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INSIDE

Samuel Slater Experience a testament to perseverance

By Rod Lee

Like Samuel Slater, Christopher Robert knows a little something about perseverance.

Which is why the words “congratulations, Chris,” uttered over and over, must have been satisfying for Mr. Robert to hear the evening of March 3, as he greeted well-wishers at the grand opening reception for the Samuel Slater Experience on Ray St. in Webster.

The museum pays tribute to the young Brit and manufacturing entrepreneur who has been called “the father of the American Industrial Revolution.”

Mr. Robert certainly identifies with Samuel Slater’s story. Especially the part, as portrayed in a video that visitors get a chance to see, in which he is discouraged from coming to America for the purpose of building spinning mills. Described as “a brilliant apprentice with a near-photographic memory and an ambitious nature,” Samuel Slater was indeed having second thoughts during his more than two-month voyage across the Atlantic, saying at one point “I should have stayed in England.”

The video presentation is an immersive one, featuring a ship with sails, rigging and stern fittings and such elements as wind, sea spray and lightning.

Samuel Slater stayed the course, and Chris Robert did too.

Mr. Robert must also have had his misgivings, however, as he set about converting the 17,000-square-foot former National Guard Armory building into a tribute to Mr. Slater and town of Webster community life. Undeterred by the task of updating the wiring, plumbing and heating and dealing with a roof that leaked and windows that were unsealed and broken, he invested \$6 million of his own money into the project.

“I’ve been through it three times when it was just plywood,” Carl Kaliszewski of Five Eleven Financial in Webster said at the grand opening. “In a year, what a difference.”



Samuel Slater Experience founder Chris Robert and Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito cut the ribbon to officially open the museum, flanked by Ross Lavoie, Selectman Randy Becker, State Rep. Joe McKenna and State Sen. Ryan Fattman.

Asked a week or so later for some follow-up comments about Mr. Robert, Mr. Kaliszewski said “Chris is kind of a private guy. I know him mostly through local events I attend. I did introduce him at a meeting of the Webster-Dudley Business Alliance in February. I can’t say enough about him. The accolades he is receiving are appropriate. I was dismayed about the political thing” (when Mr. Robert was attempting to put the Indian Princess paddleboat into service on Webster Lake nine years ago). “The town gave him the hardest time; now he is a hero for creating the museum. They fought him tooth and nail and he was just trying to do something good for the town.”

Mr. Kaliszewski said he and others were fortunate to get an advance look at the Samuel Slater Experience as it began coming together, “to see the progress, Chris’s vision and drive. He is someone who just loves to work within the community.”

Exhibits at the museum range from an 18th-century loom such as women would have used in their homes during that time period to soundly constructed cottages for workers, a typical mill worker’s bedroom and kitchen, the office

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EL PATRON

Opens in Oxford
PAGE 4

OXFORD FOOD SHELF

Provides healthy foods
PAGE 9

LIVING ON WITH LINCOLN

A March puppy
PAGE 11

TALES FROM BEYOND

Charles Haskell ghostly crew
PAGE 12

New Webster Town Administrator LaFond impressed by town’s citizens

By Janet Stoica

He’s been at his new position of Town Administrator since February 8 and has plenty of praise for the town’s department heads as well as for its residents.

Richard LaFond is a native of Brockton, graduated from Brockton High School, obtained his bachelor’s degree in history and public administration from Stonehill College, then received a master’s degree in public administration from Suffolk University.

His background and respect for history has served to impress him with Webster’s new Samuel Slater Experience and its cutting edge and futuristic displays. “The amount of detail and development that went into this museum is absolutely amazing,” he said, “and the level of giving by the Webster townspeople is truly inspiring. To have so many people come together for the benefit of all citizens is incredible.” Mr. LaFond attended the recent ribbon-cutting for the official opening of the new museum.

Mr. LaFond has met with just about every department head in town and has been given a town tour by many of the managers. “It’s interesting to see and hear what each manager is focused on when it comes to their job,” he said. “Every riding tour was different and each focus was different but all the final results came down to how the town can keep moving forward for the better. Obviously you can’t help but appreciate the urban and rural parts of town. Webster Lake is spectacular and a great asset to the town and the infrastructure has been nicely improved as well. This town has really moved for-



Webster Town Administrator Richard LaFond.

ward in the last 10 years. It’s an attractive place for someone like me that appreciates the history of its past shoe manufacturing and textile industries. People here really appreciate their roots.”

Mr. LaFond’s goals are to continue to work closely with department heads and the Board of Selectmen, while assisting with more downtown economic development and maintaining a strong fiscal environment for the town. He noted that soon state aid like that from ARPA grants will go away and

Continued on page 2

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Lt. Governor Karyn Polito presents citation to Chris Robert.



Chris and Bev Robert with museum designer Doug Mund.

SAMUEL SLATER EXPERIENCE

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Samuel Slater used, an interactive “create-your-own-textile” station, a waterwheel and a trolley car.

Barbara Van Reed, who is managing the museum for Mr. Robert, said “we were honored to have Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito attend the ribbon-cutting ceremony (on March 4th). She noted in her remarks that several people had invited and encouraged her to come. She took a tour afterwards and we have some great pictures of her on the ship and on the trolley, very much enjoying the experience.”

Ms. Van Reed said the museum saw “a steady stream of visitors on the first weekend and we trust that will continue. We’ve booked a number of school field trips for this school year still, as well as senior groups.”

The museum is open to the public year-round with hours of 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and

noon to 4 on Sunday. Private events and group visits are scheduled separately.

Mr. Robert’s goal in creating the Samuel Slater Experience was to bring history to life and make learning fun for students of all ages.

“Most don’t expect a live-

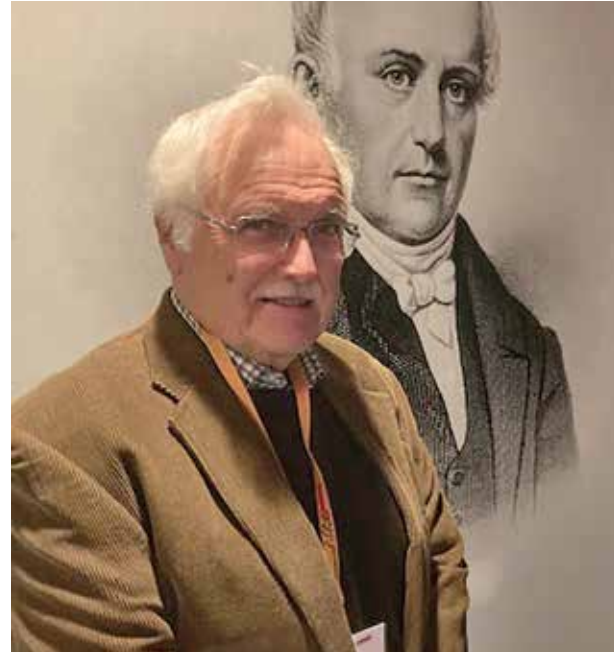
ly experience,” walking through, Mr. Robert said.

But that’s exactly what they get, in a Disneyesque atmosphere.

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.



Carl Kaliszewski of Five Eleven Financial attended the grand opening of the Samuel Slater Experience and says the museum’s creator Christopher Robert deserves all the praise he is getting for bringing the project to completion.



Richard Clark of Dudley helps guide visitors through the Samuel Slater Experience.



The Samuel Slater Guard participated in the Samuel Slater Experience grand opening and fired a volley after the ribbon cutting ceremony.



Enjoying a trolley ride are Bev Robert, Rep. Joe McKenna, Jeannie Hebert, Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito and Monique Messier of Discover Central Mass.

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RICHARD LaFOND

Continued from page 1

new ways must be found to obtain needed funding.

He sees a full-time fire department, approved by the townspeople, as a priority. “We have several positions that have been grant-funded,” he said, “and now the town will have to incorporate those positions into the budget. The policy decision has been made at Town Meeting and it’s our goal to maintain and achieve these objectives.”

The town budget is on Mr. LaFond’s radar currently. “Every town has revenue nuances and each town has its own targets. Budgeting isn’t just about accounting, it’s about people,” he said, working with our depart-

ment heads and staff trying to focus on and facilitate the best we can. Budgeting can be very divisive so working to keep people moving in the same direction and respecting what each department wants to achieve is very important.”

When asked about making Webster a greener community, Mr. LaFond indicated that he has worked with the state’s Green Communities Division (“GCD”) in his past positions with the towns of Abington and Carver. The GCD provides grants, technical assistance, and local support from regional coordinators to assist cities and towns reduce their energy use and costs by implementing clean energy projects in municipal buildings, facilities, and schools. “I appreciate what we can accom-

plish with our buildings and roads. It’s something that our grandchildren can enjoy,” he said. “It’s beyond balancing a budget. All aspects will go on well beyond all our times here.”

Overall, Mr. LaFond is greatly impressed by the town’s momentum in moving forward from the new buildings like the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library and Park Avenue Elementary School to roadway improvements and new business openings. He appreciates the warm welcome he received from the community and the goodwill extended to him and looks forward to being part of that momentum.

Contact Janet: jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

Dean at Bryant Zhuhai campus named provost at Nichols College



Daniel J. Borgia, PhD

DUDLEY – Nichols College has appointed Daniel J. Borgia, PhD, dean and professor of finance at Bryant University-BITZH, as provost, to start on April 1.

“Dan is a seasoned and versatile institutional leader who will bring Nichols College to the forefront of curricular innovation, engagement, and impact,” said Nichols College President Glenn M. Sulmasy, JD, LL.M. “His vast international experience and scholarship will advance our mission of creating global leaders.”

At Bryant University-BITZH, a joint cooperative program between Bryant and Beijing Institute of Technology Zhuhai, Borgia oversees all aspects of academic leadership, including program planning, development and management, a position he has held since 2017. Previously, he was dean of the Richard J. Wehle School of Business at Canisius College, associate dean in the College of Business at the University of Idaho, initial associate dean at Nottingham University Business School China, founding faculty member at Florida Gulf Coast University and founding Director of its Institute of Chinese Studies.

“I am incredibly honored to be named provost at such an important time in Nichols College history,” said Dr. Borgia. “I am excited about the contributions that I believe I can make to this great institution and look forward to working with President Sulmasy and all members of the college community to provide our students with an outstanding education, place graduates in significant professional roles, and help Nichols realize its full potential and advance its national and international reputation.”

A former China Fulbright Scholar, Borgia has written extensively on international business and finance with reference to China, working capital financing, entrepreneurial finance, and financial education. He is a prolific author and co-author with close to 100 peer-reviewed articles, presentations, and proceedings.

Borgia received his PhD at Kent State University, his MBA at Gannon University, and his BS at Cornell University.

He succeeds Mauri Pelto, PhD, who transitioned from vice president of academic affairs to the role of associate provost and special advisor to the president for accreditation and assessment.

Fattman lists \$405,396 in Workforce training grants

BOSTON – State Senator Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton) and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development (EOLWD) announced that three organizations in the Worcester-Norfolk Senate District would be receiving a total of \$405,396 in Workforce Training Fund Program (WTFP) grants.

Funded by Massachusetts employers via contributions made to unemployment insurance, the Workforce Training Fund helps companies improve productivity and competitiveness by providing resources to invest in the Massachusetts workforce. In partnership with EOLWD, Commonwealth Corporation

reviews and awards training grants of up to \$250,000 to Massachusetts businesses and consortia of businesses to fund training for current and newly hired employees. Grants are awarded on a rolling basis throughout the year. In FY21, more than 500 Massachusetts employers were approved for more than \$20 million in WTFP grant-funded training for more than 13,000 workers. The program is a powerful tool to create new jobs, increase skills and opportunities for our workers, and maintain the economic strength and viability of the Commonwealth’s businesses.

The following businesses received grants in Senator

Fattman’s district:

- Interscope of Northbridge was awarded \$144,200 to train 10 workers; 4 additional jobs are expected by 2023;
- Jeffco Fibres of Webster was awarded \$19,200 to train 9 workers; 4 additional jobs are expected by 2023; and
- Primetals Technologies of Sutton was awarded \$241,996 to train 77 workers; 4 additional jobs are expected by 2023.


“Congratulations are in order for the three businesses in my district that put in the hard work to receive these competitive grants,” said Senator Fattman. “This program serves an important purpose in a time where

the way we do business is constantly changing. I look forward to seeing these businesses grow and thrive in our community.”

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Bienvenido, amigos! El Patron Corona opens in Oxford

By Rod Lee

In no time at all, the new El Patron Corona restaurant on Sutton Ave. in Oxford has won the hearts of the dining public.

El Patron Corona is the fourth restaurant in a group owned by brothers Felix and Jose Bracamontes. The others are in Northborough (Rancho Corona), Lynn (Ha-

cienda Corona) and Marblehead (Casa Corona).

El Patron Corona held a grand opening in late February in Oxford Crossing, a busy plaza near the on-off ramps for I-395 that is anchored by a Market Basket, a Home Depot and a Dollar Tree. It settled into space formerly occupied by Ox Bar &

Grill in the northeast side of the plaza.

A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held on March 4.

If there was any doubt about the appeal of “authentic Mexican cuisine” in the town of Oxford, it has been quickly dispelled. On a mid-afternoon Wednesday, El Patron Corona was busy with patrons coming and going in quest of fare from a wide-ranging menu. In addition to appetizers, street tacos, pollos, mariscos, carnes, burritos and rancho quesadillas, there are such house specials as Steak Torero (a twelve-ounce New York steak, flame broiled and topped with sautéed onions, green peppers and mushrooms and covered with red sauce and melted cheese served with rice and refried beans.

Borrego Don Matute (lamb shank marinated in a delicious red chili pepper sauce, baked slowly until tender and served with marinade sauce, rice, refried beans, Pico De Gallo and avocado slices is another staple.

Las Fajitas, pork dishes, veggie dishes, egg dishes, sopas, enchiladas and ensaladas are all available at El Patron Corona, as are small combinations and large combinations.

The restaurant is open for lunch and dinner.

Festive Mexican music played continuously on March 2nd, contributing to a festive atmosphere.

“Our customers are nice, we have had no complaints so far,” Oscar Battista, a server, said, as he moved back and forth from the din-

ing room to the reception booth.

One man walking into the restaurant saw a hat sitting on a stool and said, jokingly, “do I have to wear the sombrero?”

Breaking away from his work in the kitchen, Oscar Araiza, an owner of El Patron Corona with Jose Bracamontes (Mr. Araiza is also a manager), said, when asked “why Oxford?” as the newest location for the company, “we like this town. I was in Northborough for two years before coming here. Our restaurants are doing well.”

With such established restaurants as Oxfords Casual Dining, the Whistle Stop and J Anthony’s (on the Oxford-



Oscar Araiza is owner/manager of the new El Patron Corona in Oxford; the family restaurant features authentic Mexican cuisine.

Auburn town line), pizza shops, and Chinese eateries, El Patron Corona seems like the next good fit in Oxford as alternative fare.

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.

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The bar at El Patron Corona in Oxford.



Ernie and Rebecca Hart of Upton and Ernie's brother Peter and his wife Deborah enjoy lunch at El Patron Corona in Oxford the afternoon of March 2.

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United Way awards \$60,000 to after-school programs

SOUTHBRIDGE: Pre-K students to seniors in high school will benefit from three programs recently designated as recipients for United Way of South Central MA funds on behalf of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education After School and Out of School grants.

The first round of grants was specifically for out of school time programs that would benefit students in towns that have a high need for assistance to help students re-engage and rebound from almost two years of restricted learning opportunities. United Way of South Central Mass. Executive Director, Mary O'Coin announced the grants on Monday, March 7. "After reviewing the applications that were received the ASOST-R Grant Committee selected the following programs to receive this first round of funding. We look forward to receiving more applications in the coming months for summer 2022 programs and next school year's after-school programs. These grants are making it possible to offer 'out of the box' thinking for students of all ages."

Southbridge Public Schools applied for a before school "Smart Start" program for Pre-K to second-grade students at Eastford Road Elementary School. The purpose of this program is to offer families a before-school option that will impact and increase student attendance, prepare students for their school day and enrich early literacy and social skills by encouraging students to participate in "Play," "Act" or "Construct" activities embedded with foundational school readiness and pro-social skills.

The second program in Southbridge is Growing, Reaching, and Developing (GRAD). GRAD is designed for the enrichment, empowerment, and development of high school students. This program fosters learning and awareness in the issues of food insecurity. High school students will learn the power of growing and harvesting, the benefits of healthy eating, and the importance of eliminating hunger. The program will be held at Catholic Charities; 79 Elm St. location, and be run as a collaboration with Mirurka Torres, Catholic Charities South County Area Administrator and Worcester based 2Gether We Eat. Ms. Torres stated, "Catholic Charities is excited to raise awareness about food insecurities and social justice by empowering our community youth to be agents of change and transforming learned STEM knowledge into action."

The third program will take place at the Boys and Girls Club of Webster and Dudley. Offering an onsite Robotics and Stem program provided by Our Bright Future. Students from Webster and Dudley Middle Schools will have an opportunity to regis-

ter for this robotics program, which includes entering the exciting world of programming Lego Mindstorm robotics and creating unique objects for 3D printers. During these sessions students will also

receive homework help and an opportunity to participate in planned sports activities. OBF Founder and CEO Kwasi Acheampong stated "This is a huge win for the students of Webster/Dudley. Our robotics

program has a heavy focus on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM), and allows students to learn in a fun hands-on way. Students learn how to design, build, and program a robot to complete tasks. In our 3D printing program, students create objects using 3D modeling software and then program a 3D printer to make the object."



Student building a Lego MindStorm Robot

Woodstock Academy to support displaced Ukrainian students

WOODSTOCK, CT - The Woodstock Academy is actively working with global educational partners to welcome students from Ukraine who have been displaced due to the war. The first student was set to arrive on March 21, with a total of five to seven students expected to join The Academy family.

"Like many, we are watching what is happening in Ukraine and we are concerned for the families and citizens who are under attack and are currently being displaced. Also, like many, we are asking ourselves what we can do to support the people of Ukraine," Assistant Head of School for Enrollment Amy Favreau said.

Preparations include working on logistics for international study, equipping the boarding environment, and tailoring to specific educational and medical needs for each student. Tuition, room, and board will be provided free of charge for the remainder of the 2021-22 school year.

"This work is truly in line with our mission statement and who we are as an institution," said Chris Sandford, head of school.

To help support this mission, and welcome more students in need, The Woodstock Academy is seeking financial support from its community partners. To discuss financial support or other ways to help, please contact Associate Head of School for Advancement Jonathan Sturdevant at jsturdevant@woodstockacademy.org, or call (860) 928-6575 ext. 1211.

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By Chief Steven J. Wojnar
Dudley Police Department

I wanted to take this opportunity to inform residents that on Saturday, April 30 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., the Dudley Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will once again give the public an opportunity to prevent pill abuse and theft by ridding their homes of potentially dangerous expired, unused, and unwanted prescription drugs. This has been a popular and much requested program in the past. Since these usually

take place in the spring and fall, people have inquired about it. I wanted to take this opportunity to remind everyone of the details.

The Drug Take Back has been held several times over the years in Dudley. The service is free and anonymous, no questions asked. This initiative addresses a vital public safety and health need. Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to diversion, misuse, and abuse. Rates of prescription drug abuse in the U.S.

are alarmingly high, as are the number of accidental poisonings and overdoses. Studies show that most of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including from the home medicine cabinet. In addition, people are advised that their usual methods for disposing of unused medicines—flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash—both pose potential safety and health hazards. Thanks to the effort of District Attorney Joseph Early's Office, we now have a permanent Drug Disposal Kiosk located in our Police Station Lobby. These items can now be disposed of locally at any time during the year. Other communities have these kiosks at their police stations or other town buildings. If you are not from Dudley, be sure to check with your community for one of these disposal locations.

In addition to the pre-

scription disposal, we will work with officials from Harrington Hospital to dispose of medical sharps (needles, etc.) on this same day. Collection bins will be on hand to dispose of these items properly and safely as well. A number of these programs will take place on April 30th in communities all over the area. If you are not a Dudley resident, please check with your local officials for a disposal site near you. In Dudley, bring your medications to The Dudley Police Department located inside the Dudley Municipal Complex at 71 West Main Street, Dudley. Please take some time over the next week to check your medicine cabinets for old or unused medications and plan to drop them off for safe disposal. We thank everyone in advance for their participation in this worthwhile program.

For those still seeking COVID-19 vaccination or other information, it can be found

at www.dudleyma.gov or by calling 508-949-8036. We encourage everyone to continue to be safe. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. These times continue to be challenging and 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.

1000 book reader

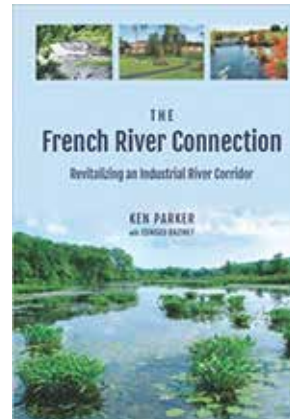


Alyssa Landry (aged not-quite-3) of Dudley, just completed the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program at the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library.

The French River book

If you have ever wondered about the river that winds through our communities, there is now a book that recounts efforts to revitalize that natural source of power and beauty.

The French River Connection, Inc. has recently published a book detailing the origin and accomplishments of the local organization to revitalize the French River. The book can be read online at www.frenchriverconnection.org. It is also available at the Dudley, Webster and Oxford libraries, and can



be ordered at Amazon. The author of the book is Ken Parker, with Edward Bazinet.

Help tell the story of newly opened Samuel Slater Experience

Volunteers needed

Slater Experience Guides are volunteer hosts of the Samuel Slater Experience (SSE) who support and enhance visitors' experiences throughout their tour of the museum.

As knowledgeable emissaries, they greet visitors, assist with self-guided tours, supply transitional and anecdotal information for each exhibit, explain the digital technology and techniques used, and answer specific questions about the Samuel Slater story, the founding of Webster, and the history of the Samuel Slater Experience.

Requirements

Slater Experience Guides are expected to share an interest and enthusiasm for the history of the American Industrial Revolution and the town of Webster.

They should have good people skills and the ability to actively interact with children, school groups, and adults in public speaking settings.

Volunteer Experience Guides are asked to make a one-year commitment and be available for at least two 3-hour shifts per month during SSE's hours of operation, including at least two weekend days each quarter.

SSE will provide periodic training sessions covering all aspects of the museum, the technology, and the building. Slater Experience Guides must be able to attend Slater Experience Guide Orientation and Training and are expected to review additional material as periodically provided or approved by SSE in order to stay up to date on any changes, additions or deletions, and to broaden their knowledge of our mission.

Benefits

Experience guides will receive a family pass for free entry to the museum during their tenure as volunteers. They will receive a 20% discount in the gift shop, a 20% discount on event rentals, and invitations to special events.

For an application form, contact Reanna Kuzdzal at 528-461-2955 or email rkuzdzal@samuel Slater Experience.org. Applicants will be asked to come in for an in-person interview.



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Dudley resident named MAPFRE Community Champion

MAPFRE Foundation recently named MAPFRE employee Carol Watroba of Dudley among its 2021 Community Champions, as part of its annual corporate volunteer award program.

The program recognizes employees who are passionate about volunteering and participate in activities during the year to help their communities.

Watroba, who works at MAPFRE in Webster, was recognized for her various community activities, including assisting the Webster/Dudley Veteran's Council with Memorial Day Flag placements at local cemeter-



Carol Watroba

ies, and volunteering at the Best Buddies Friendship Walk held at the MAPFRE campus in Webster and the Dudley Boy Scouts yard sale.

TLGV cleanup and greenup funds

It's almost time to cleanup and green up The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor. The Last Green Valley, Inc. (TLGV) has committed cleanup and green up funds for 2022 to help organizations and municipalities organize events.

The program is funded, in part, thanks to the support of bankHometown. bankHometown has been a supporter of TLGV since 2008 and has sponsored the cleanup program since 2019.

In the last 10 years, 11,498 volunteers have collected 504,003 pounds of trash from

parks, rivers and roadways throughout The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor thanks to the program. TLGV is expanding the program this year to include efforts to plant pollinator gardens or eradicate invasive species harming the region's ecosystem. Organizations and municipalities working in The Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor can request up to \$500 in funding. Those with projects outside the corridor, but still in the Thames River watershed, can request up to \$250 in funding.

Funding recipients will be

reimbursed for expenses such as publicity, cleanup supplies such as trash bags, work gloves, small gardening tools, native seeds and plantings, and food for your volunteers. TLGV will also help publicize the event and recruit more volunteers. Application details can be found at TheLastGreenValley.org under "Grant Op-

portunities" in the "Learn & Protect" menu.

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.

Earth Day Clean-up

WEBSTER - Earth Day Clean-up will take place on Saturday, April 30, from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon. Gather at the front of town hall for supplies. Then either be assigned a spot to beautify or pick your own. As always we say a big thanks to all the volunteers who come out to help.

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Photo L-R: Ron Prest Sr. Vice Commander, Bob Guenther Treasurer, Joe Sendrowski Veterans Council Military Honor Guard Chaplain, Victor Jankowski Commander, Stephen Rogerson Jr. Vice Commander, Jim Brinker Sergeant-At-Arms, Half-hidden - Paul Brodeur who swore in the new officers.

Installation of the Veterans Council Webster/Dudley

On Wednesday, March 2, the Veterans Council of Webster and Dudley held installation of officers. The Veterans Council is an organization which coordinates with other military service organizations such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans and the Polish American Veterans in Webster and Dudley. The

Veterans Council synchronizes the events which all organizations take part in to be able to act as one unit such as the Honor Guard for Military Veterans, the parades, and the maintenance and upkeep of the military monuments, and various other activities. This organization is instrumental in maintaining communication and order between all the

differing organizations in our community.

All veterans in the Community should get involved with one of the above mentioned veteran's organizations. Everyone has something valuable to contribute and it is an opportunity to have your ideas heard and perhaps help to make Webster and Dudley a better place to live.

Spaghetti Dinner

The Auburn Historical Society is holding its Annual Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser on Saturday, April 9, at the Pakachoag Church, 203 Pakachoag St. in Auburn. It will be a take-out meal only with pick-up times from 4:30 - 6:00 p.m. There will also be 50:50 and basket drawings.

Advance tickets for the

supper are required and may be purchased for \$15 each at the Auburn Historical Society Museum at 41 South Street on Tuesdays or Saturdays between 9:30 - 12:30 or by calling the museum at 508-832-6856.

Donations of baskets or gift cards for the drawings are welcome. Baskets will

be displayed, and drawing tickets can be purchased, at the museum the morning of Saturday April 9. They will also be available at the Pakachoag Church during meal pick-up times. Please let the Auburn Historical Society know if you are interested in donating to the drawings.

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You'll end up singing your favorite hits!

Food will be available throughout the day

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday, April 3

The Easter Bunny is coming to town. He will hide eggs at Memorial Beach for you to find on April 3 at 2 p.m. You may even talk him into having a picture with him. Please be there for line up by 1:45. We will divide into 3 groups. Age groups are 0-4, 5-8, and 9+.



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<p style="font-size: x-small;">MIDEA REFRIGERATOR Stainless Steel Bottom Freezer</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">\$1099⁹⁹</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">WAS \$1199.99</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">AMANA GAS RANGE #AGR1533CBAS • Stainless Steel</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">\$549⁹⁹</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">WAS \$649.99</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">GE FRONT LOAD WASHER #GFWS50SSNWW</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">\$849⁹⁹</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">WAS \$999.99</p>		<p style="font-size: x-small;">WHIRLPOOL REFRIGERATOR #WRGA59CNKZ • Counter Depth</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">\$2199⁹⁹</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">WAS \$2399.99</p>
<p style="font-size: x-small;">WHIRLPOOL ELECTRIC STOVE #WFE35S0LS • With Air Fry</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">\$899⁹⁹</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">WAS \$999.99</p>	<p style="font-size: x-small;">AMANA MICROWAVE #JYM3160RFSS</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; color: red;">\$259⁹⁹</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">WAS \$329.99</p>			

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Oxford Food Shelf provides healthy food necessities

By Janet Stoica

Without teamwork and great generosity from the churches, businesses, and wonderful people of Oxford, those among us who may need an extra bit of help with food assistance wouldn't be so blessed. The Oxford Food Shelf, run by the Oxford Ecumenical Council, consisting of the eight churches in the town of Oxford (First Baptist Church, First Congregational Church, Grace Episcopal Church, Oak Hill Bible Church, St. Ann's Catholic Church, St. Roch's Catholic Church, United Methodist Church, and Zion Lutheran Church) has been in existence for more than 45 years and is one of the most organized and focused groups in the area that provides food and other vital staples to its clients while also providing dietary guidelines for those who have come to depend on their offerings.

"We want to reach everyone who needs us," says Christina St. Martin, chairperson of the Oxford Ecumenical Council, "we are reaching out to all who need us and have made several changes since COVID to assist those in need of not only everyday foods but we are ensuring there are plenty of healthy food choices as well as including everyday household staples like paper towels, dish and laundry detergents, diapers, baby formula, baby food, and gluten-free food items. Much is donated by local residents and stores and we gratefully thank the outstanding generosity of our Oxford residents and businesses for their kindness, volunteerism, and commitment to their fellow residents in need."

Ms. St. Martin explained that most food banks provide a box of pre-selected items but the Oxford Food Shelf takes the process to another level by having those in need do their own selecting of food and household items. Their goal is to help everyone eat as healthily as possible without adding more fat, sodium, and sugar to their diets. Fresh fruits and vegetables are provided as often as these products can be secured. "We want to make people conscious of good eating choices and habits," said Ms. St. Martin. "The eight churches in Oxford support us with much-needed assistance from volunteers. We don't know what we'd do without our wonderful volunteers. They are the backbone of our services helping to stock items and assist clients who visit the Food Shelf. Most people are very surprised to see

what we offer and we realize there are many more people in our community who should be using our program. It's an easy process to come in and try our services."

According to Susan Avery, co-chair of the Council, "The shopping area is now more open and brighter and welcoming for client families. Because it's more spacious, clients are able to move through more quickly—all while maintaining social distancing guidelines. Everyone

in the Food Shelf, client families and volunteers, wear masks at all times. We have a volunteer with a sewing machine who offers to help our client families with any clothing repairs they need. We are providing warm coats, hats, and mittens for children. We provide turkey dinners and presents for children at Christmas. In the summer, we manage a community garden which yields fresh local produce for our client families." Additionally, they provide families

with information on WIC, SNAP, Healthy Eating, Home Heating Assistance Programs, and information on free and reduced cost medical care.

Variety is an essential ingredient of any food bank and the Oxford site has added more items to that variety like salad dressings, relishes, olives, pickles, even salsa, taco shells, and seasonings. Their standard offerings include canned fruit and veggies, pasta, cereals, pasta sauce, and soups. The Oxford community is very generous and people and many companies give to the Food Shelf on a weekly basis. The local churches and schools provide many donated items. Recently the Zion Lutheran Church held a Souper Bowl Fundraiser and donated 601 cans of soup to the organization.

When the vegetable growing season gets underway, the Shelf expects to have a great variety of healthy fruits and vegetables. The First Congregational Church has a garden and customers love the fresh produce. Oxford's Crown and Roots Farm allows the group to buy a share of their sustainably grown vegetables which will



Erik Larson and Richard Clark pack 601 cans of soup for the Food Shelf.

be incorporated into their summer food choices. The Shelf hopes to have leeks, bok choy, eggplant, and spaghetti squash with recipe cards provided for their healthy preparation. Even figs and black beans from the USDA will be on the shelves complete with serving techniques. Color-coded nutritious food designations will be employed via SWAP ("Supporting Wellness in Food Pantries"), assisting customers to make wise and good eating choices through the use of the color green advising them to "make this choice often," yellow for "sometimes," and red for "seldom." The

SWAP system is based on reducing sodium, added sugars, and fats.

So, if you live in Oxford and think you might need a bit of food assistance, you're very much welcome to visit the Oxford Food Shelf. There is a simple process of registration/eligibility and a weekly selection of groceries to help with your dietary needs. They are open on Thursdays from 4:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m. and are located in the lower level of the Community Center, 4 Maple Street, Oxford. Phone: (508) 987-1062.

Contact Janet: jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com



Jo-Ann Bussiere of bankHometown presents a \$2,800 check to Christina St. Martin of the Food Shelf.



Volunteers prepare to distribute fresh vegetables to customers.

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HALL RENTALS

Programs and events at the Pearle

DUDLEY - The Pearle L. Crawford Library, 40 Schofield Avenue, has listed the following calendar. Join us for one of our programs at the Pearle. To register go to www.crawfordlibrary.org or call 508-949-8021.

Knit and Crochet group - Thursday, 5:30 – 7:30 a.m. and Friday 10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. All stitchers are welcome for this informal group.

Dungeons and Dragons group - Mondays, 5:00 p.m. Have you ever wanted to learn to play D&D or are you a player looking to join a group? We have an experienced DM starting a group on Monday nights. This is an online program. Free; registration required.

Pre-K power storytime - Tuesdays 11:00 a.m. Join Miss Lida for Pre-School Story Time! We will be exploring a new letter each week starting with A and ending in the spring with Z.

Pokemon club - Tuesdays, 3:30 p.m. Calling all Pokemon fans. Children ages 7 to 14 are invited to join our club. This meeting will be a great opportunity to meet other players and share ideas. Please make sure you bring your trading cards and anything else you would like to share and discuss.

Toddler time - Wednesdays, 11:00 a.m. Come join us for Toddler Time. We will have a different theme each week with stories and songs. This is geared for ages 18 months to 3.

Lego challenge club - Wednesdays, 3:30 p.m. Come join us each week for a different Lego challenge, from writing your name in Legos to making a Lego zipline. Ages 5+.

Wiggles and giggles - Fridays, 11:00 a.m. Ages 2-5 are invited to attend this fun, free program! Sing, move, play instruments, learn rhythm, and listen to stories with Lainey Hanlon. Space is limited; registration required. Sponsored by the YMCA Community and Family Partnership.

Adult book group - Third Thursday, 6:00-7:30 p.m. The adult book group meets for an informal discussion of the month's title, which is available at the circulation desk a month prior to the meeting. The February title will be *The Hare With Amber Eyes*. For more information contact Kathryn Ward at 508-949-0819.

Cozy book night - Monday, March 28, 6:00PM-7:00PM Kids up to age 10 are invited to join us for an evening of crafts, stories, and hot cocoa. Pajamas are encouraged and bring your favorite stuffed animal to this free program.

Youth Advisory Council - Monday, April 4, 5:00-6:00 p.m. All tweens and teens in grades 6-12 are invited to join. Why join? You will gain valuable leadership skills. You can meet new people. You can earn volunteer hours (please bring your form). Pizza and drinks will be served. Free. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

Mass Murder: Massachusetts' most infamous murder cases - Thursday, April 7, 6:30-7:45 p.m. Historian Christopher Daley presents an entertaining and fascinating look at some of Massachusetts' most infamous murder cases, both solved and unsolved. Audiences that like mystery, suspense and a little blood and gore will love this lecture! It is fully illustrated with photographs and artwork culled from archival, microfilm and literary sources, and many of the murder sites and historical locations have been photographed in order to give the audience a sense of the modern day context of the crimes. Free. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

Easter egg hunt - Saturday, April 9, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. The annual Easter Egg Hunt is back! Join us to hunt for eggs in the children's room, have your picture taken with the Easter Bunny, and do a fun activity. The first 100 children will receive an Easter gift bag. This event is geared to children ages 2-10. Please note that the children's room will be closed during this event. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

Friends of the Library annual meeting - Monday, April 11, 2-3 p.m. The Friends of the Library will hold their annual meeting - all are invited to attend and learn more about the ways the Friends support the Library.

Henna Art for all ages - Tuesday, April 19, 2-3 p.m. Drop in and get a free henna design from Wicked Good Henna. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

Animal camouflage with hands on nature - Wednesday, April 20, 10-11 a.m. Come learn about animals which are able to vanish in plain sight! Discover ways in which animals are able to blend like magic into their environment. Learn about how both predators and prey disguise themselves to increase their chances of survival. Then become a nature detective and see if you can spot the hidden animal, in various nature scenes... it's not as easy as you think! Includes a fun camouflage project to take home. This is for ages 5+. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

riet K Crawford Endowment.

Music and movement with Deb Hudgins - Thursday, April 21, 10:30-11 a.m. This is a 30 minute interactive program featuring singing, guitar music, dancing, rhythm instruments, stories and variety of fun props, including a parachute, beanbags, scarves, and pom poms. These programs are theme-based, and cover everything from holidays and seasons to dinosaurs and bugs. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult.

Author Jerry Pallotta - Thursday, April 21, 1-2 p.m. Jerry Pallotta is the author of the *Who Would Win* series and many other children's books. He'll speak about his writing, and attendees will be able to purchase his books and have them autographed by Jerry. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

Records and Burpee petting zoo - Friday, April 22 various sessions. Come meet animals including a llama, alpaca, tortoise, squirrel monkey, and more! There will be 4 sessions for 25 minutes each at 1PM, 1:40PM, 2:20PM, 3:00PM, and 3:40. Space is limited and registration is required for each person attending at crawfordlibrary.org. 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. Please bring change. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Friends of the Library.

Drum circle with Mike Leo - Saturday, April 23, 11a.m.-noon. Come be part of a drum circle and play a variety of different drums. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

World War women - Thursday, April 28, 6-7:45 p.m. Judith Kalara of History At Play embodies the spirit of women who risked their lives to defeat Fascism in WWII in this immersive reliving of the triumphs of our greatest heroines. From organizing the resistance to blowing up railroad tracks, descrambling German Enigma messages, and flying dangerous missions, these stories may be the most influential and often forgotten victories of the War. Free; children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. Sponsored by the Hugh W and Harriet K Crawford Endowment.

Gladys E. Kelly Public Library

The Gladys E. Kelly Public Library, 2 Lake St., Webster, 508-949-3880, has listed the following calendar of events. All programs are scheduled to be held outside on the Library lawn (unless otherwise noted), weather permitting.

Adult Programming

Book Discussion Group - March 21 - The Gladys E. Kelly Public Library Adult Book Discussion Group meets at 6:30 p.m. New members are always welcome! Next month's book discussion will be on Monday, March 21st at 6:30PM the meeting will take place via Zoom, and will be about the book *Nobody Will Tell You This But Me* by Bess Kalb. Stop by the library, or reach out by phone to 508-949-3880, or by email to ehale@cwmar.org for inquiries.

Friends March Book Special - Month of March

MARCH is for MYSTERIES. Check out these featured authors: Patricia Cornwell, Andrew Greeley, Lawrence Sanders, John Sandford. As always, featured authors \$3.00 for a bag of books! HAPPY Sleuthing!

Yoga with Julie - Saturdays through March 26, 10-11:15 a.m. Join Julie at the Gladys E. Kelly Library for a vinyasa yoga class

for all levels. In Sanskrit, Vinyasa yoga translates to the "uniting of movement with breath". A typical class involves a centering of the mind with the breath, aromatherapy, movement of the body to release energetic blockages and, finally, a rest and relaxation. Classes are free for Gladys Kelly Library patrons.

Children's and young adult programming

Maker Mondays - Mondays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. This March we'll have air dry clay available for children and their caregivers to create with! Every month we will rotate our craft material, so stay tuned!

Chickens Around the World - Saturday, March 26, at 12:00 p.m. This program features chickens from around the world; Speckled Sussex from England, Blue Andalusians from Spain, Glossy Black Sumatras, Araucana from South America, Cuckoo Maran from France, and others who lay different colors and sizes of eggs. Learn the history and unique characteristics of these breeds, along with basic animal husbandry skills. Children can pet the chickens and depending on the season we bring baby chicks along.

Children's Book Sale - April 19 - 21.

The Friends are celebrating April vacation week by hosting a Children's Book Sale! Join us in the lobby from Tuesday, April 19 through Thursday April 21 to purchase your favorite stories.

Build Night - Tuesdays from 3:30-4:30 p.m. Every Tuesday in March we'll have marble runs for kids to create with! Building materials will change monthly, check back for more information.

Folktales From Asia - May 9 at 10:30 a.m. Parents' Choice Award-winning storyteller Motoko enchants families (ages 5 and up) with fun folktales from Asia, combined with songs, mime, and origami. Every child receives Motoko's original paper sumo game. This program is funded by a grant from the Webster Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Touch a Truck - May 14, at 10 a.m. in the town hall parking lot our second annual Town of Webster Touch a truck event. Vehicles from the fire, police, and EMS departments will be there in addition to others. Kids can climb in and explore the vehicles. Parking is available at the Library.

Parking lot craft fair

The Auburn Historical Society & Museum will be hosting the First Annual Parking Lot Craft Fair on Saturday, August 27, at 41 South St., Auburn. It will be held 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., rain or shine. Vendors can reserve a 10 x 15-foot space for \$15. Vendors will be responsible for bringing their own table(s). Food selling will be restricted. For more information or to reserve a space, contact Helen at the Auburn Historical Society & Museum at 508-832-6856, by email at auburnmuseum@verizon.net, or come to the museum on Tuesday or Saturday 9:30-12:30. Put your reservations in early.

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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**





Living ON with Lincoln

A March Puppy

By Amy LeClaire

New England winters are far too long. By late February we're craving sunshine, inspiration and sandals. We need something to look forward to, something more fun—something that smells like a puppy.

I couldn't be happier with news that fell on my lap last Thursday night (on February 24). We were number 11 on Cloverdale's list for a 2022 puppy, a confirmation made last June with Lincoln's nod of approval. The dogs were part of his ancestry. So, when Cloverdale's beautiful Molly gave birth to a litter of eight puppies during a January 31 blizzard (requiring immediate attention from owner Jane Zimmerman, who prepared for the safety and care of her dame's scheduled caesarean section), puppy parents sighed in relief. Meanwhile, my husband and I counted our blessings. We would receive a puppy from the next litter, having moved up to spot #3; and though no birthing timelines are ever exact, we estimated a late spring litter.

In the meantime, we would enjoy a clean home, perhaps a few spontaneous vacations, and a few more lazy mornings. Everything was falling into place. Yet something was amiss. Our Empty Nested home was beginning to feel like a blank piece

of paper with a checklist. Floors, done. Grocery shopping, done. Work projects, done. Tasks were stitched together in one suspicious line. As a creative (dogless) person, I felt a bit frayed at the seams. I missed the mayhem and mess of a dog. I missed coloring outside of the lines. Nothing is more motivational to a story deadline than the heated stare of a ninety-pound Golden, a ball wedged at the side of his mouth, muddy paws. "Can you wait a few minutes, Lincoln?" His head tilted to the word wait. Then he'd lay to rest, head over paws, and that expression alone (what about Lincoln?) forced me to be more productive. There's time for work. There's time for play.

Amid both, have you ever noticed how dogs lighten our loads, and make what's, perhaps, too-perfect, a bit more precarious? Take the dog involved in a serious training session; but he's more interested in the scent of ketchup on the expert's sleeve. Or (in Lincoln's case) the one who finds the small, obscure spot of exposed leather in the backseat of a new car that's been covered with a mat. A dog lives with innocence and irony and, in the process, they pull us away from the noise of life. "Look at that person going for a walk!" His big blonde head would bloom to the sight of a new person, head out window. "We'll go for a walk later, Lincoln." He'd freeze to my words, connecting fully with my promise. "Sounds good." Then he'd move back to the window, a new moment upon him.

"Would you like a puppy from this litter, Amy?" The text message fell over me like confetti. I grabbed my phone, paced, and checked for punctuation, for meaning. "Is this really happening?" A peppery heart beat and follow-up phone call led to a blessed truth. Cancellations happen. We had moved up on the list and were able to take home a puppy from the litter of Molly and Mister Big, a Martha's Vineyard stud. I used a foolishly large Sharpie (the first writing utensil available) to etch down doodles of puppy notes on a calendar, then hung up. "We're getting a puppy! And it's happening in one month!" I spat the news to my husband, then allowed it to sail off with me to Impact Fitness, where I was scheduled to teach a 6:30 Zumba class. I parked and collected my thoughts. I agreed to get back to Jane in one day with a firm decision. There was no pressure. That puppy would be scooped up in seconds should I decline. But my heart knew. I found myself typing. "We'd love

to take home a puppy from your current litter and, additionally, keep our spot for the fall litter!" Who needs an entire day to think? Fate had just lined up two puppies in the time frame we had hoped for—six months apart in age. The next litter was going to be available in the fall (at the earliest).

"I can feel your puppy. I can even smell him." Margaret, one of my Zumba members, sensed my good news as I breezed into class. I couldn't hold back my love for my March puppy. He was already with me.

Luke was about to be blessed with love.

"Thank you for including me in his name, Mom." The pup's name had emerged easily. A biblical name meaning Healer, it came with hope in the wake of global illness, political unrest, and mental instability. It came with good news and presence. Dogs do this for us. They remind us that we will all be okay. Along with that, it came with connection to Lincoln. "Both your names begin with the letter L



Lincoln reminds me - everything will be okay.

and have the hard C sound, Lincoln."

"But mine has two syllables. Luke only has one."

"No one will ever compare to you Lincoln."

I see him smiling up at me, a touch of humor in his eyes.

"I guess he can have my light blue ball."

Stay tuned for more puppy news as, together, we celebrate more dog adventures in Living with Luke.

Write to me - amyleclaire@hotmail.com



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Tales from beyond

The ghostly crew of the Charles Haskell

By Thomas D'Agostino

The eerie accounts of the Charles Haskell and its fated crew stand to this day as one of the most retold tales of the New England coastal ghosts. The ghostly phenomena witnessed by a whole crew makes this following account all the more reputable.

The Charles Haskell was built in 1869. She was a beautiful schooner that any captain would be proud to sail, but tragedy beset the boat before it ever left port. A workman making one last in-

spection slipped and broke his neck. Such a tragedy makes superstitious sailors think twice about boarding a cursed ship. The original purchaser immediately backed out of the sale, and the schooner sat dormant until a brave captain named Clifford Curtis purchased the boat and set sail for Georges Bank with his crew.

That winter, as the ship was anchored in the fishing grounds of Georges Bank, a terrible storm blew in. There

sat many other fishing vessels moored in the bountiful shoals. The captain feared other boats might lose their anchor lines and smash into the Haskell. He ordered the lines cut for maneuvering purposes. This proved to be a fatal move as the ship crashed into another schooner, the Andrew Johnson, out of Salem. Salem's vessel sank quickly, taking all ten crew members to their graves. The Charles Haskell was damaged but stayed afloat.

A few months later, the vessel was repaired and set sail once again for Georges Bank. The crew fished for several days undisturbed until the most terrifying incident changed their lives forever. As the midnight air descended to an intolerable chill, ten phantom fishermen in oilskins floated over the railing of the boat. They silently began manning in-

visible nets, baiting unseen hooks, and going about the tasks of a well-seasoned fisherman. Captain Clifford Curtis and his crew stared in disbelief at the apparitions. At one point, the captain mustered enough courage to approach the specters but was immediately froze in his tracks when they turned towards him with black holes of the dead for eyes and unearthly disdain on their faces.

The ghostly crew resumed their duties until dawn. At that point, they climbed over the railings and vanished into the sea. The Charles Haskell sailed at breakneck speed for the Port of Gloucester. Unfortunately, breakneck speed in those days was not enough for them to reach dry land safely before another night saw them once more, in the company of the phantom fishermen. This time as the ghostly crew pulled in their invisible nets and lines, they climbed over the railing, stared at the captain and crew for a few moments, then began walking across the water towards Salem Harbor.

Once in port, the schooner was immediately abandoned and never saw the fishing grounds of Georges Bank again. Some say that the Charles Haskell sat in the Gloucester port until it fell into ruin, as no one would dare board the haunted ship. Another account states that a Nova Scotia merchant purchased the vessel and took it away. Either way, Gloucester was eventually rid of its haunted schooner. As for what became of the



ten ghostly crew members, many who fish Georges Bank will tell you that sometimes they see things or receive help from unseen hands. Perhaps the spirits are still hard at work helping the fishermen from Salem before finally coming to port

after such a long time at sea. *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.*



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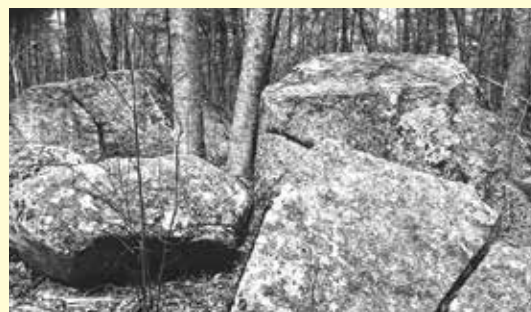


"Nature by Design," photography by Debra Horan will be on display and for sale through the month of March at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 East Main Street, Webster. The show can be viewed in the cafe gallery during regular business hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10-5, Wednesday 10-6. Call 508-949-6232 for more information or visit bookloversgourmet.com.

The main inspiration for this show comes from closely observing the inherent design, beauty and balance of the natural world, including pattern, texture and tone. Whether in our own backyard or out in the wilderness, experiencing nature and open space can lead to a deeper sense of respect, well-being, self-discovery and interconnectedness to every living thing.

Debra Horan was born and raised in Webster, and is a graduate of The Rhode Island School of Design with a BFA in Illustration. She pursued a career in freelance illustration for several years and worked for publications including Worcester Magazine, the Worcester Phoenix, the War Resisters League (NY), Orange Coast Magazine (CA), Inside Sports, and Rhode Island Monthly magazine. From 1994 through 2004 she was an active member of the women's art group ARTXII, based out of Worcester, who organized and participated in regional and national gallery, university and museum shows.

Since 1995, Debra continues to own and operate of Booklovers' Gourmet, a bookstore, cafe and art gallery, in Webster. This career enables her to combine her artistic and literary interests as well as help support local artists, authors, poets and musicians in the community by creating a welcoming place for them to gather and draw inspiration from one another.



The Car Doctor

John Paul is AAA Northeast's Car Doctor. He has over 40 years' experience in the automotive business and is an ASE certified master technician. He will answer reader's questions each week. You can find the Car Doctor podcast at www.johnpaul.podbean.com or other popular podcast sites. Email your car questions to jpaul@aanortheast.com. Follow John on Twitter @johnpaul and friend him on facebook [mrjohnpaul](https://www.facebook.com/mrjohnpaul)



Q. I have a 2013 Fiat and I live on top of a steep mountain. Since I moved up there in November, I notice a burning smell when I get out of the car. I don't smell it when I drive to other places. I try to drive very slowly up the mountain and there is less burning smell. The car gauge never shows that it overheats. I had the car checked out and they couldn't find anything wrong. Do you have any suggestions on how to take care of my car, so the transmission doesn't burn out?

A. There are two common areas that cause a burning smell: brakes and fluid leaks. I would start with an inspection of the brakes looking for uneven wear that could indicate a sticking brake caliper. The second possibility is oil leaking on the hot exhaust. Have a technician add dye to the various fluids, drive up and down your mountain road and then return to the repair shop for an inspection. The dye will help pinpoint any leaks.

Q. I have a 2018 Hyundai Elantra GT that I purchased new. After an oil change at the dealership, the drain plug dislodged and the motor was destroyed at 12,500 miles. The dealership replaced it. At 124,000 miles it started making the same noise and I immediately turned it off. The oil light never came on, and there was oil on the bottom of both doors. The replacement engine is now blown. I had the oil changed just over 4000 miles prior, and I checked the oil myself a week prior. It's

not under warranty and too costly to repair. The dealership told me that some cars just use more oil than others and can't tell me how this happened or how oil got on the doors. Aside from a missing drain plug, what else could cause such a rapid loss of oil?

A. The oil sender unit could cause a very rapid oil leak and could have been the cause of the failure, although typically the oil light will illuminate. The other common issue is a bearing failure and a possible cracked engine block. I would contact the corporate offices of Hyundai and ask about warranty coverage. Many Hyundai models due to a class action lawsuit are covered by a limited lifetime warranty. The one caveat is that the car received regular maintenance. The last possibility is taking Hyundai to court under implied warranty of merchantability (lawyers weigh in). This warranty makes the assumption that a good or product works for its intended purpose. At four years old and 124,000 miles with proper maintenance your car should have much more life left in it.

Q. My 2011 Lexus Hybrid has been draining the car battery over a six-to-eight-hour period. The dealer cannot find or fix this problem. The car runs well and has 170,000 miles on it, and I believe has life left in it. Any suggestions?

A. For the battery to become completely discharged in eight hours there is a significant electrical draw. At this point, the dealer or other repair shop needs to do a test of parasitic draw. Using the correct tools, the technician will be able to monitor the electrical system and measure the electrical current use. Typical/normal parasitic drain is 50-80 milli-amperes. Some possible circuits that are not shutting down are the fuel pump (4-8 amps), seat heaters (3 amps), cooling fan (5-7 amps) and even the brake lights or a faulty alternator.

Q. For the first time in decades we now have cars with automatic transmissions. We have a very good mechanic, but he is wary of replacing the automatic transmission fluid and filter. His thoughts are the process can dislodge crud and cause problems. Right now, the fluid in both cars is at a steady level and the right color. Any opinion?

A. If the fluid is full and the color looks good and the fluid has no odd odor I would not change it, unless there is a maintenance requirement in the vehicle owner's manual. I would vary from this recommendation, if you are towing a trailer, using your car for delivery, Uber/Lyft or if it were stuck in the snow and you over-revved the transmission. These situations can be hard on the transmission.

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Tips on financial planning



Dennis Antonopoulos
The recent market volatility has affected just about everybody's financial and investment situations - so, if you

Nearing retirement? What questions should you ask?

were planning to retire soon, will it still be possible?

Of course, the answer depends somewhat on your employment situation. With so many people's jobs being affected by the coronavirus pandemic, your retirement plans may also have been thrown into confusion. But assuming your employment is still stable, what adjustments in your financial and investment strategies might you

need to make for your retirement?

Here are a few areas to consider, and some questions to ask yourself:

• Retirement goals - Now is a good time to review your retirement goals and assess your progress toward achieving them. You may want to work with a financial professional to determine if the current environment has materially affected your goals or

if you need to make modest adjustments to stay on track.

• Retirement lifestyle - You probably created your investment strategy with a particular type of retirement lifestyle in mind. Perhaps you had planned to become a world traveler when your working days were over. Of course, in the near term, extensive travel may not be possible, anyway, but once we move past the pandemic, your freedom to roam will likely return. But if your investment portfolio is not where you thought it might be, can you (or do you want to) adapt your lifestyle plans? And can you accept the same flexibility with your other lifestyle goals, such as purchasing a vacation home, pursuing hobbies, and so on?

• Tradeoffs - Based on your retirement goals and your willingness to adjust your retirement lifestyle, you'll want to consider your options and tradeoffs. For example, would you be willing to work more years than you had originally planned in exchange for greater confidence in your ability to enjoy a comfortable retirement lifestyle? By working longer, you can continue adding to your IRA and 401(k) or similar retirement plan, and you may be able to push back the date you start receiving Social Security to receive bigger monthly benefits. You might also review your budget for opportunities to reduce spending today and potentially save more toward your retirement goals.

• Social Security - You can file for Social Security benefits as early as 62, but you can get 25% to 30% more if you wait until your full retirement age, which is likely between 66 and 67. As you created your retirement plans, you likely also calculated when you would take Social Security, but you may need to review that choice. If you postpone retirement a few years, what effect will that have on when you choose to take Social Security and, consequently, the size of your benefits? You won't want to make a hasty decision, because once you start taking Social Security, you can't undo your choice.

This is certainly a challenging time to be entering retirement, and you'll have some questions to answer. But even in the midst of uncertainty, you still have many choices. Consider them carefully and make the decisions that work for you. *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

If you're thinking of selling your house this year, timing is crucial. After all, you'll want to balance getting the most out of the sale of your current home and making the best investment when you buy your next one.

If that's the case, you should know you may be able to get the best of both worlds today. Here are four reasons why this spring may be your golden window of opportunity.

1. The Number of Homes on the Market Is Still Low

Today's limited supply of houses for sale is putting sellers in the driver's seat. There are far more buyers in the market today than there are homes available. That means purchasers are eagerly waiting for your house. Listing your house now makes it the center of attention. And if you work with a REALTOR to price your house correctly, you can expect it to sell quickly and likely get multiple strong offers this season.

2. Your Equity Is Growing in Record Amounts

Homeowners are sitting on record amounts of equity thanks to recent home price appreciation. Reports show that the average homeowner has gained \$55,300 in equity over the past year.

That much equity can open doors for you to make a move. If you've been holding off on selling because you're worried about how

This spring presents sellers with a golden opportunity

rising prices will impact your next home search, rest assured your equity can help fuel your move. It may be just what you need to cover a large portion – if not all – of the down payment on your next home.

3. Mortgage Rates Are Increasing

While it's true mortgage rates have already been climbing this year, current mortgage rates are still below what they've been in recent decades. In the 2000s, the average mortgage rate was 6.27%. In the 1990s, the average rate was 8.12%.

For context, the current average 30-year fixed mortgage rate, according to Freddie Mac, is 3.85%. And while recent global uncertainty caused rates to dip slightly in the near-term, experts project rates will rise in the months ahead.

When that happens, it'll cost you more to purchase your next home. That's why it's important to act now if you're ready to sell. Contact Marzeottigroup who can connect you with a trusted advisor to kickstart the process so you can take key steps to making your next purchase before rates climb further.

4. Home Prices Are Climbing Too
Home prices have been skyrocketing in recent years because of the imbalance of supply and demand. And as long as that imbalance continues, so will the rise in home values.

What does that mean for you? If you're selling so you can move into the home of your dreams or downsize into something that better suits your current needs, you have an opportunity to get ahead of the curve by leveraging your growing equity and purchasing your next home before

prices climb higher.

And, once you make your purchase, you can find peace of mind in knowing ongoing home price appreciation is growing the value of your new investment.

Bottom Line: If you want to win when you sell and when you buy, this spring could be your golden opportunity. Call Marzeottigroup.com today or get connected with a local real estate professional so you have the insights you need to take advantage of today's incredible sellers' market.

Do you have artifacts of Auburn?

It's spring-cleaning time and items that haven't been seen for a while may come into view, or perhaps it's time to rotate items and give your home a different look and feel for the new season. Or maybe you are trying to downsize. The Auburn Historical Society and Museum can be a good steward for items that pertain to Auburn's past. Old pictures, tools, books about Auburn, diaries, ledgers etc., could be of interest to others in exhibits at the museum, especially if there's a story that goes with it. Photos and documents can be scanned into our digital archives and returned. Come visit the museum on Tuesday or Saturday mornings, 9:30 – 12:30 and see if there's a place for your items at the museum.

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