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**Monday, May 14
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STERLING

Meetinghouse News

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SterlingMeetinghouseNews.com

March 21, 2018

Introducing SMN's new owners

We are happy to announce that we, Mark and Karen Packard, are the new owners of Sterling Meetinghouse News. After learning of the untimely death of previous owner Dr. James Barbato, we shared the community's hope that SMN would continue publication. We believe that the newspaper has been a strong part of the community and we wanted to keep it going. Our decision is about supporting the community that has supported us over the years. Our family moved to Sterling in 2001 when Mark opened Sterling Greenery. We started advertising in Sterling Meetinghouse News when Sue Staudaher owned and published it. It was a perfect way for us to advertise our new garden center. It has been a key factor in the success of both the greenery and Karen's real estate career. As it has been for both Sterling Greenery and Karen Packard Realtor, it's a great way for small, local businesses to do some inexpensive yet effective advertising that reaches the audience local businesses want and need to reach.

We wish the Barbato family the best of luck in the future and extend our heartfelt gratitude for all they did for Sterling Meetinghouse News over the past few years. We also thank Sue Staudaher for starting the paper and her generous offer to assist us as we

try to continue her legacy with the publication she founded. We believe that in a world that has so much negativity, there's still a lot of good news to report, and it's happening right here in our own backyard. In a small town like Sterling, it's important to have a community newspaper to highlight events and stories that are unique to our town and important to our residents. Local heroes, school events, our children being recognized for their achievements, and the people and events that shape our town are among the stories we're looking forward to bringing to readers.

As the news has spread about our ownership of SMN, people have asked whether our commitment to Sterling Greenery and Karen Packard Realtor will change. Anyone that knows us knows that we're both workaholics. Mark will continue to run Sterling Greenery and Karen will continue to help clients buy and sell houses in the Sterling area. We are happy to say that even though we're the new owners, editor Lex Thomas, art director Kim Morse, reporter Jamie Chase Galvin and other contributors to the Sterling Meetinghouse family will continue to keep the paper running with our support.



Karen and Mark Packard

Contributed PHOTO

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Dave Rota

PHOTO by Lex Thomas

Rebuilding in the aftermath of fire

by Lex Thomas

While working at the ice cream stand at Rota Spring Farm shortly after 6 p.m. on Saturday, March 10, an employee noticed flames coming from the area behind Dave Rota's home on Chace Hill Road. Thinking that her boss was away from the farm, she called to ask if he was burning brush. Rota raced back to Sterling to find the barn behind his home engulfed in flames and firefighters from Sterling, Lancaster and West Boylston at the site. In the meantime, crews from Leominster and Clinton covered Sterling's fire station. According to Sterling Fire Chief David Hurlbut, Sterling sent three fire engines, the ladder truck, and an ambulance staffed by 24 firefighters and EMTs. The two-alarm fire was finally subdued on Saturday night, although fire crews were on hand throughout the night.

The barn, which was completely destroyed in the fire, was built during the 1930s, and was used to store farm stand supplies, cardboard boxes, ladders, buckets, and grain. Investigators believe the fire was ignited by a block heater on a tractor that overheated and sent flames into the barn. Owner Dave Rota expects the investigation to be completed within a few days. Although Rota lost five antique tractors, three field tractors, and skid-steer loaders in the blaze, he is grateful that there was no loss in either human life or livestock.

"I'm thankful it wasn't a windy night," he says. "When I stood on the front porch of the house, the heat coming from the fire was unbelievable. I can't even think about what would have happened if there had been wind. This could have been a lot worse."

Rota Spring Farm continued on pg 8

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Got a vision for Sterling?

On February 15, Sterling's Board of Selectmen held a meeting to begin a planning process to update Sterling's 1962 master plan. Sterling's growth and change is seen in many areas, such as the Route 12 redesign causing new driving flows and new areas for business development; and business growth such as medical marijuana production and expansion of businesses on Sterling and Chocksett roads is raising awareness of Sterling's changing tax base. New growth has raised concerns about industrial pressures on the environment and concern that our town boards will ensure healthy open space and outdoor resources. Growth has increased awareness of the need for affordable housing and access to regional public transportation. Lastly, limited growth in Sterling's center, which maintains its economic potential, has yet to see comprehensive renewal. A master plan is the first step in helping Sterling create the future we want to see.

A master plan is an official town document that presents a comprehensive, long-range view intended to guide development in the town for the next 10 to 20 years. The value of having a current master plan is two-fold. Under Massachusetts General Laws, Part I, Title VII, Chapter 41, Section 81D, a master plan is required by the state when a town applies for a grant, and a master plan is used by all town boards in developing long- and short-term goals, as well as by town officials in establishing goals and measurable objectives.

I've learned that Berlin and Princeton update their master plans every 10 to 15 years. The fact that Sterling's master

plan is 56 years old highlights the need and importance for this process. During the February 15 meeting, the Board of Selectmen cited future goals and policies, land use, housing needs, economic development, transportation systems, natural and cultural resources, open space, and public services, as areas for resident involvement. What are your areas of interest for Sterling's future, and how will you contribute to Sterling's growth?

Sterling's master plan project is just beginning. Taking examples from planning work done by our neighbors in the Pioneer Valley, elements of a good master plan include a story that communicates a sense of place and an understanding of what is special about Sterling and our region; descriptions of what Sterling was like in the past, and what it's like today; examples of how Sterling is changing, and what Sterling will be like in the future, if present trends continue; ideas on alternative futures and the likely consequences of alternative courses of action; and a compelling vision of what Sterling residents desire the community to be like in the future.

Sterling is a great place to live, but without active citizen stewardship, the growth of Sterling will not be healthy nor benefit all its residents. As the great American businessman James Cash Penny (JC Penny) said, "Growth is never by chance; it is the result of forces working together." Don't leave Sterling's growth to chance. Contact Sterling's Town Administrator Ross Perry and get involved in working on Sterling's master plan.

Jed Lindholm
Griffin Road, Sterling

Itching to plow? Please ask first

I know you're trying to help, but fellas? The ambushes have got to stop. Every other winter some new random gentleman is trying to clear my driveway while my back is turned. Is it because I'm female? Or short? Have you assumed I'm a child being punished, because I shovel by hand? The thing is, I choose not to snow-blow or plow. Yes, I actually prefer to shovel. I enjoy the rigorous exercise, the crisp birdsong. I particularly love the sense of accomplishment that comes from meeting a personal challenge. And shoveling reminds me of my dad. A big whump of snow means quality time with him. Dad was a kind, gentle man. Army-retired after 20 years when I popped up, he taught me to fix my car. He built bookshelves in his wood shop. He liked everything just so. For

him, I'm proud I can shovel my own driveway. I'm proud I can still handle a string of storms with my own strong back, with my own middle-aged paws.

Yesterday, another anonymous Good Samaritan gave my driveway a little plow. I know you dudes have systems for your own driveways. Bless your hearts, but I have a system too. I like everything just so. Now I have to throw snow six feet farther to clear your berm. Now I have to literally climb your berm to remove it so I can see oncoming traffic. Now your tires packed the snow and I have to scrape with a spade.

Gold-plated problems, I know. I'm just saying: before clearing a stranger's driveway, please ask.

Constance Bradley
North Row Road, Sterling

Poison bait traps harm more than just field mice

When I was growing up in Pittsfield, I used to compete with a fellow nature buff to observe the most and earliest migratory warblers each spring. Though not a warbler, quite jealous was he when I sighted (with follow-up adult confirmation) a brightly colored drake wood duck in the (then not so clean) Housatonic River at the end of my street in March 1962, which was also recognized in the Massachusetts Audubon magazine. Though a wood duck may not be considered rare today, it certainly was then. This fellow nature buff grew up to become a Mass State Ornithologist and then it was my turn to be envious. Now well into my sixth decade, three-and-a-half of which have been spent in Sterling, I'm having close encounters with wildlife rarities that were nearly unheard of back in the Western Mass of the 1950s and '60s. Not long ago a bobcat darted across Crowley Road in front of me, the first time ever I had seen this species. And I now see a bald eagle or two flying over my house about once a year. I've always been enamored of the raptors and though not nearly as impressive as our national bird I still relish the site of the now common redtail and Cooper's hawks and ospreys and the near nightly call of the barred owls – species that are regulars in and around Sterling. So I'm extremely disheartened whenever I hear that folks in Sterling and elsewhere still use poison bait traps to rid their residences

of field mice that tend to intrude every winter. Field mice are a staple of these hawks and owls and when a poisoned mouse makes its way outside after feeding from the poison, they in turn are poisoning our magnificent raptors. In a Tufts Veterinary study examining Massachusetts red-tailed hawks, barred owls, Eastern screech-owls, and great horned owls that had been admitted to the Tufts Wildlife Clinic between 2006 and 2010, 139 of 161 birds – a whopping 86 percent – tested positive for anticoagulant rodenticides. But if these birds don't concern you, then what about your children? A four-year survey (1999 to 2003) by the Environmental Protection Agency found that at least 25,549 children under age six ingested enough rodenticide to suffer poisoning symptoms. Currently about 15,000 calls per year come in to the Centers for Disease Control from parents whose children have eaten rodenticides. Even if you place bait where children can't get to it, rodents are apt to distribute it around your house and property. There are much safer and equally effective ways to rid your house of the mice. The first that comes to mind is a cat. Ours cleans out about six mice every winter. And I believe a few escape to spread the word there's a huge mouse predator in our house and convince their fellow mice to seek exterior quarters.

Gary C. Menin, Sr.
Birch Drive, Sterling

Welcome back, Danielle

I have been a freelance reporter at several area newspapers for well over a decade, and am absolutely thrilled that I was asked to come back and write for Sterling Meetinghouse News again. I wrote for SMN for several years, under founder and then editor Sue Staudaheer. Two changes of ownership later and I'm excited to see what Mark and Karen, as well as Lex, do with this fine and well-respected publication.

I thoroughly enjoy telling the tales of the people, places, and things in my town, covering important and worthy events and news, and photographing all of the happenings. I'm very honored when people share their stories with me, and I look forward to continuing to capture snapshots of Sterling's history as it transpires.

Please feel free to reach out to me if you know of someone or something that deserves a light shined on them and thank you for supporting this wonderful local newspaper. We all take great pride in our beautiful town.

Danielle Ray
danielle@legacyphotoonline.com



STERLING

Meetinghouse News

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The next issue will publish April 11. The advertising and copy deadline is Monday, April 2. Items received after deadline will be included if space is available.

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Advertising Sales • Mark Packard
Art Director • Kimberly Morse
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Dawn E. Michanowicz
Town Clerk
1 Park Street
Sterling MA. 01564

Letter to the Editor
January 25, 2018

To the residents of Sterling:

After working for 45 years, I have decided to end my 19-year career in municipal government. I am retiring as Sterling Town Clerk effective March 1st. I retire as President of the Worcester County Clerk's Association and leader in our International Institute of Municipal Clerks as an *Athenian Dialogue Facilitator*.

The part of the job I shall miss the most are the people. Those 60-hour work weeks during the first years wouldn't have been possible without the support of Sheila, Irene, Melissa, Brenda Day, Evelyn, Kama, Elaine and Jeanne; and the staff from Butterick, DPW, the Library and Light Dept. A special thank you to those who volunteered as Election workers, many without pay such as Irene, Jo-Ann, Uthana, Kathleen, Nancy, Dick and Ginny, and all the others who've been to my home for post-election parties! You give a lot to this Town. Our teamwork got the job done. Thank you.

It was a phone call in October 2009 from Flo Coughlin who insisted I schedule an interview with the Sterling Board of Selectmen. Paul Sushchik, Dick Sheppard and Russ Philpot hired me for the job. My gratitude extends to them for supporting and trusting me to make a difference. They facilitated the final vault construction, which will remain a legacy for future generations preserving records dating back to 1764. My community involvement extended to the Houghton school where we organized mock elections and Chocksett school where I asked the art students create pictures for your Annual Town Report.

Like all Town Clerks, my office was always inundated with deadlines. In spite of those time constraints, I will always remember the residents who came by to share advice and a part of their lives with me. Those include: Brian, Loret, Jamie, Susan, Mike, Kathleen, Lex, Bill, Bob and Sharon, Dick, Ron, Jim, Donny, Malcolm, John, Amrith, and many, many more! In addition to advice and support, some of you brought me fresh farm eggs, apples, and vegetables from your gardens, and in one instance newly hatched baby ducks. You welcomed me into your community and for that I shall always be grateful.

Being a Town Clerk has been a rewarding, challenging career. Now I want spend my retirement with my husband in Holden, our four children, and our grandchild in Florida.

Respectfully,

Dawn Michanowicz, Master Municipal Clerk

Hydrant flushing

Flushing of the town's distribution system will begin in April, weather permitting, and will continue throughout May and June. Users of the public water supply may temporarily experience low water pressure and/or dirty water. Town-wide flushing is performed in order to improve the quality of potable water. For more information, call the DPW at 978-422-6767.

Curbside trash/recycling schedule for April

The DPW will be closed on Monday, April 16, in observance of Patriots' Day. Trash will be picked up on a regular schedule for the week of April 16. The holiday will not affect the curbside trash/recycle pick up schedule for that week. Have your trash/recycle curbside by 7 a.m. on your regularly scheduled pick up day.

Wachusett Food Pantry April distribution

Friday, April 20 for seniors (65+), and Saturday, April 21 for the general 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 a monthly three- to five-day supply of emergency food to any family with either a short- or long-term need. Volunteers are asked to arrive no later than 8:30 a.m. to help with distribution.

Recycling Center document shredding

Free document shredding is available on Saturday, April 7, 8 to 11 a.m. Document shredding only. The remainder of the site will be closed. Wachusett Watershed Regional Recycling Center, 131 Raymond Huntington Highway, West Boylston.

Bottle and can drive

Sterling Boy Scout Troop 189 will hold a bottle and can drive on Saturday, April 7, from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m., at the Sterling Municipal Light Department, 50 Main St, Sterling (Route 12). All MA returnable bottles and cans are accepted. If you have a large quantity or are unable

to bring your collection to the SMLD, Scouts can arrange for a pick up.

All proceeds from the drive stay in the Troop and help fund camping trips, purchase and maintenance of equipment, and administrative costs. Troop 189 is always seeking young men to accept the challenge to become the best that they can be. Boys ages 11 to 17 can find out more by attending a troop meeting. To find out dates and times, or to arrange bottle and can pick-up, call Mike at 978-422-7756.

Beware of jury duty scam

Worcester County Sheriff Lewis G. Evangelidis is warning residents about a 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 or saying they have an arrest warrant in their name. 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. Persons receiving such a telephone call or email should not provide the requested information, and should notify the Clerk of Courts office of the U.S. District Court in their area.

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Recycling Center seeking volunteers

If you have a passion for reuse, recycling and reducing the waste stream, and can spare several hours weekly or monthly 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.

Sterling Democratic Committee meeting

The Sterling Democratic Town Committee will meet on Monday, March 26, at 6:30 p.m., Room 205, Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling. Guest speaker is Jay Gonzalez, candidate for governor. All registered Democrats and Unenrolled voters are welcome.

Speed networking

The Wachusett Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting a speed networking event designed to help attendees promote their business and services. The event, sponsored by A Better Insurance Agency, will take place Tuesday, April 10, from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Holden Senior Center, 1130 Main St., Holden. \$15 for Chamber members, \$20 for non-members. Breakfast provided by Sweets & Java.

Mark Altman, founder and trainer at MindsetGo, will teach participants to effectively summarize their business's products or services in 60 seconds or less. This "elevator speech" will then be used in a one-hour speed networking session. To register, visit wachusettarea-chamber.org

Women's Day Retreat... Where Women Savor Time With God

St. Richard of Chichester Church is proud to be holding their first Women's Day Retreat in the Church Hall on Sunday, April 29, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. All women are welcome, regardless of religious denomination. Registration \$40, includes materials and lunch. Registration forms at all church entrances. Space is limited. Registration and payment to the church office by April 15. For more information or to obtain a registration form via email, contact cherylroy@me.com or call 978-422-6026.



Cheers to Lady Mountaineers

by Danielle Ray



Contributed PHOTO

The Lady Mountaineers with their coaches before competing at Cheersport in Atlanta. (Top center, left to right) Head coach Holly Boulay and assistant coach Katie Fogwell, Abigail C. Palmgren (top left), Olivia Rodriguez (Holden), Erin Foley (Holden), Lily M. Clemente (Holden), Jourdan Stuart (Sterling), Lexi M. Slavin (Holden), Libby Dowd (Holden), Emma Connolly (Princeton -- bottom center), Eve Morrison (Holden), Angela Esper (Rutland), Sarah Piscione (Sterling), Celia Callahan (Princeton), Monica L. Grady (Sterling), Camille Wheeler (Paxton), Rylie K. Butman (top right).

Wachusett Regional High School's Lady Mountaineers Cheerleading Team won first place in their division at the prestigious Cheersport Nationals, one of the world's largest cheerleading competitions, held in Atlanta, Georgia, in February.

Head coach Holly Boulay and assistant coach Katie Fogwell led the 15 athletes, comprised of freshman through seniors from Sterling, Holden, Paxton, Princeton, and Rutland, to compete against thousands of teams, and over 25,000 athletes.

Boulay started out as a gymnast before becoming interested in cheerleading, and has been coaching cheerleaders for 17 years. She says her ultimate goal for the WRSD cheerleading program is to "grow it bigger," including the Junior Varsity program that competed and went undefeated during the winter season.

"I want it so that they're set up equally to be as successful as each another," Boulay says of the high school Junior Varsity and Varsity teams. "Our goal is to place top two in the state championships in the fall."

The Lady Mountaineers have enjoyed a very successful fall and winter season. They won their first two invitationals as well as their league and regional championships, placed fourth in state championships, and highest in their Central Massachusetts division.

"I really enjoyed coaching the team this year," says Boulay. "You have such a short amount of time with your fall and winter team, and I got super lucky with a great group of kids and a great group of parents. I got super close to them."

A variety of components are packed into a 2-minute-and-30-second cheer routine, including dance, choreography, pyramids, stunting, and tumbling.

"Our team was one of a kind, with seniors who had been on the team since they were freshmen," says Boulay. "The seniors were super helpful, and they all just played their part and treated each other as equals. The freshmen held their own."

The Lady Mountaineers received an official grand championship banner from Cheersport as well as a large trophy, and each girl took home a leather jacket recognizing their triumph.

"I was excited going into it," Boulay says of the Cheersport competition. "I had a lot of kids who had never competed there. I wasn't nervous, we just wanted to have fun with it. We wanted the season to end on a good note. We went out with a bang."

Boulay is in her ninth year as a coach and manager at Pro Athletics All Star Cheerleading gym, located in Leominster.

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Annual Right to Farm Notification



It is the policy of this community to conserve, protect and encourage the maintenance and improvement of agricultural land for the production of food, and other agricultural products, and also for its natural and ecological value. This disclosure notification is to inform buyers or occupants that the property they are about to acquire or occupy lies within a town where farming activities occur. Such farming activities may include, but are not limited to, activities that cause noise, dust and odors. Buyers or occupants are also informed that the location of property within the town may be impacted by commercial agricultural operations including the ability to access water services for such property under certain circumstances.

Sterling Agricultural Commission

Book fair underway

by Danielle Ray

The 15th annual Scholastic Book Fair is at Houghton Elementary School through March 23, with Literacy Night for students, family, teachers and staff on Thursday, March 22 from 6 to 8 p.m. at the school. This year's theme is Paws for Reading. There will be therapy dogs at Literacy Night as well as Clifford the Big Red Dog.

Meredith Tufts and Melissa Tomforde, who both have children that attend Houghton, have co-coordinated the book fair for the past four years. Dozens of parent volunteers lend a hand with the set up and break down of the fair, and help with preview and purchase days for the students and teachers.

"I've always loved children books, reading to my kids, and finding great books to read with them," says Tufts. "I like promoting literacy and giving back, and being able to help the school to raise money for the things they need."

Last year was the first year that Scholastic granted Houghton a Signature Fair, which means a greater selection of books to choose from including best sellers and more series books. The books come from a large Scholastic warehouse in Danbury, Connecticut.

"We have to sell a certain amount to qualify for the Signature Fair," says Tomforde. "You get more perks, and the students and teachers love it."

A Scholastic representative donated his time the first year Tufts and Tomforde ran the fair. He was invaluable in getting them on track with table displays and providing expertise and knowledge. "This year things seemed pretty seam-

less," says Tufts. "Every year gets a little easier."

According to Tufts, there's a growing need for new parent volunteers, as current volunteers will have children moving onto the middle school over the next year or two. New volunteers could shadow the experienced parents and learn the ropes.

A bulletin board located by the school cafeteria is tailored for the fair each year, and coordinates with the theme of the book fair. Students get involved by helping create materials for the bulletin board.

Each day of the fair, the students who do morning announcements read excerpts from books that are available to purchase.

"The kids get excited to put the books on their wish list, and pick out something they will want to read," says Tomforde. "It really helps to promote an interest in reading."

Funds raised from the fair can be used as Scholastic bucks to purchase reading materials and book sets for the school, as well as books from the teachers' wish lists, and help fund PTO enrichment programs.

"The PTO Scholastic Book Fair further promotes literacy for our children," says Houghton Principal Tony Cipro. "By including Literacy Night as part of the Book Fair, parents have another opportunity to come to school with their children, purchase books, and attend teacher read-aloud sessions." For more information and to inquire about volunteering, email houghtonpto@hotmail.com.



Easter egg hunt

Join in the hunt! Sterling Recreation's annual Easter egg hunt will be held on Saturday, March 24 at Memorial Park (behind the fire station) for children in preschool through grade 3. Hunting begins promptly at noon. There will be special prizes and a visit from the Easter Bunny. Bring your basket and hunt for colorful Easter eggs. In case of snow, dress appropriately for the weather. Rain date, Sunday, March 25 at noon.

Village Green Preschool announces 14th Annual Scholarship

Village Green Preschool in Sterling is now accepting applications for a \$1,000 scholarship awarded to a graduating senior who attended the preschool and plans to attend a two- or four-year accredited college or university. Applications are available in the guidance department of local high schools and by email from the preschool office. For more information, contact Preschool Director Linda Greene at 978-422-8256 or sterlingvgp@gmail.com, or Scholarship Committee Chair Jenna O'Toole at 978-621-2220 or jennagotoole@gmail.com. Completed applications must be postmarked by April 1.

Sterling Women's Club accepting scholarship applications

The Sterling Women's Club is now accepting scholarship applications from high school seniors that are Sterling residents and entering college in the fall. Applications are available at sterlingwomensclub.info, Conant Public Library, the guidance office of area high schools, and by email at SWC01564@gmail.com. Completed applications must be postmarked by April 1.

Holden Grange announces scholarship

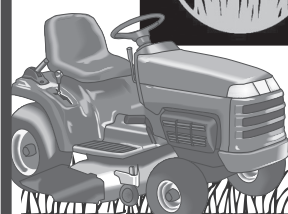
Holden Grange is offering its \$800 W. Sumner and Howard L. Jordan Scholarship to a graduating high school senior or student attending any recognized institution of learning beyond high school. Any applicant who does not belong to Holden Grange must reside in Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, or Sterling and be pursuing a course of study in agriculture/horticulture, veterinary science, or conservation/environment. A Holden Grange member in good standing for at least one year preceding the date of application is eligible to pursue any course of study. Scholarship recipient will be named in June, and funds will be awarded upon successful completion of the first semester with at least a 3.0 grade point average. A letter of intent stating future educational goals and a description of three community activities or three Grange activities in which the applicant is involved must be accompanied by an official transcript and a letter of recommendation, and postmarked by May 1 to Holden Grange, 26 Glenwood Place, Rutland, MA 01543. For more information, contact 508-886-2341 or holden-grange78@gmail.com.

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Chocksett Club scholarship application available

The Sterling Chocksett Club 2018 Scholarship application is available in the guidance department of area high schools and at Conant Public Library. Applications must be postmarked on or before May 1. Applicants must be Sterling residents. For more information, email loret.schur@gmail.com.

Worcester Central Pomona Grange announces scholarship

Applications for the Wesley Elvidge Scholarship sponsored by the Worcester Central Pomona Grange are available in the guidance department of area high schools or by emailing jordandairyfarm2@verizon.net. Anyone pursuing a course of study in an agricultural field, such as animal science, horticulture, veterinary medicine, conservation, or environment, is welcome to apply. Application deadline is May 1.

Get jazzed

The Nashoba Regional High School winter instrumental concert takes place on Thursday, March 22, 7 p.m., in the school auditorium, 12 Green Road, Bolton. The concert features the school's two jazz bands that recently earned silver and bronze medals at the Massachusetts Jazz Educators competition. Snacks provided by the Friends of Music parents' association. Tickets \$5 at the door. Students and seniors free. This is the final performance before the concert band competes in the Massachusetts Concert and Choral Conductors festival at Hopkinton High School on Friday, March 23 at 4 p.m.

First Worcester District awarded fire education grants

The Executive Office of Public Safety and Security has awarded grants to fund the Student Awareness Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) and Senior SAFE programs for the fiscal year 2018. All six towns in the First Worcester District received awards. Sterling Fire Department received \$3,708 for the S.A.F.E. program, and \$2,415 for the Senior Safe program.

Sterling EMS accepting scholarship applications

Sterling EMS, Inc. offers two annual scholarships. The \$500 Standard Scholarship is awarded to a Sterling resident enrolled in a medically-related training program. The \$1,500 Memorial Scholarship is awarded to a Sterling resident entering an undergraduate post-secondary educational program in a medically-related field. Applicants must be graduates or upcoming graduates of an accredited high school, possess a GED, HiSet (or alternative), or have taken the Commonwealth of Massachusetts competency test for home schooled/alternatively schooled individuals. Applications are available at the Sterling Fire Department, Conant Public Library, and Butterick Municipal Building in Sterling, as well as in the guidance department of area high schools. Application deadline is April 30.

Sterling Rec road race

Join the Sterling Recreation Department in welcoming spring by participating in their annual road race on Saturday, April 14. Races include 5K, 10K, and a 5K walk. Register at SterlingRecRuns. Racewire.com. Free t-shirt for the first 50 registered participants.

Hometown Heroes

“Here for you, whenever you need us”



Contributed PHOTO

Sterling Fire Chief David Hurlbut with good buddy Smokey the Bear.

Sterling resident Susan Rindfleisch was barely a month past major surgery in early January and was running short of medication.

“There had been a storm three days earlier,” she recalls. “When the wind is really fierce, snow blows right into my driveway, and plows kick snow back into the end of it. In the past, I’ve been able to shovel it myself. But this year, I wasn’t allowed to lift more than five pounds, due to my surgery.”

Needing to get to the pharmacy but unable to get out of her driveway, Rindfleisch called Sterling police. The dispatcher on duty promised to call back momentarily with a solution.

“They called back within minutes and said that Fire Chief David Hurlbut would be here within a half hour,” she says. “He was here in just a few minutes, and not only plowed out the end of the

driveway, but he plowed my entire driveway. He was a life saver that day, and said ‘We’re here for you whenever you need us.’

“I feel the chief goes way above and beyond his call of duty. I have seen firsthand that he and his department truly love their community, and all the people in it.”

Know a local hero? Send your story to: lex@sterlingmeetinghouse.com.

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Nomination papers available for 2018 town election candidates

Nomination papers are now available in the Town Clerk's Office for the annual town election on May 14. Only 39 certified voters' signatures are required to have your name placed on the ballot. Deadline to submit nomination papers is March 26. The following seats are available:

- (1) Board of Assessors – 3-year term
- (1) Board of Health – 3-year term
- (2) Library Board of Trustees – 3-year term
- (1) Board of Selectmen – 3-year term
- (1) DPW Board – 3-year term
- (1) Moderator – 3-year term
- (1) Planning Board – 5-year term
- (1) Sterling Housing Authority – 5-year term
- (1) Sterling Municipal Light Board – 3-year term
- (1) Wachusett Regional School Committee – 3-year term

For more information, contact the Town Clerk at 978-422-8111, ext. 2308.

Chocksett student helps children in need

by Danielle Ray

Fourteen-year-old Chocksett Middle School eighth grader Maddy Fisher has been selected to represent Sterling for Project 351, a non-profit organization, by running a fundraiser for Cradles to Crayons from March 26 through April 5. Fisher will be collecting gently used children's clothing, sizes newborn to 10, and new socks, which will then be donated to children in need across Massachusetts.

"It's part of their spring service project they do every year," says Fisher. "I'm really honored."

She was the top choice for the honor by the Chocksett Middle School staff, who were asked to nominate a student that's responsible, gets good grades, and shows leadership. Project 351 selects an eighth grader from every town and city in Massachusetts—over 600 kids—for the project each year.

"It's a difficult decision for us every year, because you can only pick one student," says Chocksett Principal Christopher LaBreck. "We put it out to the teachers, and Maddy's name was clearly on everybody's list."

"I knew she was an amazing young lady before we made her the Project 351 ambassador," LaBreck says, "but to see her take the initiative and see how she has grown and the impact that this experience has had on her is amazing. She's an incredible young lady, dedicated and hard working – a very impressive young lady."

In addition to being a stellar student at Chocksett, Fisher takes dance classes and is a member of the Chocksett's drama club. She played Tiger Lily in the club's recent production of Peter Pan and was elected drama officer to help run the club. She recently received an acceptance letter from Bancroft School in Worcester and plans to play volleyball there.

"I'm super proud of her," says her mother Sue Fisher. "Maddy works really hard and has earned everything she has gotten. She's very much a leader, she just has that personality. And she speaks up for what she believes in."

Five large collection bins will be placed around Chocksett, as well as additional bins at Houghton Elementary School and First Church in Sterling. Fisher says her goal is to fill them all.

"It's great knowing that I'm helping so many children across Massachusetts," she says. "It really warms my heart."



Maddy Fisher

Contributed PHOTO

NPCM streamlines leadership

Located in Sterling, Non Profit Capital Management, LLC, a full-service consulting and management group exclusively for nonprofit organizations, has announced that Brian Kindorf is the sole owner and managing director of the company. Founder Robert Guinto has decided to move away from an executive and administrative role and will continue to act as a consultant for NPCM clients. NPCM was launched as a collaboration between Kindorf and Guinto in 2003. The company started with two bookkeeping clients and has grown into a full-service organization offering grant writing, bookkeeping, and consulting with expertise in public administration, nonprofit accounting, program development, and direct service.

"Bob and I have had a great partnership and friendship since I was at Bentley University," says Kindorf. "His vast knowledge was fundamental in starting this venture and developing our services exclusively for nonprofits. I will always be grateful to him for his vision and mentorship throughout my career."

"I'm confident that streamlining the executive leadership in our organization will allow us to continue delivering management and financial expertise in this dynamic climate."

Kindorf is a certified public accountant licensed in Massachusetts. He is also a global charter management accountant. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Finance from Bentley University, and a Master of Science in Accounting from the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

For more information about NPCM, visit npcm.com.



Brian Kindorf

Contributed PHOTO



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Creativity flowing on Main Street

by Jamie Chase Galvin

A wonderful new addition to downtown Sterling, Jubilee Painting is an art studio that offers much more than its name implies. Owned by Hubbardston resident Denise Porell, Jubilee Painting offers canvas painting, cake decorating, jewelry making, and paint-your-own pottery. In addition, a large room in the back of the studio is the ideal space for children's birthday parties and private events, making Jubilee a truly versatile and creative venue.

Jubilee Painting originally opened its doors in 2015 in Holden and recently relocated to Sterling. "I was in Holden for over two years and wanted to expand the kids' birthday parties," says Porell. "I also wanted to add pottery painting and jewelry making. Canvas painting and cake decorating were already huge hits."

Originally only offering paint nights and children's birthday parties, the additional space Porell found in her Sterling location has made her expansion and the studio's additional offerings possible.

"The space in Holden just wasn't large enough to expand the kids' parties," she says. "And it's always been my dream to open my own pottery studio. This space in Sterling is really two studios, allowing me to offer so much more."

Jubilee Painting offers walk-in paint-your-own pottery Wednesday through Sunday. There's no studio fee and prices for ceramic ready-to-paint items range from \$10 to \$60, including paints and supplies. Paintable items include everything from dishware to whimsical figurines that especially appeal to children.

"We are B.Y.O.B., and we offer a private room for pottery or canvas nights," says Porell. "Shows, ladies' night out, team building, church groups, birthdays, family reunions—



Denise Porell organizes paintable ceramics at Jubilee Painting.

PHOTO by Lex Thomas

whatever the occasion, we want to make it one to remember."

Porell has always had a passion for the arts and is a commercial art graduate of Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School in Fitchburg. In addition, she's spent many years working as a floral designer, professional painter and home decorator, and is a certified ceramic instructor. Her love of painting is what drew her to open her own studio, and she enjoys the added bonuses that come with owning her own business.

"To be able to share my love of art with others is truly a gift," she says. "Children bring so much joy to my life. Celebrating their birthdays with them is my favorite part of my business."

Hoping her customers create lasting memories and unique pieces, whether a painting or piece of pottery to take home with them, is what drives Porell's behind-the-scenes work to make Jubilee Painting a creative oasis. "I want customers to have fun, and make wonderful memories with family, friends, and loved ones. Making my studio a friendly, relaxing place to allow creativity to flow and maybe surprise someone with a beautiful piece of pottery or painting on canvas that they can't believe they made, that's always my goal."

With extended weekend hours and two new employees to help serve patrons, Jubilee Painting is thriving. To learn more, stop by the studio at 27 Main St., or visit jubileepainting.com for their latest events and deals.

Rota Spring Farm

continued from page 1

The farm currently has 40 pregnant goats, 10 yearlings, and 25 head of cattle that are all safe and continue to graze happily on the farm's fields.

Rota is already planning to rebuild the barn. He made renovations to it around 2004, but tried to keep it close to the original. "I'm looking at some changes and upgrades," he says. "I plan to build something that will really work for the farm." He expects construction to begin soon after the completion of the investigation and

clearance from his insurance company.

In the meantime, it's business as usual at Rota Spring Farm. The ice cream stand is open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., and the farm store is open until 7 p.m. "But the store is really open whenever there's someone around," says Rota. "If we're there, come on in."

Rota is mindful of and grateful for all the support he has received since the fire. "I can't say enough about the fire crews that came out to help. And we've had so many calls and visits from people giving us their support," he says. "I just want everyone to know that we're here and we're open for business. And thank you for your support. It means everything to us."



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1835 repair plan underway

by Robert McKay Jones

Roofing project and universal access

While all might seem quiet at the 1835 Town Hall, there's a lot happening in preparation for the structural repairs to the roof, re-roofing and now, thanks to a grant from the Massachusetts Office on Disability, adding a limited use/limited application (LULA) elevator from the first to the second floor. We've had extensive on-site meetings with the architect/designer, structural engineer and electrical engineer and we're just a few weeks away from a complete design and bid package. Our goal is to publish the project in April and award the contract in May with work beginning in June, when we also expect to hear from the Massachusetts Cultural Facilities Fund regarding our application for a capital grant for the restoration and enhancement of the great hall.

Septic project

We're moving forward with the septic project to connect the town hall septic system to the fire station. In the works since 2001, we're pushing hard to make

the connection happen in 2019.

We've established that there is a drainage pipe running along the line of what used to be called the town ditch. Our deed research has shown that the town ditch ran along the property lines in effect at the time. Deeds for property owners such as Wilder, Sawyer, Houghton and Buck reference the ditch in the property line description.

Culverts confirm the location of a 10" or 12" drain pipe, also detailed in a 1945 plan, running from the Butterick Municipal Building across Main Street, behind 33 Main St. and across Maple Street, behind the 1835 Town Hall, 27 Main St., and Woody's Barber Shop to Waushacum Avenue. Our intention is to run our 2" main alongside the existing pipe. Our engineering firm is working on a design, and we hope to have the plan completed by summer's end.

Robert McKay Jones is Chair of the 1835 Town Hall Committee

Looking to buy or sell a house? Think spring

by Karen Packard Realtor®

I'm often asked, "Why should I sell my home in the spring?" Spring is the busiest time of the year for buying and selling homes for many reasons. After being stuck indoors all winter, people may realize their house no longer fits their needs. Growing kids may need a playroom, or owners need something easier to maintain. Good weather makes people flock outdoors to enjoy weekend activities, which often include house hunting and visiting open houses.

I tell my clients that houses sell year-round, but they sell fastest and for the most money in the spring. Some of it is simple math. There are more buyers out looking in the spring, so you're more likely to get the most traffic and more offers simply based on the increased number of people looking to buy.

Another reason that contributes to a busy spring market is school. When school is in session, people tend to be at home during the weekends, and free to attend open houses, soccer games and other local events. Summer brings hot temperatures and school vacations, which encourage people to get out of town rather than going house shopping.

In addition, spring landscapes come alive and improve that all-important first impression. Grass turns green, leaves fill trees, and blooming flowers color up the yard to help show properties at their best and much more attractively than

during the fall and winter. The leaves on trees may also increase privacy and decrease outside noise. Because buyers are more likely to purchase a home they fall in love with as soon as they see it, the best first impression always starts with the exterior and landscaping. And if the house has a pool or outdoor living area, it's best to show the property when these features can be seen to entice potential buyers.

Finally, the spring real estate market gives families who have kids planning to attend new schools plenty of time to find a house, move in, and prepare for the start of the new school year. Whether entering kindergarten or high school, moving to a new home because of schools is one of the top reasons clients cite for making the decision to move. It typically takes about 45 days to go from placing an offer to moving into a new home. So spring house hunting gives a family plenty of time to make sure they're settled before it's time to go back to school.

People buy and sell houses for many reasons, including downsizing, divorce, growing families, new jobs, and more. Whatever the reason, houses sell throughout the year, but spring always has the most activity when it comes to buying and selling.



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Spring 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, March 21, at 6:30 p.m. to discuss *Horizon* by Scott Westerfeld. 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.

Drop-In Family Game Afternoon – Families with children are invited to drop in Thursday, March 29 between 1:30 and 7 p.m. for board games and popcorn. No registration required.

What's cooking at the Cookbook Club?

Enjoy great food and discover delicious new recipes from *Pioneer Woman Cooks: Come and Get It!* by Ree Drummond on Wednesday, March 28, 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.

each month. Wednesday, April 4, at 6:30 p.m., the club will discuss *Far from the Tree* by Robin Benway. Books available at the library. No registration required.

Cougars in New England?

Join Robert Tougas, cougar expert and author of *The Quest for the Eastern Cougar*, as he presents cougar sightings and evidence of these elusive animals in the Northeast. Thursday, April 12, at 6:30 p.m. at Conant Public Library in Sterling. Books will be available for purchase following the discussion. To register, call 978-422-6409.

Download Conant Public Library app

Conant Public Library has a free app that 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.

Calling all writers

Seven Bridge Writers' Collaborative announces its first Award for Short Fiction. A \$250 prize will be awarded for the best short story on the theme of resistance. Story submissions accepted from April 1 to April 30. The winner will be announced in June, and the winning story will be published on the Seven Bridge Writers' Collaborative website. Open to New England writers only. For complete guidelines and information about this year's judge, visit sevenbridge.org/short-story-contest/. Email questions to 7bridgewriterscollaborative@gmail.com.

Conquer clutter with Jenna Elliott

Are you overwhelmed by clutter? Join professional organizer Jenna Elliott of The Naked Flower to learn how to reduce clutter and get organized at home and in the office. Presented by Conant Public Library, this workshop will be held at the Sterling Senior Center, 36 Muddy Pond Road, Sterling, on Tuesday, April 3 at 6:30 pm. Learn tips and strategies to help reduce clutter and improve the functionality of your space, including utilizing your calendar and to-do list more effectively, incorporating better habits to reduce clutter and much more. Registration is suggested but not required. 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

Sterling-Lancaster Community TV

Broadcast Schedule March 24 to March 30 2018
Comcast Channel 8

Saturday

Genre

12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - The Stranger	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - The Stranger	Entertainment
6:30 AM	Sound Off Ep 6 - Representative Chris Walsh	Interview
8:00 AM	Village Church Service	Religion
10:00 AM	College Church Service	Religion
12:00 PM	Rattlesnake Motordrome Racing - Ep 8	Hobby
1:00 PM	Euromax - Open House	Documentaries
2:00 PM	They are Still There	Documentaries
3:00 PM	Rattlesnake Motordrome Racing - Ep 8	Hobby
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Fantastic Fruit Salad	Children
5:00 PM	Nashoba Symphonic - Summer Dreams	Music
6:28 PM	The Song - Visioning Bear Singers	Music
7:00 PM	Euromax - Open House	Documentaries
8:00 PM	They are Still There	Documentaries
9:00 PM	Rattlesnake Motordrome Racing - Ep 8	Hobby
10:00 PM	Sound Off Ep 6 - Representative Chris Walsh	Interview

Sunday

12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - The Stranger	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - The Stranger	Entertainment
7:00 AM	Trinity Bolton Church Service	Religion
9:00 AM	ECC Church Service	Religion
11:00 AM	Trinity Lutheran Church Service	Religion
12:00 PM	Rattlesnake Motordrome Racing - Ep 8	Hobby
1:00 PM	Euromax - Open House	Documentaries
2:00 PM	They are Still There	Documentaries
3:00 PM	Rattlesnake Motordrome Racing - Ep 8	Hobby
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Fantastic Fruit Salad	Children
5:00 PM	Nashoba Symphonic - Summer Dreams	Music
6:28 PM	The Song - Visioning Bear Singers	Music
7:00 PM	Euromax - Open House	Documentaries
8:00 PM	They are Still There	Documentaries
9:00 PM	Rattlesnake Motordrome Racing - Ep 8	Hobby
10:00 PM	Sound Off Ep 6 - Representative Chris Walsh	Interview

Monday - Friday

12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Borderline	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Borderline	Entertainment
7:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
9:00 AM	Fitness Foodie - Tostadas	Cooking
10:00 AM	Yoga for Restful Sleep	Health
11:00 AM	Car Guy Channel - Mountain View A La Carte	Hobby
12:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News
12:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
1:00 PM	Conflict Zone - No Rest for the EU	Documentaries
2:00 PM	Church Services	Religion
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Broccoli Basics	Children
5:00 PM	Polarized Guru in Needham	Music
7:00 PM	Conflict Zone - No Rest for the EU	Documentaries
8:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News
8:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Mountain View A La Carte	Hobby
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

Broadcast Schedule March 31 to April 6, 2018
Comcast Channel 8

Saturday

Genre

12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Borderline	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Borderline	Entertainment
6:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
8:00 AM	Village Church Service	Religion
10:00 AM	College Church Service	Religion
12:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News
12:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
1:00 PM	Conflict Zone - No Rest for the EU	Documentaries
2:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News
2:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
3:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Mountain View A La Carte	Hobby
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Broccoli Basics	Children
5:00 PM	Polarized Guru in Needham	Music
7:00 PM	Conflict Zone - No Rest for the EU	Documentaries
8:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News
8:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Mountain View A La Carte	Hobby
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

Sunday

12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Borderline	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Borderline	Entertainment
7:00 AM	Trinity Bolton Church Service	Religion
9:00 AM	ECC Church Service	Religion
11:00 AM	Trinity Lutheran Church Service	Religion
12:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News
12:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
1:00 PM	Conflict Zone - No Rest for the EU	Documentaries
2:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News
2:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
3:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Mountain View A La Carte	Hobby
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Broccoli Basics	Children
5:00 PM	Polarized Guru in Needham	Music
7:00 PM	Conflict Zone - No Rest for the EU	Documentaries
8:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News
8:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Mountain View A La Carte	Hobby
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

Monday - Friday

12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - The Red House	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - The Red House	Entertainment
7:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
9:00 AM	Intuition Nutrition - Fall Smoothie	Cooking
10:00 AM	Jessersize - Ep 14	Health
11:00 AM	Car Guy Channel - Hot San Jose Nights	Hobby
11:45 PM	Off Road Vehicle Advisory Committee	Educational
1:00 PM	Global 3000 - Japan - The Oldest Generation	Documentaries
2:00 PM	Church Services	Religion
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Great Granola Yogurt	Children
5:00 PM	Harmonies - Amanda Cote	Music
6:00 PM	Capital Jazzfest - Hennessy Brothers	Music
7:00 PM	Global 3000 - Japan - The Oldest Generation	Documentaries
7:45 PM	Off Road Vehicle Advisory Committee	Educational
9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Hot San Jose Nights	Hobby
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

Please note this schedule is subject to change. Refer to www.slctv.us for any updates.



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Spring fun with Sterling Rec

Stay fit and have fun throughout the spring with Sterling Rec. For program information and to register online, visit SterlingRec.com, call 978-422-3041, email recreation@sterling-ma.gov, or stop by the office, now located in the basement of the Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling. Programs will continue to take place in the 1835 Town Hall. Follow Sterling Recreation Department on Facebook for up-to-date information.

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.

Active Kids

Tiny Tots Playtime – Infant to age 4, 5-year-old siblings welcome. Wednesdays, 9 to 11 a.m. 1835 Town Hall. \$30/month/family, or \$3/day.

After School Tennis at Houghton – Grades 1 to 4. Wednesdays, March 21 to May 2, 4 to 5 p.m. Houghton Elementary School gym. \$100.

Kids Zumba/Yoga – Grades 1 to 4. Mondays, March 26 to May 23, 4 to 5 p.m. Chocksett Middle School theatre. \$35/session.

Flag Football – Grades K to 2, and 3 to 6. Sundays, April 21 to June 17. Houghton Elementary School field. \$50/player. Register by April 1.

After School Tennis at Chocksett – Grades 5 to 8. Mondays, April 23 to June 11, 3:15 to 4:15 p.m. Chocksett Middle School gym. \$100.

Mini Soccer – Preschool. Saturdays, April 28 to June 2. Houghton Elementary School field. \$80.

Wicked Cool for Kids – Grades 1 to 4. Thursday, 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 III. Mondays, March 26 to June 18, 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. May 8 to 29. Chocksett Middle School cafeteria. \$120.

Spring Cake Mini-Session – Grades 5 to 8. Tuesdays, April 24 and May 1, 3 to 4:30 p.m. Chocksett Middle School cafeteria. \$60.

Active Adults and Teens at 1835 Town Hall

Gentle Yoga – Ages 14+. Thursdays to April 12; April 19 to June 7, 10:30 to 11:45 a.m. \$80/8-week session, or \$13/class.

Yoga for All Levels – Ages 14+. Thursdays to April 12; April 19 to June 7, 7 to 8 p.m. \$80/8-week session, or \$13/class.

Wednesday Yoga – Wednesdays, 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. Every Wednesday (weather permitting). \$90/10 classes or \$10/class.

Head to Toe Workout & Core Pilates – Ages 16+. Mondays, April 23 to June 18, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., or Fridays, April 27 to June 22, 8:45 to 9:45 a.m.

A.M. Boot Camp – Ages 16+. Wednesdays, April 25 to June 20, 5:30 to 6:30 a.m. \$168.

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

Fit Wire

How to choose the right workout program

by Kylie Kukla,
Custom Fitness Trainer

You hear it every day: "This is the best workout program ever." You read it in line at the supermarket: "12 Weeks to a Bikini Body." You see your friends post it on Facebook: "Join my challenge. You'll never go back!"

But how do you weed out all the choices out there, and find the best option for you?

It can be confusing, overwhelming and, at times, intimidating going over all of the online workout programs, the ones in mapped out magazines, or offered at your local Y. Maybe you've started a few times on a fitness journey and ended up discouraged, injured, or bored with your newest workout.

So, what's the key? The best program or workout for you is the one you can actually stick to.

That's not fancy advice, but it's true. If you can't commit to a program, don't enjoy it, or can't fit it into your schedule, it's only a matter of time before you're right back where you started. The best coaching, personal training studio, or strength training challenge group won't be worth a dime if you can't follow through and consistently show up, day in and day out.

Find what you enjoy. Like nature? Start by taking some walks outdoors. Maybe progress to going on hikes, or running on trails.

Enjoy being around other people pushing themselves? Try out a group fitness class, maybe try spinning, or go to a pilates class.

Need something more Zen-like? Search out a local yoga studio.

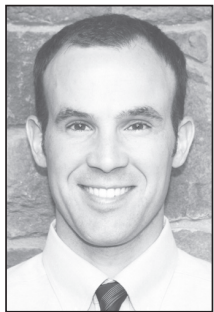
Unmotivated on your own? Look up personal trainers nearby to keep you accountable to your goals and make sure you show up every day.

Most important, don't delay any further in living a healthy lifestyle. Get started today. Decide what you like, what you think you can maintain for a long period of time, and what you'll actually enjoy doing. The best fitness program in the world won't work any other way. Find something that you know you'll stick to. Then just do it!



Kylie Kukla

Contributed PHOTO



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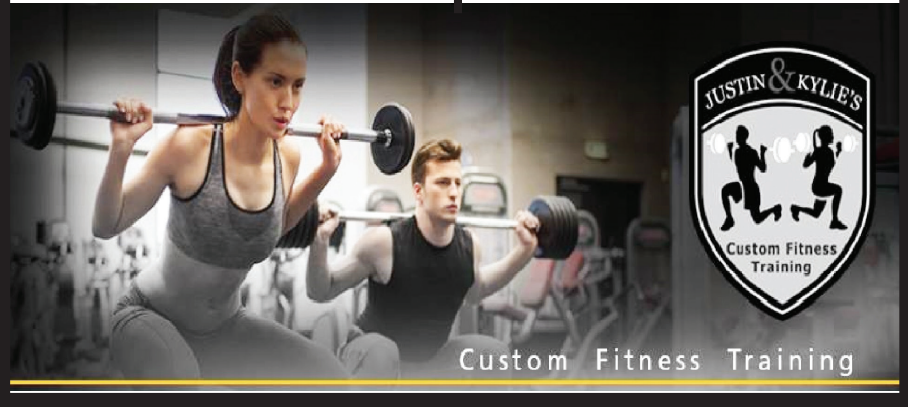


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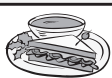
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Sterling resident, Holden Fire Chief Jack Chandler retires

by Bruce Baker



Jack Chandler

Contributed PHOTO

After a career serving fire departments in Massachusetts and Maine, Sterling resident and Holden Fire Chief Jack Chandler retired on December 31, 2017. Chandler spent over 40 years in the fire service, starting as a volunteer at the Hebron Fire Department in Maine and at the Phippsburg Fire Department, where his family owns a summer home. After moving to Sterling in 1975 to work with his cousin David Chandler at Meadowbrook Orchards, he joined the Sterling Fire Department, an entirely on-call department at that time, where he rose to the rank of deputy chief, and served as treasurer and president of the Sterling Firefighters Ambulance Service.

In 1997, Chandler was appointed chief of the West Boylston Fire Department, the only full-time depart-

ment employee. Nine years later, the department had expanded to four full-time firefighters and 36 on call.

Chandler became Holden's fire chief in 2006. One of his crowning accomplishments was leading a successful campaign to replace the aging and overcrowded fire and police stations with a new combined facility. Two additional accomplishments resulted in significant improvements in the fire department's ability to meet Holden's public safety needs: implementation of a department-operated paramedic level ambulance service; and increasing the number of full-time personnel to ensure prompt response to emergencies at all times. Improvements in emergency communications, firefighter training and safety, equipment, and technology, are among the many changes in the fire service Chandler has seen over the years.

"Running a fire department is like running a small business," says Chandler. A fire chief spends the day handling personnel administration, budgeting and finance, fire department planning and service evaluation, and ensuring that the department is always prepared for whatever emergencies may occur, as well as responding to calls for assistance. Whatever the task, Chandler lived up to it and excelled.

Sterling performer appears in Tennessee Williams play

Sterling resident Stephanie Barney will appear on stage with the Ghost Light Players of MetroWest in Tennessee Williams's *Summer and Smoke*. The play follows a high-strung minister's daughter and the wild young doctor who is her next-door neighbor. Together they explore the many facets of love. Barney will play the role of Rosa Gonzales, a girl whose appearance in the town throws a wrench into the relationship between the two young lovers.

A native of Sterling, Barney has performed in musical theater and plays since she was 9. She received a Bachelor of Arts in Musical Theater Performance from Rhode Island College in 2017. Performances are March 23 and 24 at 8 p.m., and March 25 at 2 p.m., at First Church in Marlborough, 37 High St., Marlborough. For tickets, visit bit.ly/glorioushill. For information about the company, visit ghostlightplayers.com.



Stephanie Barney as Rosa Gonzales

Contributed PHOTO

Public hearing on marijuana zoning bylaw

The Planning Board will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, March 28, at 7 p.m., in Room 202, Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Sterling, for the purpose of amending the Town of Sterling Protective Bylaws relative to marijuana establishments. Copies of the amendments are available at the Town Clerks Office, or online at sterling-ma.gov.

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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 for anyone 60+. 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 is available daily. \$3 suggested donation.

Special upcoming events

Buddy, can you spare a dime? – Tuesday, April 3, 9 a.m. The Dull Men's Club welcomes Matt Lisi and his father from the Sterling Rare Coin Corporation to speak about U.S. coins and currency. They have kindly offered to appraise a few coins for those attending, but no bags full of coins, please.

Birds of the New England Swamp – Thursday, April 5, 7 p.m. Lancaster-based wildlife advocate, naturalist and award-winning bird photographer Peter Christoph will discuss raising awareness of the need to conserve bird habitats. His photography is on display at the Senior Center through April.

Sheriff's Luncheon – Wednesday, April 11, 11:30 a.m. Spaghetti and meatballs. Followed by "Serving Time, Preventing Crime," an eye-opening presentation of how inmates chose houses for theft, located items to steal, and targeted individuals for theft at the mall or bank.

Armchair Travel to Paris – Thursday, April 12, 2:30 p.m. Bill Ayadi and Joyce Ayadi Hinckley met on a street corner in Paris and have been returning on and off for the past 45 years. Join them on a tour of both well-known and obscure places, including Notre Dame, the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre, Pere Lachaise Cemetery, The Cluny Museum and more. Discover how the city has changed over time but still remains the most visited place in Europe.

SMLD Safety Talk and Pizza Lunch – Thursday, April 26, 11 a.m., lunch 11:45 a.m. SMLD General Manager Sean Hamilton will provide an overview of the electrical industry and Ray Gouley will discuss electrical safety.

Spring Fling – Saturday, May 5, 6 to 9 p.m. Join us for Dinner and Dancing. Menu prepared by the Lowe Family. Music by Clyde Wheatley, Music Played with True Panache. Music partially funded by a grant from the Sterling Cultural Council. Tickets \$10, available until April 25. Event sponsored by Greg Aubin Trucking.

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

April program highlights

Golf Fitness 8-Week Workshop – Thursdays, 4:30 p.m., starting April 5. Join a fun 8-week session dedicated to golfers looking to improve their game. The focus will be on increasing flexibility, balance, and strength, using Pilates, yoga exercises, and stretches associated with a golf swing. Instructor Jennifer Davidson is a two-time ironman finisher and marathoner and holds multiple

certifications in yoga, Pilates, and fitness. \$5/class.

Take Charge – This 8-session series during April and May is designed to help you take charge of your health, health care decisions, finances, and more. Free.

Tuesday, April 3, 1 to 2 p.m. Take Charge of Your Health: Capstone Presentations. Graduating nursing students at the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences will present the results of two capstone projects: "The At-Home Care of a Family Member with Alzheimer's or Related Dementia" and "Social Isolation among the Elderly."

Wednesday, April 4, 1 to 2 p.m. Take Charge of Your Health: Dr. Patty has Your Back. Patty MacCulloch, NP, clinical nursing instructor and nurse practitioner at the UMass Memorial Spinal Center will give an overview of back health, including understanding spinal stenosis and the role of a healthy spine in maintaining balance.

Monday, April 23, 2 to 3:30 p.m. Take Charge of your Legal Affairs. Attorney Mark Zarrow of Lian Zarrow, Worcester, will provide an overview of elder law issues, including power of attorney, wills, and trusts.

Monday, April 30, 2 to 3 p.m. Take Charge of your Health Care Decisions. Sterling Senior Center Director Veronica Buckley will review the Personal Directive from Honoring Choices, a document that helps define your choices and preferences for medical care and treatment, and communicate them to others.

Acrylic painting: New session begins April 5

Thursdays, at 12:30 p.m. Open to new and returning students. Learn the basics and more. Go at your own pace.

Learn to paint landscapes, seascapes, trees, flowers, and much more. Weekly demonstrations. Paints and brushes available for the first class. (Supply list available at front desk). Learn to mix paints to create a multitude of hues using just a few colors. Discover creative strokes to make your paintings come alive. Registration encouraged. \$5/class.

Wachusett Food Pantry delivery 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.

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.

Senior Center snow policy

When Wachusett district schools are closed for the day due to inclement weather, there will be no programming (including meals program) at the Senior Center for the day. The Senior Center will also follow the Wachusett Regional School District's decisions regarding delayed opening and early dismissal throughout the winter.

Garden Guru

Time to spring clean your garden

by Mark Packard

If you're like me, you can't wait to start digging in the dirt. I actually miss the smell of dirt and look forward to that first opportunity to get dirty!

Garden spring cleaning should be done as early as possible to prevent damage of bulbs that will start popping up as soon as the ground warms up. Removing all leaves and debris from shrubs and trees will prevent rot and fungus growth. If you have too much mulch around your trees and shrubs, pull the excess away and discard it. New mulch should be applied to existing beds every year. Mulch breaks down by one inch per year and amends the soil naturally. It also creates a weed barrier and holds moisture in the ground, helping to prevent plants from drying out.

Bark mulch is made primarily from the bark of trees and doesn't attract insects. There are, however, some companies that are grinding pallets and other wood products, coloring them, and calling them bark mulch. This isn't the same. Make sure your mulch is made from bark, not ground wood. Most mulches are colored for consistency, but there are some that are specifically not colored.

Some people use decorative stone in their beds, but I don't recommend it. Stone holds heat and dries out your plants, doesn't create a weed barrier, and doesn't break down to amend the soil naturally. You should, however, do a 1 to 2-foot-wide apron of stone around your house or commercial building to help prevent fire hazard, insects, and drip edge runoff.

Fertilizing your garden can be done with a well balanced fertilizer like 10-10-10. Sprinkle this granular fertilizer on the ground before mulching and gently rake it into the soil to help grow bigger and longer lasting blooms.

Pruning is recommended to remove any winter damage. Prune close to the main stalk or right after new growth. But don't prune back hydrangea canes, rhododendron, azalea, andromeda or other plants that have buds from last fall. If you do, you'll be cutting off your flowers. A good general rule is to prune plants right after they flower.

Gardening questions? Email mark@sterlinggreenery.com. Happy gardening!

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Support the Senior Center at Annual Town Meeting

by Liz Pape

2017 marked the first complete year in the new Sterling Senior Center. Growth of the number of Senior Center participants showed no signs of slowing down from our successful opening of the new building in May 2016. In 2017, over 879 seniors participated in 22,619 events at the Center. On any given day, the Center hosted an average of 70 seniors, marking a 40 percent increase over 2016.

Volunteerism is alive and well at the Senior Center; 84 volunteers logged 8,856 hours of service during 2017. Volunteers staff the kitchen, the dining room and the front desk. Volunteers deliver meals on wheels, teach classes, facilitate programs and serve on our board and committees. In short, our volunteers perform a myriad of functions that keep the center humming. They are an inspiration to the community and they give new meaning to "seniors helping seniors," because 80 percent of our volunteers are seniors themselves.

Our programming has continued to expand, keeping the center busy during the day, and during many evenings, too. We offer a variety of exercise, health promotion, nutritional support, educational, recreational, inter-generational and socialization programs. Outreach services have also expanded. In addition to home visits, office consultations for application assistance, advocacy, case management, crisis intervention, family support and well-being checks and assessments, the center now has a Friendly Visiting program, offering socialization opportunities to those un-

able to visit the center. Our transportation services provide rides to the Senior Center, grocery stores, pharmacies, doctor and physical therapy appointments, and many more. In 2017, 4,204 rides were provided, and van drivers' salaries are reimbursed to the Town of Sterling through MART.

This year, even with the 40 percent increase in participation at the center, our budget request at the Annual Town Meeting remains the same as last year's with the exception of staff cost-of-living increases and the request for an additional part-time operations coordinator. The operations coordinator is a 19-hour per week non-benefited staff person to recruit, train and oversee the Senior Center's volunteers and to support the Senior Center's program activities, including our new daily home-cooked lunch program. The COA board and the senior center director remain committed to a volunteer-driven senior center. It is through our volunteers that we have been able to achieve our growth to date, and it will be through effective volunteer management that we will be able to sustain our level of high quality services to our seniors as usage of the Senior Center and the population of seniors continue to grow. We're proud of the progress we've made to date. Please support us at the Annual Town Meeting on Monday, May 7, so that we may continue to expand our services to the senior community of Sterling.

Liz Pape is chair of the Sterling Senior Center Council on Aging.

Ted Reinstein delights Senior Center audience

by Richard Maki

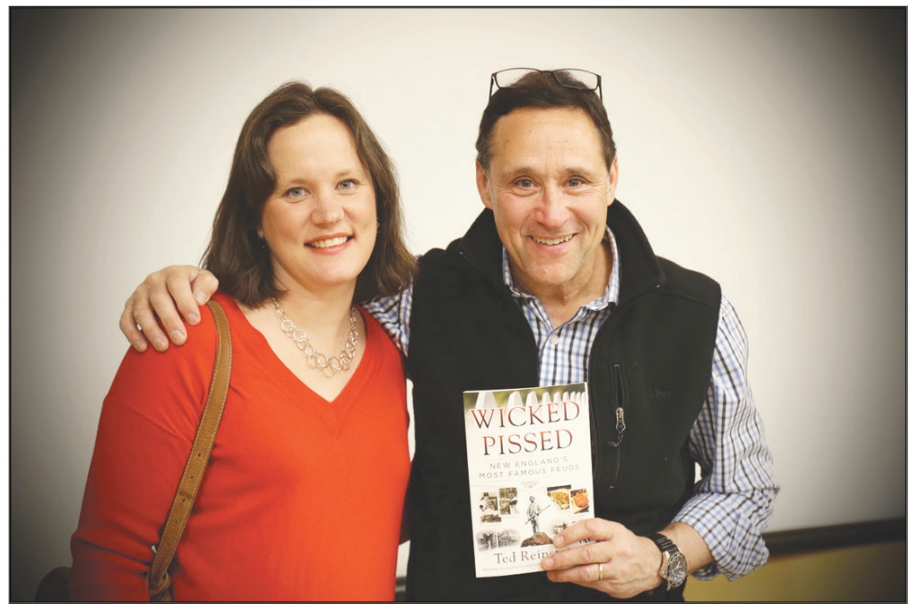


PHOTO by Richard Maki

Alisa Iannucci, president of the Friends of the Conant Public Library, with author and reporter Ted Reinstein of the award-winning television program Chronicle.

Ted Reinstein, author and reporter on the award-winning Channel 5 television program Chronicle, shared unique stories from his first book, New England Notebook at the Sterling Senior Center on March 14. The audience was entertained by his presentation about Vermont farmer and self-styled "politician" Fred Tuttle. He continued with a human interest story about the turn of the century portrait of a youthful subject by artist Norman Rockwell. Picturesque images of Pemaquid Point in Maine and his automobile experiences with Chronicle co-anchor Peter Mehegan rounded out the lively talk.

The evening program, co-sponsored by the Friends of the Sterling Seniors, drew a capacity audience. According to Alisa Iannucci, president of the Friends of the Conant Public Library, the program was a joint effort between the town's two Friends groups to bring an educational and entertaining event to the community. Reinstein's appearance also served to raise the visibility of the work of both volunteer groups. A book signing featuring Reinstein's newest books followed his presentation. The event was underwritten by Leominster Credit Union as a local demonstration of their charitable giving to civic organizations.

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Indoor yard sale

First Church in Sterling will hold its annual fundraising Indoor Yard Sale on Saturday, March 24, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the First Church parish hall. Snack bar open. Free admission. For more information, call 978-422-6657.

Palm Sunday Promenade

A multigenerational, town-wide walk around Sterling to benefit First Church's outreach ministries and the Interfaith Hospitality Network. Sunday, March 25, 1 p.m., starting at First Church in Sterling. All you need to do is register and get a few sponsors, then show up on Palm Sunday to walk. To register, visit pswalk.org.

American Legion meeting

The next meeting of the Hiram O. Taylor Post 189 of the American Legion will take place on Monday, April 2, at 7:30 p.m. E-board at 6 p.m. Hot dogs served at 6:30 p.m.

Author talk

Lisa Brooks, author of *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War, Tracing Mary White Rowlandson's Path: From Lancaster/Nashaway to Kwinitekw, the Connecticut River*, will be guest speaker on Thursday, April 5, 7 p.m., at Nashoba Regional High School Auditorium, 12 Green Road, Bolton. In *Our Beloved Kin*, Brooks, Associate Professor of English and American studies at Amherst College, recovers a complex picture of war, captivity, and Native resistance during the First Indian War (later named King Philip's War) by relating the stories of Weetamoo, a female Wampanoag leader, and James Printer, a Nipmuc scholar, whose stories converge in the captivity of Mary Rowlandson. For more information, email tcastner@nrsd.net.

Dueling Pianos for Habitat for Humanity NCM

Digital Federal Credit Union is this year's premier sponsor for Dueling Pianos, an event to help raise funds benefiting the work of Habitat for Humanity North Central MA on Friday, April 6, at the Devens Common Center, 31 Andrews Parkway, Devens. A portion of proceeds will help support the organization's critical home repair program. Tickets are \$70 per person for dinner and the show, or \$40 per person for the show only. The dinner and show package includes a three-course dinner with choice of baked jumbo shrimp, marinated beef tips, or a stuffed pepper vegetarian selection. Dinner will be served at 6 p.m. A cocktail hour with cash bar and complimentary light appetizers and desserts for show only patrons will begin at 7 p.m. A silent auction is planned and winners will be announced during the show's intermission. For tickets, visit ncmhabitat.org or call 978-348-2749.

Hope Chapel hosts family conference

Hope Chapel will host a Parent/Grandparent Conference on Saturday, April 7, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. This year's theme is "Emotions: In You and Your Child." Speakers include clinical psychologist Dr. Jennifer Gorham, Rocco Iannucci, M.D. (McLean Hospital), Dr. Laura Garafoli (Associate Professor of Psychological Science, Fitchburg State University), certified music therapist Susan Warren, and Ron Waddell (Straight Ahead Ministries, helping young juveniles in DYS). Free, including lunch. Space is limited and registration is required. To register, visit hopechapelsterling.org/parenting-workshop/.

First Church community lunch welcomes everyone

First Church in Sterling will host their next community lunch on Saturday, April 7, at noon. Menu includes pulled pork, cole slaw, and brownie sundae. All are welcome to the community lunch at no cost and no reservations. Enjoy a dinner-type meal in a warm, respectful setting on the first Saturday of each month at 6 Meetinghouse Hill Road, Sterling. The parish hall is accessible. For more information, call 978-422-6657.

Pitch party

Everyone is welcome to a public pitch party sponsored by Sterling Grange on Saturday, April 7, 6:30 p.m., at the Sterling Senior Center. Admission \$4. Refreshments will be served. For more information, email sterlinggrange53@gmail.com or call 978-563-1437.

Central Mass Lyme Foundation meeting

The Central Mass Lyme Foundation will hold its next meeting on Saturday, April 14, 1 to 3 p.m., at 90 Holden St., Worcester. Guest speaker is Cape Cod entomologist Larry Dapsis, who will give a "tick talk".

Treasures of the Community

First Church in Sterling's 12th Annual Treasures of the Community Gala will take place on Saturday, May 12, at Devens Common Center, 31 Andrews Parkway, Devens. Tickets are \$70 per person and on sale until May 1. As an added incentive, reserve and prepay a table for eight by April 7 and save \$10 per person. The event features live and silent auctions, cash bar cocktail hour with appetizers, and a buffet dinner. Auction items include sporting event tickets, home décor services, IT support, tutoring, spa and wellness services, homeowner services, handcrafted items, antiques, theme gift packages, vacation adventures, weekend getaways, restaurant gift certificates, and fine wines. View items in advance at fcstresures.com. The Treasures of the

Community Gala has raised \$256,000 to date. This year's goal is \$46,500 to benefit First Church in Sterling's events, community lunches, and other programs; Neighbor to Neighbor, a fund that assists individuals and families in Sterling that have demonstrated financial need with payments toward housing, food, utilities, clothing and other essential living costs; Interfaith Hospitality Network, an organization that serves homeless families in the Worcester area; and the La Romana mission trip, which has travelled to the Dominican Republic for the past 24 years to build the Good Samaritan General Hospital and provide health care and access to clean water to thousands of poor in remote cane cutter villages.

For information about participation and item donation, contact Phil Holman at philsterl@comcast.net. To advertise in the gala catalogue, contact Linda Holman at lady mantle@comcast.net. To volunteer, contact Pam Guild at pam@pobox282.com. For more information or to make a donation, contact Linda Davis at 978-563-1773 or davisfarmers@comcast.net, or visit FCTreasures.com.

Register for Mass. Breast Cancer Coalition Events

Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition (MBCC) will hold its annual statewide Against the Tide Swim, Kayak, Walk, Run and/or Aquathon fundraising events again in 2018. Proceeds benefit MBCC, the state's leading breast cancer organization that seeks to understand the causes of breast cancer and find ways to prevent the disease.

The Statewide Metro-Boston Against the Tide will be held at DCR's Hopkinton State Park on Saturday, June 16. The statewide Cape Cod Against the Tide will be held at DCR's Nickerson State Park (Brewster, Massachusetts) on Saturday, August 18. Both events consist of several components: competitive and recreational swims, recreational kayak, a fitness walk, and USA Track & Field certified 5K and 10K runs. To register, visit mbcc.org/swim, or call 1-800-649-MBCC (6222). Those unable to attend are invited to make a pledge to a registered participant or team.

Got paint?

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 restorencm.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.

Gold standard



Lucy

Contributed PHOTO

One-year-old Lucy is a lovely lady with thick white fur and captivating gold eyes. She is extremely friendly and will be sure to want lots of hugs and kisses. Her favorite activity is playtime. All of Lucy's veterinary work is complete. She's leukemia negative, spayed, and has a microchip. All cats are placed as indoors-only pets. Adoption fee is \$175. NEADY Cats is located in Sterling, and welcomes dedicated volunteers. For more information about volunteer opportunities, or to schedule an appointment to meet Lucy or any of the kitties, email Marilyn@neadycats.org, or call 978-422-5116.

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