

Oxford DPW and Chef Poppa Corn the Winners of Scarecrows on the Common!

BY JANET STOICA
jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

What a tremendous display of spunk and imagination on the Oxford Town Common in anticipation of fall and Halloween!

The entries were all excellent and well-thought out. They were all the Best of the Best. Truly they were. The Oxford Department of Public Works won First Place for being the Funniest and the Best of Town Spirit! They also won Second Place in the Most Creative category. Kudos to them for their ultimate originality!

The DPW went to the max of displays. Their ornery looking and fanged creature made from DPW supplies truly was an invention to write home about. The scary beast was tall, orange-and-white striped, and positively menacing in its presentation. Boogah-woogah!

The imaginations of the high-

way crew who put this looming and scary thing on exhibit at The Common were simply amazing. From the reflective vest to his trash can hat and construction barrel legs and torso, he sure was a frightful sight! His pose was

tasty-looking N & J Donuts display with an appealing pink-frosted donut, Friends of Oxford Community Center's cool display, Room on the Broom by Sarah Auclair, just awesome, and a delightful Silver Sneakers scarecrow. All entrants



ly good. Not too intimidating but certainly threatening. All in good fun as he sat among the many other imaginative, creative, and scary looking spectacles.

Chef Poppa Corn (Richard Guskey) won for Most Creative. Other entries included a really

are to be commended for their outstanding works of art. It was a first-rate display and a testament to community spirit.

If you missed these sophisticated works of art, there's always next year!

Drought Conditions Prompt Red Flag Warning

BY PATTY ROY

You can't miss it on the town website: at auburnma.gov, there is a fire caution notice along with a map outlining drought conditions in the state. The Central Region (Worcester County) is appropriately shaded in burnt orange for Level Three or Critical Drought conditions.

Rainfall has been at a significant low over the past two months and the long-range outlook doesn't show much relief. That has put a Red Flag Warning into effect, meaning a combination of weather, wind and drought means brush fires have a greater chance of spreading.

The town currently has a "no outside burning" order in place, said Auburn Fire Chief Stephen Coleman.

"Historically low rainfall, bright and breezy weather, and bone-dry fuel sources mean that any outdoor fire will quickly grow out of control," he said.

Chief Coleman is also the Public Information Officer for Fire District 7 that includes Auburn and Oxford. The Massachusetts Emergency Management Association (MEMA) created the district with its 28 municipalities that are organized to rapidly deploy firefighters and equipment, as well as share training.



The Fire Chief said it's crucial for residents to "refrain from any outdoor activity that can spark a fire," in order to conserve already busy resources.

"Every firefighter battling a preventable wildfire one who can't respond to a house fire, motor vehicle accident or medical emergency," he said.

On November 2, the Chief issued an outdoor burning ban for Auburn. Despite the fact that it was posted on social media and a town-wide Code Red notice sent out, people seemed not to get the message.

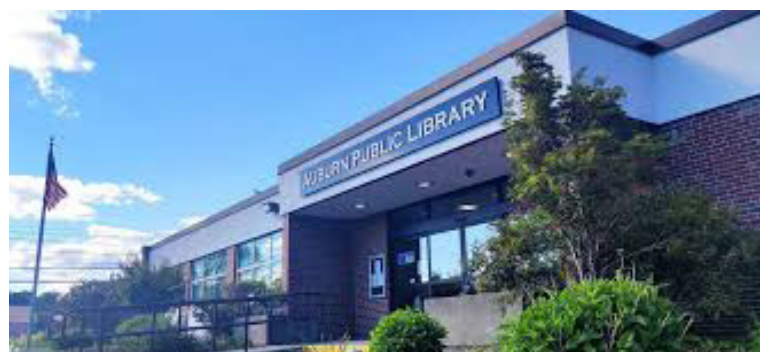
The department responded to eight outside fires from burning leaves, trash and building debris over that same weekend. On November 9, the department assisted at a fire on the Auburn/Millbury line that spread from a fire pit.

RED FLAG
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Auburn Announces Details on Library/ Goddard Park/Pedestrian Bridge Project

BY JANET STOICA
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According to the town's proposed project summary, Auburn is moving ahead with its three-phased project for the Library and Goddard Park area. Construction involves installing a large sunroom addition on the back of the library facility, implementing various improvements to



Goddard Park, and constructing a pedestrian bridge over the brook to physical link the library parcel with Goddard Park.

The report states that Goddard Park and the Auburn Public Library are anchors in Drury Square and the proposed project would involve construction of the

PROJECT
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RED FLAG

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It is illegal to burn leaves in Massachusetts at any time, and in the current conditions, open air fires such as wood-burning fire pits, chimeneas, and propane-fueled patio and yard accessories should not be used either.

Open air brush burning without a permit and authorization is subject to a fine of \$500 plus the cost of suppression during burn season which begins on January 15.

During a drought and on Red Flag days, state law further allows fire chiefs to levy \$50 daily fines for “fireworks, candles, recreational and cooking fires or any device that produces an open flame or spark.” [MGL Chapter 148, Section 30]

The fire department’s Facebook page states: “Our goal is to educate

and provide people with the current fire conditions so they can make good decisions. However, we know that is not always the case and we provide warnings and explain the rules and conditions to people in violation. If people continue to ignore the law, we will issue fines and seek to recoup costs.”

The entire state, including District 7, is facing an unprecedented fall wildfire season. Statewide, fires in October rose 1,200% above the historical average, and the 133 fires reported in the first week of November represent more than six times the average for the entire month. Many have damaged homes and other properties.

According to Chief Coleman almost all of these fires start with human activity and can be prevented by limiting outdoor activity that involves open flames, sparks and

embers, hot engines or gasoline from power equipment, and other ignition sources.

The lack of rainfall, dry dead leaves, bright sunshine and gusty winds are combining to create perfect conditions for wildfires, once started, to spread.

At the same time, water sources like lakes and ponds are supplying less water and water pressure needed to extinguish the fires.

Chief Coleman also points out that about half the homes in Massachusetts are in or near wooded areas, so they are also at risk from wildfires.

“The faster we hear about a fire, the better chance we have of safely extinguishing it,” said Chief Coleman. “If you see smoke or flames, please call 911 right away so we can protect you, your neighbors and our community.”

Auburn Town Manager Ed Kazanovicz, Announces Retirement

BY JANET STOICA
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After 30 years of serving the town of Auburn, Town Manager Kazanovicz announced his retirement effective January 31, 2025 to the Board of Selectmen



(“BOS”). He hopes to pursue family and personal interests.

He thanked the current and previous members of the BOS and Auburn residents by stating that “it’s been an honor and privilege to serve you and I will forever be grateful for your trust in me and for allowing me to serve this outstanding community.” He cited his initiatives and accomplishments in the areas of the new fire headquarters at the site of the former Chuck’s Steakhouse, establishment of EMS Ambulance Service,

police body cameras, adoption of financial policies resulting in an AA+ bond rating upgrade, creation of the OPEB (town retiree benefits) trust with a balance of \$10 million, Veterans Memorial corridor and parks, online permitting, senior housing development, construction and development of the Pappas Recreation Complex, as well as middle and high school construction.

Mr. Kazanovicz also stated that “there is still much to be done and I will remain laser-focused until my departure to ensure a seamless and smooth transition.” He thanked the town’s management team including Assistant Town Manager, Dori Vecchio; Police Chief Todd Lemon; Fire Chief Steven Coleman; Deputy Chiefs Scott Mills and Glen Johnson; CFO Karen Harnois; DPW Director Joanna Paquin; DDIS Director Darlene Coyle; IT Director Mike Marino; Town Clerk Ginger Buteau; School Superintendent Beth Chamberlin; all Division Heads and their Assistants; and all other Town Personnel who helped to advance the betterment of Auburn.

His closing remarks were “after 30 years of being employed by the town, I am prepared to write my final chapter. Auburn and its residents will always hold a special place in my heart. Thank you.”

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Here's Looking at Your Photos

The Blackstone Valley Art Association is sponsoring the 13th Annual Anything Goes Photography Show – this show is open to the public! Prints

from all styles of digital cameras, film cameras, cellphone cameras, point-and-shoots, SLRs, cyanotypes, and other photo-related artwork are warmly welcome!

The drop-off date for the show is Saturday, January 4, 2025 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the BVAA Community Art Gallery at 5 South Main Street, Uxbridge. The opening reception for the show is Friday, January 10, 2025. Each participant may exhibit two photos, which will be judged for cash prizes. Applications, hanging guidelines for the show, and drop-off details can be found at bvaa.org. A portion of all sales goes to support the work of Open Sky in the community.

As part of this community photography show, the BVAA will host a series of free photography workshops on composition, shutter speed, depth of field, and other topics. Check out our BVAA.org website and social media as we set up that schedule. Partial funding for BVAA activities comes from Local Cultural Council Grants.

We look forward to seeing your artwork! For more information, email infor@bvaa.org



The 2024 first place winner was "Mother, May I" by Sarah Lemansky.

PROJECT

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pedestrian bridge to span Dunn's Brook, improve and enhance the park, and provide new space at the back of the library that visually connects with the park and provides an opportunity for outdoor programming and expanded indoor space. The improvements are expected to create a welcoming environment at the library and the park that will encourage visitors, residents, and surrounding businesses to utilize the park while also providing easy access to the library.

The pedestrian bridge will provide connectivity to enable the town to develop walking trails through the park to the library and to Brotherton Way and back to the park. The bridge might also include a bicycle lane.

Installation of the glass sunroom structure on the back of the library would provide additional indoor programming space as well as create a connection to the outdoor space on the Library property itself and the adjoining park via the pedestrian bridge. This installation will hopefully facilitate the library's use of the outdoor space that is currently

underutilized and not easily accessible. The sunroom addition would also create a visual connection to the park as well as a physical connection which would provide opportunities to hold outdoor library programs on the newly-connected town spaces including the pond which would be cleaned and made accessible for use in passive recreational family and library activities.

This project compliments the ongoing \$4.2 million Auburn Street reconstruction project and the town-funded additional \$900,000 aesthetic improvements as well as the \$400,000 Brotherton Way improvement project.

Auburn applied for and received approval of a \$505,000 grant through the Arthur M. & Martha R. Pappas Foundation. The Pappas Foundation requires a minimum match of 50% of the total project cost and the town has developed a funding plan that does not require any new taxes as it utilizes available funds.

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Open Sky Community Services presents The Fright Before Christmas

Jeff Belanger's one-person holiday show explores the darker side of the holiday season. Warning: This event is NOT for children!

Bestselling author, podcaster, media personality, and renowned storyteller Jeff Belanger will take the stage to perform his captivating one-person show, "The Fright Before Christmas", at The G.B. and Lexi Singh Performance Center, 60 Douglas

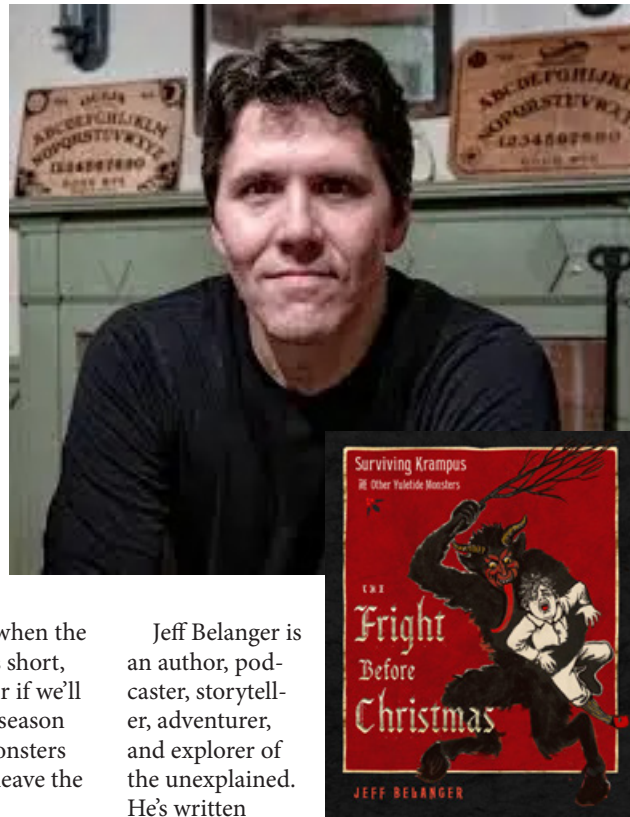
Road, Whitinsville on Saturday, December 7, at 7 p.m.

This spine-tingling event blends Belanger's wit with his fascination for the supernatural, exploring how Christmas and ghost stories have long gone hand-in-hand. Known for his dynamic stage presence

and deep knowledge of the strange and unexplained, Belanger promises audiences a night of shivers and chuckles, along with a hoard of ghosts and monsters like Krampus, Belsnickel, Gryla, the Yule Lads, and more.

Based on his bestselling book of the same name, Belanger will take his audience on a journey through the ancient history of this holiday. "No matter if you call it Christmas, Midwinter, or Yule, this holiday has always been centered on the Winter Solstice," said Belanger. "It's a time when the night grows long, the days short, and we're forced to wonder if we'll survive the oncoming icy season filled with dangers and monsters waiting to kill us... Better leave the kids home for this one."

Jeff Belanger is an author, podcaster, storyteller, adventurer, and explorer of the unexplained. He's written



more than a dozen books that have been published in six languages, he's the Emmy-nominated host, writer, and producer of the New England Legends series on PBS and Amazon Prime, and he provides programs and performances to audiences all over the world. Jeff has made media appearances on hundreds of radio and television programs over his 25-year career, and he has a passion for mysteries and legends

For more information and learn where to purchase tickets online visit: open-skycs.org/events

Auburn Public Library

369 Southbridge Street
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www.auburnlibrary.org

Evening Book Club Monday, Nov. 25 at 5:30 p.m. "The Guest List" by Lucy Foley

Evening Knitting Group, Tuesday 5-7 p.m.

The Library closes at 12:30 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 27 and will be closed for the Thanksgiving holiday Nov. 28 - Dec. 1.

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Webster-Dudley-Oxford Chamber of Commerce Donates Gift Cards to Community Food Banks.

The Webster-Dudley-Oxford Chamber of Commerce this week donated \$2,000 in grocery gift cards to Webster Dudley Food Share and \$1,000 in grocery gift cards to the Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf to support these local organizations in their mission to provide people in need this holiday season.

"There's a need out there, and

we don't talk enough about it," said John Milas, chamber director. "This is all about helping our community. The number of people going to the food banks has been increasing with the rise in the cost of food."


This is the third year that the Chamber has been donating to the food banks in the form of gift cards. Previously, it donated turkeys at Thanksgiving. Milas noted that the gift card donations are now included in the Chamber's annual budget.

Webster Dudley Food Share is a non-profit organization that provides essential food to all Webster

and Dudley residents in need. The Oxford Ecumenical Food Shelf provides free emergency grocery assistance to any family living in Oxford and any registered members of an Oxford church.

About Webster-Dudley-Oxford Chamber of Commerce


The Webster-Dudley-Oxford Chamber of Commerce advocates for the interests of its local business members and is an affiliate of the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce. For more information, go to www.wdochamberma.com or call 508-943-9700.



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SENIOR SWEAT MONDAYS AT 10 A.M.

This class emphasizes balance, stretching and strengthening. Also posture, coordination and essential muscle groups such as upper chest core and buttocks. Most of the class exercise will be in a chair or will use a chair for safety. This is a drop-in class, you do not need to pre-register. \$3.00 donation. This class is taught by Dr. Harvey Clermont.

YOGA FOR MINDFULNESS MONDAY AT 11 A.M.

Yoga for older adults is practiced with the use of a chair and incorporates breathing practices (Pranayama), focus (Meditation) and movement (Asana). Asana moves all the joints through a range of motion which will improve strength, flexibility and steadiness. Ann Ramsey is a certified registered yoga teacher of the E-RYT 500 level and has been teaching yoga to older adults for 15 years. This is a drop in class, you do not need to pre-register. \$3.00 donation

GENTLE FLOW YOGA TUESDAY AT 11 A.M.

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LET'S MOVE TOGETHER TUESDAYS 1-1:45 P.M.

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CHAIR DANCE TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS 10 A.M.

Chair dance encourages health and fitness for active people or those whose physical condition, restricted mobility, or age, limits their participation in conventional forms of exercise. Chair dancing is a fun, energizing and social activity suited for all ages - it's dancing with your soul. This class is taught by instructor Forty Arroyo. This is a drop in class, you do not need to pre-register. \$3.00 donation

STRENGTH & BALANCE WEDNESDAYS & FRIDAYS AT 10 A.M.

Strengthen & tone your upper and lower body while improving your mobility and balance with these seated and standing exercises using a chair and light hand weights (if desired). Led by Ace Certified Fitness Trainer Lin Hultgren. All levels are welcome! Beginner and modification friendly. Make a positive difference in your health today! This is a drop-in class, you do not need to pre-register, \$3.00 donation per class.

WALKING CLUB MONDAY & WEDNESDAY 10 A.M.

The group meets every Monday and Wednesday. During the summer months, meet at Lemansky Field, 400 Oxford Street North., Auburn. During the winter months the group meets at the Auburn Mall-food court. Lace up your sneakers and join the fun! Call the senior center for the current time.

MEDITATION FRIDAYS AT 11 A.M.

Meditation creates positive effects on your health, well-being, sleep problems, chronic pain, anxiety and depression. The class is led by Usha Verma. This is a drop in class, you do not need to pre-register. There is no charge for this class.

Coloring Club - Mondays at 10:30 a.m.

Knit & Stitch - Mondays 10-11:30 a.m.; Wednesdays - 9:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.

Canasta - Mondays at 12:45 p.m. \$2

Weekly Tech Clinic - Wednesdays 11a.m. - 12 p.m. Computer, phone, iTablets

Pitch - Wednesdays 1 p.m. and Friday 6:30 p.m.

Bingo - Thursdays 12:45 p.m. iPad Club - Thursdays at 1 p.m.

Quilting - Fridays at 12 p.m. Bridge - Fridays 12:45 p.m.

Dominoes - Fridays at 12:45 p.m.

Practical Nursing Open House at BVT

Tours Available December 2nd

The Moonlight Program in Practical Nursing (Post-Secondary) at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) prepares its adult learners for personal and professional success as practical nurses. If you are interested in a life-changing career in health care, register to attend the Open House on Monday, December 2nd, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The evening is an opportunity to tour the practical nursing classrooms at 65 Pleasant Street in Upton. Speak with faculty and staff, observe the state-of-the-art equipment, and participate in a question-and-answer session. Learn more about the part-time, 60-week evening program requirements, the admissions process, and how to enroll.

All interested applicants must take the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS), a requirement for the Practical Nursing program. The program administers the TEAS Entrance Exams to applicants and accepts TEAS results from other

testing locations.

"It is a good time to enter the nursing field because there's such a need for skilled nurses," said Practical Nursing Coordinator Joann L. Monks, MBA, MSc, RN-BC, RMA.

The affordable program of-

fers small class sizes and accepts in-district, out-of-district, and out-of-state applicants. For more information about the program and to register for the Open House, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/pno-penhouse.

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District Attorney Partners with Autism Resource Center to Expand Adaptive Swim Class Offerings for Neurodivergent Children

Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr. recently partnered with the Autism Resource Center to help expand adaptive swim program offerings to more families of neurodivergent children across Worcester County.

The classes include basic swim skills, as well as water safety training. They also include a home safety workshop for parents/caregivers to provide information and resources to protect against elopement.

“We know that children with Autism Spectrum Disorder are 160 times more likely to drown than their peers without adequate water safety instruction,” said Mr. Early. “We want to prevent such tragedies. These swim classes will help children be safe, help give parents some peace of mind, and also allow children to

have fun in an environment adapted to their needs.”

The Autism Resource Center first began setting up the Adaptive Swim Program last year with the support of the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism.

“The Swim and Safety Program is truly about prevention and accessibility. Our goal is to provide swim lessons to as many children and young adults with autism as possible,” said Kristen Cariglia, Director of the Autism Resource Center.

“By training more Water Safety Instructors across our region to increase the number of adaptive lessons and funding for participants, children are able participate in these potentially lifesaving lessons in close to home. We are beyond thrilled to be partnering with the Worcester

County District Attorney’s office. With their support, we are able to make these lessons accessible to double the number of children and train more swim instructors to provide them.”

Through the funding provided by the District Attorney’s Office, the program has been training additional instructors and expanding to new locations across Worcester County. Classes are currently offered at Worcester Fitness, the Worcester JCC, British Swim School of Milford and Orchard Hill Athletic Club in Lancaster. There are plans to add additional classes soon.

“Providing water safety skills to the community is at the forefront of preventing drowning incidents,” said Janine LaPrade, the adaptive swim class instructor at Worcester Fitness.



“Many times, accessibility is a substantial roadblock to acquiring these survival techniques. The partnership created by the District Attorney’s office, the Autism Resource center, and swim academy sites of Worcester County will increase the number of trained instructors, the number of sites providing lessons, as well as an increase in families served all in hopes of reducing the tragic acci-

dents that can occur, especially within this population.”

The District Attorney’s office provided \$10,000 to help cover the cost of swimming fees and additional staff training needed to expand the adaptive swim program. The prevention program money was funded through the office’s Drug Forfeiture Community Reinvestment Program,

which uses money seized from drug crimes to provide funds for community initiatives in Worcester County as a crime prevention and intervention tool.

These swim classes are open to the entire community and registration is free. Contact the Autism Resource Center at www.autismresourcecenter.org/swim for additional information and registration.

Christmas by Candlelight Returns to Old Sturbridge Village

Experience the Magic of the Holidays

Old Sturbridge Village announces the return of Christmas by Candlelight, a cherished celebration of New England’s festive holiday traditions. Tickets are now on sale to the public for select dates in November and December.

The Village will transform into a stunning winter wonderland beginning November 29, featuring over 85 beautifully decorated trees on the Christmas Tree Trail, over 80 wreaths, hundreds of candles illuminating the pathways, and more than a mile of garland used to adorn the historic buildings. Each evening of the program will kick off at 4:30 p.m. with a magical lighting ceremony.

Visitors can experience a variety of activities, including knitting Christmas stockings and baking



traditional holiday treats. Guests can stroll through the picturesque village and cross the enchanting Christmas Wish Bridge, a scenic path lined with trees along the Quinebaug River. Children will have the chance to meet Santa and Mrs. Claus in their new cabin, where they can share their holiday wishes. Visitors are also encouraged to participate in the annual Gingerbread House contest, where

creative entries will be displayed for public voting.

“Christmas by Candlelight is a celebration of the cherished traditions that make the season truly special,” said Rhys Simmons, Director of Interpretation at Old Sturbridge Village. “Our goal is to transport you back in time with an experience that delights all the senses. Picture twinkling lights adorning the trees, the enticing

aromas and flavors of mulled cider and freshly baked gingerbread, and the familiar sounds of holiday carols echoing all around.”

This year’s Christmas by Candlelight will feature an array of live entertainment, including historical performances and readings of Christmas tales for children. New this year is “Upon a Midnight Clear – An Acoustic New England Christmas,” a musical journey showcasing local artists reinterpreting classic carols.

In addition to the festivities, guests can explore the origins of classic traditions such as nutcrackers and gingerbread, along with

a remarkable miniature nativity scene featuring over 600 pieces. The Richardson House will showcase Italian Christmas customs. There will also be plenty of opportunities for holiday shopping at the Miner Grant Store and the Ox & Yoke Mercantile.

“This event has become a tradition for so many guests year after year, and many families look forward to it as the highlight of their holiday season,” continued Simmons. “We invite everyone to experience the joy of the season, relish in classic traditions, and create new memories with loved ones this winter at Christmas by Candlelight.”

Christmas by Candlelight is made possible by generous sponsors: Cornerstone Bank, Country Bank, G&F Precision Molding, and Southbridge Credit Union. For more information on tickets and full event details, visit the Old Sturbridge Village website, www.osv.org.

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Join the Very Merry Dickens Carolers at the Samuel Slater Experience Dec. 8

The Very Merry Dickens Carolers will bring the music of the holiday season to the Samuel

Slater Experience museum on Sunday, December 8, at 5 p.m. A professional group of a cap-



ella singers, the Very Merry Dickens Carolers look the part in period costumes. Their repertoire

of 4-part harmony features a variety of styles, including traditional, swing, and jazz.

Holiday refreshments are included in the price of admission.

Tickets can be purchased online at <https://samuel Slater Experience>, or at the box office during regular open hours. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under.

Come spend a little time indulging in the holiday spirit on Webster's recreated "Main Street" at the Samuel Slater Experience museum, 31 Ray Street, Webster.

This event is sponsored by the Massachusetts Cultural Council as part of its festival grant program.

About Samuel Slater Experience
Samuel Slater Experience

opened in 2022 to tell the story of Samuel Slater, the beginnings of the American Industrial Revolution, and Slater's impact on mill towns such as Webster, Massachusetts. The museum uses advanced

digital technology with immersive video and interactive exhibits to recreate two time periods: the early 1800s and the early 1900s. For more information and tickets, visit www.samuel Slater Experience.

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OMS Students of the Month



Oxford Middle School recognizes students each month who exemplify our "Be the 3," highlighting goals of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety as well as showing that attendance matters, displaying citizenship, and showing growth in a variety of ways. This month, OMS celebrates Declan Sharry, Brooke O'Connor, Megan Riley, Grant Corriveau, Matthew Martellotta, and Timothy Hall-Cook as our October Students of the Month.

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SPORTS

Running To Be Free

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Having an older brother who was running cross country, Cameron Davis's parents thought that it would be a good idea for their twin daughters to follow in Nathan's footsteps.

"It was around fifth grade when my parents decided that my sister Abigail and I should also run cross country," Davis said. "And although Abigail no longer runs, I not only found that I enjoyed it, but I felt free and open while running."

The now Oxford High School sophomore noted that running cross country clicked with her rather easily and gave her a good feeling and allowed her to push herself out on the course.

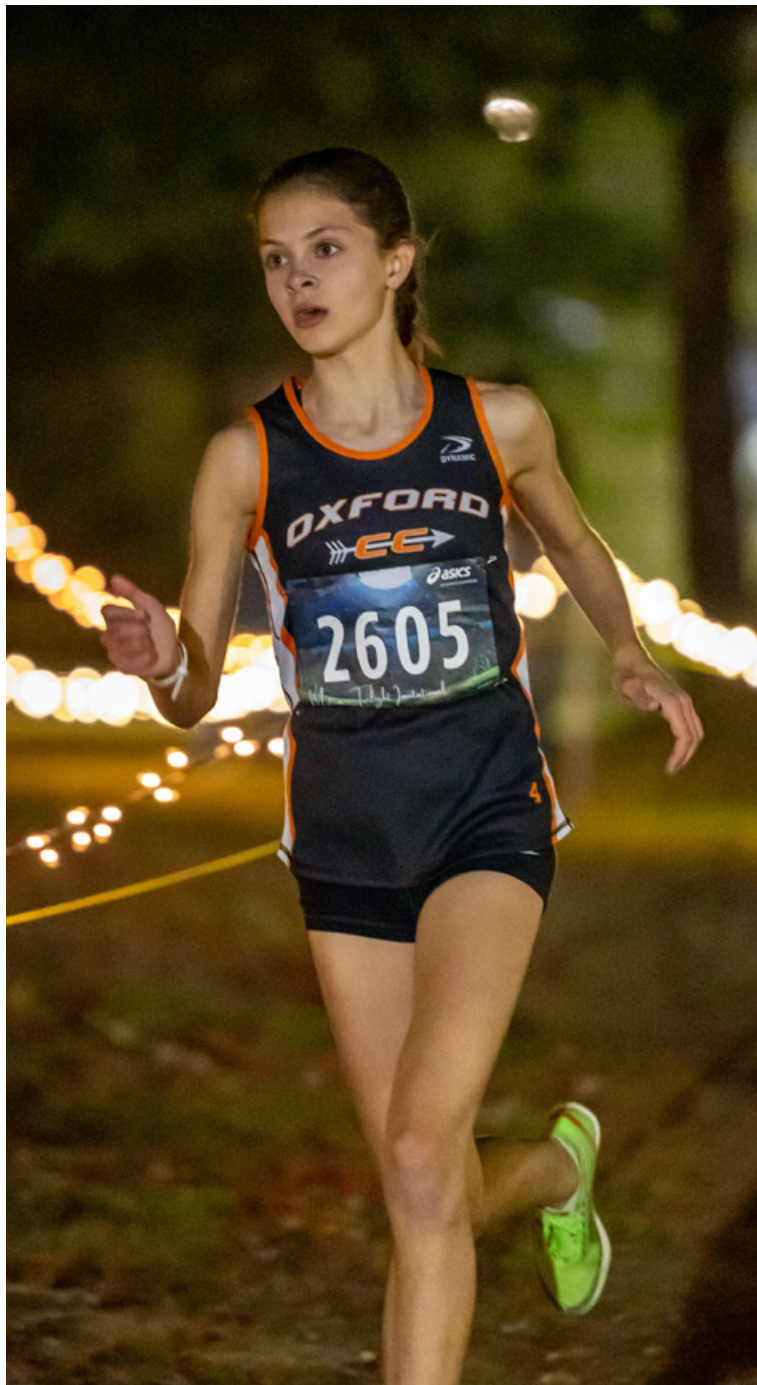
"Running cross country for the

middle school was a welcoming experience without much stress," she said. "As a beginner it was an eye opener showing me what I could become."

Upon entering high school Davis found herself still playing soccer and had to decide what she wanted to do during the fall season. The decision wasn't all that tough, Davis knew that she loved running and it was an easy decision for her; cross country would trump soccer.

Getting ready to take part in her first high school cross-country race she found herself very nervous and not knowing how things were going to turn out.

"What if I couldn't compete with the older girls," she thought. "That first race I found myself more excited than nervous and I believe that I finished third and



the State Division 3 Cross-Country Race that year."

Craig went on to say that Davis put forth a huge commitment prior to this year getting underway. The sophomore wanted a special training program, something day to day that was based on her strength and allowed her to improve her endurance. When the season got underway, Craig could see that she was more than ready to take on the year.

Davis would go on to win the Twilight Invitational in Falmouth with a time of 17:53, her best time to date and one that could have been much better if not for the cart on the course slowing her down.

"On the last lap while approaching the barn I ran into the cart, which stopped me in my tracks. Once you stop it's hard to get going again," she said. "It was disappointing, but not frustrating. It just showed me to pay more attention and allowed me to realize that I could go faster."

Coming into this season Davis wanted to get her time under 18 minutes, which she has already accomplished and in addition to getting back to the State Tournament, a place she has already been twice. As an eighth grader she finished in 7th place and last year she crossed the line third.

"I know that if I am to become better I need to get off to a quicker start and not slow down during the second mile. I need to stay consistent," Davis said. "If I can get off to that fast start, I don't want to slow down and allow the other girls to stay on my back. I want to push the pace."

According to her coach, he doesn't set goals for his runners, he allows them to set the bar to their desired height.

"She loves running and that is her true activity," Craig said. "I can only give her advice on how to succeed, but she is one that is willing to put in the work to get better."

Davis also runs the mile and 2-mile for the outdoor track team and would love to continue running once she leaves high school, but that is still 2 1/2 years away.

"It's still too early for me to think about college," she said. "Next year I'll start reaching out to coaches of schools that fit my agenda. Academics would come first, but if there is a possibility to also run that would be great."

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by placing that high against two bigger schools gave me the confidence that I had made the right decision."

By finishing in the top tier of girls, the first-time runner realized that she could compete with the other girls and that she had the ability to push herself even harder to be a better runner. When she lines up to begin a race, she gets into the mindset

that she is going to give her best effort and try to catch the girls in front of her on the course.

"She began running for us as an eighth grader. She ran the 5K with a time a little over 20 minutes," Oxford coach Tim Craig said. "She has improved a lot since that first year and as a freshman had a time under 19 minutes with her best time being 18:20. She also finished third in

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TALES FROM BEYOND

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Assonet Ledge and the Phantom Fires

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

Within the Freetown/Fall River State Forest, many strange occurrences related to King Philip's War and the Wampanoag people that once called the area home can be witnessed. The forest covers over 5,000 acres within the city of Fall River, the town of Lakeville and one-third of Freetown. The publicly-owned preserve has over fifty miles of unpaved roads and trails. The forest is also home to a 227-acre Wampanoag reservation. Author and historian Christopher Balzano has written extensively on the area called the Bridgewater Triangle and the Freetown Forest which lies within the triangle.

What can be seen on occasion in different areas of the woods are what witnesses call phantom fires. When the beholder of the phenomenon investigates, they find that the fires give off no sound, smoke or heat. The glow of the fire is contained to a small area above the ghostly flame. As soon as they appear, they vanish, leaving no trace of a blaze in the spot. In some

cases, the woods are so thick or difficult to navigate that it would be improbable or senseless to set up a camp in the particular spot where the fire is seen.

Many believe the phantom fires are a residual haunt, a moment in time recorded long ago and replaying when the conditions are right. The fires are replays of the past when Indigenous people camped on the land. They tend to appear randomly within the forest, giving the illusion that someone or something has set up camp for the night.

One of the most haunted places within the Freetown State Forest is a rocky outcropping called Assonet Ledge. The cliff one sees today was mostly formed by the Fall River Granite Company in the 1800s. For years, local youths have used it as a gathering place for parties. Not so for the Wampanoags, who shunned it due to the negative energy surrounding the precipice. It is not recorded how much of a ledge or rocky outcropping existed before the company began quarrying, but there had to have been some sort of cliff for

them to discover and commence digging the granite from the earth. The presence of an existing ledge of some sort gives credence to the Wampanoags relating the fear of a ledge before the company began taking the granite from the area.

Shadow people are often seen in the surrounding forest. Reports of hideous-looking creatures flitting among the trees and brush have scared many a visitor to the preserve. Some people who climb to the top of the Assonet Ledge report a very heavy feeling of sadness suddenly overcoming them. The feeling becomes so intense that they are compelled to leap off the edge to their possible demise.

Several people have died from falling over the ledge or drowned in the waters below. Some who have taken the plunge claim they were pushed by an unseen force—which may be a mystical creature called a Pukwudgie, known to entrance people to the top of the cliff before pushing them over. Pukwudgies are small creatures of Indigenous lore. They can appear and disappear at will. They reside predominantly within the area

called the Bridgewater Triangle, where they remain mostly unseen. Many people in the region of the triangle, either residing there or visiting, have witnessed Pukwudgies roaming about. They are said to be very dangerous. When seen, do not approach or attempt to communicate with them, as they will surely lure you to your death.

One of the main theories about why the ledge may hold such negativity dates to King Philip's War. Many of the Natives, knowing that capture by the English meant torture, dishonorable death or being sold into slavery, chose to climb to the top of the ledge and jump

off rather than face the indignity of surrender.

To this day, visitors roaming the area of the ledge hear what sounds like war whoops and see the ghosts of warriors moving about the trees and rocks of the ledge. The area where the state forest sits is obviously magical, whether it be positive or negative energies permeating the land. Legends, haunts and strange tales abound in the forest. It is obvious the Indigenous people were aware of the unworldly powers the woods held—and still do.

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LIVING WITH LUKE

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Luke Has a Relaxing Spa Day

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

We weren't necessarily looking for a new groomer. But sometimes the best things happen when you're not looking. "I think I know that dog." The owner of a pet grooming service not far from my home noticed Luke behind the front desk at the local gym where I teach. A hectic morning (with no one available to watch our most loyal family member) inspired the decision to take Luke along to my Tuesday morning Zumba class.

"How do you manage to bring your dog to work?" I've been asked. "I grab his leash and go," I've said. I'm someone who concentrates on all that can go right, versus all that could go wrong. On that Tuesday morning, the odds were stacked in my favor. Coloring outside of the lines proved worthwhile.

"My ancestors may be from Scotland, but I swear I'm part Latino. These rhythms are in my bones." A leashed Luke laid down comfortably, head over paws, while my Zumba students danced in the group fitness room. I winked over at him every now and then as though to say, "thank you for being patient," and he broke into smile. "Do the Ricky Martin song, Momma." Dogs know who we are and love us unconditionally. Little did Luke know that he was about to meet a person from his past.

"Luke? You're at Zumba?" the groomer asked.

"Hey! What's going on?" Luke wiggled and whimpered while he pretended to work behind the front desk. Dog Groomer and Happy Client reunited while I learned about the dog grooming salon located close to my gym. My mind connected convenient dots. I could drop Luke off, teach class, then come pick him up afterwards! This new dog groomer would be extremely compatible with my schedule!



I wanted to acclimate Luke to the new place before his first Drop Off, so stopped in after class. "Look! A dog bed and stuffed animals!" Luke found the break room. "There are even pillows on the couch, just like at home!" Gone were the quivers of the past as he stepped into a dog-scented salon and buried his face in my lap. "I don't want to go."

Still, had Luke grown a bit too comfortable with the cozy climate of this particular pet parlor? He hopped up on the shaggy pink couch designed, perhaps, for a freshly groomed poodle.

"Be easy, Luke," I commanded while he exposed a more confident side, thrashing a pillow back and forth.

The friendly groomer whose

canine expertise dates back nearly 25 years, took Luke's behavior in stride. "Do you want to see the grooming studio?" Luke stared up at his friend, a decorative pillow stuffed in his mouth. "I thought you'd never ask!"

The prospective client sniffed around the floor, smiled and assumed his signature move, putting on the brakes when something felt wrong. "Your shop meets my standards, but I don't want anything to do with that high table. I have a height trauma, triggered by a time when my parents, though well intentioned, allowed me to jump off the deck stairs. I wasn't developmentally ready."

Thankfully the groomer, who reportedly has been "bit, peed on, barked at and pooped on," comes



Luke experiences Shear Love with his groomer, Rachel Nieminen



Luke, a happy client, thoroughly enjoyed his spa day experience, which included a blueberry bath, a traditional Golden Cut, specialized attention, and the Autumn patterned scarf which barely fit around his big head.

My two-year-old Golden received an excellent report from his groomer. "Luke was a chill dog who goes with flow," she said. "He's very smart. He has a stubborn side, but he knows that haircuts and baths are part of life."

What does Luke have to say about the diva treatment?

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to the grooming table with several years of experience. She studied Animal Science at Becker College, worked at Tufts University and, more recently, has spent time in the brush, bathe, shampoo, cut and nail trimming trenches.

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Planning to Sell Your House in 2025? Start Prepping Now

If your goal is to sell your house in 2025, now's the time to start prepping. Even though it might seem like there's plenty of time between now and the new year, you should get a head start on any



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

updates or repairs you want to make now. Now is the time to start thinking about what you need for your next home and then taking those steps to prepare to list. Survey data exists that says 47 percent of sellers are taking longer than a month to get their home ready to sell, so starting that process early can mean more flexibility. By starting your prep work early, you'll give yourself plenty of time to get your house market-ready by the end of the year. But be sure to partner with a great agent before you get started, so you have expert insight into what repairs are worth it based on your local market.

Starting early is key: To get the best price and sell quickly, it's important that your home looks its

best. That means it's up to you to make the necessary repairs, declutter, and even consider updates that could add value as part of getting your house ready to list. By starting now, you can tackle things one task at a time. Whether it's fixing that leaky faucet, refreshing your landscaping, or painting a room, getting an early start gives you the flexibility to do the job right and with as little stress as possible. Because, if you wait to knock items off your list later on, they could quickly stack up and get overwhelming. There are some important repairs to make before selling a house, so don't be in too much of a hurry to get your home listed, if you move too fast, buyers see right through the fact that you skipped important home renovations. This might end up costing you time and money.

What should you focus on: Feeling motivated to start chipping away at that to-do list, but not sure where to start? Marzeotti Group is trained to identify home inspector items so these can be done before they are called out after you are under agreement. They range in order from: paint, improve the kitchen, bath, landscaping, worn carpet or flooring, touch-up paint outside, replace non-working appliances to name a few. While that data gives you a starting point, it

shouldn't be seen as a comprehensive list. What buyers want in your area may be different, and only a local agent will have this in-depth understanding. For example, if homes in your area are selling quickly with updated kitchens, your agent might suggest focusing on minor kitchen improvements rather than spending money on other areas that won't offer as much return. They'll also help you figure out if tackling larger projects, such as replacing your roof or upgrading your HVAC system, is worth it based on other recently sold homes.

It's not just big-ticket items that can have an impact. Your agent will also speak to some of the smaller details – like cleaning up your yard, adding fresh mulch, or painting your front door to make a real difference in how buyers feel about your home. This type of expert eye is crucial to help your house sell fast and for top dollar.

Thinking of selling your house next year? Don't wait until the last minute to get it ready. By getting a head start now, you can ensure everything is in place by the time the new year rolls around. Call The Marzeotti Group for a free consultation today or your trusted Realtor.

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bankHometown promotes Zaleski to senior assistant branch manager

bankHometown recently promoted Laurie Zaleski to senior assistant branch manager of its 569 Southbridge St., Auburn office.

Zaleski, of Charlton, was previously assistant branch manager in Auburn. She has nearly 35 years of banking experience and has earned certificates from numerous banking courses and seminars.

About bankHometown:

Founded in 1889, bankHometown is headquartered in Oxford, Massachusetts. We have \$1.4 billion in assets and offer a complete line of consumer and business deposit and lending products and services through 16 branches located throughout Central Massachusetts and northeast Connecticut. We're proud to fulfill our

community banking mission—providing individualized financial support, a suite of comprehensive products and services, and smart banking technology—all to ensure our customers can unlock their potential and build a successful future.

Through our sponsorship and charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, bankHometown and the Hometown Bank Community Foundation support non-profit organizations and causes throughout Worcester and Windham Counties. In 2023 alone, The Giving Tree donated nearly \$400,000 and over the last decade has donated more than \$2.7 million. bankHometown is proud to be named a Corporate Citizenship Award winner by Boston Business Journal for the past five years. For more information, visit bankhometown.com.

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| # of bedrooms | Rent* | Minimum Income Requirement** |
|---------------|--------|------------------------------|
| 1 BR | \$1602 | \$48,000 |
| 2 BR | \$1728 | \$51,600 |
| 3 BR | \$1851 | \$55,400 |

*Rent may be adjusted based on annual income limits provided by HUD.
**Minimum Income Requirement does not apply to households receiving housing assistance such as Section 8 or MRVP.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Must meet all income and background eligibility requirements under the Tenant Selection Plan approved by EOHLIC.
- Minimum 1 person per BR

Maximum Income per Person/People Household Size (2024 limits, provided by Worcester MA, HUD Metro Area)

| 1 person | 2 people | 3 people | 4 people | 5 people | 6 people |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| \$68,500 | \$78,250 | \$88,050 | \$97,800 | \$105,650 | \$113,450 |

If interested, please contact our office at 774-220-6334 or at topograph@wingatecompanies.com

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**

THE CAR DOCTOR

jpaul@aanortheast.com

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A. For my first 20 years at AAA I ran the AAA Diagnostic Center (just inspections, no repairs), and we inspected used cars every day. When we discontinued the service, I considered a mobile diagnostic company as a part time venture. I had the diagnostic equipment, hand tools, jacks, ramps etc. I had even lined up a former post office van as my mobile office. Once I looked at the overall expenses (insurance was staggering) and the importance of a work-life balance, I decided to leave it to someone else.

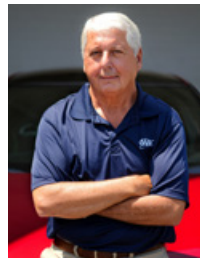
Q. An odd thing happened yesterday with my 2019 Hyundai Santa Fe. It has about 34,000 miles on it and is well maintained. I was driving home, which was 39 miles away. I was getting three quick beeps which happened about 4 times during that trip. It wasn't lane departure which sounds different. No indicator light came on. The car seemed to run fine so I'm not sure what this could be. Any ideas?

A. Intermittent problems are always the hardest to diagnose. It is possible one of the sensors was blocked. This could happen if you were driving in a heavy downpour. The other possibility is one of the doors or liftgate wasn't completely closed. At this point I would wait and see if the beeping repeats itself. If it does try to log when it did it and if there was anything odd, such as weather, rear seat occupants or cargo in the hatch area. Any notes you can make will help the technician find a solution.

Q. My beloved 1997 Maxima GLE recently succumbed to rust and had to be permanently retired. After searching for years for a car I liked more than 'Maxi', I found that I really enjoyed the new 2025 Camry SE - so I bought one three weeks ago. It puts a smile on my face every time I drive it, so I was a bit surprised by your quick review today of the new Camry which left you unimpressed. My question is: Did you drive the SE or the LE? Someone I know recently rented a new Camry LE and was also not as impressed as I am with the SE. Perhaps it may well be that any new car made in this century would be a major change for me or could there be a big difference between the LE and the SE driving experience? One more quick question- I have always used and trusted Michelin tires after a bad experience with Dunlop tires. My new car has fancy Bridgestone tires. Are they considered as reliable as Michelins?

A. The Toyota Camry that I drove was I believe a LE, I found it to be a fine car, not exciting but solid. The hybrid option and improved fuel economy make it a winner. The Camry in almost any year and version is a great car, not exciting but well-crafted and comfortable. Add in the suite of standard safety features in the 2025 model year make makes it easy to recommend. Still to me if the Camry were ice cream it would be vanilla, maybe French vanilla and your Maxima would be Rocky Road. As for the Bridgestone tires. I think they rival Michelin in some areas and perhaps surpass Michelin with their run-flat tires.

Q. My wife has a 2017 Chevrolet Traverse with approximately 95,000 miles. We have had continuing issues with the traction control light coming on as well as the message to service Stabilitrak. When that happened, the car has gone into limp mode. We then pull over, turn it off and wait a few minutes and it is fine until the next



BY JOHN PAUL

CAR DOCTOR
continued on page 13

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What will rate cuts mean for you?

For the first time in four years, the Federal Reserve has cut short-term interest rates. The Fed has indicated that this cut may be followed by several others in the months ahead. What will these lower rates mean to you as a consumer and an investor?



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

Let's first look at the potential impact on your purchasing abilities.

Generally speaking, rate cuts should be good news for consumers who need to borrow — which basically includes all of us. Keep in mind, though, that a lowering of interest rates will affect some types of loans and debt faster than others. For example, you might start seeing lower rates on car loans more quickly than you will on credit cards. And since credit card rates are already quite high, they'll likely remain so even after the Fed's actions. Still, any decline will be welcome, and your best bet will be to shop around for a card that offers the most favorable rates, along with other features, such as a good rewards program.

If you're looking to buy a

home or refinance an existing one, you should also benefit from lower interest rates. One big problem, of course, is that housing prices are likely to remain high for the foreseeable future because of the shortage of homes on the market. Nonetheless, if you took out a mortgage for a higher rate in the past few years, you may be able to save some money by refinancing, though you'll have to weigh all the factors involved, such as closing costs. Other types of housing-related loans, such as home equity loans and adjustable-rate mortgages, are closely tied to market interest rates, so you may see some movement in these areas before long.

Now, let's turn to what lower rates might mean to you as an investor. Lower interest rates typically are good for the stock market. One reason for this is because it's cheaper for businesses to borrow money to expand their operations, which ideally will lead to greater profitability, and corporate profits are still a key driver of stock prices. But the picture isn't quite that simple because not all market sectors benefit equally from lower interest rates.

Lower rates may also help you if you own bonds. You may see their value increase as interest

rates fall because other investors will be willing to pay more for your bonds and earn the higher rate they offer. Long-term bonds in particular often benefit the most from falling rates because they lock in higher yields over time. On the other hand, some savings vehicles, such as certificates of deposit (CDs), may become less attractive as they follow the Federal Reserve's lead and begin paying lower interest rates. But if you have longer-term CDs, your higher rates will continue until your CDs mature.

In any case, as we enter a lower-interest-rate environment, you might consider reviewing your investment portfolio to determine what, if any, changes you may want to make. But you'll always want your investment mix to reflect your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon — and that's true no matter what's happening with interest rates.

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

CAR DOCTOR

continued from page 12

time. We've brought it to several mechanics who have: Advised that we needed new tires (which we did); needed a new battery (which we did); throttle body needed cleaning (done); trans-

mission fluid was low and that was causing the slip that activates traction control. (Done) All of these generally result in short term fixes. Any suggestions?

A. The issue may be a poor connection at one of the ABS brake/wheel sensors or modules. The issue is that any code clears itself after about 40

restarts. To properly diagnose the issue, you need to get into a shop that can scan all the modules as soon as possible after the light comes on. Some other possibilities are the accelerator pedal sensor or brake pedal position sensor.

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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@theyankeexpress.com.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23

• Our Lady of the Valley Regional School hosts its 40th Annual Holiday Fair from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. at 74 Mendon Street, Uxbridge (behind St. Mary's Church). The OLV Holiday Fair, run through the Parents Guild, is one of the school's largest fundraisers of the year with funds going to support Catholic education and activities for over 230 students in the region. The Fair includes something for attendees of all ages, including over two dozen local vendors selling unique gifts just in time for the holidays.

Kids will have a great time participating in various activities, including a video game truck, bounce house, kids' crafts, inflatable ax throwing, a special kid's raffle table, a scavenger hunt, and much more. Santa will also be dropping in for free pictures. The Fair will also offer a variety of freshly made meals and baked goods. Pancakes will be served from 9-10 AM. Lunch options include a choice of a chicken parm sub, meatball sub, hot dog, or pizza, with fries also available. Snack options include fresh popcorn, soft pretzels, or chips. Additionally, there will be a wide selection of fresh cookies and baked goods available. The Fair offers multiple opportunities to win great prizes. In addition to the kids' raffle, participants can try their luck at the grand raffle, super raffle, and basket raffles, which feature over 50 unique baskets.

• A meet & greet with local author R. F. Mineo, will take place on Saturday, November 23rd, 1-3 p.m. At Booklovers' Gourmet, located at 72 East Main St., Webster. He will discuss and sign copies of his two suspense novels Fatal Conspiracies and Cargill Falls: The Mill Conspiracy. The event is free and open to the public. Signed copies will be

available for purchase. For more information call 508-949-6232 or visit rfmineo.com.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 25

• From 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. the Uxbridge Senior Center holds its annual Thanksgiving meal distribution for Uxbridge residents. At your request, the lunch can be delivered to your home or if you prefer, you can drive by the Senior Center to pick it up. The menu includes hot, sliced, turkey with gravy dinner with mashed potatoes, stuffing, vegetable and a roll, and cranberry sauce on the side along with a personal sized Table Talk Pie for dessert. The lunch is free and open to all seniors and the disabled. Please call the Center if you would like lunch or if you would like to donate.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 30

• Holiday Lighting Celebration on the Douglas Common from 6-7 p.m. Carols by the Very Merry Dicken Carolers and photos with Santa or reindeer.

• Small Business Saturday Alpaca Farm Tours and Vendor Fair - Angel Hair Alpacas, 66 Wesson St., North Grafton. Join us for our annual Small Business Saturday event and come meet our friendly alpacas from 10am – 3pm! We will have tours of the farm through the day and we love to talk everything alpaca! Learn about these magnificent and beneficial animals. We will also have several local vendors selling amazing local products so shop local and relax while finding that special holiday gift. Our farm store will be open for the most comfortable cold weather accessories you have ever worn and very special gifts! Free cookies and cider for visitors. No outside pets please. Our property is hilly and may not be accessible for everyone. We can accommodate a front yard alpaca visit on request. Parking is at the Willard House and Clock Museum which will also be open for tours with admission. www.angelhairal-

pacas.com

• Come join us at the Community Cat Connection on Saturday, November 30th for Shop Small Business "Caturday" from 10:00 to 2:00. Our elves (volunteers) have been busy, lovingly creating and donating unique craft items, purr-fect gifts for all of the cat lovers on your Christmas gift list. All proceeds will go towards caring for our kitty shelter residents. There will be a drop-off bin if you'd like to bring in kitty treats or toys for the cats. So come shop, meet the cats, and enjoy a holiday treat and beverage! The Community Cat Connection is located at 289 Thompson Rd, Webster.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

• The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville invites everyone (kids and adults) to our annual Cookies and Carols event to be held on Sunday, December 1, 2024 at 4 PM in the church's sanctuary (51 Cottage Street in Whitinsville). We will kick off the Advent Season with the singing of Advent and Christmas Carols led by a guest organ player (William Cudmore) and pianist (Eileen Straub). William Cudmore has played for the Woo Sox. Eileen Straub is the church's Minister of Music. We will have activities for the kids and the singing of seasonal songs. The event will be capped by the eating of cookies and the drinking of punch. All are invited! For more information, please call the church office at 508-234-8220.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

• A special viewing of the Blackstone Valley Festival of Trees will take place from 2-4 p.m. at the Great Hall at Northbridge Town Hall. Our local Senior Centers, including Northbridge, Uxbridge, Douglas, Sutton, Mendon, and Upton are invited to this

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HAPPENINGS!
continued on page 15

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HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 14

event. During this exclusive preview, attendees will enjoy the melodies of local musicians. During the evening, we will be having our Preview Party, where those who have purchased tickets will enjoy a special time and celebrate and honor our donors and sponsors. Tickets for this event will be on sale now.

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6 & 7

The Southbridge Garden Club will hold its annual Holiday Greens Sale at the Ruth Well Center for the Arts at 111 Main Street (Rt. 131) in Southbridge on Friday, December 6, from noon to 5 pm, and on Saturday, December 7, from 9 am to noon. The sale will feature a variety of hand-crafted items, including decorative wreaths, holiday centerpieces, door swags, and assorted decorations and greens. All items contain different types of live, fresh greens.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

- The 2024 Sutton Chain of Lights will Take Place this year from 10 am to 4 pm. Spend a day with your family and friends at the Town of Sutton's Annual Holiday Chain of Lights Event. Free trolleys and buses will transport visitors over rolling countryside to participating locations throughout historic Sutton. Farms, unique specialty stores, church fairs, and area businesses welcome the holidays with musical entertainment, children's activities, food, fun and Holiday characters. Route information, maps, location descriptions and brochures are available at www.suttonlights.com
- Christmas Tea at the First Congregational Church of Oxford - 9:30am-2pm. Luncheon begins at 10:30am. Assorted desserts and tea served all day.
- State Senator Ryan Fattman's (R-Sutton) annual Breakfast with Santa at Waters Farm Preservation, Inc in Sutton. Free and open to the public, but seating is limited so

reservations are required.

Doors open at 9am and breakfast will be served at 9:30am. Breakfast will be followed by holiday crafts, pictures with Santa, and wagon rides around the farm, weather permitting. To reserve your tickets for the formal breakfast, please visit <https://bit.ly/breakfastwithsantatickets>.

- Annual Christmas Bazaar, St. Joseph's Parish Center, 68 Central Street, Auburn. 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. Come and enjoy an old fashioned Christmas Bazaar and check out the Collectibles, Attic Treasures, Jewelry, Plants, Knit Goods, Holiday Décor, Toys, Candy & Baked Items and so much more! Take a chance on one of our many raffles. There is something for everyone! Free Admission. Plenty of parking available. Handicap accessible.
- On Saturday, December 7, the Blackstone Valley Festival of Trees will be open from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. for free to the public at the Great Hall at Northbridge Town Hall. Along with the trees, there will be a scavenger hunt, prizes, and goodies for the children to enjoy. The Blackstone Valley Community Chorus will enchant audiences with a performance followed by the delightful sounds of the Whitinsville Christian School Middle School Strings.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

- Breakfast with Santa at St. Denis Church Parish Hall, 23 Manchaug Road, Douglas. From 8 a.m. - 12 p.m. Adults \$10, Children (6-12) \$5. Enjoy Christmas movies and there's a prize for best Ugly Sweater. Bring your phone or camera for photos! Santa will be in his workshop, not in the main hall with the breakfast diners. Each family will have the opportunity to meet Santa and pose for pictures in a quiet, comfortable space. Visit saintdenischurch.com/santa
- The Very Merry Dickens Carolers will bring the music of the holiday season to the Samuel Slater Experience museum at 5 p.m. A professional group of a cappella singers, the Very Merry Dickens Carolers look the part in period costumes. Their repertoire of 4-part

harmony features a variety of styles, including traditional, swing, and jazz. Holiday refreshments are included in the price of admission. Tickets can be purchased online at <https://samuel Slater Experience.org>, by phone at 508-461-2911, or at the box office during regular open hours. Admission is \$10 for adults and \$5 for children 12 and under. Come spend a little time indulging in the holiday spirit on Webster's recreated "Main Street" at the Samuel Slater Experience museum, 31 Ray Street, Webster.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

- Jingle Jaunt 5K, Sutton Town Common at 10:30 a.m. Registration: \$22 Race Day Packet Pick Up 9:15-10:15 Mail checks to: First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, Sutton. No day-of registration. Sign up early, there may be a limit this year. T-Shirts for registrations received by November 28 or race closure Refreshments available. Wear some bells! Sorry, no strollers, roller blades, bicycles, walkers, wheel chairs or pets. Contact: 508-865-0198, howie189@verizon.net, or fccs@suttonfirstchurch.net
- The Douglas Winter Stroll will take place Saturday, December 14 from 4-7 p.m. with participation of organizations and businesses throughout Douglas. Do some holiday shopping, listen to carolers, explore the Museum and take part in special events and treats at the Library (special guest appearances, too!), visit the Orchard, get your trees and wreaths, grab an app or meal...best of all, take in the holiday lights on Main Street all the way up to the Common! For inquiries, please email AllyssaGniadek@allyssamanyak@gmail.com
- Cookies and Carols at 4 p.m. at the United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville, in the church's sanctuary, 51 Cottage Street,

Whitinsville. Everyone -kids and adults- is invited to this annual event. We will kick off the Advent Season with the singing of Advent and Christmas Carols led by a guest organ player William Cudmore and pianist Eileen Straub. William Cudmore has played for the Woo Sox. Eileen Straub is the church's Minister of Music. We will have activities for the kids and the singing of seasonal songs. The event will be capped by the eating of cookies and the drinking of punch. All are invited!

- The Douglas Winter Stroll will take place from 4-7 p.m. with participation of organizations and businesses throughout Douglas. Do some holiday shopping, listen to carolers, explore the Museum and take part in special events and visit the Orchard, get your trees and wreaths, grab an app or meal...best of all, take in the holiday lights on Main Street all the way up to the Common! The doors at the Simon Fairfield Public Library will be open! Come on in and meet Santa and Mrs. Claus. But before you have your picture taken, maybe first you can pen your Christmas wishes to Santa to drop in our special mailbox to the North Pole! You can also have your face painted, sponsored by LindseySarah Realty. Down in our Children's Room, John Porcino will be providing "A Heck of a Way to Stay Warm" mini-shows of music and storytelling. And the Winter Stroll wouldn't be complete without a craft project, some yummy snacks, hot cocoa and cider!
- The Sutton Historical Society will participate in the second annual Manchaug Stroll, 9 Main Street, (valfa.com/event/manchaug-stroll) from 4 pm - 8 pm, sharing the history of Manchaug Village and the holiday customs of the French-Canadian immigrants who lived and worked in the Village.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20

- Christmas Brass Concert: The Birch Alley Brass Ensemble will present a concert at Valley Chapel in Uxbridge on Friday, December 20th at 7:00PM. The brass ensemble, directed by William Moffett, is made up of 35 student and professional musicians from area towns including Uxbridge, Upton, Hopedale, Mendon, Northbridge and Milford. This concert will feature Christmas music from around the world and is free and open to the public. This will be the 13th annual performance. The concert is funded in part by the Milford, Hopedale, and Uxbridge Cultural Councils.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

- Celebrate the Winter Solstice with Christmas in New England, hosted by the Grass Roots Coffeehouse and the Rockdale Congregational Church, 42 Fowler Road, Northbridge. Karen Wilber, Amy Gallatin, Roger Williams, JD Williams, Dave Orlomoski, Krissy & Bob Dick will present a night of traditional, contemporary, original Christmas and Holiday/Seasonal songs. Prior to the show, come have a bowl of soup or chili, and at intermission have dessert. Proceeds go to the Church. Also we'll have our Cookie Walk at intermission. Buy a box for \$10 and fill it up with cookies baked by the congregation. Admission to the show is \$15 at the door only. Doors will be open at 6:30. Seating is at a first come/first serve basis. Concert at 7:30.

THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

- Coin Show at the VFW Post 1385. 13 Cross Road, Uxbridge. 3-7 p.m. Free Admission, Free Appraisals



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Responsibilities: Safely transport Club members after school between centers, schools or community locations; Ensure passengers are secured safely in the vehicle following child safety guidelines; Coordinate with supervisor regarding daily schedule and routes; Ensure timely pick-ups and drops offs; Maintain a clean and organized van and report any maintenance needs immediately; Complete all required paperwork daily; Participate in state or Club required trainings on at least an annual basis. Position contingent on passing a criminal offender record information check (CORI), national background check and an EEC fingerprint background check.

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THURSDAY IS...

TRIVIA NIGHT

7-9 PM!

Tiny Tim's at the Tuttle

-serving food Tues - Fri: 11:00-8:00; Sat. 4:00-8:00

Sun: 1:00-6:00 - Monday the kitchen only is closed

Phone: (508) 832-2701

For Hall Reservations: (508)-721-5142 or email TinyTimsCatering@gmail.com

EVERY FRIDAY

Karaoke

7:30PM-12AM

MEAT RAFFLE

EVERY SATURDAY

12:30 -4pm - 6 tables

Don't Be A Chicken. There's A Lot At Steak.



Live Bands

Every Friday 7-10

November 22 -

Ed Sullivans

Sunday Football

Kitchen open 1-6

Specialty Appetizers



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Stop and See us at the Sutton Chain of Lights on Dec. 7th



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