



Sterling MEETINGHOUSE NEWS

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May 23, 2015



PHOTO by Richard Maki

(Left to right) Town Clerk Dawn Michanowicz and Selectman Maureen Cranson at the swearing in ceremony on May 13.

Cranson embraces challenges

by Lex Thomas

Maureen Cranson, Sterling's newest selectman, is no stranger to hard work or controversy. Formerly chair of the now-defunct Senior Center Committee, she worked tirelessly over several years to win support for a new senior center, which finally gained voter approval last year. Since then, she has served as chair, and now co-chair, of the Senior Center Building Committee, a position she intends to retain while serving as a selectman.

"The [Senior Center Building] committee's function is now mostly managing the process," Cranson says. "I'm confident that I can do both."

Since being elected on May 11, she's met with a variety of department heads, including the fire and police chiefs, and has been busy ramping up on issues that come under the jurisdiction of the Board of Selectmen, a task she says has been made easier by the fact that she's attended most of the board's meetings over the

CRANSON, page 9

Meadowbrook grant enables growth

by Lex Thomas

A \$75,000 grant from the state under its Farm Viability Enhancement Program will help Meadowbrook Orchards to make purchases, additions, and a few structural changes that will enable its future growth and sustainability

David Chandler, whose family has owned Meadowbrook since it was founded in 1912, says the grant will allow him to make some changes to the business that have not been within reach in recent years.

"We've been slowly doing little things," he says, "but we haven't been able to afford any major changes, so we're all very excited."

According to the program's website, its goal is to help farms survive hard economic times by developing a viability plan to improve economic feasibility and environmental integrity. The program offers farmers environmental, technical and business planning assistance to expand, upgrade and modernize their existing operations. Capital for recommended improvements is available in exchange for an agricultural covenant on the farm property. Chandler has signed a 10-year covenant guaranteeing that over 100 of the farm's 140

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LETTERS

Thanks to voters

I would like to thank all voters who ventured to the polls on May 11 to support various candidates. I would be remiss to not thank my fellow candidates for raising their hands to also serve the town.

I appreciate the opportunity given me by voters. I'm excited, and look forward to serving on the Board of Selectmen over the next few years. I'm especially thrilled that voters gave me the thumbs up because it tells me I'm not alone in believing we need more communication, cooperation, fiscal responsibility, and a return to a true sense of community.

I will strive to make those who voted for me proud. I will endeavor to draw more citizens into actively participating in our community. I didn't get to this juncture alone. Many have offered their support along the way. I hope for your continued support during my tenure.

Maureen Cranson
Board of Selectmen

Letters to the Editor

Letters should be no more than 350 words, and must include your name, address, phone number and signature.

Send email to :

editor@sterlingmeetinghousenews.com

or mail to:

Sterling Meetinghouse News
PO Box 914, Sterling, MA 01564.

Retaking our democracy

I am writing to thank State Representative Harold Naughton and State Senator Jennifer Flanagan, along with dozens of their colleagues in the Legislature, for cosponsoring the We the People Act, our best hope of passing the constitutional amendment needed to fix our broken democracy.

Over the past 40 years, election campaign spending has skyrocketed, and the money increasingly comes from a small number of corporations and wealthy individuals, not from the general voting public. It is unquestionable that outsize political contributions have an outsize impact on who wins elections, effectively discounting the votes of the majority of voters. Supreme Court decisions since the 1970s have undone campaign finance reform that started with President Theodore Roosevelt. Campaign spending is now unlimited, campaign contributions can be made not only by voters but by corporations, and donations can be laundered through organizations that hide the source of the money.

You can learn more at WeThePeopleMass.org, at MoveToAmend.org, or at a presentation on June 17, 7 p.m., at The Bulfinch Church in Lancaster.

Bob Sarafconn
Woodside Drive, Sterling



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The advertising and copy deadline
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We are not liable for typographical errors in advertisements.

LETTERS

Thank you, Y.A.H.O.O.

On behalf of Sterling seniors who have received services from Y.A.H.O.O. (Young Adults Helping Out Others) volunteers, thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the wonderful job you did cleaning our properties. These youngsters from grade 7 through high school give their time for five weeks in the spring and fall doing yard work, such as raking leaves, spreading mulch, and sweeping.

We also wish to acknowledge this program would have gone under if Rick Lane and his staff had not stepped up and volunteered to keep it going. There are companies in town who support the program with monetary donations needed to buy new equipment. The young volunteers receive no monetary compensation. Many parents work alongside their children, setting a marvelous example. We seniors who can no longer do this heavy work want all of you who help us to know we are so grateful.

Irene E. Camerano
Beaman Road, Sterling

Editor's note

While I applaud all who trekked out to vote at our recent election, voter turnout was abysmally low at just under 16 percent. In my job, I hear a lot of bellyaching about local issues. Our elected officials have a significant role in running our town. But as residents, we are not without responsibility. Our new selectman has repeatedly voiced her commitment to engage more of our community in fair and open-minded discussions that take the views of more than just a few into account. Will she succeed? Let's hope so, for the sake of us all.

- Lex Thomas

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Memorial Day trash pickup schedule

Due to the Memorial Day holiday on Monday, May 25, curbside trash/recycling will be picked up one day later during the week of May 25. There will be no curbside pickup on Monday, May 25. Pickup will resume Tuesday. Have trash/recycling curbside by 7 a.m. one day later than your regularly scheduled pickup day.

Overdue dog licenses

Effective April 15, a \$25 late fee must be paid in addition to the \$8 or \$12 fee for overdue dog licenses. The total fee is now \$37 per dog for intact males and females, and \$33 for neutered males and spayed females. Failure to license a dog may result in issuance of a criminal complaint at Clinton District Court. Payment can be made at the Town Clerk's Office, 1 Park St., Sterling.

Hydrant flushing underway

Flushing of the town's distribution system 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.

Mandatory water ban in effect

In accordance with the Water Management Act Final Permit issued by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection, the town is required to enact a mandatory water ban from May 1 until September 30, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The ban restricts daily "nonessential" outdoor water use from public water sources.

Recycling bins available

Curbside recycling bins are available for purchase at the DPW Office, 171 Worcester Road, Sterling. \$7 each.

Recycling Center closing

The Recycling Center located at the DPW, 171 Worcester Road, Sterling, will close permanently on July 1. Recycling Center stickers will no longer be issued. The Wachusett Watershed Regional Recycle Center located at 131 Raymond Huntington Highway, West Boylston, is available to Sterling residents. For information, visit wachusettearthday.org.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town beach stickers and guest passes

Beginning July 1, the Sterling Recreation Department, located at 31 Main St., will issue town beach stickers and guest passes, which will no longer be issued by the DPW. For information, call 978-422-3041.

Remember to stoop and scoop!

Sterling's Animal Control Officer reminds residents to keep control of your dog at all times, on or off leash. No dogs are allowed at Sholan Park/town beach. And remember to carry baggies so you can scoop up after your pet and avoid the spread of parasites that occur in fecal matter.

Gorczynski wins award

Century 21 Center Home Team is proud to announce that broker Caryn Gorczynski has been awarded the 2014 Top Producer Emerald Award from the Worcester Regional Association of Realtors. Gorczynski grew up and resides in Sterling.



Contributed PHOTO

Caryn Gorczynski

Mass Audubon announces photo contest

Photographers of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds are encouraged to enter the 6th Mass Audubon Picture This: Your Great Outdoors photography contest. The competition encourages participants to reveal the state's natural wonders, including birds and other animals in their habitats, forests and fields, and people enjoying the outdoors. Last year, more than 600 photographers submitted 2,000 images. The contest includes two age levels: Over 18 and Under 18. Each entrant may submit up to five photos, which must be taken in Massachusetts, at Mass Audubon's Wildwood Camp in Rindge, New Hampshire, or on a Mass Audubon-led trip (domestic or international). A grand prize winner will be awarded a \$250 gift card, to be redeemed at a Mass Audubon shop or wildlife sanctuary. The grand prize photograph will be featured in Mass Audubon's member newsletter. Up to 12 winners will receive \$100 gift cards to redeem at a Mass Audubon shop or wildlife sanctuary. At least six honorable mentions will win \$50 gift cards. Additional honorable mentions may be awarded at the discretion of the judges. Deadline September 30. All entries must be submitted online. For submission guidelines and other contest rules and details, visit massaudubon.org/picturethis.

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Voters approve budget, school, and Fire Department requests

by Lex Thomas

On May 4, 163 eligible voters attended Sterling's Annual Town Meeting and deliberated over 40 warrant articles. Voter approval highlights:

- \$10,221,455 town operating budget passed, which includes a 2 percent salary increase for Sterling's non-union employees. The FY 2016 budget represents an increase of \$611,000 over the current year. Two adjustments were made to the proposed budget during the meeting, adding \$9,781 to the DPW's request due to a clerical error, and eliminating \$19,000 from the Council on Aging, funds earmarked for operational expenses at the new senior center, which are not needed due to a completion date that is later than originally expected.
- \$9,055,323 state required net minimum contribution to the Wachusett Regional School District, and \$1,312,301 Sterling contribution above the net minimum for operational expenses. According to Lance Harris, Sterling's representative to the WRSD Committee, the net minimum contribution was lower than originally requested, due to a renegotiation of transportation contracts. He also stated that the overall WRSD budget is not to exceed \$83,797,672 in FY 2016.
- \$768,076 assessment to Monty Tech, which represents approximately \$100,000 more than Sterling's current assessment, to offset the costs of eight additional Sterling students that will attend the school in the upcoming year.
- \$38,000 to purchase and equip a new vehicle for the Police Department, to replace the police

chief's vehicle.

- \$627,181 in Chapter 90 funds for expenditures earmarked by the DPW.
- All Fire Department funding requests were approved, including \$82,500 for a new utility vehicle that will provide forestry response and become the department's day-to-day service vehicle; \$35,000 to replace the Jaws of Life apparatus; \$51,975 to replace firefighter protective clothing; and \$98,862 to pay salaries for two additional fulltime firefighter/paramedic positions.
- \$17,000 to purchase a new server and approximately three desktop computers for town hall.
- Voters approved creation of a Veterans Service District, and \$20,000 to help fund the salary for a veteran's agent.

In addition, voters supported the Finance Committee's recommendation to not fund the DPW request of \$160,000 for a new loader.

During the Special Town Meeting that immediately preceded the Annual Town Meeting, town residents voted to transfer \$165,000 from free cash (excess revenue over expenses) to the capital investment fund; to transfer \$416,241 from free cash to the stabilization fund; to transfer \$105,000 from free cash to the snow and ice account to cover the deficit in the snow and ice budget for FY 2015.

Unlike last year's Annual Town Meeting that ran for more than seven hours over two nights, this year's meeting wrapped up in one night, and lasted about four hours.

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Voter turnout low

by Lex Thomas

On Monday, May 11, 899 voters turned out for the Annual Town Election, representing 15.8 percent of Sterling's eligible voters.

In the selectmen's race, Maureen Cranson beat out Michael Padula, with 587 votes cast for Cranson and 293 for Padula.

Incumbent Gary Menin was re-elected to the Board of Health with 444 votes, beating opponent Sue Valentine, who received 434 votes, by 10 votes.

In uncontested seats, Gregg Aubin was re-elected



PHOTO by Richard Maki

Sue Staudaer was one of 899 voters to cast a ballot at the Town Election on May 11.

to the DPW Board, Alicia Emsley and Edward Tatten were elected to the Board of Library Trustees, Matthew Stelmach was re-elected to the Sterling Municipal Light Department Board, Karen LeClerc was re-elected to the Sterling Housing Authority, Susan Hitchcock was elected to the Wachusett Regional School District Committee, as was write-in candidate Sarah LaMountain, and Amrith Kumar was elected as Town Moderator.

For complete election results, visit sterling-ma.gov/town-clerk/pages/election-results.

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Board of Selectmen report

Building declared nuisance

At a public hearing on April 30, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to pass a motion declaring that the building located at 33 Main St., Sterling, is a nuisance, due to the dilapidated condition of its exterior which poses a danger to "health, safety, and general public welfare" on account of "copious amounts" of peeling and flaking lead paint chips which have fallen onto the sidewalks, roads, and public ways that surround the property, and that the state of the building "is contributing a blight to the historical town center and district which is offensive to those who work, live, and visit Sterling, and is likely to result in adverse effects on adjacent and surrounding properties." A second motion was unanimously passed requiring the building's owner, Gary Griffin, trustee of the Griffin Powers Family Trust, to remove all peeling paint from the building's exterior by a licensed contractor, and repaint the exterior, with work commencing no later than October 1, 2015, and finishing no later than October 1, 2016.

Board re-organization

On May 13, the Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to appoint Selectman Robert Cutler as chair, Selectman John Kilcoyne as vice-chair, and Selectman Maureen Cranson as clerk.

Park Street closed for Farmers Market

Selectmen have voted to close Park Street every Friday from May 15 until the end of October for the Sterling Farmers Market from 2:30 to 7 p.m.

Ritter memorial tree planting

A memorial tree dedication took place on Monday, May 11, at Memorial Park in Sterling, in honor of former Town Administrator Jeffrey Ritter, who died unexpectedly in October. The tree, a flowering kousa dogwood, produces long-lasting white flowers every spring. Mr. Ritter's wife and daughters were joined for the dedication ceremony by family members from Michigan and Pennsylvania, who worked closely with DPW Superintendent Bill Tuttle to coordinate the location and details of the memorial. Mr. Ritter served as Sterling's Town Administrator from January 2014 until his death.



PHOTO by Richard Maki

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Cranson embraces challenges

Cranson

Continued from page 1

past couple of years.

Since moving to Sterling in 1972, Cranson has served in several capacities on town committees, and has always been an active volunteer wherever she saw the need for community involvement. In addition, she has worked in management and supervisory positions, and her jobs have given her organizational and event planning experience, useful in her volunteer endeavors.

"I've always been involved in the town, stepping up wherever I thought I could help," she says. "I've always worked hard, and working in corporate America has helped me to develop both people skills and organizational skills."

Cranson plans to put her enthusiasm and people skills to good use encouraging people to participate in town government, and especially drawing town residents back into the process who may have felt put off or disenfranchised over the past few years, adding that there are currently a number of vacancies on town boards and committees.

"I want people to participate in town meeting, and to know how their money is being spent," she says, "and I want people to know they can be heard in an open and fair-minded environment."

Cranson frequently reiterates her campaign platform, stating that the town needs more communication, cooperation, fiscal responsibility, and community involvement.

"We need to get department heads talking to each other, and talking to the selectmen, giving us regular updates," she says.

Cranson feels that the town has a good basis for a master plan on many levels, but that communication between departments and committees is needed to bring a plan together.

"I'm incredibly excited to have this opportunity," says Cranson. "But I can't do it alone. No one can. We need people to step up. If I can make that happen, I'll be very happy."



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Meadowbrook

Continued from page 1

acres will continue to be used for agriculture.

Chandler has already purchased kitchen equipment, including a new slicer and a fryer. One of the most significant additions is a pie press to make pies, one of their most popular items, more efficiently.

"We need 500 fluted pie shells for Thanksgiving, and we've always done this by hand," says Chandler. He estimates the task takes about 100 hours of labor. "With the pie press, it'll take about 2 hours."

A new produce cooler to replace some of the large 4-door coolers, has also been purchased.

Chandler, who typically does as much of the work as possible himself, has also been busy remodeling the interior of the farm store and café, building more benches and display cases. Pointing out one of the new shelves, Chandler explains that he's

been involved in every part of the process, from cutting down the tree and milling the wood, to designing and building the final product.

New retail offerings are also planned, including more sauces, jams, jellies, and fresh-cut flowers grown on the farm. Meadowbrook now also has its first beehive, and Chandler plans to sell the farm's own honey.

Outdoors, he is planning to expand the deck to more than three times its current size, which will increase the



Dave Chandler with Meadowbrook's new produce cooler.

PHOTO by Lex Thoma

farm's function capacity.

"We can organize showers, graduations, weddings, really any kind of event," says Chandler. "The atmosphere is relaxed and the food is great. In terms of food, I can do anything our customers want." As with their weekly summer barbecues, customers provide their own alcoholic beverages.

Additional plans include upgrading and expanding the playground, purchasing a delivery vehicle, increasing participation in farmers markets throughout the region, and installing a point-of-sale system that will make service and pricing more consistent, and will improve tracking of sales and services.

In the meantime, Chandler is busy planning summer events that include a barbecue every Thursday evening, continuing to offer break-

fast and lunch menus, and planning a "farm to table" dinner in August served in the orchard and prepared by a guest chef.

Meadowbrook Orchards is located at 209 Chace Hill Road, Sterling. For more information, menus, and a schedule of events, visit meadowbrookorchards.com, or call 978-365-7617.

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Josh Pineo's red carpet night

by Danielle Ray

Lifelong Sterling resident Josh Pineo experienced the red carpet first hand at the Independent Film Festival Boston 2015 on April 18 as part of the cast of Fat Boy Films' 2014 production "How I Dumped My Ex-Boyfriend's Body".

The dark comedy tells the story of Maxine, who accidentally kills her boyfriend. She ropes her best friend into helping her dispose of the body, which proves more difficult than they imagined. The antics that ensue and the characters they meet along the way get more and more over the top and humorous as the movie progresses.

Pineo stars as Tony the Fixer, an assassin and "clean up guy" the girls contact to help them dispose of the body.

Pineo said he was "speechless" when he heard the movie would be shown at the Boston festival.

"I didn't know what to expect," he said. "It's not Hollywood, but it is international. It was an interesting experience."

Pineo was interviewed by TheFoundations.tv and South Asian Video Magazine about his role in the movie. "It was cool having someone from a different part of the world asking me about my stuff," Pineo said.

Fat Boy Films owner and one of the movie's producers Ryan Convery saw Pineo performing with his band and approached him about being in the film. At first Pineo was skeptical because he had no acting experience.

"I read the script and about a quarter of the way through I was laughing out loud, before I even got to my part," he said. "Reading my lines was like looking at myself as an alter ego, but having the dial turned up to 11. I got

to tap into another part of myself and really throw my inhibitions to the wall."

He says that some of the actors had experience, while others didn't, but that the cast had good chemistry between them. "Halfway through the first day of shooting [Director] Dennis [Nadeau] asked me if I had ever done this before. I said 'What, act or kill

people?' with a straight face," Pineo recalled with a laugh. A couple of the scenes were shot at Pineo's Sterling home.

"Looking back, I realize how much goes into filmmaking. To actually be in it and see all the hard work and amount of improvisation that goes into it is amazing," said Pineo.

Pineo and the rest of the cast are hoping the film will eventually be distributed, but for now he's planning to pursue more acting roles as well as stand-up comedy gigs. He would also like to get an agent and do voiceovers.

"How I Dumped My Ex-Boyfriend's Body" will be shown at the Capital Theatre in Arlington, Massachusetts, on Saturday, June 6. Copies of the film will be available to purchase. Tickets are \$10, available at FatBoyFilms.com.



Contributed PHOTO

Josh Pineo stars as Tony the Fixer in ©Fat Foot Films "How I Dumped My Ex-Boyfriends Body", and walked the red carpet at the Independent Film Festival Boston 2015 as part of the cast.



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Patacchiola reflects on tenure as selectman



PHOTO by Lex Thomas

by Lex Thomas

At 26, outgoing selectman Brian Patacchiola is one of the youngest people to have served as an elected official in Sterling. Although he decided not to run for re-election in this year's Town Election, he says that the past three years have been among the most educational of his life.

Patacchiola has had the unique opportunity to serve on a board that saw some significant ideological and personality changes during his tenure. When first elected, he served with Paul Sushchik, an 11-year veteran of the board, and Ron Furmaniuk, a relative new-comer.

"Paul, Ron and I worked really well together," he says. "Although we had political differences, we had similar world views. Partisanship should have no part in local government in a small town where issues can be polarizing."

Patacchiola looked to Sushchik as someone who knew what to do and how to handle difficult situations, and says he learned a great deal from both his colleagues about how to bring a political body that originated in 1790 into the modern world.

Over the past year, Patacchiola served as Chair alongside selectmen Robert Cutler and John Kilcoyne. Although he describes their early weeks together as "rocky," he says he came to respect both enormously, and strove to ensure that, as chair, he gave each of them ample opportunity to voice their views and concerns.

Patacchiola cites his proudest achievements as a selectman as prioritizing the town's residents and employees ("A happy town hall is a happy town"), his support of the new senior center ("A healthy, vibrant senior center is good for the whole town"), and his effort at holding property owners responsible for the condition of their buildings ("Asking a citizen to clean up his property for the health, safety and benefit of the community is not unreasonable").

Now in his final year at Suffolk University Law School in Boston, Patacchiola calls the weeks immediately following the untimely death of Town Administrator Jeff Ritter among the most difficult of his time in office.

"I knew I had to step in during such a chaotic time, but I sacrificed a lot of academic and professional time to do so," he says. "In the midst of my heaviest semester at school, I had to reschedule exams and papers due, so that I could be here working with everyone to hold things

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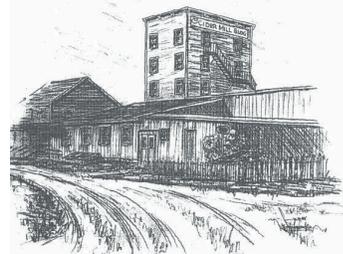
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together. Fortunately, I got great support from the dean, but it set me back several weeks. On top of that, Jeff and I had become friends, and we were getting things done."

Although he doesn't rule out political aspirations in future, Patacchiola's immediate priority is to complete his law degree and launch his professional career. He is looking forward to working during the summer as a law clerk in the City of Newton City Solicitor's Office.

As for Sterling's future, he says he hopes the town is able to recover some of the "neighborliness" that he feels has been lost over the past few years.



PHOTO by Richard Maki

(Left to right) Election winners Alicia Emsley, Edward Tatten, Maureen Cranson, Karen Leclerc, Sarah La-Mountain, and Susan Hitchcock were sworn in on May 13 by Town Clerk Dawn Michanowicz.



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McCall's performance rated proficient

by Jamie Chase Galvin

At a special meeting on May 6, the Wachusett Regional School District Committee unanimously approved a motion to accept the evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools Darryll McCall. Per his contract with the district, McCall is to be evaluated by June 30 each year. The committee gave McCall a "proficient" rating for the 2014-2015 school year, which passed unanimously.

In addition, the committee passed a motion to approve a 2 percent increase to McCall's salary, raising it to \$160,140 per annum, effective July 1. The motion passed with 14 committee members in support and four members opposed.

Maypothor Scholarship applications still being accepted

The Rick Maypothor Memorial Scholarship is available to any graduating senior from Sterling who plans to attend college in the fall. Scholarship applications are available at givelovefight.org or at the Wachusett Regional High School guidance office. Send completed application to Karen Maypothor, 2 Glendale Ave., Sterling MA 01564. Application deadline is May 31.

St. Richard's awards scholarships

On May 17, seven high school graduates and members of the Parish of St. Richard's were each awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

Zachary Foley-Cox, graduating from St. Peter-Marian High School, was awarded the St. Richard Knights of Columbus, Council 14940, Paul Bergeron Memorial Scholarship, and plans to attend Rivier University in Nashua, New Hampshire.

Connor Patrick Gill, graduating from Wachusett Regional High School, was awarded the St. Richard's Parish Altar Server Annual Scholarship, and plans to attend Babson College in Wellesley, Massachusetts.

Drew Michael DiPilla, graduating from Wachusett Regional High School, was awarded the St. Richard's Parish Annual Religious Education Assistant Scholarship, and plans to attend the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Kaitlin Mary Powers, graduating from Wachusett Regional High School, was awarded the St. Richard's Parish Annual Marie SanMartino Scholarship, and plans to attend Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York.

Nicolette Abbe DePilla, graduating from Wachusett Regional High School, was awarded the St. Richard's Parish Annual Father Michael Warner Scholarship, and plans to attend Worcester State University.

Bernard Christian McNamara, graduating from Worcester Academy, was awarded the St. Richard's Parish Annual Marie SanMartino Scholarship, and plans to attend Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas.

Dylan Thomas Casey, graduating from St. John's High School in Shrewsbury, was awarded the St. Richard's Parish Annual Father Michael Warner Scholarship, and plans to attend the University of Maine in Orono.

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Sterling resident appointed Dawson Elementary School principal

Wachusett Regional School District Superintendent of Schools Darryll McCall has announced the appointment of Kelly Williamson of Sterling as the new principal of Dawson Elementary School in Holden, beginning July 1. Williamson is currently Assistant Principal at Dawson, a position she has held since 2012. Prior to being assigned to Dawson, she was the Assistant Principal at Naquag Elementary School in Rutland, and she was a classroom teacher at Houghton Elementary School in Sterling from 2008 until 2011. Williamson earned her Bachelor of Education degree from Fitchburg State University, her Master of Education degree from Lesley University, and has completed graduate coursework in Educational Leadership, as part of the MESPA CPAL (Certification Program for Administrator Licensure) Program.



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SPECIAL FEATURE

Second of a 2-part series about Lyme disease

Lyme disease: Diagnosis is the key

by Lex Thomas

May is Lyme Disease Awareness Month. But for Michele Miller, who together with her husband Ken founded the Central Mass Lyme Foundation in 2014, Lyme disease awareness and prevention are missions and goals she strives for throughout the year.

Michele Miller's commitment to spread awareness of this potentially devastating illness has its roots in a personal tragedy. On February 9, 2013, her mother

Jeanne Cloutier passed away from late stage Lyme disease, following several years of disabling pain, suffering, and misdiagnosis.

"This is a devastating illness," says Miller. "In New England, we're in the hot zone for tick-borne disease, but we don't have very knowledgeable medical support, even though the problem is so widespread."

According to Miller, the inadequate knowledge that many doctors have about Lyme, paired with the disease's uncanny ability to present symptoms that are associated with a host of conditions ranging from flu to ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease), sets the stage for protracted and often needless suffering and confusion for patients, and may even prove to be fatal, as it was for her mother.

In December 2009, Jeanne Cloutier's brother died unexpectedly. Cloutier, who lived in Auburn and spent winters in Florida, returned to Massachusetts, and was thrust into the stressful position of having to settle her brother's estate.

"The stress got to her," says Miller. "She started to experience palpitations and anxiety, and she was prescribed layers of medications to handle the symptoms, instead of addressing the underlying cause."

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SPECIAL FEATURE



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Michele Miller (center), her daughter Alyssa and mother Jeanne Cloutier celebrating Mother's Day 2012.

In 2010, the estate was settled, and Cloutier returned to Florida that winter. She landed in an urgent care clinic when she broke out in rashes, and was diagnosed with shingles, although she had no pain, and prescribed the steroid prednisone (which worsens Lyme disease).

"She was so ill in Florida," says Miller. "Her speech was slurred when she returned. I thought she had suffered a stroke."

Miller experienced firsthand how doctors who don't

recognize the signs of Lyme disease shuffle patients from one specialist to another. Cloutier's primary care physician sent her to a neurologist for an MRI that failed to show anything unusual. She was sent to another neurologist in June 2011, who returned a diagnosis of ALS, which Cloutier described in her journal as a "death sentence." Miller points out that there are no tests or procedures to establish the presence of ALS, which is diagnosed entirely on the presentation of symptoms.

During a visit to The Nutrition Source in West Boylston to purchase vitamins, the owner recommended to Cloutier and Miller that they consult Dr. N. Thomas LaCava, a specialist in hard-to-diagnose complex chronic illnesses in adults and children, at the Francis Holistic Medical Center in West Boylston.

Following a 3-hour consultation that included tests that are not covered by insurance, LaCava diagnosed late stage Lyme disease.

"By the time she got the diagnosis, it was too late," says Miller. "Bacteria had already taken over her body."

In retrospect, Miller believes that the stress of dealing with her brother's death may have activated the bacteria, known as spirochetes, allowing them to channel into Cloutier's immune system, and culminating in devastating illness.

Miller's goal is to utilize the Central Mass Lyme Founda-

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SPECIAL FEATURE

tion, which was created in memory of Cloutier, to raise awareness, educate people about tick-borne diseases, teach prevention, and provide community support. The foundation may also finance testing at their discretion.

Miller is frequently invited to speak to schools and organizations, and often sets up an information table on the Rail Trail and in other outdoor recreation areas to talk to as many people as possible. Although she reminds people to check for ticks on humans and pets after spending time outdoors, she adds that Lyme is a communicable disease that can spread through blood transfusions and organ donations.

"Lyme is the new syphilis," she says. "People donate blood and organs all the time, yet there's no screening of blood or organs for Lyme disease."

Miller speaks almost daily to patients of all ages and parents who suspect their, or their child's, symptoms may be Lyme-related. Many have spent years bouncing between rheumatologists, allergists, neurologists, and other specialists, seeking relief from symptoms that only get worse.

Miller regularly refers callers to the International Lyme and Associated Diseases Society (ILADS) at ilads.org for information about the illness, and to find a Lyme-literate physician in their area.

"Without proper diagnosis, Lyme disease gets worse," says Miller. "The longer you go without treatment, the harder it is to treat. If you experience flu-like symptoms such as a rash, stiff neck and headache, find a Lyme-literate physician as soon as possible."

The Central Mass Lyme Foundation meets the second Saturday of each month (except December), 1 to 3 p.m., at the United Universalist Church, 90 Holden St., Worcester. For information, call toll free 1-888-511-LYME or visit Central-MassLyme.org.

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Sterling residents fulfill dream

by Jamie Chase Galvin



PHOTO by Jamie Galvin

Barbara and Tony Pagourgis, owners of Commit Fitness.

Sterling residents Barbara and Tony Pagourgis recently fulfilled a longtime dream to open and run their own training gym. Commit Fitness, located at 98 Adams St. in Leominster, officially opened for business in December 2014.

Commit Fitness is a training gym where every session is coached with small group training sessions. One-on-one training, sports performance sessions, and nutritional coaching are also offered.

"What sets us apart from other gyms is our licensing with Mike Boyle Strength and Conditioning," says Barbara Pagourgis, adding that Boyle is one of the best known and most successful fitness professionals in the world.

"Opening a gym was a dream for us," she says. "We entered the fitness industry in the 1980s. It was much different back then, not a lot of opportunity to get ahead."

They left the fitness business for a time, but recently returned. "I got back into it 12 years ago, worked as a trainer, fitness director, spin instructor, and opened a small business called nu-fit eight years ago," Pagourgis says. "Tony started volunteering with the strength program at Holy Cross College about eight years ago." Getting back into the world of fitness enabled them to open Commit Fitness in 2014.

One of their main goals is to help people get and stay healthy and age well. "We only hire trainers who are well educated in the field, have the proper credentials, and enough hands-on experience to do the job. We want to see results. That's partly where our name came from. We commit to you and you commit to us. That's the only way results happen."

For more information, visit commitfitness-ma.com or their Facebook page.

New expansion at Davis Farmland

Davis Farmland has opened its Imagine-Acres expansion, called Moo Town USA.

"This is a place where children can come to play, discover, pretend and explore," says co-owner Larry Davis.

Sterling town officials attended the grand opening of the expansion on May 14, making the children who attended honorary mayors, fire chiefs, deputies, and postmasters of Moo Town USA.

Davis Farmland is located at 145 Redstone Hill Road, Sterling. For information, visit davisfarmland.com, or call 978-422-6666.

Lilacs of Sterling moving

On June 1, Lilacs of Sterling, located for many years at 11 Main St., will be moving to 27 Main St.

Owner Lisa Coleman says the new space will allow her to better integrate the flower shop with the candy and chocolates she also sells. Coleman, who has owned Lilacs for the past two years, is also working on a website that she hopes to launch in July.

Online auction to benefit Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity North Central Massachusetts, a local affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, goes online beginning June 1 with Hard Hats and High Bids, a live internet auction to raise funds for the organization's ongoing activities.

The online auction will be held from Monday, June 1 until Sunday, June 7, but interested bidders can register early and will have the chance to view the dozens of items already featured online and keep watch as additional options become available in the days leading up to the event. Items include original artwork, household and personal services, event tickets, business website design, private golf lessons, a tick spraying service, lift tickets at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area, gift cards, and culinary delights offered by a number of area businesses and individuals, as well as a 1-week stay for up to six people at a Myrtle Beach condominium with an ocean view. For more information and the link to the auction, visit ncmhabitat.org.

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

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PHOTO by Jim Barbato

On May 9, Sterling letter carriers collected 1,200 lbs. of food donated to the "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive. (Left to right) Rick Matthews, Eileen Blake-Fitzpatrick, Annie Fitzpatrick, Ed Czerniakowski, Maegan Fitzpatrick, Maria Millett, Rose Mikula, Postmaster Bob Marrama, and Bruce Gilmore, deliver donated food to the food bank at St. Richard's.

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LOCAL HAPPENINGS



Contributed PHOTO

Diane Pedersen of the Sterling Garden Club explains the perennial choices to gardeners at the Annual Plant Sale.

Garden Club Plant Sale a success

The Sterling Garden Club would like to thank all members of the community for supporting their Annual Plant Sale on the Common on May 16. The day was delightful, and everyone enjoyed seeing the colors of spring flowers after our long, harsh winter.

With 1,000 plants being offered, the tables were filled to overflowing, and the holding area gave shoppers ample time to peruse perennials, shrubs and trees grown

by our members, or donated by Sterling Greenery last fall.

The drawing had 16 items, including Red Sox tickets, dish gardens, books and unusual arrangements. Habitat for Humanity was on hand to take leftover items to their newly-completed properties for landscaping.

The club is grateful to the town for their cooperation in allowing signage to advertise this event, the DPW for the use of their electronic sign, and First Church in Sterling for the use of the Common, and to everyone who donated plants to the sale.

Wachusett Food Pantry

The WFP is a volunteer operation that provides monthly emergency food to any family with either a short- or long-term need. Any resident of Sterling, Holden, Paxton, Princeton, or Rutland is eligible. Proof of residency is required. Located in the Cream Crock Distribution Building, 50 Worcester Road, (Rte 12), Sterling. Distribution is on Friday, June 19 for seniors, and Saturday, June 20 for the general public, from 9 to 11 a.m. Donations of non-expired food items, personal care products, and paper goods are gratefully accepted. Clean, intact plastic bags are also required for use at distribution. For more information, call 978-563-1064, email wfp@wfp1995.org, or visit wfp1995.org.

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LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Sterling-Lancaster Community TV

Broadcast Schedule May 23 to May 29, 2015
Comcast Channel 8

| Saturday | Genre |
|---|---------------|
| 6:00 AM The Steve Katsos Show - Ep 145 | Variety |
| 6:30 AM Barbara and You - Fashion | Interview |
| 8:00 AM Village Church Service | Religion |
| 10:00 AM AUC College Church Service | Religion |
| 12:00 PM Channel 8 Community Updates | News |
| 12:30 PM Pawdoption | Animals |
| 1:00 PM InFocus - Crimea Becoming Russia | Documentaries |
| 2:00 PM Channel 8 Community Updates | News |
| 2:30 PM Pawdoption | Animals |
| 3:00 PM On the History Trail - Joseph Felcone | History |
| 4:00 PM Animal Adventures - On Location | Children |
| 5:00 PM Brooks Williams Concert | Music |
| 7:00 PM InFocus - Crimea Becoming Russia | Documentaries |
| 8:00 PM Channel 8 Community Updates | News |
| 8:30 PM Pawdoption | Animals |
| 9:00 PM On the History Trail - Joseph Felcone | History |
| 10:00 PM Barbara and You - Fashion | Interview |

| Sunday | Genre |
|---|---------------|
| 6:00 AM The Steve Katsos Show - Ep 145 | Variety |
| 7:00 AM Trinity Bolton Church Service | Religion |
| 9:00 AM ECC Service | Religion |
| 11:00 AM Trinity Lutheran Church Service | Religion |
| 12:30 PM Channel 8 Community Updates | News |
| 1:00 PM InFocus - Crimea Becoming Russia | Documentaries |
| 2:00 PM Channel 8 Community Updates | News |
| 2:30 PM Pawdoption | Animals |
| 3:00 PM On the History Trail - Joseph Felcone | History |
| 4:00 PM Animal Adventures - On Location | Children |
| 5:00 PM Brooks Williams Concert | Music |
| 7:00 PM InFocus - Crimea Becoming Russia | Documentaries |
| 8:00 PM Channel 8 Community Updates | News |
| 8:30 PM Pawdoption | Animals |
| 9:00 PM On the History Trail - Joseph Felcone | History |
| 10:00 PM Barbara and You - Fashion | Interview |

| Monday-Friday | Genre |
|--|---------------|
| 6:30 AM Steve Katsos Show - Ep 146 | Variety |
| 8:00 AM Your Federal Government - Ep 17 | Interview |
| 9:00 AM Eat Well Be Happy - Shrimp | Cooking |
| 10:00 AM High Five Fitness - Ep 23 | Health |
| 11:00 AM Contemporary Science - Galaxies | Educational |
| 12:00 PM On Eternal Patrol | History |
| 1:00 PM InFocus - Risky Business | Documentaries |
| 2:00 PM Church Services | Religion |
| 4:00 PM The Local Kids - Puppets | Children |
| 5:00 PM Just Coolin - Donald Byrd | Music |
| 6:15 PM The Song - Kay Pere | Music |
| 7:00 PM InFocus - Risky Business | Documentaries |
| 8:00 PM On Eternal Patrol | History |
| 9:00 PM Contemporary Science - Galaxies | Educational |
| 10:00 PM Your Federal Government - Ep 17 | Interview |

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

Broadcast Schedule May 30 to June 5, 2015
Comcast Channel 8

| Saturday | Genre |
|--|---------------|
| 6:00 AM The Steve Katsos Show - Ep 146 | Variety |
| 7:00 AM Your Federal Government - Ep 17 | Interview |
| 8:00 AM Village Church Service | Religion |
| 10:00 AM AUC College Church Service | Religion |
| 12:00 PM On Eternal Patrol | History |
| 1:00 PM InFocus - Risky Business | Documentaries |
| 2:00 PM On Eternal Patrol | History |
| 3:00 PM Contemporary Science - Galaxies | Educational |
| 4:00 PM The Local Kids - Puppets | Children |
| 5:00 PM Just Coolin - Donald Byrd | Music |
| 6:15 PM The Song - Kay Pere | Music |
| 7:00 PM InFocus - Risky Business | Documentaries |
| 8:00 PM On Eternal Patrol | History |
| 9:00 PM Contemporary Science - Galaxies | Animals |
| 10:00 PM Your Federal Government - Ep 17 | Interview |

| Sunday | Genre |
|--|---------------|
| 6:00 AM The Steve Katsos Show - Ep 146 | Variety |
| 7:00 AM Trinity Bolton Church Service | Religion |
| 9:00 AM ECC Service | Religion |
| 11:00 AM Trinity Lutheran Church Service | Religion |
| 12:05 PM On Eternal Patrol | History |
| 1:00 PM InFocus - Risky Business | Documentaries |
| 2:00 PM On Eternal Patrol | History |
| 3:00 PM Contemporary Science - Galaxies | Educational |
| 4:00 PM The Local Kids - Puppets | Children |
| 5:00 PM Just Coolin - Donald Byrd | Music |
| 6:15 PM The Song - Kay Pere | Music |
| 7:00 PM InFocus - Risky Business | Documentaries |
| 8:00 PM On Eternal Patrol | Local |
| 9:00 PM Contemporary Science - Galaxies | Animals |
| 10:00 PM Your Federal Government - Ep 17 | Interview |

| Monday-Friday | Genre |
|--|---------------|
| 6:30 AM Steve Katsos Show - Ep 147 | Variety |
| 7:30 AM Barbara & You | Interview |
| 9:00 AM Eat Well Be Happy - Egyptian Chicken | Cooking |
| 10:00 AM Body Sculpt with Elizabeth - Ep 7 | Health |
| 11:00 AM What Magic Is | Hobby |
| 12:00 PM Channel 8 Community Updates | News |
| 12:30 PM Pawdoption | Animals |
| 1:00 PM InFocus - Hacked | Documentaries |
| 2:00 PM Church Services | Religion |
| 4:00 PM The Local Kids - Sharks | Children |
| 5:00 PM NRHS Music Benefit Concert | Music |
| 7:00 PM InFocus - Hacked | Documentaries |
| 8:00 PM Channel 8 Community Updates | News |
| 8:30 PM Pawdoption | Animals |
| 9:00 PM What Magic Is | Hobby |
| 10:00 PM Barbara & You | Interview |



PHOTO by Jim Barbato

Aime Kindorf and her children (from left to right) Cailyn, Christian and Annika chat with Kathy Chandler at the Meadowbrook Orchards booth on opening day.

Farmers Market kicks off season

The Sterling Farmers Market regular season kicked off on Friday, May 15, and will run every Friday from 3 to 6:30 p.m. at 1 Park St. (in front of the Butterick Building), downtown Sterling.

The season's vendors include Zoll Cellars Winery, Shamrock Hives Farm, Elzire's Acre Goat Milk Soap, Sunny Knoll Farm Alpacas, Pineo Family Farm, Crystal Brook Farm, Clearview Farm, Fox Hollow Pie Company, Meadowbrook Orchards, and more.

Local business sponsors are needed to support the market. The \$250 sponsorship fee helps provide payment as well as Farmer Funds to the musicians who play at the markets, electricity and tents, craft supplies for the kids, and promotion. Sponsors are welcome to distribute information at the markets, as well as \$100 in Farmer Funds (included in their sponsorship). Sponsors receive signage at the market and promotion on the market's Facebook page.

Vendor and crafter applications are being accepted for the 2015 season. For more information, find the 'Sterling Farmers Market' page on Facebook or email sterlingfarmersmarket@gmail.com.

Household hazardous products collection day

Wachusett Earthday is sponsoring a household hazardous products collection day on Saturday, June 20, from 8 a.m. to noon, at the Wachusett Watershed Regional Recycle Center, located at 131 Raymond Huntington Highway, West Boylston. Materials accepted include chemicals, paints, thinners, solvents, pesticides, herbicides, automotive products including motor oil, pool chemicals, and cleaners. Explosives and medical products are not accepted. For more information, call 978-464-2954 or visit wachusettearthday.org.

LOCAL HAPPENINGS

Treasures of the Community raises funds for three beneficiaries

by Danielle Ray

The First Church in Sterling's Treasures of the Community Auction and Gala took place on May 16 at Sterling National Country Club, and raised over \$32,000, which will be divided between three beneficiaries – First Church local community outreach and programs, Interfaith Hospitality Network in Worcester (which provides aid to homeless families), and the annual First Church La Romana mission trip to continue work on the Good Samaritan Hospital construction project.

Treasures of the Community returned following a 5-year hiatus. The fundraiser started in 2007 and has raised close to \$200,000 over the years. This year's event was attended by 180 people.

"The event was a huge success," said auction co-chair Phil Holman. "All the feedback has been very positive. Lots of people have said that they are already looking forward to next year's event."

The live auction which was held at the event included over 100 items, such as Red Sox tickets and sports memorabilia, art, wine, a handmade walnut cottage clock, and vacation getaways.

"The auction is a chance for us to build community within and outside First Church in Sterling, have fun in fancier outfits than we normally wear, and come

together in unity to support vitally important organizations," said First Church Minister Reverend Robin Bartlett. "It's our way of creating little pockets of heaven on earth."

The most recent La Romana mission trip took place in March. Adult and youth volunteers traveled to the Dominican Republic to participate in programs that bring vital services and healthcare to a poverty-stricken region.

"Our La Romana mission has built a hospital in the Dominican Republic, and has been providing safe medical care and water filtration to a forgotten part of the world for close to 20 years," said Bartlett.

Interfaith Hospitality Network will use their portion of the funds raised to replace windows at their site in Worcester, and fund a new water filtration system for the March 2016 La Romana mission trip. Holman said they may also use part of the money raised to award scholarships to people who would like to participate in the mission trip, but who can't afford the cost of airfare. In addition, First Church will be able to continue to fund outreach programs in Sterling and local areas, and also continue to sponsor programs such as Boy and Girl Scouts.

"This is called 'Treasures of the Community' because it is truly a community-wide event," said Holman. "More than 50 percent of the people who attended and donated to the event are not members of First Church. We want to continue to grow this event as a premiere ecumenical event in Sterling. We look forward to having more committee members next year from outside our church community."

Bartlett agreed, adding that "First Church in Sterling is our home base for these ministries and so many more. We are an ecumenical Christian church where a wide variety of people and beliefs are welcome. We strive to be a place in which people of all ages come together in unity for the worship of God across diversity. We seek to create heaven on earth by combatting the loneliness and isolation brought about by our consumer culture, and by being of service to people in need in Central Massachusetts through our missions and ministries."

For more information visit treasuresofthecommunity.com or fcsterling.org.



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ARE YOU COVERED?

Youth events at the library

Conant Public Library, 4 Meetinghouse Hill Road, Sterling, has events for kids of all ages.

The Music Mom – Monday, June 1, 10:30 a.m., for children birth through age 5. The Music Mom will host a fun interactive program that encourages rhyming and other music-based early literacy skills. Participants will develop confidence in self-expression. Opportunity for instrument exploration is included.

Family movie night – Tuesday, June 9, 6 p.m. "The Sponge Bob Movie: Sponge Out of Water." He lives in a pineapple under the sea, and now he'll be on the big screen in the Baker Room. Popcorn served. Call 978-422-6409 to register.

Pajama story hour – Wednesday, June 17, 6 p.m., in the Baker Room. Call 978-422-6409 to register.

Toto the Tornado Kitten – Toto the kitten was only 3 weeks old and barely weighed 6 ounces when he was spotted in a tree during a tornado on June 2, 2011, in Brimfield, Massachusetts. What happened to Toto? Come find out! Toto the Tornado Kitten will visit the library on Wednesday, June 24, at 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. Everyone will get a chance to pet Toto! Books will be on sale for \$10. All proceeds go to the Animal Rescue League of Boston or the Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Control & Adoption Center in Springfield. Space is limited. Call 978-422-6409 to register.

Summer reading program – The library is gearing up for the summer 2015 time-based, self-directed, and family-driven reading program. Patrons ages birth through 17 may use the program to improve language and reading comprehension skills, or as a reminder to set time aside for reading. Reading is a wonderful family activity, providing a great opportunity to start a dialogue and connect as a strong unit with different viewpoints. Summer travel provides an opportunity to listen to audio books and read. Registration opens on Monday, June 22. Sign up in person or online. Participants will track reading time starting Monday, June 29. Readers will receive a raffle ticket for every 2 hours spent reading. The final day to read and record time is Thursday, August 20. Sterling Summer Reading is sponsored by the Conant Public Library, the Friends of the Conant Public Library, local families, Davis' Farmland, the Massachusetts Library System, the Boston Bruins, and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Enjoy a tasty evening with the Cookbook Club

Come and sample recipes from "Cooking Light: Fresh Food Fast" on Wednesday, May 27 at 6:30 p.m. at Conant Public Library. Each participant will prepare a recipe from the book, and bring it to the library for an evening of good fun and great conversation. Cookbooks are available for checkout at the library. Call 978-422-6409 to register.

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Classics Book Club at the library

The Classics Book Club meets the first Wednesday of the month at 1 p.m., at the Conant Public Library. Selection for June 3 is "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee. Call 978-422-6409 to register.

Teen writing program and contest

The Friends of the Conant Public Library invite library patrons ages 12 to 15 to write about kindness as part of the "One Book, One Sterling" initiative. Readers have enjoyed the positive messages in this year's selection, "Wonder" by R.J. Palacio, the story of a boy with physical deformities and how his differences affect him and those around him.

Writing submissions can be an essay, poem, short story, play, or any other format. Writers can choose to describe a moment of kindness from their own life, a fictional account of kindness, or explain why kindness is important or what it means to them. All submissions will be bound into a book available to library patrons and made a part of the library collection.

The deadline for submissions is Monday, June 1. All participants will be entered into a drawing for a Kindle

Fire donated by the Friends of the Conant Public Library. The winner will be announced at a gathering on Thursday, June 11, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in the Baker Room. Refreshments will be served.

Book Club

Selection for the book club meeting on Thursday, June 18, 6:30 p.m., is "Jamaica Inn" by Daphne DuMaurier. Call 978-422-6409 to register.

Movie night at the library

Conant Public Library will host a screening of "Serena," starring Jennifer Lawrence and Bradley Cooper. Based on the 2008 New York Times bestselling novel by Ron Rash, "Serena" chronicles the relationship between newlyweds who will go to any length to build their timber empire in depression-era North Carolina. Tuesday, June 16, 6 p.m., in the Baker Room. Call 978-422-6409 to register.



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Get ready for summer with Sterling Recreation

Summer is almost here and the Sterling Recreation Department has some great activities available. A few programs are listed here, but visit sterling-ma.gov/recreation and follow the red button to learn more about all programs and register online. For more information, call 978-422-3041, email recreation@sterling-ma.gov, or stop by the office at 31 Main St., Sterling.

Boating

Intro to Stand-Up Paddleboarding— Ages 15+, or 9+ with adult. Saturday, June 6, Sholan Park. \$60.

Mommy/Daddy & Me Stand-Up Paddleboarding — Adult and child. Wednesday, June 10, 1 to 2:30 p.m., Town Beach. \$75/pair.

Summer Lake

Super Safari Adventure – Entering grades 3 to 8. June 23 to 26, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Join summer lake staff for four days of amazing adventures. Travel to Kimball Farms in Westford, Sky Zone, Canobie Lake Park, and Water Country. \$250/4 days, or \$70/trip.

Upcoming Trip

Cape Cod Canal – Saturday June 21. Travel to beautiful Cape Cod. Visit the Sandwich Glass Museum, Dan'l Webster Inn, and cruise the canal. \$84 per person.

Gibbs fundraiser

The Gibbs Little League will hold its first Gibbs Golf Tournament Fundraiser on Thursday, May 28, at Wachusett Country Club, West Boylston. Proceeds benefit field improvement, equipment upgrade, and Sterling Girls Softball. Golfer registration \$135 per person. For information, contact Hollie Lucht at Gibbsllgolf@comcast.net or 978-422-2930.

Stream Safari

The Wachusett Reservoir Watershed Rangers are holding a hands-on program on Saturday, May 30, 1 to 3 p.m. Learn about the creatures that thrive in clean, fast-moving streams and how water quality affects us all. Meet at the Trout Brook parking area, Manning Street, Holden. For information, contact the DCR Watershed Rangers at 978-365-3800.

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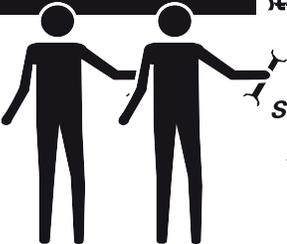
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PHOTO by Jim Barbato

Students from Village Green Preschool performed for seniors at the Senior Center on May 12.

Senior Center happenings

The Sterling Senior Center is located in the Butterick Municipal Building at 1 Park St. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday to Thursday, and 8:30 a.m. to noon on Friday. For more information or to register for programs call 978-422-3032.

Memorial Day – The Senior Center will be closed on Monday, May 25.

Book Club – Thursday, May 28, 12:30 p.m., led by library staff. This month’s selection is “Wonder,” by R.J. Palacio, as part of the One Book, One Sterling program.

Pancake Breakfast – Friday, May 29, 7:30 to 9:30 a.m., at the Senior Center. Enjoy pancakes, sausages, tea breads, juice, and coffee, hosted by the Friends of Sterling Seniors. \$2. All are welcome.

Movie – Thursday, June 4, 1 p.m. TBA.

Movie Trivia – Monday, June 8, 12:30 p.m., with Tara Riviera from Navicare. Everyone welcome to come and have fun!

Banjo program – Thursday, June 11, 1 p.m., with Dick Chase. A fun and informative afternoon of music. Refreshments will be served.

Electrical Safety talk – Friday, June 12, 11 a.m. The Sterling Municipal Light Department will be hosting this talk by Ray Gouley. Come for the talk, stay for pizza. You must come to the talk to have pizza. Register by Wednesday, June 10 at 1 p.m.

Bladder Control talk – Monday, June 15, 12:30 p.m., by Riverside Terrace. Rather than being embarrassed by a little leakage when you cough or sneeze, come and learn how to control it.

SHINE counselor – Thursday, June 18, a counselor will be available to answer health insurance questions. Appointment required.

Elder Keep Well Clinic – Thursday, June 18, noon.

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Construction set to begin for new Senior Center



by Danielle Ray

Progress continues at the site of the new Senior Center at the corner of Muddy Pond and Boutelle roads. Construction is expected to begin mid-June.

Although the total cost is not yet finalized, voters approved \$2.71 million for the entire project at the 2014 Annual Town Meeting.

Six bids were accepted after bidding opened on May 13. Five were within the budget and will be reviewed by the Senior Center Building Committee and Architectural Consulting Group, and go through all the proper state channels.

"I'm excited with our progress on this long-awaited project," says Senior Center Building Committee Co-Chair Maureen Cranson. "Finally, after so much time and talk, our Senior Center is becoming a reality."

The site was cleared with assistance from many local companies and town departments who provided and will continue to provide services at reduced costs. DPW employees helped install water hook-ups at the site,

the Sterling Municipal Light Department has addressed lighting needs, and Police Chief Gary Chamberland and Fire Chief David Hurlbut have provided invaluable input.

"Some of our citizens have stepped forward to help with site work," says Cranson. "Keith Favreau of S&K Logging & Land Clearing has agreed to do the stump-grinding and grinding, Jim Simpson stepped forward to offer grading, cutting and compacting at the site, Greg Aubin has raised his hand to do the trenching for the SMLD, and Mark Piermarini of Whitman & Bingham Associates has worked closely with all to address and reconfigure our needs into the plans. All of this was done for minimal compensation."

In addition, the Friends of Sterling Seniors have offered to raise money to provide the kitchen equipment, including a stove, refrigerator, and sinks, which represents "a big savings for our overall budget," Cranson says. "I love the community effort, for sure!"

The committee is also planning tree and shrub planting, as well as other landscaping, around the new building.

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PHOTO by Richard Maki

(Left) Volunteer Gloria Rugg and COA Board Chair Barbara Foster.

COA hosts volunteer event

On May 18, 30 senior center volunteers were acknowledged at the annual Council on Aging Volunteer Recognition ceremony at the Butterick Municipal Building.

COA Director Karen Phillips expressed her appreciation and that of the COA Board for the thousands of hours contributed annually by volunteers. "Without you, we wouldn't be able to help so many of our seniors," she said.

Volunteers enjoyed homemade baked goods and received an appreciation gift in recognition of their service to Sterling seniors.


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Ham and bean supper

The Hiram O. Taylor American Legion Post 189 will hold a ham and bean supper Saturday, May 23, at 5:30 p.m. at the First Church in Sterling hall. Takeout available. A \$10 donation is requested. For tickets, contact Bruce Daigneau at 508-852-8186, Bob Temple at 978-479-0086, or Doug Harey at 508-853-9157.

Memorial Day parade

The Hiram O. Taylor American Legion Post 189 has announced that Sterling's annual Memorial Day Parade will take place on Monday, May 25, beginning at 11 a.m. at Hillside Cemetery. Buses for participants will start running at 10 a.m. from the Legion Hall on School Street to the Fire Station on Main Street, then to Hillside Cemetery on Route 62. Marchers will begin formation at 10:45 a.m. The parade will proceed to Oak Hill Cemetery, Old Cemetery, Memorial Park (behind the Fire Station), and to the Sterling Town Common for the observance program.

The Avenue of Flags will be on display from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Hillside Cemetery, weather permitting. Anyone who would like to help honor deceased veterans should arrive at the cemetery at 7:30 a.m. to help raise the flags.

Sterling Extension Group tea

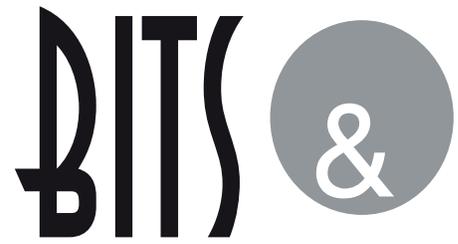
The Sterling Extension Group will hold its 2nd Annual High Tea on Thursday, May 28, 10 a.m., at the Sterling Historical Society, 7 Pine St., Sterling. Bring a teacup and a fun hat. To register, email adele1973@hotmail.com.

Pets welcome at church service

A Blessing of the Animals will take place on Sunday, May 31, 1 p.m., at the Pilgrim Congregational Church (UCC), 26 West St. (adjacent to the library), Leominster. The Rev. Keith Alderman will lead a service to bless furry and feathered friends. All are welcome. Refreshments will follow. Owners are encouraged to bring treats and water. All pets must be leashed or in cages. For more information, email Pilgrimchurch1743@comcast.net or call 978-534-5164

American Legion meeting

There will be a regular meeting of the Hiram O. Taylor Post 189 of the American Legion on Monday, June 1, 7:30 p.m., at the post hall on School Street in Sterling.



Historical Society annual event

The Sterling Historical Society will hold its Annual Meeting and BBQ on Tuesday, June 9, at 5:30 p.m., in the yard, house and barn on the Museum property, 7 Pine St., Sterling. A short business meeting will precede the barbecue. Burgers and hotdogs will be served with side dishes and beverages. Feel free to bring a dessert to share. Members, future members, and friends are welcome to tour the Museum exhibits and barn. For more information, call 978-422-6139 or email loret.schur@gmail.com.

Lyme Foundation meeting

The Central Mass Lyme Foundation will hold a meeting on Saturday, June 13, 1 to 3 p.m., at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 90 Holden St., Worcester. Guest speakers Paula Denoncourt and Helen Fu from Health Factor. For more information, call 1-888-511-LYME, or visit CentralMassLyme.org.



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Republican Committee meeting

The Sterling Republican Committee will hold a meeting on Monday, June 1, 7 p.m., at the 1835 Town Hall, Room 1. All registered Republicans are welcome to attend. Registration forms available. For more information, call Loret at 978-368-8923 or email loret.schur@gmail.com.

Democratic Committee meeting

Sterling Democrats will meet on Monday, June 8, 7:30 p.m., at the Butterick Municipal Building, Room 205. Delegates to the annual Democratic state convention will be elected, and a party representative will discuss Democratic election prospects.

Voters' workshop

We The People, a grass roots organization of voters dedicated to stamping out the undue influence of money in politics is holding "Fixing

Our Broken Democracy: The Need for a Constitutional Amendment," on Wednesday, June 17, 7 p.m., in the Community Hall of the First Church of Christ, Unitarian (the Bulfinch Church), 725 Main St., Lancaster. For more information, visit WeThePeopleMass.org, email leednotc@gmail.com, or call 781-894-1179.

Celebrate the summer solstice

Wachusett Greenways invites you to celebrate the summer solstice with kayaking and canoeing on West Waushakum Pond and The Quag in Sterling on Friday, June 19, 7 to 9 a.m., weather permitting. You must supply your own boat. For information or to register, call 978-422-9720.

5th Annual Lancaster Nashua River Festival

The Lancaster Friends of the Nashua River will hold their annual Lancaster Nashua River Festival on Saturday, June 20, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., at Kalon Farm Field on Route 117 in Lancaster located across the street from the Lancaster/Bolton Fair Grounds. The event will feature a wide variety of family activities and include exhibitors from throughout the community. Free. For information and a schedule of events, visit LancasterFriendsoftheNashua.org.

Tortie seeks "purrfect" home



Contributed PHOTO

Here's Peggy Sue, a quiet and petite 4-year-old tortoiseshell who loves a window view where she can watch birds. She's also crazy about cardboard boxes, where she can happily snooze away the whole day. Peggy Sue would be a perfect pet for a working person. For more information about Peggy Sue, or any of the NEADY Cats kitties, email Marilyn at neadycats@charter.net.



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