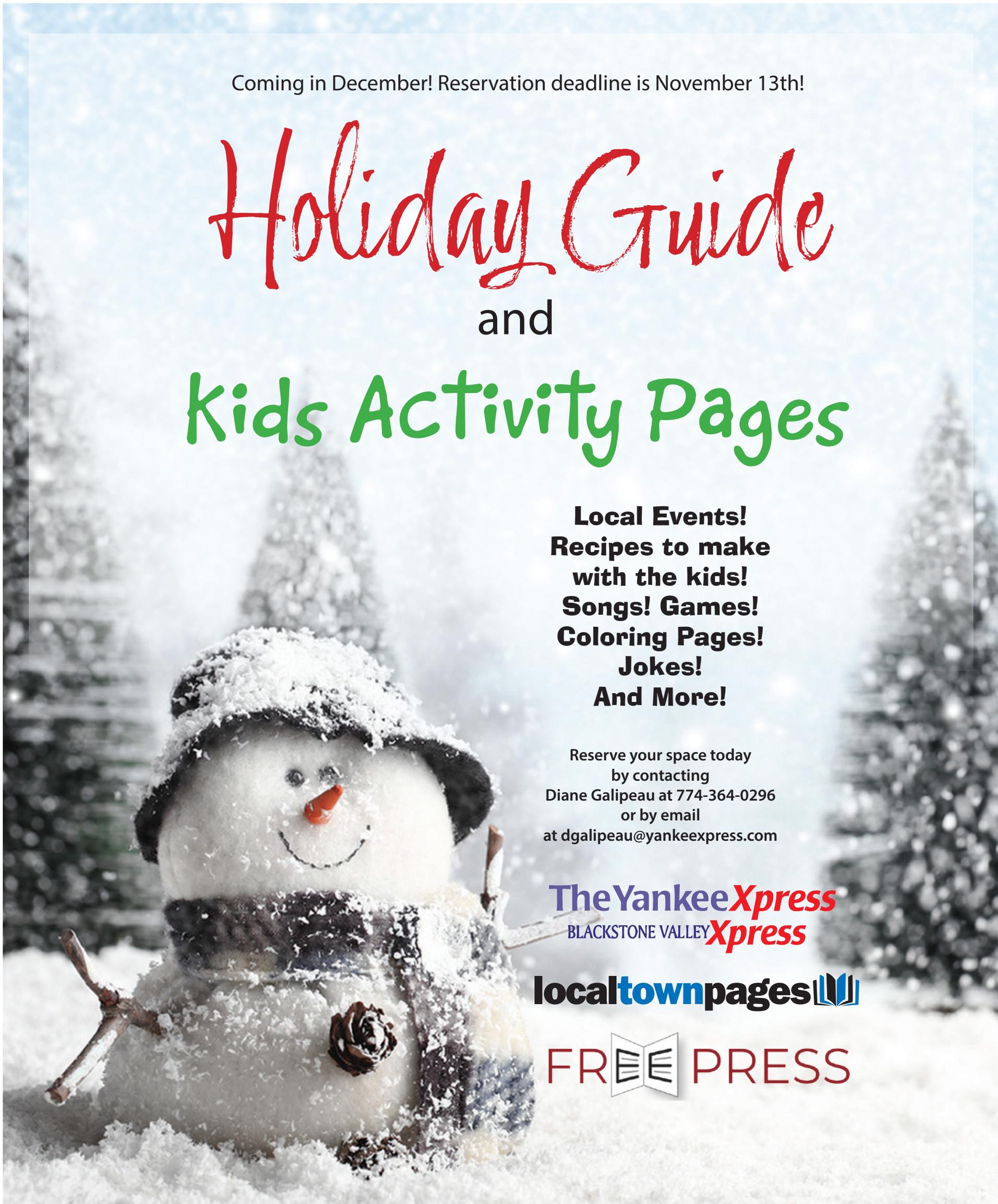
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Veterans Day Parade Saturday, November 11, 2023

Dudley will be holding their Eighteenth (XVIII) annual Veterans Day Parade this year on Saturday, November 11, 2023.

Prior to regularly scheduled parade activities; we would like to encourage everyone to attend a brief ceremonial tribute to our lo-

assemble at the Veterans' Court of Honor....

Ceremonies will commence promptly at 11:00AM. Our Chaplain will lead us in prayer, immediately following will be a three-shot volley performed by the weapon detail and Taps. Our guest speaker

Honor Guard with colors/weapons

Grand Marshal in Vehicle Webster/Dudley Veterans Council; VFW; American Legion; PAV; DAV; All Ladies Auxiliary Units; Sons of the American Legion; and the Scouting Organizations who are participating.

Please Note: all former Military veterans wishing to join us are certainly welcome and are encouraged to march. Those who plan on doing so should meet at the Dudley Municipal Complex at 10:45AM.

NOTICE:

- Three vehicles for our riding Veterans. Those who will be riding will meet at the Dudley Complex at 10:45AM.

- Those marching behind vehicles should maintain 30 feet of separation from vehicles, Ladies Auxiliary Units and all Scouting Organizations.

- One vehicle will be at the end of the parade and available for anyone having difficulty marching. Our Host this year for refresh-

ments will be provided by the Polish American Veterans (PAV) on Ray St. in Webster. All those participating/marching are invited to attend immediately upon conclusion of this event.

Please keep in mind that we are honoring all those who are serving and those who have served this great nation. We sincerely thank everyone for their participation with helping to make this day a memorable one.



VETERANS DAY

☆☆☆ NOVEMBER 11th ☆☆☆

HONORING ALL WHO SERVED

cal veterans who paid the supreme sacrifice for their country in WW II at The Memorial Monument located at the Webster Lake entryway off of Thompson Road. In addition, at this time we will be placing a wreath at the Women's Veterans' Monument. This ceremony will begin promptly at 09:45AM.

Upon completion of our memorial tribute all marching veterans will meet with their respective colors/weapons at the St. Louis School Yard Parking area located next to the gymnasium at the bottom of the entryway at 10:15AM. Transportation by bus will leave at approximately 10:30AM and proceed to the Municipal Complex in Dudley.

Upon arrival in Dudley we will

(speaker to be named) will then present a brief ceremonial message.

Upon conclusion we will march in procession from the Dudley Municipal Complex to the Webster Veterans' Court of Honor for a similar presentation with Chaplain's prayer, three-shot volley and Taps.

Ceremonies will conclude at approximately 12:45PM.

All Scouting Organizations who plan on participating are asked to meet at the Dudley Municipal Complex (Town Hall) at 10:45AM.

This year's Grand Marshall for our Veterans Day Parade is Vietnam Veteran - Sergeant Richard Norton, U.S. Air Force.

Please adhere to the following marching order:



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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 news@theyankeeexpress.com.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4

• Boy Scout Troop 107 will hold its bottle drive from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. Bring your deposit bottles and cans to the back of the Grafton Municipal Center, 30 Providence Road. Please rinse out bottles and cans. Sort containers i.e. soda cans, beer cans, glass, one liter plastic, two liter plastic and small single serving containers. Adults will be available to help you transfer your cans and bottles.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11

• Holy Trinity Church Craft Fair 9 a.m. – 3

p.m. Handmade holiday gifts and decorations, basket raffles, a bake sale and more. Grab a bite to eat in the corner kitchen. Free admission.

• Veterans Day Parade to Honor and Remember and Ceremony 11 a.m. Grand Marshal Sgt. Richard Norton Ceremony and step off at the Dudley Municipal Complex, 71 West Main Street The parade will conclude at the Webster Veterans Court of Honor, followed by a Veterans Day Ceremony.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11 - SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12

• The 16th Annual Natural Living Expo, New England's largest holistic health and wellness event will return on Nov. 11 – 12 to the Best Western Royal Plaza Hotel and Trade Center, 181 Boston Post Road (Route 20), Marlborough. Get the best of holistic and alternative health care information. Sponsored by Uxbridge-based SpiritofChange.org. Admission is \$25 with a \$4 discount for ordering online in advance.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17

• Millbury First Congregational Church will be holding their Annual Turkey Raffle on Friday, Nov. 17 at 6:30 p.m. at the Charles F. Minney VFW Post, 16 South Main St. Millbury. The top four prizes are: First Prize: \$500 in cash; Second Prize: \$250 Amazon Gift Card; Third Prize: Case of Assorted Wines; Fourth Prize: Thanksgiving Dinner Basket with Turkey. Raffle Tickets on sale outside Goretto's Supermarket, 1 Providence Street on Oct. 14; 17; 24; and Nov. 4. Refreshments will be sold during the drawing, including hot dogs and other delicious surprises.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

• The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's 45th Annual Meeting & Awards Ceremony will be held at Pleasant Valley Country Club on Armsby Road in Sutton from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. Do you know a business or individual deserving of recognition, or a business that is celebrating a milestone anniversary? Submit your nomination to Liz O'Neil.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 18

• Our Lady of the Valley Regional School hosts its 39th Annual Holiday Fair from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at 75 Mendon Street, Uxbridge behind St. Mary's Parish. The Holiday Fair has something for those of all ages. Shop for holiday gifts from a wide range of local vendors. Try your luck at one of the fair's many raffles, including basket raffles, the super raffle, and the grand raffle. And enjoy fresh baked goods, popcorn, soft pretzels, and the ever-popular cookie walk.

Children will love the kid's activities, including crafts, games, inflatables, a scavenger hunt, a kid's raffle, balloon animals, a hot cocoa bar, and pictures with Santa. Come for lunch and choose from several delicious options, including chicken parmesan subs, meatball subs, hot dogs, pizza, and fries. You can also purchase homemade meat pies to heat up at home. The Our Lady of the Valley Holiday Fair is so big, that it takes place in three buildings—the main school building, the G.R.A.C.E. Center, and the St. Mary's Parish Hall (Good Shepherd Center). This year's fair includes 3,000 more feet. For more details, visit their website at www.ourladyofthevalleyre-

gional.com. Vendors looking for table space can email olvguild@gmail.com

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24 – SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26

• The Douglas Scouting Association will host a Hometown Holiday Hall at the Scott Hall Building, 22 Church Street, Douglas on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 24-26. The hours are 10 a.m. – 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Sunday. Free admission and free refreshments. All items are homemade. Holiday store atmosphere – one stop check-out. Cash, check major credit cards accepted. All proceeds to benefit the Douglas Scouting Association.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 25

• 10th Annual Shop Small holiday shopping event with local merchants in Whitinsville and Northbridge

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2

• Uxbridge First Holiday Night and Santa Parade 4:30 p.m. To register as a parade participant, complete the form found at facebook.com/uxbridgefirstholidaynight and return it by Nov. 26. Donation of \$100 per vehicle, float or marching group. Parade staging will begin at 3 p.m. Contact us at Mendon Street Kitchen, 508-278-5750. • Chain of Lights, Sutton's annual town-wide Christmas event. Free trolley rides from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. to participating locations. Food, children's activities, shopping and lots of holiday cheer. Tree lighting with Santa and the Sutton High School Band at 5 p.m. on the Town Common.

HAPPENINGS!
continued on page 17

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Fundación MAPFRE Donates \$70,000 to United Way for Childcare and Nutrition Programs

United Way of South Central MA (UWSCM) is pleased to announce that it has received a \$70,000 grant from Fundación MAPFRE, a global non-profit organization that provides social assistance and promotes road safety. The grant is the first major gift this year that will support UWSCM's Bridging the Gap Campaign, which provides funding for critical childcare and nutrition programs in South Central Massachusetts.

"We are grateful to Fundación MAPFRE for their generous support of our partner agencies that provide affordable childcare and nutrition services for families and older adults," said Mary O'Coin, Executive Director at UWSCM. "This funding will help us to ensure that children in our community have access to the high-quality preschool and after-school childcare and nutrition for families so they can all thrive."

The Bridging the Gap Campaign supports a variety of programs that provide childcare and nutrition assistance to low-income families in

South Central Massachusetts. These programs include:

- Childcare subsidies that help families afford high-quality childcare at the YMCA and Boys and Girls Club of Webster-Dudley.

- Nutrition assistance programs through Tri-Valley, Inc. that provide food to older adults and individuals with disabilities.

- A weekly dinner program for families through the YMCA - Tri-Community Branch "What's for Dinner" program.

"Fundación MAPFRE is pleased to support the United Way of South Central Massachusetts in its important work in the community," said Jaime Tamayo, President and Chief Executive Officer of MAPFRE Insurance and Chief Representative of Fundación MAPFRE in the U.S. "We are proud to help the United Way's Bridging the Gap Campaign to provide more essentials to children and adults."

About Fundación MAPFRE

Fundación MAPFRE is a global non-profit organization that pro-

vides social assistance and promotes road safety. The foundation was established in 1975 by MAPFRE, a leading insurance company. Fundación MAPFRE works to improve the lives of people in need through a variety of programs and services, including support for children and families, disaster relief, and road safety initiatives.

About United Way of South Central MA United Way of South Central MA is a nonprofit organization that works to improve the lives of people in need in the towns of Southbridge, Sturbridge, Charlton, Dudley and Webster. UWSCM funds over 26 programs and services that address the critical needs of the community, including education, income, health, and housing.

The 2023 campaign will run through December 31. People can donate online at www.uwscm.org or by mail to United Way of South Central MA, 176 Main Street, Suite 400, Southbridge, MA 01550.

HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 16

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5

• Christmas Potluck at 6:30 p.m. First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, Sutton.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

• Auburn Recreation and Culture is hosting its 10th Annual Holiday Craft Fair from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 9 (snow date

Dec. 10) at Auburn High School, 99 Auburn Street, Auburn.

150+ Craft Vendors will help you get into the spirit of the holiday season. Santa will be making an appearance from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., so bring the kids. There will be activities, food, drawing, face painting and much more. For more information please Contact the Recreation & Culture Division or call 508-832-7736.

• Annual Holiday Bazaar 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Webster Town Hall Auditorium, 350 Main Street

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

• Midnight, Last Night Cannon firing, M.M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop, 6 Singletary Ave., Sutton.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16 2024

• The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's Home & Community Expo will be held at the Northbridge High School Field House on Linwood Avenue in Whitinsville from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Registration will occur late summer, early fall.

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Fall Fantasia Art & Music Exhibition

The Shawna Foundation and Estate of Mind will present the inaugural Fall Fantasia Art & Music Exhibition Nov. 4 – 5 at Estate of Mind, Whitinsville. The Exhibition will feature the work of local artists, as well as resident & visiting artists at Estate of Mind. The theme is Fantasia, defined as a reality augmented by the imagination, tapping into the flow of the unfolding moment, through improvisation.

The work presented includes

multi-disciplinary art forms and improvisational performance. These will comprise guided tours, fire spinning, live music, belly dancing, artist meet and greets, and more. Non-alcoholic refreshments will be served. Visual artists include: experiential designer and filmmaker Jiana Cipriano; self-described intuitive artist Cristina Dudziak; Oscar-winning producer and multi-media performance artist Jeremy Edwardes; artist, writer, and filmmaker John J Lynch;

multidisciplinary, film and graphic design artist Alexandra McDonald; Emmy-nominated producer and award-winning filmmaker, writer and artist and Skip Shea and self-taught mixed media artist Heather “Zelda” Angelone.

Performance artists include: body-positive belly dancing ensemble The PSYbel Troupe; local singer-songwriter Victoria Dobbs; fire puppeteer and fire spinner “Wizard” Sam Perry.

Full schedule and artist biographies available here: est8ofmind.com/events/fall-fantasia. Estate of Mind is a volunteer-run, donation-based collaborative creator co-living community, and pay-what-you-can arts and lifestyle event venue with a world-class visiting volunteer program, based in the historic Oakhurst Manor complex in Whitinsville. For more information, visit est8ofmind.com. The Shawna E. Shea Memorial Foundation, Inc is a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit who believes the arts and education are essential to creating a vibrant, healthy community and world. The mission of the Shawna Foundation is to equitably promote



and support students through scholarship and showcase artists in filmmaking, performance arts, poetry and other creative endeavors

with a focus on underrepresented communities. For more information visit the shawnafoundation.org.

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Fri. & Sat. 9-4

Prayer



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

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

Slatersville: American's First Mill Village

Meet the Filmmaker and Screening at Samuel Slater Experience on November 12

Samuel Slater's place in US history is as the “Father of the American Industrial Revolution,” though in his native England he is known as “Slater the Traitor” for bringing proprietary technology to the colonies.

The Slater family built and operated dozens of textile mills in Rhode Island, central Massachusetts, and Connecticut, dominating the industry for more than a

century.

It is the story that filmmaker Christian de Rezendes tells in his documentary series “Slatersville: America's First Mill Village”, which aired on Rhode Island PBS last year and now streams internationally. The five episode first season was honored with two Regional Boston/New England Emmy Nominations for Outstanding Documentary and Outstanding Musical Composition, which it received, a Gold Telly Award for Documentary Series and three film festival awards.

The Samuel Slater Experience museum will host a “Meet the Filmmaker” and screening event

on Sunday, November 12 from 2:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Mr. de Rezendes will introduce the series, which was 12 years in the making, and conduct a Q & A following the screening of Episode 1: The Mental Smugglers.” He will also review progress on the second half of the series, now in post-production.

To register for this free event, go to the museum website, samuel Slater Experience.org. For more information email: admin@samuel Slater Experience.org or call 508-461-2955.

Samuel Slater Experience is at 31 Ray Street in Webster.

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Fall harvest Native style comes to Grange



Fall is a time of color and cooling air. But it's also a bonanza of wild food, medicine and other useful plants if you know where to look and take the time to develop a relationship with the land.

Del Bachand has done that, and brings her long experience to the Dudley Grange Tuesday, Nov 14 at 6 pm.

The founder of Webster's Generations Healing Center will be talking about "local woodland plants and trees that share their bounty in the Fall with humans, animals and birds. Covering some of the medicinal plants and food used by the Native people of the area, different ways to prepare them, and again touching on 'considerate' harvesting."

The event is free and open to the public, with snacks and drinks available afterward. Dudley Grange is at 139 Center Road, next to Nichols College.

Del Bachand holds comfrey, one of many medicinal plants in Native tradition.

Announcing the Second Annual David G. Gow Memorial Scholarship For Horology

The Willard House and Clock Museum wishes to inform the public of a nationwide scholarship program dedicated to professional careers in clock making. Any US-based student who has begun the journey into the profession of clock making qualifies. \$5,000 will be awarded and the money may be used to attend advanced courses provided by various clock and watch making schools across the country.

Application Deadline: November 4, 2023

Award Release: December 14, 2023

Seasonal Rental

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Lung Cancer Screening Event

Milford Regional Medical Center will be hosting a lung cancer screening event on Saturday, Nov. 11 from 8:20 a.m. – 12 p.m. The screening is intended for high-risk individuals for lung cancer.

November 11 is National Lung Cancer Screening Day: a day intended to increase access to lung cancer screenings in communities and foster awareness about the effectiveness of those screenings.

"Early-detection through low-dose computer tomography scans have proven to be effective among individuals who are considered to be at high risk for lung cancer," said Milford Regional Director of Diagnostic Imaging Laura Chapman.

Milford Regional will offer participants free refreshments that morning. Space is limited and a physician order is required. Interested participants should call their

physicians to see if they qualify and to have an order placed. Any questions can be directed to Milford Regional's Lung Cancer Screening Coordinator by calling 508-422-2520.

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