

## No Override in Sight, but Something's Got to Give

BY PATTY ROY

Voters at the annual town meeting in May will likely be looking at a proposed budget for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026 in the neighborhood of \$51,388,256.

Assistant town manager Justin Ledoux and town finance director Katie McKenna met with the Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee at a special meeting on March 19.

The Finance Committee will likely hold one or two more public meetings before making their recommendations on the budget.

The town has five spending modules – with Education coming in at the highest at \$22,724,941 or 44 percent of the budget. Employee benefits, including total retirement and insurance, amount to \$10,620,324 or almost 21 percent of the total. Public safety is \$5,721,868, at just over 11 percent and the public works department is \$4,198,116 or slightly over 8 percent of the budget. General government accounts for \$3,164,914 or a little more than 6 percent of the total budget.

Town officials do not anticipate asking for an override this year, but hope to meet budget goals through attrition, foregoing COLA raises and reductions in supply spending.

Officials have asked the school committee to cut their budget by \$380,000 from their FY 25 number.

In November, early in the budgeting process, department heads were asked to level fund their budget requests. Budgets were due in December, department manager

meetings took place in January and the finance committee will make its final recommendations in the next few weeks.

To be able to continue to fulfill and enhance local services related to state aid, said McKenna.

“It feels like there isn't enough to go around because the reliance is more on the tax levy,” she said.

For the first time, the town has split its tax classification into two categories – residential and commercial, industrial and personal property (CIP) which accounts for only a small percentage. There was very little growth in CIP, said Ledoux.

Currently, the tax rate is \$12.67/\$1000 for residential properties and \$14.23/\$1000 for CIP.

The average single family home in Oxford is valued at \$408,040 and the average residential tax bill is \$5170, compared to a state average tax bill of \$7732.

### FY 26 REVENUE BUDGET

The town has five sources of revenue according to Ledoux and McKenna. There is the tax levy \$30,822,731 (60%); state aid at \$15,559,021 (30%) which is basically Chapter 70 funding; local revenue \$3,629,871 (7%); Enterprise Funds \$526,633 (1%) and other funding sources \$850,000 (2%).

Last year, the town used the Stabilization Fund to plug a hole in the budget, but will not do that again this year.

One bright light in the anticipated budget is a \$303,084 increase in Chapter 90 money for roads due to the state's new “millionaire's tax,” Ledoux said.

The school choice and charter assessment remains high at \$1,062,198.

“The goal has been to minimize impacts on service and residents,” he said.

Oxford Public Schools budget request is \$20,979,503 (a 1.78 percent decrease from last year). Bay Path Regional Vocational High School is looking for \$1,745,438 which is a 3.88 percent increase over last year.

Currently, school choice is 35 students that represents over \$200,000 in revenue for the town's schools while a special education tuition is \$69,000 in additional revenue.

An expansion of the breakfast and snack food service brought in over \$200,000 in additional revenue, according to the Power Point by Ledoux and McKenna.

Ledoux explained that the Student Opportunities Act (SOA) passed about six years ago was meant to fund English Language Learning, special education and health insurance, covering funding for students who have been historically the least well served.

However, record increases for special education services, including transportation, and increases in health insurance have been exploding, he said.

The state hasn't stepped up to the plate,” selectman John Eul said. “It's not our fault and it's not the teachers' fault.”

A dialogue should start to mitigate some of that expense even if it takes a few years, he said, adding that it may be possible to keep some special ed. services within house past superintendents did.



Photo - Mass DOT

## Route 20 Road Project Presentation

BY JANET STOICA  
[jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com](mailto:jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com)

The Mass. Department of Transportation (MassDOT) scheduled a live virtual public information session on March 25 about a Route 20 road project. According to their press release, the project team will update the public on construction activities completed to date and plans for 2025 for the Route 20 Reconstruction Project in Charlton & Oxford.

Mass DOT is redesigning and reconstructing Route 20 in Charlton and Oxford to improve safety and traffic operations. Proposed work includes widening the roadway, replacing bridges over the Little River and the French River, adding sidewalks

and shared use paths, installing a median barrier, improving safety and traffic operations at various intersections, and enhancing storm water treatment.

About 26,000 vehicles pass along the 3.2 mile section of Route 20 through Charlton and Oxford daily. Estimated construction costs are approximately \$72 million and are funded through the 2025 Transportation Improvement Program for the Central Massachusetts Metropolitan Planning Organization. The project begins on Route 20 in Charlton at Richardson's Corner and continues easterly to the Route 12 intersection in Oxford.

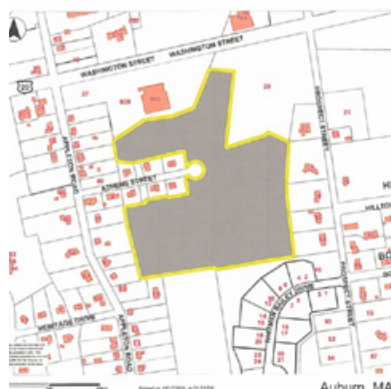
*YankeeXpress will provide updates in its next issue.*

## Affordable Housing Project Proposals

BY JANET STOICA  
[jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com](mailto:jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com)

Behind the Herb Chambers Toyota lots on Route 20 off Appleton Road, a local developer hopes to bring 192 units of affordable housing to Athens Street under the Commonwealth's regional planning law, Chapter 40B.

According to the state's website, 40B promotes responsible housing growth by creating a streamlined permitting process for eligible



projects that utilize subsidized financing and accommodate lower and moderate income working households including senior citizens. Since its passage in 1969, Chapter 40B has supported almost all affordable housing construction in Massachusetts outside of the Commonwealth's largest cities. Approximately 70,000 total units have been produced under Chapter 40B of which more than 35,000 units are restricted to households making less than 80% of the area median income.

The Athens Street project is to be developed by James Venincasa of SJV Investments of Southborough.

A second 40B project that is in the works is on Perry Place located off Auburn Street. Perry Place involves a 152-unit housing project. The listed developer is 16 Perry LLC with James Venincasa of the same Southborough address. In 2024, local residents were unhappy

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Mondays – Adult coloring, 10:30 a.m. Enjoy this relaxing hobby; Canasta at 12:45 p.m. \$2

Tuesdays and Thursdays - 11 a.m. Feb. 4 and Feb 18. Cornhole.

Mondays and Wednesdays - Walking Club, both days at 9 a.m. at Auburn Mall; Knit & Stitch, Monday 10 -11:30 a.m.; Wednesday 9:30 -11 a.m.

Wednesdays - Tech Clinic (be sure to check calendar) 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.; Pitch at 1 p.m.; Cribbage at 6 p.m.

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

Fridays - Bridge 12:45 p.m.; Dominos at 12:45 p.m.; Pitch 6:30 p.m.

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Tuesdays and Thursdays - Chair Dance at 10 a.m. with Forty Arroyo, \$3. Seated exercise with upbeat music.

Tuesdays - Gentle Flow Yoga at 11 a.m. with Angie Lavache, certified fitness instructor. \$3. Slow-paced for strength, flexibility and mobility.

Tuesdays – Classic Cardio Blast at 1 p.m. with Angie Lavache. Strength and cardio activities to

improve health and fitness. \$3 donation.

Wednesdays and Fridays Strength & Balance class at 10 a.m. \$3 with Lin Hultgren, ACE certified fitness instructor. Strengthen and tone your body.

iPad Club Thursdays at 1 p.m. No fee. Investigate the world of iPad and iPhone apps.

Mediation Class Fridays at 11 a.m. No fee, with Usha Verma. Positively affect your health, well-being, sleep problems, chronic pain, anxiety and depression.

Quilting Fridays at 12 p.m. No fee or experience necessary. The class is adapted to students' skill levels.

Chat with Auburn police officers-Tuesday, April 8. Join our Auburn police officers for lunch or a cup of coffee/dessert at 12 p.m.

Grief & Loss Support Group – Tuesday, April 15 at 1:30 p.m. Facilitated by Metrowest Hospice. Call 508-832-7799 to register.

Men's Club – April 8 at 9 a.m. Drop-in program.

Senator Moore's Office Hours – April 2 at 9:30 a.m.

Caregiver Support Group - Monday, April 14 from 1-2:30 p.m. at the Senior Center

Veterans Agent Coffee Hour - Wednesday, April 16 at 9 a.m.

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a state program that provides free health information. If you would like an appointment with our SHINE counselor, Patrick Morris, call the Senior Center at 508-832-7799.

Take a lesson on preparing Spanakopita (Greek Spinach Pie) on Tuesday, April 1 at 2 p.m. Samples will be served! RSVP: 508-832-7799. No charge, limit of 15 people

Planning for Medicare - Wednesday, April 9 at 1 p.m. Led by a BC/BS of Massachusetts representative. Call 508-832-7799 to reserve a seat.

Lori Brooks singer and guitar player entertains on Monday April 14 at 1 p.m. Call if you plan to attend.

Grief and Loss Support Group - Tuesday, April 15 at 1:30 p.m. call to reserve a seat.

Learn the Art of Pysanky - making traditional Ukrainian Easter Eggs on Wednesday, April 16 at 1:30 p.m. Class is limited to 20.

Flower Arranging with Sam's Stems - Thursday April 17 at 9:30 a.m. \$15 due upon registration. All materials provided. Call to reserve your place.

Making a Terrarium Garden Class - Wednesday April 24 at 1 p.m. Aall if you plan to attend . limited to 20 persons.

Know Your Blue Laws - Thursday, April 24 at 10:30 a.m. Presented by Sari Bitticks. Learn about the laws that prevented ice cream cones from being sold on Sunday, but even today allows you to have a duel on Boston Common. Singer/Guitarist "Arizona Doug" Urquhart - takes us on a musical trip through

the 1940s - 1970s at 1 p.m. on Monday, April 28.

DIY Décor and More - Michele Morin and Dawn Sanchez demonstrate decorative plate painting on April 29 at 1 p.m. Tools and basic materials provided. RSVP by April 23. Limited to 12 p.

Fall Risk with Dr. Manju Shukla - on Wednesday April 30 1 p.m. Dr. Shukla will share her knowledge about preventing falls with the elderly.

The Auburn Senior Center and the WRTA offer a transit service for the residents of Auburn who are age 60 and over and for people with disabilities of all ages. This is a shared ride service that will pick you up at your home. The van may make stops to pick up/drop off other passengers while you are on the way to your destination. Call the WRTA to set up an account and schedule service at 508-752-8283.

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**AUBURN**

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about the additional traffic and interruptions from construction that would be created.

Interim Town Manager Dori Vecchio, encourages Auburn residents to attend Zoning Board Meetings to keep informed about these two projects.

According to Vecchio, a meeting was held on March 3 for residents of the Athens Street area to give them a chance to air their concerns about the proposed housing development.

"I have used this meeting to prepare an item for Mass. Housing regarding the concerns of residents and the town as it relates to this proposed development. Our website has a new area that includes information regarding 40B proposals, 40B training that

we had with our consultant, and all the paperwork associated with 40B," she said.

"The Zoning Board of Appeals has been meeting to discuss the 40B project at Perry Place and residents are encouraged to attend those meetings as well. These projects will affect everyone in town," she said.

Meeting information can be found on the town's website [www.auburnma.gov](http://www.auburnma.gov) or phone 508-832-7704.

Vecchio also noted that the warrant for the Annual Town Meeting is now closed. The Board of Selectmen will review the submitted articles beginning March 24.

The town Finance Committee meets weekly on Wednesday nights to review departmental budgets. Vecchio recommends that residents attend their meetings in the selectmen's meeting room or participate online.

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# HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

## You've landed an interview, now to prepare

BY THERESA KNAPP

Congratulations, the company has noticed your résumé and they've scheduled an interview with you. Now what?

Now you prepare. Getting a job is difficult and time-consuming. The more prepared you can be, the more confident you can be, and the more successful you can be.

For the employer, the purpose of the job interview is to assess the candidate's skills, their motivation, and to see if they are a good fit with the company's culture and mission.

For the candidate, the interview can help assess if the job description is accurate, if you're comfortable with the "feel" of the company and its representatives, etc.

### Preparation is key

- Read the job description thoroughly, research unfamiliar terms and acronyms
- Research the company through its website, blog, and LinkedIn page
- Search for company reviews on sites like GlassDoor, Indeed, Jobcase, etc.
- Search for the company in the news, is there anything about the culture, stock, etc., you should (or should not) discuss during the interview? A quick Google search could reveal important information
- Be familiar with the office location (even if it's a virtual position or interview)
- Have your elevator pitch ready



### First impressions count

According to the American Psychological Association, first impressions can have a real impact on your professional success. Ways to strengthen your chances of making a good first impression include:

1. **Know your audience:** Know who you're interviewing with so you can speak to them directly
2. **Exude confidence:** Speak slowly and calmly, make eye contact
3. **Field questions gracefully:** Don't get defensive, you don't know an answer, it's okay to say so
4. **Prepare and practice:** You cannot overprepare
5. **Be a good listener:** Pay attention, make eye contact, nod, don't interrupt or finish their sentences

Source: [www.apa.org/gradpsych/2012/11/first-impressions](http://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2012/11/first-impressions)

### Your "elevator pitch" should be "u-nique"

An elevator pitch is your introduction. The pitch should be 30 to 60 seconds long and should address your professional history, accomplishments of which you're most proud of, and relevant career goals which tie in with the job for that you're applying.

The pitch should end with a fun fact about yourself, something that can help you stand out from the other candidates. It should be positive and not too personal.

Many employers receive hundreds of applications for each job. It will help your chances if you have a memorable interview. What makes you "u-nique"? Employers often ask each candidate the same list of questions so they can make accurate comparisons, and they often hear similar answers from each applicant. By sharing something unique about you – that you can directly relate to the job responsibilities – your chances of standing out can increase. Do you speak several languages? Do you have a unique hobby? Did you audition for American Idol? Were you at the 2004 Red Sox World Series Game?

### Five questions to ask yourself as you prepare

According to the job search engine Indeed.com [bit.ly/In-

deed5questions], five questions to ask yourself before a job interview include:

- What past accomplishments are you most proud of?
- What three things do you want to get better at this year?
- What skills do you have that you've noticed differentiate you from your peers?
- What would your past or present colleagues say is the best thing about working with you?
- Where do you want to be in three or five years?

Take some time to think about your answers. An interview is the time to shine, to identify areas in which you are proud, and to share those accomplishments. Let the employer know what skills and energy you'll bring to their company.

If you're wondering how to highlight your strengths in an interview, Indeed [bit.ly/Indeed-PersonalStrengths] says focus on quality not quantity, back up your strengths with examples, and provide original answers to routine questions – you want to provide the answers they're looking for while standing out from the competition.

### 10 common job interview questions and how to answer them

According to the *Harvard Business Review* [bit.ly/HBR10CommonInterviewQuestions], the following questions are often asked during a job interview:

- Could you tell me about yourself and briefly describe your background?
- How did you hear about the position?
- What kind of work environment do you prefer?
- How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?
- Do you prefer working independently or on a team?
- How do you keep yourself organized when balancing multiple projects?
- What did you do in the last year to improve your knowledge?
- What are your salary expectations?
- Are you applying for other jobs?
- Can you explain a time gap on your résumé?

Be prepared to respond to these questions with the answer and, when appropriate, why that is the answer.

### INTERVIEW PREP

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# HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

## Digital footprints, yours and theirs

BY THERESA KNAPP

According to Business News Daily, “It’s no longer that a great resume and a solid interview dictate whether you get a job offer. Your personal social media profiles can potentially seriously affect your professional life.”

Business News Daily suggests the following tips for passing social media screenings:

1. Don’t erase your profile: This can imply you have something to hide and does not guarantee the profile

is completely deleted (but do remove inappropriate content)

2. Use social media to your benefit: Use your socials to promote content that shows your knowledge, professionalism, achievements, etc.
3. Google yourself to see what others will see when they do the same
4. Consider making your profile private: It is legal for employers to check public social media accounts, and be wary of hiring managers

requesting information beyond what’s available online (this is similar to employers asking inappropriate questions during interviews and should raise a red flag)

Source: [www.businessnewsdaily.com/2377-social-media-hiring.html](http://www.businessnewsdaily.com/2377-social-media-hiring.html)

There are ways to make social media work to your advantage during the interview process, including updating your social media profiles with up-to-date information, this includes Face-

book, Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, X – anywhere you have an active account; and like/follow companies that interest you and companies where you are interviewing.

LinkedIn.com offers the following tips to improve your LinkedIn profile:

1. Choose the right profile picture
2. Add a background photo
3. Make your headline more than just a job title
4. Record and display your name pronunciation

5. Grow your network
6. List your relevant skills
7. Request recommendations
8. Showcase your passion for learning
9. Add comments
10. Follow relevant influencers in your industry

Source: [bit.ly/LinkedInProfileTips2024](http://bit.ly/LinkedInProfileTips2024)

*This article includes original content and information from Business News Daily and LinkedIn.*

### INTERVIEW PREP

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For helpful detailed responses, visit [bit.ly/HBR10CommonInterviewQuestions](http://bit.ly/HBR10CommonInterviewQuestions).

#### “What is your greatest weakness?”

Another often-asked and often-dreaded interview question is, “What is your greatest weakness?” The purpose of this question is to see if you’re honest, self-aware, and open to self-improvement; it gauges your emotional intelligence.

According to themuse.com [[bit.ly/MuseGreatestWeakness](http://bit.ly/MuseGreatestWeakness)], there is a simple formula to answer this question:

- Clearly describe your weakness [ex. Delegating]

- Give a short example of a time your weakness affected your work [ex. The meeting started late because I did all the prep work myself, I should have delegated.]
- Talk about what you’ve done to improve your weakness. [ex. I now look to my team or coworkers to ask for assistance at the beginning of a project.]

When answering the question, be sure to answer concisely and focus on the solution, not the weakness. And always leave the answer on a positive note.

#### “Do you have any questions for us?”

At the end of most interviews is one last question: “Do you have

any questions for us?” Your answer should always be “yes” even if the employer has answered every question you had. It is important you ask at least one question, preferably 1-3 questions as time allows. Suggestions include:

- How would you define success in this role?
- How is success measured in this role?
- What is the most challenging aspect of this role or this team?
- What do you like about working here?
- How many other members are in this department?
- How would you define company culture?
- What opportunities do you offer for professional development?
- Questions related to information on their website, blog, or social media
- What are the next steps in the hiring process? [this

should not be your only question]

It’s always best to ask some of these questions during the interview but be sure to save one or two questions for the end.

For the “70 best questions to ask in an interview,” visit [bit.ly/Indeed51QuestionsToAsk](http://bit.ly/Indeed51QuestionsToAsk).

*This article includes original content and information from Indeed.com, themuse.com, Harvard Business Review, and PositivePsychology.com*

#### “What’s your greatest weakness?” possible responses

When a potential employer asks this question, and they usually do, the following topics can be good answers as long as the ‘weakness’ is not directly related to the job you’re seeking. For example, if you’re applying to be a salesperson, you would not say

your weakness is cold calling; and if you’re applying to be an auditor, you would not say your weakness is math.

Other possible responses relate to:

- Public speaking
- Delegation
- Time management
- Writing
- Organization
- Attention to small details
- Cold calling
- Confidence
- Decision-making
- Explaining complex or technical topics
- Feedback, giving or receiving
- Grammar
- Math
- Patience
- Self-esteem
- Understanding when and how to say no


*A full list can be found at [bit.ly/MuseGreatestWeakness](http://bit.ly/MuseGreatestWeakness)*

### What is emotional intelligence?

Questions like “What is your greatest weakness” test your emotional intelligence, to see how you would behave, engage, and react in certain situations. Other questions used to gauge emotional intelligence, and could easily be asked during an interview, include:

1. How do you de-stress after a bad day at work?
2. What’s something you’ve achieved that you’re most proud of and why?
3. Who are some of your top role models, why do they inspire you?
4. How do you celebrate success?
5. How do you respond when a co-worker challenges you?
6. Have you ever had to change your behavior, either at work or home, if so, why did you have to change, and how did you change?
7. How do you recover from failure?
8. When have you felt demotivated, and what did you do to overcome this?
9. How would some of your closest friends describe you?
10. What kind of behavior makes you angry/annoyed?

Source: [positivepsychology.com/emotional-intelligence-interview-questions/](http://positivepsychology.com/emotional-intelligence-interview-questions/)



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# HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

## Résumés, cover letters, and references

By THERESA KNAPP

Résumés and cover letters are important because they help job seekers convey their qualifications, experiences, and skills to potential employers. Your resume and cover letter should be tailored to each specific job and should mention several of the qualifications listed in a job description.

Many companies use an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) so it is important to use as many keywords from the job description as possible as this will increase your chances to make it past the initial filter.

### Résumés

Résumés provide a first impression to the employer and should put your best foot forward. The ideal resume is one page long, but two pages is common.

The layout should include your name, email address (be sure it is a professional email address), and phone number at the top of the page, your home address is not necessary. The next section can be a Professional Summary or Objective

(optional), then Experience (in reverse chronological order) in paragraph or bulleted list form. Follow this with Education, and end with an optional Achievements or Skills section.

Do not include a Reference section on your resume. According to indeed.com, resume tips to help you land an interview include:

- Look for keywords in the job posting and include those on your resume
- Review resume examples for your industry
- Résumés should be simple and brief
- Include concrete achievements and metrics when possible
- Include only relevant information
- Use a professional font, 12 points, black font (unless your industry prefers color and creativity)
- Margins should be one inch (expand to 1.15 or 1.25 inches if you don't have a lot to fill the document)
- Call attention to important achievements within a job description or in a separate

“Achievements” or “Skills” section at the bottom of the resume

- Proofread, proofread, proofread
  - Make multiple versions of your resume
- Source: [www.indeed.com/career-advice/Résumés-cover-letters/10-resume-writing-tips](http://www.indeed.com/career-advice/Résumés-cover-letters/10-resume-writing-tips)

Coursera [[www.coursera.org](http://www.coursera.org)] suggests using action words such as *generated, reviewed, crafted, analyzed, developed, compiled, arranged, secured, collaborated, documented, presented, administered, refined, produced, accomplished, increased, grew, improved, managed, delivered, transformed, fulfilled, engaged, negotiated*, etc.

For 150 resume action words, visit [www.coursera.org/articles/resume-action-words](http://www.coursera.org/articles/resume-action-words). According to Forbes.com, the top skills to put on your resume in 2025, if applicable, are:

- Data analysis and project management
- AI and machine learning
- Software engineering and IT infrastructure
- Critical and strategic thinking
- Problem-solving

- Adaptability and agility
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication skills

Source: [www.forbes.com/sites/rachelwells/2025/01/10/top-skills-to-put-on-your-resume-in-2025/](https://www.forbes.com/sites/rachelwells/2025/01/10/top-skills-to-put-on-your-resume-in-2025/)

### Cover letters

If a job description says a cover letter is not required, you don't have to submit one. If it says a cover letter is optional, it's in your best interest to submit one.

A cover letter is a short letter that accompanies your resume and illustrates how your experience would directly relate to the specific position to which you're applying.

According to the Columbia University Center for Career Education, the goal of a cover letter is to highlight your qualifications, showcase your motivation, and reflect your voice and written communication skills. To write an effective cover letter, you should review the job description and research the company and its values and mission. The Columbia website says, “As you craft your cover letter, use examples that demonstrate your relevant skills, knowledge, and interests.”

The standard format includes a heading that matches your resume (centered), the address of the company (against left margin), then a salutation (if no name is given use “Hiring Manager or the title mentioned in the job description). The first paragraph is the introduction where you say what job you're applying for and why; and the second paragraph (this could be two paragraphs, if need be) can highlight one or two skills

or experiences and how they are relevant to the job for which you are applying. The last paragraph is a conclusion where you recap what you would bring to the organization and your interest in the position, and thank them for their consideration.

Source: <https://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/resources/how-and-why-write-great-cover-letter>

### References

References are typically not requested until a job offer is pending, though some companies may request them up front.

Be sure to alert the people you are using as references so they are not surprised when they receive an email or phone call related to your application.

Carefully consider who in your current job you can use as a reference that will not compromise your current work situation.

When choosing your references, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) says you should find colleagues you can trust, pay attention to titles, be prepared (always keep an updated list of references, keep them updated with current information), follow up after they provide a reference with a thank you note and tell them if you got the job. And finally, never misrepresent your references or yourself.

Source: [www.aauw.org/resources/career/boost-your-career/providing-references/](https://www.aauw.org/resources/career/boost-your-career/providing-references/)

This article includes original content and information from the American Association of University Women, [coursera.org](http://coursera.org), [forbes.com](http://forbes.com), [indeed.com](http://indeed.com), and Columbia University.

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\*\*Minimum Income Requirement does not apply to households receiving housing assistance such as Section 8 or MRVP.

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# HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

## Job search and technology, what you need to know about AI

BY VICTORIA RAYEL  
CAREER COUNSELOR AND  
LIFE COACH

If you're thinking about starting the new year with a new job, it's important to be clear about your job targets, ideal industry,

applicants and expedite the process.

To stand apart in this market, you need to know what to expect when it comes to technology in the job search. Three tips to ensure you don't get lost in the application 'black hole' include

application materials match the job for which you're going. You can use tools like Jobscan and free AI Chatbot's (ex. ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini) to help make sure you match the skills and experiences the job requires.

For example, upload your ré-

sumé. Put this list in a grid"

### Consider "Apply for me" Tools

Sites like Ladders and LazyApply apply to jobs on your behalf for a fee. You will fill out a series of questions, select the jobs that are interesting, then the tools will submit your application. Job searching can be a tedious task, and technology can help you save time in applying. Now you can spend more time on important things like interview preparation, upskilling, and the next tip.

### Networking

Roughly 15% of positions are filled through online applications, so it is suggested job seekers spend at least 50% of their job search time on reconnecting with their existing networks and building new relationships. If online ap-

### WHAT IS "ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE"

According to NASA, citing the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019, "Artificial intelligence refers to computer systems that can perform complex tasks normally done by human-reasoning, decision making, creating, etc."

[www.nasa.gov/what-is-artificial-intelligence](http://www.nasa.gov/what-is-artificial-intelligence)

plications are not helping you get interviews, start having conversations. Coffee chats, phone calls, networking events, LinkedIn Group discussions, Discord, Facebook and any community groups you're involved in can be an amazing resource to connect to people.

Finally, don't let AI intimidate you. It's time to embrace the new normal and leverage technology to help you succeed.



location, pay, and have a résumé. With an increasing number of applicants due to a changing business environment, geo-political landscape and overall economic changes, recruiters use tools like AI to help them quickly find top

using artificial intelligence (AI), helpful automatic tools, and networking.

### Use AI to Beat AI

When applying for a position, it's important to make sure your

sumé and the job description into ChatGPT, then try these prompts:

Type "Select three accomplishments from my résumé that match this job best" or

Type "Create a list of key skills this job is looking for and

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SPORTS

# Playing Through Pain for Her Team

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Amaya Rosario-Green was introduced to basketball by her father at the age of seven and from the very first time that she picked up a basketball, she was hooked. The now - junior at Oxford High School loved being outside playing on the court but if she couldn't play outside, she would venture indoors to join some pickup games. She had access to indoor courts via the Community Center gym whenever they were available; usually two or three times a week.

"When I was eight, I realized that I was picking up the game rather fast," she said. "My father saw that I was getting better and he pushed me."

As an eighth grader Rosario-Green made the Oxford varsity team and although intimidated at first, she soon found that all the older girls were very welcoming. Her first varsity appearance is somewhat of a blur, but she does know she wasn't on the court that

much.

"I couldn't tell you who we were even playing when I played in my first varsity game for Oxford. I was very nervous and anxious playing against older girls," Rosario-Green said. "I know that I didn't get too much playing time being an eighth grader and did more passing than shooting. I do remember making a few mistakes due to my nerves."

During her freshman campaign she needed to take the season off due to personal reasons, but once she felt that she was ok with herself she got back onto the court to prepare for her sophomore season. At this point she found that she was more confident in her game and was ready to play basketball once again.

"I was ready to take on the season," she said. "I stepped onto the court ready to give 100 percent all the time, no matter what and that year turned out to be much better than I expected."

After having a decent season, Rosario-Green decided that she was going to work hard on her

shooting mechanics and form so that she could help the team with scoring as well instead of just rebounding. As the season went on and she continued to hit her shots (most from mid-range or under the basket) her confidence grew.

According to Pirates head coach Joe Pietrzak, Rosario-Green emerged as a leader on the floor for Oxford this year. The coach went on to say that the junior was the team's leading scorer, averaging about 10 points per game; free-throws and rebounds. She was an MVP type of player for the Pirates and was named to her first SWCL All-Star team.

"To be chosen for the All-Star team was a great feeling while representing Oxford," she said. "I had worked hard, but I was not expecting it - I was definitely surprised."

Although Rosario-Green had herself a remarkable season, she did run into some issues: she encountered shin splints for the second time, but she pushed through them to be there for her teammates.

Shin splints are an overuse injury that affects the lower legs. It occurs when the muscles, tendons and bone tissue along with the shinbone are overloaded and become inflamed. The pain worsens with activity.

"She played through the end of the season with the pain of the shin splints and just about made it to the finish line. She had to eventually sit out the last game of the season," the Oxford coach said. "She gutted it out for the sake of the team."

Rosario-Green said it was a really sharp pain, but she had to play through it.

"I fought through it and never wanted to quit," she said. "It was a battle, but no matter what I was not sitting down."

During the season she would go to physical therapy and ice it, but the biggest help is just rest-



Amaya Rosario-Green, All-Star hoops player for the Oxford Pirates

ing. Rosario-Green noted now that the season is over she will fully rest but knows that shin splints are something that can come back at any given time.

When she steps back onto the court next winter as a senior she is hoping to lead the Pirates not only with a positive attitude and strong mindset, but she would like nothing more than help them get to the tournament.

"My heart is so big for this

games and the girls on the team," she said. "we have a great chemistry and I think if we work hard, making the tournament is something that we definitely can accomplish."

In addition to qualifying for the Division 4 State Tournament, Rosario-Green would also like to be in the position of making her second All-Star team.

After seeing what she accomplished this winter, Coach Pietrzak is excited to have her back for one more year.

"I'm hoping that she continues to work on her game and improve," Pietrzak said. "She is a rather quiet individual but I would rally like her to become a little more vocal on the floor next year, while certainly increasing output."

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TALES FROM BEYOND

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# Gillette Castle

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

Atop a hill called the Seventh Sister, the last of a group of knolls known as the Seven Sisters, sits a medieval-style, twenty-four-room castle in East Haddam, Connecticut overlooking the Connecticut River. This stone edifice was owned and designed by William Hooker Gillette, famous for his stage role as Sherlock Holmes. In fact, his performances as the master detective numbered

April 29, 1937. He is buried in the Hooker family cemetery in Farmington next to his wife.

His castle is a stone legacy born of an inventive and brilliant mind. Gillette designed the whole structure, right down to the slightest detail. The basic building took five years to construct. By 1919, the man who made Holmes famous was finally home. Through the years, he made enhancements upon his castle to suit his tastes. He also had a three-mile-long railroad

the land and turned it into a park for all to enjoy, complete with camping, hiking, picnicking and, of course, tours of the castle. But is the medieval-style fortress haunted? The stone edifice imparts upon the gazer of the image a most confident feeling that Mr. Gillette could possibly still reside within.

Some have even claimed to see the ghostly image of the famous actor, smoking his calabash pipe, while touring the structure. Others claim to see the spirit of his

River and surrounding landscape, scenic hiking trails and a host of other outdoor activities. Bring a lunch, take a tour and relish in the

architect of the castle. The famous actor just might treat you to a small performance while you are there.



1,300, the third-highest number of stage performances of a role in history.

Gillette was born on July 24, 1853, son of former United States senator Francis Gillette and Elizabeth Daggett Hooker Gillette, descendant of Thomas Hooker, founder of Hartford. Even as a child, he was very inventive and outgoing in his pursuits of the stage. These traits would follow him into adulthood. During his lifetime, he wrote two novels and thirteen plays. He also produced and directed various plays starring none other than himself. His love of special effects led him to invent many stage tricks and lighting techniques. His last performance was at the Bushnell Theatre in 1936. Gillette died a year later on

that circled his property. Evidence of the railway still exists in the form of tunnels and the station, as the tracks were later torn up for hiking trails. Do not be dismayed, however, for one can still ride the famous span, as Lake Compounce Amusement Park later purchased portions of the railway to shuttle visitors around the pond located on the property.

Gillette died a widower with no children. His estate had no heirs, but in his will he ruled out the chance of his possessions going to unsavory prospects by adding the sentence that the property would never fall into the hands of some "blithering sap-head who has no conception of where he is or with what surrounded." In 1943, the State of Connecticut acquired

gardener roaming the grounds, still tending to the massive landscaped flora. Many have felt sudden cold spots within the walls of the castle, but as it is made of stone, that could be entirely natural. There are reports of hikers and campers seeing the ghostly figure of someone moving about the castle holding a smoking pipe during the winter and spring hours when it is otherwise closed and locked tight. Perhaps it may be William Gillette in search of an audience to once again entertain after a long winter of solitude in the locked-up mansion. Or perhaps just the site of the edifice evokes the imagination, thus creating vivid scenes from the past within the mind's eye. Haunted or not, Gillette Castle State Park offers beautiful vistas of the Connecticut

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LIVING WITH LUKE

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# More Than Words

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

Professional writers are encouraged to “find their voices” when they write. Doing so is a process that develops gradually and takes time and self-reflection. We grow to write what’s in us to write, and to tell a story with structure, tone, cadence, and knowledge of language. Dogs, too, must find their voices. They can’t write notes or text their owners. “Out searching for a new stick. Would you mind grabbing me a new shin bone at the store today?”

How do dogs survive? How do they communicate their needs?

“HELP! HELP! HELP!” Luke learned to communicate early on, at seven weeks old to be exact. “I need to get out right now!” His 3 a.m. barking frenzy reflected a primal need to survive. New people. New bed. New rules. He wasn’t having it. Where were his warm brothers and sisters and puppy scented towels? His voice was high pitched and surprisingly loud. My husband and I felt like new parents trying to help our infant learn to sleep through the night. “We have



to go get him, Jim,” I pleaded. “He sounds terrified. He’s trying to tell us something.”

I trotted down the stairs, my own heart beating like a nervous kitten’s. “I’m sorry, Luke. Mummy’s right here.” I shuffled to the crate door, nearly tripping over my slippers to reach him. I smelled my puppy before I saw him. Little Luke had pooped all over himself. “Ohhhhhh. Gosh. Luke!! You poor thing.” I placed my hands beneath his armpits, lifted him up, and headed for the sink. He hung limp and apologetic. “I had an accident. I used my puppy voice, but you ignored me. I screamed. I howled. I was trying so hard to tell you something. You ignored me.”

Every mother is guilty of something. This incident, a reminder of my most unheroic moment as a Dog Mom, has scarred me. Luke was trying to tell me something, but I didn’t listen. Fear not, readers. While Luke aged, I grew wiser. I learned to listen more closely to what my dog was trying to say.

### I just want to play.

Luke initiates play with a peculiar voice. Sharp and relentless, the voice reflects that of a barking seal. His playful voice has grated on the nerves of parents at the dog park.

“My dog doesn’t like being barked at this way.” A Dog Mom expressed her disappointment to me one time. “He’s just not used to that behavior.” Meanwhile, an oblivious Luke carried on. “Let’s play! Let’s play! Let’s play! C’mon! You chase me, then I’ll chase you!” The introverted hound turned his head away. My exuberant pup was learning an important lesson. The world doesn’t revolve around him. We discussed the matter during the ride home. “Dogs don’t like when you bark in their faces, Luke.” I spoke to his reflection in the rearview mirror. He popped his big head out of the sunroof travel crate and thought about it. “If dogs don’t like barking, then maybe they shouldn’t be in a dog park.”

### I’m very uncomfortable with you.

Luke’s ferocious bark is the one I’m most appreciative of, especially when it happens at night. He uses a deep, magnificent roar to protect his home from predators. One night while he was in the backyard for a final check, I heard the distinct roar.

“Who’s that, Luke?” I hoisted open the upstairs window and watched him roar in the direction of our driveway. Apparently, someone or something was lurk-



ing in a shadowy corner of our home. “Woo. Woo. Woo. Woo.” He crouched down; broad shoulders bulging, hair raised. I imagined a wolf with yellow eyes and red gums showing his teeth at my dog. “Go Away! Go Away! Go Away!” The bark was extraordinary. Even I felt intimidated.

“Luke, get over here!” Jim was less enchanted. Luke turned his head to the voice of his intolerable leader and dashed back inside. “Good boy, Luke.” I needed to praise my dog for using his voice to protect us. I rubbed his ears. He sat proudly, chin lifted. “Thank you for telling Mummy about that bad guy.” He licked my hand. “Someone’s got to do the dirty work around here.”

The next morning, we realized that my son had left the light on in his car, casting the unusual effect that a person was seated there. Car burglaries are common. I imagined a scarfed thief scheming—right there in our driveway! Our dogs’ eyes and ears remain open to potential danger. Luke was doing his job.

### I’m seriously afraid!

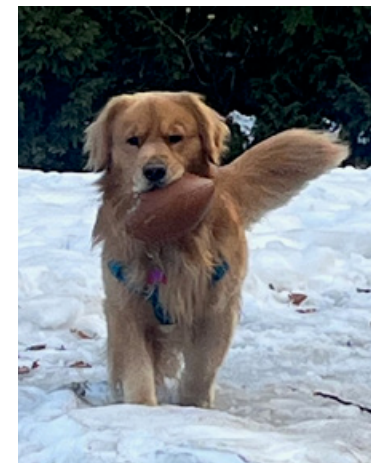
If only the villain of Luke’s nighttime watches could see him at the groomer’s doorstep. “I. Just. Want. To. Be. With. You.” Luke

doesn’t shake at the groomers. He quakes. He tells me how he feels with a full body vibration that breaks my heart. He digs his paws into the floor so that I must drag him (sliding) from the doorway entrance. “It’s okay, Luke. You’re going to look so handsome!” I once followed him to the groomer’s table and held his paw while he had his nails trimmed. He shook atop the table like the victim of a Frankenstein science project (who also happens to be afraid of heights). I read his mind. “Cages, latches and locks. Sad faces. Noisy dogs, razor blades and scissors. This place is off.”

He nearly knocks me over to jump back into his travel crate in the parking lot and sits like a star pupil while I pull out. “I told you I’d be right back, Luke. You do look handsome,” I say to his reflection in the rearview mirror. He gazes out the back window. The groomer’s shop sign fades in the distance. “Next time I’m about to be chopped up and sold for pedigree beef, I’ll keep my looks in mind.”

### Time to eat.

I’m afraid that Luke has learned to use his intelligence as a weapon.



Of course, he knows exactly when dinnertime happens and lets me know by resting conveniently beside his bowl an hour before. “Just in case you happened to forget, Mom. This is where my bowl is located.” He’s developed a second habit to further my understanding. He’ll stand over his bowl, typically after I’ve rewarded him for coming back when called inside, and stare into it like a gambling addict fixed on a number. “Show me the money. My recall is outstanding.” I toss him a few kibbles. “Good boy, Luke.” I relish the jingle of

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REAL ESTATE

# Is it time to put your house back on the market?

If you took your house off the market in late 2024, you're not the only one. Nearly 73,000 homes were pulled from the market in December 2024 alone – that's more than any other December going all the way back to 2017. Whether it was because offers weren't coming in, the timing around the holidays



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

felt overwhelming or they wanted to see if the market would improve in the new year, a lot of other homeowners decided to press pause, too. But now, with spring fast approaching, it's time to reassess. The market is already picking up, and waiting any longer to jump back in may only mean you'd face more competition from other sellers down the road.

## Why Now Could Be the Right Time

Selma Hepp, Chief Economist at CoreLogic, explains that some of those sellers may have pulled their listings late last year with the goal of trying again this spring: Another reason for a step back could be that sellers wanted to wait and see how spring home buying season goes, and if mortgage rates fall which would bring more home buyers and competition back in the market. That's because spring is when buyer demand is typically at its highest point for the year. More people start their home search once the weather warms up. They're eager to close on a home so they can move in during

the summer. So, it's a great window for sellers. It means more buyers. And while mortgage rates haven't fallen dramatically, they have come down some in recent weeks. Early signs already show buyers are becoming more active as a result. Since January, demand has picked up – and that should continue as spring draws even closer.

## What to Do Differently This Time?

Start by checking the status of your listing agreement. Because even if you pulled your listing, you may still be under contract. And until your listing expires, your agent or brokerage is your best resource on what else you could try to get it sold. If you aren't sure of the status of your listing, whether active, expired, or withdrawn, take a look at your listing agreement and talk to your real estate agent. If your contract is still active, now's the perfect time to reconnect with your agent to explore strategies to get your home sold this time around. If your contract has expired and you're considering other options, reach out to The Marzeotti Group or another trusted real estate professional who can help you figure out where to go from here. Either way, take some time to reflect on your last experience. What held you back from getting it sold before? And what can you do to improve your chances this time around? Be sure to include your agent in this thought process. They'll give you an objective point of view and some advice based on what may have gone wrong last time. For example:

**\*Your Pricing Strategy:** Did buyers overlook your house because it was priced too high? Your real estate agent can help you analyze the latest sales in your area to make

sure you're hitting the right number. Believe it or not, you could actually be leaving money on the table by not pricing competitively. When it's priced appropriately for the market, your opportunities for multiple offers and buyer competition increase.

**\*Your Marketing Approach:** Was your home staged to look its best? Did you use a skilled photographer for your listing photos? Small tweaks can make a big difference in how buyers see your house. Something as simple as taking new photos now that it's spring can help your house show better than it did in the winter listing.

**\*Offering Concessions:** Were you willing to offer incentives to buyers? As the supply of homes for sale grows, more sellers are entertaining the idea of concessions or incentives to get the deal done. If you weren't open to those conversations, that may have been a factor, too.

**\*Showings and Flexibility:** Did you have limits on when buyers could see the home? If your house is accessible and available, you'll likely get more offers. Bottom Line, if your house didn't sell last year, spring may be your second chance. With

buyer activity rising, it's the perfect time to talk to an agent about coming back into the market with a fresh strategy. What do you want

to do differently this time around? Give us a call today to go over your options and make a plan.

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## LUKE

*continued from page 10*

good behavior. My dog could have roamed anywhere, but he ran back to me for a few dry kibbles. Has Luke learned to capitalize on the reward system?

"I could have run from our home to greet that cute Collie, but I stayed right here on the step." He rushes to the foot of his dish and waits for me to pay up. He inhales the kibbles, freezes for a moment, then looks up at me. "A dog's restraint in the space of another dog is one of the hardest learning tasks, Mom. Just a few more and we'll call it a day." Perhaps Luke, indeed, has become a capitalist.

## I love you.

My dog wiggles with a happy squeal, grabs his lamb and brings it to me when I arrive home. "I just want to let you know how happy I am to see you, to spend time with you and just be together. He watches me take a rare seat on the couch. "I'm so happy you are sitting down, Mom. You work so hard to help others. I see you. I feel you. I want to be with you." He climbs up and collapses beside me. His head falls easily onto my lap.

"I love you, Momma." Sometimes a dog says what words cannot.

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THE CAR DOCTOR

jpaul@aanortheast.com

# All Around Motor Head

**Q.** I read your advice columns each week and listen to your podcasts fairly often. You confuse me a bit. One time I am convinced you are a dedicated petrol-head then you are talking about electric cars and even electric bikes. So, what gives?

**A.** You found me out I enjoy, gas engines, electric motors, cars with insane horsepower and performance and cars that get 50 miles per gallon. We live in what I call the golden age of automobiles. We have a choice of gas cars, diesels, electrics, and hybrids and that, in my mind, is fantastic. Yes, even motorcycles,

scooters and electric bikes interest me. So I guess you can say if it has wheels, I am interested.

**Q.** I have a 2015 Volkswagen Tiguan that randomly cuts off while driving around in town, but it starts back up immediately. It does not shut off while traveling on the highway. What is wrong?

**A.** At this point it is impossible to say it is one particular problem. The most likely culprit is a problem with the fuel system. A good technician will perform a visual inspection

looking at major systems as well as possible damaged wiring. The next step would be to scan all the modules in the car to look for possible pending codes. Then check for a fuel issue while underway. Depending on how intermittent the stalling is, time may be the best diagnostic tool. Trying to diagnose a car that is operating normally, can lead to guessing and expensive parts swapping.

**Q.** I have been repairing my own cars for years and have always tried to use factory parts rather than aftermarket. I always felt that the quality was better. I recently replaced a part in my daughter's Ford Fusion, and it was new in the box and did not work. Aftermarket parts have always worried me, now original parts seem almost as bad. What is going on?

**A.** I recently helped a neighbor with a repair on his Toyota and the factory parts were a perfect fit and worked as designed. Another neighbor was puzzled because he replaced

the temperature sensor on his car was a factory part and the car would not start easily when the car was hot. A quick scan showed that when the engine was hot the sensor was reading 35 degrees. We replaced it with an aftermarket sensor and all was good. When I buy aftermarket parts, especially electronics, I try to buy from the original equipment supplier. I have found the quality is good and the prices are cheaper than the actual factory parts.

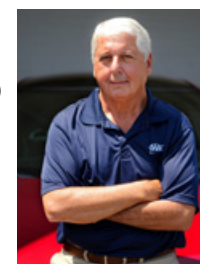
**Q.** My 2014 Ram, 1500 SLT is a quad cab with the 5.7L Hemi, 8-sp. A/T and has 134,000 miles on it. There is a message "fuel sensor fail" on dash. There are no readable codes when checking with a scanner. The full tank show "E" and goes back/forth to "F", back to "E". The dash shows "low fuel warning" while on "E". Can I ignore it due to the cost of repair and the age of the truck? The truck is handy, but at 11 years old I do not want to put \$1000 into it. I thought I would monitor gas amount via the "Trip A", "Trip B" on dash menu. If not replaced, will the engine be harmed?

**A.** The only possible harm that I can think of is if you are constantly driving low on fuel, which can overheat the fuel pump. The fuel gauge sensor on most Chrysler vehicles is part of the fuel pump module. To fix

the issue you would replace the entire module. The cost of the part is about \$600, and it will take a couple of hours of labor to replace it. The other possibility is a broken wire or rust causing a poor connection. Although my experience is the issue you described is typical of a faulty pump module.

**Q.** I have a Toyota Camry that is about five years old and has 52,000 miles on it. I asked my mechanic to flush the transmission, and he said it was not a good idea. He said I am better off draining and refilling. What are your thoughts on this?

**A.** Flushing a transmission and replacing all of the fluid can sometimes cause issues. The other problem I see with transmission flushing is the shops that do it, do not always use the factory fluid. As strange as it sounds the slightly contaminated fluid actually aids in how the car will shift. So replacing some of the fluid during a drain and refill leaves some of the worn clutch material that is suspended on the old oil and can actually prolong the life on the transmission,



BY JOHN PAUL

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## An Evening at a Luau

The Auburn Police Association is holding a luau dinner on Friday, May 2 at the Auburn Elks Club, 745 Southbridge Street, Auburn. Enjoy a delicious dinner, great music and a cash bar from 5:30 – 9 p.m. The band starts at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$40 per person and are available for pick-up at the police station lobby from 4-7 p.m. on April 24 and 25. Also available for pick-up on April 26 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

See the Auburn MA Police Department Facebook Page to order and pay for tickets. Don't forget to enter the Scratch Ticket Raffle for \$10 per ticket, only 1000 tickets will be sold. Drawing on May 2, video posted on the police Facebook page. Winner does not need to be present to win.

Proceeds to benefit the 501c3 non-profit Auburn Police Association.

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TIPS ON FINANCIAL PLANNING

dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com

# Don't lose track of financial accounts

For years, people save and invest in 401(k) plans, IRAs and other financial accounts. They wouldn't lose track of this money, would they?

You might be surprised. About 1 in 7 people has unclaimed cash or property, totaling billions of dollars, according to the National Association of Unclaimed Property Administrators.

People lose track of their money for a variety of reasons: They change jobs and forget about their retirement accounts; they move and leave no forwarding address; they change names and don't notify former employers; or their employers go out of business or merge with another company.

Whatever the reason, losing tabs on accounts that could be worth thousands of dollars is never

a good thing. What can you do to avoid suffering this type of loss?

Here are a few suggestions:

- **Maintain good records.** Keep records of all your financial, investment and retirement accounts — and let a family member know where these records are kept.

- **Keep a manageable number of financial accounts.** The fewer bank and brokerage accounts you have, the easier it will be to keep track of everything. You might even want to consolidate accounts when possible.

- **Report your change of address.** Whenever you move, contact your financial services providers and any former employers with whom you may have retirement accounts.

- **Report name changes.** If you change your name, notify new and old 401(k) plan administrators, banks, brokerages and any other institution connected to your money.

- **Manage retirement accounts when you change jobs.** If you leave your job, you might be able to leave your 401(k) behind with your old

employer. But if you do, keep track of it. On the other hand, you could roll your old plan into your new employer's plan or into an IRA.

- **Inform your financial professional about all your accounts.** If you work with a financial professional, they can help you track your accounts, so inform them of all past and present IRAs and 401(k)s or similar employer-sponsored plans.

So far, we've looked at ways you can prevent losing track of financial accounts. But can you do anything if you suspect you've already left some money behind?

If you think you've lost tabs on an IRA, you can check old tax returns and bank statements to help you track your contributions and find the name of the financial provider that held your account. If it's a 401(k), you can contact your old employer's plan administrator.

You can get some help from other sources, too. The Department of Labor recently launched a retirement savings lost-and-found database ([lostandfound.dol.gov](http://lostandfound.dol.gov)) that can help you find pension

or 401(k) plans connected to your Social Security number. For a stray IRA, you can check unclaimed.org, the website of the National Association of

Unclaimed Property Administrators. And for various other sources of money — including uncashed checks from corporations and financial institutions, inactive brokerage accounts and unclaimed safe deposit boxes — you can check MissingMoney.com, the unclaimed property website of the National Association of State Treasurers.

These sites offer no guarantees of finding your lost or missing accounts or other sources of money,

so you still may have to do your own sleuthing. But as the old saying goes, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" — which, in this case, means you'll help yourself greatly by tracking your accounts from beginning to end.

*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](mailto:dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com). Edward Jones Member SIPC*



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

# Officer Returns from Deployment

Recently, Auburn Police Officer Matthew Rodwill returned from nearly a yearlong deployment overseas with the Mas-

sachusetts Army National Guard. Upon his return, he presented Auburn Chief Todd Lemon with a U.S. flag and a certificate.

The flag was flown by the 3rd Platoon, Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 181st Infantry Regiment during the GLOC mission in support of Operation Inherent Resolve and the fight against ISIS, from September 26 to October 1, 2024, through the deserts of Iraq and Syria.

The department is extremely proud of Officer Rodwill and his commitment to both the U.S. Army and our country, as well as deeply thankful for this generous gift.



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## Job change?

Whether retiring or changing jobs, you'll want to know your retirement account options.

There are four potential options for your 401(k) when leaving an employer:

- Leave it in your former employer's 401(k) plan, if allowed by the plan.
- Move it to your new employer's 401(k) plan, if you've changed employers and your new employer plan allows for it.
- Roll the account over to an individual retirement account (IRA).
- Cash it out, which is subject to potential tax consequences.

We can talk through your financial goals and find the option that works best for you.

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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.**

**FRIDAY, MARCH 28 AND SATURDAY, MARCH 29**

• ValleyCAST, the arts and culture arm of Open Sky Community Services, is hosting their One Act Play Festival on the Mumford

on March 28 and 29 at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 p.m.) in the Singh Performance Center, 60 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. The festival features a diverse lineup of compelling one-act plays, showcasing the creativity and talent of local performers, directors and playwrights. Audiences can expect drama, comedy and thought-provoking storytelling all packed into a series of short, engaging performances. Tickets will be available at the door for \$5 per person and \$15 per family. Tickets purchased

on Friday provide entry to both nights. At the conclusion of the festival, three prizes will be awarded in recognition of the best original act, best ensemble, and best-in-show. For more information visit: www.openskycs.org/valleycast or contact Mary Laliberte at: mary.laliberte@openskycs.org or call 508-234-6232.

and Clock Museum, 11 Willard Street, North Grafton.

**THURSDAY, APRIL 17**

• "Rendezvous with Rachel Revere" presented by History at Play, LLC at Blaxton Hall, 9 Main Street, Sutton at 6:30 p.m. Presented by the Sutton Historical Society. The play will highlight the decisions and concerns of Rachel Revere, wife of Paul Revere in the days after his famous ride to warn of the arrival of the British.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 27**

• New England Country Music Club Dances at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin Street, Uxbridge. Live band "Borrowed Time" at the New England Country Music Club Dance, Progressive Club, 18 Whitin Street, North Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m., music 1-5 p.m. \$11 for non-members. Doors open at 12:15 p.m. Music plays 1-5 p.m. Snacks may be brought in, cash bar for beverages.

**THURSDAY, MAY 15**

• Historical Portrayals by Lady J presents "Farm Girl on the Front Lines: Deborah Sampson's Secret" highlighting the story of this Patriot who disguised herself as a male to serve her young country. At 1p.m. in the Sutton Senior Center, 9 Hough Road, Sutton. Presented by the Sutton Historical Society.

**SATURDAY, MAY 17**

• Join the 10th Annual Family Fun Fishing Day at Riverbend Farm, 27 Oak Street, Uxbridge from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Fishing goes until 1 p.m. with awards at 1:20 p.m. There will be activities for the whole family and food and ice cream will be available for purchase from Joey D's Wingz 'n Thingz and Sweet Wise Ice Cream Truck. All ages and abilities welcome. Fishing poles, bait and instruction will be available when you pre-register. Participants are also welcome to bring your home. Pre-registration opens April 14 at thebrwa.org/familyfishing2025. The event is free, but pre-registration is required. Contact Joanne Holahan with any questions at 508-278-5200. The rain date is May 18.

**THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH**

• Coin Show at the VFW Post 1385, 13 Cross Road, Uxbridge, 3-7 p.m. Free admission, free appraisals.

**SATURDAY, MARCH 29**

• 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Family Fest and Home Show at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, 65 Pleasant Street, Upton. Bring the whole family along for an exciting day out! We've got a fantastic array of activities lined up that everyone, young and old, will enjoy. For the kids, there's a variety of fun activities to keep them entertained. Meanwhile, adults can explore the offerings from 100 plus vendors, featuring a wide selection of products and services for your homes and businesses. Don't forget to join in on the fun by voting for your favorite Mac & Cheese! Admission is free, just bring some canned goods for the local food pantries!

**FRIDAY, APRIL 4**

• The Holy Spirit Episcopal Church hosts a monthly Community Breakfast on the First Friday of each month from 8-9 a.m. A full breakfast will be served for a donation of \$5.00. Location of the event is Holy Spirit Episcopal Church located at 3 Pleasant St, Sutton.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 5**

• Simon Willard's Birthday Party from 12-3 p.m. Willard House and Clock Museum, 11 Willard Street, North Grafton.  
• Free Easter Egg Hunt at Rockdale Congregational Church, 42 Fowler Road, Northbridge. On Saturday April 5, 1-3 p.m. Rain date is April 6 from 1-3 p.m. Find a Golden Egg and win one of four Easter Baskets.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 6**

• Live band "Rhode Island Rednecks" at the New England Country Music Club Dance, Progressive Club, 18 Whitin Street, North Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m., music 1-5 p.m. \$11 for non-members. Doors open at 12:15 p.m. Music plays 1-5 p.m. Snacks may be brought in, cash bar for beverages.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 12**

• Former science teacher David Hagberg will offer a talk on tower clocks and why he has one in his house. At 2 p.m. Willard House

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# bankHometown Parent Wins 2025 USA TODAY Top Workplaces Award

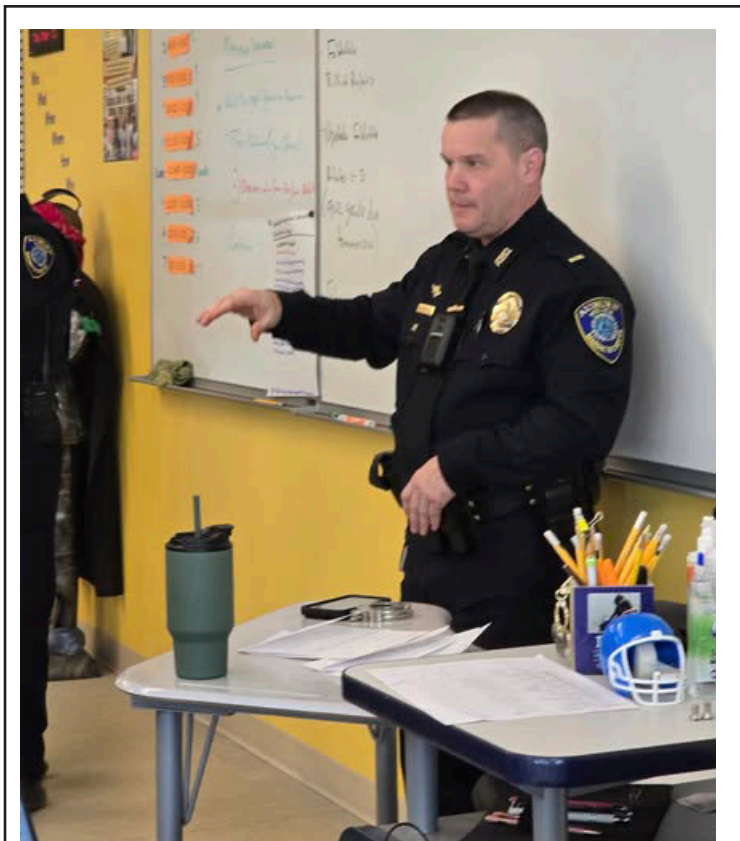
**H**ometown Financial Group, the parent company of bankESB, bankHometown, North Shore Bank, Abington Bank and Hometown Mortgage, announced today it has earned the 2025 USA TODAY Top Workplaces award for the third time in four years. Top Workplaces USA celebrates organizations with 150 or more employees that are dedicated to building an exceptional people-first culture. Winners are chosen based solely on employee feedback

gathered through an anonymous, third-party employee engagement survey, issued by Energage, a leading provider of technology-based employee engagement tools. More than 42,000 organizations across the country were invited to participate in the Top Workplaces USA survey. Results are calculated by comparing the survey's research-based statements, including 15 Culture Drivers that are proven to predict high performance against industry benchmarks.

"We're honored to have received this trio of national awards as an employer of choice. But we're even more grateful to our employees because it's their positive feedback that earned us the honor," said bankHometown President and CEO Robert J. Morton. "Our dedicated, talented, and passionate employees continually unlocking

potential for our customers, our communities, and one another. And they've embraced our culture where "Respect everyone," "Foster positive energy," and "Laugh often. Have fun!" are three of our most treasured core values. They believe we're doing something right." "Earning a Top Workplaces award is a badge of honor for

companies, especially because it comes authentically from their employees," said Eric Rubino, Energage CEO. "That's something to be proud of. In today's market, leaders must ensure they're allowing employees to have a voice and be heard. That's paramount. Top Workplaces do this, and it pays dividends."



Auburn School Resource Officer Randy McCarthy and Lieutenant Kenneth Charlton recently visited with Auburn Middle School's 8th grade Civics classes. They gave their time and expertise to review Constitutional law, especially the 4th, 5th, and 6th Amendments, offering valuable insights. The students gained a deeper understanding of their rights and responsibilities, all thanks to your engaging discussions and real-world knowledge.



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Adults: \$38 | Children (under 12): \$19  
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 MARCH 28	 APRIL 5
 APRIL 11	 APRIL 12
 APRIL 19	 APRIL 25
 APRIL 26	 MAY 10

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KSF: A TRIBUTE TO KANSAS, STYX AND FOREIGNER | MAY 31

**HAPPY HOUR**  
1/2 PRICE APPS:  
WEDNESDAYS & THURSDAYS (4PM-6PM)  
ONE PER PERSON MAX. PORTIONS MAY VARY.  
CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH OTHER OFFERS OR SPECIAL EVENTS.

**BAR:**  
\$5 BEER • \$6 WINE • \$7 COCKTAIL  
TUESDAY IS LARRY'S NIGHT AND OFFICE HOURS.

**MUSIC BINGO & BURGERS**  
WEDNESDAYS 4:30-6:30 PM  
\$1000 TO ONE BURGERS  
BUY 1 BURGER AND GET THE 2ND BURGER FREE  
BINGO PRIZES  
FREE TO PLAY!  
FREE TO PLAY!  
FREE TO PLAY!  
FREE TO PLAY!

**PRIME RIB WEDNESDAYS**  
12OZ PLUS TWO SIDES FOR \$25  
STARTING AT 4PM • LIMITED TIME OFFER WHILE SUPPLIES LAST • DINE-IN ONLY

FOR MENUS, RESERVATIONS, TICKETS, AND MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [WWW.SAMUELSSLATTERS.COM](http://WWW.SAMUELSSLATTERS.COM)  
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- Furniture/Appliance
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10 yard \$350

15 yard \$450

20 yard \$600

7 DAY RENTAL

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