



Sterling MEETINGHOUSE NEWS

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November 15, 2017

American Folk Art on exhibit in Sterling

by Lex Thomas



PHOTO by Linda Davis

Artist Diane Ulmer Pedersen exhibits her paintings at the Sterling Senior Center through January.

When artist Diane Ulmer Pedersen began painting in the American folk art style, she had no idea that it would become her preferred style, bringing her both recognition and enormous satisfaction.

"Back in the '70s, I was working in an antique and home decorating shop, and my goal was to create original art for period homes," she says. "I was also doing a lot of watercolor painting at that time, then I started to do primitive portraits of children. It was the period work that got snapped up."

An exhibit of Pedersen's work is on display at the Sterling Senior Center through January. All pieces are available for sale, and the exhibit has received a great deal of attention and a very positive response.

Pedersen took her first art lessons at the Philadelphia Art Museum before entering grade school. She was an art major throughout high school, and went on to earn a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Denison University. She later attended the Moore College of Art & Design in Philadelphia, where she studied commercial design and graphic arts.

Crafts and painting from 1800 to 1830 are her favorites and provide her greatest source of inspiration. "I paint very methodically," she says. "It's geometric. I like simplicity, rather than busyness in my painting."

A native of Pennsylvania, Pedersen has lived in Massachusetts for 30 years, and in Sterling for the past 17 years. In addition to her American folk art paintings, she enjoys graphic design, and has created countless logos and posters for local events and organizations. She is also getting back to her watercolor painting, and enjoys attending the watercolor classes at First Church in Sterling whenever she can.

"I love a community approach to art," she says. "I've spent a lot of years working alone in my studio. There's a different personality when you're in your studio. I love sharing with other artists, and walking around to see what everyone else is doing."

Pedersen doesn't paint every day, but finds other creative outlets in cooking and crafts. She loves puzzles and design challenges.

"Inspiration comes to me in all kinds of ways," she says. "It's always a kernel of something, whether a new material or even just a thought. I can't always count on the source of inspiration, but it's always a surprise, and that's always wonderful."

For more information and to see Pedersen's work, visit DianeUlmerPedersen.com, or visit her current exhibit at the Sterling Senior Center.

Local resident wins HMEA Advocacy Award

by Jamie Chase Galvin

On October 12, Sterling resident Patricia Lynch was awarded the 2017 Advocacy Award for her extensive and tireless work with Horace Mann Educational Associates (HMEA). Founded in 1982, HMEA has a long history of providing services for children and adults with developmental disabilities at school, work, home, and in the community.

Lynch, who has worked with HMEA for 10 years and currently serves as the Program Coordinator for the Intensive Flexible Family Support Program, was recognized at an awards ceremony that recognized her unwavering support in helping secure a Habitat for Humanity home for a family with seven children, four of whom have mobility challenges, not adequately addressed by their housing situation. Lynch helped the family to apply for, and secure, a home now being built in Fitchburg.

HMEA pg 4



Contributed PHOTO

Pat Lynch (left) receives HMEA's 2017 Advocacy Award from Donna Boucher, Senior VP for Adult Services at HMEA.

State Senate Election
Tuesday, December 5
7 a.m. to 8 p.m.
Houghton Elementary School
32 Boutelle Road
For more information, contact
Town Clerk's Office
978-422-8111, ext. 2307

SterlingMeetinghouseNews.com

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Neighborhood group forming to address negative impacts of Pandolf-Perkins Quarry

Residents of Woodside Drive, Belmont and Glendale streets, and Route 12, are forming a committee to present a bill to the Sterling Board of Selectmen seeking changes to activities by Pandolf-Perkins Quarry, located on Route 12 opposite the Sterling DPW. The group, led by James P. Barbato, will address citizens' complaints relating to constant quarry noise, weekly blasting that shakes homes, and odors from the asphalt plant, along with other complaints that residents feel have turned their quiet neighborhood into an industrial zone. The first meeting will take place at the Sterling Senior Center on Monday, November 20, at 7 p.m. Are you affected by the company's actions? Email james.barbato@comcast.net, and include your name, complaints you would like addressed, and whether you can attend the meeting.

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Clinic keeps animals healthy, owners happy

Twenty-five rabies shots were administered and five microchips were implanted at Sterling's yearly fall rabies and microchip clinic on October 14. As the town's Animal Control Officer, microchips allow me to find the owner of any domesticated animal if they get loose or are injured, and have no identification tags. My universal scanner picks up all brand names of microchips. But remember that microchips must be registered by calling the microchip company. I want to remind residents that cats tend to wander a greater distance from home than dogs. I receive many missing cat notifications through the Sterling Police Department. A microchip inserted in the neck area, which is a painless procedure for the animal, would help me to find owners of lost pets much more often, and more quickly in an emergency situation. Thanks to the Board of Health for sponsoring the clinic.

Louis Massa
Sterling Animal Control Officer



(Left to right) Sterling post office workers Lisa Atwood-Guitare, Jackie Aubuchon, and Nadine Mitchener.

Contributed PHOTO

Stamps boost breast cancer research

The Sterling post office is grateful to patrons that purchased the semi-postal breast cancer stamps during Breast Cancer Awareness month. The post office sells breast cancer stamps year-round to raise funds for breast cancer awareness. Through their customers, the post office has raised over \$84.4 million dollars for breast cancer research. Nationally, Sterling came in 43rd out of 37,000,000 post office branches.

Thanksgiving curbside trash pickup schedule

Due to the Thanksgiving Day holiday on Thursday, November 23, Thursday and Friday trash and recycling curbside routes will be picked up one day later. Residences whose regularly scheduled pickup day is Thursday will have curbside pickup on Friday, November 24, and residences whose regularly scheduled pickup day is Friday will have curbside pickup on Saturday, November 25.



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The next issue will publish December 13. The advertising and copy deadline is Monday, December 4. Items received after deadline will be included if space is available.

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Sterling Meetinghouse News is mailed free of charge to all postal patrons of Sterling. We are not liable for typographical errors in advertisements.

Tell them you saw it in the Sterling Meetinghouse News

Letters to the Editor

Letters should be no more than 300 words, and must include the writer's name, address, phone number and signature. Only name, street name and town will be printed. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. On occasion, letters up to 500 words may be published as opinion pieces, at the editor's discretion. Send email to lex@sterlingmeetinghousenews.com or mail to: Sterling Meetinghouse News, PO Box 914, Sterling, MA 01564.

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Beware of jury duty scam

Worcester County Sheriff Lewis G. Evangelidis is warning residents about a recent phone scam in Worcester County where citizens are being targeted and threatened with prosecution for failing to comply with jury service in federal or state courts. According to the Sturbridge Police Department, in recent days fraudulent calls have been made to residents in the Sturbridge area where a caller identifying himself as an officer from the Worcester County Sheriff's Office has attempted to pressure recipients into providing pre-paid money cards, credit card and confidential data, potentially leading to identity theft and fraud. These calls, which threaten recipients with fines and jail time if they do not comply, are fraudulent and are not connected with the U.S. courts or the Worcester County Sheriff's Office. The Worcester County Sheriff's Office does not contact residents and demand payments or ask for credit card information on behalf of the courts regarding jury duty and is asking residents to be vigilant against this scam. Federal and state courts do not require anyone to provide any sensitive information in a telephone call or email. Most contact between a federal or state court and a prospective juror will be through the U.S. mail, and any phone contact by real court officials will not include requests for social security numbers, credit card numbers, or any other sensitive information. Persons receiving such a telephone call or email should not provide the requested information, and should notify the Clerk of Court's office of the U.S. District Court in their area.

Household hazardous products collection

Wachusett Regional Recycling Center will offer household hazardous products collection, including chemicals and paints, on Saturday, November 18, 8 a.m. to noon. Also accepting all bulk, recycle, reuse and electronics (some with fee). Located at 131 Raymond Huntington Highway, West Boylston. For more information and hours, call 978-464-2854 or visit wachusettearthday.org.

Wachusett Food Pantry November distribution

Friday, November 17 for seniors, and Saturday, November 18 for the public, 9 to 11 a.m. Residents of Sterling, Holden, Paxton, Princeton, and Rutland are eligible. Proof of residency required. Located in the Cream Crock Distribution Building, 50 Worcester Road (Route 12), Sterling. The WFP is a 100 percent volunteer-run year-round operation that provides monthly three- to five-day supply of emergency food to any family with either a short- or long-term need. New and current volunteers are encouraged to arrive at 8:15 a.m. to help with distribution. For information, call 978-563-1064, email wfp@wachusettfoodpantry.org, or visit wachusettfoodpantry.org.

Wachusett Food Pantry delivery available for seniors

Are you a Sterling Senior (65+) unable to get to the food pantry? We can help by delivering to you. Monthly distribution items available include pasta sauce, peanut butter, tuna fish, beans, cereal, milk, juice, meat, vegetables, eggs, cheese and bread, as well as personal care and paper products. For more information or to register, call 978-422-3032. Proof of age and residency is required. Senior distribution is the Friday before the third Saturday of each month.

Fall brush dump schedule

The brush dump located behind the Sterling Police Department on George Peeso Lane will be open on Saturday, November 18, from 8 a.m. to noon. Sterling residents only. For more information, visit the DPW page at sterling-ma.gov.

Network at "Business After Hours"

The Wachusett Area Chamber of Commerce will host a "Business After Hours" networking event on Monday, November 20, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Specialty Sandwich Company Bar & Grill, located at 624 Main St., Holden. The event, sponsored by Integrated Financial Partners, will feature networking, hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar and door prizes. Chamber members \$15, non-members \$20. To register, visit wachusettareachamber.org.

Blue Heron to offer martial arts designed for women

by Lex Thomas



Joanne Jeneski

PHOTO by Lex Thomas

There's a new martial arts studio coming to Sterling, and it's specially designed to meet the needs of women. According to Joanne Jeneski, owner of Blue Heron Tai Chi Chuan/Blue Heron Martial Arts, traditional martial arts were created for men to combat men of equal stature. "Most martial arts studios are not very welcoming to women," says Jeneski. "Sometimes women get babied, less often they're actually sabotaged. And we're always in the minority."

In addition, she doesn't feel traditional martial arts meet women's needs. "Attacks on women are very different from attacks on men. Women get terrorized. It's not just a matter of strength. It's also manipulation. Women become slaves to fear."

Jeneski is one of the first people worldwide to offer Mulan Fa Chuan, a modern and practical martial art designed specifically for women.

"It's not just about self-defense," says Jeneski. "There are physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual benefits to martial arts. And it gives women an edge of self-confidence in many areas of life."

Jeneski's classes will be limited to eight participants. Classes will be offered throughout the week. She feels students should take two or three classes per week. "It's all about practice," she says. "You lose your skills if you only train once a week. There's absolutely no substitute for practice and training."

Jeneski has studied martial arts for over 40 years, and discovered Mulan Fa Chuan while travelling in Thailand last year. While based on the tenets of compassion, courage, humility, patience, and sincerity, the training is rigorous. "At the end of each training session, you feel like you've had a real workout," she says. "I decided to bring Mulan Fa Chuan to Blue Heron because there's a need for it."

Want to learn more about Mulan Fa Chuan? Blue Heron Tai Chi Chuan/Blue Heron Martial Arts will hold an open house on Saturday, November 18, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at 27 Main St., Sterling. For more information, call 508-933-5257 or visit blueherontaichiandmassage.com.

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Special state election

A special election for the position of Massachusetts State Senator has been called for December 5, 2017. The seat became vacant on August 31, when Jennifer Flanagan, state senator for the Worcester and Middlesex District, resigned to join the state's Cannabis Control Commission, appointed by Governor Charlie Baker.

Candidates on the ballot for the special election are Democratic candidate Sue Chalifoux Zephir, Republican candidate Dean Tran, Claire Freda running as an Unenrolled candidate, and Charlene DiCalogero running as a Green-Rainbow Party candidate.

Polls for the special election open at 7 a.m. at the Houghton Elementary School gymnasium, 32 Boutelle Road, Sterling. Deadline for voter registration is Wednesday, November 15. Absentee ballots are due by Monday, December 4, at noon. Voters unable to vote on election day may request an absentee ballot application by emailing Townclerk@sterling-ma.gov, calling 978-422-8111, ext. 2307, or in person at the Town Clerk's Office, Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling.

Sewage feasibility study planned

The Sterling Board of Selectmen has held an initial public meeting with representatives of ABC Soils, Inc., an environmental engineering company based in Sudbury, Massachusetts, to define the feasibility of providing sewage services in portions of the town. Marcia Berger, President of ABC Soils, and John Hume of the Montachusett Regional Planning Commission answered questions from selectmen Richard Lane and

John Kilcoyne concerning the scope of the project, anticipated end products, and proposed timelines.

The \$9,500 feasibility study is partially funded by a Local Technical Assistance grant from the MRPC and support from the Sterling Economic Development Committee budget. Responding to selectmen's concerns regarding adequate time to conduct the study, Hume said that the Commonwealth requires that the LTA funds be expended by December 31, 2017. Berger confirmed that ABC Soils will be able to complete the project before the end of the year.

Following a broad description of the types of local assistance ABC Soils would require, members of the audience voiced their views about the three target areas: the industrial/commercial region of northeast Sterling, the downtown business district, and East Lake Waushacum.

Allen Hoffman of the Board of Health and Richard Maki, representing the Economic Development Committee but speaking for himself, expressed similar views regarding their priorities. Both felt that the major focus of the feasibility study should be along Route 12 and along Chocksett Road in the northeast quadrant of Sterling. A second priority would address possible needs in the central business district, and lastly, East Lake Waushacum water quality concerns. Representatives of the East Lake Waushacum Association observed the meeting without comment.

ABC Soils will work with town departments to secure data needed for the feasibility study. A working session to define the specific district boundaries followed the public meeting.

Chalifoux Zephir victory in primary, voter turnout low

by Lex Thomas



Sue Chalifoux Zephir

In the Special Primary Election held on November 7, Susan Chalifoux Zephir defeated Michael Mahan and Michael Kushmerek in the Democratic primary. Chalifoux Zephir will face

off against, Republican candidate Dean Tran, Claire Freda running as an Unenrolled candidate, and Charlene DiCalogero running as a Green-Rainbow Party candidate in the Special State Election on December 5 to choose a full-time state senator for the Worcester and Middlesex District to replace state Senator Jennifer L. Flanagan, who has resigned her senate seat to become Governor Charlie Baker's appointee to the state's Cannabis Control Commission.

Voter turnout in Sterling was low, with a total of 532 voters, representing 9.1 percent of eligible voters. Sue Chalifoux Zephir received 209 votes, defeating Michael Kushmerek with 61 votes and Michael Mahan with 90 votes. Republican candidate Dean Tran ran unopposed and received 167 votes.

Responding to questions to candidates from Sterling Meetinghouse News published in the October 18 issue, Chalifoux Zephir stated that her priorities, should she be elected as senator, would be to improve funding for public schools and investment in transportation infrastructure, improve access to affordable health care, and ensure that anyone who needs addiction treatment or mental health services gets the care they need.

Chalifoux Zephir has called on Tran and all candidates to join her in committing to run a positive state senate campaign.

HMEA

continued from page 1

"The Advocacy Award is given to that employee or a supported individual of HMEA who has contributed significantly to advocating on behalf of others," said Doug MacPherson, Vice President of Development and Public Relations. "Pat clearly did this on behalf of a family which could not, and did not, have the time or resources to advocate for themselves."

While humble about the award, Lynch says she's happy to have made a difference in the life of this particular family.

"It was important that I support the family and be with them through all of these steps," she says. "English is the second language for the parents, so I wanted to make sure they understood everything. When I told the mother that I was being given this award for helping them she said that I deserve it because I encouraged her when they didn't think there was any chance of them getting a house and she never would have been able to do it without my help. That made me feel really happy."

Lynch has a passion for, and has made a career of, supporting and advocating for those around her. Starting with a family child care program she ran in her home for 17 years, she went on to work as an aide in the public schools for a special education classroom. From there, Lynch worked as an Applied Behavior Therapist working with children on the autism spectrum before becoming part of the HMEA family.

For more information on HMEA and Habitat for Humanity, including opportunities to volunteer, visit hmea.org and ncmhabitat.org/volunteer-2.

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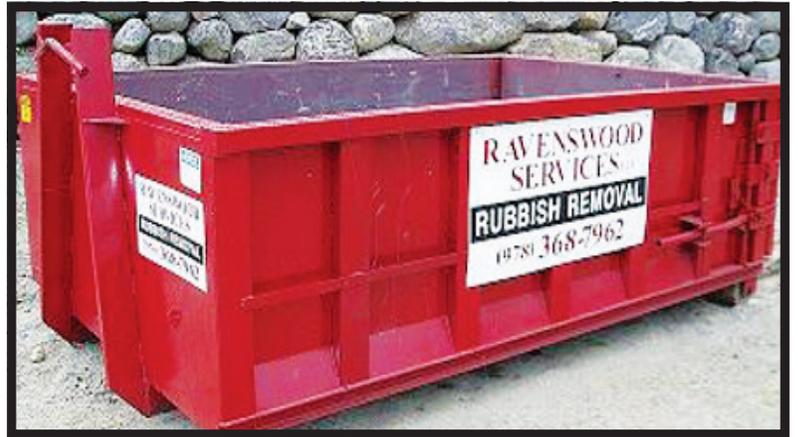
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Critical Home Repair Program needs volunteers

by Lex Thomas



PHOTO by Linda Davis

Habitat for Humanity volunteers work to make critical repairs that allow families to remain in their homes.

In 2015, Habitat for Humanity of North Central Massachusetts launched their Critical Home Repair Program, a home preservation initiative that provides needed interior and exterior repairs for low-income homeowners to maintain a safe, decent, and affordable place to live. The program focuses on safety, security,

accessibility, weatherization, and keeping houses up to city codes. The program is also vital for seniors who may be physically unable, or lack the financial resources, to maintain their homes. In Sterling, NCM Habitat for Humanity is working together with First Church in Sterling and the Sterling Senior Center to identify seniors that would benefit from their assistance.

Barbara Dumont, Coordinator of the First Church in Sterling/Habitat for Humanity NCM Critical Home Repair Program, says there is a need for volunteers to work on repair crews. Volunteers must be over 16 years of age, and be available to work on Wednesdays through Saturdays. Both skilled and unskilled volunteers are needed. All necessary tools are provided by Habitat NCM.

"There's always a Habitat construction manager on site who leads the project and assigns volunteers to tasks they can manage," says Dumont. "It might be carrying lumber, holding materials, or assisting skilled workers."

Although work takes place Wednesdays through Saturdays with some projects taking several days or weeks to complete, volunteers only commit to times they're available. "These projects are short term," says Dumont. "You can volunteer for one day or more. The time commitment may be small, but the help is critical." The work day is typically from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Jobs are within 45 minutes of Sterling and rides to a work site can be coordinated and shared.

"We see this as an outreach program," says Dumont. "Our goal is to involve the community in helping homeowners that are truly in need."

For more information or to volunteer, contact Barbara Dumont at 978-563-1835 or barbaradumont@comcast.net, or visit ncmhabitat.org.

Open House!

Nov 18th 10am - 5pm

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Most traditional martial arts were created for men to combat men of equal stature. There have been martial arts created by women before but these as well became dominated by men. Mulan Fa Chuan is a modern art from South East Asia. It is named after the famous historical character who took her fathers place in the Chinese Army, hid the fact that she was a woman and became an officer of high rank. When her time of service was completed she was offered a prestigious position and wealth but asked for only a horse to return home. Hua Mulan was a gifted martial artist, tactician, and swordsmen.

This martial art is dedicated to her. Mulan Fa Chuan or "Mulan Fist" is not a self-defense course but an actual Martial Art with a curriculum and belts. It is a "hard" martial art based on practical application.



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Sterling Youth Ballet launches for young dancers



Contributed PHOTO

Sterling Youth Ballet will perform The Nutcracker at the Monty Tech auditorium.

Sterling Youth Ballet, established as a non-profit ballet company by dance teacher Paula Meola, will perform classical ballets and contemporary pieces, and give young dancers an opportunity to study and perform with leading dancers and teachers. The new dance troupe will collaborate closely with Paula Meola Dance, and will use the school's facilities for its company classes. Dancers aged 14 to 18 will be selected by an audition process and by invitation to exceptional dancers from the school and surrounding community. The company encourages dancers from all backgrounds and experiences to audition.

Sterling Youth Ballet's artistic director and ballet mistress Paula Meola has appointed Alexandr Lunev, a former principal dancer with the Kirov Ballet of

St. Petersburg, Russia, as ballet master. Together with other renowned ballet faculty members, Meola and Lunev plan to set a world-class standard for the training of young dancers, many of whom will ultimately find careers with professional dance companies.

Sterling Youth Ballet's first production is *The Nutcracker*, staged in the 1,000-seat auditorium at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School on November 30, December 1, 2, and 3, featuring a cast of over 100 dancers with some leads being danced by guest artists from ballet companies in Boston and Providence. For ticket information, call 978-422-6989. For Sterling Youth Ballet audition information, visit sterlingyouthballet.org.

Sterling Lions Club offers Youth Speech Competition sponsorship

The Sterling Lions Club will sponsor a local student in a statewide Youth Speech Competition organized by Massachusetts Multiple District 33 Lions Club.

"This competition shows how capable, talented and poised our high school students are. We're happy to once again offer this opportunity," says Sterling Lions Club President John Kilcoyne.

The Youth Speech Competition provides an opportunity for students in grades 9 through 12 to speak publicly in a prepared speech of five to eight minutes on a designated topic. This year's topic is "What is the impact of volunteerism?" The competition starts at the local club or school level and proceeds through several levels, ending with a statewide competition. The contest is open to all students in grades 9 through 12, including foreign exchange and home-schooled students, and LEOs provided that a Massachusetts Lions or LEO club sponsors them. For more information, contact Lion Emerson Wheeler at 508-450-9650 or emewheels37@gmail.com.

Monty Tech recognizes honor roll students

More than 300 sophomores, juniors and seniors were honored recently at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School's annual honor roll banquets. Stu-

dents named to the honor roll for all four quarters last year, and their families, were invited to attend the banquet and award ceremony. Again this year, the number of students being honored was so high, it necessitated holding two banquets on different nights.

Sterling residents honored were Peter Agurkis, Joshua Barrett, Casey Brown, Sara Dupont, Cody Favreau, Holly Forstrom, Alissa Gaulin, Emily Grote, David Hinckley, Sarah Jacobs, Samuel Landadio, Alexander Littizzio, Felicity Lyons, Ryan McGahey, Jared Michalak, Dennis Minnich, Taylor Moroney, Tyler Page, Sarah Parker, Erica Regan, Brianna Remy, Katelyn Roseberry, Samuel Smith, Emily St. Thomas, Joseph Taubert, Emily Thorogood, and Katherine Tremblay.

Practical Nursing program holds info session

Monty Tech's Practical Nursing program will hold an informational session on Thursday, November 30, from 5 to 7 p.m., in the school cafeteria, located at 1050 Westminster St., Route 2A, at the Fitchburg-Westminster line. Those interested in jump starting a career in nursing are urged to find out more about the 10-month, hands-on practical nursing curriculum. Financial aid is available, and the GI Bill is accepted. The program is fully approved through the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing and accredited by the Council on Occupational Education. For more information, call 978-345-9200, ext. 5108.

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A hand up for neighbors in need

The Sterling Neighbor to Neighbor Fund, now in its fifth year of operation, continues to be a "helping hand" to individuals and families in Sterling. The fund was established to assist people in town with demonstrated financial need to get through difficult economic times. Applicants for assistance may receive payments for housing, food, utilities, clothing and other essential living costs. The fund is intended to provide temporary help to people in the community to enable them to regain their financial independence and has been described as a "hand up, not a hand out".

The fund is administered by a three-person committee which reviews all applications and decides whether to grant assistance. Patrick Fox, who serves as community representative for the fund, is charged with the responsibility of initially reviewing each application, investigating the circumstances and reporting to the committee.

During the past year, seven applications have been approved, resulting in payments on behalf of Sterling residents in the total amount of \$5,952. During the same time period, donations to the fund from individuals, corporations and associations in Sterling have totaled \$5,230.

Since 2014, the Sterling Municipal Light Department has supported the fund with its Roundup program. SMLD customers may agree to "round up" their monthly bills to the nearest dollar, and the difference is given to the fund. The



PHOTO by Lex Thomas

Patrick Fox

annual cost per customer is less than \$12, but when added to the donations of other customers participating in the program, the impact can be great. Since the Roundup program began, over \$6,000 has been contributed to the fund. Participation in the Roundup program is easy and voluntary. Customers may simply stop by the SMLD office, or call or email the office.

For people who wish to apply for assistance, application forms and eligibility guidelines are available at the office of the Executive Assistant at the Butterick Municipal Building or online at sterling-ma.gov. Go to the "About Sterling" link and scroll down to "local organizations". Donations to the fund may be made by check payable to "Sterling Neighbor to Neighbor Fund" and mailed to or dropped off at the office of the Executive Assistant at the Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling MA 01564.

Annual Holiday Greens Sale



Contributed PHOTO

(At left) Nina Kaupp of the Sterling Garden Club displays one of the decorated wreaths that will be available at the Holiday Greens Sale.

The Sterling Garden Club's Annual Holiday Greens Sale will take place on Saturday, December 2 from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Sterling Historical Society Barn. Located on the corner of School and Maple streets, the barn will be filled with elegantly decorated wreaths, kissing balls, door swags, centerpieces, table arrangements, boxwood trees, mailbox swags, birch log bundles, and outdoor arrangements handmade by club members. Boxes filled with greens will also be available at 8:30 a.m. Prices range from \$10 for birch log bundles to \$40 for a mailbox swag, with the average price around \$25. No two items are alike, but matching wreaths, kissing balls and door

swags can be pre-ordered by calling Pat Thomas at 978-422-3566 by November 23. Because only fresh-cut greens are used, an abundance of greens is needed. If you would like to donate greens, club members will trim shrubs and trees at your home and remove the trimmings. For more information on donating greens, call Pat Thomas at 978-422-3566 before November 23. Proceeds from the sale support civic beautification projects in Sterling, education enrichment programs for students and other activities sponsored by the Sterling Garden Club. For more information, visit gcfm.org/sterlinggardenclub or Sterling Garden Club on Facebook.

Recycling Center seeking volunteers

If you have a passion for reuse, recycling and reducing the waste stream, and can spare several hours a month or even every week to the cause, the Wachusett Watershed Regional Recycling Center needs you. Volunteer opportunities are available every day of the week (except Sunday), and at all levels of physical activity. For more information, visit wachusettearthday.org, or call 508-464-2854 and leave a message with your name and phone number.

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Fall fun at the Library

Activities abound for all ages at Conant Public Library, located at 4 Meetinghouse Hill Road, Sterling. Call 978-422-6409 to register for programs.

Let's play at library's new "Playbrary"

Play is an essential part of early literacy development. Conant Public Library invites families with young children to stop by and enjoy "Playbrary," a collection of toys for ages birth and up. Toys are located at the Children's Room desk and are available for children and caregivers

to use while at the library. Children under 10 must be supervised by a caregiver. No library card is necessary to use the toys, and they are available during all open hours. For information, call 978-422-6409.

Especially for kids

Middle School Book Club – Youth in grades 5 to 8 are invited to attend on Wednesday, November 15, at 6:30 p.m. to discuss *The Fourteenth Goldfish* by Jennifer Holm. Read the book ahead of time, then come to the meeting to discuss it and participate in a themed activity. Book copies are available at the library. Registration required.

Thanksgiving No-Bake Dessert

– Wednesday, November 22, 1 p.m. Children grades 3 and up. Registration required.

Drop-In Card Making – Children of all ages can create winter-themed cards on Tuesday, December 5, at 5:30 p.m. No registration required.

Family Movie – Enjoy popcorn while watching the box-office hit *Despicable Me 3* (rated PG) on Tuesday, December 12, at 6 p.m. Ages 17 and under, children under 10 must be accompanied by a caregiver. Registration required.

Adult coloring

Discover the stress-reducing and relaxing benefits of coloring at Conant Public Library's adult coloring program. Monday, November 27, at 6:30 p.m. Supplies available or bring your own. No registration required.

What's cooking at the Cookbook Club?

Enjoy great food and discover delicious new recipes for dishes from around the country in *Cook's Country Eats Local* on Wednesday, November 29, at 6:30 p.m. Prepare a dish, and bring it to the library for an evening of good food, great conversation, and new recipes. Cookbooks are available at the library. To register, call 978-422-6409.

Parents' Night Out Book Club

Enjoy an evening out with a good book and good company. The Parents' Night Out Book Club features different family- and parenting-themed books each month. Wednesday, December 6, at 6:30 p.m., the club will discuss *Perfect Little World* by Kevin Wilson, which follows pregnant teenager Izzy Poole as she joins a utopian experiment in which 10 children are raised collectively without knowing their true parentage. Books available at the library. No registration required.

Holiday card and gift tag workshop

Conant Public Library will host an art class for adults on Thursday, December 7, at 6 p.m. Join Suzanne Hauerstein for a watercolor holiday card and gift tag workshop. Participants will learn basic watercolor techniques including wet on wet, resist and using salt to design their own cards and tags, as well as learning to create origami-style envelopes. Registration is required and space is limited. To register, call 978-422-6409.

Download Conant Public Library app

Conant Public Library has a new app! The free app provides access to a mobile-friendly catalog, your CWMARS account, as well as Overdrive and other library services. The Conant Public Library app is available to download through the App Store and the Google Play Store. Search for CWMARS, then download. For more information, call 978-422-6409.

Self-publishing workshop

Are you looking for an overview of the self-publishing process? The Secrets of Self-Publishing, with Ursula Wong, will cover the importance of editing, e-book formats, print on demand, services for publishing on Amazon, and marketing. Saturday, November 18, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Writers who attend the morning self-publishing session can receive personalized guidance on their project from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Thayer Memorial Library, 717 Main St., Lancaster. Students who would like to discuss their manuscript specifically during class should contact urslwng@gmail.com. Registration is required. For more information or to register, visit sevenbridge.org/seven-bridge-sessions/november/special-workshop. For more information, visit sevenbridge.org/seven-bridge-sessions/november/special-workshop.



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Looking for the Sterling Recreation office?

It's now in the basement of the Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling. Programs will continue to take place in the 1835 Town Hall. For program information and to register online, visit SterlingRec.com, call 978-422-3041, email recreation@sterling-ma.gov, or stop by the office. 'Like' Sterling Recreation Department on Facebook for the most up-to-date information.

Holiday Tree Lighting

Join us for the annual Holiday Tree Lighting, on Sunday, December 3. Santa will light the tree on the Town Common at 4 p.m. A reception will follow at First Church in Sterling Parish Hall. Everyone welcome!

Active Kids

Sterling Rec Basketball – Boys grades 6 to 8. Division V: \$100 before December 1, \$110 after December 1. Family cap \$250. Register at SterlingRec.com or at the Sterling Recreation office. Season mid-December to early March. Coaches needed. Registration for grades 1 to 5 is closed.

Tiny Tots Playtime – Infant to age 4, 5-year-old siblings welcome. Wednesdays to December 27, 9 to 11 a.m. 1835 Town Hall. \$3/day.

Kids Zumba/Yoga – Grades 1 and up. Session III. Mondays, December 4 to January 8, 4 to 5 p.m. Houghton Elementary School gym. \$35.

Kinderball – Kindergarten. Saturdays, December 2 to January 20, 8 to 9 a.m. Chocksett Middle School gym. \$75.

After School Tennis at Houghton – Grades 1 to 4. Saturdays, January 6 to February 10, 11 a.m. to noon. Houghton Elementary School gym. \$100.

Wicked Cool Half Days – Grades 1 to 4. Thursdays, January 25, March 8, and May 25, 1 to 3:30 p.m. Sterling Senior Center. \$50/class.

Art and Creativity for Kids

Music and Movement – Infant to age 5. Session II. Mondays, January 8 to March 19, 10 to 10:45 a.m. 1835 Town Hall. Previously registered family \$160 (first child), \$100 (second child). New family \$175 (first child), \$115 (second child). Register at pakmusic.org.

Cooking – Grades 5 to 8. Tuesdays, 3 to 4:30 p.m. Session III: November 28 to December 19. Chocksett Middle School cafeteria. \$120.

Holiday Cookies Workshop – Grades 5 to 8. Thursday, December 14, 3 to 4:30 p.m. Chocksett Middle School cafeteria. \$35.

Active Adults and Teens at 1835 Town Hall

Gentle Yoga – Ages 14+. Thursdays, November 30 to February 1, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. \$80/session or \$13/class.

Yoga for All – Ages 14+. Thursdays, November 30 to February 1, 7 to 8 p.m. \$80/session or \$13/class.

A.M. Boot Camp – Ages 16+. Wednesdays, January 3 to April 11, 5:30 to 6:30 a.m. \$168.

Head to Toe Workout & Core Pilates – Mondays, January 8 to April 9, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., or Fridays, January 5 to April 13, 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. Mondays: \$144. Fridays: \$168.

Yoga Dance – Ages 14+. Tuesdays, January 23 to April 10, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. \$99/session or \$15/class.

High School Pick-Up Basketball – Grades 9 to 10, Tuesdays, December 5 to April 24, 7:30 to 8:45 p.m. Grades 11 to 12, Mondays, December 4 to April 23, 7:15 to 8:30 p.m. Chocksett Middle School gym. \$25/player.

Men's Pick-Up Basketball – Ages 18+. Wednesdays to May 30, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Chocksett Middle School gym. \$25/season.

Ladies' Pick-Up Basketball – Ages 18+. Mondays to March 26, 6 to 7:15 p.m. Chocksett Middle School gym. \$25/season.

Naga Fitness with Gina at 1835 Town Hall

All classes are \$10 each or \$90/10 classes paid in advance. For program descriptions, visit SterlingRec.com.

Kettlebells – Saturday 8 to 9 a.m.

Power Yoga – Saturdays 9:30 to 10:45 a.m.

Ski & Snowboard Programs

Monday After School Ski & Snowboard – Grades 3 to 12. Mondays, January 8 to February 26, 3:15 to 8 p.m., Wachusett Mountain Ski Area. Six-week pass \$120 before December 1, \$140 after December 1. Season Pass: Bronze \$269, Silver \$349, Gold \$559 All GPS rates are an additional \$100 as of December 2. Program code: STRRM.

Saturday Program – Grades 3 to 12. Saturdays, January 6 to February 17, 8:15 a.m. to 3 p.m., Wachusett Mountain Ski Area. Seven-week lift badge \$220 before December 1, \$240 after December 1 (only valid for the seven-week program, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.).

Cribbage – Session I: Thursdays, January 11 to February 8. Session II: Thursdays, February 22 to March 22. 7 p.m. at Sterling Senior Center. \$20/player/session. Everyone welcome.

Bruins tickets – Thursday, February 1, 2018, 7 p.m. Boston Bruins vs. St. Louis Blues, TD Garden, Promenade seating. \$90/ticket, available at SterlingRec.com or at the Sterling Rec office.

Get creative with Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts and 6 Bridges Gallery in Maynard invite all area artists to submit pieces for an art show and online auction and encourage everyone to visit and bid on pieces. The Art Show, titled "Home is Where the Art Is," centers around recycled art, and will feature "reclaimed" and "repurposed" objects transformed into unique art pieces by local artists. Artwork will be displayed at 6 Bridges Gallery from January 12 through February 3, 2018. Registration is free. The event is being held to raise funds for ongoing Habitat home construction and repair in the 25 towns served by the organization. For more information and to download a registration form, visit NCMHabitat.org and 6BridgesGallery.com.

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“Home” for the Holidays by Liz Pape

Most of us think of the holidays as a happy time, an opportunity to be with family and to reflect upon the many blessings we share. But for some, the holiday season is not as joyous as it used to be. Seniors who are homebound, who are unable to prepare meals or decorate for the holidays, or who no longer have family nearby, may not look forward to the holiday season the way they once did. The Sterling Senior Center wants to bring holiday spirit to all its seniors. This year, like last year, the center will be decorated with Christmas trees and lights, and our volunteer elves are always ready to help you make yourself at home at the center. Join us, other seniors, and people from throughout the community, as we enjoy the festive decorations. If you need a ride, call us and we'll send our van to pick you up. Our Christmas party on Sunday, December 10, from 1 to 3 p.m., is another opportunity to get in the holiday spirit, with music and hot and cold hors d'oeuvres. No reservations needed.

My favorite holiday is Thanksgiving – no gift-giving pressure, and lots of tasty food to share with family and friends. This year, Kevin Lowe, his family and dozens of volunteers, are once again preparing Thanksgiving dinner at the Senior Center for Sterling's seniors. To me, this is the embodiment of holiday spirit – sharing your blessings with others. Kevin has prepared an amazing

menu, and if last year was any indication, everyone will leave completely satisfied and very full. One of the volunteers helping Kevin and his family make this Thanksgiving dinner a success is Nickole Boardman, Outreach Coordinator for the Sterling Senior Center, and her family, husband John, and children Luke, 13 and Laela, 11. They are responsible for taking Thanksgiving dinner to those seniors who are unable to attend. Nickole and her husband see this as an opportunity for their children to learn about giving. Last year, they delivered warm meals to nearly 20 seniors. Luke and Laela got to meet seniors, tell them what was in their meal, and ask what they wanted for dessert. They saw how grateful the seniors were, not only for the meals, but also to see that someone cared enough about them to make the effort to deliver meals instead of staying home and celebrating with family. Nickole and John wanted their children to see the value in giving back to the community and sharing with those in need. As Nickole says, “at the end of the day, we all discussed how nice it felt to help others and how appreciative all the seniors were. My kids really got a lot out of it and asked if we could do it again this year and we said yes. My kids are really looking forward to our family's new-found holiday tradition.”

Liz Pape is Chairman of the Council on Aging Board

Honoring Sterling's veterans



PHOTO by Richard Maiki

Rick Voutour pins Army veteran Dick Martin.

More than 80 Sterling veterans and their guests were honored at the Senior Center on October 7. The keynote speaker was Sterling's veterans agent Rick Voutour. In recognition of their past service, Voutour, assisted by staff from Representative James McGovern's office, presented those who served in the military with various medals and pins. Senior Center director Veronica Buckley was also recognized as a Blue Star Mother in celebration of her daughter's active Navy service. The dinner was sponsored by the Friends of Sterling Seniors to honor Sterling veterans.

Volunteer at the Senior Center

The Senior Center couldn't run without our volunteers. If you have a few hours to spare during the week, consider joining our team. To volunteer, call 978-422-3032.

Get to know your Senior Center

Located at 36 Muddy Pond Road, the Sterling Senior Center is open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and Friday, 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For more information or to register for programs, call 978-422-3032. There is an answering machine available at all times.

Drop in for coffee Monday to Friday, 8 to 11:30 a.m. The Sterling Senior Center serves lunch at 11:30 daily. Anyone 60+ is welcome. Check the Sterling Council on Aging newsletter for daily menu. Call 978-422-3032 for a reservation the day before you want to come. Home meal delivery available daily. \$3 suggested donation.

November and December event highlights

Kevin Lowe and family will once again serve a free traditional Thanksgiving dinner for those who may be alone or in need of a meal. Dinner will be served on Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, November 23, at noon, at the Senior Center. For reservations, call the Senior Center at 978-422-3032 by Monday, November 20, at noon.

Special events

Thanksgiving Dinner – Thursday, November 23, noon. Served by the Lowe family.

Annual Christmas Party – Sunday, December 10, 1 to 3 p.m.

Lights and Caroling Van Ride – Tuesday, December 12, 4:30 p.m.

Hot Chocolate, Cookies and Song – Provided by Girl Scouts, Tuesday, December 12, 6 p.m.

Chocksett Senior Breakfast – Friday, December 15, 8:30 a.m. Sign up by December 11.

Just For Fun

Pitch Party – Sponsored by Sterling Grange. Saturday, December 2, 6:30 p.m.

Make & Take

Christmas Card Workshop – By Mary-Ellen Cox. Thursday, December 7, 1 p.m. Signup required.

Christmas Centerpiece – By Sterling Garden Club. Friday, December 8, 12:30 p.m. Signup required.

For a complete listing of senior center calendar events, visit sterling-ma.gov/senior-center or pick up a newsletter at the Senior Center.

Happy Travelers offer exciting trips

The Happy Travelers, bus trips for the 50+ traveler, offers an exciting roster of day trips. All day trip pricing includes driver, escort, and gratuity. To request a copy of the 2017 schedule, call 508-835-4312 or 508-612-5312, or email glady2@verizon.net. Flyers available at the Sterling Senior Center.

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History of firefighting in Sterling

The Sterling Historical Society is proud to sponsor the program The Road to the Red Shirt, the story of fires and firefighting in Sterling from 1781 to 1883 and the experiences that led to the creation of Sterling's first organized fire company. Wednesday, November 15, 7 p.m., at the American Legion Hall, School Street, Sterling. This is a special program presented by Lt. Thomas Kokernak of the Sterling Fire Department. For more information, email info@sterlinghistorical.org or call 978-422-6139.

Noises Off at NRHS

Michael Frayn's Noises Off captures a touring theatre troupe's production from dress rehearsal to closing night. Performances Friday, November 17, and Saturday, November 18, at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, November 19, at 2 p.m., at Nashoba Regional High School auditorium, 12 Green Road, Bolton. For tickets, visit NashobaDrama.com.

Holiday craft fair to benefit Sterling library

The Friends of the Conant Public Library Arts & Crafts Show will be held on Saturday, November 18, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the First Church in Sterling, 6 Meetinghouse Hill Road. Crafters offer a broad range of affordable, high-quality gift items, including photography, pottery, glass ornaments, wood products, jewelry, quilted items, knitted and crocheted items, children's items, American Girl doll clothes, succulent dish gardens, soap and herbal items, caned chairs, note cards, alpaca apparel and fiber, and hand-dyed batik clothing for adults and children. Homemade lunch café, bake sale, and raffle. Proceeds support the library's Summer Reading Program for children. Members of the Friends appreciate help at the craft fair from Boy Scout Troop 1 and Pack 34, as well as CCD students from St. Richard's parish, who help to set up and dismantle the event and assist in the kitchen.

Central Mass Lyme Foundation meeting

The Central Mass Lyme Foundation will hold its November meeting on Saturday, November 18, 1 to 3 p.m., at 90 Holden St., Worcester. Guest speaker is Deb Kizilcan, L.M.T., C.C.H., and the owner of the Holistic Wellness Center in Auburn.

Craft Fair in Townsend

Townsend Congregational Church 16th Annual Holiday Craft & Greens Fair, Saturday, November 18, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. 3 Brookline St., Townsend.

Healing Through the Holidays seminar

Healing Through the Holidays, Discovering Strength, Hope and Meaning this Holiday Season will be held on Saturday, November 18, 1 to 2:30 p.m., at the Holden Senior Center, 1130 Main St., Holden. Designed to assist individuals in understanding the emotional aspects of healing and surviving the holiday season, topics discussed include the experience of loss and the personal journey we make through grief, the meaning and value of traditions and rituals, and ways to cope. Sponsored by Miles Funeral Home, facilitated by Terri Philbrick, LICSW. Light refreshments will be served and attendees will receive a free book. Free. To register, call 508-829-4434. For information, visit milesfuneralhome.com or the Miles Funeral Home Facebook page.

Sterling Democratic Committee meeting

The Sterling Democratic Committee will meet on Monday, November 27, 6:30 to 8 p.m., Room 205, Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling. The agenda will include hosting gubernatorial candidate Setti Warren. All Sterling registered Democrats and interested Unenrolled voters are welcome.

First Church community lunch welcomes everyone

First Church in Sterling will host their next community lunch on Saturday, December 2, at noon. Free, no reservation required. First Church provides a free, tasty meal once a month in a hospitable, respectful and welcoming setting for people in the community who find it hard to provide or prepare a good meal, or who would enjoy eating a meal in a communal setting. All are welcome. For information, or to volunteer, call 978-422-6657. To view volunteer opportunities, visit signup.com/go/3uwLNT.

American Legion meeting

The December meeting of the Hiram O. Taylor Post 189 of the American Legion will take place on Monday, December 4, at 7:30 p.m. E-board at 6 p.m. Hot dogs served at 6:30 p.m.

Houghton Holiday Fair

Saturday, December 9, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at Houghton and Chocksett schools, Boutelle Road, Sterling. Over

50 vendors, crafters, \$20 kid photos with Santa, kids craft table, Christmas cookies, and raffles.

Holiday Marketplace call for entries

The Princeton Arts Society's annual holiday sale takes place during the first two weekends in December. Artists and artisan crafters are invited to submit work for sale.

The show focuses on small, original works and items. All mediums are welcome. Wall space is available for framed pieces. Pedestals and tabletops are available for 3-dimensional work, printed material, and artisan made gift items. For information and entry form, visit princetonarts.org or email contact@princetonarts.org.

2018 Medical Mission Trip to La Romana is gearing up

Volunteers from First Church in Sterling, central Massachusetts, Maine and as far away as Virginia are teaming up and traveling to La Romana, Dominican Republic, from March 2 to 11 to provide medical, dental, and vision services to impoverished Haitian workers and families living in the bateys of the Dominican Republic. They are also working to complete the building of a hospital to serve the same population. For almost 20 years, with the help of many volunteers and supporters, this mission has been able to make a difference in the lives of countless people. They are currently seeking volunteers to join this effort. Anyone interested in volunteering to be a part of this adventure as a traveler or a support volunteer, contact Doug Davis at 978-265-7547.

Unleash your inner artist

Weekly art instruction is offered by Charlie Gray, a Rutland resident with years of experience in the field of making, teaching, and selling art. To see some of his work, visit charlesgrayfinearts.blogspot.com. Free. Supply your own materials after the first session. Mondays, 9 to 11 a.m., First Church in Sterling Parish Hall, Room 2.

St. Richard's breakfast supports sister village

St. Richard's Church in Sterling hosts a Community Sunday Morning Breakfast that is open to the public every Sunday from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Proceeds from the breakfast support St. Richard's "Sister Village" of Los Patzanes, Guatemala. Everyone is welcome to enjoy a delicious breakfast. For information, call 978-422-

8881.

ReStore seeks donations

Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts is looking for donations for their ReStore, located in Leominster. ReStore sells donated new and gently used furniture, home improvement and building materials at a fraction of the original retail value. All profits go to support home ownership for hard working families in North Central Massachusetts, while keeping good reusable materials in use and out of the landfill.

To donate gently used items, visit the store anytime Wednesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Staff available to assist with offloading items. You can also contact the store at 978-227-5556, or visit restorenem.org/donate to schedule a donation pick-up. Donations are picked up Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays.

Nar-Anon support group

A Nar-Anon family support group meets every Thursday, from 7:15 to 8:30 p.m., at St. Richard's Downstairs Chapel, 4 Bridge St., Sterling. Nar-Anon is a 12-step group for family and friends of those addicted to drugs.

Big love



Indigo

Three-year-old Indigo is a large, long-haired solid black male with big gold eyes. He's shy at first, and will need time to adjust to his new home, but is sweet and gentle, and will make a wonderful companion for his lucky human. All of Indigo's veterinary work is complete. He's leukemia negative, neutered, and has a microchip. All cats are placed as indoors-only pets. Adoption fee \$175. NEADY Cats is now located in Sterling, and welcomes dedicated volunteers. For more information about volunteer opportunities, or to schedule an appointment to meet Indigo or any of the kitties, email Marilyn@neadycats.org, or call 978-422-5116.

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Honoring veterans

Saturday, November 11, dawned cold and blustery, but brilliantly sunny. Sterling residents turned out to honor veterans at the annual parade and ceremony.



PHOTOS by James Barbato

Left to right) Representative Harold Naughton and Legion Commander Bob Temple.



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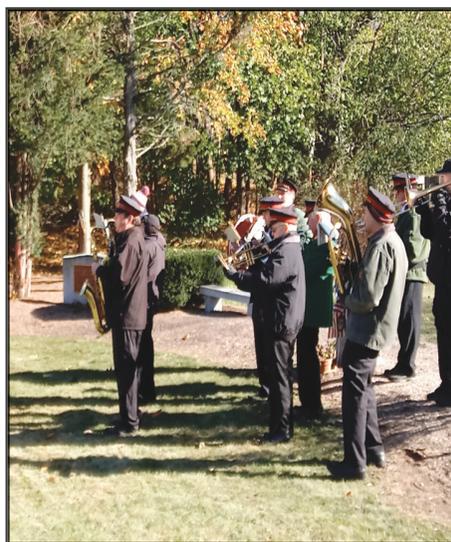
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