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September 21, 2016

## Special Olympics coach ready for the challenge

by Lex Thomas

The 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro are now a memory, but for Kathy Chandler, Olympic fever is just starting. Chandler has been appointed a Team USA coach for alpine skiing—one of 80 applicants for the position—and will travel with the team to the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2017, held in Graz, Austria, from March 14 to 25. The Special Olympics is primarily for those with intellectual disabilities, but some athletes have physical disabilities as well.

Chandler is a veteran of the games, having been a coach during the 1997 games in Austria, the 2001 games in Toronto, and the 2004 games in Alaska.

"I've spent my life working with people with disabilities, whether intellectual, cognitive, physical, or emotional," says Chandler. In fact, she's done this vital work for the past 35 years.

Chandler is on the board of directors for Special Olympics Massachusetts, and runs state games for alpine skiing. She was a ski instructor and ski school director at Wachusett Mountain where she learned about teaching people with disabilities, but didn't specialize until 1991, when she started coaching at Waterville Valley in the White Mountains of New Hampshire, where she now teaches instructors. She's worked with veterans that have returned from war zones without limbs and enter the Paralympic Games. She's delighted that the Olympic Committee now includes the Paralympic Games in their ads.



Kathy Chandler

Contributed PHOTO

For the upcoming Special Olympics, Chandler has four women athletes under her supervision, ranging in age from 25 to 49. Within the Special Olympics structure, skiers are ranked as novice, intermediate, and advanced. All Chandler's skiers are ranked advanced, but that could change based on the skiing terrain at the games.

"I've given all my athletes dry land training exercises

they need to do," she says. "I talk to them every couple of weeks, but that will increase as we get closer to March." Fifty-five skiers will head to Austria, together with 12 coaches from around the country.

At this point, Chandler is eagerly anticipating the December training camp in Killington, Vt., the first time that all athletes and coaches gather together. "We'll all be in Killington, but then the athletes go home with ideas that they'll work on with their local coaches," she explains. "Technology makes this so easy. I can get videos of what they're doing and coach them that way."

At 66, Chandler works as hard as her athletes to stay in shape. "I'm proud to be doing as much as I do, but I work very hard to stay in shape," she says. "I train at Commit Fitness [in Leominster] at least twice a week, I play tennis three times per week, I walk every morning, and I try to eat as healthy as I can."

Chandler skis a lot. She travels a lot. She runs a large program in Breckenridge, Colorado, for warriors who are significantly injured with traumatic brain injuries and PTSD. She's a member of the Professional Ski Instructors of America, and runs clinics and certification exams for them. She has been inducted into the National Disabled Ski Hall of Fame for founding the Waterville Valley Resort's adaptive ski program.

Still, above all, Chandler embodies an attitude of gratitude. "This is such an incredible opportunity to be with people who have intellectual challenges. Their skiing improves, but I also learn so much," she says. "I've spent my life doing what I love to do. How lucky am I? I'm so lucky to be able to do what I want to do."

## David Ortiz opens "Big Papi" Mega Maze

by Chelsea Dill



PHOTO by Chelsea Dill

David Ortiz addresses fans at the Mega Maze.

Twenty years ago, Larry Davis, co-owner of Davis' Farmland together with his father John and brother Doug, got the idea that people might care about visiting a farm and farm animals. That idea has culminated into thousands of visitors to Sterling each year to visit Davis' Farmland and Davis' Mega Maze. It started with a small petting zoo. "Kids want to play with nature and be with animals," says

Larry Davis.

By 1996, Davis' Farmland opened its doors and fences. "It was leap of faith because there's a big difference between the Farmland petting zoo and the current Davis' Farmland Children's Discovery Farm," he adds.

Davis' Farmland is geared towards kids aged 12 and under, and provides hands-on experience and one-on-one interactions for young visitors to learn about farm animals. More than 350 animals inhabit the property, and it's considered to be the largest private sanctuary of endangered farm animals in North America. This year marks not only Farmland's 20th anniversary, but also the 170th year of the Davis family farm, celebrating seven generations in agriculture.

While Farmland celebrates two decades, Davis' Mega Maze, once again designed by expert British maze designer Adrian Fisher, hit a grand slam this year. On August 30, the Davis family welcomed David "Big Papi" Ortiz to the Mega Maze. The theme of this year's maze is to honor the legendary Red Sox player, through a partnership between Davis' Mega Maze and '47, a sports lifestyle brand based in Boston. This year's maze depicts a cornfield portrait of Ortiz and the words, "Thanks, Big Papi," as part of a tribute to David Ortiz's charity work and im-

pending retirement.

Ortiz was clearly pleased by the event, and delighted fans with his lighthearted remarks and sportsmanship. "It's an honor to be here," he said. "I really like corn." He later opened the maze by taking a ceremonial swing at corn stalks held by Larry and Doug Davis, hitting an ear of corn out into the crowd.

Ortiz concluded his visit by taking a helicopter ride for an aerial view of his likeness in the Mega Maze before heading back to Boston for a Red Sox game against Tampa Bay.

Whether guests visit Davis' Farmland or the Mega Maze, the family knows that the company's success is that everyone, staff and visitors alike, enjoy being there. "The guests are just as responsible for the success of Farmland as we are," says Larry Davis. Doug Davis agrees. "We've got so many people to thank for Farmland's success, but one of the main things we've done from square one is to listen to our guests. They're the smartest people in the world. They tell us exactly what they want and need. That's why we're out here working every day."

Reflecting on the past two decades, Larry Davis looks back on how far the company has come. "This anniversary feels really special," he says. "A lot of people said we wouldn't make it."

But the Davis family's imagination, perseverance, passion, and farm spirit continue to reap a harvest of fun every season at Davis' Farmland and Mega Maze.

Davis' Farmland and Mega Maze is located at 145 Redstone Hill Road, Sterling. For information about hours and events, visit [davisfarmland.com](http://davisfarmland.com), or call 978-422-6666.

[SterlingMeetinghouseNews.com](http://SterlingMeetinghouseNews.com)

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### Town boards must be accountable

With great interest, I read the letter in Sterling Meetinghouse News signed by concerned residents of the Redstone Place area regarding a proposed housing development in their neighborhood. Basically, these residents want to maintain the quality of their neighborhood and their community life. Right up front, I applaud their efforts to save their neighborhood. I volunteered to help them with historical information and town information about the closing or abandonment of a once traveled town road. I'm always in favor of preserving neighborhoods and land. It has always been hard work, and too often not successful.

There are many issues at play in quest of answers to the Redstone development project, and for that matter, several other equally questionable development projects in Sterling. Residents of a town have a legitimate right to ask a town board to study a problem and provide appropriate answers. Town boards have a legal and ethical responsibility to provide answers. If they don't know the answer, they have a responsibility to do due diligence to find out, not to procrastinate or refuse.

Too often, town boards forget that they have taken an oath to work for the greater good of the town and its residents. Too often, town boards respond to the demands of a developer who plans to develop parcels of land that would be best left unbuilt. They know that they are to first take into account townspeople's legitimate concerns, provide adequate answers and follow up with a plan that benefits the town. Boards, such as the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and Conservation Commission know that they have the

right to deny a building project if that project would have an adverse impact on the adjacent neighborhood.

There are several proposed projects in Sterling which must be carefully questioned and analyzed. Town board members often approve projects not in their neighborhood, and fight against those proposed for their own areas. All boards must remember that they work for the town and its residents, not what they or a particular few want. Each proposed project should be carefully examined for its impact before being approved.

One example of a project needing scrutiny is the proposed development on Route 62 that will adversely impact families living there. How can four dwellings and four septic systems be placed on 2.5 acres of land that is steep and mostly ledge?

Another area of concern is housing developments in the East Lake Waushacum watershed, all of which will have a negative impact on the lake and its watershed, already under severe stress. As far back as 1980, a professional study highly recommended controlled development in the watershed, and other conservation measures.

In conclusion, questions that all town boards should ask about each project are: What is the effect on the surrounding neighborhood? What are abutter's concerns? How will this project benefit the town? How will this project benefit the neighborhood? How will this project negatively impact the neighborhood?

And finally, the most important question of all: When will Sterling adopt a master plan to be used for the benefit of the town?

Maryanne MacLeod  
Swett Hill Road, Sterling

### Thanks from Sterling Rec

The Sterling Recreation Department would like to thank all of the wonderful individuals, staff, departments, local businesses, and residents that helped make this summer spectacular. We are so grateful for our incredibly talented summer staff and instructors. Their creativity, dedication and love of the job allow us to provide high-quality programs. Thank you to the local businesses that support our Summer Concert Series and allow us to bring a variety of talented groups to Sterling. Thank you to all of the residents and non-residents who took advantage of our programs and properties. It was a great summer to be at the Town Beach. Thank you to the administration and custodial staff at Houghton and Chocksett schools for working around our programs and allowing us to use their space. Thank you to the publications that share our program listings and work to keep the community aware of what we have going on. And thanks to Town of Sterling departments for their help and support. We could not accomplish and provide all that we do without everyone's help. Thank you for your teamwork!

Kristen Dietel  
Recreation Director

### Thanks to Adult Summer Reading donors

Conant Public Library would like to thank the following local donors for their generous support of our Summer Reading Program for Adults: Anne's Hands, Darby's Bakery, Village Pizza, Chris' Barber Shop, West Boylston Cinemas, Panera Bread (Leominster), The Harvest Grille, Mulligan's Miniature Golf, Nashoba Massage Therapy Associates, Blue Heron Tai Chi and Massage, and The Brick Mexican Grill.

We are very grateful to all of these community-minded businesses for making Sterling such a wonderful place to live and supporting the library.

Patricia Campbell  
Library Director

### Sterling appoints Senior Center director

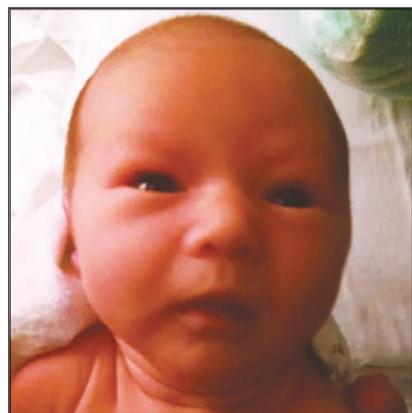
At their September 7 meeting, the Sterling Board of Selectmen appointed Veronica Buckley as Sterling's new senior center director. Buckley has worked as a part-time outreach coordinator for the Ware Senior Center, where she learned about benefit and entitlement programs, such as Medicare and Medicaid. She has worked as resident service coordinator for a private property management company, and has run grant programs, overseeing services and accommodations for individuals with disabilities. Buckley takes over from Karen Phillips, who resigned in April, and Outreach Coordinator Nickole Boardman, who has served as Interim Director.

### Food Truck Festival at Chocksett

Chocksett Middle School will host its first Food Truck Festival on Saturday, October 1, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 40 Boutelle Road, Sterling. Enjoy delicious treats from food trucks including Lorna Jean's and Mike & Ant's Ice Cream. Live music, bubble soccer, and raffles. If interested in joining the food trucks, email Amy Davis at amymikelonis@hotmail.com.

### Letters to the Editor

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



Contributed PHOTO

Piper Hager

### Birth - Piper Hager

Born August 23, 2016, at St. Vincent's Hospital in Worcester, to Matthew and Rachael Hager. Piper arrived several weeks before her due date, weighing 5 pounds and 13 ounces. Piper is the granddaughter of Clyde Hager and Cindy Popp-Hager of Sterling.



Contributed PHOTO

Officer Shane Murray of Sterling, recent graduate of Worcester County Sheriff's Office Basic Recruit Training Academy #45.

### Graduating class includes Officer Shane Murray of Sterling

Worcester County Sheriff Lewis G. Evangelidis recently welcomed 11 new correction officers to the Worcester County Sheriff's Office. Officer Shane Murray of Sterling was part of the 45th graduating class of the Worcester County Sheriff's Office Basic Recruit Training Academy. Murray was also the recipient of the Paul J. Westberg Banner Award, given to the recruit who exhibits the most class effort and enthusiasm during the 12-week academy. Among the traditions observed during the graduation ceremony was as a badge-pinning, where new officers were "pinned" into their new profession by a family member.

### Chemical and paint collection

Wachusett Regional Recycling Center will hold a household hazardous products collection on Saturday, October 1, 8 a.m. to noon. No other part of the recycling center will be open.



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# Chocksett student receives Youth Hero Fire Safety award

by Chelsea Dill



PHOTO by Chelsea Dill

Fire Chief David Hurlbut presents Maeve with a certificate.

On Wednesday, August 10, Maeve Keneally couldn't sleep. The 10-year-old went downstairs and smelled smoke, and saw that it was coming from the garage. An RC car battery charger had overheated and caught fire in her family's Sterling home. Calm despite danger, she alerted her family and the Sterling Fire Department rushed to the scene and contained the fire, saving their home. Keneally's bravery was honored with the Young Hero award at the Board of Selectmen meeting on September 7. Her parents, Fin and Monique, and 12-year-old sister Paige, joined her in celebrating the award – part of the state's Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) program. Keneally joins 327 other young recipients of the award for acting quickly and appropriately in reporting emergency situations. Since its inception 22 years ago, the S.A.F.E. program has been part of a 70 percent reduction in fatalities from fire-related incidents.

As the 328th Young Hero in Massachusetts, Keneally was presented with the award by Massachusetts State Fire Marshal Peter Ostroskey.

"You made a huge difference," he said. "It was a real heads-up call that you recognized and you took appropriate action. You saved the day."

"When you see something, say something," Keneally said, knowing that every moment counted after she saw the smoke. "It was very scary. I'd like to thank the Sterling Fire Department. We felt much safer after they came."

Keneally also received a certificate of recognition from Sterling Fire Chief David Hurlbut.



Contributed PHOTO

(Far right) Ginger A. Ryll.

Ginger A. Ryll, daughter of Randall Ryll and Marianne Kusa-Ryll of Sterling, graduated from Norwich University and the Military College of Vermont with a Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice on May 14. Former Army Chief of Staff, General Raymond Odierno, gave the commencement address.

Ryll graduated from Wachusett Regional High School in 2012. While at Norwich,

she was a member of the Corp of Cadets Cadre, served with the Vermont National Guard, and worked as a Norwich University photographer. Ryll was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the United States Army at Fort Knox, Ky. on August 5. She will serve in the United States Army National Guard and is presently unassigned.

## Document shredding at the recycling center

Wachusett Regional Recycling Center will provide free document shredding on Saturday, October 15, 8 to 11 a.m. Also accepting all bulk, recycle, reuse and electronics items (some with fee). Regular open hours are every Monday 5 to 7 p.m., Tuesday 9 to 11 a.m., Wednesday 2:30 to 4:30 p.m., third Saturday 8 to 11 a.m. Home goods, reusable furniture, crafts, sporting goods, fabric, bicycles, school supplies and appliances for swap or to be passed on to families in need are welcome. Large appliances or furniture \$5 disposal fee. 131 Raymond Huntington Highway, West Boylston. For more information, visit [wachusettearthday.org](http://wachusettearthday.org).

## Mandatory water ban

Properties with even numbered street addresses will be allowed to use irrigation systems and sprinklers on even calendar days and properties with odd numbered street addresses will be allowed to use irrigation systems and sprinklers on odd calendar days. The use of sprinklers, automatic or other, is prohibited from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on all days. Handheld watering of vegetable and flower gardens with the use of a hose is unrestricted and may be performed on any day or time. This policy is mandatory and shall remain in effect until September 30. Violators are subject to fines or other enforcement action, as determined by the DPW Board/Water Commissioners. For more information regarding the mandatory water ban, visit [sterling-ma.gov](http://sterling-ma.gov) or call the DPW at 978-422-6767

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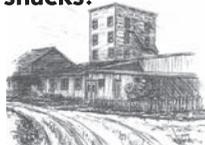
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## Y.A.H.O.O. celebrates 15 years of community service

by Chelsea Dill

Have you driven past houses in Sterling and noticed a group of teens in bright orange shirts raking leaves or trimming hedges? Those youth volunteers are a part of Y.A.H.O.O.– Young Adults Helping Out Others. This year, the program, founded in 2001 by Sterling residents and led by Kevin Beaupre, marks a 15-year milestone of community service in Sterling.

Youth from 7th through 12th grades are encouraged to participate. Many of the volunteers are from Sterling, but the program is open to any teen in surrounding communities and school districts. Whether volunteers can help out for just one day, or for the full five weeks the program operates in the fall and spring, any amount of time is appreciated by the senior who hosts them. "These people always have great stories to tell and it's nice to be able to connect with them in such a fun way," says Wachusett Regional High School student Siobhan Moisan, who began volunteering with the program as a freshman. "They always seem so appreciative of the work we do and it's a nice feeling to know you've helped them out."

Director Rich Lane has witnessed the program's positive impact during his four years of involvement. "Seeing the youth of Sterling shaking hands or hugging our seniors and the look of joy on the senior's face after our activity at their house, is incredibly fulfilling," he says.

Although the light yard work is the physical result of the volunteers' efforts, the program closes the generation gap between the teen volunteers and their elderly hosts. "The true mission of Y.A.H.O.O. is to provide a means for youth to socialize with Sterling's seniors," says Lane. "The generation gap can lead to misunderstanding, confusion and resentment. It can also lead to a lack of historical perspective. Y.A.H.O.O. is a tool to reduce those negative factors."

*This year's fall cleanup begins October 15. Any teen can sign up at sterlingyahoo.org.*

## You have to see Kitchen Associates New Showroom! It is room after room of beautifully designed kitchens.

More good news. . . Kitchen Associates received the Angie's List Super Service Award for 2014! If you are building a new home or remodeling, my wife and I highly recommend Kitchen Associates. We are enjoying the amazing functionality of our kitchen. You can view some of their other kitchen and bath masterpieces on their website.



Dan Andelman

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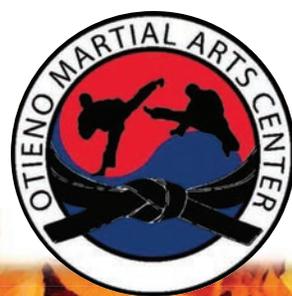
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### Osgood Road water storage tank offline

The Osgood Road water storage tank is offline for major repairs which began September 6, and will remain offline for approximately 60 days. The storage tank holds 750,000 gallons of water, approximately 40 percent of the town's water supply. Restrict water usage during this time period, in addition to the existing outdoor watering ban.

### Fall Rabies and Microchip Clinic

The town of Sterling is holding a Rabies and Microchip Clinic at VCA Sterling Animal Hospital, 4 Clinton Road (Route 62), Sterling, on Saturday, October 1. 978-422-6262. \$12 per rabies vaccination, cash or check only. All towns are welcome.

Bring cats in carriers from 8 to 9 a.m., and dogs on leashes from 9 to 10 a.m. Rabies vaccinations will be valid for one year from October 1, 2016. To qualify for 3-year status, proof of prior rabies vaccinations must be provided. No exams will be performed during the clinic.

Home Again microchips will be available for \$48.50, including lifetime registration.

Sterling's Animal Control Advisory Board members will be available to assist and answer questions. For more information, call Animal Control Officer Louis Massa at 978-422-7331.

### Join Cub Scouts

Sterling Pack 34 eagerly awaits new Cub Scouts! There's still time to register. Den meetings start in late September. Cub Scouts for 2016-2017 are for boys in grades K to 5. Lions, Tigers, Wolves, Bears, and Webelos I and II. Den meetings are usually every other Friday at 6:30 p.m. at First Church in Sterling. Special activities throughout the year include Scout Olympics, Halloween party, hikes, marching in parades, sleigh rides, space derby, pinewood derby, and overnights at an aquarium or other venue. For more information, email sterling-pack34cubmaster@gmail.com.

### Jessica Pierce joins Coldwell Banker in Bolton

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in New England has announced that Sterling resident Jessica Pierce has affiliated with the Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage office in Bolton. As a sales associate, Pierce will provide residential real estate services in Sterling and surrounding communities including Bolton, Clinton, Lancaster, Leominster, Princeton, Stow and more. Pierce is a life-long resident of Central Massachusetts and a graduate of Nashoba Regional High School.



Jessica Pierce

Contributed PHOTO

### Chamber hosts "Par-Tee!" Golf Tournament

The Wachusett Area Chamber of Commerce is hosting a "Par-Tee!" Golf Tournament on Wednesday, September 28, at Bedrock Golf Club, 87 Barre Paxton Road, Rutland. This fun nine-hole tournament is designed for players of all ability levels. \$75 per player includes greens fee, cart, hors d'oeuvres and a cook-out. Shotgun start at 12:30 p.m. Event features contests on the course and a 50/50 raffle. The field is limited to 48 golfers. Foursomes will be filled on a first-come basis. To register online visit [wachusettareachamber.org](http://wachusettareachamber.org), call 508-829-9220 or email [info@wachusettareachamber.org](mailto:info@wachusettareachamber.org).

### Leominster Credit Union fall Shred-A-Thon

Leominster Credit Union will hold a Shred-A-Thon on Saturday, October 1, 9 a.m. to noon, at 910 West Boylston St., Worcester. Community residents can reduce the risk of identity theft by shredding old, sensitive documents on site by a secure shredding service, New England Security Shredders. Bring up to three legal size file boxes or three 13-gallon kitchen trash bags to be shredded for free. Donations to Habitat for Humanity will be accepted during the event. Documents to shred include bank statements, tax returns, medical bills, credit card statements and other personal documents. For more information, contact Joanne Lattanzi, Marketing Manager, at 978-466-7240 or [marketing@leominster-cu.com](mailto:marketing@leominster-cu.com).

### Nashoba Valley Chamber hosts chili cook-off

The Nashoba Valley Chamber of Commerce will host a chili cook-off on Sunday, October 9, from 1 to 4 p.m., on the Devens Common. All you can eat, over 20 varieties of chili. \$10/person, children under 10 free. Raffles, children's entertainment, and live music. Chili entry forms are available at [NVCoC.com](http://NVCoC.com). For more information, call 978-425-5761, or email [Meagan@nvcoc.com](mailto:Meagan@nvcoc.com).

### Curbside trash/recycling for October

The DPW will be closed on Monday, October 10, in observance of Columbus Day. However, the holiday won't affect the curbside trash/recycle pick up schedule. Trash will be picked up on a regular schedule October 10 to October 14. Have trash/recycling curbside by 7 a.m. on your regularly scheduled pickup day..

### Sterling guitar teacher nurtures students of all ages

by Lex Thomas

Back-to-school season makes a lot of people—even those without children or with a grown family—think about learning something new, taking up a fresh hobby, or pursuing a dream they haven't had the time or resources to indulge in the past. For many, the dream of being a musician ranks especially high.

Guitar instructor Lou Valentino began playing guitar when he was 13. He's been teaching guitar for 25 years, 20 of them in Sterling. Since 2003, he's offered guitar lessons through the Sterling Recreation Department at 1835 Town Hall. He estimates that over the years, he's taught over 6,500 lessons to students ranging in ages from 6 to 76. The majority of his students have no musical knowledge at all when they begin lessons.

A native of Connecticut, Valentino has a very special relationship with Sterling and his students here. "Sterling has blessed my life in many ways," he says. "I love watching students grow in their ability and confidence."

Valentino studied guitar, piano and voice at Roger Williams University, and spent 18 years working as a performer throughout New England before deciding to dedicate himself to teaching.

"I'd rather teach than perform," he says. "Performing isn't as intimate as teaching. The one-to-one relationship with students is very gratifying. There's also a lot of pressure that comes with performing."

He has devoted a lot of time and thought to developing his teaching method. "The teacher's awareness is so important," he says. "I think about how to best fulfill the needs of each student in a way that makes them feel good about themselves."

Students typically have one half-hour lesson per week. For younger students, Valentino likes a parent to be present during the lesson.

"I like the family dynamic and environment that lessons create," he says. "Parents can express their feelings about the progress their child is making, and if they've sat through the lesson, they're much better equipped to help their child to practice in between lessons."

Students learn how to read music, harmonic patterns, theory, rhythm, blues scales, and finger picking. They learn a range of techniques that they can apply to other instruments, and that are especially useful for those that want to study music theory in college. Valentino teaches both acoustic and electric guitar, and is considering teaching bass as well.

But although he has a lot of information to impart to his students, he wants the experience to be enjoyable for them. "There's a flow to teaching," he says. "I don't like so much rigidity that it takes the fun out of music. Each student is unique, and each grows at a different rate. Watching that growth and being a part of it—for me, it's the best feeling in the world."

For more information, including rates and available lesson times, call Lou Valentino at 860-574-9467.

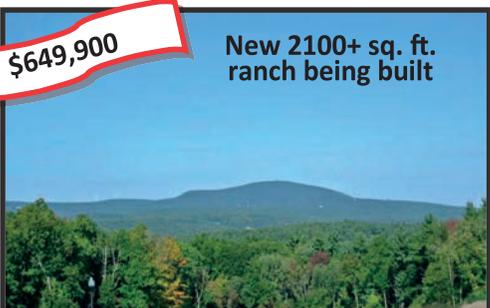


Lou Valentino

Contributed PHOTO

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**Fill a shoebox for a child in need**

In August, Hope Chapel hosted their annual Vacation Bible Spectacular for kids ages 4 through 8th grade. Each year, the program undertakes a mission project, collecting items to be donated to people in need, both locally and internationally. This year, Hope Chapel has partnered with Samaritan's Purse, and asked their VBS families to donate items to fill shoeboxes that will become part of the Operation Christmas Child (OCC) program, which provides shoeboxes filled with gifts to children all around the world. For some, it's the only Christmas gift they will receive.

Every year, Hope Chapel has collected boxes, and this year will be a relay center for OCC, hosting a packing party on Saturday, October 22, from 2 to 4 p.m., at Hope Chapel, 35 Chocksett Road, Sterling. In addition to packing shoeboxes, the event will feature carnival games and snacks. Everyone is welcome. Hope Chapel will be accepting items to be used in the shoeboxes up until the packing party. For information about OCC and donation guidelines, visit [hopechapelsterling.org/occ](http://hopechapelsterling.org/occ).



Participants in this year's Vacation Bible Spectacular at Hope Chapel.

Contributed PHOTO

**Monty Tech holds 22nd Annual Golf Tourney**

Monty Tech's 22nd Annual Scholarship Golf Tournament will be held Monday, September 26, at Oak Hill Country Club, 840 Oak Hill Road, Fitchburg. Sponsored by the Monty Tech Foundation, the event will start with registration at noon, followed by a 1 p.m. shotgun start. Social hour, dinner and awards will immediately follow the event. Entry fees are \$175 per

golfer, or \$700 for a foursome. A \$50 entertainment package covers raffle tickets and mulligans. Proceeds benefit student scholarships and funding for special programs and events. Over the past year, the Monty Tech Foundation awarded \$50,000 in scholarships to deserving students. For more information or to register, call 978-345-9200, ext. 5253.

**10th Annual College & Career Fair at Monty Tech**

Area highschool students are invited to attend Monty Tech's 10th Annual College & Career Fair on Wednesday, September 28, 5 to 7 p.m., in the school cafeteria.

Representatives from approximately 80 two- and four-year colleges and universities, technical, business and military schools, as well as labor unions, will be on hand to answer questions about their

post-secondary educational and career opportunities.

Students are invited to enter a drawing to win a new laptop. The first 50 students to attend the event will receive free movie passes. Monty Tech is located at 1050 Westminster St., Rte. 2A, at the Fitchburg-Westminster line.



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# Sterling Democrats gather at social event

by Lex Thomas



U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern addresses crowd at the Sterling Democratic Social on August 29.

U.S. Congressman Jim McGovern, Massachusetts State Senator Jennifer Flanagan, and Worcester County District Attorney Joseph Early Jr., each addressed a group of about 50 supporters and voters from Sterling and surrounding towns that attended the Sterling Democratic Summer Social on August 29, hosted by Steven Miles and Barbara Davidson-Miles of Sterling. State Representative Harold Naughton Jr. was expected to speak, but was unable to attend.

Early said he is most often asked about progress on the investigation of the death of Vanessa Marcotte, a Google employee and Boston University graduate murdered while jogging near her mother's home in Princeton.

"Everything that can be done is being done," he reassured the audience, but urged the public to use caution and remain vigilant.

McGovern spoke about the importance of elections on all levels. "What's at stake is that if a demagogue was to win [the November election], it would define politics at every level, including local," he said. "Politics should be a noble profession. It should be about making our communities better."

Guests at the event liked what they heard and agreed that it was beneficial to meet some of Sterling's political representatives and to have the opportunity to engage in conversation and discussion about issues of concern to area residents.

PHOTO by Richard Maki



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Trish McMaster Drinkwater grew up in Sterling and attended Wachusett Regional High School. She currently lives in Lancaster with her husband, Justin, who works as an electrician. Trish joins our team with 13 years of mortgage lending experience and is excited to be able to use her knowledge to help make the home buying process easy for her clients.



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# Four new year-round nature trails open in Sterling

by Chelsea Dill



PHOTO by Chelsea Dill

One of Sterling's new trails.

The Sterling Rail Trail has become a popular sanctuary for walkers, runners and nature lovers. Now, thanks to a new initiative by Sterling's Open Space Implementation Committee, four more nature trails are open for public use. The

project began in summer 2014 when the OSIC developed the Sterling Trails as part of the committee's mission to adhere to Sterling's Open Space and Recreation plan, which aims to "identify and seek to preserve significant open-space, cultu-

ral, and recreational resources that will sustain the quality of life and the rural character of the town." The Sterling Trails initiative also includes Wachusett Greenways, Sterling Land Trust, and the DCR. Over 30 percent of the land in Sterling is for conservation and owned by the Sterling Land Trust, DCR, or the town of Sterling itself, so the Sterling Trails offer residents a great way to explore and appreciate the landscape in an ever-changing and urbanizing world.

OSIC Chair Peder C. Pederson and his fellow committee members are dedicated to the Sterling Trails initiative and personally clear the trails of any debris and brush that would inhibit public use. They are currently seeking a seventh committee member, as well as volunteers to help with seasonal maintenance. The committee has plans to create and map more trails and hopes to have a dozen trails in total.

Each trail has been mapped by the committee and designated as a worthy trail due to historical information and interesting flora and fauna in each location. The trails vary in length, so users can choose a long journey into nature or a brief respite from everyday life. The new trails are geared for different activity levels and are available year-round. Snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, bicycling, and jogging are popular activities on the different trails. The OSIC has created informational brochures to provide background and functional information about each trail, including parking, prohibited and allowed activities, historical tidbits, and facts about local plant life. While each trail differs in length and scenery, so do specific regulations regarding dogs, horses, motorized vehicles, and hunting. Check each specific trail brochure for guidelines mandated for each location. There is also an informational kiosk on North Row Road.

The trails now open are the Butterick Nature Trail, Gaylord Trail at Hardscrabble Road, Lynde Basins Trail, and Heywood Reservoir Trail. The newest one is the Butterick Nature Trail, located on a large parcel of town-owned land off of Park Street. Other trails, like the Lynde Basins Trail and the Heywood Reservoir Trail, are created with permission from the town of Clinton, due to land use that straddles both towns. All of the trails also have value as natural resources. Many are connected to DCR land, which houses headwater that feeds the Wachusett Reservoir, so protecting and keeping the water supply clean is a high priority, while still making the trails accessible for public use.

For more information and to download the nature trail brochures, visit [sterling-ma.gov/open-space-implementation-committee/pages/sterling-trails](http://sterling-ma.gov/open-space-implementation-committee/pages/sterling-trails), or the kiosk at North Row Road. For volunteer opportunities or to join the Open Space Implementation Committee, call 978-422-2920.

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# Local apple picking strong despite drought

by Chelsea Dill



PHOTO by Chelsea Dill

Clearview Farm's fresh-picked apples.

Flipping the calendar to September means back-to-school, leaf peeping, and the annual rite of picking apples straight from the trees. Though the summer drought has been hard on crops, Sterling's orchards are in good shape and ready to uphold the apple picking tradition.

Davis Farmland on Redstone Hill Road grows two types of apples, McIntosh and Cortland, both good for eating and cooking. The orchard has been affected by weather throughout the year, including the mild winter that brought early apple blossoms. "It hasn't been an ideal farming season," says Nicolette Sacco, marketing representative and Davis Mega Maze manager. "But everything tastes good. We were very fortunate. It could've gone very badly."

In the orchard behind their farm store, Meadowbrook Orchards on Chace Hill Road offers McIntosh, Cortland, and Macoun apples for picking. Around the second week in October, Red Delicious will be available, too. "The orchards have been fine throughout the drought," says owner Dave Chandler. "The apples are smaller than they were a year ago because they need water to get bigger. But they're a decent size, it's a great-looking crop." Meadowbrook's 100 acres of farmland produce many of the ingredients used in the food and baked goods available in their store.

On Kendall Hill Road, Clearview Farm is also ready for the pick-your-own season, despite being affected by early budding and crops suffering a killing frost before blossoming. Honeycrisp, Empire, Liberty, Fuji, Gala, Blondies, and Cameo are just some of the vast variety of apples they grow in their 35-acre orchard.

With apple picking comes food made from local produce. Meadowbrook Orchards uses off-site production to turn their apples into locally-grown cider, while Clearview Farm presses their own unpasteurized cider. Using apples in baking is just as popular as its neighboring fall flavor, the ubiquitous pumpkin, and many orchards turn their crops into homemade apple pies, apple turnovers, and apple cider donuts.

Sterling is a great farm-to-table community and the success of local orchards depends largely upon residents taking pride in supporting their town. There are so many great reasons to stay local when choosing where to pick apples, and the harsh season makes it even more important to stay local this year. "Orchards were a total loss last year because of hail," says Chandler. "We want to be here for people and we want people to be able to enjoy our orchard."

Open space is another Sterling attraction, and the prevalence of local orchards contributes to rural aspects that many communities are striving, and struggling, to protect.

## Sterling Grange kicks off another year

Sterling Grange celebrated the organization's new year with an Installation of Officers. The ceremony was performed by the Massachusetts State Grange Musician, Brian Carr, of Salem.

In addition, Vern Gaw received a Community Citizen Award in recognition of the many hours of community service he provides to various local groups and organizations. For more information about Grange membership and activities, visit [grange.org/sterlingma53/](http://grange.org/sterlingma53/), call 508-886-2341, or email [sterlinggrange53@gmail.com](mailto:sterlinggrange53@gmail.com).



Contributed PHOTO

Sterling Grange officers: Front row (left to right): Donald Segur, Kathy Dugan, Janet Segur, Beverly Kohlstrom. Second row (let to right) Dorothy St. Jean, Cheryl Aubuchon, Gloria Popp, Phyliss Fife, Ceres Joanne Watson. Back row (left to right) Louise Jordan, James Strang, James Temple, Vern Gaw, Carl Hewitt, Flora Erin DeCoste.

## Farmers Market collecting backpacks and school supplies

The Sterling Farmers Market is collecting gently used backpacks and new school supplies throughout the month of September for distribution to local children in need. Bring donations to the Shamrock Hives Farm kiosk.

The market is held every Friday, rain or shine, from 3 to 6:30 p.m. at 1 Park Street (in front of the Butterick Building), Sterling. The market showcases local farmers and vendors offering farm fresh produce, bread, meats, honey, organic eggs, dried herbs, homemade ice cream, baked goods, whoopie pies, soaps, dog treats, plants, and more.

Enjoy live music, monthly crafters, and special children's events.

Local business sponsors are needed to support the market and help defray costs. Prominent signage at the market and social media promotion of your business, as well as a table at the market, are included in the sponsorship.

Vendor and crafter applications are still being accepted for the 2016 season. For more information like 'Sterling Farmers Market' on Facebook or email [sterlingfarmersmarket@gmail.com](mailto:sterlingfarmersmarket@gmail.com).

## Sterling-Lancaster Community TV

### Broadcast Schedule Sep 24th to Sep 30th, 2016

Comcast Channel 8

Saturday	Genre	
12:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater - A Man Betrayed	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater - A Man Betrayed	Entertainment
6:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
8:00 AM	Village Church Service	Religion
10:00 AM	AUC College Church Service	Religion
1:00 PM	DW Focus On Europe Italian Resort	Documentaries
3:00 PM	All Aboard - Atlanta Railroads	Hobby
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Elephant Extravaganza	Children
5:00 PM	Just Coolin - Jaco Pastorius	Music
6:00 PM	Valley Homegrown - Fiesta Brava	Music
7:00 PM	DW Focus On Europe Italian Resort	Documentaries
9:00 PM	All Aboard - Atlanta Railroads	Hobby
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

Sunday	Genre	
12:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater - A Man Betrayed	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater - A Man Betrayed	Entertainment
7:00 AM	Trinity Bolton Church Service	Religion
9:00 AM	ECC Church Service	Religion
11:00 AM	Trinity Lutheran Church Service	Religion
1:00 PM	DW Focus On Europe Italian Resort	Documentaries
3:00 PM	All Aboard - Atlanta Railroads	Hobby
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Elephant Extravaganza	Children
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6:00 PM	Valley Homegrown - Fiesta Brava	Music
7:00 PM	DW Focus On Europe Italian Resort	Documentaries
9:00 PM	All Aboard - Atlanta Railroads	Hobby
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

Monday-Friday	Genre	
12:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater - Billy the Kid Returns	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater - Billy the Kid Returns	Entertainment
7:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
9:00 AM	Love on a Plate - Socum Buca	Cooking
10:00 AM	Body Sculpt with Elizabeth-Total Body Warm-Up	Health
11:00 AM	All Aboard - Canadian Steam	Hobby
12:00 PM	H2O Series - Protecting Lancaster Waterways	Local
1:00 PM	DW Global 3000 People in Need	Documentary
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Moviemanía	Children
5:00 PM	Just Coolin - Nina Simone	Music
6:00 PM	Valley Homegrown - Appalachian Still	Music
7:00 PM	DW Global 3000 People in Need	Documentary
8:00 PM	H2O Series - Protecting Lancaster Waterways	Local
9:00 PM	All Aboard - Canadian Steam	Hobby
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

### Broadcast Schedule Oct 1 - Oct 7, 2016

Comcast Channel 8

Saturday	Genre	
12:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater-Billy the Kid Returns	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater-Billy the Kid Returns	Entertainment
6:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
8:00 AM	Village Church Service	Religion
10:00 AM	AUC College Church Service	Religion
11:30 AM	All Aboard - Canadian Steam	Hobby
12:00 PM	H2O Series - Lancaster's Waterways	Local
1:00 PM	DW Global 3000 People in Need	Documentaries
2:00 PM	All Aboard - Canadian Steam	News
3:00 PM	H2O Series - Lancaster's Waterways	Local
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Moviemanía	Children
5:00 PM	Just Coolin - Nina Simone	Music
6:00 PM	Valley Homegrown - Appalachian Still	Music
7:00 PM	DW Global 3000 People in Need	Documentaries
8:00 PM	All Aboard - Canadian Steam	Hobby
9:00 PM	H2O Series - Lancaster's Waterways	News
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

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6:00 PM	Valley Homegrown - Appalachian Still	Music
7:00 PM	DW Global 3000 People in Need	Documentaries
8:00 PM	All Aboard - Canadian Steam	Hobby
9:00 PM	H2O Series - Lancaster's Waterways	News
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

Monday-Friday	Genre	
12:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater - Cause for Alarm	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Retro Movie Theater - Cause for Alarm	Entertainment
7:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
9:00 AM	My Mothers Recipes - Cal Pep	Cooking
10:00 AM	P2W - Homeopathy	Health
11:00 AM	All Aboard - East Broad Top	Hobby
12:00 PM	Channel 8 Community News	News
12:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
1:00 PM	DW In Good Shape-Smallest Pacemaker	Documentaries
2:00 PM	Church Services	Religion
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Lovin Lobster	Children
5:00 PM	Just Coolin - Gil Scott-Heron	Music
6:00 PM	Valley Homegrown - Eva Capelli	Music
7:00 PM	DW In Good Shape-Smallest Pacemaker	Documentaries
8:00 PM	Channel 8 Community News	News
8:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
9:00 PM	All Aboard - East Broad Top	Hobby
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

Please note this schedule is subject to change. Refer to [www.slctv.us](http://www.slctv.us) for any updates.

**Lots happening 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.

**Especially for kids**

**Picture Book Club** – Thursday, September 22, 2 p.m. (half-day for WRSD schools). Youth grades K through 2 are invited to read the book ahead of time and then join us for a themed snack and print making activity. This new book club will feature beautifully illustrated picture books of different genres to encourage an early love of reading. First book is *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* by Philip C. Stead, available at the library. Registration required.

**Music Circles** – Music Circles at Conant Public Library are back. Six-week session begins Monday, September 26, at 10:30 a.m. Ages 2 to 5. Registration required.

**LEGO Club** – The LEGO Club is back, and will meet on Thursday, October 6, at 4 p.m., and Thursday, October 20, at 2 p.m. Ages K and up. Children may register for one session. Registration required.

**Middle School Book Club** – There's a new book club in town for kids grades 5 to 8. First meeting Thursday, October 13, at 6:30 p.m. *Doll Bones* by Holly Black is the story of three best friends and their encounters with a haunted doll. Participants will decorate voodoo doll cookies, perfect for Halloween. Copies of the book are available at the young adult circulation desk. Registration required.

**Family movie night** – Tuesday, October 18, 6 p.m. *Hocus Pocus*, rated PG, follows Max, Dani, Allison and a magical cat as they work to stop three evil witches, known as the Sanderson sisters (Bette Midler, Sarah Jessica Parker, Kathy Najimy), from gaining immortality on

Halloween night. Children under 18, accompanied by their caregivers, are invited to attend in costume. Registration required.

**Not-So-Spooky storytime** – Monday, October 24, at 2 p.m. and Thursday, October 27, at 10:30 a.m. Youth ages 18 months and up. Celebrate this special time of the year with tales of Halloween creatures, songs, and crafts. Registration required

**Pumpkin Decorating** – Tuesday, October 25, at 10:30 a.m. Just in time for Halloween, children ages 2 and up are invited to decorate their own pumpkin. Registration required.

**Summer readers rewarded with books**

After spending the summer reading books and enjoying programs in Conant Public Library's Summer Reading Program for children, participants were treated to a book of their own to take home. The books were donated by the Friends of the Conant Public Library. The Friends group supports many programs and resources that are available through the library, including e-books, passes to cultural attractions, and children's programs. For information on becoming a member, email [friendsofconant@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofconant@gmail.com) or call Ellen Zanino, president, at 781-858-3282.

**What's cooking at the Cookbook Club?**

Conant Public Library's Cookbook Club will have breakfast for dinner on Wednesday, September 28, 6:30 p.m. Choose a recipe from *Brunch @ Bobby's* by Bobby Flay, prepare the dish, and bring it to the library for an evening of good food and great conversation. Cookbooks are available at the library for checkout. Call 978-422-6409 to register.



Contributed PHOTO

*Laith Jaber, 3, of Sterling, receives his book from Children's Librarian Angela Cote in August. Laith chose "Maybe Something Beautiful" by F. Isabel Campoy and Theresa Howell.*

**Parent's Night Out Book Club**

Are you a parent who loves to read and talk about books? Let's read some family- and parenting- themed contemporary fiction together. Wednesday, October 5, 6:30 p.m., Baker Room, we'll discuss *Inside the O'Briens* by Lisa Genova. Books are available in the children's room. No registration required.

**Sterling Library presents North Sea Gas**

Conant Public Library will present a musical evening with North Sea Gas, a Scottish folk band from Edinburgh, on Wednesday, October 5, at 6:30 p.m., at Chocksett Middle School, 40 Boutelle Road, Sterling. North Sea Gas is one of Scotland's most popular folk bands, combining great vocals, numerous instruments, and good-humored storytelling. Free. For more information, call 978-422-6409.

**Adult coloring program**

Discover the stress-reducing and relaxing benefits of coloring at Conant Public Library's adult coloring program. Monday, September 26, and Wednesday, October 12, at 6:30 p.m., in the Baker Room. Supplies available or bring your own. No registration required.

**Nighttime knitting program**

Conant Public Library is introducing an evening drop-in knitting group this fall. All skill levels welcome. Not limited to Sterling residents. Bring whatever project you're working on. Tuesdays, 6:30 p.m., lower level of the library. No registration required.

**Vendors wanted for holiday craft fair**

The Friends of the Conant Public Library Arts & Crafts Show will be held on Saturday, November 19, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., at the First Church in Sterling,

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6 Meetinghouse Hill Road. Craftspeople will offer a broad range of high-quality gift items at the juried fair, and the Friends of the Conant Public Library will offer a homemade lunch café, bake sale, and raffle. To request a vendor application, email [friendsofconant@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofconant@gmail.com).

Proceeds from the event will support the library's Summer Reading Program for children.

**Library bookstore closed**

The Friends of the Library bookstore in the lower level of the Conant Public Library in Sterling has closed. All remaining items in the bookstore are priced 4 for \$1. With the bookstore closing, the library will no longer be accepting book, movie, or audio donations. The library and the Friends greatly appreciate all past donations. For more information, call 978-422-6409.

**Bridging Writers Author Series**

Seven Bridge Writers' Collaborative and the Bridging Writers Author Series welcomes Cal Armistead for a reading and discussion of her novel, *Being Henry David*, on Monday, October 3, 6:30 to 8 p.m., at Thayer Memorial Library, 717 Main St., Lancaster. Free. Armistead holds an MFA in creative writing from the Stonecoast Program at the University of Southern Maine. *Being Henry David* is her first novel.

**Modern publishing workshop**

Seven Bridge Writers' Collaborative presents *The Pros and Pitfalls of Modern Publishing* with Dale T. Phillips and Ursula Wong, on Saturday, October 15, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at Thayer Memorial Library, 717 Main St., Lancaster. This comprehensive workshop will review the spectrum of publishing solutions available, including traditional publishing, small press, partnering with collectives, vanity press, and DIY options, as well as manuscript readiness, editing, contracts, and revenue. Free. For more information, visit [sevenbridgewriters.blogspot.com](http://sevenbridgewriters.blogspot.com), or email [7bridgewritercollaborative@gmail.com](mailto:7bridgewritercollaborative@gmail.com).

**Fall programs are here**

Stay fit and have fun throughout the fall. For program information and to register online, visit [SterlingRec.com](http://SterlingRec.com), call 978-422-3041, email [recreation@sterling-ma.gov](mailto:recreation@sterling-ma.gov), or stop by the office at 31 Main St., Sterling. Like Sterling Recreation Department on Facebook for the most up-to-date information.

**GPS Passes** – Season passes for Wachusett Mountain Ski Area. Ages 6+. Bronze: \$269, Silver: \$329, Gold: \$559. All prices increase \$100 on 11/19. Group name: Sterling GPS, Coordinator: Kristen Dietel.

**Volunteer at the Senior Center**

The Senior Center couldn't run without our wonderful volunteers. If you have a few hours to spare during the week, consider joining our great team. Extra help is needed at reception and in the kitchen.

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

Drop in for coffee Monday to Friday, 8 to 11:30 a.m. The Sterling Senior Center serves lunch at 11:30 daily. Anyone over 60 is welcome. Call 978-422-8022 for a reservation the morning before you want to come. Home meal delivery available daily. \$3 suggested donation.

**Gourmet Magic** – Thursday, September 22, 10:30 a.m. Cooking for one or two? Cooking demonstration sponsored by Sterling Village. Registration required.

**Book club** – Thursday, September 22, 12:30 p.m. This month's selection is *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown.

**Self-defense class** – Thursday, September 22, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. for less active seniors, including those who walk with

the aid of a cane or walker; 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. for more active seniors, who are able to walk unaided. Taught by Jim Alty of New Horizon Karate. \$5 donation. Registration required.

**Self-defense class** – Friday, September 23, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. for more active seniors, who are able to walk unaided. Taught by Jim Alty of New Horizon Karate. \$5 donation. Registration required.

**Fuel assistance sign-up** – Monday, September 26, 9 a.m. to noon. Do you qualify for fuel assistance? Save yourself a trip to Fitchburg—come meet with a representative and sign up.

**Red Cross CPR certification class** – Tuesday, September 27, 6 to 9 p.m. Sponsored by the Sterling Fire Department. All ages welcome. 10-person limit. \$25 donation. Registration required.

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

**Senior Center Grand Opening**

Come celebrate the grand opening of the new Sterling Senior Center on Sunday, October 2, 1 to 4 p.m. Food, raffles, music, speakers and tours. 36 Muddy Pond Road, Sterling.

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The experience at each phase of the sales effort was superior, such as having an Open House on 4th of July weekend to get the house on the market as quickly as possible, using a unique method of a drone to take an aerial picture of the outside area which was over an acre of land, useful insights on pre-listing staging, effective showings and proactive facilitation during the sale negotiations/due diligence. All of these tasks, whether business-related or personal were accomplished with a noticeable degree of competence, humility, integrity and grace.

Thus, I highly recommend Karen Packard at Open Door Real Estate for your residential real estate needs.

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# Project Linus seeks to reach 500 blanket goal

by Lex Thomas

For the fifth year, Sterling residents Meredith Tufts and Kate Blehar are spearheading Sterling's participation in the Auburn chapter of the Project Linus Blanket Event at Conant Public Library. This national program makes and delivers blankets to critically ill children, or those victimized by fire or other catastrophic event. To date, the organization (project-linus.org) has delivered over 6 million blankets since 1995. So far, the Sterling branch has delivered almost 400 blankets, and hopes to exceed 500 this year.

In addition to being a milestone year, this year's campaign is especially significant because of a donation from a family that participated in the program's first year, and then became one of its beneficiaries.

Last October, one month before his second birthday, Drew Iarrobino, the son of Ryan and Holly Iarrobino of Sterling, was diagnosed with Wilms' Tumor, a type of kidney cancer. His medical team at UMASS in Worcester and Boston Children's Hospital recommended immediate chemotherapy treatment. The following day, he was taken into surgery. As he was being prepped, Drew and his parents were presented with a handmade patchwork quilt, which became a source of comfort immediately and throughout their stay at UMASS. After months of successful treatment, they traveled to Boston



Contributed PHOTO

Drew Iarrobino and his Project Linus blankets.

Children's Hospital where Drew underwent an extensive and successful surgery to remove the remaining tumor in his kidneys. During his first days of recovery, they were once again given a handmade fleece blanket covered with neon dinosaurs, which, once again, brought brightness and warmth to Drew's room. Shortly after Drew's discharge from Children's Hospital, he began radiation therapy at UMASS. Once again, the family received a fleece blanket, this time decorated with robots and spaceships.

"There's something about a warm,

fuzzy blanket that brings comfort and security," says Drew's mom, Holly. "Our family went through a lot of pain for the six months Drew was in aggressive treatment. At times, it was almost unbearable."

During a short hospital stay last year, the family received a gift from the Kaitlyn Langlois Memorial Foundation (kicksforkaitlyn.com). Kaitlyn was a child from Sterling that lost her battle with cancer in 2005, at the age of 16. Her dream was to help others and give back what was given to her.

"We knew immediately that we wanted

to donate our donation to another cause and keep Kaitlyn's "help" ball rolling," says Holly. "Having participated in the Project Linus event in Sterling and knowing firsthand how a blanket made with love can lift the spirits of someone who needs all the love they can get, Project Linus seemed like the perfect fit. I will be making 28 blankets and each one will be sprinkled with a little extra love from our family. Drew's treatment was successful. He's a survivor of children's cancer, and we are grateful to his team of caregivers and thankful for all the support we received this past year.

The Iarrobino's contribution will be used to purchase fabrics and supplies to produce the blankets, which are quick to assemble and require no sewing, which is one of the reasons Tufts and Blehar began the project

"We wanted our kids, who were toddlers at the time, to be able to do something to help others," says Tufts. "Project Linus made that possible. Because there's no sewing involved, it's perfect for 3-year-old fingers, or for elderly arthritic fingers. Everyone can do it."

The chapter has produced 387 blankets over the past four years. They're hoping to reach 500 this year. To take part in this year's blanket making event, email meredithtufts@hotmail.com before Saturday, September 24.

Blanket assembly Saturday, November 5, at Conant Public Library. Sign up for a 30-minute slot between 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Material fee: baby blanket \$7, child blanket \$9, teen blanket \$11.

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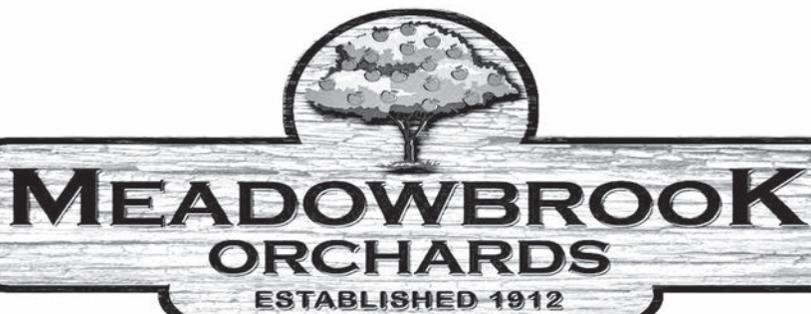


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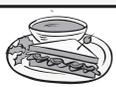


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## SCT presents Footloose

Come kick up your heels and join the celebration as Sterling Community Theatre presents Footloose, an energetic and dynamic musical based on the popular 1984 film of the same name. Performances September 23 and 24 at First Church in Sterling, at 7:30 p.m. Saturday matinee at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$18 for adults, \$14 for children and seniors. Tickets available at the door, or online at [sterlingtheatre.com](http://sterlingtheatre.com).

## Firefighters' Chicken & Duck Barbecue

The Sterling Firefighters' Association will prepare their annual Chicken & Duck Barbecue on Saturday, September 24, rain or shine, at the Sterling Fire Station, with seatings at 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. Meal includes corn, baked potato, dinner roll, apple, and soda. Bring the family and dine at the Sterling Fire Station. Take-out available at 4:30 and 6:30 p.m. Chicken \$13, duck \$15. Tickets on sale at the Fire Station or from any firefighter.

## Pitch Party sponsored by Sterling Grange

Sterling Grange will hold its monthly public pitch party on Saturday, October 1, 6:30 p.m., at the Sterling Senior Center, 36 Muddy Pond Road. Admission to play cards is \$4. Refreshments served. For more information, call 978-563-1437 or email [sterlinggrange53@gmail.com](mailto:sterlinggrange53@gmail.com).

## Youth sexuality education program

Our Whole Lives, a nationally-recognized and prized values-based sexuality education program in both secular and church communities, will be offered at First Church in Sterling, 6 Meetinghouse Hill Road, starting October 2, from 5 to 8 p.m. Classes will be offered twice each month on Sunday evenings through May 21, 2017 for area youth entering grades 7 through 9. Instructors are trained through the Our Whole Lives program ([uua.org/re/owl](http://uua.org/re/owl)). An evening orientation is scheduled for September 25, for parents of registered youth. Please note that while abstinence is strongly promoted throughout this program, alongside sexual health and values, this is not an abstinence-only program. For more information, contact Debbie Gline Allen, Minister of Lifespan Faith Development, at [education@fcsterling.org](mailto:education@fcsterling.org), or call 978-422-6657.

## Poetry in Lancaster

The Seven Bridge Writers Collaborative will host a monthly gathering to bring poets together to discuss all things related to poetry in a relaxed, welcoming venue. The Poetry Room offers local poets a chance to share work, discuss craft

and support each other in the creative process. Next meeting is Monday, September 26, 7 to 8:30 p.m., at The Parlor, First Church, 725 Main St., Lancaster. For more information, visit [sevenbridgewriters.blogspot.com/](http://sevenbridgewriters.blogspot.com/), or email [7bridgewriterscollaborative@gmail.com](mailto:7bridgewriterscollaborative@gmail.com).

## New England Symphony Orchestra's Fall Harvest Concert

Tickets are now available for a Fall Harvest Concert with the New England Symphony Orchestra (formerly the Thayer Symphony Orchestra), on Saturday, October 1, 7:30 p.m., at Clinton Town Hall. \$18 general admission, \$15 for seniors, and \$12 for students. Tickets can be purchased at Thurston House and Sunrise Boutique in Clinton, and at [newenglandsymphony.org](http://newenglandsymphony.org), or call 978-466-1800.

## Calling all crafters, artists and artisans

Spaces are still available for the 41st Annual Horse Shed Fair, Saturday, October 1, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the grounds of the First Church of Christ, Unitarian (the Bulfinch Church), Main Street, Lancaster. Rain or shine. Customers look forward to this popular event, and they come ready to buy. For more information and to download an application, visit [firstchurchlanasterma.org/events](http://firstchurchlanasterma.org/events).

## Annual book sale

The Friends of the Thayer Memorial Library will hold its annual book sale on Saturday, October 1, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday, October 2, noon to 4 p.m. at Lancaster Town Hall, 695 Main St., Lancaster. There will be a Members Only Preview Sale on Friday, September 30, 3 to 7 p.m. If you would like to attend the Preview Sale and are not a member, you can become a member at the preview. All proceeds benefit books, programs and events at the library. Prices reduced on Sunday. Credit cards accepted.

## Democratic Town Committee meeting

The Sterling Democratic Town Committee will meet on Monday, October 3, 6:30 to 8 p.m., at the Butterick Municipal Building, 1 Park St., Room 205. The agenda includes welcoming new members and planning to encourage voter turnout for Democratic candidates in the general election. All Sterling registered Democrats and interested Unenrolled voters are welcome.

## American Legion meeting

There will be a meeting of the Hiram O. Taylor Post 189 of the American Legion on Monday, October 3, 7:30 p.m., at the post hall, 32 School St., Sterling.

## Eat, Pray, Learn is back

Eat, Pray, Learn returns to First Church in Sterling, following the success of its inaugural year. The program is offered to residents of Sterling and surrounding communities on the third Wednesday of the month. On Wednesday, October 19, Ron Kearns will lead "Earth as Beauty, Earth as Legacy," a program of gratitude for the earth and life itself, as we face a rapidly paced and changing world. On Wednesday, November 16, Eat, Pray, Learn will host a Veteran's Forum, centered on veteran care. The evening, open to all including children of all ages, begins at 6 p.m. with a simple supper of soup, salad, and bread, followed by a brief worship service, including meditation, singing, and prayer at 6:30 p.m. Programming, which offers opportunities for spiritual development, conversation, and deepening of understanding, begins at 7 p.m. Child care and homework space are provided, beginning at 6:30 p.m. Free, but donations are gratefully accepted.

## Get ready for Houghton Holiday Fair

Crafters and Vendors wanted for the annual Houghton Holiday Fair on Saturday, December 10, at Houghton and Chocksett schools on Boutelle Road in Sterling. Available space for over 50 crafters and vendors. For an application, email [HoughtonHolidayFair@gmail.com](mailto:HoughtonHolidayFair@gmail.com).

## Seeking volunteers for 2017 La Romana mission

Volunteers from First Church in Sterling, Acton Congregational Church in Acton, Faith Baptist Church in Auburn, New Life Spanish Christian Church in Fitchburg, and other volunteers from throughout Central Massachusetts are traveling to La Romana, Dominican Republic, February 24 to March 5, 2017 to provide medical, dental, and vision services to impoverished Haitian workers and families living in the bateys of the Dominican Republic. We are also working to complete construction of a hospital to serve the same population. For almost 20 years, this mission has been able to make a difference in the lives of the people we serve. However, much work remains. Anyone interested in volunteering to be a part of this adventure as a traveler or support volunteer should contact Doug Davis at 978-265-7547.

## Free watercolor classes

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](http://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.

## 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.

## Mass Audubon annual photo contest

Photographers of all ages, abilities, and backgrounds are encouraged to enter the annual Mass Audubon Picture This: Your Great Outdoors photography contest. The competition encourages participants to reveal the state's natural wonders in their habitats, and people enjoying the outdoors. Two age levels: Over 18 and Under 18. Submit up to 10 photos, which must be taken in Massachusetts, or at Mass Audubon's Wildwood Camp in Rindge, New Hampshire. 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. Nine 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 visit [massaudubon.org/picturethis](http://massaudubon.org/picturethis).

## Young and playful



Laddie

Laddie is a handsome 1-year-old all black male with big gold eyes and a bushy tail. His fur has unusual brown shading. Laddie is young and wants to play the day away. He's very friendly and loves lots of attention. Laddie's veterinary work is up to date. He's leukemia negative, neutered, and has a microchip. Adoption fee \$150. All cats are placed as indoors-only pets. For more information, or to schedule an appointment to meet Laddie or any of the kitties, email [Marylyn@neadycats.org](mailto:Marylyn@neadycats.org), or call 978-422-5116.

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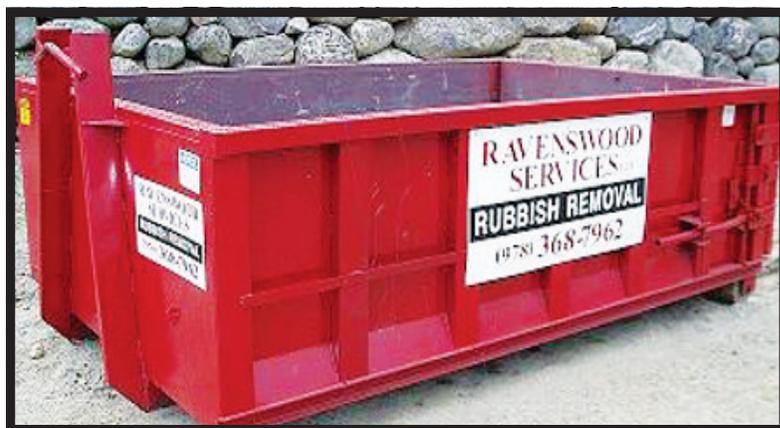
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