

New K9 Officer for Webster PD

BY JANET STOICA
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Her kennel name was Autumn but now that she's a full-fledged member of the Webster Police Department, she's called O.J. in memory of a former police officer. "O.J. has visited the students at Bartlett High School and the kids love her," said Webster P.D.'s School Resource Officer Jonathan Brooks. "They were the ones who came up with her nickname. She's a German shorthaired pointer born in the Netherlands, and is primarily a bird dog."

According to the American Kennel Club's website, this breed of dog is intelligent, boisterous, bold, affectionate, and trainable which probably explains how she came to live at a canine academy in western Massachusetts, where she was trained to be not only a police officer's valuable asset in fighting crime, but also for search/rescue operations and private security organizations.

According to Officer Brooks, O.J.'s training included 200 hours of all basic police dog duties including narcotics detection. "We had used the kennel previously," Officer Brooks stated, "and during our visit to view a potential candidate, each dog is shown after discussing the needs of our department and the type of communities we serve. We observe them going through their basic paces and we felt O.J. had the highest drive and was very good with her alerts."

Officer O.J. arrived in Webster seven months ago and it was then that the essential bonding began with Officer Brooks. In addition to



Officer Brooks and K9 O.J.

establishing a daily routine and adjusting to her position in a patrol car, creating a high-level of trust between Officer Brooks and O.J. would be one of the most important aspects of her training. "She's

a fun-loving and gentle dog and is great around people," Brooks said. "Throughout her academy training

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Webster Town Updates

BY JANET STOICA
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"Our latest town meeting passed a \$65 million budget and we have a \$1 million capital fund," said Rick LaFond, Webster Town Administrator, "our department heads do a really good job of assembling their budgets. Tim Bell and Courtney Friedland put together a really good plan. They do a good job getting the word out to the public. It's a trusting environment. Between our town website listing the Town Meeting Guide and for Webster townspeople who want to follow along, they can do so. It's a down-to-earth and boots-on-the-ground documentation. People don't hesitate to phone me or our department heads with questions and it's worked out very well. We don't want to get overly-sophisticated and want to make it as easy as possible for the general public to understand."

LaFond further stated that the town used \$1.3 million in Free Cash at the May town budget meeting which lines up with the \$1.3 million in out-of-district school transportation costs that was overwhelmingly put toward the Special Education budget. Unfortunately, however, he also felt there was not enough interest from the state, but the town must adhere to state law. "Nevertheless, if this continues for our Special Ed. budget, we'll have to find additional areas of revenue. We are bound by law to make this work and transportation costs have doubled in the last three years as there are more students in our town. Just this past year, we had

two students who required their own registered nurses and the town is required to fund this need. State officials are in charge of deciding which students are designated as Special Education."

On another budget item, LaFond mentioned that this is the second year that an appropriation of \$25,000 was passed to assist with the lake's weed project. "The abutting lake homeowners live on the lake and don't own the lake but they spend \$100,000 annually to keep the lake vegetation at bay," he said.

Also of significance is the Route 395 and Route 16 dual-intersection project which LaFond indicated is on time with some inconvenience, but the detouring is currently at a minimum. "There shouldn't be too much lengthy detouring now," he stated. "The state is still on target to finish in the Spring of 2027. The roundabout side, near Mapfre Insurance, required new water mains as per our Water/Sewer Commission and with Tom Cutler, our Water and Sewer Superintendent in charge, it worked out very well. There were zero complaints about this part of the project."

LaFond stated that the select-board has established a Master Planning Committee and are forming it currently. The committee will consist of members from all town departments as well as two to three at-large community members. There will also be a committee established for advocacy of the town's Historical Commission.

Recently, Webster's third Busi-

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Charlton Town Meeting Approves 6.3 Percent Budget Increase

BY JANET STOICA
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According to Town Administrator Andrew Golas' town meeting report, total budgeted expenditures for Fiscal Year '26 are \$44,039,388 reflecting a 6.3 percent increase from FY25. Key allocations include: General Government: \$3,848,400 (7 percent increase); Public Safety: \$7,487,900 (7.2 percent increase);

Education \$22,806,942 (8.3 percent increase); Public Works \$1,927,400 (0.7 percent increase); Human Services \$440,100 (3.5 percent increase); Culture and Recreation \$648,700 (3.9 percent increase); Debt Service \$966,646 (53.4 percent increase); Retirement and Insurance \$5,913,300 (8.7 percent increase).

Golas' report stated that this is a level-service budget with no new positions added. The

primary cost drivers are reserves held in the Human Resources Budget for ongoing contract negotiations with Police, Fire, and DPW unions. The public safety areas include a new police Administrative Sergeant and Emergency Telecommunicator as well as a new EMS Officer. The educational budget for the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District reflects a 3.9 percent increase with an assessment of

\$20,256,949 to Charlton an 8.9 percent increase of \$1.7 million over FY25. Reference is made to state funding when the school district has received nothing more than the minimum Chapter 70 Aid as provided by the state funding formula which has also progressively eroded municipal

CHARLTON BUDGET

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Upgrades to Dudley Police and Fire Systems

South Worcester County Communications Center Director Gregory Lynskey along with Dudley Police Chief Marek Karlowicz and Dudley Fire Chief Dean Kochanowski are pleased to announce major upgrades to the Public Safety Radio Communications System in Dudley. Following many years of planning, the Dudley Public Safety Agencies transitioned from antiquated analog radio channels to P25 digital radio channels effective in mid-May.

These upgrades are a major step in improving operational safety

for first responders in the community and bring the Dudley Public Safety Departments in compliance with national Public Safety Radio Interoperability standards.

Director Lynskey stated, "This is a major milestone in what has been a nine-year project that would not have been possible without the support and assistance of the State 911 Department through grant funding opportunities. We are extremely pleased to have such a great working relationship with both the communities we serve and the State 911 Department, as is

evidenced by their continued funding support to improving Public Safety in Webster and Dudley."

He added that funding for this project, along with the corresponding project in Webster, consisted of \$139,467 in State 911 Support & Incentive Grant funding and \$1,037,629 in State 911 Regional Development Grant funding. Grant funds were obtained over a total of ten years through nine different awards. Additionally, a total of \$378,000 was approved between the May, 2022 and May, 2023 Webster Annual Town Meetings. \$60,000 in American Rescue Plan Act funds were also contributed to the project by Dudley. The total project costs for both communities was \$1,615,100.

"Improving radio communication has been a priority for the

Dudley Police Department for the last couple of years. SWCCC Director Lynskey dedicated great efforts to secure funding and planning for this much needed project. His efforts will improve officer safety and add reliability to our current radio system." Chief Karlowicz said.

Chief Kochanowski stated, "Reliable fireground communications is not an option, it is a necessity. These upgrades will assist us in improving firefighter safety at incidents by having state of the art, reliable communications at our fingertips." While there are no plans to encrypt any of the public safety radio channels and while the operating frequencies will not change for Dudley Police, we must note that many older home scanners will not be capable of receiving the

new digital channels. Additionally, the operating frequency for Dudley Fire will change to a new frequency.

Residents who wish to monitor the public safety departments via a home scanner will need to ensure their current scanner, or any newly purchased scanner, is capable of receiving P25 digital transmissions. The completion of this multi-year project marks a major step forward in public safety technology in both the communities of Dudley and Webster, technology that will serve both communities well for many years to come. Dudley Public Safety P25 Digital Radio Frequency Information: Dudley Police: 155.430 MHz – Network Access Code: 179 Dudley Fire: 154.3325 MHz – Network Access Code: 127

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CHARLTON BUDGET

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operating budgets since 2008.

The Council on Aging (COA) Budget increased 5.3 percent for staffing and programming improvements. The town will transition meal services to Tri-Valley Elder Services at no cost reallocating savings to increase the Activities Assistant position to 24 hours weekly.

The 53.4 percent debt service increase is due to new bond issuances, including funding for the fire substation and landfill

capping projects. Retirement Insurance and Healthcare costs increased by 19 percent, contributing to an overall 8.7 percent rise in benefits and pension contributions.

If you were born in 1965, the Charlton Senior Center will be celebrating your birthday at the Senior Center while inviting you to learn about the benefits of being a senior and taking a tour of the center. Appetizers and desserts will be provided along with live music with Jumpin' Juba thanks to a grant from the Charlton Cultural Council. There will also be tables of information

available from various agencies.

The town would like to advise its residents of local job openings which include an Assistant Library Director, Police Dispatcher, and Council on Aging Kitchen Coordinator. All job requirements can be found on the town website: townofcharlton.net and clicking on the Employment tab.

Residents are also invited to the Groundbreaking Ceremony for the new Charlton Fire Department Substation at 4 Oxford Road. The event will be held on Wednesday, June 18, at 4 p.m.

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WEBSTER*continued from page 1*

ness Breakfast Committee met which consists of commercial property owners. Members felt that invitations to local business owners to join may be of future consideration. "We're asking our

business property owners to tell us what they like and dislike about our town. We'd like their advice and we agree we should be working through zoning bylaws for a positive process. Feedback has been positive thus far. Our meetings will be held quarterly going forward," said LaFond.

WEBSTER K9*continued from page 1*

she proved herself to be very smart and problem-solved as she adapted to her training very quickly. Her area of expertise is narcotics detection. I remember the first time she was put to the test, she jumped a counter to get to the upper cabinets where narcotics were hidden. She was brilliant. Her training involved every type of environment including extreme temperatures and floor textures like carpeting, tile, vinyl, and unsavory (filthy) locations. She found crack cocaine easily hidden in secret places as well as on humans."

The Webster K9 Unit is also part of the Central Mass. Law Enforcement Council which supplies drones, motorcycles, SWAT teams, accident reconstruction personnel, and hostage negotiators to police departments as needed.

"If I'm available, I'll help with a narcotics situation," said Brooks. "I'm pretty much on call with O.J.; she's one of two dogs in Worcester County that is a certified narcotics dog and is capable of doing human sniffing which allows them to sniff out specific scents associated with narcotics."

This type of animal behavior is not counted as an illegal search for purposes of the Fourth Amendment. Once the dog detects the target odor, it performs a specific

behavior known as an "alert" to signal the handler. The alert can be passive, such as sitting or lying down, or active, such as barking or pawing.

Spending most of her time in a patrol car comes with additional services such as a heat alarm that will call 911 if the vehicle becomes too hot or cold and a window fan to help cool the animal. The cruiser will also sound a siren and its lights will flash if an emergency situation does occur.

For most police narcotic dogs, purchase costs are in the \$14,000 range. Webster's O.J. was donated by Curaleaf, located in Webster, which produces and distributes cannabis products in North America. Police dogs typically work seven to eight years on average as long as they're healthy. "We want to give them a good quality of life and we want to ensure they're taken care of when they need to retire," said Brooks.

Donations to help support the Webster Canine unit can be made at the Webster Police Department which does have a special donation account. The station is located at 357 Main Street, Webster MA 01570. (508) 943-1212. Additionally, donations for retired and ill canines can be made to paws4bluek9.com which is located in Palmer and assists police departments nationally with police canines' emergency medical care, essential equipment, and training.

Summer Reading at the Pearle

"Level Up at Your Library" runs Monday, June 23

– Friday, August 15 at the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library, Dudley. Join us for a summer filled with fun, games and learning. Summer Reading is not just for the kids; this program is open to all ages and is free! We have over 100 unique prizes and

an amazing event lineup. If you register for the Summer Reading

program during our kick-off event on Monday, June 23 from 1-7 p.m., you will receive a tasty frozen treat* (while supplies last) and a chance to win two free tickets to the Southwick Zoo! Be sure to check our event calendar @ crawfordlibrary.org for more details and a complete list of upcoming events.



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June Events at the Charlton Public Library

For further details and to register for programs, please visit our website, charltonlibrary.org. Additional parking is available across the street at Town Hall and at the Elementary School.

MOVIES AT THE LIBRARY

All showings are on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. only unless noted in Dexter Hall. No registration required.

June 17: "A Working Man." Levon Cade left his profession behind to work construction and be a good dad to his daughter. But when a local girl vanishes, he's asked to return to the skills that made him a mythic figure in the shadowy world of counter-terrorism. 2025. Rated R. Runtime 116 minutes. Starring Jason Statham, Jason Flemyng, Merab Ninidze, Maximilian Osinski, and Cokey

Falkow.

June 24: "Captain America: Brave New World. Anthony Mackie returns as the high-flying hero Sam Wilson, who's officially taken up the mantle of Captain America. After meeting with newly elected U.S. President Thaddeus Ross, Sam finds himself in the middle of an international incident. He must discover the reason behind a nefarious global plot before the true mastermind has the entire world seeing red. 2025. Rated PG-13. Runtime 118 minutes. Featuring Anthony Mackie, Harrison Ford, Danny Ramirez, Shira Haas, and Carl Lumbly.

THREADED TOGETHER FIBER ARTS GROUP (FORMERLY SILVER NEEDLES KNIT & CROCHET GROUP)

Thursdays from 1-3 p.m. in the Sibley Reading Area. No registra-

tion required.

Bring your current project and relax with friends. All are welcome regardless of skill level.

FIBER ARTS CLUB FOR TWEENS AND TEENS

Friday, June 13, 3:45-4:30 p.m. in the Storytime Room. No registration required.

Are you interested in knitting, crocheting, needle felting, or other fiber art? Join us to practice your craft, learn from more experienced friends, or teach others! We may have some special guests stopping by to give some pointers! Don't forget to bring your current projects! This group is best for tweens and teens ages 9 - 18.

CURRENT EVENTS & POLITICS DISCUSSION GROUP

Friday, June 13, 1- 3 p.m. in the

Community Meeting Room. No registration required.

What is next for our country? How can we work together? We will be talking about all of this and more at this drop-in, weekly adult discussion led by local resident and scholar David Schiller. All are welcome to attend these discussions. Respectfulness and civility are required; registration is not.

OPEN PLAY FOR BABIES 0-12 MONTHS

Monday, June 16, 10 -11 a.m. in the Storytime Room. No registration required.

Meet up with other babies and caregivers for fun open play and socialization! Age-appropriate toys will be available to play with. This program is for caregivers with babies ages 0-12 months (non-walkers) only, please!

RAINBOW KINDNESS ROCKS

Monday, June 16, 2:30-3:15 p.m. in the Storytime Room. No registration required.

Join us to paint some Rainbow—and/or Kindness-themed rocks! We'll use paint markers and Sharpies to make our designs. This program is best for ages 6 and older, but younger children may attend with an adult caregiver.

POKEMON CLUB

Tuesday, June 17, 4-4:30 p.m. in the Storytime Room. Registration required.

Do you love all things Pokemon? Join us for Pokemon Club! Enjoy a variety of fun Pokemon activities, trade cards, plus try your hand at playing the game on our new play mats! For ages 6-12.

ALZHEIMER'S CAREGIVERS SUPPORT GROUP

Tuesday, June 17, 6-7:30 p.m. in Dexter Hall. No registration required.

The Alzheimer's Support Network Caregiver Support Group is led by Alzheimer's Care Professionals and experienced caregivers. We offer information, resources, and strategies specific to caring for someone with Alzheimer's and other Dementias along with support for transitioning to different care settings. Co-sponsored by Tri-Valley and Charlton Public Library.

CRAFTERNOON FOR KIDS

Friday, June 20, 3:30-4:30 p.m. in the Storytime Room. No registration required.

Drop by the Storytime Room and make a fun craft! Best for ages 5-10.

ME AND MY MINI WITH SUNFLOWER MOVEMENT THERAPY

Mondays, June 23 & 30, 10 -10:45 a.m. in the Community Meeting Room. Registration required. A 45-minute creative movement group for ages birth through 2.5 years with grown-up leader Katelyn Cramer from Sunflower Movement Therapy. The group is focused on adult and baby spending quality time together, fostering attachment, and baby interacting with others their age. Get groovy to upbeat music with props, instruments, and a story! Space is limited.

G.S.A. FOR TEENS: FRIENDSHIP BRACELETS

Tuesday, June 24, 5:30-6:30 in the Community Meeting Room. No registration required.

GSA (Gender & Sexuality Alliance) is for middle school and high school students. Meetup to talk, hang out, and make new friends! At this first meeting, we are mak-



Left to Right: Lauryn, Shannon, John, Emily, Gina, R.D.O. Peter, Lynda, Dave, Dr. Renee Gomez, April, Dr. Jenna Larocque

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Lorri Ducharme, owner of Prestige Salon & Day Spa in Webster, is proud to announce exciting additions to the salon's offerings—designed to enhance both inner confidence and outer beauty.

Prestige now features two highly skilled professionals: Evlen Dasilveira, a certified paramedical tattoo artist and permanent makeup specialist, and Carly Whitcraft, RN, a certified aesthetic nurse and founder of Carly Rx Aesthetics, a boutique medical aesthetics practice operating within the salon.

Paramedical Tattoo & Camouflage Artistry

Evlen Dasilveira brings specialized expertise in scar camouflage, stretch mark blending, and 3D areola reconstruction for breast cancer survivors. With a medical associate's degree and more than 24 certifications in body inking, she provides transformative services for clients healing from surgery, childbirth, or skin trauma.

"After breast reconstruction surgery, this service is truly life-changing. Clients say it helps them feel whole again," says Ms. Ducharme.

"It's like closing a difficult chapter and moving forward," adds Evlen, who partners with Harrington Hospital Cancer Center to offer restorative support to survivors.

Evlen's services include:

- Scar Camouflage – Permanent pigments blend scars, stretch marks, and areas of hypopigmentation with surrounding skin.
- Lip Blushing & Neutralization – Enhances lip color and shape, correcting dark patches or inconsistencies.
- Microblading & Powder Brows – Creates a natural brow appearance for clients with sparse or missing brows due to aging, alopecia, or chemotherapy.

These treatments are long-lasting, sun-safe, and can last up to

Business spotlight

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Carly Whitcraft, RN, brings over 20 years of healthcare experience and advanced aesthetic certifications to the Prestige team. Through Carly Rx Aesthetics, she delivers a client-focused, medically guided approach to facial rejuvenation and internal wellness.

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- SkinPen® Microneedling – FDA-cleared collagen induction therapy that improves skin tone, texture, acne scarring, and fine lines.
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From left: Evlen Dasilveira, Lorri Ducharme and Carly Whitcraft

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Dudley Senior Center Events for June 2025

No Memory Café for June as Town Hall is closed Thursday, June 19, in observance of Juneteenth.

June 25: Potluck lunch with chicken, macaroni salad, watermelon, and root beer floats. The cost for this event is \$5 per person. Please RSVP for this event by calling 508-949-8015 or sign up in the Dudley Senior Center.

Activities at Dudley Senior Center: 1 p.m. Tuesdays – Pitch League; 11:30 a.m. Wednesdays – The Dudley Senior Center Knitting group; 1 p.m. June 4 – Book Club: "The Dovekeepers by Alice Hoffman, Mondays and Thursdays – Tri lunches.

SPORTS

Still Young but Closing in on Milestones

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Carly Moody has been playing basketball and soccer for as long as she can remember, but it was in seventh grade when she was introduced to lacrosse playing for the Auburn Youth League. The next season the Dudley resident got the opportunity to play

for the Shepherd Hill Regional High School varsity lacrosse program, one year before transferring her skills to Bay Path Regional. “Playing with the girls from Shepherd Hill, who were much older and experienced than I was definitely was hard get into at first,” she said. “I learned a lot and began starting right away. In my second game I got my first goal –

it was very exciting to do.” Moody noted that Shepherd Hill did not have a junior varsity squad due to low numbers, but she was still going to give it her all at the tryouts to prove she belonged on varsity. Although much younger than the majority of the girls, she was not worried going into the tryouts.

Having made the team as a seventh grader, she felt great about her accomplishments and took her game seriously. That season she netted 37 goals for the Rams, something that she really didn’t expect to happen that early.

When the season came to a close, Moody had a decision to make – stay with Shepherd Hill or move over to Bay Path; she chose the later due to it being a vocational school. Now, as a freshman she would have to start all over with another team, but would first have to make the Minutemen team.

“I knew some of the girls going into the tryouts and it was similar to Shepherd Hill. I was confident in my skills, but I didn’t know what to expect,” Moody said. “With that one-year with Shepherd Hill under my belt I was very confident, but it was still a challenge.”

Prior to coming to Bay Path she continued to work on her lacrosse skills in any way that she could during the off-season and she also believes that playing soccer and basketball for the Minutemen helped her to get ready for the spring sport.

While she truly enjoys the competitive play of both soccer and basketball, there is something about the lacrosse competition that is different and keeps her on her toes. Although she hasn’t been playing the game as long as the other two, lacrosse has defiantly become her number one priority when it comes to the three sports.

Having already tallied 37 goals as an eighth grader Moody was looking to eclipse the century mark during her first season with Bay Path and second overall.



“Carly works extremely hard on and off the field; her stats speak for themselves,” lacrosse coach Rachel Hearnlaye said. “Having already scored 37 with Shepherd Hill as an eighth grader I expect her to hit that 100 mark by the end of this year.”

At the time of this writing, the Minutemen freshman had already tallied 57 goals for her new school giving her 94 on her career. Moody still has another six regular season games left in which to reach the 100-goal plateau. Getting there was one of her goals coming into this season, but she would also like to have the team make the State Tournament; Bay Path is sitting on the cusp with a 6-8 record.

The young lacrosse player knows that she has plenty of time to help Bay Path qualify for the State Tournament in the future, but also knows in order to do so she and the team are going to have

to get better. In the off-season she plans on continuing to work on her game as much as she can before the other two sports get under way and take up her time.

“She is always at practice ahead of the scheduled time working on her skills,” the Bay Path Coach said. “As a midfielder she plays both offense as well as defense and continues to focus on her goal scoring as well as her defense.”

Moody believes her speed and shooting skills help to open up the offense while creating space. In doing this she can not only have those scoring opportunities but can help set up her teammates. However, on the defensive side of the ball she would like to get better to help the team and knows over the next three plus years she needs to keep getting better to help the Minutemen get into the Tournament and make a deep playoff run.

As the youngster looks to improve upon her skills, the coach is just hoping that Moody can continue to keep growing as a player.

“She needs to grow and realize that she doesn’t always have to go for the easy shot,” Hearnlaye said. “Recently, against BVT she had 6 goals but she also had a lot of nice assists. She is naturally athletic and has that drive that should benefit her in the future as long as she keeps the growth mindset.”

Lake Chaggoggagoggmannauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

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Author Launches Book at Booklovers' Gourmet

Woodstock, Connecticut author Karen Warinsky will launch her new book of poetry at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main Street, Webster on Saturday, June 28 from 1-2:30 p.m. This event is free and open to the public and will include a limited open mic and raffle.

Titled *Beauty & Ashes*, (Kelsay Press), this is her fourth collection. Warinsky has published poetry since 2011 and her books are *Gold in Autumn* (2020) and *Sunrise Ruby* (2022), both from Human Error Publishing, and *Dining with War* (2023 Alien Buddha Press). She is a Best of the Net nominee and a former finalist of the Montreal International Poetry Contest and won First Place in 2024 for her poem "Mirage" from the Ekphrastic Poetry Trust. She coordinates spoken word/poetry events in MA and CT under the name Poets at Large, and currently holds readings



at Roseland Park in Woodstock and The Vanilla Bean Café in Pomfret, CT. Warinsky and her husband have lived in Woodstock for 34 years where they raised their three children, and she is retired from careers in journalism and teaching.

Lee Desrosiers, editor and publisher of *The Naugatuck River Review* and *Wordpeace*, wrote in her blurb for the book: "In these

poems you will find a celebration of womanhood and self-love, a carillon, meditations on aging and mortality, gardens and lakes, marriage, a folder for death, junkmen "with their scrappy junkyard no-name cat / and their watchful, blank blue-eyed German Shepherd," and much more, which together make Warinsky's collection well worth reading."

James Penha, managing editor for *The New Verse News*, writes: *Beauty & Ashes* ... follows the seasons of the year as an allegory, of course, for the trajectory of a human life. But the book's calendar ends in spring, the season of beginnings (!) despite our learning earlier from a speaker that Death "is sometimes there / lounging in my poems about nature and spirit... / he wants to take me home." And so, I reread these poems earnestly wondering where we have been and where we are headed. And I do

mean we, for although the poems are personal and autobiographical, I recognize in all of them a correspondence and often a congruence with my own experience of beauty and ashes. I think every reader of this collection will as well.

This event is suitable for ages 14 and up. Books will be available for purchase. People should call (508) 949-6232 to sign up for the open mic.

Adaptive Water Ski Program Awarded Grant

The Webster Water Ski Collective is proud to announce that its Adaptive Ski Program has once again been selected as a recipient of the prestigious Craig H. Neilsen Foundation Grant through Move United Sports. This significant grant will fund the program for both the 2025 and 2026 ski seasons, enabling the Collective to continue providing free adaptive water ski opportunities to youth and adults living with spinal cord injuries (SCI).

This marks the second time the Collective's Adaptive Ski Program has received this grant, further solidifying its commitment to inclusion and empowerment through watersports. The initiative is designed to foster independence,

physical and emotional wellness, and new skill development in individuals with SCI — all through the power of adaptive water skiing.

"We are incredibly honored to be a two-time recipient of this transformative grant," said Ryan DesRoches, Director of Adaptive Skiing at the Webster Water Ski Collective. "Thanks to the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation and Move United Sports, we can continue breaking down barriers and offering life-changing experiences on the water."

The Adaptive Ski Program provides specialized equipment, trained volunteers, and a supportive community that helps individuals of all ability levels experience the freedom and exhilaration of water skiing. Whether participants



are returning athletes or first-time skiers, the program tailors each session to meet individual needs and goals, ensuring a safe, fun, and empowering environment.

With the renewed funding for 2025 and 2026, the Collective aims to expand outreach efforts, add more ski days to the schedule, and increase access for new skiers throughout the New England region.

For more information about the Adaptive Ski Program or to register as a participant or volunteer, visit websterwaterski.org.

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Dudley appoints seven to newly formed Government Study Committee

The Dudley Selectboard has appointed former Webster Selectman Randy Becker, Assistant Vice President of Finance for Easterseals of Massachusetts Keith Gajewski, retired Dudley Deputy Fire Chief Paul Konieczny, local business owner Brian LaBrec, Webster town administrator Richard LaFond, product quality control specialist Cheryl Lieteau, and former Business Manager for the Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Rich Mathieu as full members of the newly formed Govern-

ment Study Committee. Appointed as alternates were National Grid Project Manager Hannah Ferris and Dean of the Graduate School at Nichols College Robin Frkal.

This committee will evaluate the town's government structure during public, televised meetings. Its reports and recommendations will be widely available for residents' consideration and action.

"I'm very thankful for the people that came forward to assist the town in acting on the recommendation of the Department of Rev-

enue's Division of Local Services to form a government study committee," town administrator Jonathan Ruda said, adding, "The education, experiences, and independent nature of the committee volunteers will ensure an a-political and unbiased study and will bring about informed decisions relative to the future organization of our community."

The development of this committee follows a financial management audit conducted by the DLS at the request of the Board

of Selectmen, after repeated calls from residents. The audit covered concerns over budget shortfalls, Proposition 2 ½ override elections in the summer 2023, and ongoing fiscal challenges.

A key finding of the DLS report emphasized that Dudley's decentralized government structure lacks essential coordination and communication, hindering its ability to function effectively and efficiently. Addressing this issue will be the primary focus of the committee's work.

Committee responsibilities include reviewing the town's organizational structure, identifying inefficiencies, researching best practices in peer communities, and gathering input from town officials and residents. The study is expected to conclude by May 2026, when the committee will present its findings and recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. These recommendations may lead to further action at the May 2026 Annual Town Meeting.

CHARLTON LIBRARY

continued from page 4

ing friendship bracelets. Make them in your PRIDE colors or any colors you want!

PUZZLE RACE

Tuesday, June 24, 6 -7:30 p.m. in Dexter Hall. Registration required.

Can your team complete a jigsaw puzzle faster than your friends and neighbors? Each team will receive the same 300 piece puzzle provided

by the library. The team that finishes first or completes the most before time is called wins! Adults, teens, and families with children aged 8+ are welcome to participate. Registration is required – only one person from each team should register. Teams can have up to six members.

BUILDWAVE FOR GRADES K-5

Wednesday, June 25, 3-4 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room. Registration required.

Want to foster your child's interest in STEM, while igniting their

creative spark at the same time? Buildwave is a creative building program that feels like a video game! Over the course of the workshop, students create with over a dozen different building materials, including Lego, PlusPlus, and custom-made Buildwave materials. The workshop is structured like a video game, with an audiovisual setup featuring animations and music that guide students through the different building waves. As your child creates with wave after wave of new objects, they build creative confidence, become better collaborators, and encounter design and engineering fundamentals in a unique and memorable context.

TINY TOTS @ NIGHT

Thursday, June 26, 6-6:30 p.m. in the Storytime Room - Registration required.

This is an evening version of our Tiny Tots program! Best for babies to age 3. Includes songs, finger-plays, scarves, shakers, music,

books & free play!

FAR FROM EDEN CONCERT

Thursday, June 26, 6-7:30 p.m. in Dexter Hall. No registration required.

Far From Eden is a four piece band from Millbury, Massachusetts, formed in 2005 by Vocalist Tina Pugliese Savage, Drummer Ed Scholz, Bassist Bob See, and Guitarist Dave Bourdeau. FFE is noted for Tina's powerful vocal delivery and cleverly crafted versions of songs from a wide variety of genres and artists including Aretha Franklin, Pink Floyd, Lady Gaga, Led Zepelin, and U2. All are welcome.

CHARLTON UKULELE LEAGUE & ENSEMBLE

Thursday, June 26, 6-7:30 p.m. in the Community Meeting Room. No registration required.

Experienced musicians and newbies all welcome. Questions? Email Cule5632@gmail.com

CARRIE FERGUSON FAMILY CONCERT

Friday, June 27, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. in Dexter Hall. No registration required.

Join us for a fun family concert to celebrate Pride Month at the Library! Carrie Ferguson concerts are fun and interactive, with plenty of dancing, singing, and audience

participation. Their music is positive and upbeat, featuring themes of inclusivity, self-care, accepting feelings, love of nature, environmental stewardship, and just all around joy for life. As an LGBTQ artist, Carrie is particularly interested in offering supportive and encouraging messages to LGBTQ children and their families. All ages are welcome!

CRITICAL THINKING DISCUSSION GROUP - HENRY IV, PART 1 BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Friday, June 27, 1-2 p.m. in the Sibley Reading Area. No registration required.

No experience with critical thinking discussion groups is necessary. Books/materials are available for checkout one month prior to discussion. Questions? Email saga3@charter.net.

MACRAME RAINBOW KEYCHAINS (AGES 8-18)

Monday, June 30, 2:30-3:30 p.m. in the Storytime Room. Registration required.

Learn how to make a macrame rainbow keychain! For ages 8-18. This program is part of our Rainbow Crafts celebrating Pride Month! Please note: this craft requires the use of a glue gun.

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TALES FROM BEYOND

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Harrie's Jailhouse Restaurant

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

51 Warwick Street in Middletown, Connecticut is not your average building in the middle of a residential neighborhood. It never was. The 1850 facility once housed the Pameacha Jail, which included the sheriff's residence and a dozen brownstone prisoner-holding cells. The cells were later removed and brought to Haddam, Connecticut for use in their jail, which has now been closed for a decade as of this writing. What remains of the actual cells at the Warwick street location consists of a small room with windows and an outside stairway where the cells once sat. Only one section remains of one of the cells where patrons can still dine. The building later housed a restaurant called Bread & Water, but a fire in April 2017 damaged a good portion of the structure and forced its closure in 2019. Just prior to closing, Bread & Water was chosen among 8,500 eateries across the state as South Region Restaurant of the Year. In 2020, Carrie Carella, owner of

NoRa Cupcake Co. and Heather Kelly went in search of a place that was unique in character and history. They found 51 Warwick Street to be the perfect place. In March of 2021, they opened Harrie's Jailhouse Restaurant as an elevated pub fare restaurant. Harrie's specializes in signature sandwiches and cocktails where one can relax at the bar downstairs, on the outdoor patio, or at seating on the first floor. The restaurant's name is a combination of Heather and Carrie, who have both since had their fair share of paranormal experiences.

The building houses a permanent resident by the name of Sarah. Sarah is a little girl ghost who may have lived in the building at one time after it ceased to be a jail house. Heather and Carrie have learned to live in harmony with Sarah who they have concluded was between the ages of eight and ten years old when she died. Sarah likes to play with the lights, create sudden drafts, throw things and take items off the tables and bar, dropping them to the floor. Sarah does not limit her exploits to the owners

and staff at the restaurant. Many patrons of Harrie's have witnessed strange events presumed to be caused by her. One patron witnessed the remote control for the television fly off the TV and bounce off the bar. Some come to the restaurant in hopes of witnessing the child ghost while dining or enjoying a drink. Often, Sarah does not disappoint. Heather and Carrie admitted they sometimes have to appease Sarah by putting a mocktail out for her when she starts acting up. Whether it is totally effective or not in pleasing the ghost, they are not sure, but they believe it makes her feel included and comfortable with the people who work or visit of the place.

Next door to the pub is the old town almshouse that has been converted into apartments and a section for a small business. Almshouses were where people of the town in need would reside. This included the poor, elderly and disabled citizens within the town. Often, there was a farm of some sort where they grew much of their own food. Sometimes they worked at

menial jobs to help support their way. The old almshouse building is also haunted by some of the long deceased tenants who most likely spend their last days in the poorhouse. In 2012, Ghost Hunters investigated both places and found them to be still alive with the spirits of those who once tenanted them. The haunting of both buildings go back much

further and can be assured the ghosts will still be around for years to come. Such places tend to leave a certain psychic scar on the property due to the reason why they were invented in the first place; to house the poor and suffering or hold the not so nice people in society.

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Bring any type of watercraft from kayaks, canoes, PWCs, sailboats, cabin cruisers, to ski & pontoon boats for a stem to stern check of equipment for compliance to federal and state safety regulations. Vessels can be inspected on a trailer as well as afloat.

Trailer-d vessels, not having Webster access sticker and not launching, can be examined at the entrance gate to Memorial Ramp. Personal watercraft, not allowed to launch at the Wallum Lake Ramp on weekends, can also be examined at the gate. Both locations can accommodate boats arriving by water. The stations will be active from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Weather-related rescheduling will be the following Sunday, same time, and location.

Vessel Examiners are qualified and experienced to answer any boating related questions or concerns along with being trained to spot any potential problems. They will award your vessel with a 2023 VSC decal if it meets Auxiliary standards on items such as: registration & hull numbering, life jackets, fire extinguishers, expiration

dates on flares (if required), working navigation lights, overall vessel condition, etc. A VSC is conducted only with your consent; no reports are filed with any law enforcement agency. There are no citations, legal obligations, or penalties on violations or potential problems found. A VSC decal may result in

a boat insurance discount and will indicate to law enforcement on the water that your vessel complies with safety regulations.

The Examiner will give the vessel owner options and information on correcting any issues. Often a quick trip to the nearest boating supply vendor is all that is necessary to obtain missing safety items and easily pass a re-inspection, sometimes on the same day. Coast Guard Auxiliary Vessel Examiners will be around the local lakes at various, un-scheduled times during the boating season; they are few in number and not readily available inland.

If you cannot make it to the station, schedule a VSC online at the link: [VesselSafetyCheck.org](https://www.vesselsafetycheck.org)

It is best to take advantage of this scheduled opportunity and start your boating season with a visit to our station, and a 2025 VSC decal.

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LIVING WITH LUKE

amyleclaire@hotmail.com

Protecting Luke Amid Tick Season

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

Luke has a tick." I state with panic, as though another head has grown from his neck, then stiffen my hold on him. "I'm okay with rough love, Momma, but this is starting to feel awkward."

I don't want to lose sight of the blood sucker, who may realize that he (or she?) has been caught.

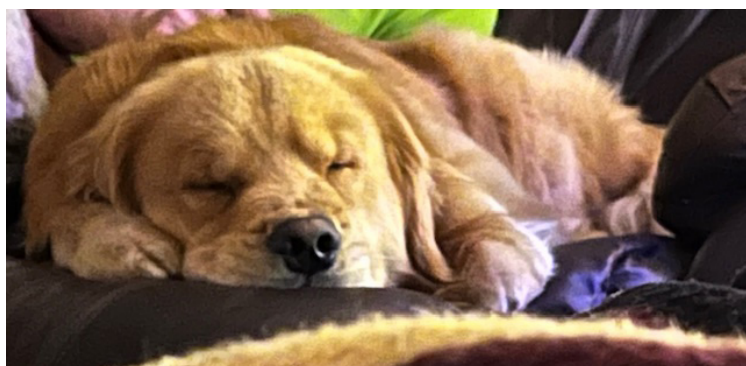
command my husband to fetch our cherished de-ticking tool, a small spoon with a sharp wedge cut out at the top, and one forever missing when we need it the most.

"Where did you put it last?" His question feels counterintuitive. "If I knew where it was, then it wouldn't be misplaced, right?" Luke maneuvers like a breakdancer while struggling to free his head from my hold. "I don't know what's happening here, but I just want to sniff the floor again."

A tick once attached to the skin on Luke's throat. He was still a

believe that, on some level, dogs sense and trust the firmness of our care. They know that we are looking out for them. How could we not? I once scraped my knee and, weeks later, a barely visible scar held the scent of blood. Luke sniffed the wound and began licking the area. "Smells like an abrasion, Momma. Don't worry. I'll take care of it."

"FREEDOM!" Nothing spells RELIEF quite the way an extracted tick does. Luke races to his toybox, pulls out his stuffed lamb, and prances about the kitchen; proud



A tick's gender (I later learned) is indicated by its scutum. Male ticks have a scutum that covers most of their back, and a female tick has a white halo on its half scutum. However interesting, this one needs to go. I part Luke's fur and gag. My least favorite antagonist is shaped like a sunflower seed, its head burrowed in the meat on the back of Luke's neck. One might think that by now (eight dogs in) the sight would be casual. My father used to pull bloated ticks off our dogs using a pair of pliers. He'd drop the pea-sized gluttons into a bucket of kerosene.

"Hurry. Go find the scooper!" A tick sighting still rattles me. I

puppy, only six months old. That very parasite caused repeated (and irritable) scratching and, likely, the positive trace of Lyme disease found on a subsequent blood test. More testing indicated that he is asymptomatic and will be just fine, especially with the aid of a monthly pill. He could even end up testing negative the next time, according to the vet's diagnosis. Nevertheless ...

The surgery begins without a moment to spare. Daddy (having located the spoon) covers the tick's body and pulls it slow enough to force it to detach from Luke's skin. "Almost done, Lukey." I rub his belly for emotional support. I do



of himself for enduring a mysterious ordeal. "Something caused parental tension. But what? I was so worried they'd never let me go, but I got myself out of that headlock, alright." His enthusiasm is liberating. It appears we've all been freed from the tick's hold. I wash my hands. Luke thrashes about the kitchen and celebrates the joy that is Living with Luke.

Meanwhile, the tick scrambles to find a way out of the spoon's dome.

"Burn him alive." I take a random shot at the tick's gender and watch Luke chew on another stuffed toy. His red chili pepper squeals with joy. Then I imagine him at the shore of a lake, unable to swim due to joint pain. He breathes in the aroma of fresh water and looks away. "I used to love to swim. That was then." He turns in a circle and lies down. "I'm discouraged."

"I'll get the lighter." This leech needs to pay.

The flame pops to life. The tick senses its heat, and scrambles up the spoon's dome with homely, curly feelers then slides back down, unsuccessful. I turn away. My soft heart stills. I'm disappointed with the tick, yet I cannot watch the execution. The tick was just being a tick. Parasites feed off the life of another. Such is what's meant to be.

"Buh bye." Nonetheless, the flush of the toilet resounds like the roar of a lion, and the burned corpse spins away in no time. I scratch my scalp. Is that a pimple or a tick?

"I think I have a tick!" I've gone mad.

Luke trots into the bathroom. "What's going on in here? He grabs a sock from the laundry basket. I open his mouth and grab it back.

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LUKE

continued on page 11

REAL ESTATE

Common Real Estate Terms Explained

If you're a first-time homebuyer, chances are you'll come across some terms you're not familiar with. And that can be overwhelming, especially while going through one of the biggest purchases of your life. The good news is you don't need to be an expert on real estate terms, that's your agent's job. But getting to know these basic terms will help you feel a lot more confident throughout the process.



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

Terms every homebuyer should know. Once you're familiar with this terminology, you'll have a better understanding of important details – from contracts to negotiations. So, when those big conversations happen, you'll feel informed, in control, and able to make the best decision for your unique situation. Having a basic understanding of important real estate concepts before you start

the home buying process will give you peace of mind now and could save you a fortune in the future.

Here's a breakdown of a few key real estate terms and definitions you should know.

Appraisal: A report providing the estimated value of the home. Lenders rely on appraisals to determine a home's value, so they're not lending more than it's worth.

Contingencies: Contract conditions that must be met, typically within a certain timeframe or by a specified date. For example, a home inspection is a common contingency. While you can waive these to try and make your offer more competitive, it's generally not recommended.

Closing Costs: A collection of fees and payments made to the various parties involved in your home purchase. Ask your lender for a list of closing cost items, including attorney's fees, taxes, title insurance, and more.

Down Payment: This varies by buyer, but is typically 3.5-20% of the purchase price of the home. There are even some 0% down programs available. Ask your lender for more information. Chances are, unless specified by your loan type

of lender, you don't need to put 20% down.

Escalation Clause: This is typically used in highly competitive markets. It's an optional add on in a real estate contract that says a potential buyer is willing to raise their offer on a home if the seller receives a higher competing offer. The clause also includes how much a buyer is willing to pay over the highest offer.

Mortgage Rate: The interest rate you pay when you borrow money to buy a home. Consult a lender so you know how it can impact your monthly mortgage payment.

Pre-Approval Letter: A letter from a lender that shows what they're willing to lend you for your home loan. This, plus an understanding of your savings, can help you decide on your target price range. Getting this from a lender should be one of your first steps in the homebuying process, before you even start browsing homes online.

You don't need to have all these terms memorized, but a little knowledge goes a long way. Brushing up on the basics now means fewer surprises later – and more clarity when you buy a home.

LUKE

continued from page 10

He smiles and lifts a paw for me to hold. "Love you, Momma." The two of us share a moment. I hug his big head and plant a kiss on his snout. He smells faintly of aloe from a recent backyard bath. He leans into my chest. The struggle of being a dog parent is real. We do not want to see our dogs in pain and will do anything to prevent it. Those who rescue dogs understand the concept viscerally. Something about a dog abused, malnourished, or sick sends fire through our veins, even though we know that pain is a part of life. We endure struggle like a champ. Yet the threat of a creature the size of a seed (or pea) is too much to bear. Why is that?

I sit cross-legged on the bathroom floor. Luke rests his head on my lap. His loyalty is unrivaled, yet one dog-quality stands out above the rest.

A dog is innocent. Luke would not hurt another living creature, unless doing so meant to protect, defend or survive. He doesn't possess the ego, pride or sinfulness of a human. He's not vindictive, selfish or malicious by nature. He's born with simplicity—to love and be loved.

"Love you, Lukey." He licks my chin and reminds me of how much I need him, just as much as he does me. We'll both go great lengths to protect each other. Man may be a dog's best friend, but Mom will always have his back.

Write to Amy:
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Nissan Pick-up Is Reliable Alternative to Toyota

Q. I asked you once about two-door pickups. As a Toyota owner for many

years, I wanted to purchase a 2025 two-door Tacoma as I have been happy with my previous Toyota's. For a month I have been corre-

sponding with Toyota dealers, also Toyota Corporate with no success finding one. So, I am considering purchasing the 2025 Nissan Frontier SV King Cab. It is exactly what I am looking for. The Nissan dealers have many on their lots and they cost about the same as the Tacoma. But I have never owned a Nissan, so I do not know what their reliability is (my Toyota's have been excellent). I am particularly concerned about the V6 engine the Frontier comes with.

brake fluid is also sometimes called synthetic because it is not traditional glycol based and is not hygroscopic. Silicone fluid is often used in vintage cars because it will not corrode internal brake parts. It is also not compatible with conventional brake fluid and is more compressible and can give the driver a feeling of a spongy pedal.

A. This does sound a little strange. I can understand that in the sport setting, the computer will lock out eighth gear for better performance. In the normal setting the transmission should go into eighth speed at highway speeds. I would go back to the dealer and road test another K4 for comparison. Having an 8-speed transmission that does not shift into eighth gear automatically does not make much sense to me.

Q. Does AAA repair tires at your residence? I have a flat, will they repair the tire at my house?

A. Over the many years I have been with AAA, we have been looking into mobile flat repair, but to do it properly, you need to inspect the tire (take it off the rim) to see if it is damaged. Some providers and DIYers will put in a plug. I also carry a plug kit in my car in case of emergencies, but a plug is a temporary repair. For a tire to be repaired properly, the tire needs to be inspected for damage and repaired with a plug/patch combination. AAA will come out, air up your tire, install a spare (if your car has one) or tow the car to a tire store.

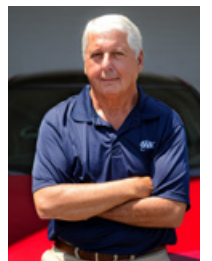
Q. I was watching

YouTube and saw a mechanic checking for parasitic electrical drain with a thermal imaging camera. Does this work and have you tried it?

A. I think we watch the same channels. I recently have been using an Innova Infra-red Inspection Camera. I did find a relay that stayed on when the car was off because of the heat signature. Although it is a versatile tool, it is not the quick answer to finding parasitic draw, it is just another tool for diagnostics and troubleshooting that can get you down the correct path.

Q. With the new synthetic brake fluids, are they still hygroscopic? Can these brake-fluid exchanges be extended?

A. All DOT 3, DOT 4, and DOT 5.1 fluids (U.S. Department of Transportation boiling point specification) are conventional, but are all synthetic - sort of. The reason is because they blend components. But I believe the "synthetic" label (engineers let me know) is more marketing that the resistance to moisture. This is like synthetic blends of oil; there is not a percentage blend standard. Silicone



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TIPS ON FINANCIAL PLANNING

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Is your retirement at risk?

It's important to save for retirement, but only half of Americans have calculated how much money they'll need, according to the 2024 Retirement Confidence Survey by the Employee Benefit Research Institute. Yet without



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

knowing how much you'll need, it's hard to know if you're on track to reach your goals for retirement.

Here are a few considerations to help shape your retirement savings strategy.

Calculate how much you'll need. You may dream of retiring "comfortably," but how do you define "comfortable" in terms of actual money? Take the time to outline how much you spend now, and how much you think you'll spend in retirement. That will help you understand how much you need to save now to afford the retirement lifestyle you want later. A financial advisor can help with resources and knowledge for building and managing your retirement strategy.

Start saving now. It's easy to procrastinate, especially if you are younger and further away from retirement. But the earlier you start, the less you may need to save from each paycheck to build your funds over time. If you're closer to retirement, you can take advantage of catch-up contributions to most

401(k), 403(b), governmental 457 plans and the federal government's Thrift Savings Plan. If you're 50 or older, you can save pretax an extra \$7,500 to your retirement account beyond the standard total limit of \$23,500 allowed in 2025. Those 60-63 years old can contribute to these plans an extra \$11,250 above the standard total limit. That's an annual total of \$31,000 for people ages 50 and older; or \$34,750 for those 60-63 years old in pretax retirement plan contributions.

Take the right amount of risk. You may think it's risky to put money away for retirement instead of keeping it handy for discretionary spending. But the biggest risk of all is not reaching your retirement goal. For example, a portfolio that's all in cash will have little increasing value over time and won't provide any growth potential even to keep up with inflation. It's as if you're losing money every year. Then again, if your investments are only keeping up with inflation, your money is not growing. Consider growth investments to help build the funds you'll need in retirement. The key is ensuring you have the appropriate amount of risk — not too much, but not too little — to achieve your growth goals.

Save separately for emergencies. To protect your hard-earned retirement savings, build an emergency fund separate from your long-term investments. It can help ensure you have what you need to cover surprises like a large auto repair, unexpected medical bills, temporary loss of income from

changing jobs or early retirement caused by health issues. For most people, three to six months' worth of total expenses is an appropriate amount for an emergency fund. And you'll want to keep it in an accessible, low-risk account that holds cash and equivalents. Above all, try to avoid taking money from your long-term retirement investments. Doing so could result in taxes, penalties, and reductions to your overall principal investment, all of which could affect your retirement savings.

Retirement should be an exciting time to enjoy what you've worked so hard to earn. Planning for what you'll need and protecting those savings can help ensure a comfortable future.


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.

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- 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@theyankeeexpress.com.

SATURDAY, JUNE 14

• The Sutton Historical Society Inc. will host

the annual Town-Wide Yard Sale from 8 a.m. 1 p.m., rain or shine. The registration fee is \$10. Registration forms are available at sutton1704.org and must be received by Friday, May 30. Participants can either set up at their home address or request a spot at the M.M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop, 6 Singletary Avenue, Sutton. The society creates and distributes location maps identifying all participating location to assist visitors with locating all yard sales. Send questions to sutton1704@gmail.com. The Sutton Historical Society is a 501c3 organization.

SUNDAY, JUNE 15

• The theme of the 2025 Millbury Fourth of July Parade is "A Community Celebrates!" The parade will start at Millbury High School, 12 Martin Street at

1 p.m. and end at Windle Field. <https://www.millburyfourth.org/>

TUESDAY, JUNE 17

• The General Ebenezer Learned Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution will be unveiling and dedicating a 250 Anniversary burial marker to honor the Revolutionary War soldiers who answered the alarm on April 19, 1775 at the West Auburn Burial Ground at 1 p.m. The burial ground is at the corner of Waterman Rd. and Southbridge St. in Auburn.

SATURDAY, JUNE 21

• Join family and friends for a stuffed chicken dinner beginning at 5:30 p.m. at St. Peter's Parish Hall, 39 Church Avenue, Northbridge. Tickets are \$17 per dinner and include salad and dessert. To go meals will be available for pick-up at 5 p.m. All orders must be purchased in advance by Tuesday, June 16. Call 508-234-2156 or email the parish office: parishoffice@stpeterockdale.org for orders and tickets.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 25

• Uxbridge Spartan Basketball is having a one-time only golf fundraiser to raise money for scoreboards at Hecla Street basketball courts at Blissful Meadows, 801 Chocolog Road, Uxbridge. The cost is \$175 per golfer or \$400 for a foursome. Registration opens at 8 a.m. Shotgun start at 9 a.m. Please make checks payable to Uxbridge Spartan Basketball Association, P.O. Box 386, North Uxbridge, MA 01538. The organization is a 501c3 charity. Sponsor opportunities are available: hole/tee sign \$200; beverage cart \$500; or registration table \$1000. You can also register at <https://tinyurl.com/USBAGolf>.

• The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Com-

merce will hold its Business After Hours Networking Event from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Murder Hill Brewery & Taproom at 670 Linwood Avenue, Building C, Whitinsville. Murder Hill is an exciting local brewery nestled within the historic Linwood Mill complex. Enjoy a relaxed and lively evening of networking, with local craft brews on tap and delicious bar bites. Admission is \$20 for members and \$40 for future members. RSVP by June 23: Liz O'Neil at 508-234.9090 ext. 102 or at loneil@blackstonevalley.org

THURSDAY, JUNE 26

• The Charlton Public Library Summer Concert series sponsored by Cornerstone Bank presents "Far From Eden." They are a four piece band from Millbury, formed in 2005 by vocalist Tina Pugliese Savage, drummer Ed Scholz, bassist Bob See, and guitarist Dave Bourdeau. The band is noted for Tina's powerful vocal delivery and cleverly crafted versions of songs from a wide variety of genres and artists, including Aretha Franklin, Pink Floyd, Lady Gaga, Led Zepelin, and U2. From 6-7:30 p.m. at Charlton Library, 40 Main Street. Free and open to the public. Additional parking is available at the Elementary School and Town Hall.

SATURDAY, JUNE 28

• A Basic Life Support and First Aid Class will be offered beginning at 8 a.m. in St. Peter's Parish Hall, 39 Church Avenue, Northbridge. This class is for newcomers and those looking for re-certification. Learn valuable lifesaving skills. Training is done by the American Heart Association. The class is \$89 per person and must be paid in advance when you register. Class size is limited. Please register by Monday, June 23. Call 508-234-2156 or email the parish office: parishoffice@stpeterockdale.org for more information.

THURSDAY, JULY 3

• Millbury Farmers Market at the Mansion, a new monthly event taking place on the beautiful grounds of the historic Asa Waters

Mansion, 123 Elm St., Millbury. From 3-7p.m.

THURSDAY, JULY 10

• The Charlton Public Library Summer Concert series sponsored by Cornerstone Bank presents "The Dirty Martinis" with Les Sampou and Ed Grega. Les Sampou has seven albums of original songs and has toured the U.S. and Europe for the past three decades, earning her top billing at major festivals as well as supporting such legendary acts as Aretha Franklin. Ed Grega has written dozens of film scores as well as won composer awards (2023 and 2024) for his work on PBS "This Old House." They bring their vast talents to an extensive repertoire which includes not only award-winning original compositions but cover songs from Americana, Classic Rock, and American Songbook standards. Their repertoire covers classics from the 1920s to the 2020s. "Twenties to the Twenties" appeals to all ages. From 6-7:30 p.m. at Charlton Library, 40 Main Street. Free and open to the public. Additional parking is available at the Elementary School and Town Hall.

SUNDAY, JULY 13

• The New England Country Music Club will hold a dance with live classic country music by "The Farm Hands" at the Progressive Club, 18 Whittin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m., live music from 1-5 p.m. Snacks may be brought in cash bar for beverages.

THURSDAY, JULY 31

• The Charlton Public Library Summer Concert series sponsored by Cornerstone Bank presents Tony Graham, a singer-songwriter from County Tipperary, Ireland, will perform. He has an extensive catalogue of songs ranging from traditional ballads to more contemporary Irish hits. His passion for Irish music shows through in his performances, as every song he sings tells a story. From 6-7:30 p.m. at Charlton Library, 40 Main Street. Free and open to the public. Additional parking is available at the Elementary School and Town Hall.

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Blackstone Heritage Corridor in 'Story Walks' Collab with Worcester Writers' Collective

Greenway Signs Feature Prose, Poetry of Locals Inspired by Region's Rich History and Imagery

The Blackstone Heritage Corridor in partnership with the Worcester Writers' Collective, proudly announces the launch of "Blackstone Story Walks," a new initiative that blends local history, creative writing, and the scenic

and the imagination it inspires.

"Blackstone Story Walks brings our mission to life in a new way. It celebrates the creativity of this region – both past and present – while promoting local writers and inviting the public to interpret their

lens on place and identity.

"So much of our organization is centered on the belief that storytelling is a highly effective tool for building community," said Brett Jarrobbino, a representative of the Worcester Writers' Collective. "We've talked for a while now about how often we've run into original, local writing in exciting and

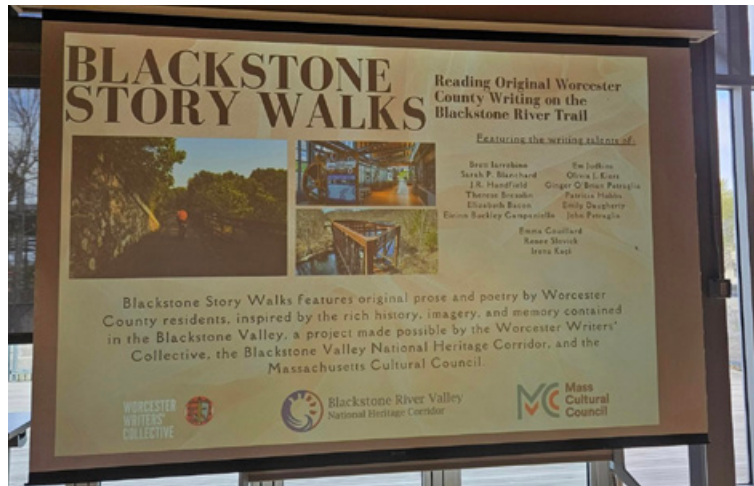
unexpected places across Worcester County and New England, and we started to feel an urgency to bring that innovation to our city. Through this collaboration, we're proud to showcase voices that reflect the depth and diversity of Worcester and the entire Corridor."

To view the Blackstone Story Walks signs, visitors can start their

walk at the parking area at 205 North Main Street, Millbury and follow along the bike path. Signs will be visible at several bridges along the river.

For more information, visit: blackstoneheritagecorridor.org/

To learn more about the Worcester Writers' Collective, email: [worcestertwriterscollective@gmail.com](mailto:worcesterwriterscollective@gmail.com)



experience of the Blackstone River Bikeway/Greenway.

The project features excerpts from original short stories and poems penned by Worcester-area authors, displayed along the southern section of the bikeway in Worcester and Millbury. Story panels are installed along the trail with accompanying QR codes, allowing visitors to access the full-length versions of each piece directly on their phones.

Designed to engage walkers, cyclists, and visitors of all ages, "Blackstone Story Walks" invites readers to explore both the physical landscape

surroundings with fresh eyes," said Anya Wilczynski, Interim Executive Director of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, a nonprofit providing strong leadership to preserve, promote, and celebrate the Blackstone Valley's resources since 1986.

Each writer drew inspiration from the Blackstone Valley – its landscapes, history, and symbolism. The featured works reflect a wide range of voices and themes, from Indigenous heritage and notable local figures to poetic meditations on the river and the pathways it shapes. Every piece offers a unique and thought-provoking

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