SPENCER NEW LEADER

Free by request to residents of East Brookfield, West Brookfield, North Brookfield, Brookfield, Leicester and Spencer

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Friday, January 5, 2024

Mail carrier retires his mail bag after 41 years

NORTH BROOKFIELD — What started as a mail milestone — North Brookfield resident Richard Bernard was on the postal payroll the very day one of his daughters was born — culminated into his retirement after 41 years of federal service.

Bernard, first a six-year Air Force veteran, spent 35 years as a letter carrier at the Marlborough Post Office, ending his career with a route that had 525 deliveries.

He was honored at work with employee, postal retirees and family members who applauded his success, wishing him "Congratulations" and "Goodbye."

"I'm excited. I've done this so long," Bernard said at a presentation at the Post Office.

He'll miss "the people, for sure."

Postmaster Nicholas Tselikis recognized Bernard with a retirement certificate congratulating him for his dedication and achievements as a mail carrier and union steward.

"I've looked up to you," Tselikis said, mentioning the respect Bernard had gained from co-workers and managers.

The mail carrier retired with both his daughters, Ashley and Bethany, and wife Nancy at his side. He's planning on going on cruises, a favorite of his.

The memorable birth is good for conversation. It happened on May 21, 1988, and Bernard began his career two days later.

The Postal Service generally receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

Grant funding supports programs at Leicester Senior Center

Courtesy

Officials from the Leicester Senior Center and Leicester Public Schools are teaming up to offer intergenerational programs.

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

LEICESTER — The Senior Center recently received significant funding through a pair of grants that will support programming.

The grants total $116,950 to benefit the senior community.

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs (EOEA) opened a new $1.45 million grant program to help councils on aging across the state offer hybrid programs available both in person and virtually.

As part of a recent funding package, the EOEA awarded $99,400 to the Leicester Council on Aging for hybrid programming. Grant funds can be used to purchase equipment, hire staff, or cover expenses necessary for a hybrid program.

"This grant will greatly enhance the quality of life for our older adults

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Knights of Columbus dinner to support SONG

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

WEST BROOKFIELD — Local residents have an opportunity to support children in need by attending a Knights of Columbus dinner.

Knights of Columbus Council 11080, based at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Parish in town, is sponsoring a spaghetti dinner on Saturday, Jan. 13.

The event will take place inside Dugan Hall at Sacred Heart Church (10 Milk St., West Brookfield).

Proceeds from the event will help members of the Supporting Orphans Nationally and Globally (SONG) organization provide ongoing assistance to children orphaned by the war in Ukraine.

Based in Brookfield, SONG is run by Executive Director Wally Connor, a past Grand Knight of Council 11080. In recent years, Connor has made several trips overseas to assist children in dire need of basic necessities.

Connor recently returned from Rzeszow, Poland, and Irpin, Ukraine, where he helped fellow volunteers provide support for children at refugee centers. Many of the kids have lost one or both parents during the war.

"SONG has been providing ongoing direct support to these children since shortly after the invasion," read a statement released by the organization.

SONG officials thank local residents and business owners for their ongoing support of children in need. The Jan. 13 dinner is another great opportunity for residents to give back to children in desperate need of food, shelter, medications, and clothing after being displaced from their homes by the war.

The Jan. 13 dinner will include pasta fagioli; a garden salad; meatballs and sausage; spaghetti and sauce; garlic bread; dessert; and water, soda, and coffee.

The dinner cost is a $15 donation per person. Children under the age of 12 will pay $10 per guest.

Take-out dinners will be made available at 6 p.m. The sit-down meal will be served at 6:30 p.m.

Dinner admission tickets are also good for entry for special door prizes. Meanwhile, a 50/50 raffle and additional offerings will be available.

To purchase tickets for the dinner, call 508-612-1649 or 413-813-8100.

To learn more about the event, please send an email to bobfalter@gmail.com or wallyconnor122@gmail.com.

Additional information about SONG and its efforts to assist children around the globe can be found by visiting www.supportingorphans.org.

Local legislators pay a visit to Leicester schools

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

LEICESTER — Local legislators recently visited the town's schools to meet students and learn about several successful new programs within the district.

During his Dec. 11 visit, State Rep. David LeBoeuf met with Leicester High School students and staff members to learn about curriculum offerings at the newly acquired campus of the former Becker College. These include specialized career pathway programs.

"With Principal Zawada and Superintendent Kustigian, I toured the early childhood education, building and property management, health sciences, and advanced manufacturing programs," read a statement released by LeBoeuf. "I also got to meet with Leicester pre-K students, see the new Head Start classrooms, and discuss opportunities to build culinary and veterinary programs."

LeBoeuf was impressed by the hard work he saw from students, as well as the dedication of staff members to continue augmenting programs.

"There is a lot of great

Turn To ***VISIT*** *page* ***A15***

Courtesy

Local legislators recently visited Leicester students and staff members.

All gowned up!

Bay Path nursing students doff Personal Protective Equipment

HOLDEN — At Holden Rehabilitation and Skilled Nursing Center, a 123-bed nursing facility offering long-term skilled care and short-term rehabilitation Dr. Ana Liza Olivar of Rutland shows practical nursing students the proper donning and doffing of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE).

Dr. Olivar is a full-time faculty at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy in Charlton. She started at the beginning of the 2021-2022 academic year. She has been an adjunct faculty since 2015. She previously earned her Master of Science in Nursing from Walden University (Nursing Education Track) in 2013 and her Bachelor of Science in Nursing at the Cebu City Medical Center College in Nursing in the Philippines in 1996.

There is a specific order in which Dr. Olivar instructs her practical nursing students to take off their gowns. The first thing nursing students do is if they've tied the tie they're going to break the tie. Why? Because one does not know if they got the folds folded over. Students are instructed not to try to reach behind for the tie. They do not know if their back is protected or perhaps they have touched something with their gloves. The best approach is to break it in the front if they have put on the tie. The next thing to do is to disengage the gown. To disengage the gown, it is best not to fumble in the back. Reach over the shoulders, cross the arms, and bunch up the gown. It is best to make it a good tight gown and then pull it away from the body. Keep holding on to the gown and pull the gown through the sleeves making sure the gown is turned inside out. Taking the gown off completely, all inside out making sure the students are protected from the gown, and rolling up the gown into a nice, neat little ball. Any microorganisms that may be on the inside of the gown are contained when thrown out. All this with the gloves on. The gloves are the last to be taken off followed by hand hygiene with an alcohol-based product or soap and water.

The practical nursing students at Bay Path receive ample practice time at Skills Laboratory, during simulation and more practice plus further demonstration, and return demonstration with mastery at the clinical sites.

About Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy
Bay Path Practical Nursing is a 40-week (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam.

Courtesy

Shown in the photo from left are Vanessa Gachagua of Southbridge, Tracy Nakyagaba of Charlton, and Dr. Olivar.

Driver injured in Christmas Day accident

SPENCER — A Spencer man was seriously injured during a one-vehicle accident early on Christmas Day.

Spencer first responders were dispatched to the scene on Dec. 25 at 12:55 a.m. The accident occurred on Thompson Pond Road near the intersection with Paxton Road.

The 31-year-old driver was hospitalized with significant injuries, but they did not appear to be life-threatening, police said.

The Central Massachusetts Law Enforcement Council also responded to the scene, and is performing the accident reconstruction, as part of the investigation.

"We can say it appears speed was an obvious factor in this crash," read a statement released by the SPD.

Police are also investigating whether the vehicle involved in the accident may have also been involved in an earlier hit-and-run crash causing injury in Worcester.

"The Worcester District Attorney's Office is involved in this investigation, and any additional comments or further information will come from the District Attorney's Office," the SPD statement read.

As of press time, no charges had been announced against the driver.

December storm causes heavy damage to local roads

REGION — Several roads throughout the area were recently closed following a major storm.

The Dec. 18 storm brought heavy winds and rain to central Massachusetts, taking down trees and power lines in many communities. Flooding also created damage and road closures in multiple towns.

Sturbridge was particularly hard hit. Holland Road, Westwood Drive, McGilpin Road, and Gideon Road were impassable for hours due to trees on wires.

Elsewhere in Sturbridge, flooding occurred on Cooper Road and Falls Road. A fallen tree caused problems on Walker Pond Road.

In West Brookfield, Route 9 was closed between Foster Hill Road and West Brookfield Road due to flooding.

"Issues arose with the bridge and the substantial amount of rainfall we had today," read a statement released by the West Brookfield Police Department.

The bridge was expected to reopen the next day following a full inspection.

Several towns saw power outages as a result of the storm, but crews responded quickly to get the lights back on for most customers within a day.

The Spencer Fire Department sent out multiple units to respond to trees and wires down.

Friday's Child

Chance
Age 14

Hi! My name is Chance and I'm a really smart kid who likes to read!

Chance is a sweet and funny boy with a wonderful sense of humor. He is bright, talkative and outgoing. Chance loves to read but also enjoys playing outside where he can run around and be active. In the summer he loves to go to water parks or just swim in a backyard pool. But he is also very happy just playing and running in his backyard or being inside playing video games.

Previous to this year Chance had been in a therapeutic day school but this year he has transitioned into a mainstream public school. It has been a positive transition to this new setting for him and his teachers report that he is doing very well both socially and in his academics. His teachers also state that Chance is very inquisitive and asks a lot of bright questions. His favorite subject is Math. Chance is a leader and does best with clear directives, structure, routine, and predictability in his daily life which also applies to his school setting. He wears prescription glasses to treat a slight "lazy eye" although he does not like wearing them. He currently lives in a foster home setting where he has been for over 4 years. He has made great progress in this home setting.

Chance would like a 2 parent home, pet-free, with at least one mom where he would be the only or youngest child by at least a few years. He will need guidance, love, structure, routine, and firm boundaries in his new family. There is an open adoption agreement set by the court stating that Chance's birth mom, who lives out of state, should receive letters and photos periodically throughout the years if it's in Chance's best interest.

https://adopt.mareinc.org/waiting-child-profiles#gallery/child/6588

Can I Adopt?

If you're at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples. As an adoptive parent, you won't have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with.

To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org . Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.

P.E.T. of the Week

Sponsored by Leicester Veterinary Clinic, LLC

Ty

Breed Domestic Shorthair/ Neutered, Mix Male
Age14 years 8 months

Hi my name is TY, I am a diabetic cat, I am very well controlled with my insulin and do not mind my shots at all. I am super sweet and cuddley. I am currently in foster care and you would need to call and make an appointment to meet me. I would need to be the only animal in the home. I don't like to share. I look forward fnding my furever home!

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Real Estate

BROOKFIELD

None

EAST BROOKFIELD

$170,000, 340 W Sturbridge Rd, Warren, Audrey A, to Truax Holdings LLC.

LEICESTER

$655,000, 9 Maighans Way, Szklarz Nt, and Conley, Stephanie C, to Leite, Scott J, and Leite, Julie A.

$461,000, 85 Virginia Dr #85, George Ft, and Sebolt, Christopher A, to Sluis, Sylvia V.

$420,000, Lillian Ave, Parella, Josh, and Parella, Alexandra N, to Gagner, Justin, and Phillips, Ann.

$260,000, 171 Chapel St, Hare, Dianne E, and Whitworth, David P, to Chaching Co.

$230,000, 981 Main St, Leicester Town Of, to G & R Inv Group LLC.

$177,500, 62 Pine Ave, Mccluskey, Jon A, to Scott, Shaun.

$574,900, 99 Moose Hill Rd, Mcguire, John, and Nargiso, Elizabeth, to Foley, Clayton, and Foley, Kristen.

$525,000, 21 Hyland Ave, Grady Lisa Ann Est, and Grady, Rose, to Gagne, Emily, and Gagne, Joshua A.

$510,000, 65 Virginia Dr #65, Hanlon Ft, and Hanlon, Suzanne M, to Williams, Vernon C, and Williams, Myra J.

$465,000, 4 Breezy Green Rd, Dipietro Lt, and Dipietro Jr, Joseph J, to Schatzle, David, and Payite, Lydie K.

$320,000, 357 Main St, 2020 5d Realty Inc, to 424 Realty LLC.

$100,000, 1560 Main St, Archambault, Joseph, to Prosper Point Prop LLC.

NORTH BROOKFIELD

$645,000, 44 Green Rd, Usher, Kathleen S, and Usher, William T, to Loban, Andrei.

$360,000, 11 Ayers St, Sharron, James, and Sharron, Maria M, to Farrington, Aaron, and Jordan, Amelia.

SPENCER

$818,000, 91 E Charlton Rd, Wyka, Andrew E, to Fontaine, Karen M.

$505,000, 48 E Charlton Rd, Kennedy 3rd, John J, and Kennedy, June L, to Tamaradze, Mizam.

$499,000, 3 Jolicoeur Ave, Cooper, Jack M, and Cooper, Grace A, to Mcmahon, Thomas, and Mcmahon, Alexandra.

$432,000, 33 Grove St, Gillespie, Ryan, and Fyvie, Cassidy, to Rego, Hugo.

$259,900, 6 Crestview Dr #68, Austin, Harry C, and Austin, Ann M, to Esposito, Stephanie M.

$630,000, 48 Lambs Grv, Fallstrom, John W, and Fallstrom, Cheryl C, to Lund, Christian, and Lund, Kathleen.

$460,000, 16 Ashview Dr, Arsenault, Alexander A, and Joppas, Alysia H, to Nelson, Richard C, and Nelson, Krista J.

$395,000, 72 Cherry St, Nelson, Richard C, to Vasquez-Murphy, Julio C.

$339,000, 95 Chestnut St, Round, Norman S, and Round, Barbara A, to Kelleher, Michael.

$75,000, 126 Main St, S Middlesex Non-Profit Hs, to 126 Op LLC.

WARREN

$440,200, 503 Brimfield Rd, Lone Oak Enterprises LLC, to Sorel, Jesse, and Sorel, Krista.

$301,000, 95 School St, Fijol, Sophia R, to Rich, Christopher.

$265,000, 601 Coy Hill Rd, Dumas, Brian E, to Mckinney, Justin D.

$360,000, 111 Bemis Rd, Markopoulos, Nicholas, to Garza, John, and Richardson-Cline, Krista.

$330,000, 374 Washington St, Dcmb Properties LLC, to Orloff, Alexei.

$265,000, 26 Jones St, Hempel, Patricia A, to Stebbins, Matthew O, and Stebbins, Linda.

WEST BROOKFIELD

$450,000, 69 John Gilbert Rd, Westbrook Prop Mgmt LLC, to Lake, Brian S, and Lake, Ann M.

$82,500, 214 Long Hill Rd, Poole, Christine, to Steadfast Fence Inc.

$440,000, 17 Clearview Dr, Fortin, Philip G, and Fortin, Annette R, to Miller, Jason R, and Miller, Merce G.

Nursing student obtains Be There certificate

CHARLTON — Ashley Breault of Brookfield, a practical nursing student at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy recently completed training and obtained her Be There Certificate.

The Be There Certificate is a self-paced learning experience designed to increase mental health literacy. The training provides knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to safely support anyone who may be struggling with their mental health. From https://www.betherecertificate.org/: "It provides a deep understanding of Be There's 5 Golden Rules — a simple but actionable framework on how to recognize when someone might be struggling with their mental health, your role in supporting that person, and how to connect them to the help they deserve."

Breault is a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) at Quaboag Rehabilitation and Skilled Care Center (since 2021). She was previously honored as Employee of the month at Quaboag and is active with mentorship since 2022. She completed her CNA and Home Health Aide Certification at the Fieldstone School in 2021. Breault is an alumna of Quaboag Regional Middle High School (2019). She is certified in Mental Health First Aid, Dementia Care, Stop the Bleed, HCP/BLS Provider CPR and first aid. She recently participated in her clinical team's Luminary lighting project for the Alzheimer's Association's the Longest Night to shine a light to diminish the darkness and illuminate a path towards a world where Alzheimer's and dementia are nothing but a memory.

Breault joins 31 other members of the 2024 cohort progressing to term 2 of the rigorous 10-month practical nursing program at Bay Path. She previously took the leadership in handling Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy merchandise (sweatshirts & hoodies) distribution for the PN Class of 2024 and assisted with stocking the Practical Nursing student food pantry.

According to Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director, "At Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy we believe that student engagement and patient advocacy are contributory to a well-rounded, prudent nurse. Success is intentional. We ensure that our PN students are relevant and actively engaged in empowering themselves, especially when it comes to mental health."

About Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy

The program is a 40-week (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is fully approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services Department of Public Health Board of Registration in Nursing (www.mass.gov/dph/boards/rn) and is accredited by the Commission on Occupational Education (www.council.org). For more information, visit www.baypath.net.

Friends' annual Senior Christmas Luncheon a jolly good time

Courtesy

Filled to capacity, the North Brookfield Senior Center was recently the site for a delicious complimentary Christmas luncheon catered by Common Grounds Ciderworks and a fun-filled afternoon.

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Christmas came early to North Brookfield Seniors this year. On Dec. 20, the Friends of the NB COA hosted a fun-filled luncheon for all to enjoy. An anonymous, generous donor subsidized the meal of prime rib or fish. Common Ground Ciderworks skillfully catered the filled-to-capacity event.

Highlights included raffles, games, and a door prize. Sue Lewandowski won the 50/50 raffle. Deb Welch won the door prize, a lovely floral arrangement. A lucky winner at each table got to take home a colorful holiday centerpiece. Tabby LeBlanc provided great music for the event, including his beautiful rendition of "Mary, Did You Know?"

Friends would like to thank our countless volunteers who helped the afternoon run smoothly, Common Ground Ciderworks for the delicious meal, and all of you who make our season bright.

We wish you all a happy and healthy 2024. You can follow us on Facebook @NorthBrookfieldSenior Center to learn about our upcoming Annual Souper Bowl, scheduled for Feb. 10 at the center.

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TOYS FOR KIDS DONATIONS

Donations as of 12/22/2023

12/17/2023	Sons of the American Legion Post 138	$250.00
12/17/2023	Joseph and Susan Lacroix	$100.00
12/17/2023	J. Henry Morin and Son, Inc.	$150.00
12/17/2023	Robert and Lynn Esposito	$100.00
12/19/2023	Central Mass Dustless Blasting LLC	$50. 00

Monetary Donations may be sent to: Spencer Toys for Kids, P.O. Box 186, Spencer, MA 01562. New, unwrapped toys can be dropped off at: Spencer Fire Dept, Cornerstone Bank (Spencer office), ERA Key Realty Services (415B Main St). If you would like to sponsor a child, please contact Donna at donnaflannery@erakey.net or call 508-885-6336. If you are in need of assistance, applications can be picked up at: Spencer Post Office, Mary Queen of the Rosary Food Pantry, Town clerk's office in the town hall, or ERA Key Realty Services (outside mailbox). You can see updates on Facebook at Spencer Toys for Kids.

Town of Spencer is seeking private snow plowers for the 2023-2024 Winter Season.

If interested, please contact the Office of Utilities and Facilities, 3 Old Meadow Road, Spencer, MA Monday-Thursday 8:00am – 5:00pm, call 508-885-7515 or on the Town website www.spencerma.gov

Applications should be submitted as soon as possible.

The Town of Spencer is an equal opportunity employer.

Spencer police seeking full-time dispatcher

SPENCER — The Spencer Police Department is seeking candidates for a full-time dispatcher position.

Candidates must be at least 21 years old, a U.S. citizen, and a high school graduate.

Preference will be given to those with dispatching experience, as well as candidates who have completed the Massachusetts Public Safety Communications Academy.

All resumes and applications can be dropped off at the police station (9 West Main St.). Please direct your materials to the attention of: Chief Michael Befford.

To learn more about how to obtain an application, visit www.spencerma.gov.

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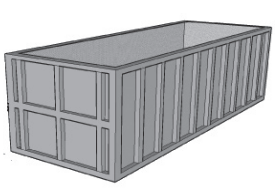
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Bay Path announces grade 11 honor roll

CHARLTON — The following students in grade 11 have been named to the honor roll for the first quarter of the 2023-2024 school year at Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School.

High Honors

Kortnie Adams, Rima Al-Dulaimi, Kaelen Anderson, Yheraldine Baez, Lake Boucher, Amberlyn Brindle, Jameson Burke, Catherine Comeau, Mikayla Crocker, Adison Daoust, Philipe Dasilva, Ryan Dawson, Jenna Defosse, Emma Dwyer, Claire Farrar, Lexie Harris, Valerie Hilner, Ava Iozzo, Molly Isaacs, Kayah Jadczak, Samantha Landgren, Nathan Lashua, Emma Leclair, Eva Lombardi, Lillian Maglich, Ayla McGrail, Isabel McLam, Jersey Mejias, Ava Millette, Jacob Morello, Maya Ortiz, Alaina Pafume, Willis Perreault, Brad Piekarczyk, Gabriel Prado, Neh Reh, Kaylie Richard, Savannah Steiner, Matthew Twombly, Manaali Vaidya, Angelica Vega, Alison Welton, Amelia White

Honors

Nicholas Adler, Werique Alves, Minos Anifantis, Connor Belanger, Jessica Benoit, Briana Berrios, Kendall Bond, Camden Bousquet, Kaiden Brochu, Kendra Brooks, Julia Burgos, Jonathan Burke, Trentin Buzzell, Jonathon Carter, Robert Casati, Hannah Cavan, Matthew Chatterton, Mikayla Clyne, Makayla Collazo, Olivia Collins, Noah Cournoyer, Isabelle Crump, Hunter Davis, Jasai Diaz, Madison Dolan, Rori Donohoe, Carly Donohue, Bryce Dube, Jared Dubovick, Jaden Fall, Midrose Freeman, Conor Gadbois, Erin Gallant, Anthony Gonzalez, John Gordon, Noah Goulet, Matthew Guerin, Evan Gunnard, Keegan Hall, Abigail Haynes, Joshua Hemingway, Elena Jerez, Jacob Johnson, Skylar Johnson-Mello, Jacob Jurado, Dylan Kasprzycki, Justin Killy, Sarah Kempskie, Emma Knott, Austin Kravitz, Katherine Landgren, Hayden Larson, Logan Letourneau, Benhamin Lombardi, Miranda Magalhaes, Joseph Mancini, Brady Marcoux, Kyle Mazur, Emma McLaughlin, Paul McManus, Callie Merchant, Cheyene Monsen, Zachary Moody, Blayke Morse, Ava Murray, Dale Nussey, Isabella Pabon, Jordan Packard, Dominic Paldino, Jack Papgni, Bruna Paula, Catherine Pavone, Raegan Perreault, Emerson Pitz, Ryan Plante, Dylan Polinski, Eva Powers, Nicholas Reardon, Casey Renaud, Nevin Rivera, Jennalee Rousseau, John Rutter, Dominic Schoff, Benjamin Scobie, Nash Sicari-Swinimer, Abigayle Simpson, Paul Smith III, Lynkon St. Jean, Zaydyn Streeter-Wornham, Zoeybeth Streeter-Wornham, John Sullivan, Aaliyah Szkutak, Madison Teal, Cassandra Tinsley, Brady Tremblay, Colin Vaillancourt, Vincent Van Dam, Nayelix Vega, Adrian Vitkos, Dayzyah Wintzel Neely, Naomi Yi, Cayden Young

Principal's List

Connor Allain, Peter Barbale, Connor Barrette, Claire Beaudreau, Zachary Bogar, Brea Brunelle-Jacoby, Jylazell Bueno, Teagan Carey, Aidan Carpenter, Kaylee Corrado, Travis Cronin, Mariah Cutroni, Chase Davis, Gregory Downie, Gabriella Dube, Logan Edwards, Sophia Falconer, Aiden Fausek, Reyna Gonzalez, Devan Grensavitch, McKayla Hoel, Bryce Hutchinson, Eliza Kalwarczyk, Samuel Lamont, Evan Lotti, Corbin Marcustre, Dominic Marino, Aiden McCarthy, Jed McManus, Sullivan Morse, Camron Mortell, Robert Mousseau, Isabella Pettinelli, Lizmarie Rodriguez-Soto, Joseph Roman, Brayden Ryan, Kaden Sandgren, Corey Scovil, Kalli Sheehan, Ed Simon, Kathryn Szretter, Hailie Tod

Editor's note: Due to space limitations, the honor rolls for grades 9 and 10 will be published in the coming weeks. The honor roll for grade 12 appeared in last week's edition.

North Brookfield Savings Bank thanks community for success in annual Toy Drive

NORTH BROOKFIELD — The Annual Toy Drive, which NBSB has hosted for many years, was once again a huge success, bringing hope and joy to those who needed it most during the holiday season.

Due to the overwhelming generosity of community members, customers, and employees of North Brookfield Savings Bank, the Toy Drive collected hundreds of toys as well as hundreds of dollars, which were distributed to local toy drive organizations in each of the Bank's communities. In addition, North Brookfield Savings Bank donated $1,500 to the local toy programs. All the toys collected, and additional toys purchased with the Bank's donation, ensure that local children of struggling families receive holiday gifts.

For the Toy Drive, the bank accepted monetary donations as well as donations of new and unwrapped toys for children at most of its branch locations. This year's donations included several impressive items such as bicycles, skateboards, sleds, winter coats, slime kits, oversized stuffed animals, among many other various trucks, cars, baby dolls, science kits, board games, crafts, and toys.

"We were so thrilled to once again hold our annual toy drive within our branch locations. The generosity shown by our communities and employees alike is unwavering," said North Brookfield Savings Bank Digital Marketing Strategist Nicole Syriac. "It is apparent that everyone in our neighborhoods and at North Brookfield Savings Bank has a strong sense of community commitment, even in the toughest of times. We thank you all for helping us bring magic to local children this holiday season."

North Brookfield Savings Bank proudly partnered with the North Brookfield Police Association's Toys for Joy Program, East Brookfield Toys for Joy Program, West Brookfield Police Association Holiday Toy Program, Ware Police Department "Christmas for Kids" Program, Belchertown Firefighters Association Adopt-a-Family Program and Palmer Lions Club Holiday Toy Program to offer support to the communities they serve.

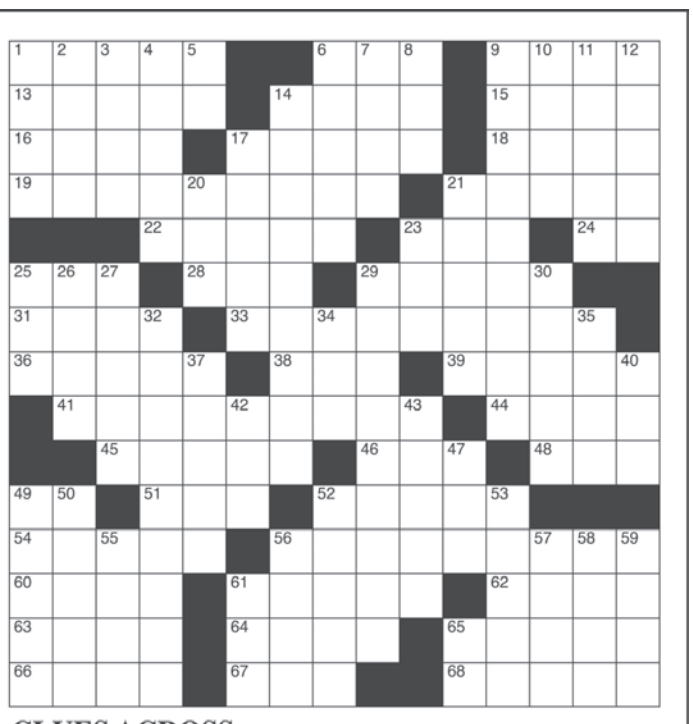
Courtesy

NBSB Employee Joseph Ribeiro featured outside of our West Brookfield Branch assisting "Farmer Matt" Koziol and West Brookfield Police Officer, Nathan Hagglund with our donation of Toys from NBSB's Annual Toy Drive Collection Fundraiser.

To learn more about North Brookfield Savings Bank's community giving efforts and all of the convenient banking products and services offered, visit www.NorthBrookfieldSavingsBank.com.

About North Brookfield Savings Bank

North Brookfield Savings Bank is a mutual savings bank with full-service branches in North Brookfield, East Brookfield, West Brookfield, Ware, Belchertown, and the Three Rivers Village of Palmer. NBSB offers a wide variety of deposit and loan products for individuals and businesses throughout Central and Western Massachusetts and has been a steadfast supporter of the communities it serves since 1854. All deposits are insured by the FDIC and the Depositors Insurance Fund. North Brookfield Savings Bank was voted Best Bank in Central Massachusetts for 2021 and was named "Community Icon" Among the Top Extraordinary Banks in the Nation in 2022 & 2023. For more information, please call 1-866-711-6272 or visit us online at www.NorthBrookfieldSavingsBank.com.



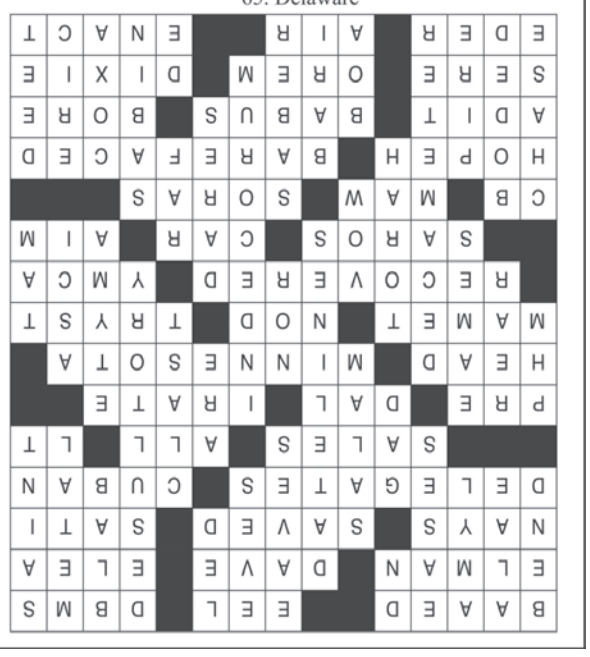
CLUES ACROSS

1. Bleated
6. Snakelike fish
9. Database management system
13. Russian-American violinist
14. Wendy's founder Thomas
15. Ancient Italian-Greek colony
16. Negatives
17. Rescued
18. Self-immolation by fire ritual
19. Assigns tasks to
21. Island nation native
22. Trade
23. Detergent brand
24. Famed NY Giant
25. Before
28. Split pulses
29. Extremely angry; highly incensed
31. Body part
33. American state
36. David __, US playwright
38. Move one's head slightly
39. Secret rendezvous
41. Improved
44. A place to exercise
45. 18-year astronomical period
46. Automobile
48. You can take it
49. A radio band
51. Jaws of an animal
52. Short-billed rails
54. Chinese province
56. Shameless and undisguised
60. Horizontal passage into a mine
61. Adult males
62. Fail to entertain
63. Dried-up
64. City in north-central Utah
65. Southern U.S.
66. German river
67. Oxygen
68. Make law

CLUES DOWN

1. Curved segment
2. Wings
3. From pentane (Chemistry)
4. Gradually gets into
5. Commercial document (abbr.)
6. Overhang
7. Christmas and New Year's have them
8. Type of bulb
9. Lacking a plan
10. Tattle
11. Rockers like it "heavy"
12. One who's been canonized
14. Indicate time and place
17. Nobel Prize winner in physics
20. The voice of Olaf
21. Fragmented rock
23. They __
25. Master of Philosophy
26. Backside
27. Landmark house in L.A.
29. An act of undue intimacy
30. From which a later word is derived
32. Equal to 10 meters
34. Neither
35. Computer language
37. Sacred book of Judaism
40. A woolen cap of Scottish origin
42. A way to dedicate
43. Challenges
47. British Air Aces
49. Large, influential bank
50. Portended
52. Cavalry-sword
53. Vaccine developer
55. Napoleonic Wars general
56. Italian Seaport
57. Hip joint
58. __ Clapton, musician
59. Insect repellent
61. Decorative scarf
65. Delaware

PUZZLE SOLUTION



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THE 411
CHECK OUT ALL THE LATEST IN LOCAL SPORTS!

Tips to kick the common cold

The common cold is appropriately named. According to the American Lung Association, adults get an average of two to four colds per year while children typically get between six and eight colds annually. Colds indeed seem an inevitable part of life, and that may be even more so during winter.

Though colds can strike at any time, Johns Hopkins Medicine notes that the increased incidence rates of colds during cold seasons like fall and winter may be attributable to the increased amount of time people spend indoors. Extra time indoors means individuals spend more time in tight quarters with other people, which is notable because colds are highly contagious. There might not be a way to avoid colds this winter, but Johns Hopkins notes there are some strategies that can help treat a cold and potentially lessen its severity.

• Hydrate. A concerted effort to stay hydrated can help your body fight the cold and potentially make you feel better by easing congestion. When a cold strikes, make sure you drink plenty of the right fluids, which include water, decaffeinated tea with lemon, and broth. Caffeine can cause dehydration, so avoid coffee and caffeinated teas and sodas. Throat-soothing warm liquids like tea and broth can serve dual functions for those whose colds include a sore or dry throat.

• Gargle with salt water. Though it may seem like an old wives' tale, gargling with salt water can effectively alleviate the pain and swelling of a sore throat. Johns Hopkins recommends a saltwater gargle with about one teaspoon of salt per cup of warm water.

• Utilize a humidifier. Johns Hopkins notes that cold hair holds less moisture than dry air. Dry air can worsen symptoms associated with sore throat, so a humidifier can be used to make indoor air more moist and therefore more sooting to a sore throat. Johns Hopkins also reports that dry nostrils are more vulnerable to viruses, so employing a humidifier in winter may help your body more effectively fend off cold viruses.

• Get plenty of rest. Sleep helps to strengthen the body's immune system, making it more effective at fighting off and overcoming the cold virus. Johns Hopkins recommends adults get between eight and 10 hours of sleep when they come down with a cold.

• Avoid unproven "treatments". Some cold treatment techniques are ineffective at combatting cold viruses. Johns Hopkins notes that antibiotics are designed to treat bacterial infections, not viruses. In addition, there is little evidence suggesting zinc and vitamin C have any impact on cold viruses.

Colds may be inevitable, but knowing what to do when a cold strikes may help reduce the severity and length of the common cold.

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Worcester Probate and Family Court
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Worcester, MA 01608
(508)831-2200
Docket No. WO23C0625CA

CITATION ON PETITION TO CHANGE NAME

In the matter of:
Nathan Daniel Czub
A **Petition to Change Name of Adult** has been filed by
Nathan Daniel Czub of West Warren MA requesting that the court enter a Decree changing their name to:
Nathan Daniel

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Any person may appear for purposes of objecting to the petition by filing an appearance at: Worcester Probate and Family Court before 10:00 a.m. on the return day of 01/16/24. This is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline by which you must file a written appearance if you object to this proceeding.
WITNESS, Hon. Leilah A Keamy, First Justice of this Court.
Date: December 13, 2023
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
Jnuary 5, 2024

ATTENTION SPENCER RESIDENTS
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IN-PERSON OR REMOTE
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024
@ 6:30 P.M.
SPENCER WATER DEPARTMENT
3 OLD MEADOW RD.
SPENCER, MA. 01562
January 5, 2024
January 12, 2024

TOWN OF BROOKFIELD
MASSACHUSETTS
BROOKFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Notice of Public Hearing

Pursuant to The Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, the Brookfield Conservation Commission will hold a public hearing on **Thursday January 25, 2023**, at 6:30 P.M, located in the Banquet Hall at the Brookfield Town Hall, on a Request for Determination of Applicability
for the address listed at 42 Webber Road for the purpose of constructing a single-family home. The application is on file and is available for public inspection in the Town Clerks office Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M. and Wednesday from 3 P.M. to 8 P.M.
Christopher Kelleher
Chair, Brookfield
Conservation Commission
January 5, 2024

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Funding available to farms affected by severe weather

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — The Healey-Driscoll Administration recently announced significant funding to assist farms ravaged by severe weather events last year.

Nearly 350 farmers in western and central Massachusetts will split $20 million awarded through the state's Natural Disaster Recovery Program for Agriculture (NDR).

Recipients include several local farms that experienced major crop losses due to extensive flooding throughout the spring and summer.

"After seeing the devastating damage and listening to farmers who lost their livelihoods over the summer, we knew we had to do something to support the agricultural industry," said Gov. Maura Healey. "This program is helping us put farmers first so they can recover, rebuild, and become more resilient in the face of climate change. We're grateful to the legislature for their partnership each step of the way to support our hardworking farmers."

After struggling through a lengthy drought in 2022, local farmers dealt with the opposite problem in 2023. At times, even general thunderstorms rapidly intensified into damaging deluges across the region. On other summer days, farmers had to get their work done beneath hazy skies darkened as a result of raging Canadian wildfires.

Looking ahead to 2024 and beyond, state officials are warning that extreme weather events will continue to cause detrimental impacts. And local farmers are often the first to endure the fallout.

"Farmers are on the front lines of an increasingly volatile climate. When the farming community is hurting, we are hurting. Our administration has been committed to helping these farms in their time of need," said Lt. Gov. Kim Driscoll. "The agricultural industry is instrumental in our food system and the overall economy. We hope this funding will go a long way toward ensuring this sector remains resilient."

In addition to the summer floods, an arctic freeze in early February significantly damaged the stone fruit crop in central Massachusetts, wiping out peaches and plums.

In May, overnight temperatures fell below freezing after most fruit blossoms had set, causing severe damage to apple, pear, and grape crops.

July's unprecedented rainfall caused destructive flooding in western and central Massachusetts, impacting thousands of acres of crops cultivated by more than 110 farms across the region. For some farmers, the events meant a total loss of their crops for the season; others saw substantial reductions in their harvests.

"The natural disasters highlight the severity of the impacts that climate change has on our environment. Our farms are becoming more vulnerable, and it is important that we help them now in their time of need but also provide the necessary long-term support," said Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Rebecca Tepper. "Massachusetts operates as a team, and we are dedicated to supporting this important industry in its resiliency and sustainability efforts as we anticipate continued weather events."

To receive funding through the NDR Program, applicants were required to be a Massachusetts-based agricultural operation growing field crops, hay and forage crops, or produce crops.

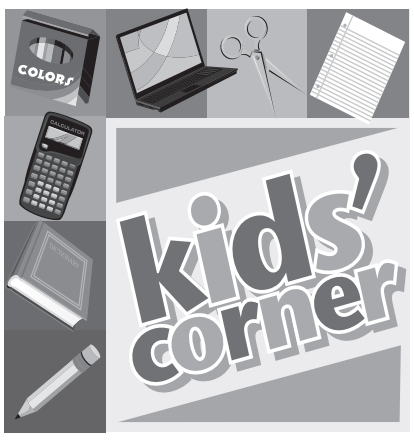
Eligible farms had to demonstrate that they suffered losses of greater than 15 percent of their total planted acreage during one of the 2023 natural disasters.

"Over the summer, it was heartbreaking to tour and see the destruction that the July floods caused," said Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources Commissioner Ashley Randle. "After hearing from so many about what they needed in order to remain viable, we knew that immediate relief in funding was critical to assist in recovery efforts."

Funds from the NDR Program will be distributed immediately to enable local farms to begin the work needed for the 2024 growing season.

Local recipients of NDR funding include Agronomy Farm Vineyard, LLC (Oakham); Breezy Gardens (Leicester); Brookfield Orchards (North Brookfield); Center View Farm (Spencer); Cooks Farm Orchard (Brimfield); Coy Brook Farm (West Brookfield); and Cranberry Pond Farm (Brookfield).

To learn more about NDR funding, visit www.mass.gov.



THIS POPULAR FOOD MAY REDUCE INFLAMMATION (SWELLING) AND STUFFY NOSE WHEN SICK.

ANSWER: CHICKEN SOUP

Math Blocks

Fill in the missing blocks with numbers between 0-10.
The numbers in each row add up to the totals on the right.
The numbers in each column add up to the totals on the bottom.

2	1		10
	6	4	10
9	3		20
11	10	19	

Solution

2	1	7
0	6	4
9	3	8

Get Scrambled

Unscramble the words to determine the phrase.

TOH UPSO

Answer: Hot soup

THIS DAY IN... HISTORY

JAN 5

• **1911:** KAPPA ALPHA PSI, THE WORLD'S THIRD-OLDEST AND LARGEST BLACK FRATERNITY, IS FOUNDED.

• **1944:** THE *DAILY MAIL* BECOMES THE FIRST MAJOR LONDON NEWSPAPER TO BE PUBLISHED ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

• **1972:** U.S. PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON ANNOUNCES THE SPACE SHUTTLE PROGRAM.

New Word

SIMMER

to keep food just below boiling when cooking or heating it

New director works to strengthen programming to North Brookfield Senior Center

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

NORTH BROOKFIELD — Having recently been approved as the permanent director of the Senior Center, Michelle Thayer is working hard to provide strong programs and services.

With a background that includes experience in the mental health field, Thayer brings plenty of unique assets that benefit the senior community. With local seniors having spent extended stretches in isolation during the pandemic, community members are eager to get back out and return to fun programming.

"My years of experience in the mental health field allow me to bring a different perspective to some problems and help find solutions that are sometimes overlooked," Thayer told the New Leader. "I also appreciate that people will come to me for help when they have a problem."

Seniors are enjoying an array of programs at the center each week, including the Walkers Group that meets at 9:30 a.m. on Mondays and Thursdays.

Tuesday is bread distribution day for senior residents of North Brookfield and Brookfield. On Wednesdays, the center offers its Crafty Queen-agers group (crocheting, knitting, sewing) in the morning, followed by meals cooked by volunteers. The cost of each meal is $3 per person.

An art class takes place at the center on two Thursdays per month, and Tai Chi is scheduled for Tuesday afternoons. Yoga takes place on Thursday afternoons.

Prior to becoming the permanent Senior Center Director, Thayer served as the interim director on three occasions since 2021. She also works full-time as a behavior therapist.

Looking ahead, Thayer hopes to augment the current lineup of programs with new and returning activities for local seniors.

"I am very hopeful that we can bring back several programs and activities to the Senior Center," Thayer said. "We have a handful of MedRide drivers again, and will be booking rides for North Brookfield residents to get to important medical appointments."

Bingo is expected to restart at the center in January, with a monthly Music Bingo presented by a volunteer. Additionally, officials plan to increase movie days and the center's meal schedule.

"We will also increase visitors that will be scheduled to provide educational information for any that wish to attend," Thayer added.

Officials hope upcoming presentations will cover such topics as avoiding fraud; personal safety; fire safety; identifying medical emergencies; health and wellness; veterans' services; and legal planning, among others.

Senior Center officials are also aiming to increase their volunteer pool.

"Since 2021, there are a handful of very dedicated volunteers that do meals, setup, cleanup, activities, and pretty much all of it," said Thayer, who invites additional community members to join the volunteer team and help give back to seniors. "We need people that will just come into the center, sit, chat, set a table, make a fresh pot of coffee, cook a meal, wash some dishes, or provide rides down to the center for those who want to come but cannot drive or walk."

Added Thayer, "Our senior community relies heavily on the generosity of volunteers, and our current volunteer pool is greatly diminished."

If you are unable to volunteer your time but would still like to contribute, contact the Senior Center to learn about additional ways to give back. Officials keep a regularly updated list of supplies and items needed for the center.

Officials are also hoping to hold another volunteer fair to help spread awareness. Keep an eye out for further information in the new year.

How they SAY that in...

ENGLISH: Soup

SPANISH: Sopa

ITALIAN: Minestra

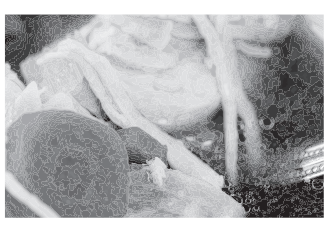
FRENCH: Soupe

GERMAN: Suppe

Did You Know?

SOUPS ARE BROKEN DOWN INTO TWO GROUPS: CLEAR SOUPS AND THICK, CREAMY SOUPS.

GET THE PICTURE?



Can you guess what the bigger picture is?

ANSWER: CHICKEN SOUP

CRYPTO FUN

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Determine the code to reveal the answer!

Solve the code to discover words related to New Year's celebrations.
Each number corresponds to a letter.
(Hint: 17 = N)

A. 1 9 13 23 24 13 5 17 4
Clue: Bubbly drink

B. 23 26 25 17 26 5 9 16
Clue: Twelve a.m.

C. 12 4 22 7 20 3 16 26 7 17
Clue: Plan to change

D. 24 13 12 16 2
Clue: Fun event

Answers: A. champagne B. midnight C. resolution D. party

SUDOKU

3			1	4				
1		8	5	3		2		
	6			9	2	3		4
	8		4				6	7
		7		2			5	
4			7		8	1	2	
		4		5				9
5								
9	7	6		8			4	

Level: Beginner

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:
Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

ANSWER:

3	9	2	1	4	6	8	7	5
1	4	8	5	3	7	2	9	6
7	6	5	8	9	2	3	1	4
2	8	3	4	1	5	9	6	7
6	1	7	3	2	9	4	5	8
4	5	9	7	6	8	1	2	3
8	2	4	6	5	1	7	3	9
5	3	1	9	7	4	6	8	2
9	7	6	2	8	3	5	4	1

How to tell if it's a cold, the flu, COVID-19 or RSV

There's much to look forward to at the start of winter. The holiday season starts winter off with a bang, while outdoor enthusiasts know their chances to hit the slopes and ski and snowboard are just beginning. Sports fans know January marks the return of the National Football League playoffs, while travelers who need a little winter warmth often designate February as a month to soak up some sun in a faraway locale.

With so much to do each winter, it's especially problematic when you come down with a cold. However, winter tends to be cold and flu season in many areas, as viruses tend to spread more easily when people spend more time indoors. This winter, people may wonder if their sniffles indicate they have a cold, the flu or a sign of something more serious, such as COVID-19 or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Anyone unsure of what's behind a cold-like illness is urged to speak with their physician. In addition, the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases notes that the common cold, the flu, COVID-19, and RSV present some similar symptoms, but also some unique ones. Though each illness is complex, the frequency with which some symptoms present may indicate which issue a person is dealing with. Knowledge of those symptoms and their frequency can help people determine if the culprit behind their winter illness is a cold, the flu, COVID-19, or RSV.

Cold
- Aches: Sometimes
- Difficulty breathing: Rarely
- Fatigue: Sometimes
- Fever: Rarely
- Loss of taste or smell: Rarely
- Sore throat: Often
- Wheezing: Rarely

Flu
- Aches: Often
- Difficulty breathing: Rarely
- Fatigue: Often
- Fever: Often
- Loss of taste or smell: Rarely
- Sore throat: Sometimes
- Wheezing: Rarely

COVID-19
- Aches: Sometimes
- Difficulty breathing: Often
- Fatigue: Often
- Fever: Sometimes
- Loss of taste or smell: Sometimes
- Sore throat: Often
- Wheezing: Rarely

RSV
- Aches: Rarely
- Difficulty breathing: Sometimes
- Fatigue: Rarely
- Fever: Sometimes
- Loss of taste or smell: Rarely
- Sore throat: Rarely
- Wheezing: Often

Individuals who are concerned by the presence of cold- or flu-like symptoms are urged to speak with their physicians. Though many instances of cold, flu, COVID-19, and RSV will go away without medical intervention, each condition can pose a significant health risk in certain situations.

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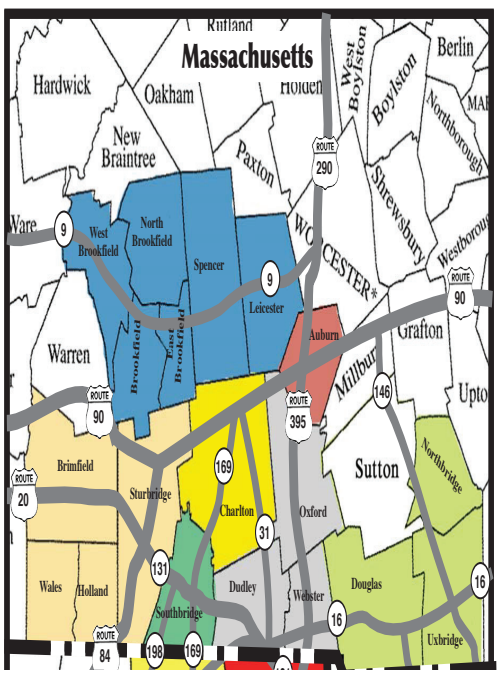

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PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

BRENDAN BERUBE
EDITOR

VIEWPOINT

OPINION AND COMMENTARY FROM SPENCER, LEICESTER AND THE BROOKFIELDS

EDITORIAL

Resolutions that have stood the test of time

As we turn the page on a new year, and consider our own resolutions for 2024, we thought we would see what advice some famous figures from the past had to offer.

"Play and sing good, dance better, help win war–beat Fascism."– Woody Guthrie, 'NewYear'sRulin's, '1943

"I will tell people not to call in the morning, or not answer the phone." – Susan Sontag, diary, 1977

"Keep looking around me — only much more so —observing — but not only myself but others and everything — take things (it) for what they (it's) are worth." – Marilyn Monroe, diary, 1955

"Makeup in privacy, not where he sees you." – Dating Guide, 1938

"Things not to worry about: Don't worry about popular opinion, don't worry about dolls, don't worry about the past, don't worry about the future, don't worry about growing up, don't worry about anybody getting ahead of you, don't worry about triumph, don't worry about failure unless it comes through your own fault, don't worry about mosquitoes, don't worry about flies, don't worry about insects in general, don't worry about parents. don't worry about boys, don't worry about disappointments, don't worry about pleasures, don't worry about satisfactions." – F. Scott Fitzgerald, letter to his daughter, 1933

"A New Year's Resolution that a man can keep... take a glass of Guinness every day." – Guinness advertisement, 1935

"Into each day put 12 parts of faith, 11 parts of patience, 10 of courage, 9 of work, 8 of hope, 7 of fidelity, 6 of liberality, 5 of kindness, 4 of rest, 3 of prayer, 2 of meditation and one well-selected resolution." – Ocala Motors Inc. advertisement, 1960

"No New Year's Resolutions except to make the bed and stop mooning about."

"Set great goals, daily rest, brief vacations, knowledge of all weaknesses, better use of time." – Richard Nixon, diary, 1965

Do what you've never done before, see what you've never seen

Feel what you've never felt before Go where you've never been. – Donovan, "New Year's Resolution," 1970

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted.

It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Peace on earth and goodwill towards men

To the Editor:

As I sit writing on Christmas Eve, nursing my body to be more accepting of my three week old hip to match the one I received seven years ago, I reflect on the 75 Christmases I have experienced. it has been a time of peace joy and goodwill. The joy in the season brought out the best in us and cordial familiarity to even strangers.

Flash forward to a time when even families have differing opinions in which we put so much stock as to twist our love into a perversion of gain loss theory. An example would be when your wife changes he hair or gets dressed up, she expects to receive a complementary opinion from you, while conversely, a stranger complementing her hair or dress, when they did not have to, is valued as more honest. On the other hand, your negative response carries far mor pain than being dissed by a complete stranger.

It is in this environment that we all, who are in virtually the same boat when it comes to gas and grocery prices, performance of investments and economy job market, and cost of car replacement, housing, education and healthcare. While I acknowledge we all have individual circumstances, I cannot be more astonished that we do not even all believe the same facts. After all, opinions, perceptions and visions and interpretations can vary, but facts never should. One popular TV network is in the process of court ordered multimillion-dollar payments for lying about voting machines.

Joe Biden has a son who has not been an exemplary character, peddling his family connections for maximum profits. His alcohol and drug abuse are also well known. That said, he is a Yale educated lawyer, and brings that to the table as well. We will have to wait and see if his father was actually involved in his activities, as well what was illegal and not just immoral or inappropriate. I have heard that his profits exceed $25 million. While on the subject of things that do not smell right, Jared Kushner receiving two billion dollars to invest for the Saudi king who killed and dismembered a Saudi-American journalist, days after leaving his west wing office, also needs a look.

Donald Trump, who fathered five kids by three immigrant wives, all of whom he cheated on, has been found to have raped someone in a dressing room, is under 91 felony indictments, cannot account for all of the classified documents he never should have taken, is on tape in multiple states trying to get people to illegally alter election results, famously stood beside Putin, disclaimed our own security claims because he believed Vlad when he said he didn't do it, has plans to end Ukraine conflict by abandoning them and NATO, says he only wants to be a dictator for a day, wants to fill government with his loyal cult, many of whom he had pardoned The thing is, some of us set higher standards for what a POTUS should look like.

We all need to look at the facts and lighten up. Yesterday, my wife was out walking our dog along Quaboag Street, where we live, and there is no sidewalk. Someone in a contractor truck, forced to yield because of oncoming traffic, lays on his horn. I know most of my neighbors; we walk or walk our dogs, jog and ride bikes along our little piece of lakefront heaven. Among my favorite times were when the bridge was being rebuilt or would get flooded enough to close. In summer, I sit on my patio enjoying my view of the lake across the street. For a little residential street, it sure gets a lot of traffic. Among the vehicles passing by, I regularly see trucks that no doubt exceed the weight limits on the bridge on the Route 9 end, and we are clearly a favored cut through between Route 49 and 9. Since we are not blessed with either sidewalks or even consistent off street paths, all we ask ok drivers using our quiet little street is extending courtesy to we who walk here. With a 30 mph limit, I still think pedestrians have the right of way, and courtesy goes a long ways in our little town with no traffic lights. I hope my wife recognizes the horn blowing truck passing by. I want to be sure to contact their management to comment on how well he represents his company's courteous behavior.

In these somewhat trying times, wouldn't it be great if we all extend some extra courtesy and respect. It is free, and would be much appreciated

KEN KIMBALL
BROOKFIELD

Senior Living at Prouty thankful for community's support

To the Editor:

Senior Living at Prouty would like to extend a warm thank you to all the wonderful local businesses and organizations who donated and supported our annual Holiday Party and Raffle for our residents this year.

Senior Living at Prouty has honored this holiday tradition for countless years, crafted and planned by the Resident Service Coordinator, to ensure the Holiday season is full of joy and appreciation for each one of its residents. As a non-profit HUD subsidized facility that houses seniors in our communities, this is a true highlight of everyone's hard work and compassion. The residents come together not only to celebrate the festivities, but to make new friendships, connections, and spend time with the people that surround them. It takes a village to make this event come together, and we couldn't do it without you!

This year, we are thanking these local businesses for their generous contributions and support…

EB Flatts, East Brookfield
Eller's Restaurant, Leicester
Home Depot, Auburn
Kostas Café, Spencer
Saint Joseph's Abbey, Spencer
Subway, Spencer
Thai House Restaurant, East Brookfield
The REAC Company, Leicester
Advanced Auto Parts, Spencer
Annies Thrift & Vintage, East Brookfield
Appleblossoms, Spencer
Bayberry Bowling, Spencer
Big Y, Spencer
Brookfield Orchards, North Brookfield
Charlies Diner, Spencer
Craigs Barbershop, Spencer
Cormier Jewelers, Spencer
Dairy Queen, Spencer
Dunkin Donuts, Leicester

On behalf of Senior Living at Prouty & Mainstay Supportive Housing and Homecare, we thank you again and again. We feel fortunate to be a part of this community. Thank you to all staff members who assisted this year, as well as all the attendees who helped make this joyful day possible for all.

We wish you the happiest of Holidays, and a prosperous New Year!

Sincerely,

LILLY KINNEY, RESIDENT SERVICE COORDINATOR
SUSAN HORNER, COO
LARRY OAKS, PRESIDENT
SENIOR LIVING AT PROUTY

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How would you handle forced early retirement?

FINANCIAL FOCUS

TREVOR NIELSEN

When you plan to retire at a certain age, you can follow a strategy that incorporates your investment moves, your health insurance and other factors. But what happens if you're forced to retire earlier than you anticipated?

Unfortunately, this situation is not that uncommon. About 40 percent of Americans say they have been forced into retirement, according to a recent survey from Edward Jones and Morning Consult, a research firm. If this were to happen to you because of a layoff, company downsizing or a health issue, would you be prepared to maintain your lifestyle today — and in the future?

Everyone's situation is different. If your forced retirement happened only a short time before you actually expected to retire, you might not need to take any steps at all. But if it was a matter of a year or more, you may need to look into the following areas:

Cash flow – Obviously, a sudden, unexpected loss of employment will affect your cash flow. And if yours was the only source of income for your household, the situation could be especially concerning. Still, you may well have options that can help. You might find a part-time job, for one thing — many employers hire seniors for various types of service-oriented work. And if you've built an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses, now might be the time to tap into it. You also might need to start withdrawing funds from your IRA and 401(k), though, ideally, you'd like to delay this move as long as possible, as these withdrawals may be taxable.

Health insurance – Health insurance can be a major concern if you face an unexpectedly early retirement. Once you're 65, you'll be eligible for Medicare, but what if you haven't reached that age? Through the COBRA legislation, you might be able to remain on your employer-based health insurance for a while — typically 18 months after your job ends. However, COBRA is expensive: If you're qualified, you might have to pay the entire premium for coverage, up to 102% of the cost of the plan, according to the U.S. Department of Labor. If you're married, you might be able to get on your spouse's health insurance, but if this option isn't available, you could explore a Marketplace plan by visiting the healthcare.gov website.

Social Security – A forced early retirement could affect your decision on when to start taking Social Security. You're eligible to begin collecting payments at 62, but your checks will be considerably bigger if you wait until your full retirement age, which is likely between 66 and 67, depending on when you were born. If your sudden retirement puts you in a real cash crunch, you might have to start taking payments regardless of your age, but if you have enough in savings, or your spouse's income is enough to keep you afloat, you may want to wait as long as possible so you can get the larger checks. Of course, if your retirement comes while you're still several years away from Social Security eligibility, you won't have to make this now-or-later decision right away.

Being forced to retire before you planned can certainly be challenging. But by looking at the options available to you, in terms of finances and health insurance, you may well find choices that can help you minimize the disruption to your life.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Trevor Nielsen, your local Edward Jones Advisor in Sturbridge at 508-347-1420 or trevor.nielsen@edwardjones.com.

Letters to the Editor

Thanks to all who supported Spencer Toys for Kids

To the Editor:

We have wrapped up our 2023 Spencer Toys for Kids program, and we are truly grateful for all of the support from our wonderful community!

This year, 235 Spencer children from 108 families were able to receive some Christmas magic. We are thankful for our family sponsors (76 this year), those who made monetary & new toy donations, our crafters who made beautiful hats, mittens, stuffed animals, two very generous families who donated Price Chopper & Big Y gift cards and my company owners & managers at ERA Key Realty who allow us to use our office for Santa's workshop. We were sincerely blessed with a great Christmas giving season for our Spencer families who needed help this year.

We all hope you can see that you live in a community that cares about its people! We were thrilled with every, single gift bag that went out the door! Please check out our Facebook page at Spencer Toys For Kids where we had updates throughout the season.

Thanks to all of you for making Spencer a wonderful place to call home! Happy New Year!

Donna Morin Flannery
Spencer Toys For Kids
Coordinator

Haley's Civil War comments say more than meets the eye

To the Editor:

When Nikki Haley recently responded to the question about the Civil War, "I think the cause of the Civil War was basically how government was going to run. The freedoms and what people could and couldn't do," I think that response was more in line with the wisdom of Lincoln when he said "so that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom – and government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth."

Lincoln did not say "so that slavery will perish from the earth," but rather, something more profound. I think Haley's response was also quite profound. But then, I wouldn't expect petty politicians to recognize that.

Len Ivel
Leicester

The country of Gaza [Hamas] and Israel is a spiritual war!

To the Editor:

Hamas is the evil spirit that is leading, provoking this war against Israel.

I may be a little out of my element; however, I am warning us not to be deceived. I am warning us this is a spiritual war between Hamas and Israel, and we are also being affected. I believe according to Scripture, this war is provoked by evil spirits. Hamas in Hebrew means violence, wrongdoing, cruelty, damage, injustice, oppression, unrighteous living, killing, and unless we humble our self and turn to God in prayer and humble our self in obedience to God's moral law this will someday personally affect us. Come on, people, we are no match apart from God to resist evil spirits, angels. Our only victory is in and through God Jesus in prayers and obedience. Amen!

The following is Biblical evidence of the violence provoked by bad angels. The first evidence of bad spirits is in Genesis 6:7—22: God flooding the world the other evidence of bad spirits is the spirit of Amalek, Amalekites were ancient pre-Islamic people who were possessed by evil angels who" unprovoked" attacked Israel. Exodus 17:14. Because of this attack and their many sins, God vowed to blot them out. God said to Moses write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua see's and keeps it because I (God) will completely blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.

The name Hamas is not in the Bible; however, the evil spirit who was and is provoking evil is evident today between Israel and Hamas, and we have the responsibility to humble our self and pray for Israel and for this Country USA that we are obedient to God's moral laws.

Throughout Bible history, there has been violence and I am sharing with you a few Bible events that evil spirits provoked wars. Evil spirit [Hamas] is apparent in Genesis 6:5-8; God had to destroy the people with a flood.

Joel 3:19 — again, the evil spirits [Hamas] is responsible, even if the spirit's name is not mentioned, it is evil spirits that are provoking between Egypt and Edom were two of Israel's most persistent enemies. They represented all the nations that that were hostile to God's people like Hamas is hostile to Israel, God's people. God promised that they would be destroyed; it is also a promise that all evil in the world will one day be destroyed. That includes Hamas.

Obadiah was a prophet of God and Edom was an evil Nation. Obadiah 1:10-14 — God's judgment came against the Edomites. Why? Because any nation and individuals who mistreat God's people God will judge all according to the way they treat God's people. Israel Jerusalem is God's people and Gaza [Hamas} hates the people, God's people and they are being provoked by the evil spirits of Hamas to destroy Israel, shame on them, It is obvious to me God will defeat the evil of Hamas. There are many more conflicts of evil spirits in the in Bible; I do not have enough space. To share them.

It is my understanding that those radicles [Hamas] were promised glorious pleasures and many women to their pleasures in heaven for their obedience to destroy Israel Jerusalem. However! What they will experience, because they are trying to destroy God's people is eternal death in hell. I am ending with Psalm 83. Jehoshaphat and the people of Judah can be applied to today's war between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. Many of us are praying that God will give victory to Israel and I believe God will because God originally gave this land to the people Israel. However! We must humble our self and recognize that the Lord God Jesus is above "all" rulers of this earth; we must humble our self before God and realize in adversity God may allow us to be defeated before we can have the ultimate victory. We must not take anything for granted, we must humble our self. Question! Wouldn't it be it better to seek the Lord God Jesus in times of prosperity and peace rather than to wait until God's judgment is on us?

I recently heard this and would like to share it with you, it is very appropriate. It is time today to remove Jesus from the crib and from the manger and receive Jesus in your our hearts; every day needs to be Christmas. Amen!

Dwell in peace!

Roland Blais
Brookfield

People's court

To the Editor:

The House of Representative is the people's house. It consists of representatives voted in by the people to represent them. They are put there to make sure we have an honest system taking care of our country. Checks and balances as created by our founders in the US Constitution. They have uncovered that Joe Biden and his family have been taking bribes and payments from foreign companies. To show you, the people, the evidence, they have voted to have an impeachment Inquiry. It is the duty and right of the people's house to make sure we do not have corruption at the highest level of our government.

The Republicans have found the following: 20 fake LLC companies set up by the Biden crime family. A fake LLC company produces nothing. It is a shell company to take bribes and foreign payments and whitewash them. These are paid out to Biden family members in "loans" and other payment methods. Don't you want to see this evidence brought out in full light so you can see it yourself. Don't you want to see this televised so you can make up your own mind. It's you, the voter, which should get to see the evidence and be the jury. That's what the House of Representatives is, The People's Court. If he looks guilty based on the evidence, then you may choose not to vote for him. This knowledge is your power to decide if you want him as your President.

Instead, you see the political Dem Leftists trying to shield the president from your oversight. Career political hacks like McGovern, Marky, and fake Indian Warren. They want to deprive you of viewing the evidence. They think their smarter and better than you. They, along with propaganda machines like CNN, with input from the Biden White House, spin it as lies and a political game. They reward their lackeys with plum positions so they can be used to protect them. These are the same players that in the months before the last election signed a letter drafted by Blinken calling the Hunter laptop Russian information. Clearly disinformation designed to affect the voting, pure election interference.

If you or your family had fake LLC companies and payments coming in from foriegn agents, you would have Bidens weaponized police agencies of the DOJ and FBI police breaking down your doors with automatic weapons and body armor. You would have the full weight of the federal legal system crush you like a bug. Be put up in front of a appointed judge who already has you guilty. No lawyers to represent you because if they do they could get disbarred A rigged system . Be put in prison for 20-30 years. But this won't happen to the Biden crime family. They have paid protection by the likes of capo Garland and his foot soldier Jack Smith attacking Trump. It's time we demand a fully transparent investigation of the Bidens using the Impeachment process. Let him be judged by you, the people, in The People's Court!

Mark Robillard
Spencer

Celebrate Sleep this Month!

Take the Hint

KAREN TRAINOR

Extreme exhaustion is a common side effect of the high energy hustle and bustle of the holiday season. With sleep deprivation and holiday stress taking its toll, often all it takes to cure "festive fatigue" is a good, long snooze – and now sleepers have society's blessing, as "Festival of Sleep Day" is celebrated in January!

The unofficial holiday offers a guilt free pass to relax, chill out, and catch up on some well-deserved Zs. Moreover, the day, which promotes sleeping, also encourages adequate slumber throughout the year, which can boost both physical and mental health.

In honor of Festival of Sleep Day, which falls on Thursday, January 3rd this year (not to be confused with World Sleep Day on March 15…yay, another day of guiltless sleep!) this week's column shares sleep facts, suggestions and stats – all in the name of 40 winks!

Benefits of Proper Sleep: Getting the proper amount of sleep is of optimum important for good health, so it's necessary to get your nightly sleep quota. According to published reports, toddlers need 11 hours of sleep every night, plus a two-hour nap during the day; preschoolers require 11 to 12 hours of sleep a night; school-age children need 10 hours of sleep each night: teens require nine and a quarter hours of sleep every night - most get less than eight and a half. And adults need about eight hours of sleep every night.

Getting your share of quality sleep not only makes you refreshed, but experts reveal it boosts your immune system, which can halt a pending cold and flu virus.

"Not getting enough sleep makes you more vulnerable to picking up illnesses and not being able to fight them off," said Donna Arand, PhD, DABSM, clinical director of the Kettering Sleep Disorders Center in Dayton, Ohio. "What's going on is your immune system is degraded."

More importantly, studies have shown a possible link between heart disease and sleep deprivation.

"When you don't get enough sleep, you have an inflammatory response in your cardiovascular system (in the blood vessels and arteries) and that's not a good thing," said the sleep director. Arand added: "We see the same thing in hypertension. If that sleep deprivation continues long term, chronic inflammation has been linked to things like heart attack, stroke, and diabetes."

Good, deep slumber also helps turn back the clock because it sharpens your mind and defuses stress. It also rejuvenates your body. During sleep, your body secretes melatonin, cortisol, and other hormones that help you repair cells and burn fat according to experts.

Sleeping well can also help ward off diabetes, according to another study by the Kettering Sleep Disorders Center of young, healthy adult males. When the participants decreased their sleep time to about four hours per night for six nights, every one of the healthy young men showed impaired glucose tolerance, a precursor to developing diabetes, according to the data. The study revealed after a few nights of regular sleep, the men in the diabetes study returned to a normal state of glucose tolerance.

Medical research also points out a link between lack of sleep and obesity in both young and old. In one study, people who slept five hours per night were 73% more likely to become obese than those getting seven to nine nightly hours of sleep. In fact, one study found that lack of sleep was a bigger contributor to childhood obesity than any other factor.

**

Resetting the (Sleep) Clock: To determine exactly how much sleep you need - on a night you feel fairly rested - sleep until you wake up on your own. If you feel rested and refreshed, the length of the time you slept is how much sleep you need.

If you are over exhausted and always tired but can't sleep, it might be time to reset your sleep clock to ensure your daily dose of rest. If your body clock is set to a different time than your schedule, you'll feel tired. Experts say when you're in your 20s and 30s, your body is typically set to stay up late and sleep late. On the other hand, it's not unusual for people in their 60s and 70s to fall asleep at 8 p.m. and wake up at 4 a.m.

Here's how to get back to a normal sleep rhythm by resetting your sleep clock: Bright electric light can shift your body clock, according to a study published in the Journal of Investigative Medicine. If you want to stay up later, sit under a bright light bulb for one to two hours before your current bedtime. This will slowly shift your body clock to a later bedtime. In the morning, block out bright light until you've been up for an hour or two. If you want to go to bed and get up earlier, dim the lights after 9 p.m. and let the morning sun shine in your room.

**

Insomnia Cures: If you're always tired, you're not alone. The National Sleep Foundation in Washington D.C., conducted a study that revealed just 26 percent of adults said they get a good night's sleep a few nights a month or less. Another 24 percent say they get a good night's sleep only a few nights a week. Current medical and psychological research reveals over half of Americans are sleep deprived, and studies show who have less than six hours sleep a night have a 70 % higher mortality rate. In fact, a large study published in the journal PLOS Medicine, provides evidence that people 50 and older who sleep five hours or less at night have a greater risk of developing multiple chronic diseases as they age compared with peers who get a longer night's rest.

**

Think your body will never miss a few winks of sleep? Think again. If you get one hour less sleep than you need each night for eight nights in a row, your brain will need sleep as desperately as if you had stayed up all night.

**

Insomnia can also affect the body as much as drinking alcohol. Studies show 17 hours of sustained wakefulness can result in a decrease in performance equivalent to a blood alcohol-level of 0.05%. And after five nights of partial sleep deprivation, three drinks will have the same effect on your body as six would when you've slept enough. Reports reveal sleepiness is second only to drunkenness as the leading cause of vehicle accidents.

**

Want to ensure a good night's sleep? Experts advise against watching TV in bed, because the noise increases alertness, which makes sleep difficult. If you wake up in the middle of the night, don't look at your cell phone! In the morning, get up once you wake up.

**

Lounging in bed cuts into your waking hours and will postpone your bedtime that evening, a problem if you have to wake up early the next day.

**

In a study published in the British Medical Journal Lancet, elderly patients slept "like babies" when a lavender aroma was wafted into their bedrooms at night. These patients had complained of difficulty falling asleep and had to take sleeping pills to get sleep prior to the aromatherapy.

**

Lemon Balm also promotes sleep as it acts as a very mild sedative and Chamomile is a muscle relaxer that has mild sedating properties. Chamomile tea has long been used to relieve stress and promote sleep. It is also used to treat anxiety in sufferers young and old.

**

Insomnia can also be successfully combated by bathing in hot (up to 103 degrees) water approximately two hours prior to bedtime. And walnuts can even help you sleep more soundly. The nuts boost melatonin levels, which induces sleep, to three times the norm.

**

Win Dinner for Two at the Publick House

Your tips can win you a great three course dinner for two at the historic Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge! Simply send in a hint to be entered into a random drawing. One winner per month (or whenever enough tips are received) will win a fabulous three course dinner for two at the renowned restaurant, located on Route 131 across the town common in historic Sturbridge. Because I'm in the business of dispensing tips, not inventing them (although I can take credit for some), I'm counting on you readers out there to share your best helpful hints!

Do you have a helpful hint or handy tip that has worked for you? Do you have a question regarding household or garden matters? If so, why not share them with readers of Stonebridge Press newspapers? Send questions and/or hints to: Take the Hint!, C/o the Southbridge Evening News, PO Box 90; Southbridge, MA 01550. Or email KDRR@aol.com. Hints are entered into a drawing for dinner for two at the historic Publick House Inn.

POLICE REPORTS

Leicester

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

1:49 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 3:35 a.m.: abandoned 911 call (Mayflower Circle), resolved; 5:12 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 7:02 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 7:18 a.m.: mv stop (Paxton Street), spoken to; 9:41 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), citation issued; 9:51 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:57 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, criminal application issued; 10:20 a.m.: bomb scare (Main Street), report taken; 11:27 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 11:33 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, criminal application issued; 11:49 a.m.: ambulance (Lakeside Avenue, Worcester), transported; 11:50 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 11:56 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, mv lights violation, unlicensed operation, criminal application issued; 11:57 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 12:08 p.m.: illegal dumping (Town Beach Road), report taken; 1:06 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 1:14 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:33 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 1:41 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 1:49 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 2:20 p.m.: assist citizen (Stafford Street); 2:33 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 3:43 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 5:30 p.m.: welfare check (Pleasant Street), spoken to; 5:45 p.m.: erratic operator (Pleasant Street), gone on arrival; 7:02 p.m.: assist citizen (South Main Street); 7:26 p.m.: threats (Pleasant Street), resolved; 7:37 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), written warning; 8:32 p.m.: suspicious mv (Sherri Lane), gone on arrival; 11:14 p.m.: erratic operator (Henshaw Street), gone on arrival.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15

12:28 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 12:56 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:06 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:07 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 1:27 a.m.: welfare check (Paxton Street), assisted; 1:54 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 2:13 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 6:29 a.m.: stolen mv (Main Street), report taken; 6:34 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 8:08 a.m.: welfare check (Paxton Street), no action required; 8:55 a.m.: drug violation (Main Street), name, age, address, details of violations not entered into public police log, arrest; 9:28 a.m.: welfare check (Main Street), report taken; 9:43 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 11:26 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 1:03 p.m.: investigation (Main Street), report taken; 2:23 p.m.: threats (Paxton Street), report taken; 3:19 p.m.: suspicious activity (Henshaw Street), spoken to; 3:29 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 3:55 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 3:59 p.m.: suspicious mv (South Main Street), spoken to; 4:18 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 4:25 p.m.: assist citizen (Main Street); 4:32 p.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), spoken to; 4:33 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 4:37 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 4:56 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:29 p.m.: ambulance (Cambridge Street, Worcester), transported; 5:44 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 5:50 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 6:08 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 6:15 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 6:19 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 6:26 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 6:34 p.m.: animal complaint (Marshall Street), referred to ACO; 8:23 p.m.: accident (River Street), mv towed; 9:30 p.m.: mv stop (Huntoon Memorial Highway), written warning; 11:27 p.m.: investigation (Queen Street, Worcester), name and address redacted from police log, receiving stolen credit card, criminal application issued; 11:41 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), false alarm.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16

12:01 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 12:18 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, uninsured mv, unregistered mv, criminal application issued; 12:56 a.m.: mutual aid (Main Street, Worcester), transported to hospital; 1:16 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:44 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), citation issued; 2:03 a.m.: suspicious mv (South Main Street), resolved; 2:13 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 2:30 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 2:53 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street) verbal warning; 3:04 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street) verbal warning; 3:15 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street) verbal warning; 3:20 a.m.: a&b w/dangerous weapon (Burncoat Street), name and address redacted from police log, assault w/dangerous weapon, threatening to commit a crime, assault & battery; name address redacted from police log, assault & battery, assault & battery w/dangerous weapon, criminal applications/2 issued; 10:23 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 11:10 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 11:26 a.m.: accident (Pine Street), report taken; 1:53 p.m.: animal complaint (Birchwood Drive), referred to ACO; 2:16 p.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), investigated; 3:49 p.m.: RV complaint (Logan Street), unfounded; 4:33 p.m.: welfare check (Ackley Drive), resolved; 5:31 p.m.: assist citizen (Soojians Drive); 9:02 p.m.: assist other PD (South Main Street), services rendered; 9:07 p.m.: assist other PD (South Main Street), services rendered; 10:15 p.m.: welfare check (Stafford Street), assisted; 11:44 p.m.: disturbance (Stafford Street), services rendered.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

12:05 a.m.: assist other PD (Main Street), services rendered; 12:17 a.m.: larceny (Stafford Street), report taken; 12:18 a.m.: suspicious mv (South Main Street), investigated; 8:59 a.m.: ambulance (Salminen Drive), transported; 10:19 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 2:45 p.m.: ambulance (Pleasant Street), transported; 3:20 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 6:27 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 6:55 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 7:32 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:48 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), citation issued; 9:55 p.m.: mutual aid (Dayton Street, Worcester), call canceled.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18

3:30 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 6:42 a.m.: hazardous conditions (Pryor Road), investigated; 6:56 a.m.: hazardous conditions (Pleasant Street), hazard removed; 9:47 a.m.: illegal dumping (Town Beach Road), spoken to; 10:19 a.m.: investigation (Main Street), report taken; 10:24 a.m.: assist citizen (Colonial Drive); 10:33 a.m.: debris in road (Marshall Street), removed; 10:37 a.m.: hanging wires (King Street), services rendered; 11:00 a.m.: hanging wires (Collier Avenue), investigated; 11:36 a.m.: erratic operator (Leela Lane), transported to hospital; 12:00 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 12:48 p.m.: ambulance (Carleton Road), transported; 1:12 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 1:18 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 1:32 p.m.: assist other PD (Main Street), services rendered; 1:46 p.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), call canceled; 2:08 p.m.: open door/window (Pleasant Street), unable to locate; 3:44 p.m.: water/sewer problem (Paxton Street), services rendered; 4:03 p.m.: assist citizen (South Main Street); 5:01 p.m.: water/sewer problem (Paxton Street), services rendered; 5:06 p.m.: ambulance (Whittemore Street), transported; 5:30 p.m.: summons service (Towtaid Street), served; 5:43 p.m.: summons service (Stafford Street), served; 6:02 p.m.: debris in road (Marshall Street), services rendered; 9:22 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 10:46 p.m.: disturbance (Waite Street), resolved; 11:52 p.m.: mv stop (Mill Street), name and address redacted from police log, uninsured mv, op w/suspended registration, unregistered mv, criminal application issued.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19

12:08 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 12:28 a.m.: mv stop (Auburn Street), verbal warning; 12:51 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 12:54 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:20 a.m.: mv stop (Marshall Street), verbal warning; 1:24 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, mv lights violation, criminal application issued; 3:29 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 7:24 a.m.: investigation (out of town, no location noted in police log), report taken; 7:46 p.m.: restraining order service (Mayflower Road), unable to serve; 7:50 a.m.: ambulance (Virginia Drive), transported; 8:15 a.m.: accident (Pleasant Street), mv towed; 8:16 a.m.: suspicious activity (Main Street), gone on arrival; 9:48 a.m.: illegal dumping (Main Street), report taken; 10:22 a.m.: investigation (Lake Avenue North, Worcester), report taken; 10:46 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), assisted; 10:56 a.m.: investigation (South Main Street), report taken; 12:06 p.m.: welfare check (Parker Street), services rendered; 1:21 p.m.: summons service (Main Street), unable to serve; 1:22 p.m.: restraining order service (Mayflower Road), served; 1:36 p.m.: investigation (Charles Street), report taken; 1:45 p.m.: mv stop (Paxton Street), verbal warning; 1:55 p.m.: welfare check (Craig Street), gone on arrival; 1:58 p.m.: mv stop (Washburn Street), verbal warning; 4:19 p.m.: ambulance (Rural Drive), transported; 4:35 p.m.: accident (King Terrace), report taken; 5:38 p.m.: arrest warrant service (Stafford Street), unable to serve; 6:37 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:52 p.m.: debris in road (Stafford Street), referred; 9:05 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), unable to locate.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

12:19 a.m.: welfare check (Deer Pond Road), services rendered; 12:36 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 12:59 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:23 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:40 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 2:03 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), citation issued; 3:07 a.m.: welfare check (Burncoat Lane), resolved; 7:53 a.m.: mv stop (Paxton Street), spoken to; 8:05 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 8:12 a.m.; mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 8:33 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), Leopoldo Loja-Zamora, 34, 7 Mount Pleasant Avenue, Leicester, failure to signal, operating w/license suspended for OUI, arrest; 8:36 a.m.: ambulance (Boyd Street), no action required; 10:31 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 10:46 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 11:58 a.m.: erratic operator (Mill Street), unable to locate; 1:16 p.m.: suspicious mv (Paxton Street), no action required; 1:47 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, unregistered mv, uninsured mv, criminal application issued; 2:28 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 5:51 p.m.: summons service (Oak Bluff Lane), unable to serve; 6:27 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 10:03 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 11:58 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning.

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

1:01 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:13 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:23 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 1:34 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), citation issued; 1:35 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 2:00 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, speeding, report taken; 10:15 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 10:22 a.m.: larceny (Main Street), report taken; 12:09 p.m.: disturbance (Pleasant Street), resolved; 2:14 p.m.: ambulance (Breezy Green Road), transported; 2:15 p.m.: suspicious mv (Main Street), report taken; 2:32 p.m.: ambulance (Reservoir Street), transported; 3:34 p.m.: welfare check (Sterling Street), services rendered; 4:19 p.m.: ambulance (Dale Street), transported.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

3:22 a.m.: suspicious mv (Stafford Street), investigated; 4:03 a.m.: ambulance (South Main Street), transported; 4:55 a.m.: icy roadway (Westminster Street), resolved; 8:47 a.m.: assist other agency (Town Beach Road), services rendered; 11:08 a.m.: ambulance (Carlson Drive), transported; 1:18 p.m.: accident (Pleasant Street), name and address redacted from police log, speeding, OUI liquor, negligent operation, marked lanes violation, arrest; 1:33 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 1:45 p.m.: animal complaint (Pine Street), referred to ACO; 3:10 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 3:17 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 3:22 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 3:24 p.m.: neighbor dispute (Redfield Road), report taken; 3:29 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 3:35 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 3:40 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 3:44 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 3:51 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), written warning; 4:16 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 4:24 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 4:31 p.m.: assist other agency (Town Beach Road), investigated; 4:38 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, op w/suspended license, no inspection sticker, arrest; 5:08 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 5:37 p.m.: ambulance (White Birch Street), transported; 5:49 p.m.: ambulance (Pitcairne Avenue), transported; 6:08 p.m.: erratic operator (South Main Street), unable to locate; 7:03 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 7:22 p.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 7:23 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 7:30 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 7:52 p.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), verbal warning; 7:58 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), verbal warning; 8:13 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning; 8:22 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), written warning; 9:09 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:33 p.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), verbal warning; 9:58 p.m.: mv stop (Main Street), written warning.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

12:47 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), call canceled; 12:59 a.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 5:06 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 7:25 a.m.: suspicious person (Boutilier Road), resolved; 7:43 a.m.: welfare check (Sterling Street), report taken; 8:38 a.m.: erratic operator (McNeil Highway), spoken to; 9:44 a.m.: family problem (Cricklewood Drive), report taken; 10:16 a.m.: ambulance (Clark Street), transported; 10:20 a.m.: ambulance (Reservoir Street), services rendered; 11:36 a.m.: suspicious activity (Soojians Drive), services rendered; 11:52 a.m.: assist citizen (Huntoon Memorial Highway), report taken; 12:20 p.m.: disabled mv (Pleasant Street), services rendered; 1:29 p.m.: assist citizen (Main Street), report taken; 1:34 p.m.: harassment (Main Street), spoken to; 2:36 p.m.: investigation (Main Street), spoken to; 3:09 p.m.: ambulance (Winslow Avenue), transported; 3:51 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), unfounded; 4:07 p.m.: arrest warrant service (Charles Street), Lisa L. Ducharme, 46, 84 Charles Street, Leicester, straight warrant; Brian J. Ducharme, 50, 84 Charles Street, Leicester, straight warrant, arrest/2; 5:35 p.m.: family problem (Autumn Lane), peace restored; 6:44 p.m.: assist citizen (Main Street).

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

12:16 a.m.: mv stop (Pleasant Street), citation issued; 12:32 a.m.: welfare check (Pleasant Street), report taken; 1:33 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 2:05 a.m.: ambulance (Main Street), transported; 3:31 a.m.: animal complaint (Stafford Street), referred to ACO; 5:11 a.m.: ambulance (Grove Street, Paxton), transported; 9:50 a.m.: ambulance (Stafford Street), transported; 11:46 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), spoken to; 12:07 p.m.: mv stop (Lake Avenue), spoken to; 12:43 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 12:45 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), name and address redacted from police log, unlicensed operation, uninsured mv, unregistered mv, number plate violation, criminal application issued; 1:17 p.m.: assist citizen (South Main Street); 4:21 p.m.: ambulance (Alsada Street, Worcester), transported; 4:28 p.m.: welfare check (Mayflower Road), report taken; 5:49 p.m.: animal complaint (Forest Street), referred to ACO.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

12:01 a.m.: mv stop (Craig Street), verbal warning; 12:14 a.m.: suspicious mv (Stafford Street), spoken to; 10:17 a.m.: ambulance (Mechanic Street, Spencer), transported; 1:07 p.m.: ambulance (Bixby Road, Spencer), call canceled; 1:30 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 2:46 p.m.: vandalism (Rawson Street), report taken; 5:50 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), unable to locate; 9:16 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26

12:32 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), Justin M. Langelier, 45, 6 Meadowbrook Road, Hudson, possession of ammunition w/o FID/LTC, possession Class B drug (cocaine), possession Class B drug (LSD), possession Class C drug (psilocybin mushrooms), possession Class E drug (Adderall), possession Class E drug (alprazolam), arrest; 12:57 a.m.: accident (Pine Street), resolved; 4:23 a.m.: disabled mv (Pleasant Street), mv towed; 8:04 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:29 a.m.: investigation (Rawson Street), report taken; 10:27 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 10:55 a.m.: disabled mv (Stafford Street), unable to locate; 10:57 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), name and address redacted from police log, number plate violation to conceal ID, misuse of dealer/repair plate, criminal application issued; 1:35 p.m.: investigation (South Main Street), report taken; 5:23 p.m.: suspicious mv (Town Beach Road), resolved; 5:45 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), unable to locate; 6:33 p.m.: disturbance (Main Street), resolved; 7:32 p.m.: disturbance (King Street), resolved; 7:54 p.m.: erratic operator (Main Street), unable to locate; 8:06 p.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 8:09 p.m.: accident (Charlton Street), mv towed; 8:53 p.m.: open door/window (Pleasant Street), resolved; 9:00 p.m.: suspicious person (Pleasant Street), resolved.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

12:11 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 12:29 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 1:14 a.m.: mv stop (South Main Street), citation issued; 1:23 a.m.: disabled mv (Tanglewood Road), unfounded; 1:42 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), verbal warning; 9:25 a.m.: mv stop (Main Street), citation issued; 10:21 a.m.: welfare check (McNeil Highway), services rendered; 10:32 a.m.: suspicious mv (Old Stafford Turnpike), investigated; 11:04 a.m.: ambulance (Huntoon Memorial Highway), transported; 11:13 a.m.: suspicious person (Ingram Road), Nam Can Nguyen, 49, 1050 Main Street, #313, Worcester, failure to appear upon recognizance, arrest; 4:47 p.m.: suspicious activity (Soojians Drive), no action required; 5:02 p.m.: mv stop (Stafford Street), verbal warning; 5:27 p.m.: erratic operator (Stafford Street), message delivered; 5:51 p.m.: welfare check (Tobin Road), services rendered; 9:49 p.m.: assist citizen (Tobin Road).

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SPENCER

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 13

1:54 a.m.: medical/general (East Charlton Road); 1:57 a.m.: medical/general (Paxton Road); 2:13 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), services rendered; 2:28 a.m.: parking violation (Main Street), ticket issued; 5:28-5:48 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 6:13 a.m.: officer wanted (Ash Street), rep. ice on road; 1:02 p.m.: commercial alarm

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(Mechanic Street), services rendered; 1:06 p.m.: officer wanted (Roys Drive), pkg. taken; 1:24 p.m.: mv complaint (North Spencer Road), erratic operator; 2:46 p.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 2:48 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), aggressive driver; 3:25 p.m.: mv complaint (North Spencer Road), c/o speeding; 3:29 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 3:37 p.m.: juvenile matter (Paxton Road), re: incident at school; 8:12 p.m.: mv stop (North Spencer Road), Julia Odelia-Elisheva Normandin, 26, 2 Parent Street, Spencer, OUI liquor, negligent operation, marked lanes violation, arrest; 8:12 p.m.: DPW call (West Main Street), snow squall/snow on road; 9:46 p.m.: medical/general (Wall Street); 10:38 p.m.: animal complaint (Meadow Road), c/o barking dog; 11:26 p.m.: suspicious mv (McCormick Road), investigated; (total daily mv stops – 3).

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14

2:15 a.m.: commercial alarm (West Main Street), services rendered; 3:25 a.m.: animal complaint (Main Street), c/o barking dog; 6:16 a.m.: medical/general (Ledge Avenue); 9:32 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 10:04 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), services rendered; 10:05 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 10:46 a.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 10:50 a.m.: 911 call (Church Street), test/elevator phone; 11:05 a.m.: medical/general (Ash Street); 11:28 a.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 12:03 p.m.: suspicious persons (Donnelly Cross Road), investigated; 12:51 p.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 1:21 a.m.: animal complaint (Brown Street), c/o dogs barking; 2:11 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), rep. sale of multiple pistols/revolvers; 4:22 p.m.: DPW call (Ash Street), icy conditions; sometime between 4:22-5:27 p.m.: arrest warrant service (Main Street), Daniel Joseph Paradis, 23, 84 Main Street, Spencer, warrants/3, arrest; 5:27 p.m.: mv lockout (West Main Street), assisted; 5:49 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Leicester PD bolo/erratic operator; 5:53 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 6:17 p.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), req. welfare check/child; 6:50 p.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 7:10 p.m.: officer wanted (Grant Street), rep. poss. scam; 7:19 p.m.: 911 call (Cherry Street), accidental; 9:16 p.m.: mv lockout (Main Street), assisted; 9:51 p.m.: medical/general (Maple Street); 10:08 p.m.: commercial alarm (Mechanic Street), services rendered; (total daily mv stops – 4).

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 15

12:01 a.m.: disturbance (Elm Street), noise complaint; 12:13-3:30 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 3:09-3:44 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd/3; 5:11 a.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), crane blocking parking spots in ambulance bay; 8:38 a.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 10:37 a.m.: parking complaint (Main Street), mv parked on curb; 10:57 a.m.: harassment prevention order service (Woodside Road); 11:19 a.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), iWatch/hard fall detected; 11:49 a.m.: officer wanted (Clark Road), req. welfare check; 12:28 p.m.: officer wanted (Route 49), re: missing mv; 2:29 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), req. keep the peace; 3:06 p.m.: disturbance (Main Street), services rendered; 3:27 p.m.: suspicious persons (Ash Street), investigated; 3:54 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), c/o activity on YouTube; 8:15 p.m.: medical/general (Jolicoeur Avenue); 8:50 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 11:26-11:46 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; (total daily mv stops – 5).

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16

12:02 a.m.: suspicious mv (Greenville Street), investigated; 12:10-1:38 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:49 a.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 4:46 a.m.: 911 call (Pearl Street), no emergency; 8:20 a.m.: medical/general (Cherry Street); 8:26 a.m.: officer wanted (Church Street), re: neighbor's security system; 10:40 a.m.: 911 call (North Spencer Road), child w/phone; 11:30 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 11:45 a.m.: animal complaint (Lake Street), loose dog; 12:14 p.m.: officer wanted (Walnut Street), c/o issues w/neighbor; 2:08 p.m.: officer wanted (Deer Run Road), req. welfare check; 4:38 p.m.: mv stop (West Main Street), Katherine Marie Davis, 34, 100 Sewall Road, Boylston, OUI liquor, negligent operation, child endangerment while OUI, arrest; 4:54 p.m.: animal complaint (Pleasant Street), c/o dog barking; 4:55 p.m.: disturbance (West Main Street), unwanted party; 8:09 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 11:22 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 11:50 p.m.: building checked, secure; (total daily mv stops – 2).

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17

12:07-3:02 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:05-3:08 a.m.: parking violations/4 (McDonald, Grove, Mechanic Street), tickets issued; 11:46 a.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 12:58 p.m.: 911 call (Main Street), open line; 1:39 p.m.: officer wanted (North Spencer Road), req. evening property checks; 5:55 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), North Brookfield PD bolo/mv w/front-end damage; 6:24-6:30 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 6:44 p.m.: animal complaint (Donnelly Road), dead possum; 8:12 p.m.: mv complaint (North Spencer Road), erratic operator; 8:30-8:38 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 11:33 p.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 11:45 p.m.: commercial alarm (West Main Street), services rendered; (total daily mv stops – 3).

MONDAY, DECEMBER 18

12:06-12:45 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 3:25 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 3:43 a.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), UMass/Southbridge CT down; 4:18 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), services rendered; 5:16 a.m.: officer wanted (North Spencer Road), limb/southbound lane; 6:16 a.m.: officer wanted (Terkanian Drive), heard loud boom; 6:37 a.m.: DPW call (Summit Street), tree on wires; 6:39 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 6:40 a.m.: lost/found (Maple Street), bicycle found; 6:52 a.m.: accident (North Spencer Road), report taken; 7:06 a.m.: DPW call (Wm. Casey Road), tree blocking road; 7:35 a.m.: DPW call (Northwest Road), tree on wires; 7:54 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 8:34 a.m.: officer wanted (Pearl Street), tree fell on shed; 8:37 a.m.: officer wanted (Cherry Street), req. welfare check; 10:16 a.m.: DPW call (Mechanic Street), siding blown off bldg.; 10:33 a.m.: DPW call (Mechanic Street), stop sign down; 10:35 a.m.: fire/woods/grass (Charlton Road), utility pole on fire; 10:39 a.m.: DPW call (Woodside Road), tree across road; 10:42 a.m.: fire alarm (Maple Street), referred; 10:45 a.m.: DPW call (Cranberry Meadow Road), tree across road; 10:46 a.m.: DPW call (South Spencer Road), tree/wires down; 10:48 a.m.: DPW call (Wilson Street), tree down/blocking hydrant; 10:56 a.m.: DPW call (South Spencer Road), utility pole leaning; 10:58 a.m.: DPW call (Tom Casey Road), beaver dam breached/road flooded; 11:01 a.m.: animal complaint (Crown Street), loose dog; 11:07 a.m.: DPW call (Greenville Street), rep. sink hole; 11:31 a.m.: restraining order service (Browning Pond Road); 11:36 a.m.: DPW call (East Charlton Road), tree down; 12:19 p.m.: fire (Paxton Road), referred; 12:24 p.m.: DPW call (Borkum Road), stream over road; 12:41 p.m.: fire alarm (Maple Street), referred; 1:38 p.m.: DPW call (Howe Road), tree on wires; 1:42 p.m.: DPW call (South Spencer Road), water dept./no power, no pump; 3:31 p.m.: fire (Cherry Street), referred; 3:49 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 5:06 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 5:34 p.m.: officer wanted (Maple Street), bike left on sidewalk; 5:35 p.m.: elderly matter (Highland Street), req. welfare check; 5:40 p.m.: elderly matter (Prospect Street), services rendered; 5:41 p.m.: DPW call (Summit Street), utility pole blocking road; 8:57 p.m.: mv theft (Summit Street), mv window smashed/damaged; 9:11 p.m.: medical/general (Richland Avenue); (total daily mv stop – 0).

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19

12:04 a.m.: medical/general (Paxton Road); 12:31-1:50 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 1:22 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 2:03 a.m.: medical/general (Thompson Pond Road), lift assist; 6:21 a.m.: medical/general (Greenville Street); 7:44 a.m.: DPW call (Adams Street), rep. black ice; 8:23 a.m.: DPW call (South Spencer Road), no power at well; 10:39 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 11:08 a.m.: animal complaint (Charlton Road), injured owl; 11:21 a.m.: animal complaint (South Spencer Road), c/o hens digging up property; 12:39 p.m.: animal complaint (North Spencer Road), c/o animal remains near wall; 1:36 p.m.: medical/general (Taylor Road); 1:37 p.m.: medical/general (North Spencer Road); 1:44 p.m.: animal complaint (Water Street), loose/aggressive dogs; 1:47 p.m.: officer wanted (Irving Street), re: mail rec'd; 2:18 p.m.: suspicious persons (Smithville Road), info taken; 2:20 p.m.: commercial alarm (South Spencer Alarm), services rendered; 2:33 p.m.: fraud (Laurel Lane), report taken; 2:42 p.m.: juvenile matter (Main Street), re: disruptive student; 3:37 p.m.: elderly matter (Main Street), spoken to; 4:07 p.m.: disabled mv (West Main Street), services rendered; 4:49 p.m.: officer wanted (North Spencer Road), req. property check; 9:30 p.m.: building checked, secure; 9:39 p.m.: DPW call (North Spencer Road), runoff freezing; 11:30-11:53 p.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd/3; 11:56-11:57 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; (total daily mv stops – 2).

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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 20

12:09 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), services rendered; 12:47-1:21 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 5:43 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), services rendered; 5:50 a.m.: DPW call (Greenville Street), icy conditions; 7:11 a.m.: medical/general (Mercury Drive); 8:35 a.m.: DPW call (North Street), icy conditions; 8:39 a.m.: mutual aid (Pope Street), Delaware SP req. welfare check; 8:55 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 9:55 a.m.: harassment prevention order service (Norcross Road); 10:15 a.m.: medical/general (Paton Road); 10:26 a.m.: restraining order service (West Main Street); 10:53 a.m.: elderly matter (Chestnut Street), found stolen dog; 12:15 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (West Main Street), no contact; 12:39 p.m.: suspicious mv (Mechanic Street), investigated; 1:01 p.m.: fraud (Salem Street), report taken; 2:17 p.m.: DPW call (Jones Street), loose sewer grate; 2:33 p.m.: medical/general (North Brookfield Road); 5:16 p.m.: DPW call (South Spencer Road), icy conditions; 5:21 p.m.: fraud (Woodside Road), FB Marketplace scam; 5:40 p.m.: animal complaint (Pleasant Street), c/o barking dog; 7:58 p.m.: suspicious persons (West Main Street), rep. incident; 9:22 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), mv w/no lights struck curb; 10:07 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), someone repeatedly ringing doorbell; 10:46 p.m.: medical/general (Clark Road); 11:24 p.m.: suspicious persons (Greenville Street), investigated; (total daily mv stops – 4).

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21

1:39-2:24 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 3:25 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 6:56 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), services rendered; 7:47 a.m.: DPW call (Howe Road), icy conditions; 8:05 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 9:04 a.m.: 911 call (West Main Street), CMed line down; 10:02 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 10:39 a.m.: medical/general (Lincoln Street); 10:41 a.m.: medical/general (Linden Street); 12:49 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (West Main Street), resolved; 2:55 p.m.: 911 call (Church Street), elevator test; 5:40 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 6:46 p.m.: DPW call (Greenville Street), icy conditions; 7:07 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), aggressive operator; 11:24 p.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 11:28 p.m.: suspicious mv (Bixby Road), investigated; 11:51 p.m.: medical/general (Sherwood Drive); (total daily mv stops – 7).

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 22

12:24-2:10 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 2:20 a.m.: 911 call (Greenville Street), status not noted on police log; 3:23 a.m.: building checked, secure; 7:53 a.m.: DPW call (Howe Road), icy conditions; 11:30 a.m.: abandoned 911 call (Chestnut Street), no contact; 11:50 a.m.: officer wanted (North Spencer Road), spoken to; 12:29 p.m.: mv repossessed (Duggan Street), info rec'd; 1:40 p.m.: officer wanted (West Main Street), req. officer to obtain statement; 2:14 p.m.: medical/general (Clark Street); 3:02 p.m.: DPW call (Oakland Drive), icy conditions; 3:28 p.m.: disabled mv (North Spencer Road), assisted; 6:06 p.m.: residential fire (Marble Road), referred; 6:11 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 8:57 p.m.: officer wanted (Vista Lane), req. welfare check; (total daily mv stops – 8).

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

12:36 a.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), bolo/source not noted on police log; 2:11-2:32 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 7:53 a.m.: commercial alarm (Main Street), testing; 8:31 a.m.: officer wanted (Main Street), water pouring from trailer; 8:33 a.m.: commercial alarm (Water Street), accidental; 10:25 p.m.: animal complaint (Grove Street), loose dog; 11:49 a.m.: fire alarm (Mechanic Street), referred; 12:04 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Cranberry Lane), resolved; 12:29 p.m.: lost/found (West Main Street), state ID found; 1:03 p.m.: suspicious persons (West Main Street), investigated; 1:20 p.m.: animal complaint (G.H. Wilson Road), injure raccoon; 2:26 p.m.: building checked, secure; 2:40 p.m.: animal complaint (Laurel Lane), loose dog; 3:47 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Maple Street), referred; 3:51 p.m.: suspicious persons (Main Street), investigated; 4:47 p.m.: 911 call (Greenville Street), open line; 5:34 p.m.: medical/general (Paxton Road); 6:49 p.m.: elderly matter (Lincoln Street), male walked away from residence; 6:50 p.m.: building checked, secure; 7:21 p.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 8:17 p.m.: commercial alarm (West Main Street), services rendered; 8:21 p.m.: officer wanted (Chestnut Street), re: LTC suspension; 9:13 p.m.: accident (West Main Street), report taken; 10:14 p.m.: DPW call (Mechanis Street), water main break; 10:17 p.m.: 911 call (Main Street), open line/hang-up; 11:17 p.m.: fire/woods/grass (Valley Street), referred; (total daily mv stops – 2).

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

1:36 a.m.: medical/general (Bay Path Road); 2:06-2:17 a.m.: buildings checked, secure; 5:38 a.m.: residential alarm (Sherwood Drive), services rendered; 6:01 a.m.: intelligence/parole (West Main Street), info rec'd; 8:01 a.m.: animal complaint (Briarcliff Lane), rep. vicious dog; 8:08 a.m.: medical/general (Howe Village); 8:12 a.m.: larceny (Main Street), report taken; 9:13 a.m.: suspicious mv (School Street), investigated; 9:44 a.m.: medical/general (Greenville Street); 10:22 a.m.: medical/general (Charlton Road); 12:15 p.m.: juvenile matter (Chestnut Street), spoken to; 1:04 p.m.: medical/general (Cranberry Lane); 3:08 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 5:11 p.m.: disabled mv (Main Street), assisted; 5:28-5:50 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 5:36 p.m.: disabled mv (Greenville Street), assisted; 6:18 p.m.: medical/general (Charlton Road); 6:42 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 7:52 p.m.: disturbance (Lyford Road), unwanted party; 8:14 p.m.: suspicious mv (West Main Street), investigated; 8:47 p.m.: disturbance (Maple Street), unwanted party; 8:56 p.m.: officer wanted (Browning Pond Road), unable to reach son; 9:27 p.m.: medical/general (Cranberry Meadow Road); (total daily mv stops – 1).

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

12:15 a.m.: suspicious mv (North Spencer Road), investigated; 12:55 a.m.: accident (Paxton Road), report taken; 10:02 a.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 10:08 a.m.: medical/general (Mechanic Street); 10:36 a.m.: juvenile matter (Main Street), re: welfare check; 12:08 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 12:44 p.m.: animal complaint (Briarcliff Lane), c/o vicious dog; 12:52 p.m.: 911 call (Smithville Road), hang-up; 12:59 p.m.: medical/general (Bixby Road); 1:34 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Worcester PD bolo; 1:54 p.m.: medical/general (Condon Drive); 2:51 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (Lake Avenue), resolved; 3:07 p.m.: medical/general (Main Street); 7:35 p.m.: buildings checked, secure; 9:11 p.m.: accident (Main Street), report taken; 10:25 p.m.: mutual aid (West Main Street), Charlton PD bolo;11:13 p.m.: medical/general (Paxton Road); (total daily mv stops – 0).

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26

12:46 a.m.: suspicious mv (Maple Street), investigated; 5:30 a.m.: FID card issued (West Main Street), assisted; 5:31 a.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 7:52 a.m.: sex offender registration/annual (West Main Street), assisted; 8:16 a.m.: DPW call (Maple Street), water backup into apt.; 9:26 a.m.: suspicious mv (Maple Street), info taken; 10:02 a.m.: medical/general (Ash Street); 10:33 a.m.: commercial alarm (West Main Street), services rendered; 11:18 a.m.: medical/general (Adams Street); 11:20 a.m.: animal complaint (Lake Whittemore Drive), loose dogs; 11:33 a.m.: fire alarm (Mechanic Street), referred; 11:39 a.m.: medical/general (Browning Pond Road); 11:53 a.m.: officer wanted (McCormick Road), re: threats rec'd; 12:10 p.m.: fraud (West Main Street), report taken; 12:18 p.m.: abandoned 911 call (West Main Street), accidental; 12:39 p.m.: medical/general (Pleasant Street); 2:00 p.m.: LTC issued (West Main Street), assisted; 2:42 p.m.: DPW call (Howe Road), couch dumped near park; 4:17 p.m.: elderly matter (Crown Street), re: DA referral; 4:19 p.m.: medical/general (West Main Street); 4:37 p.m.: officer wanted (Pearl Street), re: trailer for moving; 6:42 p.m.: animal complaint (Wilson Street), missing dog; 6:49 p.m.: suspicious mv (Donnelly Cross Road), re: activity at boat ramp; 7:33 p.m.: mv complaint (Main Street), erratic operator; 8:12 p.m.: medical/general (Church Street); 8:51 p.m.: building checked, secure; (total daily mv stops – 0).

# # #

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SPORTS

Flauto helps Northbridge stun previously unbeaten Panthers

Nick Ethier photos

David Prouty's Alec Fournier breaks away from a Northbridge defender for an uncontested layup.

Jay Jay Neiray of David Prouty releases a pass down to the corner of the court.

NORTHBRIDGE — In the final game of 2023 for the Northbridge and David Prouty boys' varsity basketball teams, which was played at Veterans Memorial Field House on Saturday, Dec. 30, the Rams and Panthers were engaged in a back-and-forth affair.

When all was said and done, Northbridge was the team ending the year with a victory, as they topped previously unbeaten Prouty, 51-48.

The Panthers had the hot hand early, though, in particular Jayden Rubio. The freshman scored Prouty's first 10 points, as the visitors led after a quarter of play, 12-4.

The Rams then battled back, with Adam Flauto collecting 11 points of his own in the second quarter. Northbridge won the frame, 18-9, and held a slim one-point lead (22-21) at the break.

The third and fourth quarters were then one-point differentials, with the Rams winning them both, 16-15 and 13-12. Flauto made 3 of 4 free throws down the stretch to seal the victory. Flauto scored a game-high 22 points, with teammates Anthony Becerril and David Scichilone each netting 9 points.

Rubio led Prouty in scoring with 18 points, with Alec Fournier finishing with 11 points. Jay Jay Neiray helped the Panthers with 8 points and 10 rebounds.

The Rams improved to 2-4 with the victory, while Prouty is now 6-1 heading into 2024.

Spartans' second half surge enough to upend Quaboag

Quaboag's Ryan Fernandez has just enough space to convert a layup.

UXBRIDGE — When the Uxbridge boys' varsity basketball team hosted Quaboag on Thursday, Dec. 21, the Spartans didn't get out to the first half start that they had hoped for. Instead, the Cougars headed to the locker room leading by 11 points, 30-19, at intermission.

But Uxbridge rallied back, first winning the third quarter by a 16-6 count to trail by just one point, 36-35, as play moved to the final frame. Then, in the fourth, the Spartans outscored Quaboag, 14-5, including an 11-0 run to finish the game. Scoring 30 second half points and limiting the Cougars to just 11 allowed Uxbridge to emerge victorious, 49-41.

Ethan McCusker had a double-double for the Spartans with 10 points and 11 rebounds, while Aidan Blood scored 10 points and pulled down 8 boards, and Kellen LaChapelle chipped in 8 points.

For Quaboag, Hart Waz (12 points on four 3-pointers), Owen Stevens (10 points) and Ryan Fernandez (8 points) were the leading scorers.

Uxbridge improved to 3-1 with the victory, while the Cougars slipped to 1-1.

Hart Waz of Quaboag releases a crosscourt pass.

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Quaboag's Owen Stevens (22) sets a pick so that Matthew Tiberii can pull up for a jump shot.

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High School Notebook

Tantasqua boys' swim team defeats Westborough, remains unbeaten

The Tantasqua swim program competed against Westborough on Wednesday, Dec. 20. The boys won, 92-78, and the girls took the loss with a score of 127-49.

Top swims for Tantasqua's boys' team were from Ethan Zhu winning both the 200 free and 100 back, Evan Dambly in the 200 IM, Ethan Korenda in the 100 free, Sam Merchant in the 500 free and Jonah Scherer in the 100 breaststroke.

On the girls' side, Tantasqua's Abbey Korenda won the 200 freestyle, Alison Regan won the 50 free and Sasha Hildago won the 500 free.

After the meet, the boys improved to 3-0, while the girls dropped to 0-3.

SPORTS

Saint Paul beats Beavers for Auburn High Rocket Classic Championship

Rockets also get by Bay Path in consolation game

Nick Ethier photos

Bay Path's Peter Barbale (33) receives a pass from Ed Simo

Corey Scovil of Bay Path leaps up to catch a pass in the paint in front of Auburn's defense.

Bay Path's Dale Nussey keeps the ball to the outside while driving on Auburn defender Jason Kahura.

AUBURN — After Saint Paul beat Bay Path (71-57) and Blackstone Valley Tech defeated Auburn (41-39) back on Wednesday, Dec. 27 in first round play of the Auburn High Basketball Rocket Classic Tournament, the Saints played the Beavers and the Minutemen took on the Rockets for the championship and consolation games, respectively, on Friday, Dec. 29.

Saint Paul 61, Blackstone Valley Tech 48 — The Knights trailed after the first quarter of play (16-13), but then they won each of the next three quarters to pull away from the Beavers for the Rocket Classic Championship.

Saint Paul led at the half, 27-23, and through three quarters, 43-35, before winning by 13 points behind Robert F. Muir "Mooch" MVP Award winner Jack McGrath's 24-point, 5-rebound performance.

Other top scorers for the Knights (3-3) included Jake LeFrancois (14 points) and Sam Kuffour (11).

For now 1-4 Valley Tech, Ryan Sauter led the offensive charge with 13 points, while Nick Whitlock and Jon Powell each added 8 more.

Auburn 67, Bay Path 59 — The Rockets got off to an extremely fast start, as Brayden Martin scored a two-point basket and four 3's in the first quarter alone, and they led 22-13 after the initial eight minutes.

Auburn also led at the half, 30-25, and after through quarters, 55-39, before hanging on to beat the Minutemen by eight.

Martin finished with a game-high 20 points, as a total of 10 Rockets registered points. Billy Stewert (12) and Jason Kahura (11) were also in double figures for Auburn (2-3).

Eight Bay Path players found the scoring column, which was led by Peter Barbale's 14-point effort. Luke Smolski chipped in 10 points for the Minutemen, which dropped to 1-3 on the season.

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2023 musical instrument auction results

ANTIQUES, COLLECTIBLES & ESTATES

WAYNE TUISKULA

First off, I'd like to wish a Happy New Year to all readers of this column. In recent articles, I discussed a few of the top selling items we sold at auction in 2023. In today's column I'll share some additional information on the best items of the past year, focusing on musical instruments.

Many people have musical instruments that have been passed down through their families and often don't realize that they may be of value. Instruments like antique violins and cellos may date back centuries. Selling a well-crafted violin could even put you in a different tax bracket. We recently sold a newer collection of musical instruments that still generated considerable interest and brought great results.

Our June auction featured 63 guitars from a Boston collector's estate. The collection included 1960s and newer electric and classical guitars. Some Gretsch guitars sold well, but the Gibson guitars brought the strongest prices.

Orville Gibson began producing guitars in 1894 as a hobby. He eventually decided to turn his passion into a business and formed the Gibson Mandolin-Guitar Manufacturing Company in 1902. Sadly, he died in 1918 and didn't get to see how successful his company would become, according to guitar.com. In the 1920s, Gibson created a truss rod and height-adjustable bridge that musicians liked and helped the company grow. In 1935, they produced their first electric guitar, the EH-150. Gibson also designed acoustic guitars that were popular with musicians in the late 1930s. They continued to make improvements throughout the 1940s and 1950s. In 1952, they developed a partnership with a jazz guitarist that helped produce a legendary guitar. Les Paul created a solid body guitar he called "the Log." While it wasn't particularly well received at first, it would eventually become iconic. Some of the Rock and Roll greats who played Les Paul guitars include Neil Young, Eric Clapton, Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page, Fleetwood Mac's Peter Green, and Guns n' Roses' Slash.

The top selling Gibson guitars in our June auction were a Gibson custom L5 electric guitar with mother of pearl shell frets that sold for $3,540. Two Les Paul models were also on the list. A Gibson Les Paul 25/50 anniversary guitar with mother of pearl brought $3,245. Another Gibson Les Paul custom electric guitar went for $3,540. There were several acoustic guitars that also were popular with bidders. A 1974 Jose Ramirez six-string guitar struck a chord with collectors, bringing in $5,000.

We have three electric guitars for sale in our current auction that ends on Jan. 10, including a Paul Reed Smith solid body guitar. We also have nearly 200 lots of gold and platinum jewelry, along with many sets of sterling silver flatware and other silver from multiple estates. We are also offering many pieces of mid-century modern furniture and accessories as well as some fine art, antiques, and collectibles.

I will be teaching my night class at the Bay Path Evening School in Charlton in the spring and will be presenting on selling your antiques and collectibles when downsizing to the Learning in Retirement group in Danielson, Connecticut on May 6. Please visit our Web site, https://centralmassauctions.com, for links to other upcoming events.

Contact us to consign items or for auction information at: Wayne Tuiskula Auctioneer/Appraiser Central Mass Auctions for Antique, Collectibles Auctions and Appraisal Services info@centralmassauctions.com or (508-612-6111).

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MELINDA MYERS

There's no need to visit a spa for a bit of soothing aromatherapy. Grow fragrant plants indoors to improve your mood and promote a sense of relaxation.

Gardenias may be the first fragrant flowering plant that comes to mind. They can be challenging but are worth the effort. Grow them in moist acidic soil, in bright light, and surrounded by other plants or on a gravel tray to increase the humidity.

Jasmines are known for their sweet fragrant flowers. Arabian jasmine (Jasmine sambac) will flower indoors several times throughout the year if it receives sufficient light. Consider adding artificial lights to boost flowering. Grow this plant in a warm draft-free location and allow the soil to dry several inches below the surface before watering again.

Citrus are valued for their fruit, but they also produce fragrant flowers. Give them bright light and keep the soil slightly moist for the best results.

Stephanotis floribunda was frequently used in wedding bouquets. Grow it in a sunny window and watch for flowers to appear in spring on new growth. Complete all necessary pruning as soon as the plant stops flowering.

Plumeria are the fragrant flowers often used in Hawaiian leis. Provide bright light, moist well-drained soil, and fertilize throughout the summer to promote flowering. Allow the soil to go a bit drier during the winter. Don't panic if the plants go dormant and drop their leaves in winter. New leaves will appear as temperatures warm.

String of pearls (Curio rowleyanus) is a trailing succulent with leaves that resemble peas. Grow these in a brightly lit location that is a bit cooler in the winter. This along with slightly drier soil in winter can promote flowering. Its cinnamon fragrance is one you'll remember.

Another succulent that may reward you with flowers is hoya. Keep the soil a bit moister during the summer when the plant is actively growing. Allow the soil to dry slightly when the plant is resting during the winter. High humidity in spring and summer followed by cooler temperatures and drier soil in winter will encourage pot-bound plants to flower. Watch for fragrant flowers to form on the long leafless stems.

Give the leaves of scented geranium (Pelargonium) a pet and enjoy the lemon, rose, apple, peppermint, or pine fragrance. Although grown for their scented foliage they also produce pretty but less showy flowers. Place the plants in areas where you brush past the leaves or can easily give them a pat to release and enjoy the fragrance.

Find a cool spot in your home away from drafts of hot and cold air for your lavender plant. Make sure the plant receives plenty of sunlight from a south-facing or similar window. Consider adding artificial lights to increase your success. Water thoroughly when the top inch of soil is dry to the touch. Pour off any excess water that collects in the saucer.

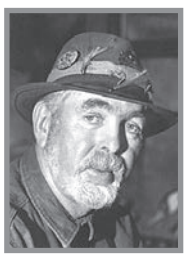
Visit your local independent garden center or reputable online plant retailers that are more likely to sell these in winter. Then clear out some space on a sunny windowsill or invest in a few plant lights and start growing some fragrant plants.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released "Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition" and "Small Space Gardening." She hosts The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" instant video and DVD series and the nationally syndicated Melinda's Garden Moment radio program. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for Birds & Blooms magazine. Myers' Web site is www.MelindaMyers.com.

Courtesy

Fragrant plants, like gardenias, add beauty indoors, boost mood, and promote relaxation.

A good day for a bird hunt



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

RALPH TRUE

Hope everyone survived the holidays. Now maybe we can get back to some normal living, whatever that is. There is no ice for ice fishing, which was always part of this writer's things to do after the holidays.

A couple of weeks ago, this writer had the pleasure of bird hunting with the Walker family, at the Uxbridge Rod & Gun Club. It was one of the last pheasant hunts for members only, and proved to be a successful one, as well as enjoyable, hunting with the Walker family. Aiden was extremely excited to hold Twig's leash until we released her to hunt down the first pheasant of the day for our group of hunters. Although the youngest hunters were not allowed to shoot, they enjoyed the day, with our three pheasant limit being filled in less than one hour. My yellow lab Twig did a great job retrieving our downed birds. The young hunters did get to carry our harvested birds back to the clubhouse, where we checked them in. I am sure that this family will carry on the hunting tradition long after we are gone.

Deer hunters are anxious to hear the results of this year's deer harvest in Mass., but it will take a while before the numbers are released. One thing for sure: a lot of deer were harvested, even without the snow for tracking.

Wachusett Res. continued to delight rod and reel anglers with some impressive rainbow trout and some lakers. The season is now closed and you will need to wait until spring to fish the Reservoir again. Anglers that fished Wachusett Res. also reported seeing some large fish break water during their fishing expeditions this fall. There are some big fish in Wachusett Res. and they will be there next year. Hopefully, some big fish will be caught!

Don't forget to renew your Rod & Gun memberships. Most club memberships need to be renewed at this time of year.

Take A Kid Fishing & Keep Them Rods Bending!

Greet the new year with joy

POSITIVELY SPEAKING

TOBY MOORE

Hey everyone, as we stand on the precipice of another New Year, it's fascinating to observe people's different attitudes towards this annual milestone.

Last year, I mastered keeping my New Year's resolutions neatly tucked away in a journal on my bookshelf!

Speaking of New Year's attitudes, they say an optimist stays up to see the New Year in. A pessimist waits to make sure the old one leaves.

I want to say, let's go easy on ourselves this year, stop being self-critical, and enjoy the New Year celebration. Speaking of which, I love watching the ball drop on New Year's Eve in Times Square; it reminds me of what I did all last year!

Let me tell you a story about my friend James at last year's New Year's Eve party. He was in no shape to drive, so he sensibly left his car at the party and walked home.

As he was wobbling along, he was stopped by a policeman.

"What are you doing out here at four o'clock in the morning?" asked the police officer.

"I'm on my way to a lecture," answered James

"And who on earth, in their right mind, is going to give a lecture at this time on New Year's Eve?" enquired the officer sarcastically.

"My wife," slurred James grimly.

Enough about that. I want to talk about resolutions; I decided to drink more water this year. But I've only gotten as far as 'drink more.'

I'm taking baby steps with these resolutions. On the topic of baby steps, one of my most significant resolutions this year is to stop procrastinating, but I'll wait till tomorrow to start.

And speaking of resolution lists, the top contender every year is 'losing weight.'

So, I went to my doctor for advice.

He looks at me and says, 'Your weight is perfect; you just happen to be seven feet too short!' If only gyms offered height-increasing programs, I'd be in perfect shape for 2024.

My journey with weight has been, let's say, 'uplifting.'

In 2020, I resolved to get my weight down below 180 pounds.

In 2021, I was to follow my new diet until I got below 200 pounds.

In 2022, I resolved to develop a realistic attitude about my weight.

In 2023, I aimed to work out three days a week.

In 2024, I will try to drive past a gym at least once a week!

But seriously, folks, my goal is to lose 10 pounds - I only have 15 more to go!

Let's remember the romance of New Year's Eve. Take my friend Jenny, who dreamed her husband, Max, gave her a diamond ring. She told Max about her dream and asked, "What do you think it means?"

He hugged her tight and promised she would know what it meant by midnight on NYE.

As the clock struck twelve, he handed her a small package. As she eagerly opened the package, she realized it was a book about 'The Meaning of Dreams.'

Talk about managing expectations!

So, maybe the New Year's resolution should be just that – managing expectations. Or at least trying to read more; I'm starting by adding subtitles to my TV. Hey, it's a step in the right direction.

And what did the cat say on New Year's Eve? 'Meow!' That's profound, right? If only our resolutions were as simple as our pets' thoughts.

Let's switch gears for a moment.

As a kid, I was allowed to stay up late on NYE. Now that I'm an adult, I'm forced to stay up late on NYE!

They say with age comes wisdom, so let's navigate through another year with this bit of prayer in mind:

'Grant me the senility to forget the people I never liked anyway, the good fortune to run into the ones that I do, and the eyesight to tell the difference.'

In the end, maybe that's what the New Year is about – embracing the senility of joy, the fortune of good company, and the wisdom to know our blessings.

So, let's greet this New Year with laughter, love, and a little less seriousness. May it bring joy, surprises, and memories worth cherishing.

Happy New Year, everyone!

www.StonebridgePress.com

Area residents invited to join in SMILE Mass mission

BY KEVIN FLANDERS
STAFF WRITER

REGION — The SMILE Mass organization invites area residents to join its mission of enhancing recreational experiences for people with disabilities.

Small Miracles in Life Exist (SMILE Mass) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to assisting families raising children with disabilities, as well as those supporting adults with disabilities. Through an array of programs and services, the organization helps improve educational and recreational experiences for families across the state.

With 2024 just underway, SMILE Mass leaders are excited for a promising year ahead. And it all starts with the ongoing support of residents and business leaders statewide.

A major program in need of fundraising support this year is Club SMILE Mass, which provides multiple activities benefiting people of all ages.

SMILE Mass recently announced that preliminary paperwork has been signed for the acquisition of a property in Framingham, which will be used to facilitate the Club SMILE Mass program.

"When we launched Club SMILE Mass in 2021, we approached a national health club and secured the space to execute these activities," said SMILE Mass founder and president Lotte Diomede. "As the program became more well-established and more clients signed on, we have outgrown the health club and are now forced to have a waiting list."

With the purchase of its very own property, SMILE Mass will soon be able to begin the process of establishing what leaders are celebrating as, "A community within a community."

To reach this goal, the organization has launched a capital fundraising campaign. Residents can choose between several donation levels.

"We are looking for 200 donations of $5,000 and above from our donor base, businesses, financial institutions, and organizations, which will allow us to build out the kitchen, library, gym, music therapy room, and elevator—and to make improvements to the garden and grounds," added Diomede, who established SMILE Mass in 2014. "These donations will come with naming rights or partial naming rights, allowing families or businesses to leave a lasting legacy for generations to see."

With a donation of $2,500, donors can purchase a wooden bench that will be placed on the property. Each bench will be carved with your family or business name, creating a lifelong legacy recognizing your donation.

For donations of $100, you will be able to purchase a legacy brick engraved with a message of your choice.

"This is a wonderful gift to give for holidays or birthdays, or to leave a legacy commemorating a family name, family member, or business," read a statement released by the organization.

The state-of-the-art facility will include classrooms for one-on-one learning and activities, with specialized spaces designed to limit external and overwhelming stimuli.

In addition to the classroom and outdoor learning spaces, the facility will feature an adapted gym; a heated pool for swim classes and water therapy; a fully handicapped-accessible playground; adapted trails throughout the property; a water activities zone for fishing and kayaking; and a pavilion where fitness training, art, and music classes can be offered to those with special needs.

Club SMILE Mass programming currently consists of several classes and activities. These include offerings in swimming; music therapy; story-time sessions; Bingo games; small group workout classes available via Zoom; and bike evaluations performed by a physical therapist.

For residents with disabilities, it has been difficult to find high-quality programming since the COVID-19 pandemic. In the years following the lengthy state-mandated shutdowns of 2020, many service providers have reduced their offerings or closed altogether.

Looking ahead, SMILE Mass is hoping to offer a destination for residents and families from across the state.

"This is our biggest undertaking yet. It is an opportunity for those who believe in equity and equality to resolve a national crisis following the pandemic," Diomede said. "The world is not built for people with severe disabilities, but everyone deserves a fully accessible world."

To donate to the organization's capital campaign, visit www.smilemass.org. You may also call 617-967-7755.

Courtesy

EAST BROOKFIELD POLICE HOLD HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE

The East Brookfield Police Department held a food drive which included donations from area residents. As a result, Christmas came early for the East Brookfield Baptist Church Food Pantry, which was blessed with a large donation of food. The Food Pantry Is located at the East Brookfield Baptist Church, 262 E. Main St. It's open to the public every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to noon.

Leicester Knights of Columbus hosting family dinner

LEICESTER — The Leicester Knights of Columbus will host a family dinner this month.

The event will take place on Thursday, Jan. 11, at 6 p.m. Menu options include a choice between meat loaf and baked fish. Each meal includes a salad, entrée, and dessert.

The cost of the meal is $15 per person.

To make reservations for the event, call Don at 508-615-8434. You may also send an email to ohno7g7@yahoo.com.

The Leicester Knights of Columbus is located at 90 Manville St.

FUNDING

continued from page A1

by allowing us to reach a greater population," said Senior Center Director Rachelle Cyr. "The Leicester Council on Aging already has a robust program, and this will allow us to enhance that programming by reaching out to those who are not able to access in-person programs."

Senior hybrid programming is especially important following the lengthy stretches of isolation created by pandemic lockdowns, officials said. Many local seniors have been thrilled to return to in-person social activities, while others prefer virtual options to help them stay connected.

"Research studies show that loneliness and social isolation can affect health and wellness for older adults, with higher risks for health problems such as heart disease, depression, and cognitive decline," Cyr added. "Hybrid programming can provide meaningful connections for older adults who are at risk for loneliness and social isolation."

Director Cyr and Donna McCance, the Vice Chair of the Leicester Council on Aging, attended a conference in August to learn about the Hybrid Programming Technology Grant.

"This grant application came about through the collaboration of the COA and the School District," McCance said. "We teamed with Dr. Brett Kustigian, Superintendent of Leicester Public Schools, and Dr. Richard Lind, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, to create an intergenerational program where students can develop and share their knowledge and skills using technology to create programs with the older adults."

School officials are excited about the opportunities created by the program.

"The idea of connecting older adults with the students will provide them an opportunity to share with the youth of their town their life stories and wisdom gained from their experiences," Lind said.

Leicester Town Administrator David Genereux also expressed his support for hybrid programming.

"These funds will help the community expand access for our elder population to receive high quality hybrid options. We are committed to delivering virtual and in-person programming to our seniors to ensure our growing elder population has their needs met," Genereux said.

Paul Miller, the technology coordinator for the school district, will collaborate with the schools and the Senior Center toward integrating the hybrid technology.

"I am happy to be able to assist the students and older adults with acquiring and setting up their new technology for the hybrid programming. I am certain this will be a successful venture for everyone," Miller said.

Cyr and McCance also teamed up to apply for the "Nutrition Innovation and/or Expansion" grant. This program is designed to help local senior centers create or sustain nutrition programs to support the food security of older adults.

Grant funding received for this program totaled $17,550. Funds will enable the Leicester Council on Aging to develop a garden at the Senior Center.

"It will provide nutrient rich foods that promote healthy aging and disease prevention through the growth of fruits, vegetables, and herbs on site that will be shared with the older adults," Cyr said. "It will provide many educational opportunities about nutrition and gardening, as well as exercise."

Added McCance, "We have many older adults and people within our community who have already expressed a desire to work with this garden project, and they are very excited about it. The timing of receiving both grants is perfect, as we will be able to document the growth of the garden with the technology to share with everyone."

School leaders and students alike are eager to get involved in the programs.

"Everyone benefits when you connect older adults and students," Superintendent Kustigian said. "Our students learn valuable perspective, wisdom, and experience."

VISIT

continued from page A1

work and community collaboration happening in town," LeBoeuf added. "I am looking forward to working with our legislative delegation to support Leicester, Cherry Valley, and Rochdale."

On Dec. 13, Sen. Peter Durant and State Rep. Paul Frost visited the schools.

"I thoroughly enjoyed touring the Leicester campus and seeing the innovative efforts of Dr. Kustigian and Principal Zawada as they make use of the former Becker College campus," Durant said. "They're working hard to create programs that are relevant and engaging for today's students."

School officials were thrilled to host the legislators and showcase the latest achievements for Leicester students and staff.

"As we look to expand our vocational opportunities for students, it is vital to have legislative support. Representatives LeBoeuf, Berthiaume, and Frost have continually been there to support us," said Leicester Public Schools Superintendent Brett Kustigian. "As Senator Durant takes over for my former teacher, Anne Gobi, I look forward to a strong partnership with Peter, too."

School officials are planning for additional visits from local leaders in the year ahead. The Leicester Public Schools leadership team is eager for a strong 2024 at all schools across the district.

"Our doors are always open to our legislators. We take pride in what we do every day, and we appreciate their support. We all agree that we need to expand vocational opportunities for students," Kustigian said.

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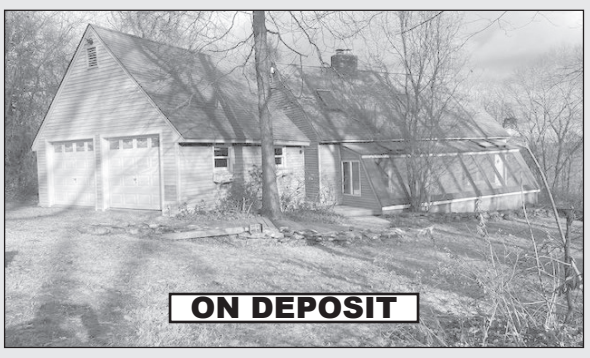

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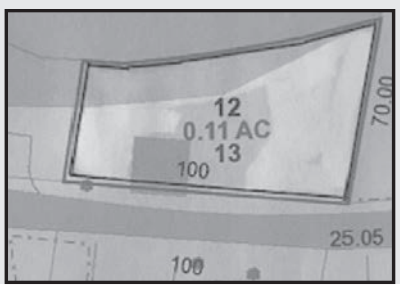

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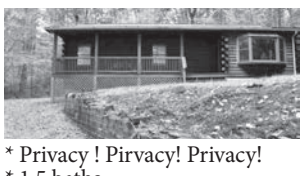

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Nursing students participate in Luminary lighting

Courtesy

Standing from left: Michael Wairimu of Worcester, Jeniffer Kilonzo of Shrewsbury, Regina Njuguna of Worcester, Christine Abdi of Worcester, Patrick Njunge of Worcester, and seated, Dr. Adelina Healy of Dudley.

www.StonebridgePress.com

CHARLTON — The PN Class of 2024 at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy observed the winter solstice and brought some honor to the year's longest night with the virtual Luminary Lighting, Dec. 21.

Traditionally, the winter solstice has been an important moment for ancient cultures related to their dependence on the sun for their survival. To everyone across the Southern Hemisphere, the North Pole shifts almost directly facing the sun bringing the longest day of the year. All clinical groups of the PN Class of 2024 participated with the project lead, JohnMartin Wanjiru.

Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director received the luminary kits from Meghan O'Neil, manager, The Longest Day, Alzheimer's Association Massachusetts/New Hampshire.

Bolandrina said, "We participated in the past and continue to be excited to participate and be a part of The Longest Night. The respective clinical sites of all six clinical groups served as a beautiful setting for the class of 2024 luminary lighting."

The rest of the PN Class of 2024 was joined by PN faculty, Dr. Ana Olivar, Professors Jennifer DeFilippo, Virginia Dockstader, and Angela McGrath. All participated with the hopes of helping diminish the darkness and illuminate a path towards a world without Alzheimer's and other dementia.

Photos of the Luminary lighting, including other PN students with their decorated kits and who they are honoring as they light their candle, are available for viewing at the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy's Facebook Page, https://www.facebook.com/BayPathPracticalNursing2015

About Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy offers a 40-week (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is fully approved by the: Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Human Services of Public Health Board of Registration in Nursing 239 Causeway Street Boston, MA 02114 617-973-0800www.mass.gov/dph/boards/rn The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is accredited by the: Council on Occupational Education 840 Roswell Road Building 300, Suite 325, Atlanta, GA 30350 Telephone: 800-917-2081 www.council.org Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School is fully accredited by the: New England Association of Schools and Colleges 209 Burlington Rd., Suite 201 Bedford, MA, 01730-1433 781-271-0022; www.neasc.org.

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