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**Monday, May 7
Annual Town Meeting**

**Monday, May 14
Town Election**



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Meetinghouse News

SterlingMeetinghouseNews.com

April 11, 2018

Hey, readers!
Don't miss your chance to name our new mascot! Got a great idea? Send it to: sterlingmeetinghousenews@gmail.com. Winning entry will be announced in the next issue!

Sterling welcomes new town clerk

by Danielle Ray

Sterling resident Barbara Bartlett officially stepped into the role of Sterling Town Clerk on March 28. She leaves her position as Administrative Assistant in the Department of Public Works in Lancaster, but will work in both towns through most of April during the transition.

Bartlett brings nearly 10 years of experience in town government to the job. She has served as Assistant Town Accountant, Assistant Town Clerk, and Acting Town Clerk in Lancaster, Senior Account Clerk at the Shrewsbury Fire Department, and has an extensive bookkeeping and accounting background.

Bartlett is no stranger to town government in Sterling, having served on the Treasurer-Collector Search Committee in 2011, and has been a member of the Finance Committee since 2012 (from which she has now resigned). She has also volunteered as an election worker and assisted former Sterling Town Clerk Dawn Michanowicz during several elections.



PHOTO by Danielle Ray

Sterling Town Clerk Barbara Bartlett

"I have a strong appreciation for the election process, for involvement by residents on boards and committees, and for the annual town meeting," Bartlett says. "I've always felt drawn to working with people, and I think my customer service and communication skills are some of my strongest traits."

Bartlett was Michanowicz's liaison to the Finance Committee. During a phone call regarding budget matters Michanowicz mentioned she was retiring. When the position was posted, several people asked Bartlett if she intended to apply.

"I didn't have a desire to leave my job," Bartlett recalls. "I was happy in Lancaster, and I had been doing a different type of work for the past three years. It was only after the job posting had expired and was reposted that I started to seriously consider applying."

Bartlett says the interview process went smoothly with "a great panel of interviewers" including Town Administrator Ross Perry, Selectman Maureen Cranson, Stow Town Clerk Linda Hathaway, and Sterling resident Mike Rivers.

As excited as she is to dive into her new role, leaving her position in Lancaster has been difficult in some ways.

"The employees of Lancaster are truly like family to me, having been there with me through some of the toughest times in my life, including the experience of being Acting Town Clerk while the town prepared to recall two of its selectmen," she says. "But they told me that they expected me to go to Sterling when they heard of the opening and were surprised it took me so long to apply."

Bartlett said Michanowicz, as well as Lancaster Town Clerk Mary de Alderete, and Lancaster Assistant Town Clerk Dianne Reardon, strongly encouraged her to apply for the position and cheered her on during the interview process.

Her welcome to Sterling's Town Hall has been very warm, with many people, from her co-workers to fellow town employees and residents, stopping by her office to introduce themselves and welcome her in person.

Bartlett says one of her major goals as town clerk is to spark interest in more residents to get involved, participate, and be more active in town. "There are opportunities to serve all over town, including in the Town Clerk's office, volunteering as an election worker, becoming a member of a board or committee that has a vacancy, and so much more. There's something for people of any age, background, and availability."

"Sterling has so many opportunities that give people a chance to meet and work together. I would love to see more of us doing that, becoming part of Sterling and getting to know each other."

Annual Town Meeting – Monday, May 7 – 6:30 p.m., Chocksett Middle School, 40 Boutelle Road
Town Election – Monday, May 14 – 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., Houghton Elementary School, 42 Boutelle Road
Absentee ballots available in the Town Clerk's Office.

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Helping special athletes succeed

by Danielle Ray

Sterling resident Kathy Chandler loves winter. An avid skier, Chandler parlayed her love of the sport into a volunteering opportunity. She has been involved with the Special Olympics since the 1980s as a coach and recently retired as a member of the Board of Directors. For the past five years she has run the winter Special Olympics State Games in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

There are 17 athletes and coaches on the Wachusett Great Mountain Bears team that Chandler heads, whose home base is Wachusett Mountain in Princeton, a job she does with the support of a group of dedicated coaches who share her passion.

Weather and snow conditions are huge factors for the games. Two years ago, the games in Massachusetts were cancelled due to weather. Chandler continued page 2



Contributed PHOTO

Kathy Chandler (center) with members of her Special Olympics team ready to compete.

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Congratulations, Sterling Meetinghouse News

I am delighted that Sterling Meetinghouse News will continue under the ownership of Mark and Karen Packard! They obviously have a passion for their community, and are enthusiastic about bringing local news to residents.

Their first issue was very substantial, especially considering the short amount of time since the Packards took ownership. Editor Lex Thomas, art director Kimberly Morse, and reporter Jamie Chase Galvin continued their excellent work with help from other contributing writers. It is wonderful that Danielle Ray is bringing her enthusiasm back to the pages of Sterling Meetinghouse News. Richard Maki, Robert McKay Jones, and Liz Pape, who are all volunteers in our community, contributed information about events and projects they are involved in. There are very few independently-owned newspapers remaining, and I believe they tend to be more immersed in the local community. Sterling is fortunate to have such a newspaper, and I encourage the local businesses to support it through their advertising, and the readers to, in turn, support the advertisers.

Susan Staudaher
Founder of Sterling Meetinghouse News



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Meetinghouse News

Sterling Meetinghouse News is published by Sterling Media Inc.
44 Redemption Rock Trail,
Sterling, MA 01564
SterlingMeetinghouseNews.com
978-235-1626
SterlingMeetinghouseNews@gmail.com

For advertising information send email to: SterlingMeetinghouseNews@gmail.com or call Mark 978-235-1626

The next issue will publish May 9. The advertising and copy deadline is Tuesday, May 1. Items received after deadline will be included if space is available.

Publishers • Mark and Karen Packard
Editor • Lex Thomas
Contributors • Jamie Chase Galvin, Linda Davis, Albert Jersey, Kylie Kukla, Karen Packard, Mark Packard, Liz Pape, Danielle Ray and Lex Thomas
Advertising Sales • Mark Packard
Art Director • Kimberly Morse
Sterling Meetinghouse News is mailed free of charge to all postal patrons of Sterling.
We are not liable for typographical errors in advertisements.

Support funding for prevention of breast cancer

In the United States, about one in eight women will develop invasive breast cancer in her lifetime, and more than 40,000 women die every year from breast cancer. As a pathologist, I diagnose breast cancer far too often. As a medical adviser to the Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition (MBCC), I understand the importance of prevention. This is finally being recognized in the medical community. In an effort to promote a better understanding of the importance of toxic exposures and breast cancer, MBCC launched the Let's Talk Prevention: Reducing Toxic Exposures program. MBCC is helping facilitate the discussion between health professionals and patients about environmental exposures and chemicals of concern. Many chemicals of concern are industrial chemicals that do not stay isolated inside factories. Minimizing exposure to chemicals linked with negative health impacts can lessen the burden of disease and improve public health. The majority of breast cancer efforts have traditionally been focused on treatment and screening while funding for prevention lags far behind. A far greater benefit in lives saved would be realized from efforts directed towards prevention. Additionally, the financial impact is much greater. It is less expensive to keep a patient healthy and out of the hospital. I invite you to support MBCC's mission of cancer prevention by registering for the Against the Tide Swim, Kayak, Walk, Run, Paddleboard or Aquathon events. Please join us for the 26th annual statewide event on June 16 in DCR's Hopkinton State Park and for the 19th annual statewide event on August 18 in DCR's Nickerson State Park. These uplifting events bring together people from all over New England for a morning of fun, family, and inspiration, while helping us raise funds for prevention. Your support is crucial to helping us to change the legacy of breast cancer for future generations. Learn more, register, or pledge at mbcc.org/swim, or call 800-649-MBCC.

Dr. Michael Misialek
Associate Chair of Pathology,
Newton-Wellesley Hospital
Assistant Clinical Professor of Pathology,
Tufts University School of Medicine
Medical Adviser,
Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition

Recycling Center seeking volunteers

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

Wachusett Food Pantry April distribution

Friday, April 20 for seniors (65+), and Saturday, April 21 for the general public. 9 to 11 a.m. Residents of Sterling, Holden, Paxton, Princeton, and Rutland are eligible. Proof of residency required. Located in the Cream Crock Distribution Building, 50 Worcester Road (Route 12), Sterling. The WFP is a 100 percent volunteer-run year-round operation that provides a monthly three- to five-day supply of emergency food to any family with either a short- or long-term need. Volunteers are asked to arrive no later than 8:30 a.m. to help with distribution.

Chandler

continued from page 1

to the lack of snow at Wachusett Mountain.

"That was heartbreaking for the athletes," she says. "This year we were nervous that the same thing would happen until we had two great snowstorms in March."

Chandler had the opportunity to travel to Austria for two weeks last winter to compete in the Special Olympics there with her team. They skied every day and competed in slalom, giant slalom, and super g events. Days began at 5 a.m. to ensure the athletes were ready for breakfast and on the bus to the mountain at 8 a.m. Coach's meetings at 10 p.m. followed days filled with skiing and awards ceremonies.

"Working with the athletes is what I enjoy most about the Special Olympics," she says. "Never underestimate how much a person with cognitive challenges can do. It's amazing when you push them and they respond. It's the best job in the world."

Chandler has four grandsons who all ski race, two at Wachusett Mountain and two in Washington state. Her son David is a coach at Wachusett with his two sons. Chandler and her fellow coaches arranged their Special Olympics training

day to a time that David was training his team, so he could help them with setting courses and coaching. They are hoping to create a unified team that includes both Special Olympic athletes and able-bodied racers who will train and race as a team in 2019 against other unified teams in the state.

Chandler is passionate about her nearly 40 years of involvement with adaptive sports, which is not limited to the Special Olympics. She recently spent a weekend with wounded veterans, a population she says is another of her favorites.

In December she ran a program in Breckenridge, Colorado, where 70 men and women veterans from rehab hospitals all over the country came to learn how to ski.

"They have some of the most significant physical and emotional challenges with lost limbs and traumatic brain injuries," Chandler says. "But it's another experience I wouldn't miss."

"During my tenure in this field, I can say that I've had the opportunity to travel the world working with people of all ages and abilities. At the end of every day, everyone – athletes, coaches, and parents – are so excited about what they've accomplished. It doesn't get better than that."

Editor's Note

In my years associated with Sterling Meetinghouse News, and having come from a large urban metropolis, I've given a lot of thought to the mission, purpose and importance of a community newspaper. When I had the opportunity to become editor of SMN, I embraced it as a chance to keep the tradition of a small community press, which is shrinking at an alarming rate throughout the country, going. Now, I embrace it as an opportunity to make that tradition thrive in Sterling. Unlike a big city, where individuals can remain hidden, whether by choice or circumstance, a small town gives each resident a forum in which to be heard and recognized. Nothing embodies that more than the Annual Town Meeting, where each community member has the right to vote on issues that affect our town now and for years to come. Today, I use this space to issue a "Call to Action" to each of my fellow townspeople. We may be a relatively small community, but we can be mighty. I urge you all to come to this year's Annual Town Meeting on Monday, May 7. Listen, think, and vote. It's what will keep our town strong. — Lex Thomas

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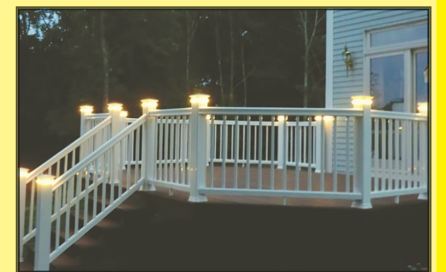
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Voters will decide marijuana bylaws at town meeting

by Danielle Ray

Voters will have three articles on the May 7 Annual Town Meeting warrant to vote upon regarding bylaws pertaining to regulation of recreational marijuana growth and distribution through establishments in Sterling.

The first article would completely prohibit recreational marijuana establishments in town. The second article would create modified protective bylaws to allow for recreational marijuana growth and distribution by establishments in light industrial areas only with several stipulations attached – stand alone facilities not to be in a building containing other retail, set back 500 feet from lot lines, and the establishment would have to obtain a special permit from the Planning Board in addition to the state license.

"If neither article passes, prohibition or regulation, the town is left unprotected," says Sterling Town Administrator Ross Perry. "Anybody that has a state license to sell marijuana and meets our standard business process based on zoning could come in, no different than someone coming in saying they want to open a bookstore."

The Board of Selectmen requested that the second article be put in place as a way to regulate marijuana establishments should prohibition be voted down. Because both articles pertain to zoning bylaws a 2/3 majority vote at town meeting is required.

"The Board of Selectmen had asked the Planning Board to consider a zoning article, which was suggested by the state," says Board of Selectmen Chair Maureen Cranson. "If the prohibition article fails, the town would have no

control of where cannabis can be grown or distributed in Sterling."

Two public hearings on the marijuana bylaws issue have been held over the past few months by the Planning Board. A dozen residents were in attendance at the second meeting on March 28. They unanimously favored zoning bylaws as opposed to total prohibition.

"The Board of Selectmen supports the second article because it insures some modicum of control," says Cranson. "There are no guarantees that prohibition will stick legally. If we have nothing in place, the town could get caught with their pants down."

If the second article passes, the third article would ask voters whether they want to place a 3 percent local sales tax on recreational marijuana sold in town, the maximum allowed by the state and in addition to state tax. The Finance Committee does not support prohibition. They are in favor of the potential revenue stream.

Perry has asked other towns in the area for their estimate on potential tax revenue from the local sales tax on recreational marijuana. Some are guessing it could be more than \$300,000 annually. "There's potential for tax revenue," he says.

At last year's town meeting, residents voted a moratorium on the cultivation and retail sales of recreational marijuana, which ends July 1.

"We need to do something if we want to control the marijuana industry in Sterling," says Cranson. "Anyone interested in either side of the issue needs to come to town meeting and vote. The route we take will be determined there."

This year's Annual Town Meeting warrant includes 37 articles that will be presented to Sterling residents for their vote on Monday, May 7. Pick up or download your copy of the warrant, bring it with you to the Annual Town Meeting, and help make informed decisions for your town. The warrant is available at the Butterick Municipal Building, Conant Public Library, 1835 Town Hall, Department of Public Works, Sterling Municipal Light Department, and online at sterling-ma.gov.

Dog licenses due

Louis Massa, Sterling's Animal Control Officer (ACO), reminds residents that the deadline to license your dog is April 15. Failure to obtain a license by April 15 will result in a \$25 fine in addition to the cost of the license, and may result in a complaint issued against the owner in Clinton District Court. For more information, call 978-422-7331.

Curbside trash/recycling schedule for April

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

SMLD hosts open house

The Sterling Municipal Light Department's annual open house will be held on Thursday, April 19, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 2 Leominster Road, Sterling. There will be trucks and equipment on display, a demonstration of how squirrels can disrupt electrical service, as well as the popular bucket truck ride and the power-generating bicycle. Hot dogs, popcorn and refreshments will be available, and SMLD staff will be on site to answer general electrical and day-to-day operations questions. Get information and sign up for our new Community Solar program, and tour our newly renovated office building. For more information, call the SMLD at 978-422-8267.

Spring 2018 brush dump schedule

The brush dump located behind the Sterling Police Department on George Peeso Lane will be open 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, April 21, April 28, May 5, May 12, and May 19. Open to Sterling residents only. For more information, visit the DPW web page at sterling-ma.gov.

Hydrant flushing

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

Mandatory odd/even water ban restriction

The odd/even water ban is in effect. All use of automatic irrigation systems and any type of lawn sprinkler must comply with the odd/even water system. 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 a hose is unrestricted and may be performed on any day or time. For more information, visit the DPW web page at sterling-ma.gov.

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Contributed PHOTO

Sterling Fire Chief David Hurlbut

Sterling fire chief earns re-accreditation

Sterling Fire Chief David Hurlbut has recently earned re-accreditation as the town's fire chief, effective immediately. Re-accreditation extends for three years. Chief Hurlbut and his staff and crew are well known in the community, and have come to the aid of countless numbers of people, both in Sterling and in surrounding communities. The town is fortunate to have emergency services that are equipped with state-of-the-art equipment and well-trained personnel. On behalf of our community, Sterling Meetinghouse News congratulates Chief David Hurlbut.

Sterling EMS accepting scholarship applications

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

Holden Grange announces scholarship

Holden Grange is offering its \$800 W. Sumner and Howard L. Jordan Scholarship to a graduating high school senior or student attending any recognized institution of learning beyond high school. Any applicant who does not belong to Holden Grange must reside

in Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, or Sterling and be pursuing a course of study in agriculture/horticulture, veterinary science, or conservation/environment. A Holden Grange member in good standing for at least one year preceding the date of application is eligible to pursue any course of study. Scholarship recipient will be named in June, and funds will be awarded upon successful completion of the first semester with at least a 3.0 grade point average. A letter of intent stating future educational goals and a description of three community activities or three Grange activities in which the applicant is involved must be accompanied by an official transcript and a letter of recommendation, and postmarked by May 1 to Holden Grange, 26 Glenwood Place, Rutland, MA 01543. For more information, contact 508-886-2341 or holden-grange78@gmail.com.

Chocksett Club scholarship application available

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

Worcester Central Pomona Grange announces scholarship

Applications for the Wesley Elvidge Scholarship sponsored by the Worcester Central Pomona Grange are available in the guidance department of area high schools or by emailing jordandairy-farm2@verizon.net. Anyone pursuing a course of study in an agricultural field, such as animal science, horticulture, veterinary medicine, conservation, or environment, is welcome to apply. Application deadline is May 1.

NRHS 3rd annual Arts Showcase

Students from the visual and performing arts departments at Nashoba Regional High School will present the 3rd annual Arts Showcase on Wednesday, April 25, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., in the school library, located at 12 Green Road, Bolton. The event features an art show installment in the library, musical acts performed by students in music classes and ensembles, and baked goods provided by food classes. Admission is free and open to the public. Donations are gratefully accepted, and will be used to support the arts departments and for next year's art show.

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School NEWS
Easter Egg Hunt



"On your mark, get set, go!" Sterling Rec director Kristen Dietel declares the start of the annual Easter egg hunt.



PHOTOS by Danielle Ray

At Left: Cold weather and snow didn't deter dozens of families that showed up for Sterling Rec's annual Easter egg hunt on Memorial Park on March 25.



At Right: Easter egg hunters (from left to right) Wyatt, Veronica and Charlotte Ray plan their tactic for collecting lots of eggs.

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Spring into a new job

The Arc of Opportunity in North Central Massachusetts in partnership with the North Central Career Center will host a spring job fair on Tuesday, April 17, 4:30 to 6 p.m. at The Arc of Opportunity located at 564 Main St., Fitchburg. The North Central Job Fair will feature a diverse group of local employers from Fitchburg, Leominster and surrounding towns with an immediate need to fill a variety of positions. Meet hiring managers from local companies, including The Arc of Opportunity, Heywood Healthcare, Kaleidoscope Family Solutions Massachusetts, USA Sanlaser Co., Catania Oils, New Hampshire Ball Bearings, Life Care of Nashoba Valley, Charter Communications, Potpourri Group, The Key Program, Massachusetts Department of Corrections, Westrock, Stanley Steamer, Settlers Crossing Enterprises, Inc, DRS Naval Power Systems, The Bridge of Central Mass, Fosta-Tek Optics, Seven Hills, The Institute of Professional Practice, and more. Free to job seekers, \$50 for employers interested in attending. To register prior to the event and to view an updated list of employers attending, visit arcofopportunity.org/jobfair.

LCU annual book drive

Leominster Credit Union is joining with credit unions throughout Massachusetts to collect new and gently used books during the month of April in association with the Cooperative Credit Union Association Annual Book Drive. Books collected will be donated to local organizations providing an educational resource for many children. Books may be dropped off at any Leominster Credit Union branch by April 27. For more information, contact Kathy Hurley at 978-466-7242 or khurley@leominstercu.com.

Chamber holds progressive “Business After Hours”

The Wachusett Area Chamber of Commerce will hold a progressive “Business After Hours” networking event on Tuesday, April 24 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at 61 Boyden Road, Holden. The event is co-sponsored and hosted by The Law Office of Melissa A. Gleick, Rawson & Sons Insurance Group, and Fairway Independent Mortgage, and will feature networking, food stations and Red Sox-themed door prizes. Chamber members \$15, non-members \$20. To register, call 508-829-9220, email info@wachusettareachamber.org, or visit wachusettareachamber.org.

Spring Shred-A-Thon

Leominster Credit Union will hold a Shred-A-Thon at its headquarters located at 20 Adams St., Leominster, on Saturday, May 5, 9 a.m. to noon. All items will be shredded on-site by a secure shredding service. 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 gratefully accepted. The Shred-A-Thon helps raise awareness about recycling and the importance of shredding personal documents to protect against identity theft.

Important documents to bring to the Shred-A-Thon include bank statements, tax returns, medical bills, credit card statements and other personal documents. For more information contact Joanne Lattanzi, AVP/Marketing, at 978-466-7240 or marketing@leominstercu.com

SMLD leads the way for solar + energy storage

The Sterling Municipal Light Department and Origis Energy USA are joining together for the Community Solar + Storage Project Dedication Ceremony on Tuesday, April 17, at 2 p.m., at 15-23 Chocksett Road, Sterling. This project is the first community solar + energy storage in Massachusetts. The system combines a 1 MWac rooftop solar installation with a 1 MW / 2 MW hours energy storage system to deliver dispatchable clean energy to Sterling’s residential ratepayers. Construction was announced for the Sterling Community Solar + Energy Storage project on January 24 and is now complete.

Climate Justice: A Moral Emergency

As part of the Eat, Pray, Learn series, First Church in Sterling will host a program on the topic of climate change on Wednesday, April 18, in the Parish Hall, at 6 Meetinghouse Hill Road. A light supper will be served at 6 p.m., followed by the program from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Professor Robert Krueger, Director of WPI’s Environmental and Sustainability Studies Program, will discuss climate justice, and Peder C. Pedersen, Professor Emeritus, WPI, and a member of First Church, will introduce basic climate change facts and ideas for climate change solution. There will be ample opportunity for questions and answers.

Climate change represents an existential threat to preserving planet earth as a livable place. Life in Massachusetts, away from the coast, has so far sheltered us from most climate change effects and thus made it far too easy to be lulled into complacency. But already, climate change has had a disproportionate

impact on communities of color, indigenous communities and poor white communities around the world. To render climate justice is to admit our complicity and then do our utmost to rectify the impact on such communities and especially on the future inhabitants of our planet: our children and grandchildren. The alternative is for them to inherit a hot, inhospitable planet. In the words of UCC minister Jim Antal, “We are the first generation to foresee and the final generation with opportunity to forestall the greatest effects of climate change.” Free. All are welcome.

Garden Club plant sale is coming

The Sterling Garden Club will hold its annual Plant Sale on Saturday, May 19 (rain or shine), 9 to 11 a.m., on the Sterling town common. Every year Sterling residents line up early to purchase beautiful perennials from club members’ gardens which have proven hardy in our climate. In addition to perennials, there will be annuals, herbs, trees, shrubs, grasses, ground covers, vegetables and hybrid daylilies. Plants are priced from \$4 to \$10 per pot, with unique plants and large shrubs priced slightly higher. Tickets will also be sold for a raffle of about 15 garden-themed items including books, jewelry, wreaths, plants, container gardens and other items. The raffle will be drawn at 10:45 a.m. Come early to purchase tickets. To donate plants to the sale or offer plants from your garden to be gathered by garden club members, call Vivian Pratt at 978-422-7970. All leftover plants are donated to Habitat for Humanity. Proceeds from the sale support Sterling civic beautification projects and educational programs for students in the Sterling schools, as well as other activities.

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Palm Sunday Promenade

PHOTOS by Linda Davis



Pastor Robin Bartlett (left), Pastor Megan Lynes, and the congregation of First Church in Sterling welcome Fiona the donkey to the Palm Sunday service on March 25.



Fiona the donkey led about 50 walkers on the 5 km Palm Sunday Promenade through the streets of Sterling. Participants raised \$13,000 to benefit First Church's outreach ministries, Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), and the Neighbor to Neighbor fund in Sterling.

Hometown Heroes



Contributed PHOTO

It's Y.A.H.O.O. time again! Watch for the orange shirts. It means youth volunteers are helping Sterling's seniors with yardwork.

It's Y.A.H.O.O. time again

April may bring spring showers, but it also marks the return of Sterling Y.A.H.O.O. – Young Adults Helping Out Others, a Sterling-based program in which teenage volunteers assist the elderly in town with yard work they can no longer do by themselves. The season begins on April 21, at the Shed (behind the Butterick Municipal Building). New and returning volunteers in grades 7 to 12 are encouraged to sign up. Parents are encouraged to participate, too, as Y.A.H.O.O. is always in need of adults to help with driving. Each year, Y.A.H.O.O. selects a charity for donation. This year, they have chosen NEADS in Princeton. Participants can help by bringing donations on Saturday mornings. These young people, fondly known as "Yahooligans," are heroes to the many Sterling seniors they help. They bring smiles, fun, and a willingness to help their community. See a group of kids wearing bright orange shirts? Give them a wave or honk your horn to let them know how much our town appreciates them. For more information and to sign up, visit sterlingyahoo.org.

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

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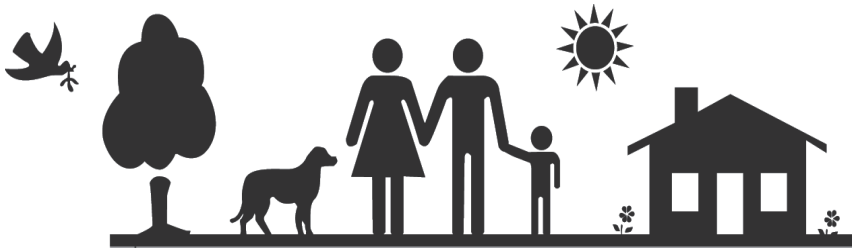
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More good news. . . Kitchen Associates received the Angie's List Super Service Award for 2014! If you are building a new home or remodeling, my wife and I highly recommend Kitchen Associates. We are enjoying the amazing functionality of our kitchen.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



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Nothing stops a great performance by The Crushers

by Danielle Ray

Local favorite teenage band The Crushers nailed their performance at the FutureStars Showcase 2018 at the Bull Run Restaurant in Shirley on March 25 despite lead singer James Barone losing his voice midway through the set due to illness. Their good friend and guest singer Anya Saben stepped up to lend her voice to 'Sweet Child O' Mine' by Guns 'n' Roses.

"Prior to the show our lead vocalist, James, woke up with a high fever and was on the verge of losing his voice," said drummer Ben Godbout. "He wanted to come to the show and give it his all, which he sure did!"

This was the band's third year performing in FutureStars which Godbout said "was a great experience to get our name out to more people." Godbout's brother Jonathan, guitar and vocals, along with Barone and brothers Jake and Zac Brennan, guitar and bass respectively, performed a six song set that included 'Everlong' by the Foo Fighters, an original song 'New Ways', 'Sweet Child O' Mine', The Godfather instrumental theme, another original 'Seven', and crowd favorite 'Enter Sandman' by Metallica, which Barone and Saben sang as a duet.

"Anya has been our guest vocalist before at the Gardner Ale House and is an amazing addition to the band," Godbout said. "Before the show we were rapidly changing our setlist around to play songs that James would have a better chance of singing and preserving his voice," adding that the situation made this one of their most difficult shows to date. But, like true professionals, the band seamlessly adjusted their set on the fly and incorporated an instrumental number. Godbout also sang one of their original tunes while they figured out how to proceed.

"We had asked Anya to be ready at any time if she was comfortable in doing so

in case James lost his voice on stage," explained Godbout. "James did lose his voice and Anya sang solo and nailed 'Sweet Child O' Mine' for the first time with us."

The FutureStars Showcase is sponsored by City Music in Leominster, where the band shops for a lot of their equipment and Saben takes voice lessons.

The band has been expanding their repertoire of cover songs as well as writing

new and original material since they formed nearly three years ago. The band members all played baseball together, and when they discovered they shared a love of music and performing, The Crushers was born.

According to Godbout, constant practice is the key to improving both individually and as a band. "We constantly work on originals. We write often and occasionally edit songs we've already written. We have about four or five originals at this time that we can play live. And we're learning lots of new covers to keep a fresh setlist for people who come to most of our shows."

The band hopes to perform at larger venues in future years and plans to write more music. They recently recorded their original song, 'Seven' at the WEMF radio station in Brighton, their first track to officially be recorded, which is currently being mixed and edited. They were also featured on the Fitchburg Access Television show 'Barbara and You'.

"We enjoy getting better each day and playing live," said Godbout. "Knowing that songs are sounding better and hoping to make the next show better than the last is very exciting."

Upcoming shows include the Southside Grille and Margarita Factory in Gardner on May 19, Princeton Fest on June 9, June 21 at the Gardner Ale House, and July 2 at Memorial Park in Sterling.

For show dates and band news, visit crushers.rockz.com.



The Crushers performing at at the FutureStars Showcase 2018 on March 25.

PHOTO by Danielle Ray

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Paying forward the kindness of a new community

In January, the Reverend Megan Lynes was appointed Minister of Faith Formation at First Church in Sterling. Intern reporter Albert Jersey recently caught up with her to ask about her first few weeks in Sterling and her goals.

SMN: What led you to become a pastor at First Church in Sterling?

ML: I was drawn to First Church in Sterling because kindness, respect, having an open mind and a joyful collaborative spirit are at the very heart of this religious community. This congregation is prayerful and reverent, fun and playful, and cares immensely about contemporary world issues, always seeking to make a positive difference. In this congregation, important dialogue about tough issues is possible because we agree to listen to one another with an open mind. So often we find that our underlying values are the same. For example, we all want to keep our children safe. How can we do that? Let's think together, rather than simply turning away from people with opposing views.

SMN: What do you appreciate most about the community of Sterling?

ML: Senior Pastor Robin Bartlett has been a good friend for years and I've always admired her ministry. I have a soft spot for rural places and small towns where you know your neighbors, take care of each other and help one another in tough times. So when Pastor Robin reached out to me in search of a Minister of Faith Formation, I said yes. I had been serving as one of the ministers at the First Parish in Bedford for nine years and felt ready for a change. I'm so grateful that I get to be a pastor to youth and families especially. I love working with young people and this match has already been more than I could have hoped for.



Pastor Megan Lynes

Contributed PHOTO

SMN: What are your biggest goals at this point?

ML: People come to church for so many different reasons: for inspiration, to pray or grieve, to celebrate, to be reminded of ultimate truths, and most of all to make meaning of our lives. As the Pastor of Faith Formation, I help support programming for people of all ages, not only children. My primary goals right now are to learn what adult and Sunday school programs are working well and what we could do better.

SMN: You are the currently president of the Mass Bay Chapter of UU Ministers and have worked for the Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries. What do you like the most about those groups?

ML: First Church in Sterling is a federated congregation with ties to two denominations, the United Church of Christ, and the Unitarian Universalist Association. My current position serving as the president of the Unitarian Universalist ministers in the Mass Bay area is something I value greatly because it connects me with nearly 200

Paying Forward continued page 10

Karen's Market Analysis

Finding your home value

by Karen Packard Realtor®

Home values are changing rapidly in Sterling. There might be a big difference in what your house was worth six months ago compared to today. Finding the value of a property is what Realtors® specialize in. At many appointments, I hear things like "I looked up my Zestimate® on Zillow®, so I know what my house is worth," or "My friend has a similar house in a different town so mine is probably worth the same as hers." First of all, you should never rely on the Zestimate®. Zillow® has an algorithm that factors in many aspects of the house and area, but it will never take the place of having a local expert give you a market analysis for the value of your home. Every house has unique features that factor into pricing the house for sale. Every town is different and even neighborhoods within the same town can change the house value. Having a full time local real estate agent come into the house to see all the features, layout and upgrades is the most accurate way of determining the value.

In order to price a home correctly, agents look at what the most similar properties have sold for within the past few months. Because the market changes constantly, what happened in your neighborhood a few years ago can be very different than what is happening right now. Real estate agents look at the most recent sales, the most similar style, living area, number of bedrooms, bathrooms, finished basements, garages and more. Then we adjust mathematically to calculate how your home differs in comparison to homes that have recently sold.

Updates, pools, views, and unique features all get calculated to come up with the value of your home in today's market. If you decide to sell in the future, your Realtor® should redo the entire market analysis, starting with the most recent sales, to make sure your value is current with the market.

Websites and apps can be fun to play with, but when looking for an accurate value when selling your most valuable asset, call a full time local expert. We will help you get the correct price for your home, whenever you decide to sell.

Have a real estate question? Email your questions to me at kpackardrealtor@gmail.com, and I'll be happy to answer them next month in this column or directly to you.



Karen Packard

Contributed PHOTO

KAREN PACKARD
Realtor®

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Paying Forward

continued from page 9

other ministers locally. I help organize learning opportunities for ministers where we can nurture excellence in ministry. Sometimes ministers can become isolated in their work, but when we meet as colleagues and hold each other accountable and help each other with our struggles, we are all the better for it, both individually and in terms of serving in our ministries more effectively. Before I became a parish minister I worked for Cooperative Metropolitan Ministries, organizing interfaith activism, and summer camp experiences for teenagers from many faith backgrounds. The focus was to connect across differences, so that we might serve the common good and come to understand and respect each other's traditions, beliefs and practices. When we build connection and respect and friendship, so much is possible.

SMN: How can people make a difference in the community?

ML: In my new position here in Sterling, I've felt the kindness of strangers, and I want to be part of paying that forward. The world we live in today often keeps us fearful or disconnected from our neighbors. But Sterling is a town that offers endless opportunities to jump in and collaborate with others and form bonds through shared experience. It can be as simple as talking to someone in line at the bank, coaching a soccer team with a fellow parent, volunteering in Sunday school, or serving on a town committee. What could be more rewarding than building up the common good side by side? Putting love into action has endless possibilities.

Sterling-Lancaster Community TV

Broadcast Schedule April 14 to April 20 2018 Comcast Channel 8			Broadcast Schedule April 21 to April 27, 2018 Comcast Channel 8		
Saturday	Genre		Saturday	Genre	
12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Abraham Lincoln	Entertainment	12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - DOA	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Abraham Lincoln	Entertainment	4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - DOA	Entertainment
6:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview	6:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
8:00 AM	Village Church Service	Religion	8:00 AM	Village Church Service	Religion
10:00 AM	College Church Service	Religion	10:00 AM	College Church Service	Religion
12:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News	12:00 PM	Dish it Out - Best Burger	Cooking
12:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals	12:00 PM	Dish it Out - Best Burger	Cooking
1:00 PM	Tomorrow Today - Robots with Human Emotions	Documentaries	1:00 PM	Euromax - What's Cooking?	Documentaries
2:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News	1:30 PM	Lucky Pro Wrestling - Halloween Bash Oct 14 Pt 1	Local
2:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals	3:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Best Antique Cars at History Park	Hobby
3:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Pacific Coast Dream Machines	Hobby	4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Loving Lobster	Children
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Time Train	Children	5:00 PM	Precious Metals Flute Concert	Music
5:00 PM	Valley Homegrow - Party Wolf	Music	6:30 PM	The Song - Wanda Metcalf	Music
6:00 PM	Capital Jazzfest - Walbass Krash	Music	7:00 PM	Euromax - What's Cooking?	Documentaries
7:00 PM	Tomorrow Today - Robots with Human Emotions	Documentaries	7:30 PM	Lucky Pro Wrestling - Halloween Bash Oct 14 Pt 1	Local
8:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News	9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Best Antique Cars at History Park	Hobby
8:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals	10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview
9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Pacific Coast Dream Machines	Hobby			
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview			
			Sunday		
12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Abraham Lincoln	Entertainment	12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - DOA	Entertainment
4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Abraham Lincoln	Entertainment	4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - DOA	Entertainment
7:00 AM	Trinity Bolton Church Service	Religion	7:00 AM	Trinity Bolton Church Service	Religion
9:00 AM	ECC Church Service	Religion	9:00 AM	ECC Church Service	Religion
11:00 AM	Trinity Lutheran Church Service	Religion	11:00 AM	Trinity Lutheran Church Service	Religion
12:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News	12:00 PM	Dish it Out - Best Burger	Cooking
12:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals	1:00 PM	Euromax - What's Cooking?	Documentaries
1:00 PM	Tomorrow Today - Robots with Human Emotions	Documentaries	1:30 PM	Lucky Pro Wrestling - Halloween Bash Oct 14 Pt 1	Local
2:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News	3:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Best Antique Cars at History Park	Hobby
2:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals	4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Loving Lobster	Children
3:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Pacific Coast Dream Machines	Hobby	5:00 PM	Precious Metals Flute Concert	Music
4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Time Train	Children	6:30 PM	The Song - Wanda Metcalf	Music
5:00 PM	Valley Homegrow - Party Wolf	Music	7:00 PM	Euromax - What's Cooking?	Documentaries
6:00 PM	Capital Jazzfest - Walbass Krash	Music	7:30 PM	Lucky Pro Wrestling - Halloween Bash Oct 14 Pt 1	Local
7:00 PM	Tomorrow Today - Robots with Human Emotions	Documentaries	9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Best Antique Cars at History Park	Hobby
8:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	News	10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview
8:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals			
9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Pacific Coast Dream Machines	Hobby	Monday - Friday		
10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview	12:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Rich and Strange	Entertainment
			4:00 AM	Saturday Night at the Movies - Rich and Strange	Entertainment
			7:30 AM	Barbara and You	Interview
			9:00 AM	What's Cooking in Lakeville-Kale Soup & Corn Bread	Cooking
			10:00 AM	In Good Shape - Potato Health Benefits	Health
			11:00 AM	Car Guy Channel - Hennessey's Car Collection	Hobby
			12:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	Educational
			12:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
			1:00 PM	Conflict Zone - German Social Democrats in Berlin	Documentaries
			2:00 PM	Church Services	Religion
			4:00 PM	Childrens Corner - Movieman	Children
			5:00 PM	Valley Homegrow - Creacion Big Band	Music
			6:00 PM	Capital Jazzfest - Angela Hagenbach	Music
			7:00 PM	Conflict Zone - German Social Democrats in Berlin	Documentaries
			8:00 PM	Channel 8 Community Updates	Educational
			8:30 PM	Pawdoption	Animals
			9:00 PM	Car Guy Channel - Hennessey's Car Collection	Hobby
			10:00 PM	Barbara and You	Interview

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

Rec NEWS

Get in shape for summer with Sterling Rec

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

Register today for summer programs

Sterling Recreation is excited to announce our programs for Summer 2018! Visit SterlingRec.com to see all our great offerings and register now, as programs fill up quickly. Brochures are available at the Butterick Municipal Building, Conant Public Library, DPW, Chocksett Middle School, and Houghton Elementary School.

Active Kids

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

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

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

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

After School Tennis at Houghton – Grades 1 to 4. Wednesdays, May 9 to June 6, 4 to 5 p.m. Houghton Elementary School gym. \$100.

Wicked Cool for Kids – Grades 1 to 4. Thursday, May 25, 1 to 3:30 p.m. Sterling Senior Center. \$50/class.

Art and Creativity for Kids

Homework Club – Grades 5 to 8. Mondays and Thursdays, 3 to 5 p.m. Chocksett Middle School library. \$10/day. Registration forms available at school office.

Cooking – Grades 5 to 8. Tuesdays, 3 to 4:30 p.m. May 8 to 29. Chocksett Middle School cafeteria. \$120.

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

Robotics and Coding – Grades 3 and 4. Tuesdays, May 1 to June 5, 4 to 5 p.m. Houghton Middle School. Presented by CodeWiz. \$220.

Active Adults and Teens at 1835 Town Hall

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

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

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

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

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

Naga Fitness with Gina at 1835 Town Hall

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

Kettlebells – Saturday 8 to 9 a.m.

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

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2nd Annual Road Race coming to town

by Jamie Chase Galvin



Calling all walkers, runners, and springtime enthusiasts looking for a way to get active! The Sterling Recreation Department's 2nd Annual Road Race is slated for Saturday, April 14 at 9 a.m. With both 5K and 10K runs, as well as a 5K walk option, there's something for everyone looking to kick off spring with some outdoor fitness. Registration is open up until the morning of the race, which begins at the Griffin Road fields behind Chocksett Middle School and follows a well-planned route ensuring a safe and fun run for everyone.

"Our goal is to provide an opportunity for the community to get out and moving to celebrate the start of spring," says Recreation Director Kristen Dietel.

With scheduling issues due to snow and a cold, rainy day for last year's race, Dietel is hopeful for better weather this time around.

She and everyone working behind the scenes have expended a tremendous amount of effort to ensure a smooth day for the second annual road race. "The race doesn't come together overnight and it takes true teamwork to make it happen," she says. "We needed approval from the Board of Selectmen before we could book the date with the timing company, RaceWire. This year we looked at a lot of calendars to try to find a date that didn't conflict with too many other activities, and is hopefully outside the window for snow. We've worked hard on advertising. This year we relied on local running clubs to promote us and put the event on their calendars, and on local publications to spread the word."

The success of race day depends on many volunteers and community members to ensure smooth sailing for participants. "Heading into race day we rely on supplies from the DPW, help from the police and fire departments to ensure safety, and lots of fabulous community volunteers," says Dietel. A booth staffed by Sterling's own All-Access Physical Therapy will give runners and walkers an opportunity to talk to experienced physical therapists.

"We're incredibly thankful to everyone that makes this event possible," says Dietel. "Even those that don't choose to run or walk are welcome along the route or at the finish line to cheer us on. It's really a community event with something for everyone."

For information, including fees and registration, visit SterlingRecRuns.Racewire.com.

Fit Wire

HIIT It!

by Kylie Kukla,
Custom Fitness Trainer



Kylie Kukla

Contributed PHOTO

HIIT: (High Intensity Interval Training) is the "new" craze that's hitting the fitness world. While it's definitely not a new training system, it has gotten more notoriety recently as a buzzword for gyms, and for good reason. HIIT is a form of training that combines short periods of intense anaerobic exercise coupled with brief recovery periods.

One of the major advantages of HIIT is its time efficiency. Instead of spending an hour walking on a treadmill, or watching the minutes tick by slowly on the elliptical, HIIT-style training can be done in just 20 minutes if done correctly, while still burning your target number of calories, or even more.

The key to HIIT lies in the intensity at which you perform it. The idea is to work as hard as you can for a certain amount of time, and then rest just as hard. For example, to turn treadmill sprints into a 20-minute heart rate-raising, calorie-burning, sweat-inducing HIIT workout, you simply sprint at your maximum capacity for a certain amount of time, say 30 seconds, then rest for 30 seconds or longer, allowing your heart rate to return to normal before going for another all-out 30-second sprint.

Here are some more of our favorite HIIT workouts:

Spin Sprint – Same idea as a treadmill sprint, but using a spin bike. With the bike, you are also able to turn up the resistance, adding another level of intensity to the workout.

Circuits – Choose four or five exercises, perform them back to back with no rest in between, and then repeat. Try to use exercises that really get your heart rate cranked up, and involve jumping or running up stairs.

Sled Pushes – This is a great way to get your heart rate up quickly. Perform a given number of pushes before taking a break to allow your heart rate to return to baseline. Alternatively, do 30 seconds of an all-out sprint with the pushes, resting for a minute afterwards, and repeat.

The great thing about all of these workouts is the ability to change them each time. One week you can do spin sprints, 30 seconds on and 30 seconds off. The following week, try 20 plate pushes, then 20 seconds of an all-out treadmill sprint. This will prevent you from becoming bored with your workout, making it fun and different each time.

HIIT is a great alternative to a fast and effective calorie torching workout, without spending hours on a machine watching the seconds tick by, and not really feeling that you worked up a sweat, or pushed yourself. Give it a try, and discover a HIIT!



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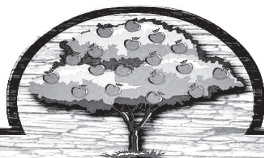
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Passes available for school vacation activities

Are you looking for things to do with the kids during April school vacation? The Friends of the Conant Public Library offers passes to the Discovery Museums in Acton, Davis Farmland in Sterling, the deCordova Sculpture Park and Museum in Lincoln, the EcoTarium in Worcester, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, the Museum of Russian Icons in Clinton, the New England Aquarium in Boston, and the Worcester Art Museum. One parking pass for Massachusetts parks is also available. Passes provide free or reduced admission, and can be reserved in advance at the Conant Public Library, 4 Meetinghouse Hill Road, Sterling.

The Friends of the Conant Public Library supports many programs and resources that are available through the library, including children's programs and these passes to cultural attractions. For information about becoming a member, send an email to friendsof-conant@gmail.com. Membership forms are available at the library. To join online, visit SterlingLibrary.org, click on "About the Library," then "Friends of the Library."

Spring fun at the library

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

Especially for kids

Picture Book Club – Children in grades K through 2 are invited to join the Picture Book Club on Thursday, April 12, at 4 p.m. This month's selection is *Here We Are: Notes for Living on Planet Earth* by Oliver Jeffers. Copies of the book are available at the library for checkout. Registration required.

Drop-In Crafternoon: Earth Day Theme – Reuse and create using recycled materials. Tuesday, April 17, from 1 to 4 p.m. For children of all ages. No registration required.

Breakerspace: Tinker, Dismantle, Rebuild – Thursday, April 19, from 1 to 4 p.m. For children in grades 2 and up. Tinker, dismantle and rebuild old electronics and toys. No registration, but caregiver supervision is required.

Storytime – Sign-up starts Monday, April 23, at 10 a.m., for the next 6-week storytime series starting the week of May 7 until the week of June 11. Storytimes feature songs, movement, scarf and instrument play, as well as great books. Mondays at 2 p.m., ages 3 and up. Tuesdays at 10:30 a.m., ages 18 months to 3 years. Tuesdays at 2 p.m., all ages. Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m., ages 3 and up. Thursdays at 10:30 a.m., Drop-in baby storytime, birth to 2 (no registration required). Registration is limited.

Drop-In LEGO – Wednesday, April 25, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For children of all ages. Children under 10 must be accompanied by a caregiver. No registration required.

Kids Cook – Thursday, April 26, at 6:30 p.m., for youth in grades 3 and up. This month, instead of using a cookbook, cook your favorite recipe at home and bring it in to share. Registration required.

Adult coloring

Discover the stress-reducing and relaxing benefits of coloring at Conant Public Library's adult coloring program. Wednesday, April 11, and Monday, April 30, at 6:30 p.m. Supplies available or bring your own. No registration required.

Cougars in New England?

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

What's cooking at the Cookbook Club?

Enjoy great food and discover delicious sweet and savory recipes featuring fresh fruits and vegetables from *The Harvest Baker* by Ken Haedrich on Wednesday, April 25, at 6:30 p.m. Prepare a dish, and bring it to the library for an evening of good food, great conversation, and new recipes. Cookbooks are available at the library. To register, call 978-422-6409.

Parents' Night Out Book Club

Enjoy an evening out with a good book and good company. The Parents' Night Out Book Club features different family- and parenting-themed books each month. Wednesday, May 9, at 6:30 p.m., the club will discuss the humorous and heartfelt novel *This Was Not the Plan* by Cristina Alger. Books available at the library. No registration required.

Sew with a Pro

Do you have sewing projects that you aren't sure how to complete? Sewing pro Cathie Ryan will be on hand to help and advise on Wednesday, May 16 and Wednesday, May 23 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.; and Thursday, May 31 and Thursday, June 7 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Bring sewing projects, including all supplies needed and sewing machines. Participants will be assisted on a first-come, first-served basis. No registration required.

Calling all writers

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

Memoir writing workshop

Seven Bridge Writers' Collaborative presents *Memoir: Finding and Shaping your Story* with Paul Hertnecky on Saturday, April 21, 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Thayer Memorial Library, 717 Main St., Lancaster. Writing personal narrative demands that we find the truth, use stories to support it, and reveal it in a way that matters to the reader. Paul Hertnecky presents powerful lessons for memoirists on techniques and strategies that appeal to readers. For information, visit sevenbridge.org/seven-bridge-sessions/april/.

Local Authors Day

Join local authors as they read from their most recent published works, answer questions about writing, and sign books available for purchase. Featured authors are Ali Hosseini (fiction novelist), Victor Infante (journalist, poet, writer), Andrew Linnell (children's picture books), Ruth McCarty (mystery writer), James Nicola (poet and dramatist), Christian Reifsteck (poet), Corinne Smith (Henry David Thoreau specialist), and Ursula Wong (historical fiction writer). Saturday, May 5, 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Thayer Memorial Library, 717 Main St., Lancaster. For information, visit sevenbridge.org/seven-bridge-sessions/may/bridging-writers/.

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Taste of Sterling a tasteful success

by Danielle Ray

The 5th annual Taste of Sterling, held at Sterling National Country Club on March 18, was a resounding success with \$3,000 raised to benefit the Friends of the Sterling Seniors. Over 250 attendees noshed on cuisine from a dozen local restaurants and organizations. The event has grown in popularity and attendance has nearly doubled over the years. The community fundraiser helps fund senior center programs, special holiday events and luncheons.

"We like the idea of highlighting not just the Friends and their efforts, but local vendors as well," says event organizer and Friends of the Sterling Seniors President Maureen Cranson. "Showing that you don't have to travel too far for a great meal, some take out, or a catered event, and we offer a wonderful variety of choices. It's a great way to support the group, meet new friends, connect with old friends, and it's a bargain at \$15."

Friends of the Sterling Seniors is also partnered with the Council on Aging and helps support their YMCA programs as well as some Conant Public Library events. Funds raised have been used to purchase artist rails installed at the Sterling Senior Center to spotlight local artists, as well as other items for the senior center including laptops, coffee, game boards, Wii bowling equipment, and more.

"When the senior center has a need, we try to fulfill it," says Cranson. "When they extended their newsletter from nine months to 12, we were able to support the additional printing and mailing costs, and when they needed another freezer and a small refrigerator for a breakfast nook, the Friends funds were there in support."

Cranson says she has a wonderful and dedicated team who helps her to organize the event each year. Volunteers solicit vendors, help set up and clean up, step in to run a booth if a vendor can't be present, and sell tickets.

Sterling National Country Club has hosted the event for the past few years, a partnership that Cranson loves and values. She also appreciates the vendors who are dedicated to ensuring the success of the event.

This year's vendors included The Brick, Lilacs of Sterling, Meadowbrook Orchards, Mike and Brianna's Cupcakes, Similan Thai Bistro, Sterling Deli & Chinese, Sterling Fire Association, Sterling Healthcare & Rehabilitation Center, Sterling National Country Club, Sterling Senior Center, Village Pizza, and Zaytoon. Sterling Odd Jobs with Patrick Lane provided valet parking. In addition, local businesses Miles-Sterling Funeral Home & Tribute, Solar & Kilcoyne, PC, Atlantic Tent Rental, and Over Easy Cafe helped to sponsor this year's event.



PHOTO by Danielle Ray

(Left to right) Bob Protano, Karen Packard and Mark Packard.



PHOTO by Danielle Ray

Friends of the Sterling Seniors Treasurer Greg Billings and Senior Center Director Veronica Buckley.

Garden Guru

Annuals or perennials? Plant your garden with both

by Mark Packard



Contributed PHOTO

Well, the snow is finally gone and spring is springing! Any day now, you'll notice the forsythia starting to bloom bright yellow and bulbs poking through the mulch. Other early bloomers that are a little less common are flowering almond, red bud trees, and sand cherries. These early bloomers bring some welcome color to our landscape in early spring, but probably the most noticeable color of all is creeping phlox. Creeping phlox is a groundcover perennial that is commonly found hanging over retaining walls or along walkways. The bright pink, white, blue and purple is eye catching, to say the least. Creeping phlox is an easy plant to grow. It tolerates full sun and thrives in areas where other, more sensitive perennials, don't. Creeping phlox is a great perennial for rock gardens.

Perennials are replacing annuals more and more. Perennials come up every year, making them more cost effective and less work in the spring. With the right landscape design you can mix perennials, shrubs and trees to have color all year. One reason people still use annuals is because they bloom for several months instead of just a few weeks. There are, however, re-blooming shrubs and perennials that will blossom a second time giving a longer bloom season. The re-blooming hydrangea was one of the first, but now there are re-blooming lilacs, dianthus, and even a re-blooming tree called the autumn flowering cherry that blooms in both spring and fall!

One of the most common questions I get at this time of the year is "Is it too early to plant?" You can plant trees, shrubs and hardy annuals like pansies now, but don't plant your vegetable garden yet. Vegetables and annuals shouldn't be planted until after the full moon in May. This year the full moon is May 29.

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Seniors staying strong

by Liz Pape

The Sterling Senior Center recognizes that good health and strong bones are keys to keeping seniors safe and decreasing falls. Nutrition and exercise are critical components. Since January, all our lunches are prepared at the senior center, and every lunch meets senior nutritional standards – our menu is reviewed and approved by our partner, the Montachusett Opportunity Council. Our lunches provide critical vitamins for strong bone health, and taste great! Join us for lunch Monday through Friday at 11:30 a.m. No reservation required.

Exercise is critical to staying strong and limber, and the senior center is committed to providing a variety of classes and programs to keep us moving. Since opening, we've added Tai chi, pickleball, chair pilates, zumba and line dancing to our existing chair yoga, pilates and chair exercise classes. Our instructors work hard to make exercise fun and safe, and can modify traditional exercises to meet the needs and abilities of seniors. Improved posture, better balance and general well-being are some of the benefits that come with regular exercise. Classes are scheduled every week and anyone can attend on a drop-in basis. One of our new 8-week exercise programs is Golf Fitness, Thursdays at 4:30 p.m. It's still a drop-in class, but will run for only eight weeks,

helping golfers and wannabe golfers get into condition for the season. We've also begun 8-week exercise programs including Senior Strong and Stepping Out, which are designed to progressively build strength and balance by providing exercises that increase in duration or intensity over the course of the program. Although these classes require you to commit to the entire eight weeks, the benefits are well worth it because they get results. Our initial Senior Strong program, which ran last September through November, had 21 enrollees, with 16 completing the class. Using the Berg Balance Scale for baseline and post testing, an average 15 percent improvement was noted. In our last Senior Strong program, which ended in March, enrollees had a 17.6 percent improvement in the Balance Evaluation Systems Test, and a 59 percent improvement in the Sit to Stand test. We've been so satisfied with the results of our 8-week Senior Strong program that we're seeking grant funding to offer it again.

Our mission at the Sterling Senior Center is to maintain the health and well-being of Sterling's seniors and to assist them with preserving their independence. Our nutrition and exercise programs do just that. Visit us at the center and give us a try.

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

Get to know your Senior Center

Located at 36 Muddy Pond Road, the Sterling Senior Center is open Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Thursday, 8 a.m. to 6 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 anytime Monday to Friday. The Sterling Senior Center serves a home-cooked lunch at 11:30 daily for anyone 60+. Check the Sterling Council on Aging newsletter for daily menu. \$3 suggested donation. No reservation needed. Meals on Wheels is available for our homebound seniors.

Volunteer at the Senior Center

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

Special upcoming events

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

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

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

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

Artist opening reception – Thursday, May 3, 6 to 8 p.m. Featured artists during May and June are students from Houghton and Chocksett schools. Student string ensemble will perform during the opening reception.

Mother's Day Tea – Friday, May 11, 1 p.m. For a complete listing of senior center calendar events, visit sterling-ma.gov/senior-center or pick up a newsletter at the Senior Center. Check out our Facebook page.

April program highlights

Golf Fitness 8-Week Workshop – Thursdays, 4:30 p.m. Join a fun 8-week session

dedicated to golfers looking to improve their game. The focus will be on increasing flexibility, balance, and strength, using Pilates, yoga exercises, and stretches associated with a golf swing. Instructor Jennifer Davidson is a two-time ironman finisher and marathoner and holds multiple certifications in yoga, Pilates, and fitness. \$5/class.

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

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

Acrylic painting

Thursdays, at 12:30 p.m. Open to new and returning students. Learn the basics and more. Go at your own pace. Learn to paint landscapes, seascapes, trees, flowers, and much more. Weekly demonstrations. Paints and brushes available for the first class. (Supply list available at front desk). Learn to mix paints to create a multitude of hues using just a few colors. Discover creative strokes to make your paintings come alive. \$5/class.

Food Pantry delivery

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

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Vernal Pool Discovery Program

Come and learn why vernal pools are a vital part of the ecosystems within the Wachusett Watershed. These pools that dry up later in the year are teeming with life in the spring. Participants will learn how to identify vernal pools in the field and search within the pools for organisms that rely on them for habitat. Dress appropriately to be outdoors in the woods for part of the program. Sunday, April 15, at noon. Meet at Stillwater Farm Interpretive Center, 228 Redemption Rock Road, Sterling. For more information, call the Wachusett Ranger Station at 978-365-3800.

Kids' Fishing Derby

The Eight Point Sportsmen's Club will hold its 2018 Kids' Spring Fishing Derby on Saturday, April 21, and Sunday, April 22, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day at 147 Beaman Road, Sterling. There is a three-fish daily limit. Registration is \$3 for juniors (15 and under) and \$7 for adults (16+). Separate registration for each day. Prizes awarded to all juniors each day. Trophies awarded to first, second, and third place overall finishers after 4 p.m. on Sunday. The snack shack will be open for purchasing refreshments.

Roundtable discussion with Sterling farmers

The Sterling Agricultural Commission will host a roundtable discussion with a panel of local farmers about the state of agriculture and open land in town. Topics will include land preservation, agriculture tourism, the farmers' market, proactive pest and disease management, and the next generation of local farmers. Tuesday, April 24, 6:30 to 8 p.m., at the Sterling Senior Center, 36 Muddy Pond Road, Sterling. Free and open to the public. Light refreshments will be served.

American Legion meeting

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

What happened to the Andrea Doria?

The Sterling Historical Society will host the program *Desperate Hours: The Loss of the Andrea Doria*, presented by Lester Paquin and Lucy Allen of the Barre Historical Society, on Tuesday, May 8, at 7 p.m., at the Sterling Legion Hall, School Street, Sterling. The year was 1956, Eisenhower was in the White House, and Elvis Presley was just becoming a household name. What happened to the Italian ocean liner Andrea Doria, on July 25,

1956? Everyone is welcome to come and hear this amazing story. Refreshments will be served. For more information, call 978 422-6139 or email loret.schur@gmail.com.

Central Mass Lyme Foundation meeting

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

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

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

First Church community lunch welcomes everyone

First Church in Sterling will host their next community lunch on Saturday, May 5, at noon. All are welcome at no cost. No reservations required. Enjoy a dinner-type meal in a warm, respectful setting on the first Saturday of each month at 6 Meetinghouse Hill Road, Sterling. The parish hall is accessible. For more information, call 978-422-6657.

Treasures of the Community Gala

First Church in Sterling's 12th Annual Treasures of the Community Gala will take place on Saturday, May 12, at Devens Common Center, 31 Andrews Parkway, Devens. Tickets are \$70 per person and on sale until May 1. The event features live and silent auctions, cash bar cocktail hour with appetizers, and a buffet dinner. Auction items include sporting event tickets, home décor services, IT support, tutoring, spa and wellness services, homeowner services, handcrafted items, antiques, theme gift packages, vacation adventures, weekend getaways, restaurant gift certificates, and fine wines. View items in advance at fcstreasures.com. The Treasures of the Community Gala has raised \$256,000 to date. This year's goal is \$46,500 to benefit First Church in Sterling's events, community lunches, and other programs; Neighbor to Neighbor, a fund that assists individuals and families in Sterling that

have demonstrated financial need with payments toward housing, food, utilities, clothing and other essential living costs; Interfaith Hospitality Network, an organization that serves homeless families in the Worcester area; and the La Romana mission trip, which has travelled to the Dominican Republic for the past 24 years to build the Good Samaritan General Hospital and provide health care and access to clean water to thousands of poor in remote cane cutter villages.

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

Register for Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition events

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

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

Got paint?

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

St. Richard's breakfast supports sister village

St. Richard's Church in Sterling hosts a Community Sunday Morning Breakfast that is open to the public every Sunday from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. Proceeds from the breakfast support St. Richard's "Sister Village" of Los Patzanes, Guatemala.

Everyone is welcome to enjoy a delicious breakfast. For information, call 978-422-8881.

ReStore seeks donations

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

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

Nar-Anon support group

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

Golden-eyed tuxie



Brittany

Three year-old Brittany is a gorgeous tuxedo lady with pretty gold eyes. She is very friendly and will be sure to want lots of belly rubs and hugs. All of Brittany's veterinary work is complete. She's leukemia negative, spayed, and has a microchip. All cats are placed as indoors-only pets. Adoption fee is \$175. NEADY Cats is located in Sterling, and welcomes dedicated volunteers. For more information about volunteer opportunities, or to schedule an appointment to meet Brittany or any of the kitties, email Marilyn@neadycats.org, or call 978-422-5116.

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Karen and Mark Packard

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"Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible" -St. Francis of Assisi