

# The Yankee Xpress

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July 9-August 13, 2021

## O'Connor Insurance is on the move with new offices and a second-generation vision

By Barbara Van Reed

O'Connor & Co. Insurance Agency moved its headquarters from Dudley to Webster last month, one of several changes the company has made in the last year.

Another is that Ryan O'Connor is now heading up the agency that his parents Dan and Karen O'Connor established in 1990.

Dan had a degree in economics from Westfield State and experience as an insurance agent, while Karen had been a real estate appraiser with a psychology background, making for a strong basis to set up the O'Connor & Co. Insurance Agency.

Now, three decades later, Dan and Karen are still actively serving their

insurance clients, working remotely, while son Ryan manages the physical office at 135 Thompson Road. Dan and Karen remain the agency's principals.

Ryan explains that the transition has been a natural for him. "I've been coming to the office with my parents since I was 4 or 5 years old; I grew up in the world of insurance."

He seems confident, ready to manage the future of the O'Connor agency, which includes a deliberate expansion. The company last year acquired the Burnham and Nale Insurance Agency in Southbridge. In addition to Massachusetts, O'Connor

Continued on page 2



Pictured at the new location of O'Connor & Co. at 135 Thompson Rd., Webster (l to r) Sue Costen, Teresa Bonner, Ryan O'Connor, Iris Bonin, Rosa Galvin, Barbara Zurawski, Renee Alicea and Kelly Coffey.

## Webster Dudley Business Alliance regroup, and looks ahead

By Rod Lee

The scene that unfolded shortly after 5:00 p.m. on June 24 at The Rose Room Café and Tonic Bar in downtown Webster is the same one playing out across the country right now.

Organizations whose in-person activities had been grounded to a "virtual" halt by the pandemic are getting back into face-to-face meetings; without masks.

On the last Thursday evening of the month, the Webster Dudley Business Alliance (WDBA) became the latest to welcome its members to a live gathering. In the WDBA's case, a resumption of near-normal operations took the form of a net-

working event hosted by Bill and Jess Sabine at The Rose Room on E. Main St. in Webster.

About twenty people attended. Represented were businesspersons from banking and finance, construction, technology, the arts, the media, property management, the salon industry—even the soon-to-open "Samuel Slater Experience" in the former National Guard Armory in Webster.

The mood was understandably upbeat as Deb Keefe, the WDBA's treasurer, signed participants in, and Lucas Perzan, the WDBA's new president, welcomed them.

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Ericka Labonte of B.Kind Café and Dan Bennett of D.B.C. Solutions converse at the outset of the Webster Dudley Business Alliance's first in-person gathering in months, at The Rose Room in Webster.

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## O'CONNOR INSURANCE

Continued from page 1

Insurance has been licensed in Connecticut for 10 years, and in the last 12 months added licensing for New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Maine, with a vision to grow regionally.

Ryan recognizes the competitive nature of insurance.

"You have to be good at sales, know what you are talking about. Some insurances, like auto and home, are mandatory, which makes it easier, but we are not just selling our policies, we are selling ourselves."

He notes that customers at his agency can talk with him and his office staff personally, unlike customers of the direct writers, the national insurers.

He does not name names, but it is insurers like GEICO and Progressive.

Agencies like O'Connor represent dozens of insurers and can find the best rates for their clients.

Barbara Zurawski, who joined the agency in 2015 as a representative, handles both personal and commercial lines of insurance. She is quick to mention that

O'Connor writes policies for many of the local businesses, including restaurants, landlords, contractors, and private schools. She also notes that its agents can speak multiple languages: Spanish, Czech, Russian, Italian, Polish, Portuguese.

O'Connor Insurance had been located at 16 Village Way in Dudley for 20 years when it moved to Webster last month. "We had hired more people and outgrew the space,"

said Ryan, anticipating more growth.

He concedes, however, that "the most important thing is to grow smart, not just blow up."

The O'Connor family has always had close ties to its communities, involved with local charitable organizations and business associations. Dan serves on the board of the Boys & Girls Club of Webster-Dudley.

Barbara Zurawski too, exemplifies the community

spirit. She became the newest member of the Charlton Board of Selectmen in the May election, and after being a member of the Dudley Woman's Club for many years, is starting up a similar group in Charlton.

Ryan sums up his personal vision for O'Connor with a smile: "I like people, I like our towns, I'm good with numbers. I'm going to perpetuate this for another 30 years."



Pictured (l to r) Sue Costen, Renee Alicea, Theresa Bonner, Ryan O'Connor, Iris Bonin, Barbara Zurawski, Kelly Coffey and Rosa Galvin.

## W-D BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Continued from page 1

The usual chatter accompanied the early portion of the proceedings. Ericka Labonte of B.Kind Café in Webster was telling Dan Bennett of N. Grosvernordale-based D.B.C. Solutions about recent thefts her restaurant has been subjected to, resulting in "a need for security." Ms. Labonte added that she knows and admires Mr. Bennett's work as a master carpenter and residential construction expert.

"He's awesome, he did my deck," she said.

COVID of course was a hot topic. For Mr. Bennett, orders for his company's services "never slowed down, it got busier," over the past year. He doesn't believe a reoccurrence of the potentially deadly disease is imminent. "We're about to start a job in Dayville," he said. "A 30' x 40' barn, for storage. It will take about three to four weeks."

Mr. Perzan said a prime goal of his Insation Technologies firm, which is housed in the Nipmuc Plaza on Thompson Road in Webster, is "to save people money for phone, Internet and TV." Insation's "Stream Live TV (7000+ channels)," he explained, is "TV with a fire stick, two TVs for twenty-five dollars a month, three TVs for \$35 a month. We have several hundred customers all over the country."

Each person in attendance was allocated one minute to say something about their



WBDA President Lucas Perzan of Insation Technologies addresses members in attendance at the event at The Rose Room.

business, with Mr. Perzan joking that if they exceed that time "we'll throw forks at you." This part of the meeting allowed Ms. Sabine to announce that The Rose Room was launching "full sit-down dinners at night" for the first time; and for Deb Horan of Booklovers' Gourmet to talk up her busy shop. Throughout July, for instance, a display of Dudley mixed-media artist Lisa Kretchman's work, entitled "At Peace in Nature," will be on display at Booklovers'. A meet-and-greet with the artist will take place on Saturday, July 17 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.

With its stop at The Rose Room—home of seasonal fare showcasing local growers since November of 2018—the WBDA is eager to keep events like its networking session coming. Up next, Mr. Perzan and Ms. Sabine announced, would be an opportunity for members to volunteer for a few hours the following Saturday morning (June 26) at Tim Carroll's "Farmer Tim's" 92-acre historic property in Dudley.

Still ahead too, probably in

September, is a visit to the new Samuel Slater Experience, a museum now being put together on Ray Street in Webster.

In briefing the WBDA on the progress of the endeavor to celebrate the life and contributions of Samuel Slater, Barbara Van Reed said the museum is using a "Slater's Sheep Community Art Project" as a way to introduce the textile manufacturer to the public in a highly visible, fun way. The museum has acquired twenty-five life-sized sheep sculptures and is inviting local artists to get involved by painting creative images on the sheep. Local businesses, organizations and individuals are invited to support the initiative as sponsors.

The sheep will be displayed at various locations in Webster and surrounding towns.

"Help us make a decorated sheep parade a reality," the museum posts on its Facebook page.

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

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## Samuel Slater Experience receives a Silver Hammer Award



Pictured at the awards ceremony on May 20 at Peppercorn's Grill & Tavern are Tim Murray, president & CEO of the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce, Chris Robert, founder and owner of the Samuel Slater Experience, and Robert D. Cox, Chair of the Chamber Board of Directors and managing partner at Bowditch & Dewey.

Each year, the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce recognizes the special accomplishments of area people and businesses. The Samuel Slater Experience received a 2021 Silver Hammer Award this year, which acknowledges "construction or rehabilitation projects that have an extraordinary visual and aesthetic impact on our physical landscape and have brought new life to some of the region's most historic assets."

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# W-D-O Chamber of Commerce annual meeting at Samuel Slater Experience



Chris Robert leads a tour with Webster Five President Dan Doyle, center, and Anjena Kuzdzal, also with Webster Five.



Curator Olivia Spratt in Samuel Slater's office with Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Jeannie Hebert and Liz O'Neil, also of the BVCC. At right, Tina Puzo of bankHometown.



Bob Noll of Boston Productions Inc. (museum video designer) with Scott Ciprari.



Webster Selectman Randy Becker with new Nichols College President Glenn Sulmasy.



Board members Lauri Cashman, Carl Kaliszewski, and Laura Crosetti.



Bev Robert with Webster Selectman Andrew Jolda



SSE Construction Manager Nick Hopkins with Maria Lugo, banquet and special events manager at Samuel Slater's Restaurant.



Dave Laabs chats with Vic and Kathy Waskiewicz of JV Mechanical.



Barbara Van Reed with Webster Selectwoman Lisa Kontoes.



Jeannie Hebert with Dennis and Mary Lou Luukko.

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# Samuel Slater Experience hosts first in-person Chamber meeting in Webster

By Barbara Van Reed

It felt like a family reunion of sorts. For dozens of local businesspeople, the first Webster-Dudley-Oxford Chamber of Commerce live networking event in 18 months saw smiles, hugs and handshakes all around.

The occasion was the Chamber's Annual Meeting on June 8, usually held in January, but postponed for COVID, like so many other events.

The setting was the soon-to-be-opened Samuel Slater Experience in Webster, giving attendees a preview of the museum's exhibits, which tell the continuous story of Samuel Slater's life from leaving Eng-

land in 1789 to eventually setting in Webster.

The museum includes a series of immersive experiences that use a variety of cutting-edge digital technologies that make each visitor a realistic witness and participant in the journey.

The business meeting began with a brief speech by Samuel Slater Experience owner Chris Robert, who remarked that when he began restoration of the building, the 17,000 square-foot former National Guard Armory, four years ago, "it had no power, no water, and no heat, but plenty of asbestos everywhere, in the ceiling, the walls and the floor."

The transformation of the space into a "Disney-like" teaching experience will realize Mr. Robert's vision to give students a history lesson that they will always remember and carry home with them. His goal is to bring students from all around the region to the museum for a day immersed in history, technology, and culture.

Chamber president Ross Lavoie announced the addition of two new programs for Chamber members, each specifically designed for businesses with a small number of employees, one for health insurance benefits and one for retirement benefits.

The Chamber's executive board was unanimously re-elected: President Ross Lavoie of Oxford Insurance, Vice Chairman Donald Bourque of Choice1Graphics, Treasurer Brenda Sullivan of Webster Five, and Secretary Liz Horgan of Nichols College.

The Chamber also announced two new board members, Lisa Prince of Tri-Valley Inc., and Chad Troyse of Cornerstone Bank.

Sponsors for the annual meeting were Webster Five and Aubuchon Hardware. Catering was provided by Samuel Slater's Restaurant.



W-D-O Chamber executive board members Chairman Ross Lavoie, Treasurer Brenda Sullivan, Secretary Liz Horgan, and Vice-Chairman Don Bourque.



Board members Laura Crosetti, Laurie Cashman, Candido Diaz, Dennis Luukko, Lisa Prince, Barbara Van Reed, Chad Troyse. In the rear, Carl Kaliszewski. Missing: Mary Ann Fontaine, Nick Adamopolous.



Presenters Ross Lavoie, WDO Chamber president, Chris Robert, Samuel Slater Experience owner, Dan Doyle, president of Webster Five, Bernie Aubuchon, board chairman of Aubuchon Hardware.



Chamber Treasurer Brenda Sullivan with Chamber Director John Milas welcome registrants to the Chamber's annual meeting.

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Living well and looking good

# C. Diff tricky to treat, but rarely terminal

By Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: In December, I developed an abscess in my jaw from food getting caught in my tooth. I went to see a local dentist who prescribed clindamycin and metronidazole. I came down with a case of C. difficile. I have since found evidence that multiple antibiotics and clindamycin are causes of C. diff.

I am getting mixed messages about my prognosis. Some medical people are telling me it's not a big deal and to just

wash my hands a lot. My primary physician, however, gave me the impression that this is basically a terminal diagnosis.

She told me how sorry she was and that I had been a very healthy person but am not any longer. She told me that it will most likely recur, and every time it does it will be more difficult to treat until I become antibiotic resistant, and that people die from it. She also told me that she would set me up for the standard yearly appoint-

ment, but that I should come see her whenever I need to.

I am paranoid about what my future holds and what, if anything, I can do. I would like your opinion of this situation. Any guidance you can give me would be greatly appreciated. - Anon.

ANSWER: Clostridium difficile ("C. diff") infections are common but can be serious. As you correctly note, many antibiotics are associated with the acquisition of symptomatic C. diff infections, and although clindamycin is the best known, other antibiotics (quinolones, amoxicillin and related penicillins) are actually more common. The antibiotics kill off large numbers of healthy bacteria, allowing the unhealthy C. diff to take over. The cardinal symptom of C. diff is watery diarrhea, at least three loose stools in 24 hours. Abdominal pain and cramping, nausea and poor appetite are

common. Fever is less common. Symptoms can start during antibiotic treatment or up to a month after completing antibiotics.

Treatment is stopping the antibiotic if possible and if still being given. Antibiotic treatment against C. diff is with the newer drug fidaxomicin or with oral vancomycin; unfortunately, fidaxomicin is ridiculously expensive - a course of fidaxomicin is \$3,000 via goodrx.com in the U.S. at the time of writing. A course of oral vancomycin costs much less, often less than \$200 through the same website. If neither of these is available, metronidazole is a less-expensive alternative.

Fidaxomicin has the lowest risk of recurrence of the infection, and many experts will reserve it for a person who has recurred after oral vancomycin. For the unusual person who continues to recur after antibiotic treatment, fecal microbiota transplants (processed from stool of healthy donors) have been safe and effective.

I am disturbed that you got the impression that C. diff is a terminal diagnosis. Although in rare cases, hospitalized patients can get so sick that they can die from C. diff, this would be very unusual in less severe disease, as in someone who is able to go home from the hospital.

Handwashing is necessary to reduce infection to others. Avoiding drugs like Prilosec that suppress acid can help prevent recurrences. Finally, probiotics (live healthy bacteria) may be of use in reducing infection and recurrence.

**Commercial lab tests vs genetic counseling**  
DEAR DR. ROACH: I have a daughter (almost 31 years)

who is concerned about Charcot-Marie-Tooth syndrome. Her maternal grandmother has been diagnosed with that condition. She is interested in seeking out a genetic test for the condition to learn if she is susceptible. She was referred to a commercial, direct-to-consumer laboratory for the test.

How likely is it that a lab test for this specific condition would be accurate? Should she be doing all of this through either a particular type of genetics counselor or her private physician (internist) rather than an independent effort? - R.C.

ANSWER: Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease is the eponym given to a family of hereditary motor sensory neuropathies: diseases that affect the nerves that carry the impulses necessary for movement and sensation. The initial symptoms are most commonly weakness and atrophy in the feet, followed by similar problems in the hands and sensory changes.

The diagnosis may be made by EMG testing (electromyography, a needle study of the electrical activity of the muscles),

but genetic testing is another way of making the diagnosis. If her grandmother has a known mutation, then genetic testing is likely to give her confirmation of her own status.

Commercial genetic testing is certainly available, and probably accurate. However, I would still recommend a visit to a genetic counselor. This may require a referral from her primary-care doctor. The correct test to order, and its interpretation, depends on the exact diagnosis of her grandmother's condition, since there are many genetic variations of Charcot-Marie-Tooth. It is likely that your daughter will have questions after the test results, and the benefit of having an experienced clinician there to answer them would be invaluable.

*Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. (c) 2021 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved*

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## Brandon Rd. bridge closed

DUDLEY - A recent bridge inspection was conducted in the Town of Dudley by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (Mass DOT). The Town of Dudley Highway Department was notified on or about May 28 of structural issues with one of the bridges spanning the French River on Brandon Road.

For safety purposes, Mass DOT has ordered Brandon Road in Dudley closed until further notice.

Town officials are working with Mass DOT, Senator Fattman and Representative Durant, as well as officials from the Town of Webster to expedite the repair and re-opening of this roadway as soon as possible. In the meantime, detours were placed in effect by Mass DOT as of Monday, June 14. Traffic in the Brandon Road / Chase Avenue area will be directed to South Main Street in Webster and then to School Street. Travelers should be aware of this and seek alternate routes whenever possible. The Town of Dudley apologizes for any inconvenience.

Chief Steven Wojnar, Dudley Police Department

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# In-person again! Auburn Chamber welcomes DA Joe Early Jr.

By Rod Lee

There was unmistakable pride in Steve Londregan's voice during the Auburn Chamber of Commerce's 59th annual meeting at J. Anthony's Italian Grill on June 8, as he thanked colleagues for their contributions to all the organization accomplished during his two years as president.

"I hope he's not going to cry," Mr. Londregan's wife Donna said. She was sitting next to guest speaker and Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr. at the head table.

It was a bittersweet moment for Mr. Londregan, who owns Chuck's Steakhouse. As Matteo Gentile of Exit Realty Partners noted in his own remarks on behalf of the Chamber's Nominating Committee, "when Steve took over we met live and now that he's leaving we're meeting live again."

Indeed, the noon-hour get-together was the Auburn Chamber's first in-person sit-down in more than twelve months.

Mr. Gentile extolled Mr. Londregan's leadership, which included advocating for "getting (town) taxes even lower" than they already are, and overseeing the distribution of more than \$15,000 in scholarship money to graduating seniors (at a breakfast on May 21, a hybrid event). The latter was achieved even though the Chamber wasn't able to hold its yearly fundraising golf tournament to benefit students in 2020.

The 26th edition of the Chamber's School/Business Partnership event is a go for 2021; it will be played on September 13, at Blackstone National Golf Club in Sutton.

Mr. Londregan now becomes president ex-officio, as Kerri Cunningham of Fuller Automotive steps in as presi-

dent. The other officers announced by Mr. Gentile are Roger Robinson of Webster Five, vice president; Ralph D. Marois of Marois Brothers, treasurer; and Tina Puzo of bankHometown, secretary/clerk.

Incoming officers and directors were given a round of applause, as was Virginia Murphy, who serves as the Chamber's liaison.

After lunch, Mr. Early spoke on the topic "Opioid Awareness in the Community and Workplace." No one is better qualified to address the subject. Mr. Early formed the Central Mass Opioid Task Force in March of 2015, bringing together government leaders, law enforcement, health-care professionals, educators, substance-abuse experts, families in need of addiction services and others in response to the growing problem of opioid addiction and overdose deaths.

Opioid addiction is obviously something Mr. Early cares deeply about. Accompanied by Casey Shea and Paul Jarvey from his staff, he made available a number of

handouts, including one on a laminated card that conveyed the message "it's not junkie: it's mother, father, sister, brother, aunt, uncle, cousin, niece, nephew. Don't shame. Remove the stigma. Ask 'how can I help?'" This thought is in keeping with his belief that people suffering from addiction need support—not humiliation. Not rejection.

Another was entitled "The Truth About Your Opioid Prescription" and, on the flip side, "Overdose and the Opioid," with information about how opioid drugs "can stop brain signals that remind your body to breathe. This is very dangerous and can lead to serious harm or death."

Mr. Early had not gotten far into his talk before pointing a finger of blame at pharmaceutical companies and doctors who, he says, have fueled the flames of addiction.

"Purdue Pharma, they knew better than to say Oxycotin is not addictive," he said.

The nation loses more people to opioids than motor vehicle accidents and gun vio-

lence, he said.

He recommended that everyone read "Sam Quinones' book Dreamland: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic." It tells "how we got into this mess...pharmaceutical companies and doctors" in part, who prescribe pills that patients get hooked on and after that they go out on the street for fifty dollar pills "and when they run out of those they turn to heroin and it's sold like a pizza delivery."

Ninety percent of overdose deaths, "people have fentanyl in their systems."

Mr. Early said removing the stigma from addiction is key to battling the epidemic.

He said the Central Mass Opioid Task Force follows guidelines set up the CDC in advocating for practices and steps that can be taken to help people suffering from addiction:

"Narcan (which saves lives).

"Access and availability to treatment. Everyone who leaves an ER should do so



Outgoing Auburn Chamber of Commerce President Steve Londregan, right, chats with Matteo Gentile, a director, before the organization's 59th annual meeting at J. Anthony's Italian Grill on June 8.

with a treatment plan.

"Intervention.

"Detection of outbreaks.

"But mostly just eliminate the stigma. We have to step out of the silos to achieve success. We need compassion and a little bit of empathy.

"What we do at the DA's office: we show compassion but stay within the law. We get grants. We love comeback stories."

Why should business care?

"Opiate addiction costs business \$100 billion a year," he said.

Mr. Early wasn't able to address the Chamber as planned last year, because of the pandemic.

But his message resonated just as loud and clear, this year.

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.



Worcester County DA Joseph D. Early Jr. and Donna Londregan listen in as Ms. Londregan's husband welcomes attendees to the Chamber's 59th annual meeting.



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# bankHometown promotes four to AVP/VP; names branch manager

OXFORD — bankHometown recently promoted four of its officers and named a new branch manager for its Main Street, Lancaster, office.

**Tina M. Puzo**, of Dudley, was promoted to vice president, branch officer, of bankHometown's Southbridge St., Auburn, office and has assumed additional responsibility as retail sales coordinator for several of the bank's central Massachusetts offices. Puzo joined bankHometown in 2009 as branch manager of the Webster office and has more than 30 years of banking experience, including



**Susan Collins**

having previously served as vice president, business development and sales manager at TD Bank. She completed finance coursework at Quinsigamond Community College



**Donna M. Daigle**

and earned a certificate from the New England College of Business and Finance. Puzo is active in the community, currently serving as secretary of the Auburn Chamber of Com-



**Erika Heredia**

merce, chair of its Programs Committee, and co-chair of its town-wide Clean-up Committee. Additionally, she is manager of bankHometown's United Way campaign and a member of the town of Auburn's Business Roundtable Committee. She previously received the Girl Scouts of Montachusett Council's Women of Distinction award and was previously named one of Worcester Business Journal's 40 Under Forty honorees.

**Donna M. Daigle**, of Lunenburg, was promoted to vice president, branch officer, of bankHometown's Sack Blvd., Leominster, office, and has assumed additional responsibility as retail sales coordinator for the bank's two Worcester offices and three northern Worcester County locations. Daigle has more than 40 years of banking experience, joining bankHometown in 2014 as branch manager and later promoted to assistant vice president, branch officer. Before that, she was assistant vice president, store manager, with TD Bank. Daigle is also the secretary and treasurer



**Joel Laureano**

for the Leominster chapter of Business Network International.

**Joel Laureano**, of Paxton, was promoted to assistant vice president, branch officer, of bankHometown's Grove St., Worcester, office. He joined Millbury Savings Bank in 2015, which merged into bankHometown in 2019, and managed the bank's Millbury Street, Worcester, office before moving over to the Grove Street location when it opened in 2020. He has more than 20 years of banking experience, having also been a branch manager at both Bay State Savings Bank and Citizens Bank and an assistant branch manager at the former Bank of Boston/Fleet Bank. Laureano is a volunteer with the Friends of the Worcester Seniors.

**Susan Collins**, of Webster, was promoted to assistant vice president, cash management sales officer, and is based in bankHometown's Elm St., Millbury, office. She joined bankHometown in 2000 as a teller and over the years has been promoted to assistant branch manager, branch



**Tina M. Puzo**

manager, cash management sales officer, and now assistant vice president. Collins will earn her associate degree in business from Bay Path University this spring and previously received a certificate in management, leadership, and building high performance teams from Quinebaug Community College. She is active in the community, having served as treasurer of Friends of All Saints Academy and as the academy's cheer coach as well as secretary and treasurer of the Sturbridge chapter of Business Network International.

**Erika Heredia**, of Worcester, was named branch manager of the bank's Main Street, Lancaster office. She joined bankHometown in 2017 as a teller and was later promoted to teller supervisor and most recently to assistant branch manager of the bank's Grove Street, Worcester, office. Heredia holds an associate degree from Quinsigamond Community College and is a worship director and youth leader and mentor with the Revival International Center.

## Nichols College names women's institute for departing president to honor decade of leadership

DUDLEY — The Nichols College Board of Trustees has announced that the college's Institute for Women's Leadership (IWL) will be named for Susan Engelkemeyer, who retired in June after serving 10 years as Nichols president. The new name is the Susan West Engelkemeyer, PhD, Institute for Women's Leadership.

"Nichols has come a long way in the past 10 years with Susan's steady hand at the helm. She has navigated the college through tough waters and positioned us for even greater success," said Board Chair John H. Davis, referring to the gains the college made in enrollment, retention, and endowment growth under Engelkemeyer's leadership, as well as

the completion of a historic \$66 million fundraising campaign.

In honor of Engelkemeyer's retirement, members of the board contributed a total of \$400,000 to the endowment for the IWL, which she created in 2013. The Institute focuses on the issues and challenges impacting women in business using campus initiatives, industry partnerships, research analysis, and thought leadership. Its goals are to develop the leadership potential of students and serve as a resource and authoritative voice on women's leadership for the community. Among its programs are the annual Empowering Women in Business Conference and the biennial Massachusetts Women's Leadership Index, released this spring.

"Susan has been a model leader and an inspiration to our students. We are excited that the IWL, one of her crowning achievements, will reflect and honor that legacy," Davis added.

"The Institute for Women's Leadership is an integral part of the Nichols College mission to develop prepared, confident and ethical leaders of tomorrow," said President Engelkemeyer. "Our students — both female and male — benefit from the Institute's efforts to foster awareness of gender inequality and to affect change at the personal and institutional levels. I am proud that my name will continue to be associated with this important work and truly thank the Board of Trustees for this honor."

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# Cornerstone Creations casts your wishes

By Janet Stoica

For over 20 years, Pete Robitaille has been casting his artwork at his Sturbridge studio to the delight of his customers. What began as a hobby for this creative collector of architectural art has blossomed into a full array of unique and custom-made everlasting pieces of concrete art.

"It's not a heat process to cast these pieces of concrete statuary," said Pete, "a mold is used to create each one

imagine. "I make over 3,000 designs now," he said, "and I work with mold-makers internationally from England to Australia to Germany and Russia. I look for unique designs in the mythical, gothic, and nature-inspired areas. The most popular requests currently are for gnomes, gargoyles, bird baths, planters, and wall hangings."

His wall hangers can be used indoors or outdoors and are completed in a standard gray or antique finish. It's a niche market ac-

New England weather from summer to winter is a true testament to the strength and durability of Cornerstone's offerings. "These are not lightweight pieces," he said, "these are made to last."

The most unusual creations that Mr. Robitaille has created are for repositories of loved ones' cremation ashes, be it for a family member or a dear family pet. He has also made statues of pets, epitaphs, and quotation markers.

The casting process involves the use of a blended concrete mixture that is poured into a mold form, taking care to ensure that air pockets are non-existent. Once the casting process has been completed

perfections for a fine finish and then, if requested by a customer or decided by Mr. Robitaille, priming and painting is done for an even more refined look. Some of his creations are definitely in the family heirloom category. His 1,000 square foot inventory includes a wide range of creations. Stunning statuary in a most unique environment.

Cornerstone Creations, 71 Main Street, Sturbridge. Phone: (508) 347-0888.

Hours: Thursday - Sunday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. Find them on Facebook.

Contact Janet: [jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com](mailto:jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com)



and then a refinement process is used to bring each unit up to its full potential." Mr. Robitaille began his venture into concrete creations about 20 years ago when he met someone who was selling molds for the same price as statues. Apparently, his first purchase resulted in a creative streak that continues today with his large display of just about anything that his customers might

ording to Mr. Robitaille as no one really does concrete art anymore. There are plastic resin designs from China but they certainly do not retain their sturdiness like the creations offered by Cornerstone, especially if the piece is an outdoor unit. Withstanding the

and molded, a curing process is next, which may last up to a week. The finishing stage involves the use of a cement compound, filling in any im-

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## Sacred Heart Parish celebrates 150 years in the community

WEBSTER – Sacred Heart of Jesus celebrated its 150th anniversary as a parish at a special Mass Sunday, June 13. Guests included Bishop Robert McManus of the Worcester Diocese, priests, curates and other members of the religious community as well as state and local dignitaries, and more than 150 parishioners and friends of Sacred Heart.

The liturgical celebration, originally scheduled for June 2020, was postponed due to COVID-19 restrictions. Delaying the commemoration until 2021 gave the parish the opportunity to celebrate two additional milestones: 125th anniversary of the Church building and 25th anniversary of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel.

At the Mass, Representa-

tive Joseph McKenna read a state resolution marking the milestone and highlighting the accomplishments of the parish over the past 150 years. State Senator Ryan Fattman, while holding his toddler son Harrison, followed with brief remarks. He cited Luke 6:46-49 about the man who built his house and laid the foundation deep within a rock so the storms and winds could not shake it. "This speaks volumes to exactly the type of parish that has been built here," he said. Music for the liturgy featured several musicians and the Church's pipe organ console that dates to the 1920s.

Sacred Heart Parish traces its roots to French Canadian immigrants living and working in the area who were interested in celebrating Mass in the manner and language

to which they accustomed in Canada. The first Church, located on the corner of Slater and East Main streets, was purchased from a Methodist Church and was the home of Sacred Heart from 1870 to 1896 when the current Church was built with materials imported from Canada.

"When the founding mothers and fathers of the Parish came from Canada, they brought very little with them," said Bishop McManus in his address to the congregation. "Most of them did not bring a word of English. They came with hardly any money and few material goods. But what they did bring was a profoundly deep and unshakable Catholic faith.... With tremendous effort and because of their faith they built this extraordinary magnificent Church for



Father Adam Reid, pastor of Sacred Heart Church, says Mass with Bishop Robert McManus.



Bishop Robert McManus addresses the congregation.

the greater honor and glory of God. What they lacked in finances, they found in faith."

Reverend Adam Reid, pastor of Sacred Heart, shared the significance of the milestones in a letter to the parish. "We are the living legacy of the efforts of our French-Canadian parish founders' lived faith," he said. "We celebrate our rich history but do not seek to dwell in the past... We now look to enter into the next chapter of our parish history by first re-experiencing and perhaps in some cases discovering for the first time, a profound and life changing relationship with our Jesus Christ."

This year also marks the 25th anniversary of the Blessed Sacrament Chapel, located in the Emmaus Cen-

ter across the street from the Church. Opened in 1996, the Chapel serves the region as a spiritual sanctuary of perpetual adoration, operating round the clock, thanks to a legion of volunteers who are scheduled in hourly shifts.

The mission of Sacred Heart is to promote the gospel of Jesus Christ through worship, outreach and education. The parish offers some 30 liturgical and social outreach ministries. In addition, Sacred Heart serves the larger community as the hub of operations for the St. Vincent dePaul Society, as the epicenter of worship at the 24-hour-a-day Emmaus Chapel, and as a partner with St. Louis Parish in instilling Christian values in today's youth at All Saints Academy.

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State Senator Ryan Fattman, holding son Harrison, gives brief remarks, which were preceded by the reading of a state resolution by Representative Joseph McKenna.

## Dudley Woman's Club completes a successful year

Despite the pandemic during the 2020-2021 club year, the DWC stepped up and donated over \$14,500 in goods and cash across the following organizations: You, Inc - Christmas Adopt-A-Child

Program, Worcester Community Fridges, Roseland Park Upkeep fund, Blessed Backpack Brigade, Breast Cancer Coalition, Center of Hope, Charlton REAS, Dudley Veterans, HANDS, It Starts At

Home, Inc., Second Chance Animal Shelter, Veteran's holiday gifts, Webster/Dudley Boys and Girls Club, Dudley Police toy drive, three scholarships to graduating local high school seniors and the Webster/Dudley Food Share.

A great big thank you to all who contributed to help others during this difficult time.

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## Best Buddies Friendship car parade



Volunteers cheer on Best Buddies parade participants.

Best Buddies students and their families participated in its Friendship Car Parade at the MAPFRE Insurance campus on Gore Road in Webster recently. Dozens of MAPFRE employees volunteered to help with logistics and provide overall support. Best Buddies works to enrich the lives of youths and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities through their Friendship program, Jobs program and Leadership Development program.



Pictured l-r: Chad Stawiecki, Kathleen Mazurek, Jane Herron, Jose Luis Bernal, Carmen Gargallo, CEO Jamie Tamayo, Sue Gryb, COO Jose Corral.

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<b>GRAND FUNK RAILROAD</b> The American Band AUGUST 8 • 1PM	<b>THE CONCERT</b> ABBA THE CONCERT AUGUST 13 • 7PM	<b>CHASE RICE</b> AUGUST 14 • 1PM
<b>TOWER OF POWER</b> AUGUST 15 • 1PM	<b>YACHT ROCK REVUE</b> THE HOT DADS - TIGHT JEANS AUGUST 21 • 1PM	<b>SCOTTY MCCREERY</b> AUGUST 22 • 1PM
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## Indian Ranch honors veterans on Flag Day

On Flag Day, June 14, the management of Indian Ranch once again put out a wonderful luncheon for the veterans of our community.

Former State Rep. Paul Kujawski, who is one of the veterans' biggest advocates, gave a stirring talk on the appreciation of the veterans as well as handing out hats to the veterans of the Korean War and Desert Storm which were appreciated. When everyone had eaten, the veterans boarded the Indian Princess to cruise around Webster Lake. Due to the cold inclement weather on June 14, the participation was much less than other years, however it was a very enjoyable day for all involved as it always is, and it kicks off the summer season for veterans who look forward to this day.

On behalf of all the veterans who participated, I wish to extend a very warm and sincere thank you to Indian Ranch and to Paul Kujawski for their unwavering support of veterans in Webster and Dudley.

*Stephen P. Rogerson  
Veterans Services Officer -  
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## Regis College Dean's List

WESTON - Regis College is pleased to announce that 481 students made the Dean's List for academic achievement for the 2021 spring semester.

Alyssa Ward of Webster, is among the students who made the Dean's List. Ward is in the class of 2022.

To be eligible for the Dean's List as a senior, junior or sophomore at Regis, a student must have a semester grade point average (GPA) of at least 3.50.

"I am very pleased to see so many of our students excelling across the university," said Regis College Vice President of Academic Affairs Mary Erina Driscoll. "The Dean's List and the diversity of academic disciplines speak to a dedicated student body and to a faculty that promotes intellectual curiosity and achievement."

## Scholarships awarded

Each year the Oxford Woman's Club awards three \$750 scholarships to graduating seniors who reside in Oxford.

This year the club is excited to announce the winners. The Oxford Woman's Club Scholarship goes to Danielle Johnson of Oxford High School. The Josie Tyler scholarship goes to Hayden Dube of Bay Path Regional High School and The Clara Barton Scholarship goes to Samantha Burdett of Bay Path Regional High School. Congratulations to the winners and to a bright future ahead.





Webster Police Chief Michael Shaw.



District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr.



Rev. Janice Ford of the Open the Word Recovery Center.

## Worcester County Overdose Response Program sees successes in first year

WORCESTER – More than half of those offered services following an overdose accepted treatment as part of a program launched last year by District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr. and all 60 police departments in Worcester County.

Critical Incident Management System (CIMS) launched in March 2020 and was used by police departments in all of Worcester County's cities and towns over the last year to collect overdose data and respond to non-fatal overdose victims to offer services. The response visits were performed with a plainclothes police officer and a recovery coach usually within 48 hours of an overdose incident.

Data from the last year shows that on 52 percent of the follow-up visits, individu-

als accepted services. In another 9 percent of instances the individuals were already seeking services.

"These are encouraging numbers," said Mr. Early in a press conference today. "It was a challenging year to launch this program with the roadblocks presented by the COVID-19 pandemic. These numbers are a promising start. Any time we can help even one person get access to treatment is a life that is being saved."

The District Attorney's office purchased the CIMS software for \$40,000 using drug forfeiture funds in 2019 from developers Kelley Research Associates. The implementation of CIMS was a successful partnership between the District Attorney's Office, local police departments and municipalities.

"By getting the names of the folks who've had the non-fatal overdoses and by giving the opportunity for the follow up...what you've done is open the door. You've made the connection. You've provided an opportunity for that person when they're ready to take advantage of the treatment options that are available to them," said Worcester City Manager Edward Augustus.

CIMS allows police departments to share information, as well, so that when a person overdoses outside of their hometown they are still receiving a follow up visit.

"Addiction has no jurisdictional boundaries," said Fitchburg Police Chief Ernest Martineau, former President of the Central Mass. Chiefs of Police Association. "When there's no boundary for that,

there can be no boundary for helping people. And that's what this does. It connects 60 cities and towns police departments in responding and helping."

"The beauty of CIMS coming on board is now we have a centralized database that's tracking and we get an alert when we have to go offer up services. And the other thing that we were missing was when people were outside of Webster having an overdose, we never knew. Now with CIMS, we can follow up with them. It's a really integral part of getting these people the help they need," said Webster Police Chief Michael Shaw. Webster's responses to those in need are assisted by a partnership with Opening the Word Recovery Center, run by Rev. Janice Ford, which opened in June 2020

and served more than 2,000 people.

In fall of 2020, the District Attorney's office was awarded a \$1.2 million grant from the federal Department of Justice-Bureau of Justice Assistance to fund recovery coaches that will respond with police to follow up and offer services after an overdose.

Mr. Early was also joined at the press conference by Worcester Police Chief Steven Sargent, current President of the Central Mass. Chiefs of Police Association and Southbridge Chief Shane Woodson, Dudley Police Chief Steven Wojnar, and Worcester Fire Department Deputy Chief John Powers.

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## Grange sponsors summer concert series

DUDLEY – Celebrate summer under the stars this year with the Dudley Grange Summer Concert Series.

July 10 (raindate July 17), the Great Garage Band Reunion brings their self-styled “loud and outrageous” 60s and 70s funk, rock, R&B and blues (with six horns) to Center Road at 6 p.m.

August 7 (raindate August 14), 7 p.m. will feature music from Art Sandoli leading into a

chance to stargaze and watch the Perseids meteor shower. NASA volunteer educator Dino Tata will lead that astronomical exploration if the clouds cooperate; bring your telescope or good binoculars, and we will have some available for use.

All shows are outdoors, all ages and free admission on the grass at Dudley Grange’s historic location, 139 Center Road (next to Nichols Col-

lege). Bring lawn chairs or blankets, snacks and drinks (no alcohol allowed) and intent to have some fun in the warmth of a summer evening.

The series is being sponsored by a grant from the Dudley Cultural Council, the local agency of the Massachusetts Cultural Council. For more information on the Grange itself, go to <https://www.facebook.com/DudleyGrange.163/>.

## July Art Exhibit

WEBSTER - At Peace in Nature, mixed-media artwork by Lisa Kretchman, will be on display and for sale July 1-31 at Booklovers’ Gourmet, 72 East Main Street, Webster, during regular business hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10-5. A meet and greet with the artist will take place on Saturday, July 17, from 2-4 p.m. Please RSVP to [deb@bookloversgourmet.com](mailto:deb@bookloversgourmet.com) or 508-949-6232.

Lisa Kretchman is a local mixed-media artist living in Dudley. She studied painting, illustration, and digital media at Massachusetts College of Art and Design. Her artwork has been shown in local galleries, museums, and events, including the Warwick Museum of Art, The Attleboro Arts Museum, the RI Convention Center (as part of the Flower Show),

and the Quinebaug Valley Council for the Arts & Humanities. She also participates in several public art projects, including Putnam’s Fire & Ice Festival, and is a regular artist at the Jack-O-Lantern Spectacular at Roger Williams Park Zoo in Providence, RI, an event that draws tens of thousands of viewers each year.

Much of her work is inspired by nature, often with added story or symbolism. In her process, she blends media including watercolor, pastel, and acrylic, and found objects. By exploring themes of positive intention, compassion, and peace, she hopes to share that energy through her work with others.

More examples of the artist’s work, including her Art Hearts charity project can be seen at [lisakretchman.wordpress.com/fine-art/](http://lisakretchman.wordpress.com/fine-art/)



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- 3 LBS. CUT UP CHICKEN OR 1 LB. BACON
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Living ON with Lincoln

# Lincoln finds me a puppy



By Amy LeClaire

I'm on the road, driving in my old Honda Pilot. Lincoln sits patiently by the window. He's staring intently at the scene outside, our latest destination. I park, open the back door and let him out for the latest excursion, one set at a small pond located below a woody incline at the edge of a back road. We're in a dream, one that holds the quiet authenticity of the way things have always been. I know I'm in a dream while I'm in it. I watch him hustle down the hill and find the water. He sinks down into the pond and dog paddles, his head lifted while he bobs to the rhythm of his swim.

The dream, I sense, is about to end. I soak up the moment and watch my dog revel in what comes naturally. We may be in two different worlds but we're still together. Like an

ocean wave against shoreline, we'll keep meeting this way. We may exist in two different forms, but we're still connected.

I wake up, palm my chest. Lincoln.

The dream floats with me into the kitchen. The hardwood floor is polished, hairless. I pull out a box of Grape Nuts and wait for Lincoln to remind me of where his dish is located, just in case I happened to forget. I wait for him to stare at my banana while it's unpeeled, then turn his nose up at a brownish wedge. Override. I gaze out at the bay window at a back yard too lush. Where are the yellow patches? Why are the bunnies so liberated, the crows cockier than usual? We need Lincoln. Sigh.

A puppy might help.

I find myself scrolling through dozens and dozens of websites and Facebook Golden groups. My heart swells while I peruse picture after picture, Golden after Golden. One stands at a dock, another snuggles with a litter mate, one wears a checkered bow

tie. My eye catches one that looks just like Lincoln. He sits proudly and smiles, his chesty lion mane puffed out.

The thought of enduring loss, grief and pain—yet again—borders on the absurd. Happy people choose to be happy, and move away from pain. Besides, my house sparkles, my car is clean, and my freedom—

Freedom is subjective when it comes to owning a dog. On one hand, you are able to pull off a day excursion without worrying about leaving your dog home alone. Ditto for the vacation to Europe. On the flip side, a dog "frees" us from life's petty stresses. Have you ever noticed that a dog, unlike a human, does not sweat the small stuff? Imagine you've just dropped a pint of blueberries on your kitchen floor. They scatter and roll beneath the crack where the fridge meets the floor. Blood pressure rises. The entire day has been this way, one disaster after the next. Now imagine that same happening with a dog. Blueberries drop. Whoopsie. Three seconds flat and the mess will be gone. A dog will speed-vacuum one blueberry at a time, press his face against the fridge crack to sniff out the lost berry and, in the process, make you smile. Dogs make the hard things easy. They lighten our loads and help us realize that the small stuff is just that, small stuff. In doing so, they don't take away our freedom, so much as they do offer a way to live freely. Dogs don't need yoga to de-stress. They live it.

As natural free-spirits, dogs also allow positive attitudes to

overcome negative situations.

Humans can be difficult. They can be defiant, rebellious, obnoxious, cruel, intolerant, rigid, insensitive, or unreasonable. How do humans approach conflict with other humans? They judge, scorn, fight, gossip, or avoid hard situations all together. They grow apart and divide, forever stuck in a stalemate of egos. Have you ever watched how a dog approaches a difficult human?

"Did you see that woman in the car beside us? She's waving her hands and wagging her finger at us! I think she wants to play!" If that same woman were in a dog's presence, he'd lick salty, sweaty anger from her palms and make her laugh. Dogs see the very best in people. They don't keep score or a record of wrongs. A dog makes it impossible to be angry with the loved one who has just stepped on your last nerve. "Is that a spot of scallop you're wearing on your shorts?" Dogs sniff out the good parts. They forgive, forget, and approach conflict with compassion.

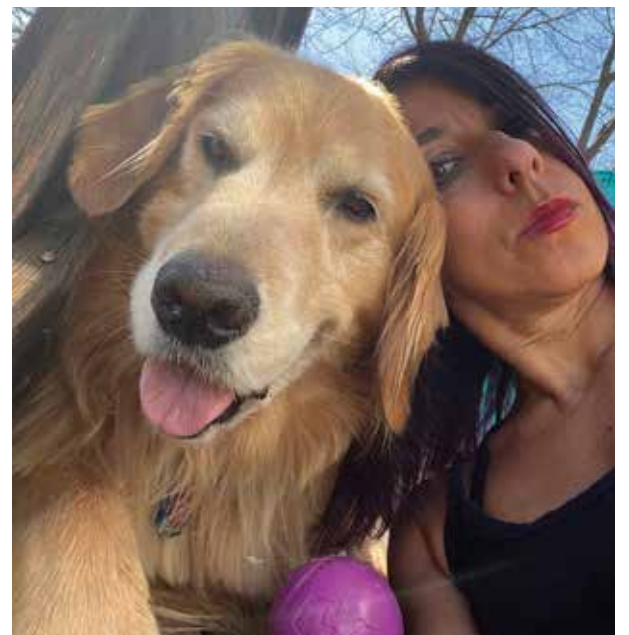
I try to practice what Lincoln has taught me. He's still with me. I want to relate to people the way Lincoln would. I want to be a better person. But I'm only human. Dogs are better.

"Either you find me a puppy or I'm getting a rescue."

I need a puppy. I blame a husband who, less hasty, chooses to window shop for cute Golden retrievers via smartphone searches. "Look at this guy!"

My patience for cute on-line Golden retrievers wears thin. I want my own. "We need to get on a puppy list with a quality breeder," I say. "We will," he says back. But his lax demeanor fails to convince. Since when is Living Without Dog tolerable? I'm suspicious.

The search begins. I read, write, network, Google, and collaborate with neighbors and Dog People. I learn that due to the 2020 pandemic, the demand for Golden retrievers soared, causing a puppy shortage, lengthy wait lists, and frustration. Golden Dames can only have so many puppies in the course of a year, and there are several variables which may or may not hinder the birthing process. I imagine Lincoln sitting at my heels at an ice cream counter while I admire the puppy beside us. "Yeah, yeah, he's cute. But let's talk



Kindred spirits.

about my soft serve."

Does Lincoln not want me to get a puppy?

By mid-June, puppy doors begin to open via friends who know of my situation and are also looking for one. One call led to another, until I'm offered a spot on a list. A July litter is available! I'm excited but everything is moving along so fast and I need more answers. I want to know more about the parents of my puppy. I seem to have a lot of questions, but not enough answers, and there are too many loopholes in too many changing facts. Something is amiss. One puppy deal falls through, followed by other dead-end leads. That puppy would be perfect, but I can't travel to Seattle. Gorgeous dogs, but what about health clearances?

Meanwhile (and somewhat miraculously) my husband reaches Cloverdale Golden Retrievers of CT via his own (more analytical) search. He manages a phone call with the owner, an experienced high-quality breeder who — who has collaborated in the past with Twin Beau D Kennel, Lincoln's birth place! She has seen his pictures, knows of his roots, and, technically, some of her pups may even be distant cousins!

Sold! We're getting a puppy next spring! Better than that, the puppy is a part of Lincoln! I couldn't be happier.

Lincoln isn't against getting a puppy. He just needed to be involved in the process. Once again, my dog brings out the best in tough situations.

"Thank you, Lincoln."



Lincoln enjoying his soft serve.



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## Programs and events at The Pearle

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Knit and crochet group - Thursday 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. and Friday 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. All stitchers are welcome for this informal group, meeting weekly in the Fels Room.

Don't forget to sign up for summer reading now through July 30. Sign up and enter to win some great prizes for kids, teens, and adults.

Lunch time story times, Wednesdays at noon throughout the summer. Story time will be held outside in the lot near the children's wing. There will be a take home craft each week that goes with what we read. These are geared for ages 0-5. Sessions are limited to 15 families. Be advised we will be in a wooded lot so bug spray and sunscreen is recommended.

July 14 - Dragons; July 21 - Animal Safari; July 28 - Bubble Party. Free; registration required.

Dissect an owl pellet - Monday, July 12 - multiple sessions. Join in to dissect an owl pellet and see what bones we find and identify them. Ages 5-12. Limited to five participants per session.

Sponsored by the Hugh and Harriet Crawford Endowment. Free; registration required.

Paint a birdhouse - Friday, July 16 - multiple sessions. Join us to paint and decorate a pre-built birdhouse to attract birds to your yard. Ages 5-12. Limited to five participants per session. Sponsored by the Hugh and Harriet Crawford Endowment. Free; registration required.

Burpee and Records petting zoo - Monday, July 19 - multiple sessions. Register for a 25-minute session to meet and pet a variety of real animals. You will have the ability to purchase small amounts of feed for the animals. The money from the feed machines will go to help the Friends of the Library. Come meet animals like a llama, alpaca, tortoise, squirrel monkey, goats, and others.

Sponsored by the Hugh and Harriet Crawford Endowment. Free; registration required.

Animal magnets/pendants - Thursday, July 22 (first half) and Monday July 26 (second half) - multiple sessions. We will be creating animal magnets or pendants. This is a 2 part activity. Part one is creating the animal and part two is painting it. (If you cannot come to the second session you can take your creation home to dry.) This is for ages 8-12. Sponsored by the Hugh and Harriet Crawford Endowment. Free; registration required.

Stuffed animal sleepover - Thursday, July 29, 2:00-4:00 p.m. We are letting your stuffed animals take over the library. Drop in

### Dean's List and grad from Norwich U

NORTHFIELD, Vt. - Wilson Robin Reich, Dudley has been recognized on the Dean's List at Norwich University for the Spring.

Hannah Jane Mendez Rockwood, Webster also graduated with her Bachelor of Science in environmental science and psychology.

Full-time undergraduate students, who earned a semester grade point average of at least 3.40 and had no failures in the previous Fall or Spring semester are awarded Dean's List honors. These students cannot have any pending Incomplete (I) grades. Dean's List honors are noted on the official transcript each term earned.

### MassBay CC Dean's List

WELLESLEY HILLS - The following local students have been named to MassBay Community College Dean's List, achieving outstanding academic honor for the spring 2021 semester.

Keri-Ann Dayhoff of Oxford studying computer tomography  
Leomara Lacerda Silva of Webster studying liberal arts -

psychology/sociology

To be eligible for the MassBay Dean's List, students must complete at least six credits of college-level courses, be in good standing with the College, and earn a grade point average of 3.500 or higher. The spring 2021 semester Dean's List includes 930 full- and part-time students.

and create a bed for your stuffed animal to sleep in, and then leave them to sleep overnight. We will then make sure they have a fun night at the Library. (We will post their adventures on Facebook and Instagram.) Please register your animal! You can drop them off anytime between 2-4 p.m. Sponsored by the Hugh and Harriet Crawford Endowment. Free; registration required.

Summer reading ends Friday, July 30, 1:00-3:00 p.m. Drop in and get an ice cream sandwich or popcorn for participating in summer reading! Ms. Lida will be outside for your last minute reading tracking to put your tickets in the raffle baskets. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.



### Neighborhood yard sale

OXFORD - A neighborhood yard sale will be held Saturday, July 10 and Sunday, July 11, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 5 Founder's Court, Oxford. Please no early birds.

Some of the items available are furniture, jewelry, tools, toys, glassware, lawn items, Christmas items, clothes, TV, chests, books and lamps.

### Summer yard sales

The Helping Hand summer yard sales schedule has been announced. The time of each sale is 8 am to noon. The dates include July 10 and July 24, August 7 and August 21, and September 11. The yard sales are held at Dodge Chapel, 81 Hammond Hill Road, Charlton. To donate call Deb 508-987-0708, Annette 508-347-7596, or Judy 508-248-5580.

### Flea market

The Upton VFW will hold the next in its summer series of flea markets from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. beginning July 10 at Post headquarters, 15 Milford St., (Route 140) in Upton. The markets are held the second Saturday of each month through October, weather permitting.

Spaces for vendors and craftsmen are \$10, or \$15 if a banquet sized table is needed. Reservations are not necessary. Post member David Kennedy can provide further information by calling 508-529-3314 or via the VFW Facebook page. Coffee and donuts will be available in the morning. Hot dogs, chips, and cold drinks will be offered at lunchtime.

### Yard Sale

Saturday, July 10 and Sunday, July 11 - Yard Sale - 8 a.m.-2 p.m. at 31 Conlin Road, Oxford, for items such as books, clothes, furniture, household, tech, jewelry, etc. No early birds, please.

*Happy Summer!*



Every Thursday, June 24 through September 30, from 4-7pm, the Auburn Farmers' and Cultural Market will take place at the Dr. Arthur and Dr. Martha Pappas Recreation Complex, 203.5 Pakachoag Street, Auburn.

Participants include Fay Mountain Farm/Kettle brook (start July 8); Moosup Valley Farm-fresh cut flowers perennials; Elzire's Acre Farm-goat milk soap; Lady Love Lamas-makes lama yarn items; BS Maple Syrup; Charlton Honey; Jackson's Creative handmade art; Center Bakery-baked breads and more; Crystal Clear Emotions-silver jewelry blue topaz; The Art Lab and Gallery-handmade art; B-Organic-organic bags for produce and more; Mandie C's Sweetery- assorted cookies; Sarkisian Studios-hand painted art items; American Flag Craft-\$25 pp.

For more information please email [Kpappas@town.auburn.ma.us](mailto:Kpappas@town.auburn.ma.us) or call 508-755-3291.

### Northeastern U Dean's List

BOSTON - Northeastern University is pleased to recognize those students who distinguish themselves academically during the course of the school year. The following residents were recently named to the University's dean's list for the Spring semester, which ended in May 2021.

To achieve the dean's list distinction, students must carry a full program of at least four courses, have a quality point average of 3.5 or greater out of a possible 4.0 and carry no single grade

lower than a C- during the course of their college career. Each student receives a letter of commendation and congratulation from their college dean.

•William Dunion of Dudley, a Northeastern University student majoring in chemical engineering.

•Natalie Baclawski of Dudley, a Northeastern University student majoring in mathematics/business admin.

•Erin Warren of Webster, a Northeastern University student majoring in biology.



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## Black Tavern scholarship awarded

The Black Tavern Historical Society of Dudley is pleased to announce the recipient of the Michael Branniff Memorial Scholarship for 2021 is Colin Humphries.

Colin is a graduate of Shepherd Hill and will attend the University of Massachusetts this fall, with a major in political science.

The Board of Directors met with Colin at their annual meeting on Saturday, June 26. Marc Mosely, a member of the scholarship committee, presented the award.



## WDO Chamber scholarships

The Webster-Dudley-Oxford Chamber of Commerce scholarship program has been in place dating back to the mid 90s, awarding over \$125,000 in scholarships. The funds are generated primarily from the Chamber's annual schol-

arship golf tournament from the generous support of sponsors and golfers who play in the annual event.

The scholarships (\$1500.00) are awarded to students from Bartlett High School, Shepherd Hill, Oxford High

School, Bay Path and a WDO member.

The 2021 recipients are: Gabriela Piwowarczyk from Bartlett High School Panayiota Veronis from Shepherd Hill Regional High School

Joseph Szela from Oxford High School Ryan Steiner from Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School Tyler McKay, the Philip L. Hopkins Memorial.

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Dominic Manzi-Knych has caught a break in his young life and congratulations to him as he enters into the Division One college basketball world at UMASS Amherst as an assistant coach for head coach Matt McCall who will be en-

## Dominic Manzi-Knych named UMASS assistant basketball coach

tering his fifth season on the UMASS campus.

UMASS is in the ultra competitive Atlantic 10 conference and Manzi-Knych is grateful and excited for such an opportunity at a very young age.

Manzi-Knych just graduated from UMASS in May with a bachelor of science degree in sport management. He graduated from Bartlett High School in 2017 and was part of the Indians 2017 Clark Tournament and District championship team.

As an undergrad at UMASS Dominic worked his way up to the assistant position by be-

ing a tireless student manager during his freshman and sophomore years and then got promoted to senior manager his junior and senior years on the UMASS basketball team under the watchful eye of Coach McCall.

Hard work always pays off and in this situation for Manzi-Knych it was all worth it. "I love Coach McCall and UMASS basketball and when the job opened up recently, my first thought was I must be dreaming," said Manzi-Knych. McCall must have seen what we all know in these parts, that Dominic is a tireless worker and his loyalty goes on forever, but his staple quality is his humility.

McCall offered the title of video coordinator to Manzi-Knych last week and the dream has come true for the local kid. His mother Luanne Manzi and his father John Knych are glowing with the news of their son landing such a position right away in a national setting of college basketball.

The video position on the college and professional sports levels is the recapturing of what happened in practices and games using video editing software to compile breakdowns of specific plays or techniques.

The Atlantic 10 conference has the likes of Dayton, St. Louis, URI, Fordham, St. Bo-

naventure, George Mason, and Richmond to name a few. Manzi-Knych said, "there are no nights off in the A10. All the schools in the A10 have great facilities and atmosphere to play in. It is a very competitive conference. The goal is to compete and get to the NCAA tournament every year."

The Minutemen ended their 2020-21 season in the A10 quarter finals where they were beat by St.Louis. However, it was the farthest they advanced since 2014.

The outlook is bright at UMASS and McCall's coaching resume started with Billy Donovan at Florida as an assistant and then a two year head coaching stint at Chattanooga before landing at UMASS in 2017. McCall has put the foundation in for the Minutemen to be successful this season and make a run at the NCAA tournament. There has been a lot of movement on their roster to make that expectation a reality.

Manzi-Knych has a huge task in front of him at such an early age and relishes the fact that he is in a big time atmosphere in a program that is at the cusp of achieving the ultimate goals of an NCAA division one bonafide program where the lights are the brightest and the bands are the loudest.

It doesn't get any better for Dominic Manzi-Knych from



Dominic Manzi-Knych on the job at UMASS.

Webster. The kid put his head down and worked his way up the ladder the old school way. He is a valuable cog in the UMASS basketball wheel and he has prepared himself to embrace the opportunity.

Good Luck to Manzi-Knych and UMASS. Webster has a young son at a tender age in the big show of college basketball by way of his humil-

ity, perseverance, and hard work. His day-to-day responsibilities are demanding and crucial to Head Coach Matt McCall and the entire UMASS basketball program. Dominic is chomping at the bit for this opportunity. The opportunity couldn't have happened to a better kid. A great lesson lesson of preparation meeting opportunity.



Dominic Manzi-Knych on his way to a career in coaching.

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## Cruising scene 2021

### Cruisin' Scene at Bass Pro Shops and Gillette Stadium

By Jim Weicherding

It took awhile but it appears after weeks of non-stop postponements due to the pandemic we are starting to get back to normal. Normal being used relatively and nothing like we were used to on the cruisin' scene pre-pandemic.

After two months of delays, Mass Cruisers and Bass Pro Shops began hosting their bi-weekly car shows at Gillette Stadium to the delight of thousands of show vehicle owners and spectators. This show attracts the largest crowds across New England and you will find show vehicles adorned with license plates from New

York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

This car show is the longest running seasonal automotive event that typically ends the week of Halloween every year. Most expire in late September or early October. I don't know of any other area car show that goes until Halloween week.

Governor Charlie Baker recently lifted all restrictions across the state, allowing this venue to start for the cruisin' season. Better late, than never, like last summer. If you have a classic ride or just love seeing all of the beautiful show vehicles and mingle with automo-

tive enthusiasts, then Bass Pro Shops and Gillette Stadium is the place to be every other Thursday over the next four months thanks to the Mass Cruisers.

Enjoy the great oldies during the event brought to you by Cruisin' Bruce Palmer and sponsored by Peter Sacchetti at Sacchetti Classic Insurance. This is a fantastic car show and everyone involved is dedicated to making sure you have a great and exciting experience. Keep this automotive hobby and car culture thriving for years to come. Please, "take a kid to a car show."





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**Q.** I own a 2007 Shelby GT500. I bought it new, and it has only 11,000 miles on it. When I was in Florida my battery maintainer failed and the battery went dead. I put in a new battery and now my Shaker 500 CD player keeps cycling and I cannot get the CD out. It keeps cycling even when the radio is shut off and the key is out of the ignition. Have you heard of this or know a remedy? It's driving me nuts.

**A.** This seems to be a fairly common problem with this audio system. Unfortunately, it doesn't look like an easy or quick fix. You certainly could try completely disconnecting the radio and repowering it to see if that resets the control unit; although it might discharge the CD, the unit may still cycle as if there is a CD trying to eject. At this point you will need to send the unit out for repair or upgrade to an aftermarket unit.

**Q.** My 2020 Hyundai Kona will display a "battery discharge" warning on the dash. I have taken the car to the dealer on multiple occasions, and they can't find anything wrong. The car only has 4500 miles on it. I didn't expect these kinds of problems with a new car. What can I do?

**A.** This warning will come on when the battery is discharging. Typically, this will happen if you are sitting in the car with the radio on (accessory or key-on) with the engine not running. It is Hyundai's method of warning the driver that continuing to do this could cause the battery to go dead. The other possible issue is the battery is not being fully recharged. This is possible since you have only driven 4500 miles in a year. At this point I would want the battery to be slowly recharged and then tested. At the same time the car should be

checked for a parasitic drain. Some Kona models had an issue with the rear hatch not fully closing which kept the courtesy lights on.

**Q.** My cargo van has a removable seat and I think my kids were playing in the van and put a handful on pennies in the space where the seat locks to the floor. Now every time I stop, I hear the pennies sliding. Since they are pennies, I can't use a magnet to get them out. Any idea how I can quiet the noise?

**A.** Years ago, I saw a similar problem and it was fixed by squirting grease in the channel where the seat locks in. The grease only worked until it got warm and start to "melt" and then the noise came back, quieter but back. The other issue is grease has an odor. If this were my vehicle, I would first try fishing the pennies out with a wire attached to something sticky. If that doesn't work, I would try spraying the area with expanding foam. The foam should glue the pennies in place and stop the noise.

**Q.** Are you familiar with the Shine Armor products? Do they work as well as they claim, especially the scratch remover?

**A.** I am not familiar with the Shine Armor line of products. When it comes to scratch remover, the test for a scratch is if you can catch your fingernail on the paint, you won't make the scratch disappear. You may minimize its

appearance, but the paint is damaged and can only be repaired with touch-up paint. There are many spray-on detailing products. I have tried a few and found most of the "hybrid ceramic" sprays to be similar. Some will smell better, others have better spray bottles but in my very unscientific testing the end result appears about the same.

**Q.** I want to replace my old Nissan Frontier. What is your opinion of the latest Honda Ridgeline truck?

**A.** The Honda Ridgeline is, in my opinion, the best compact/midsize pickup truck sold today. The engine is powerful and performs well. The cargo bed is useful, and the lockable hidden trunk is very handy. The interior is comfortable with plenty of room for four adults. My only critique is the lack of a radio tuning knob and I'm not wild about the push button shifter.

**Q.** Pre COVID you came out to our senior center and did a talk about car care and it was quite informative. With all the interest in electric cars these days could you do a talk about hybrids and other electric vehicles? Perhaps you can do the talk virtually from home?

**A.** Certainly. Virtual presentations are the new normal these days and I would be happy to host a talk about hybrids, plug-in hybrids and electric vehicles. Readers if you would like to have me at your event virtually just send me an email: [jpaul@aaanortheast.com](mailto:jpaul@aaanortheast.com).

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Tales from beyond

# The Spooner House in Plymouth

By Thomas D'Agostino

When visiting Plymouth, Massachusetts, one finds there is so much to take in and so little time. One suggestion would be to stay the night and take a few tours, especially a ghost tour, for Plymouth has plenty of spirits to visit in the dark of night. One good example is the Spooner House on North

Street. By day it is a museum but by night, it comes alive with those who once roamed its chambers in a mortal frame.

The Spooner House was built in 1749 and stayed occupied by five generations of the family. When James Spooner died in 1954, the house was

passed over to the Plymouth Antiquarian Society where it became a museum. It is still furnished with Spooner family heirlooms for all to see. It is also furnished with at least one busy little ghost. Abigail Townesand was a little girl when the Spooner family took her in. Unfortunately, she

died of an infection from an abscessed tooth. She still remains, either not knowing her time has long past, or to play with the visitors both day and night.

One group on a lantern light ghost tour encountered the little girl when it came up to them and touched one of the women on the back of the shoulder. The little girl in the white robe said, "I have to go now," and melted away. The group ranted about how the special effects of the tour really had them fearful for a moment. That is when the guide reluctantly told the crew he does not have any little girl running around in a robe at 10:30 p.m. trying to scare people. Although it is a great idea, it is not quite legal. A member of another tour saw her standing by the corner of the house before vanishing.

Workmen came to the house to do restorations. The door was locked so they began knocking. Moments later a little girl let them in then ran off into another room. The workmen called the curator to let him know the door was locked but a little girl let them in. The curator stated in astonishment that there is no little girl in the house, as it is



a museum and always locked. They then followed the direction of the little girl and were taken aback at the fact that she had entered a room where the only exit was in their eyesight, yet she was gone.

Lights appear in the upper windows as if someone was walking to and fro with a lantern or candle. One night, a woman sought to peek into the house while the inside shutters were ajar. The tour guide kindly aimed a flashlight through the crack. The shutters flew wide open and on the other side of the dark room was the distinct face of a woman staring back at them. She then vanished in the beam of light as the onlookers dispersed in fear. The building had been well secured and empty for the night.

Larry, one of the guides, had one experience with the ghost while explaining the house during a tour. As he stood at the door of the Spooner House in the alley, there began a small knocking sound from the other side of the door. Once again, the place had been secured for the night.

A visit to Plymouth is a must. It is classified as the birthplace of America with the landing of the Pilgrims in 1620. But it is after hours when the spirits begin their own pilgrimage.

*Thomas D'Agostino and his wife Arlene Nicholson are seasoned paranormal investigators, authors, and co-organizers of Paranormal United Research Society. You can find out more about them by visiting [www.tomdagostino.com](http://www.tomdagostino.com).*

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## Strange BUT TRUE

- On May 19, 1996, Kermit the Frog gave the commencement speech at Southampton College, Long Island University.
- TASER is actually an acronym for Tom A. Swift's Electric Rifle. "Tom Swift" references the book character who is not just an inventor of amazing gadgets, but a childhood favorite of the Taser's inventor, Jack Cover.
- The average high-school swimmer swims 1 million strokes per season.
- Researchers found that male

bottlenose dolphins in Western Australia's Shark Bay have formed "boy bands" that harmonize their mating calls together in order to better attract females.

- While working as an extra on the set of "The X-Files," singer Michael Bubl  was fired for stealing a hot dog from the craft services table.
- The most common injury caused by makeup is scratching the eye with a mascara wand.
- A local folk remedy in Boho, Ireland, involved placing soil from the local church under one's pillow while sleeping to cure infections. The nature of the remedy proved more scientific than divine when, in 2018, a microbiologist found the soil contains a previously unknown strain of streptomycetes, which can be used to create antibiotics.
- Out at sea, a tsunami is only about 3 feet high, and could pass a boat without being noticed.
- With every bottle of Laphroaig whisky, you're entitled to a lifetime lease on a one-square-foot plot of land on the Scottish island of Islay, as part of Laphroaig's loyalty program "Friends of Laphroaig."
- A green cat was born in Denmark in 1995. Some people believe that high levels of copper in the water pipes nearby may have given his fur a verdigris effect.
- Edgar Rice Burroughs, creator of the iconic jungle man Tarzan, worked as a pencil-sharpener salesman before trying his hand at fiction. He only started writing at the age of 36 to support his wife and two kids.

Boanthropy is a psychological disorder in which patients believe they are a cow.

- The infamous crocodile jump by James Bond in "Live and Let Die" was performed with real crocs by the only person willing to attempt it - the owner of the crocodile farm.
- In early 2015, Mattel released Hello Barbie, an interactive talking doll that didn't just repeat preprogrammed phrases, but could actually hold a two-way conversation. The doll raised major concerns over privacy, however, since the discussions between it and child owners were recorded and sent to third-party vendors. Goodbye, Barbie!
- Like casinos, your local shopping mall is intentionally designed to make you lose track of time, with clocks and windows removed to prevent views of the outside world, in a type of "scripted disorientation" known as the Gruen Transfer.
- The original recipe for chocolate contained chili powder instead of sugar.
- As if it weren't cool enough that your DNA encodes the entire blueprint for your body using a set of just four characters (amino acids), you can treat the outside surface of cotton fabric with concentrated genetic material, as the DNA is also flame retardant: Its molecules are similar to those in other fireproofing substances.

*Thought for the Day:* "I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it." - Thomas Jefferson

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## Dudley COA during the pandemic year

Throughout the pandemic, the Dudley COA has been actively working behind the scenes, from zoom meetings, conference calls, webinar meetings, all communications have been quite frequent, crucial and sometimes overwhelming. Senior outreach has never been more important, as seniors were taking the brunt of the COVID-19 in illnesses and fatalities. Many remained in lockdown for months on end, giving rise to possible emotional/mental health concerns, as well as recognized setbacks for those who have dementia, Alzheimer's, or oth-

er cognitive issues.

The COA is considered by the State of Massachusetts to be an essential service, and we have remained active and vigilant, throughout the pandemic even though our usual office setting had been closed since March 2020. We have been working with Tri Valley Elders Inc. for Elder Nutrition, emotional support, and crisis support throughout these many months. It's been an ongoing challenge for everyone in finding new and creative ways to reach to out our seniors, as many aren't online and many don't

want to be. It has also been challenging reaching out and staying in contact with our professional support systems, our colleagues, who kept us in focus of our direction in helping seniors get through this dark and unprecedented time. It felt dark and ominous to me at times too, but the seniors gave me hope, if they could persevere so could I. Special thanks to MCOA and The Office of Elder Affairs as they have never lost sight or waived support in direction of our community members, our questions, concerns, solutions, or even bright, work-

able ideas to share amongst other COAs. Their clear focus being always on our Massachusetts Senior Population and helping navigate the ever changing foggy terrain, week to week at the many meetings we attended. MDPH and Gov. Baker also kept us up to date with regular meetings, about virus transmission, masking, social distancing, schools, contact tracing, vaccine sign ups and clinics. COAs were always invited to leave questions we wanted answers to before any meetings.

Margaret Bussiere,  
Director Dudley COA







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**Chief's corner**

**Respect funeral processions on the roads**

By Chief Steven J. Wojnar  
Dudley Police Department

One question I am frequently asked, concerns driver's responsibilities when happening upon a funeral procession. I have written about this subject previously, however it is always beneficial to remind people of these activities. Our officers escort many of these events throughout the course of a year and violations can occur on a regular basis even then.

Drivers who are not part of the funeral will quite frequently ignore the rules relative to these proces-

sions by "cutting" into or across the procession. I was asked to clarify the laws and etiquette drivers should observe at these times.

Funerals have the right of way while traveling on the roads. They are given special privileges as well. Only the first vehicle in line is required to stop at a red signal or stop sign. The others following are not required to stop. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 272 Section 42 prohibits anyone from willfully interrupting "by driving fast or otherwise in any way disturbing a funeral

assembly or procession." Punishments include fines or a jail sentence of up to one month.

Most funeral parlors provide some form of signage for participants to advise fellow motorists of the procession. Vehicles can use their headlights and/or hazard lights to provide additional warning. Drivers should be observant of traffic and pay special attention to the possibility of a funeral passing by. This is of particular concern when a driver happens upon the middle of a procession. It may take a

period of extra observation to understand what may be happening. Drivers should take the time to look for the magnetic signs, high beam headlights, hazard flashers, etc. These processions can be regular weekday occurrences in town. They are generally short in duration. Waiting for a few moments is the lawful thing to do. It is also a last token of respect for the deceased individual being brought to their final resting place.

**COVID vaccines**

For those still seeking vaccination information, it

can be found at www.dudleyma.gov or by calling 508-949-8036. Please continue moving forward with the "re-opening" of our state in a reasonable manner. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. This has been a challenging year plus for everyone. We, at the Dudley Police Department, greatly appreciate the support we receive from our community.

*Thanks again for your questions and comments. Please send them to me at the Dudley Police Department 71 West Main St. Dudley, Ma. 01571 or email at swojnar@dudleypolice.com. Opinions expressed in this weekly column are those of Chief Wojnar only and unless clearly noted, do not reflect the ideas or opinions of any other organization or citizen.*

**Dudley Conservation Land Trust native bulb and pollinator sale**



The Dudley Conservation Land Trust (DCLT) is offering native and pollinator bulbs for sale. The sale will continue thru September or until supplies last. Orders will be available for pick-up in time for fall planting. Proceeds will support and expand DCLT's land stewardship efforts to enhance visitor experiences now and in the future.

Sanctuaries in Dudley and Oxford exceed 400 acres. DCLT is dedicated to preserving and enhancing open space for our community to enjoy. We strive to provide the best possible habitat for native plants and animals. We also provide visitor-friendly trail experiences to educate and inspire the public about surrounding natural beauty.

Our fall fundraiser sale will feature spring bulbs native to and raised in the eastern US and friendly to native pollinators. These include Spring Beauty, Trout Lily, Blood Root, Great White Trillium, Red Trillium, Dutchman's Breeches, Virginia Bluebells, Crested Iris and Rue Anemone. For added spring cheer, we will also include "Sweetness" Daffodil, a yellow single or jonquilla early bloomer, also favored by our native pollinators. These little beauties will naturalize over the years for a rich display each spring.

In addition, DCLT plans to sponsor a free presentation in the fall on native plants (including some from our bulb sale), open to all. Stay tuned for the launch of our fall native and pollinator-friendly bulb sale on our website: www.dudleyclt.org. So, get your trowels ready, support the Dudley Conservation Land Trust and plant away.

- Nancy Vajcovec, DCLT Clerk

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## Prayer

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

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

Believer



## The Last Green Valley is offering a TerraCorps (AmeriCorps) position

The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV) has been selected by TerraCorps, an AmeriCorps affiliated environmental non-profit, to be a Service Site for the 2021-22 TerraCorps program year. This partnership will allow TLGV to host a Youth Education Coordinator in a full-time, 11-month service position from August 2021 to July 2022.

As part of TerraCorps, TLGV's Youth Education Coordinator will spend their service term supporting the local community by developing partnerships, leading programming and engaging with volunteers. The coordinator will collaborate with TLGV's Board of Directors and staff to create new inclusive programming and evolve current programming to engage new audiences, such as youth, young families and racially and economically diverse communities.

As a TerraCorps Member, the Youth Education Coordinator will have the opportunity to gain hands-on experience serving with a local non-profit and will receive professional development, training and mentorship. As part of TerraCorps, Members will also receive a living allowance, and will be eligible for healthcare coverage, childcare coverage, loan forbearance and an education award through AmeriCorps.

TerraCorps is currently accepting applications. If you are interested in learning more about how serving with TerraCorps will offer you professional experience and opportunity in the conservation sector by service with The Last Green Valley,

please visit [Terracorps.org](http://Terracorps.org). For questions about serving with TerraCorps, please contact Lianna Lee, Chief Program Officer at [llee@terracorps.org](mailto:llee@terracorps.org).

For additional information about the opportunity to serve with The Last Green Valley, please visit [TheLastGreenValley.org](http://TheLastGreenValley.org) or contact Lois Bruinooge at

860 774-3300 or [lois@tlgv.org](mailto:lois@tlgv.org).

The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor is the last stretch of dark night sky in the coastal sprawl between Boston and Washington, D.C. The Last Green Valley, Inc. works for you in the National Heritage Corridor. Together we can care for it, enjoy it and pass it on.



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Tips on financial planning

# Don't let investments go on vacation



**Dennis Antonopoulos**

Now that we've gained at least some space from the COVID-19 pandemic, summer travel is heating up. But while you might be eager to hit the road, you won't want your investments to take a vacation – you need them to work hard for you consistently. But how can you make this happen?

Here are some ideas:

- Know your destination. "If

you don't know where you want to go, then it doesn't matter which path you take." This bit of wisdom, paraphrased from the classic children's book, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, may be appropriate for, say, hikers exploring a new landscape. But as an investor, it matters a great deal which path you take. If you only dabble in investing, occasionally putting some money into one investment or another, it will be difficult to build a portfolio that's consistently working in your best interest. It's important to create a long-term investment strategy based on where you want to go in life – that is, how long you plan to work, what sort of

retirement lifestyle you envision, and so on.

• Match goals with investments. Some investments are designed to achieve certain goals. To illustrate: When you contribute to an IRA and a 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored plan, you're investing for one specific, long-term goal: a comfortable retirement. While you can tap into these accounts for other purposes – though doing so might incur immediate taxes and penalties – they are designed to provide you with income during your retirement years. Similarly, you may have other investments for other purposes, such as a 529 education savings plan. Here's the key point: Goals-based investing,

by its nature, can help ensure your portfolio is always working on your behalf, in the way you intended.

• Invest for growth. Ideally, hard work produces results, and one of the main results you want from your investments is growth – that is, you want your investments to appreciate in value so they can eventually help you meet your goals. But if you are overconcentrated in vehicles such as certificates of deposit (CDs) and government securities, you may end up lowering your growth potential. That's not to say that CDs and Treasury bills are in some sense "lazy." They can provide you with income and help you reduce the impact of market volatility on

your portfolio. But to achieve most of your goals, you'll need a reasonable number of growth-oriented investments working for you, with the exact percentage based on your needs and life stages.

• Check your progress. How else can you ensure your investments aren't just taking it easy? By checking up on them. If you follow a buy-and-hold strategy, your portfolio shouldn't require many changes if it already reflects your goals, risk tolerance and time horizon. Too much buying and selling could jeopardize your ability to follow a consistent, long-term strategy. However, "buy and hold" doesn't mean "buy and for-

get." By reviewing your portfolio at least once a year, you can determine if your investments are performing as they should. If they're not working for you as you'd like, you may need to make some changes.

If you're traveling this summer, relax and enjoy yourself – but keep those investments working hard.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert Street, Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com. Edward Jones Member SIPC*

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**RE: Real Estate**



**Mark Marzeotti**

Eighty nine percent of sellers list their home with a real estate agent. The sellers surveyed listed trustworthiness, responsiveness, local market knowledge, a good reputation in the community, and a strong sales track record as the most important attributes in a top-notch agent.

A great real estate agent can make a huge difference in many aspects of your selling experience, from your stress level to your profits. I want to share the many benefits of selling with a local agent, and share with you what it will cost you.

*What is the standard commission for a real estate agent?*

Real estate agents work on a commission basis, making a percentage of the sale or purchase price of the home their client is buying or selling. Typically, as a seller, you'll pay 6 percent of the sale price, with half of the total serving as the buyer's agent's commission.

Keep in mind that the commission may be negotiable up front, depending on local market factors or your own situation. For example, if you're going to be using the same agent to help you sell your house and also to

# Why use a real estate agent to sell your home?

buy your new home, you may be able to negotiate a lower rate since they'll be getting two commissions.

*What is the difference between a listing agent and a buyers agent?*

The listing agent, also known as a sellers agent, works for the seller to help them sell their house, from listing to closing. The buyers agent works for the buyer, guiding them through the process of finding a home they love, into negotiations, and all the way through closing.

*Benefits of using a listing agent*

You might ask yourself, "Why use a real estate agent to sell my home?" There are a number of services and plenty of expertise a real estate agent can provide, so it's important for each seller to take a look at the list of benefits and decide if an agent is worth the expense.

1. Real estate agents provide local housing market expertise:
  - We have access to a comprehensive list of comparable homes and understand the value of homes in your area.
  - Taking into consideration the current market conditions, we can strategize ways to craft the optimal selling approach, with the goal of earning the highest possible return on your home.
  - We can guide you to setting the right price for your home, one that will allow you to both pocket as much money as you can while selling in a timely manner.
  - We understand local hous-

ing codes and can point out any red flags on your property that buyers (and their home inspectors) will find.

- We can recommend the specific home improvements that matter most to buyers in your area.
2. Real estate agents market your listing:
    - We can provide recommendations for staging your home.
    - We can hire a professional photographer to take great listing photos including drone pictures. Common practice for Marzeotti group.
    - Creating an enticing listing description of a property is an art form, and a skilled agent can call out features local buyers are looking for.
    - We list your property on the MLS and online real estate sites like Zillow. In fact, agents have access to many more listing outlets than sellers who are listing on their own.
    - We host open houses and showings, physically showing your home to buyers.
    - We serve as a buffer between you and all potential buyers, fielding calls, answering questions, and scheduling showings.
  3. Real estate agents network with other agents to increase buyer interest:
    - We may show your home to an agent-only crowd to increase buzz and spread the word.
    - We talk to other agents about

your home, positioning it as a match for their buyers.

- Homes sold by agents are typically more appealing to buyers agents, as they know they'll get a commission on the sale.
4. Real estate agents handle your negotiations:
    - We vet all potential buyers, identifying the serious offers.
    - We skillfully work with the buyer's agent to get you an offer that meets your needs in terms of price, timing, and repairs.
    - We help you make smart decisions on negotiating counter-offers.
  5. Real estate agents ease the

selling process:

- Selling a home comes with a lot of paperwork, and your real estate agent will handle it all.
- Professional real estate agents keep an eye out for deal loopholes and unusual requests, and read all the fine print.
- In a multiple-offer situation, they'll help you identify the pros and cons of each offer, making your decision easier.
- We'll recommend when you should counteroffer and when you should accept the deal.

*How do I hire a real estate agent?*

There are lots of ways to find

a great local real estate agent. A great way is to ask friends and family members for referrals and searching online. Sometimes it is clear who you should choose based on local newspapers and other advertising media.

You'll also want to pay attention to the duration of your agent's contract. If you're working with an agent you haven't worked with before, you may want to go with a short contract term, so that if your house doesn't sell quickly, you can pivot to an agent who better fits your needs.

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