

The Yankee *Xpress*

SOUTH EDITION: Charlton, Dudley & Webster

November 7, 2025

Charlton Town Meeting Voters Deny Firearms in Public Building

Address Health Insurance Increase and Approve Funds to Cap Landfill

BY JANET STOICA
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Charlton's October 20 Town Meeting had approximately 300 residents in attendance with many eager to vote on Articles 10 and 12 regarding the carrying of loaded or unloaded firearms in town buildings such as schools and administrative buildings. A citizens' petition had been presented for Article 12 requesting that municipal buildings be exempt from the firearms prohibition as follows: Exempt Municipal Buildings as Prohibited Areas Pursuant to Section 124 of Chapter 135 of the Acts of 2024. To see if the Town will vote to exempt Town municipal administrative buildings and property from being defined as a "prohibited area" for the possession of a firearm, loaded or unloaded, as defined in section 121 of Chapter 140, under the provisions of Section 124 of Chapter 135 of the Acts of 2024, as outlined in G.L. c. 269, Section 10. Or take any other action relative thereto. The article was defeated with a tally of 126 voting "no" to the exemption and 101 voting "yes." The Selectboard also sponsored Article 10 that

stated: To see if the Town will vote pursuant to M.G.L. Chapter 4, Section 4, to exempt Town administrative buildings or offices from being classified as a "prohibited area" for the possession of firearms as outlined in G.L. c. 269, Section 10(k)(2)(i); or take any action relative thereto or thereon. This article was also voted down thereby prohibiting firearm possession in town buildings by a vote of 137 to 133. According to Town Administrator Andrew Golas, "there was much impassioned discussion on both sides of the issue."

In other business, voters did not pass an article to transfer \$1.7 million of stabilization funds to the town operational budget. In May the original projection was for \$800,000 but the current number was closer to \$5 million including the school budget. Town Administrator Golas stated that the town is still in a healthy position for its current budget but the transfer was to assist in bolstering future needs. "Health care costs have risen dramatically," he said, "in May we were given a 20% cost increase projection but then in October were provided an additional 20% increase. It was a \$450,000

liability that we had to account for. We are one of 72 towns in the State Insurance Trust Fund that includes health insurance premiums and medical expenses."

Voters also approved funds to go toward the Flint Road landfill-capping project. The landfill was closed years ago, but was never capped and the Mass. Dept. of Environmental Protection wanted the landfill capping to be in compliance with state law. Four years ago, voters approved funding of an additional \$500,000 for the capping. After awaiting Board of Health approvals, the project ran into PFAS contamination issues necessitating further testing and compliance. PFAS, otherwise known as "forever chemicals," or per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances, are a group of man-made chemicals used for decades to make products resistant to water, heat, and stains. They are human-made chemicals that can build up in the environment and in people's bodies. Health concerns are linked to PFAS exposure and studies show they can persist in

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Keeping Local News Alive and Communities Connected

BY JENNIFER RUSSO

For the first time in our newspaper's history, the cost of postage has surpassed the cost of printing. On average, mailing services have increased in price by over 7% in the last couple of years. While the USPS may require this operationally, it does underscore the growing financial challenges facing local journalism today. Paper, ink, fuel, and distribution costs have all risen sharply in the past year, and while we've absorbed those increases for as long as we could, we now find ourselves at a turning point.

Despite these challenges, one thing hasn't changed: our commitment to providing free, local news that keeps our communities informed and connected. Local journalism is not just about headlines — it's about people. It's about the high school team's championship win, the opening of a new family business, the celebration of a lifelong volunteer, and the coverage of town meetings, and ensuring that every story is told.

When you open your community newspaper, you read about your neighbors, your schools, and the heartbeat of your area. You're

seeing your community reflected in print - its triumphs, challenges, and spirit. Local news brings people together, fosters accountability, and preserves the stories that make each town unique. Without it, those small but powerful connections risk being lost.

Advertising revenue has always been a vital source of support for our papers, and we are deeply grateful to the local businesses that continue to support us. But as printing and mailing costs rise to historic levels, advertising alone can no longer carry the full weight of production. We recognize that our small businesses are facing similar pressures, and we would prefer not to raise advertising rates too much. Instead, we're turning to you — our readers — for help.

This November, we're launching our annual Support the Newspaper campaign. Every donation, no matter the size, helps offset the rising costs of printing and distribution, ensuring that your paper remains free, local, and delivered right to your doorstep or mailbox. Your contribution isn't

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Webster Town Meeting Barely Makes Quorum

\$1,000,000 in Grants from Healey Administration

BY JANET STOICA
jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

On Monday, October 20, the Webster October town meeting was able to meet quorum by one attendee. Needed town voters were 61 for a quorum and 62 were in attendance. There were six articles on the town warrant. Article 1 involved reports from the Finance Committee/Selectboard to act upon the two boards' recommendations. Articles 2, 3, and 4 were monetary transfers from Treasury Funds to pay unpaid bills from the Town Administrator, Sewer Dept., and Water Dept. Article 5 concerned acceptance of two parcels of land on Houghton Street located in a single-family residential zoning district, and Article 6 dealt with a \$15,000 fund transfer for replacement of aging multi-gas meters for the Fire Department. All articles were approved.

Webster Town Administrator Rick LaFond stated that the town

has been looking to hire a new Director of Planning and Economic Development. Ann Morgan, the current Director, who will be leaving her position soon, has been assisting the town until a replacement is hired.

"We haven't been successful in finding and hiring a replacement for Ms. Morgan," stated LaFond. "There's competition and our salary for this position is very competitive. We've been doing hands-on recruiting. All departments here work reasonably well, are very coordinated, and cohesive. It's a bonus to coordinate working together. The camaraderie helps planning immensely and more importantly it's the cohesiveness and the mutual trust that everyone feels towards each other. We want to ensure we hire the right personality. We're searching for someone who may not be actively looking for a new position and who would appreciate real teamwork. We're optimistic. Ann Morgan is not someone whom you

can easily replace. Her knowledge, history, and professionalism are hard to replace."

The Town Clerk and the Town Administrator's Offices will soon be swapping spaces at the town hall. The Town Clerk will soon be located on the first floor and the Town Administrative offices will migrate to the second floor to accommodate the conventional foot traffic for the Clerk's office and also to create more public meeting space for small committees and working groups in the Administrator's offices. The new first floor location of the Clerk's office will allow better handicap access and better use of space. The flooding problems of the basement offices will hopefully be addressed soon as bids to alleviate the flooding situation will be going out soon.

The Selectboard's November 10 meeting will address the Webster Police Department's consultant's staffing study. Issues will be made known to the public at that time.

Additionally, the Massachusetts

Dept. of Environmental Protection has allocated \$500,000 to assist Webster to treat PFAS in the town's drinking water. Known as "forever chemicals" because they break down very slowly, PFAS are the toxic man-made, per- and polyfluoroalkyl chemicals. These poisonous chemicals are found in such products as Teflon and Scotchgard and have been in use since World War II. The Webster grant will greatly assist the town with funding for its PFAS filtration plant currently under construction.

Webster has also received notification of another \$500,000 grant from the Governor Healey-Driscoll Administration. This grant will assist with funding for Main Street, South Main Street, and North Main Street infrastructure projects such as road reconstruction and safety while improving pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access between proposed developments and existing businesses throughout the area.

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food, drinking water, consumer products, and wildlife which has led to concerns about potential health impacts, including increased risks for certain cancers, liver disease, immune system dysfunction, and altered metabolism. They do not break down easily in the environment. They have been used in a wide range of consumer and industrial products including non-stick (Teflon) cookware, stain-resistant carpets and furniture, water-resistant clothing, and certain food packaging. They have also been used in firefighting clothing and firefighting foams. After monitoring reports were submitted to the Mass. DEP, it was determined that capping can now go forward.

For a complete list of Town Meeting articles voted on, please visit the town website www.townofcharlton.net

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Save “Caturday,” Nov. 29 for the Community Cat Connection

BY JANET STOICA
jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

You’ll never find another love like that of a cat. They might appear to be finicky or self-centered but wait a minute. You are their world, their entire universe. They can’t wait to see you when you get home. They are the best love bugs you could ever hope to meet. Such soft cuddly creatures. They don’t need to be walked outdoors, they don’t need anything more than your cuddles and love and soft words of endearment. Just give them a fresh water fountain, decent food, and a clean litter box and you’ve got a friend for life, guaranteed.

Webster’s Community Cat Connection (CCC) is THE place to be on Saturday, November 29 from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. It’s a day to Shop Small as in an annual event created by a well-known credit card company to encourage consumers to support local businesses and to boost your local economy. Shoppers can find deals and special events at local shops and businesses can use the day to attract new customers and build relationships. You will never regret establishing a great relationship with the CCC.

“We are trying to raise awareness of the CCC,” said Barbara Hassett, “we’d like people to meet all of our cats available for adoption. This is our second year of participation and 2024 was a huge success for us. It was beyond what we had hoped for. We’d like everyone to know that 100 percent of the day’s proceeds go towards caring for our cats. We gratefully accept monetary donations as well. We do have many medical bills for our kitties including spaying/neuter-



ing which is a big drain on our finances.”

“Many of them are out in foster care which entails a pregnant cat going to foster and after her babies’ weaning, they will return to the shelter. Once these little kits are ready, they will be spayed or neutered as well as vaccinated and will be returned to our shelter. These little critters are too young to fight off any viruses and this is why they are vaccinated. They are also socialized. We very much encourage visitors and potential owners to meet our tabbies first and an application is a must. If you are approved, you may adopt one of our residents.”

The CCC’s Surrender Coordinator has confirmed that the shelter has 13 kittens at the shelter currently and almost 40 with fosters waiting to come into the shelter once they are spayed/neutered and vaccinated. So far this year, the CCC has taken in

285 cats (both adults and kittens) and found homes for 201. This is a huge bump in intakes versus the last few years. In 2024 they took in 191 tabbies and adopted out 187; 2023 154 felines were taken in with 193 adopted; and in 2022 the CCC took in 201 tabbies and adopted out 186.

Their volunteer elves have been busy...lovingly creating and donating unique craft items and purr-fect gifts for all of the cat lovers on your Christmas gift list. All proceeds will go towards caring for their kitty shelter residents. Complimentary refreshments will be offered on Caturday as well as holiday cookies.

Highlights include many themed gift baskets such as family movie night treats, hand-crafted cat toys, home spa gifts, and other wonderful options, about 10

raffle baskets in all. There will be a drop-off bin if you’d like to bring in kitty treats or toys for the cats. And, as always, they sure could use Purina wet or dry cat food; cages; blankets/towels; Scoop Away Litter; cat toys; office supplies such as copy paper, postage stamps, and pens; HE laundry detergent, bleach, paper towels, trash bags, sponges, dish soap, latex gloves, band aids, and antibacterial hand sanitizer. That’s quite a list but it’s what they need and use. Please note: It’s harmful to cats to use cleaning products with “sol” in the name like Lysol and Pine-Sol....

So, come shop, meet the cats, and enjoy a holiday treat and beverage! They are so very grateful for your involvement and assistance!

The Community Cat Connection is located at 289 Thompson Rd, Webster, MA 01570. Phone: 508- 949-0779 <https://communitycatconnection.org>

COMMUNITY NEWS

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just helping to print pages — it’s helping to keep civic engagement alive, preserving our community history, and giving a platform to local voices that deserve to be heard.

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A Walk in the Douglas Woods

From Paleoindians to Puritans—a 12,000-year journey walking through New England

BY THOMAS J. MCLAUGHLIN

Thomas McLaughlin is writing a series of articles on hiking in the region.

With nearly 6,000 acres, the Douglas State Forest offers a trove of nature trails. There are more than 36 miles of trails, 7.8 miles of which is the Midstate Trail. Just 20 miles south of Worcester and 25 miles north of Providence, this forest is a hidden oasis. “Away from the lake, a different visitor experience awaits. Trails crisscross thousands of acres of rock-strewn uplands, allowing visitors to get away from crowds, explore the Forest, and reconnect with nature.” (Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR))

Longer outside trails connect to the forest (the Midstate, the Southern New England Trunkline (SNETT), Air Line State Park, Tri-State, and the North-South), but there’s also numerous shorter trails within the Douglas Woods—Coffeehouse, Cedar Swamp, Bird Blind, Rocky Brook, Chamberlain Pond, Sassafras, Ridge, Wallis Pond, Eagle Bridge, Laurel, CCC Water Hole, Schmidt, White Pine, Red Pine, and others.

Heading north on the Midstate from the Massachusetts and Rhode Island border you can enjoy more than three miles of uninterrupted wilderness before reaching Southwest Main Street, which is a minor break in the wilderness. Beyond this



you can hike almost two more miles until you reach Route 16 with a few more miles of woods after this.

The Douglas Woods are full of remnants of the past from old foundations and stone walls to random glacial erratics among the trees. It provides a nice hike along ponds and marshes, on boardwalks over streams, across rocky fields, and through serene pine groves.

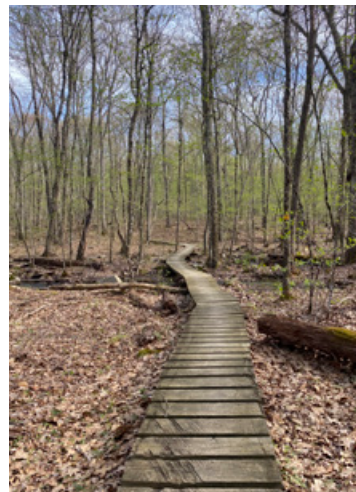
When you exit the forest and begin walking north along Northwest Main Street you’re not far from where New England’s Great Trail, the Old Connecticut Path, crosses into the Douglas Woods.

Some portions of the Old Connecticut Path are main roadways today such as Route 126 from Wayland to Framingham, near the Shopper’s World Plaza, but in Douglas it’s still a walk in the

woods. What was once a major trade and travel route for the Nipmuc and Agawam people is itself a remnant in the forest.

This path began in what is now Harvard Square in Cambridge, and it ran through Framingham, Westborough and Grafton. It continued on through Sutton, Douglas, Webster and Dudley and across Connecticut all the way to the Connecticut River.

Jason R. Newton, a retired educator, created an impressive website on this trail, “Guide to Rediscovering the Old Connecticut Path.” He has researched and written extensively about this topic. He shows portions of this ancient trail in his YouTube videos that include visits to Water’s Farm, Manchaug Pond, and the Douglas Woods. It’s worth checking out.



The Paleoindians were the first to arrive in New England thousands of years ago. These early hunters followed herds of woolly mammoths and mastadons from Siberia into North America. As the ice retreated here in Massachusetts (leaving behind glacial erratics, tills, drumlins, and kettles), vegetation grew, and herds of caribou, elk, and deer populated our region.

After the Paleoindian period ended, later groups in the Archaic and Woodlands stages populated the region.

For centuries the Nipmuc and Agawam tribes walked along the Old Connecticut Path and the Bay State Trail. They walked on trails that were likely created and worn down by deer drawn toward lakes, streams, and grazing areas.

Less than fifteen years after the Pilgrims arrived on the Mayflower in 1620, and just four years after John Winthrop, who spoke of a shining city on a hill, arrived in Boston on the Arabella in 1630, a group of ten Puritans known as the Adventurers set out in 1634, on the

Old Connecticut Path from Watertown to establish Wethersfield, CT.

The adventurers were led by John “Mad Jack” Oldham, who was banished from Plymouth Colony. Oldham’s death off of Block Island two years later led to the Pequot War.

Two years later, a second, larger group of Puritans led by Cambridge ministers, Thomas Hooker and Samuel Stone, ventured out on the Old Connecticut Path and founded Hartford, Connecticut and created the Connecticut Colony.

These groups were the first Europeans to venture into Central Massachusetts. All the English settlements were on or near the coast in the early 1630s. It would be decades before the English established settlements further inland at Lancaster, Groton, and Mendon.

Sandwiched between the adventurers and Thomas Hooker’s party was William Blaxton or Blackstone, who moved from the western wilderness of Beacon Hill to settle in Cumberland, Rhode Island in 1635. Roger Williams went on to establish Providence the following year in 1636.

William Pynchon, a trustee of the Massachusetts Bay Company and founder of Roxbury, sailed up the Connecticut River in 1635, and returned in 1636, to found Springfield, MA.

But the Old Connecticut Path offered an overland route from Boston that otherwise would have required sailing around Cape Cod on a ship, passing Rhode Island and going up the Connecticut River. This historic path went through our area and crossed through the Douglas Woods.

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Webster Water Ski Collective Honors Barbara Greene with 2025 Legacy Award

The Webster Water Ski Collective honored Barbara Greene with the 2025 Legacy Award, recognizing her lifetime of dedication, leadership, and passion for water skiing and the Webster Lake community.

said, adding that those were the days when parents would just drop off their teens at the lake. She has been a guiding force in the local water-skiing community for more than six decades.

Barbara's journey on the water



"Barbara was one of the original club members and she is still a good friend to the organization," said Ryan DesRoches, director of adaptive skiing for the Water Ski collective.

Affectionately known as the "Dock Mother" during the 1990s era of the club, Barbara would be on hand four nights a week for coaching and training, Desroches

began in 1954, when she became one of the first water skiers on Webster Lake. A lifelong resident, she quickly became a fixture in early ski shows—performing in pyramids, doubles, and solo acts with grace, strength, and showmanship that inspired generations to follow. Today the club focuses on slalom, jumps and adaptive skiing.

In the early 1990s, Barbara played a key role in reviving organized water skiing in Webster.

"She just showed us what to do, so now we turn around and try to return the favor with the next generation of water skiers," DesRoches said. She also was instrumental in raising funds to one again place a water ski jump on Webster Lake.

As a show director and board member throughout the 1990s and 2000s, she helped shape the club's identity and culture, leading with enthusiasm, creativity, and a deep love for teamwork. In DesRoches' memory, Barbara was like the tenth player on a baseball team, always there, always helping, but never claiming credit or attention.

Barbara also stands at the heart of the Greene family legacy—the first three-generation family associated with the Webster ski club. Her son Robbie, and grandchildren Randy and Chelsea, continue to carry forward the passion and dedication that Barbara instilled.

Even after stepping back from active skiing, Barbara remained ever-present—cheering from the dock, spotting from the boat, offering instruction, and mentoring young members.

A devoted historian and storyteller, Barbara also maintains a mini

ski museum at her home on Union Point, filled with vintage skis and memorabilia from the sport's earliest days on Webster Lake. Every piece tells a story, and Barbara shares them with infectious enthusiasm.

Today, she can still be found enjoying the lake she loves—boating, swimming, or even jet skiing with her grandchildren.

"Barbara's legacy is woven into the very fabric of our club," said the

Leonardo Topa, the club's president.

The 2025 Legacy Award was officially presented at the Webster Water Ski Collective's Annual Banquet on October 17, at Point Breeze in Webster.

"In a lot of ways, this award is 30 years too late," DesRoches said. "We wanted to tell Barbara we appreciate you and say thank you for everything you did."

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A scary good time was had by all at Dudley's Spooktacular!

It began when gaggles of ghosts, goblins and princesses took over the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library on October 23 for fun and photos. Dozens of costumed children and their families then paraded to Town Hall where they played games, learned fire safety, and ate hot dogs and S'mores. The Town of Dudley's annual Halloween Spooktacular was, once again, a hit with the wee ones

and, it seems, the adults had a little fun too. The costume contest winners were: Most Unique - Corpse Bride; Scariest- Little Chucky; Funniest -Jailbird and Policeman. This event hosted by the Dudley Recreation Commission wouldn't be possible without the many volunteers who dedicated their time and enthusiasm to the effort.

The Recreation Commission extends is thanks to: Thank you to: Dudley Cultural Council Dudley Recreation Commission Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library Staff Dudley Woman's Club Dudley Police and Fire Departments Boy Scout Troop 273 And all the many other town staff, volunteers and supporters, who made this event possible!



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BY LEE-ANN BARKHOUSE

AWARENESS IN ACTION: THE QUIET STRENGTH BEHIND CONNECTION

In every interaction, whether cheering from the sidelines, standing in line, or walking through town, our behavior leaves an impression. Self-awareness is the foundation of genuine connection. It's the pause that helps us notice our surroundings, choose our words with care, and respond with kindness rather than reaction.

When we take the time to understand how our tone, actions, and presence affect others, we elevate everyday moments into opportunities for respect and trust. Self-awareness builds relationships, strengthens communities, and reminds us that small courtesies often speak the loudest.

Q. At my child's weekend soccer game, I often see parents yelling at referees, coaches, and even kids. What's the right way for adults to behave at youth sports? And what should bystanders do when it happens?

A. Sports are meant to teach teamwork, perseverance, and fun, not pressure or perfection. They also give children an important chance to

learn, negotiate, and build their own skills—both on and off the field. When adults overstep, we unintentionally take those learning moments away.

The best thing parents can do is cheer for effort, not outcome. Applaud good plays on both sides, model sportsmanship, and leave coaching to the coaches.

Our children learn how to win and lose by watching us. Let the loudest thing from the stands be your support, not your criticism.

For bystanders, the most effective approach is to stay composed and redirect the energy. Yelling back rarely helps and can escalate tension. Instead, model calm enthusiasm, cheer appropriately, and if behavior crosses a line, discreetly notify a coach or event official. Sometimes the most powerful statement is your example of restraint and respect.

And remember, this isn't just for kids' sports. Good sideline behavior applies at every level—from youth games to professional sporting events. Respectful fans make the experience better for everyone: players, coaches, referees, and fellow spectators alike.

Q. Our town hosts lots of public gatherings such as concerts, parades, and farmers markets. Lately, people

seem unaware of basic courtesy. Any reminders?

A. Community events thrive when everyone shows up with courtesy and awareness. Simple acts like standing back so others can see, keeping walkways open, and saying "please" and "thank you" to volunteers make a huge difference.

If you bring chairs, coolers, or strollers, be considerate of space. Be patient, kind, and flexible. When we practice small courtesies, we strengthen the fabric of our communities.

Q. I have noticed people letting their dogs pee in main foot-traffic areas, near store entrances and sidewalks where people walk. Is that acceptable?

A. Our furry friends bring us joy, but they also come with responsibilities. Allowing a dog to relieve itself in high-traffic areas can create unpleasant surprises for others, and not everyone appreciates stepping where your dog just went. Little ones may be crawling or playing nearby too.

A kind approach is to guide your dog to a grassy or less-traveled spot away from entrances, dining areas, or storefronts.

Always carry bags or wipes, and if an accident happens, do your best to rinse or clean the area.

Being a considerate pet owner is more than following rules—it's showing respect for our shared spaces and neighbors. Those few extra steps demonstrate thoughtfulness, responsibility, and kindness in action.

Q. I was at the grocery store and received wonderful service from a young cashier. He greeted me warmly, looked me in the eye, and truly made my day. What's the best way to compliment him? I'm sure most stores hear more complaints than praise.

A. What a lovely observation, and you are absolutely right! Positive feedback can brighten someone's day and reinforce great habits. When you receive exceptional service, start by thanking the person directly. A simple "You've been so helpful—I really appreciate how kind and professional you are" goes a long way.

If possible, tell a supervisor or fill out a customer comment card or online survey mentioning the employee by name. Many stores track positive feedback for recognition or bonuses, and your words could make a meaningful difference in that young cashier's day.

Kindness multiplies when we notice it. Taking the time to acknowledge good service not only rewards the individual, it

also reminds everyone watching that courtesy and connection still matter.

ETIQUETTE TIP OF THE MONTH

Disconnect to Reconnect - Some of life's best moments happen when we're fully present—listening, laughing, and sharing time with the people who matter most. Setting aside our devices, even briefly, allows us to slow down and truly connect. Whether it's a family dinner, a walk with a friend, or a cup of coffee shared in real conversation, those simple moments of presence strengthen trust, deepen relationships, and remind others they're valued.

See you next month—and until then, keep showing up as your best self.

-Lee-Ann

Have a situation you'd like help with? Write in or email (info@investinuma.com) and your question may be featured in a future column. Let's build a kinder, more respectful world, one interaction at a time.

Lee-Ann Barkhouse is a certified etiquette and leadership coach who helps people show up with confidence, kindness, and credibility. At Invest in You (www.investinuma.com), she shares practical tools to make everyday moments more thoughtful and meaningful—whether at work, at home, or right here in the community.



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Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School has been awarded a Career Technical Initiative (CTI) Round 10 grant totaling \$1,337,077.24

Workforce development initiative supported by the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet.

This highly competitive grant will allow Bay Path to deliver no-cost, credentialed training and job placement services to unemployed and underemployed adults across Worcester County. Training will be provided in Automotive Collision Repair, Automotive Repair Technology, Building Maintenance, Culinary Arts, Diesel Technology, Electrical, HVAC, Manufacturing, and Welding—fields critical to the Commonwealth's economic growth.

"We're incredibly grateful to the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the Workforce Skills Cabinet for this CTI grant," said Superintendent-Director Kyle Brenner. "This funding allows Bay Path to significantly expand our adult training programs, directly addressing the critical demand for skilled tradespeople in our region. We're proud to empower individuals with the skills they need to thrive, while helping build a stronger, more resilient workforce across Massachusetts."

The Career Technical Initiative is designed to meet persistent workforce shortages in the trades and manufacturing sectors by leveraging the state's vocational school infrastructure. Bay Path will continue its close collaboration with MassHire Career Centers and regional Workforce Boards to provide high-quality training leading to industry-recognized credentials and direct employment pathways.

Eligible participants must be 18 years or older and either unemployed or underemployed—defined as earning less than \$56,100 annually (or \$27 per hour). Most recent high school graduates qualify as underemployed and are encouraged to apply.

Bay Path is building on a record of success. Through previous CTI Rounds 7 and 9, the school trained over 70 adult learners in trades such as Culinary Arts, HVAC, Manufacturing, and Automotive Collision Repair—many of whom are now

working in their chosen industries.

Pamela Truenow, CTI Auto Collision class of 2025 and now employed at Long Subaru said, "As a graduate of the CTI Program, I am excited for the new group of students that will be able to take advantage of the hands-on vocational training. This program will provide them the skills and tools needed to acquire jobs and improve their lives. I am working in the auto collision field and am planning on more education to better my current position and enhance my career. The support that Bay Path and MassHire provided throughout the program and after with job assistance was key!"

Bay Path's CTI employer partners include: Masonic Health System/The Overlook, ckSmith Superior, C&C Temp Control, Inc., Kinefac Corporation, Upper Blackstone Clean Water, Dexter, MassDOT, Sheet Metal Workers Local #63, BAPS, The Arc, Primetals, HVAC/R Service Contractors, Table 3 Restaurant

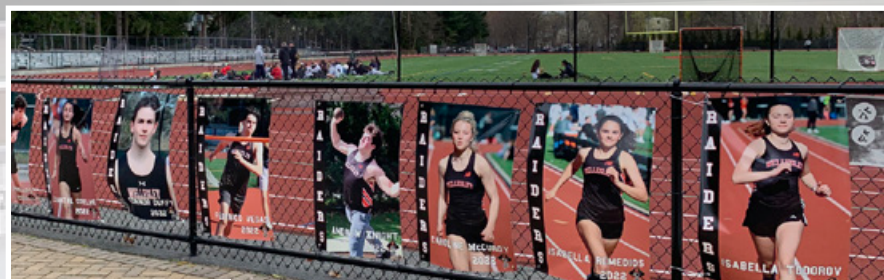
Group, Fuller Collision Center, Long Subaru, Harr Motor Group, UMass, and Flexcon.

Interested participants can

learn more or apply by visiting masshirecentralcc.com/baypathcti/h

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SPORTS

History Making Season at Bay Path

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

After the Massachusetts Athletic Association (MIAA) decided to move leagues around Bay Path found themselves playing in the newly formed Central Mass. Athletic Conference (CMAC) with a bunch of teams that they had never seen before. Not only were the Minutemen going to take on teams that they had never met in competition, they also had a new coach taking over the varsity program.

Mike White, last year's junior varsity golf coach, was tapped to take over varsity duties this fall, and he wasn't setting his expectations all that high.

"Upon taking over, I was just hoping that I could get the players to be better than they were last year," White said. "I really wanted them to get on the course and enjoy themselves, while having fun and they certainly did that."

Bay Path went out, during their first year in the CMAC, and recorded an overall record of 15-4 – the best ever in school history. The Minutemen golfers would enter the CMAC Tournament at the end of the year and capture a second-place finish. Unfortunately, in the Districts where the golf team made their first ever appearance, the team didn't do all that well and their season came to an end.

"Next year we will definitely do better in the Districts and hopefully get to the States, now that



they have seen the big boys play and are willing to work harder in the off-season to make that happen," the coach said. "They will also be used to playing on the (district) course that they were unfamiliar with this season."

Leading the way on the links throughout the year was sophomore Tyler Friend. The second-year golfer for Bay Path shot an average of 38.7 on the links and was a lot better than the new coach thought that he'd be. Friend moved up into the num-

ber one spot this fall after finding himself teeing off a lot lower last year. White also noted that Friend is not that big of a kid but can hit the ball a good distance from the tee.

The number two golfer during the historic season was junior Ely Gemboiski, who averaged a 40.9 on the season. While Gemboiski improved his golf game this fall, the coach mentioned that he gets a little nervous on the course at times.

"We need to work on his

nervousness, but we should have it solved by the time the season rolls around next year," White said. "Ely helped us with a couple of wins this year with his scores and as a senior next year should help us more."

Rounding out the top four players are brothers Ayden (a senior) and Owen (a junior) Kennedy. The two brothers are somewhat similar when it comes to scoring, both shoot in the 43 range, but other than that they are quite different on the course.

"The go back and forth playing three and four," the coach said. "Once they tee off, they are both different golfers. Ayden is more serious while Owen seems to have more fun; he's a free-spirited golfer."

In addition to the top four, senior Luke Heller also was part of the successful season as was up and coming sophomore Andrew Lashua, who according to the coach can hit the ball some 270 yards and straight.

While Bay Path will be saying goodbye to a couple of seniors from this year's historic season, White will have the majority of his team back next fall and he is looking forward to even more improvements.

"One of the biggest things that I want to do next year is get in more practices so that we can work on fundamentals of their swings, while getting them on the course a week earlier," he said. "This year we had too many matches (Bay Path played in 22 games) over a five-week period – that is way too much and didn't allow us to practice."

With the fact that he wants to get the kids on the course earlier while cutting back on their games so they can practice more, who knows what the Bay Path golfers will be able to accomplish next fall. The team would definitely like another shot at the Districts, where they faltered this season, and are hoping to make an inaugural trip to the State Tournament, making more history for the program.

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TALES FROM BEYOND

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Sprague Mansion

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

Cranston's Sprague Mansion remains as one of the most haunted houses in the state of Rhode Island. Many tragedies have unfolded in this 18th century homestead. These tragedies have left psychic scars in the passing of time that still resonate in the former estate of the prominent, yet tragic family.

William Sprague built the manor in 1790. His various mills and bleachery amassed quite a fortune for his family. Sprague met with an unfortunate demise during dinner one evening when a fish bone became lodged in his throat. Doctors tried desperately to remove the bone but he died during the surgery. His son William went on to become a United States Senator while his other son, Amasa tended to the family business. Amasa turned an even larger fortune from the business he inherited.

A long running feud between the Sprague family and the Gordon clan, who wanted to put a pub next to one of the Sprague mills would later end in tragedy.

The Sprague family feared it would become a problem with work attendance at the mill. The idea was shot down by the town council. On December 31, 1843, Amasa Sprague was found brutally beaten and shot to death near his home. John Gordon was hanged for the murder, but Gordon's brother later confessed to the crime. This case caused the Rhode Island government to rescind the death penalty.

Amasa was laid out in the living room of the great estate and buried at Swan Point Cemetery where the massive Sprague memorial sits. His original stone is on display at the mansion. The family fortune dwindled during the post Civil War depression and the mansion was eventually sold. In 1966 the Cranston Historical Society obtained the property and restored it as a public building for tours and functions.

The first ghostly activity began around 1925 when an apparition was seen on the staircase. Since that time, there have been numerous sightings of the ghost descending the steps of the 28-room mansion. The mansion

has a number of ghosts roaming its corridors. Along with the wraith on the stairs, witnesses have reported seeing the ghost of Lucy Chase Sprague who lost a large portion of the family fortune. Other ghosts could be the spirits of William Sprague II who founded the empire and left this world so unexpectedly. Some even claim to see the son of Civil War Governor William Sprague IV who committed suicide in the house in 1890.

Paranormal research groups have conducted investigations on the property for years. Some claim to have witnessed wraiths reflecting in the glass of a hutch in the ballroom. As one group stood in the room, three separate times the image of a man passed by the glass. According to data collected at the house, the place is extremely active with all kinds of paranormal activity. Scores of photographs have been taken allegedly revealing ghosts or paranormal activity in many of the rooms. One photo even shows the figure of the ghostly woman ascending the famed staircase. Another has im-

ages in the ballroom of a lady in what appears to be a long white Victorian dress. Other photos are of misty or wispy white figures human in form but not recognizable enough to say whose form it might have been. EVP recordings (Electronic Voice Phenomenon) in the house concluded that the living room, ballroom, wine cellar, doll room, and a spare room seem to be active with spirit activity. Even the gift shop is occupied by a spirit whose footsteps are heard wandering through the room.

Many visitors through the years have met the ghosts of the Sprague mansion. Guests and

caretakers alike have stories of covers being pulled off beds or objects moving without visible hands to guide them. The ghost of a little girl and a dog were seen in one of the bedrooms. There is a room full of dolls that seem to follow your every move while passing by. Visitors have claimed that they heard voices coming from that particular room. Contact the Cranston Historical Society to arrange a tour and perhaps you may see one of the Sprague family as well. (401) 944-9226

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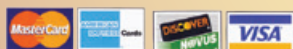
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When Luke has Something Important to Say

A dog owner discovers that listening to her pet's instincts can teach her a thing or two about trust, intuition, and joy.

BY AMY LECLAIRE

Luke's language is silent yet expressive. He tells me all I need to know with dark, honest eyes and a subtle tilt of his head. Over time, I've grown fluent in this quiet dialogue, as one might grow attuned to a favorite song—the rhythm, the pauses, the spaces where meaning hides between notes.

"Let's go for a walk, Luke," I tell him, looping the leash. "You can pick the way."

He doesn't move. Instead, he anchors himself to the front step, bracing against my tug. His face folds in protest. I can't help but smile. He looks like a furry Eskimo—steadfast, resolute, unwilling to compromise his point of view. I don't want to walk. Frisbee is more fun.

I stop, considering his pro-

posal. "You'd rather stay home, Luke?" His head tilts, eyes bright, as though to say, You truly do understand me. Yes! Let's stay here and play! His conviction makes me wonder if he's part human.

"Go get the frisbee, Luke!"

His sprint—smooth, elastic, athletic—tells me otherwise. He zigzags through the yard with the focus of a bloodhound, then gallops back, triumphant. The soft disc dangles loosely from his teeth, teasing me to grab it. But I've learned my lesson.

The frisbee is looped around his two front canines in a remarkably strong hold. I could pry open his mouth and free it, but why resort to barbarism when Luke is cognitively advanced?

"Luke, do I need to get the beeper?"

The word barely escapes my tongue before he drops the frisbee at my feet. That he associates the word "beeper" with its imagined sound—and adjusts his behavior accordingly—makes me

ridiculously proud.

Fine, he seems to say. Have at it.

Until he humbles me again. I'm about to launch the frisbee—graceful as a magician freeing a dove—when Luke charges me like a linebacker. "Luke, please!" I lose balance, the frisbee veering off-course and disappearing into a Rose of Sharon bush.

"What are we going to do now?" I fret.

Luke, oblivious, sniffs the ground. Where's the frisbee? What happened?

Upon seeing me lost in the shrub's arms, he connects the dots. Watch out, Mom! I'll rescue it! He noses in and out of dense branches, bobbing his head as if determination alone might free the disc. Meanwhile, I devise a more creative plan.

I aim the garden hose at the hostage frisbee. A steady stream loosens its grip until it trembles. Luke, now fully involved, invades my space and barks—head lifted high—DROP IT. DROP IT. DROP IT. The frisbee obeys, falling just in time for Alligator Luke to snatch it up.

He takes off across the grass—a streak of muscle and light, tail whisking the air behind him. For a moment, I swear he's advertising joy itself: an emblem of what it means to be healthy, happy, and wholly alive.

Luke's insistence that frisbee is more fun than a walk seems perfectly reasonable. Note to self: Listen to Luke. Take him seriously. He knows how to be happy.

But what about when Luke's body language conveys something darker—something protective, even foreboding? Is it possible for a dog to sense a bad vibe? I'm convinced it is, and that we should take heed.

We had just settled into our usual spot at the local bookstore. Luke, tied to the round table on a short leash, relaxed at my feet as I worked, waiting for his share of blueberry scone. The routine had long been smooth and predictable. I'd write, he'd charm visitors and accept gentle pats with regal calm.

"Your dog is so calm!"

"What's his name?"

"Can my daughter pet him?"

"Look, honey—he's so soft."

Sometimes, between greetings, Luke would nap beside me like a lion, utterly at peace. But not today.

"Grrr."

He lifted his nose to the air, a



low grumble rising from his chest.

"What's the matter, Luke?" I asked, scanning the room. A baby sat in a carriage nearby. I stroked his head. "It's okay, Luke."

He wasn't convinced. Another growl followed, sharper this time, building into a coyote-like howl—"Ahroo! Woo, woo!"—and ending as suddenly as it began. I returned to work, though he remained upright, alert.

Moments later, a man appeared from behind a bookshelf like a troll emerging from a stony fortress.

"I cannot believe you have your dog here."

The contempt in his voice was thick with anger. His eyes, black and unblinking, locked on mine.

The air turned cold. I'd never encountered such hostility in a lifetime of dog parenting.

"Excuse me? I've been here about sixteen times," I replied, voice measured but firm. "My dog is on a short leash. He barked. Dogs do that occasionally."

Two wrongs don't make a right, I reminded myself (on sarcasm). Still, my steadiness must have lit a spark in his already smoking temper.

"It's a f---ing bookstore. It's for humans."

The curse word hung between us like a hard menthol cough drop—sharp, bitter, lingering. Luke sat at

my side, panting calmly. He knew.

"Go report your story to management," I said. "And please, be kind."

My faith in humanity proved to be as strong as Luke's sixth sense. The manager—fair, calm, and diplomatic—listened to both sides. "I see no reason for you to leave," he said, restoring a small but powerful balance to the moment.

Relief swept through me. Luke, ever intuitive, sensed the shift and leaned into my leg.

Our happy ending got even happier. A follow-up conversation with the area supervisor confirmed that the man's behavior would be addressed—and that Luke would always be welcome back.

Now, each time we return to the bookstore, Luke trots through the door with quiet confidence, ready to resume his post by my chair. He settles beside me as I write, as though nothing ever happened—even though we both learned something important.

Luke reminds me, with every steady breath at my feet, that calm can be contagious, kindness still counts, and sometimes the best way to listen is simply to trust.

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REAL ESTATE

New home inspection law in Massachusetts, what is it?

What home buyers and sellers need to know

Massachusetts has implemented a new law that significantly changes how home inspections are handled in real estate transactions. The law takes effect October 15, 2025 and applies to transactions entered into on or after October 15, 2025.



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

There are two very significant changes that this law brings moving forward: First, buyers are given the right to conduct a home inspection if they choose. However, once under agreement, the buyer may choose not to conduct a home inspection. Second, sellers (and their agent) are required to provide buyers with a new disclosure form which details the rights and obligations of each party.

This law, part of the Affordable Homes Act, a statute passed in August 2024, aims to protect buyers' rights to conduct home inspections and introduces specific restrictions on how offers involving inspection waivers can be made and not made. The law is intended to prevent the seller or their agent from putting pressure on buyers to waive an inspection as part of the home purchase process. After several delays in late 2024 and early 2025, the final regulations were published by Governor Healey's Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities in June 2025. The regulations (760 CMR 74) provide the details on how the law will operate.

The law applies to purchase agreements dated after October 15, 2025, and only on the sale of residential buildings with one to four units, condominium units, and co-op shares tied to residential occupancy. First, sellers or their agent cannot state that they will only accept offers from buyers who agree to waive, limit, or forego a home inspection. As an example, this means that a seller cannot counter a buyer's offer with a provision that would remove the buyer's contractual right to conduct a home inspection. Second, sellers cannot accept an offer that waives the home inspection. During negotiations, a buyer (and their agent)

should not convey any intent to waive a home inspection. As a consequence of limitation being placed on sellers, buyers can no longer make their offer more attractive by indicating their intent to waive an inspection in advance of acceptance. Third, there is a new disclosure form requirement. Sellers or their agents will be required to provide the disclosure form to buyers and the form must be signed by the buyer and seller on or before the date of signing the first written purchase agreement. For most of Massachusetts, the first purchase agreement is the "Offer to Purchase" or "Contract to Purchase", although in some parts of the state, the first purchase agreement is the "Purchase and Sale Agreement." Regardless of what agreement is used, the new disclosure form must be signed at or prior to signing the purchase agreement.

The form confirms several things: seller represents and warrants that the purchase agreement is not contingent on the waiver or limitation of the buyer's choice to have a home inspection. A seller's acknowledgement that the buyer may have the property inspected by a licensed home inspector of the buyer's choice. A notice that the seller will provide the buyer with a "reasonable" period after entering into the purchase agreement to decide whether to proceed with the transaction.

What About Negotiations? The regulations state that the parties cannot include a provision in the purchase agreement that would "Render a Home Inspection Meaningless." This means that the parties cannot agree on an unreasonable limit on the buyer's ability to schedule, receive, or review a home inspection. It also means that the agreement cannot prevent the buyer from choosing not to proceed with the deal if the buyer is unsatisfied with the results of the home inspection. As an example, the parties cannot agree that the buyer has just 12 hours from signing the purchase agreement to complete a home inspection and review the results. This provision would likely "render a home inspection meaningless" because it's highly unlikely the buyer could schedule a home inspection in that time frame and review the results.

But the regulations do allow for negotiations around two specific areas: First, it is permissible to

agree to limit a buyer's choice not to proceed with the transaction if the aggregate estimated cost of repairs exceeds a reasonable threshold to be negotiated by the parties. Second, the parties can agree to reasonably limit a buyer's deposit refund if the buyer chooses not to proceed after the home inspection. While these areas are negotiable, they call for the agreement to be "reasonable." There is no single definition of "reasonable." It is used as a flexible standard and dependent on the totality of the facts and circumstances in the transaction.

There are however exemptions. For this complete list, reach out to a member of the Marzeotti Group or your trusted real estate professional.

Penalties for Non-Compliance. Failure to comply comes with harsh penalties. For sellers, a violation may be used as evidence of an intent to misrepresent or conceal a material fact about the home. For agents, a violation may be considered an unfair or deceptive business practice under Massachusetts consumer protection laws (Chapter 93A).

This law is designed to create a more level playing field for home buyers by ensuring all buyers have a fair opportunity to inspect a property. However, it removes the ability of the buyer and seller to negotiate around certain areas and introduces significant changes to how offers are structured and what can be communicated before acceptance.

For more information on this topic, please reach out to the Marzeotti Group or your trusted real estate professional.

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THE CAR DOCTOR

jpaul@aanortheast.com

Car Design Inspo Comes From Everywhere

Q. An observation and a question about car styling. I saw a 2025 Hyundai Sonata, and it reminded me of the 1958 Packard Hawk's front grille. Do you think the designer saw the 1958 Hawk at a car show?

A. Designers take inspiration from many places. I remember talking to Ford's head of design J. Mays at the time, and he told me he would walk around Target and get inspiration for design and color in the housewares section. Another designer told me he was struggling with a fender shape and found the exact

curve in a vintage Electrolux vacuum cleaner. So could a Hyundai designer see a design in a Packard, it is certainly possible. There is an expression "that everything old is new again."

Q. I own a 2022 Volkswagen Atlas with 65,000 miles on it. Recently the air conditioning on the two driver side vents started blowing warm air after 15-20 minutes of driving. The passenger side was cold and worked perfectly. The dealership was not able to locate the problem, any suggestions?

A. The dealer should be the best source of repair since they have the best technical information. Looking at the theory and operation of the system there are a left and right air motor/doors. It is possible the left motor has failed or is getting a poor command. The other issue I have not seen in Volkswagen but was common in Honda vehicles was, if the system was low on refrigerant the passenger side vent would blow warm air. So, it gets down to the basics, drive the car until it malfunctions, take a reading of pressures and look for fault codes and manually operate the blend doors with a scan tool. The issue may be a faulty door motor, but testing needs to be performed.

Q. I am looking for a new car. I have owned two Hyundai Tucson SUVs over the last decade or so. But I am looking for something a little smaller. I will be 75 next year and do not expect to do any heavy driving. But I do go kayaking and bicycling in the summer, so I need something to haul the equipment. I am looking

primarily at the Subaru Crosstrek, Hyundai Kona, Mazda CX30 and Buick Encore GX in that order. I would appreciate your thoughts on these or any other suggestions you can make.

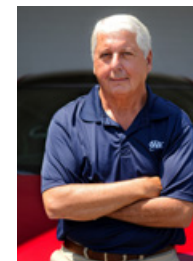
A. I would also look in the same order you have listed. I would add the Kia Soul to the mix. Although the Kia Soul lacks all-wheel drive that the Subaru has, it is roomy, rides well and has good and not overcomplicated tech/safety features.

Q. Upon leaving my house today, I saw my neighbor come home and after I arrived back home, I happened to notice the car still running - it is quiet, so I noticed the dashboard.

It is a VW Jetta, so besides the lost gas, anything else that could have potentially happened, or damage done? The car was running for about three hours and only gets driven about once per week.

A. Today's cars can run for a very long time without any damage, providing they are well maintained. Still if this were my Volkswagen Jetta, I would have the oil changed. Heat and unburned fuel can cause oil to break down. Fresh oil and a check of fluids are all that is necessary. The good news is some new cars will limit engine run time to an hour if the computer senses the driver has left the vehicle. Recently I have noticed in some new cars, if you get out of the car with the engine running it shuts off in about an hour.

Q. My grandson purchased a 2013 Volkswagen Passat 2.5 liter 5-cylinder engine with 57,000 miles. It is a beautiful car, except that it overheats when driven above 60 mph,



BY JOHN PAUL

local driving is fine. We brought it to a very reliable local shop who replaced the thermostat, flushed the cooling system (that was extremely dirty), performed a block check and checked the cooling fan operation which worked as designed. Any suggestions to resolve this issue. Possibly replace the radiator.

A. As I was reading your email, the first item that came to mind was a leaking cylinder head gasket. Driving on the highway with a leaking head gasket can cause the cooling system to get bound up with air and overheat. Since the system was checked for internal leaks, the next step would be the radiator. Since the coolant was badly contaminated it is possible the radiator is partially clogged. A non-contact thermometer or thermal imaging camera can easily find cold spots in the radiator. On a higher mileage engine I would suspect the water pump, but with low mileage that is unlikely. Based on your description I would replace the radiator. As a general rule, the 2.5 liter 5-cylinder engine is usually quite robust and with proper care can last 200-300,000 miles.

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TIPS ON FINANCIAL PLANNING

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The real meaning of diversification in investing

In the world of investing, we've all heard the phrase, "Don't put all your eggs in one basket." It's solid advice that emphasizes the importance of diversifying your



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

investments. Unfortunately, some people misinterpret this wisdom to mean they should avoid consolidating their investment accounts and

keep their money spread across multiple financial institutions, often working with several different financial advisors.

However, when financial professionals talk about diversification, they're referring to diversifying your investment assets, not your accounts. There's a big difference between the two and confusing them could hurt your financial future.

Scattered accounts may affect costs, paperwork and advice. When your assets are spread among multiple financial institutions, you could face several drawbacks. First, you're likely paying more in fees than necessary. Multiple providers often mean multiple account fees, transaction costs and mutual fund expenses that can add up quickly. Generally, the more assets you have with one financial provider, the more opportunities you have for reducing or eliminating these costs.

Managing scattered accounts also could create a paperwork nightmare. You'll receive multiple monthly statements and numerous tax forms, making it much harder to see the big picture of your financial health. This complexity can lead to missed opportunities and poor decision-making.

Perhaps most important, working with multiple financial advisors may result in conflicting advice and duplicated investment strategies. Without a comprehensive view of

your entire portfolio, each financial advisor may recommend investments that don't work well together, potentially delaying your progress toward reaching financial goals.

There's strength in consolidation. Consolidating your accounts with a single financial advisor offers numerous benefits. You'll have opportunities to develop a closer, more comprehensive relationship with someone who understands your complete financial picture. This financial advisor can provide informed guidance and help eliminate the conflicting advice that may come from working with multiple professionals.

Consolidation also makes it easier to implement a well-diversified portfolio that fits your level of risk tolerance. When all your investments are in one place, you can see exactly how your assets are allocated and make strategic adjustments as needed. It becomes simpler to gauge aggregate investment returns, assess your portfolio assets and rebalance when necessary.

For retirement planning, consolidation can be especially valuable. IRAs at different providers can be consolidated at any time without tax consequences when assets are transferred directly between providers. When you retire, your 401(k) can typically be rolled over into an IRA, streamlining your retirement income strategy.

True diversification still matters. While consolidating accounts makes sense, diversifying your actual investments remains crucial. A good financial advisor will help you carefully build a balanced mix of stocks and bonds appropriate for your age and goals. As you approach retirement, this typically means shifting toward a more balanced portfolio that still provides growth to combat inflation while offering stability and income.

Diversification goes beyond just stocks and bonds. Take bonds, for instance: You can diversify by bond type (municipal, corporate and gov-

ernment), bond maturity (through a strategy called "laddering") and bond sector to spread risk across different parts of the economy.

How to get started. If your retirement savings and investment accounts are scattered among various financial institutions, consider consolidating everything with one trusted financial advisor. The streamlined record-keeping, potential for reduced fees and comprehensive financial guidance can help improve your wealth-building potential while making your financial life simpler to manage.

Dennis Antonopoulos
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508-832-5385
Dennis.Antonopoulos@edwardjones.com

THIS ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN BY EDWARD JONES FOR USE BY YOUR LOCAL EDWARD JONES FINANCIAL ADVISOR

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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.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

• Then Grafton Land Trust will hold its annual dinner meeting at 6 p.m. at the Highfields Golf Club in Grafton. This year's speaker will be Dr. Stephen Mrozowski, the founding director of the Andrew Fiske Memorial Center for Archeological Research at University of Massachusetts Boston.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9

• A Polka Dance featuring Dennis Polisky & Maestro's Men will be held from 1-5 p.m. at the Uxbridge Polish American Social Civil Club, 217 Mendon Street, Uxbridge. Plenty of seating and room for dancing. Full bar, food and raffle tickets will be available for purchase. \$15 admission. For more information, call 508-278-7583.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

• Charlotte Wilson will share fascinating facts about Sutton's citizenry during Revolutionary days at 7 p.m. in the first Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, Sutton. Courtesy of the Sutton Historical Society.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14;
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15**

• Vaillancourt Christkindlesmarkt & Artisan Show: Friday, November 14, 2025 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.; Saturday, November 15, 2025 11 a.m. – 7 p.m.
Celebrate the start of the season with a traditional German Christmas Market in the quintessential New England town of Sutton! This event is rain, snow, or shine. All ticket sales are final and cannot be changed once purchased. Valfa.com/calendar/kris
Yuletide Wine Garden Nov. 28 10 am. – 4 p.m. Nov. 29; Nov. 30; Dec. 6; Dec. 7; Dec. 13; Dec. 14; Dec. 20; Dec. 21

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16

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

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21

• Annual Church Turkey Raffle at C.F. Minney VFW Post at 16 South Main Street, Millbury. First prize: \$500 cash. Second prize: \$250 Amazon gift card. Third prize: Case of assorted wines. Fourth prize: Thanksgiving dinner basket with turkey. Also, many items

HAPPENINGS!

continued on page 15

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Do you have a talent for engaging writing that informs and inspires? We are looking for a local interested in telling stories important to the area. If so, Our Town Publishing wants you to join our team of dedicated journalists. If interested, please submit writing samples to proy@yankeeshopper.net

November Happenings at the Dudley Senior Center

Nov. 12: Brown Bag Lunch at noon with a choice of turkey breast or chicken salad with cranberries. The cost is \$4 per person. Please RSVP with the sandwich selection and condiments by calling 508-949-8015 or sign up in the Dudley Senior Center.
Nov. 13: Blood Pressure Clinic starting at 11 a.m. Please stop by and have your blood pressure checked.
Nov. 20: Memory Café from noon – 2 p.m. Fan favorite Franny Mik will provide entertainment. Assorted sandwiches will be served with homemade chicken tortellini soup and brownie sundae. The cost for this event is \$5 per person. Please RSVP by calling 508-949-8015 or sign up in the Dudley

Senior Center.
Nov. 26: Potluck Lunch at noon serving meatloaf, mashed potatoes, gravy, peas, carrots and dessert. The cost for this event is \$5 per person. Please RSVP by calling 508-949-8015 or sign up in the Dudley Senior Center.
Monthly Activities at Dudley Senior Center:
Tuesdays at 1 p.m. – Pitch League
Wednesday at 11:30 a.m. – The Dudley Senior Center Knitters
Monday and Thursday - Tri Valley lunches served.
The Senior Center will be closed Tuesday, Nov. 11 (Veterans Day) and Thursday, Nov. 27 (Thanksgiving Day).

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ALTER EGO December 5
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Dudley and Webster to Hold Veterans Day Parade on Tuesday, Nov. 11

We will be holding our twentieth annual Veterans Day Parade on Tuesday, November 11, 2025. We invite everyone to attend a brief ceremonial tribute at The Memorial Monument, honoring our local veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country in World War II. This monument is located at the Webster Lake entryway off Thompson Road, and the ceremony will begin promptly at 9:45 a.m. We will also place a wreath at the Women's Veterans' Monument during this tribute.

After the memorial tribute, all marching veterans should meet with their respective colors/weapons in the St. Louis School Yard Parking Area, located next to the gymnasium at the bottom of the entryway by 10:15 a.m. Transportation by bus will depart at approximately 10:30 a.m. to the Municipal Complex in Dudley.

Upon arriving in Dudley, we will gather at the Veterans' Court of Honor. The ceremonies will begin promptly at 11 a.m. Our Chaplain will lead us in prayer, which will be followed by a three-shot volley performed by the weapon detail and the playing of Taps. After that, our guest speaker, Colonel Arvid Hill of the U.S. Army, will deliver a brief ceremonial message. After the conclusion of the Dudley ceremony, we will march in procession from the Dudley Municipal Complex to the

Webster Veterans' Court of Honor for a similar presentation, including a Chaplain's prayer, a three-shot volley, and Taps. The ceremonies are expected to conclude at approximately 12:45 p.m.



- Webster/Dudley Veterans Council
- VFW
- American Legion
- PAV
- DAV

- All Ladies Auxiliary Units
- Sons of the American Legion
- Participating Scouting Organizations

Please note that all former military veterans are welcome to join us and are encouraged to march. Those planning to march should meet at the Dudley Municipal Complex at 10:45 a.m. Three vehicles will be available for riding veterans. Those who plan to ride must also meet at the Dudley Complex at 10:45 a.m.

Marchers behind vehicles should maintain a distance of 30 feet from cars, Ladies Auxiliary Units, and all participating Scouting Organizations. One vehicle will be available at the end of the parade for anyone

who may have difficulty marching.

Our host for refreshments this year will be the Polish American Veterans (PAV) on Ray St. in Webster. All participants are invited to attend immediately following the event.

Let us remember that we are honoring all those who are serving and those who have served this great nation. We appreciate every-

one's involvement in making this day memorable.

This invitation is extended to veterans and the public by: Andrew Kozlowski, U.S. Air Force

Chairman of the Veterans Day Parade and Master of Ceremonies

Guest Speaker: Colonel Arvid Hill, United States Army

Co-Chairs:

- Stephen Rogerson, U.S. Army
- Richard Holewa, U.S. Navy
- Victor Jankowski, U.S. Army
- Ronald Prest, U.S. Navy
- Randolph Snow, U.S. Army
- Joseph Sendrowski, U.S. Navy

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HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 14

will be on view to be raffled off during the evening.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6

• 9:30 a.m., Waters Farm Preservation, Sutton. Breakfast with Santa, sponsored by Sen. Ryan Fattman and Stephanie. Breakfast, photos, crafts. Free but reservations are required. <https://bit.ly/breakfastwith-santatickets>

• 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., various locations, Sutton. Sutton Chain of Lights. Celebrate Christmas in historic Sutton with businesses, churches and organizations in town for the annual Christmas and holiday season celebration. Hop on a free trolley for rides to more than three dozen locations to do shopping, enjoy delicious food, kids' activities and animals. The Sutton High School Band plays traditional carols and

Christmas tunes at 5 p.m. on the Town Common and Santa Claus comes by to light the Town Christmas tree.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10

• "The Fright Before Christmas" with author and television personality Jeff Belanger sharing stories of ghoulies, ghosts, and things that go bump in the night during this darkest time of year. Be delightfully frightened during this multi-media program. Caution: this program is not for young children. Register. Millbury Library.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 13

• The 2025 Jingle Jaunt 5K will take place on December 13 at 10:30 a.m. It takes place at the First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Rd. Sutton. Info and entry forms at howie189@verizon.net or fccs@sutton-firstchurch.net. Registration: \$23 race day packet pick up. Wear some bells!

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November 7 - A Night with Zeppelin
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November 14 - No Band
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November 21 - Nostalgica

November 28 - Fender Road

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