

Parents say why they dislike Summit...

BY KEITH KENT
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

Serious parental concerns were raised about the current usage of the Summit learning curriculum used by Winchendon at the March 14 meeting of the school committee.

Many concerns were first addressed by Scott and Kimberly Gahagen, with son and eighth grade MMS high honors student Nicholas Gahagen, opening by reading a letter to the committee addressing not only with extreme dis-

pleasure that Summit Learning taking between four to five hours of computer screen time per day, but well exceeding a nationally recommended doctors average of two hours screen time daily for children.

Gahagen's letter in part read, "The user is expected to advance through the school year and learn all the information almost entirely individually. Those on the school board: Would you like to be subjected to this? I find it to be a constant mental and emotional battle to stay up to expectations."
"I have seen students fall

behind to the point where they no longer care," he continued, and "Clearly a self-guided learning style does not satisfy every student," said young Gahagen, who also informed the committee about students who varied from racing through all materials by December, to those who have not yet completed materials from last September.

The letter closed with, "Now my advice to the school board: listen to my complaints and the complaints of many adults, who are just concerned for their children's wellbeing. You

say that Summit is a tool, but it dominates every corner of the school day, forcing us to keep up almost entirely individually. Many parents are obviously disappointed at the program and at the school. If conditions are not soon improved, the school may suffer, and investments may be lost. The program may not be able to stay at the school. I hope the school board is able to make the right decision."

Members of the committee thanked Gahagen for his articulate letter and notifying them of his concerns as a student.

His father Scott Gahagen then read a statement to the committee, opening a Power Point presentation with, "When there is a push back in school reform and it is rejected those who do the pushing back often get blamed for not embracing change or they are made to sound like they do not know better."

The presentation read in part they are for, "school reform, improving the quality of education, and change based on sound research, prov-

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Greg Vine photos

A worker checks out blueprint for the Clark's new facility

Clark Community Center moves forward

BY GREG VINE
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

If all goes well, the new community center under construction at the Clark Memorial YMCA should be completed by the end of May. That's according to Clark Executive Director Mike Quinn. Ground was broken on the \$1.6 million project on Nov. 4 of last year.

The shell of the building is nearly complete, with only the pointing of brickwork and some work on expansion

and joints to be finished, says Quinn. Most of the action now is taking place inside the building, which will house a gymnastics center, rooms for before and after school programs, and public meeting space.

The gymnastics center accounts for about half of the 13,600-square-foot facility. According to Quinn, about 300 youngsters participate in the Clark's gymnastics program annually. The center will have a spring floor

and tumble track, and space for equipment such as parallel bars, a pommel horse, balance beams, rings, and uneven bars.

"This will allow us to host some events here," he said. "Right now, we sometimes have to travel to Greenfield or Westfield to take part in meets."

Gymnastics equipment currently crowds the gymnasium in the Clark's original

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...Administration explains Summit merits

BY JERRY CARTON
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

A baker's dozen middle students from seventh and eighth grades sat on the Murdock auditorium stage Monday and told sixth graders, all of whom will be participating in the Summit learning program next year about their experiences with the platform this year.

There were acknowledgments of some worry, even a bit of fear early in the year, adjustment periods, working through personal pet peeves and a gradual adjustment to the change in curriculum style.

The session was part of a pro-active campaign being waged by MMS in response to charges Summit doesn't work, doesn't meet state mandated standards and disrupts the so-called normal learning process.

To those criticisms, Principal Jess Vezina is adamant that Summit will not only prove to

be a way to boost previously-stagnant test scores but is already creating a new enthusiasm in the building.

"Students are more engaged. We listen to our kids," she said as the personalized learning platform begins the final quarter of the year.

"Teachers are energized," she added.

Those students on stage Monday (Maggie, Angelina, Camille, Kelsey, Kylie, Nobaleigh, Michaela, Dezzaray, Jillian, Hailey, Dan, Nick, and Kaitlyn) not only discussed their encounters about how the year has unfolded, they eagerly fielded an array of questions from curious sixth graders, many of which focused on what Summit students do all day and how time is divided in a primarily self-paced structure.

As students talked to their peers, Vezina emphasized

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Photo by Keith Kent

The school committee introduced Thaddeus King of Lowell public schools as the new MHS Principal. Left to right at Superintendent Steve Haddad, Danielle LaPointe, Chair Larry Murphy, Thaddeus King, Greg Vine, Dawn Fronte, and Felicia Nurmsen.

MHS has a new principal

BY KEITH KENT
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

After reviewing some 20 applicants, committee meetings, and narrowing the field, and much decision making, the MHS Principal Search Committee has chosen Thaddeus King of the Lowell public school system as their lead choice for Murdock High School Principal. A process which spanned over several months, he comes with a competitive resume.

King, who has worked in the Lowell system for the past 11 years, has a Masters of education degree with a major in curriculum and teaching from Fitchburg State University.

Previously serving as principal of the Henry J. Robinson Middle School for six years, King has served as principal of the Cardinal O'Connell Alternative School this academic year.

In a press release March 11,

Superintendent Haddad wrote, "Thad provided a safe learning environment for a diverse population of over 700 students and always stayed focused on the social, emotional, and academic issues facing his students."

Making an appearance and introduced to the School Committee March 14, King said, "Winchendon Public Schools has a number of things I was looking for in a district before I moved. This was a family decision for us."

Referring to a presentation about the Summit Learning platform by Chad Dufour and difficulties it presents to students King continued, "Coming to a community where the education of the parents' children is as important to them as it is to me is important. Coming from an urban district you don't always feel that way, so I got that feel tonight by what happened here this evening."

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X (finally) marks the spot

BY KEITH KENT
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

Chief Tom Smith of the Winchendon Fire Department said the department has received the legal permission necessary to begin marking buildings which are unsafe, or unfit for firefighters to enter in case of a structure fire, which would if marked, only allow firefighters to attack the potential structure fire from the building's exterior, and not from an internal attack.

"We have received correspondence back from the town attorneys verifying we will be following the proper channels to actually mark unsafe buildings, and I will be meeting with the building inspector to go over the notifications for the building owners, and we will then be marking the buildings with an 'X' which are not safe to enter," said Smith.

Smith explained ongoing inspections have been taking place at various buildings to see what kind of conditions the buildings are currently in on a case by case basis, with town regulations developed and accepted by the Board of Selectmen.

"I would say a rough estimate is that within the next couple of weeks, you will see the abandoned buildings starting to be marked," said Smith of the timeline.

Structures which are considered most life hazardous, according to Smith, will be first, who also said the signs have already been purchased.

"We are doing this for not only the safety of the firefighters, but for the safety of the community. It doesn't matter who owns any of the buildings, we are doing this according to proper safety regulations,

assessments, and requirements," said Smith.

Another safety reason for the markings according to Smith is if another neighboring community fire department is covering the department under mutual aid while the WFD could be out of town, that department would need to be able to recognize the structure was not safe to enter.

Structural features which could cause a building to be marked vary widely creating a wide variety of safety concerns. Floors being removed in rooms which, if entered under a heavy smoke condition may not be visible, potentially sending a person from the second floor to the basement with nothing in between, according to Smith.

Other factors to consider are ceilings which have fallen,

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WEEKLY QUOTE

I intend to live forever,
or die trying.
Groucho Marx



What is the Spring Market?

One of the most common things I hear from home sellers and home buyer is that they are going to wait until the spring. It technically starts on March 20th. For a seller and buyer this could mean March, April or May. The reason Home Sellers wait until the spring is that they expect to get more money because there are more buyers. The reason the buyers wait till the spring is to ensure that there is enough inventory to buy. Our current

market in Worcester county has extremely low inventory right now as well as many buyers unable to find homes due to that low inventory.

If your home was the only home in its price range in its neighborhood and there were 2 buyers for the home then it should get more money that if you waited till spring and now there were 4 homes for sale and 6 buyers in that neighborhood. As a seller you should be more concerned with the invento-



REALTOR'S REPORT

JAMES BLACK

ry level than of home many buyers are looking. This will ensure your home sells faster and for more money.

Buyers are saying the same thing, I want to wait till spring so there is more inventory to choose from. Yes if you have the same scenario listed above you will possibly pay more for the home. However, it is possible to have your agent reach out to see if they can find someone looking to sell in the spring who has not listed it yet. Then you may be able to find a

home with no competition.

If you are thinking of waiting till the spring for any reason I suggest you meet with an agent at least a month in advance if not 3 or 4 months before to give you the suggestions needed to get the home ready to sell. Right now is a great time for your home to go on the market because the inventory is low but the buyers are coming out to look now. Get your home on the market and sold before your neighbor does but make sure it is ready with necessary repairs done, staging and professional photos.

REAL ESTATE TRANSACTIONS

WINCHENDON

\$201,500 37 W Shore Dr, Carter Valerie J Est, and Carter, Cassie, to Greenwood, Stephen D.

\$56,000 302 Spring Cir #B, 302B Spring Circle T, and Perreault, Raymond G, to Toytowne 302B LJS LLC.

\$23,100 115 Monomonac Rd E, US Bank NA Tr, to CR 2018 LLC.

EASTER WEEK SCHEDULES

HOLY WEEK AT THE UNITED PARISH CHURCH

39 Front Street Winchendon
www.unitedparish.com

Palm Sunday March 25th 10:00AM
Parade of Palms. Come and receive

your palms, as we learn about Jesus journey into Jerusalem! Followed by coffee hour after service for fellowship!

Boy Scouts Breakfast 7:30-9:30AM: the boy scouts are serving a breakfast before Palm Sunday service. Includes egg, sausage, home fries and all you can eat pancakes with coffee and juice provided. For adults cost \$7.00 and kids (10 and under) \$4.00; family of 4 or more \$20.00. Please come and enjoy a wonderful breakfast and support our Boy Scouts Troop 193 before listening to the word of God with a full belly!

Good Friday March 30th 7:00PM

Our music director, Martha Dienst, has been working tirelessly with the Choir for our annual Easter Holy Week production of: "O What A Savior" Cantata by Russell Mauldin. This emotional and spiritually filling cantata will lead us on the path of Christ's final days here on earth and help us to understand the beauty of His Resurrection on Easter Sunday. Please join us and watch this wonderful and uplifting performance!

Easter Day April 1st

Sunrise Service 6:00AM

Olde Centre Church Top of High Street

Worship with Jesus' followers as they discovered the empty tomb during the dawn of Easter Morning. The Rooster has been known to cock-a-doodle-doo during the service to alert everyone that the dawn is breaking!

Easter Service 10:00AM

United Parish Church

Please join us to hear a re-performance of The Easter Cantata "O What A Savior" by the United Parish Choir and listen to Pastor Cal's message of Jesus' Resurrection! We hope you leave with the feeling of Gods Love in your heart.

* Following the service with an Easter Egg Hunt outside for the little ones!

HOLY WEEK AT IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CHURCH

52 Spruce Street Winchendon

Palm Sunday, March 24-25

Solemn procession, blessing of palms and reading of the Lord's Passion

Saturday Vigil Mass: 4 p.m.

Sunday Mass: 8 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

Church cleaning for Easter: 3 p.m.

Daily Mass Monday-Wednesday, March 26-18

Confession: 6 p.m.

Mass: 6:30 p.m.

Holy Thursday March 29

Morning prayer: 8 a.m.

Chowder supper at 5:30 p.m. hosted by Our Neighbor's Kitchen

Mass of the Lord's Supper: 7 p.m.

Stripping of the Altar and recitation of the penitential psalms following Mass

Chaplet of Divine Mercy: 9 p.m.

Night Prayer: 10 p.m.

Good Friday, March 30

Morning Prayer 8 a.m.

Traditional Stations of the Cross: noon

Commemoration of the Lord's Passion & Solemn Veneration of the Cross: 7 p.m.

Vigil at the tomb of our Lord until 10 p.m.

Chaplet of Divine Mercy & Night Prayer: 9:45 p.m.

Holy Saturday, March 31

Morning prayer: 8 a.m.

RCIA rehearsal: 11 a.m.

(please note the church will be closed after morning prayer to prepare for the Vigil)


Solemn Eater Vigil: 8 p.m.

Easter Sunday April 1

Solemn Mass for Easter Sunday 10 a.m.

With renewal of Baptismal promises

Easter Egg Hunt: 11:30 a.m.



WINCHENDON SUBSTANCE ABUSE TASK FORCE PRESENTS:

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For questions contact Jennifer Sibley at 978-868-7174

Kathi Meyer will be speaking about her daughter who passed away due to underage drinking.






Chris Sullivan, a former Patriots player, will speak about his NFL career and his struggles with addiction.



Chris Sullivan



Kathi Sullivan and her daughter Tay


COURIER CAPSULES

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER
Immaculate Heart of Mary hosts a corned beef and cabbage meal at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, March 24 at the Parish Hall. There will be step dancers, and a few tickets are still available. Come celebrate!


CALVARY CEMETERY
The gates are now open at the cemetery, but with the possibility of additional snow, please be cautious entering and exiting. Note that spring clean up does not begin until May 1 and the cemetery is not officially open until Memorial Day.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT
Nicole Fleming, a junior majoring in American Sign Language at the University of Rochester, has been named to the Dean's List for academic achievement for the fall 2017 semester. Fleming, a resident of Winchendon is the child of Katrina Fleming and Mark Fleming, and a graduate of Worcester Academy in Worcester.


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Good news for the most part as audit reviewed

BY RUTH DEAMICIS
STONEBRIDGE EDITOR

The School Committee, Board of Selectmen, and Finance Committee faced the Audit Committee and Anthony Roselli on Monday to review the audit report by Roselli & Clark, and for the most part, it was good news.

“As I have been to other municipalities, to other offices throughout the state, I’ve been asked ‘how did Winchendon do it?’ This town has turned itself around, and people want to know how this was done,” said Roselli.

Roselli said cooperation was good, no matter what was requested, and he was impressed by how well everyone was now working together.

The only area of concern, and it was already being addressed, was follow up on grants and filing reports.

“Particularly the federal grants at the school level,” explained Roselli.

“The Title I grants have outstanding information from as far back as 2013 that need to be resolved. There needs to be a better system of following these, and other grants,” he said.

“There are single audit rules, Federal rules, requirements and checks and balances that have to be done. This needs to happen. If we need to support Rich (school business manager Rich Ikonen) we need to set him up to be successful,” stressed Roselli.

Superintendent Steven Haddad said there were already systems being put in place to address just this problem. He said the town’s assistant town accountant had agreed to put in hours for the school to address just these grant related problems specifically.

Roselli appreciated this, and pointed out further problems with grants, and said the schools and town should continue to work closely together to clear up especially older, unclosed grants.

“Have the state DESE help with these. Considering that most grants include an administrative stipend, there should be a way to provide for a grants administrator, it’s well worth evaluating,” said Roselli.

Most grants, he explained, had somewhere between 1.5 to five percent for administrative costs in the grant. And one administrator for both school and town could be conceivable.

Haddad said he had also been in discussion with both Gardner and Narragansett about sharing resources concerning grant administration. Ikonen, said Haddad, was also creating a procedure handbook for grant administration.

Roselli also addressed report discrepancies and failing to meet some deadlines with reports. But, he said, he could see the town was attempting to find ways to do better in these areas.

“There were transactional problems that affected end of year reports, and these need to be discovered throughout the year and repaired; not wait until the end of the year when all else is being done at the same time. This will be getting better as everyone adjusts to the software and the methodology,” said Roselli.

Finally, Roselli was very pleased with the way the schools and the town were cooperating over payroll issues. The payroll is now being done through a single office, with the assistant town accountant hired to work with conversion of new software to track a new human resources model to help with compensation for paid leave, absence and how to convert to funding for people at a variety of compensation levels.

“These are operational details that will get ironed out as the software becomes more familiar. Having the payroll all tracked from a central source

will be the key to better control,” said Roselli.

His final statement concerning schools addressed better future planning for the two elementary schools.

The audit firm plans to do deeper audits on two departments per year going forward, and this year did police and fire departments. Both, he said, were in good shape for the most part.

The fire department needs to work with the Board of Selectmen to find a way to research and then write off more than half a million dollars in uncollectable revenue for ambulance runs.

“For the most part, these are most likely uninsured, or even deceased. There is no collection possibility. They have also been on the books much too long,” said Roselli.

Though the fire department has begun using an outside firm for billing and collection, and does now have a part time clerk to handle much of the paperwork, Roselli said the older charges need to be cleared so the department could begin with a “clean slate.”

“The department is well run, and the software can now talk to one another, department to accountant,” said Roselli.

Some investigation into adding another ambulance unit was suggested to add to possible income for the department. Roselli said when both current ambulances are busy, the possibility does exist another call does go out to mutual aid or a paid service.

“Data collection to find out whether another unit makes sense should be done,” he suggested.

As for the police, he was also pleased, pointing out that the only weakness found was in reporting and then collection of detail payment; when officers are on a construction site or a sporting or recreational event and paid. For the most part, however, the lag is due to

collection from the outside source of funding; and is often enough the state of Massachusetts itself.

“The work on local highways earlier this year took several months to catch up for payment,” said Roselli.

The system has the officers paid out of local funds, and the town reimbursed when the payment from the outside source is made. A system Roselli said is normal and legal. But, does indeed cause some accounting problems at times, particularly at the end of an accounting year.

“There isn’t too much that can be done, but good housekeeping and accounting to keep track,” he said.

A system to not have the town pay officers from other towns through Winchendon’s town funds if used on local details was discussed; and will be made policy. Officers would be paid from their own towns, and those towns would be reimbursed once Winchendon receives payment.

Overall, Roselli said the town, by paying down its debt early, keeping its budgeting on course, working well between departments and following guidelines was one of the better towns his firm had the pleasure of auditing.

“We enjoy our time at Winchendon every year,” he said.

ACCURACY WATCH

The *Winchendon Courier* is committed to accuracy in all its news reports. Although numerous safeguards are in place to ensure accurate reporting, mistakes can occur. Confirmed fact errors will be corrected at the top right hand corner of page three in a timely manner. If you find a mistake, call (978) 297-0050 during normal business hours. During non-business hours, leave a message in the editor’s voice mailbox. The editor will return your phone call. Or contact the editor at the following email: ruth@stonebridgepress.news.

Governor to speak at MWCC commencement

BY JERRY CARTON
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

Governor Charlie Baker will deliver the commencement address when Mount Wachusett Community College holds its annual graduation ceremony on May 16.

Baker has long touted the importance of community colleges.

“Our administration remains committed to creating more opportunities for students to enter the workforce with the skills they need and I look forward to joining Mount Wachusett Community College this spring for their commencement,” he said.

“Among the graduates will be 30 individuals from Pathways Innovations and Gateway schools who will receive MWCC degrees before finishing high school, showcasing the opportunities that exist for early college and dual enrollment here in Massachusetts. Affordable community college and early college programs like our Commonwealth Commitment are top priorities for our administration and I look forward to celebrating with everyone at MWCC this spring,” added Baker.

Murdock students have been regular participants in dual enrollment programs. Tom Sutherland is doing so this year and Emily Kiberd-Pervier and Mary Desire are taking courses at MWCC. Murdock has been aligned with the programs for a number of years.

MWCC’s new president James Vander Hooven expressed enthusiasm about Baker coming to the Gardner campus.

“His leadership while serving as our governor, service as cabinet secretary and CEO of a major health care provider make him an outstanding choice to address our graduates. His ability to lead in both public and private sectors while working with a wide variety of individuals and organizations with different opinions sets the perfect example for our graduates as they prepare to build their careers.”

It has been 55 years since the Mount opened its doors in 1963. Currently about 11,000 students attend the two-year school including many from Winchendon. Degrees will be awarded in arts, business, communications, community/non-profit, education, general, health, history, public and social services, science, technology, and vocational.

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VIEWS

Opinion and commentary from Winchendon and beyond

EDITORIAL*It's about time*

Several years ago, a very vocal local activist went to a lot of work to identify empty buildings in town because he was concerned about safety issues.

He thought about health issues, safety issues, the fire department, the police department, kids, pets, transients living in them...you get the idea.

The idea was a good one. And a list was created.

It languished for a while. Several years in fact.

There wasn't a policy in place. No one knew just who should do what to make this happen. There didn't seem to be any funds to buy the bright red X signs. And who would make the decisions on putting them up? Or a way to take them down again if a property was improved?

And who made the decisions, who notified people, who, what, where, when, how...

Yes. Bureaucracy moves slowly, we all know that. And we do want the town to do it right.

So we send kudos to those who didn't stop. Who didn't forget. Who followed it through.

Because the policies are in place. The signs are purchased and will be going up.

The gentleman who lo those many years ago brought this to the attention of several people, not sure just where he should go with the idea though he did indeed go to

police, fire, town manager...all the right places it seems; should rightly feel heard.

Citizens with ideas, do the same. Don't give up.

We know sometimes it does take time before things can happen. This is the typical case actually.

The town had to have its rules and regs, its policies, its ducks in a row so to speak. People needed to be able to move deliberately on this. So as this as an example, if you have a complaint or an idea for Winchendon, take a few first steps.

An idea for a new park?

A place for a memorial?

A clean up day (by the way, Winchendon's annual town wide clean up will be April 21 with the dumpster on Pleasant Street provided by MDS and refreshments, bags, gloves donated).

An event?

A new business?

Come up with your own idea, we would love to know. And though it may not happen overnight, with diligence, it seems Winchendon will indeed get it done.

As a side note, we notice and welcome the new principal to Murdock High School and can't help but make note that we have to say we now have to Hail two Kings in Winchendon: as Thad King will be principal at Murdock and Manuel King is already library director at Beals Memorial Library.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Moon:

To the Editor:

It is beyond me why you would choose to publish the skewed analysis of the 2nd Amendment by Harold Pease and support the NRA straw man that intelligent citizens are looking to abolish the right to own a gun. Nonsense. This kind of special pleading ignores the will of most citizens who are just looking for reasonable changes to our gun laws. They rightly see the issue not as a constitutional crisis, but as an issue of public health, where the safety and welfare of our citizenry requires immediate legislative action.

If a reasonable person examines the 5-4 *Heller* decisions of 2008, the Supreme Court underlined that individuals had an inherent right to own guns for lawful purposes. *Heller* applied that standard to overturn a ban on privately held handguns. The immediate outcry by the NRA and its minions was that this standard could also be applied to AR-15 type rifles, the kind used in many subsequent mass shootings, including the one used in Parkland.

Changing the gun laws to reflect minimal oversight on purchasing, to require background checks to prevent convicted felons and those

with mental health problems from owning guns, and to ban semi-automatic weapons such as the AR-15, have wide support. Abolishing the 2nd Amendment to the Constitution does not.

The challenge for citizens interested in reasonable changes to our gun laws is two fold. Any action in Congress requires elected officials who will support a given policy and who will work to institute those changes. Here in Winchendon, we are preparing to vote in a September primary to nominate a Congressional Representative in the Third District. There are 13 Democratic candidates alone for this position! What is their stance on these important issues? The other challenge is to recognize that we must be in this fight for the long haul. Whatever reasonable changes make it into law, there will be organized opposition...and court challenges. Do we have the dogged determination to persist against strong opposition?

Reasonable changes to our gun laws are a fight worth having.

Be in it for the long haul.

PATRICK MOON
WINCHENDON

Welcome back to the Boys of Summer

...AND
ONE MORE
THING...
.....
GREG
VINE

"Do you know what I love most about baseball? The pine tar, the resin, the grass, the dirt. And that's just in the hot dogs."
- David Letterman

It is with great anticipation that I look forward to opening day for the Major League baseball season. Just six days from now, on March 29, the boys of summer will take the field on diamonds across the coun-

try. On that day, my beloved Red Sox will face off against division rivals the Tampa Bay Rays in Florida. A week later, on April 5, the Sox will play their home opener - again against the Rays - at historic Fenway Park.

I look forward to the baseball season for many reasons, not the least being that - in a way - it is in my blood. You see, my father Homer (a baseball name if ever there was one) briefly played minor league ball in the old New York-Penn League. He wore what are called "the tools of ignorance" - the nickname for a catcher's protective equipment - for the Elmira Colonels, a farm club in the Brooklyn Dodgers organization.

For a variety of reasons, poor eyesight being among them, his baseball career was short-lived, but he never lost his love of the game. It was, as much as anything can be, a constant in his life. It became a constant in my life because baseball was the one thing - almost the only thing, frankly - that my father and I truly had in common.

The two us spent many hours together watching games on television. But among my fondest memories is that of sitting on the porch of our home in Westminster listening to Red Sox games on my dad's small transistor radio. On nights when thunderstorms moved through the area we had to strain to hear the voices of

Ken Coleman, Ned Martin, and Mel Parnell fighting their way through the crackle caused by distant lightning. On other nights, when the sky was clear and cooling breezes wafted through the jalousie windows, it was - to us - like listening to a symphony; the crack of bat hitting ball, the slap of ball hitting catcher's or first baseman's mitt, the roar of the crowd, the faint cries of beer and hot dog vendors wandering the stands, the singing of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame," and the color and play-by-play of the announcers.

Occasionally, my dad and I would make the trip to Fenway to take in a game live and in person. It was an experience

every young boy should share with his father. There really is nothing like it. I will forever cherish sitting in those famously uncomfortable seats - next to my dad - watching Carl Yastrzemski at the plate, the unique hesitation pitch of Louis Tiant, a fabulous right-field snag by Dwight Evans, or Fred Lynn make an outstanding catch on the warning track in center.

But the one thing I love about baseball - and, I think, my dad loved as well - is its constancy. It's something that can be counted on. Spring training starts in February, and the regular season wraps up

Turn To **VINE** page **A5**

Once upon on a time

Once upon a time in a land not so far away, the people were ruled by a gentleman of high quality. They trusted his decisions. They admired his courage. They found him to be of the highest moral character. Supporting this ruler was a most beautiful wife, said to have been highly sought after as a bride, a virgin, educated abroad in a fine school in Switzerland. They met skiing on the slopes at Gstad.

It was a quick romance. They dated two months, announced their engagement, and returned to the homeland. In the course of the next four years, they welcomed two sons, as handsome as their father, as moral and upright. They went



NOTES OF
CONCERN
.....
JACK
BLAIR

to the finest schools and were now embarked on careers of their own.

Not a hint of scandal anywhere in the family. The country was happy, the people prosperous, other nations envious. They ruled happily, with everyone's support and encouragement until their deaths.

I challenge my readers to name a president of the United

States, since the beginning of our Republic who fit this description. Pick Washington. Well, there was the problem of those slaves. Pick Jefferson. Well, there was that problem of children with his house slave Sally Hemmings. Let's move forward. How about FDR who died with his mistress at his side and his daughter helping in deceiving her mother?

Maybe JFK? Well, there were Fiddle and Faddle swimming naked daily with the president in The White House pool. And of course, there was a German spy, as well as the mistress of a Chicago mobster. Maybe you would choose Ike. Did you read the book written by his war-time driver?

And then there is Nixon, whose problems did not seem to be sexual but immoral nevertheless. Moving on to Bill Clinton, well no one needs to be reminded of the list of sexual conquests there.

Bottom line: humans make mistakes. Some of commission, some of omission. Sexual urges, if consensual, have absolutely nothing to do with politics because when we thought they did, it was a Fairy Tale. Humans come with strengths and weaknesses. I think it was Winston Churchill who said great men come with even greater strengths and greater weaknesses.

The new media has spent billions of dollars digging around

for sexual peccadilloes, only to find themselves in the spotlight for the same behavior. Sometimes it reminds me of when we burned witches at the stake.

It is hard to let go of expectations. We want leaders who are moral men and women, cherishing their family, never straying, and honest as the day is long.

No one could safely say no such man exists in public life, but I see very few of them. And I see even fewer on the horizon.

It would serve us well to dwell on their policy positions, their understanding of setting an example in their public life,

Turn To **BLAIR** page **A5**

13 years ago

It was for the record, 13 years ago tomorrow - March 24, 2005 when this column first appeared in this newspaper. It had been 17 days since my heart attack at the airport in Philadelphia, the last 12 of which I had spent at my parents' home in Baltimore largely because they had no steps since at that moment steps were prohibited. It took me several days to write that first essay because of the natural exhaustion which tends to follow major health setbacks. It would be several weeks more before I was deemed well enough to get back on a plane. My then-and-now editor Ruth DeAmicis had suggested I write an account of the experience and so I did. Whether the column was intended to be a one-time thing was not discussed in those weeks and never has been since. The only rule was that I could not opine on specific issues I would cover as a reporter as opposed to

an op-ed columnist.

So here we are. 13 years. Last year I suffered the worst catastrophe imaginable. Now and forever there will be no words. Ever. It is impossible to adequately express how much I miss Courtney every moment of every day nor how much my heart aches every moment of every day even though I don't always show it "out there". There exists in my life and soul a void which can never be filled. Period. Her brothers, one of whom is a father in his own right. The other, (who had the good sense to marry the woman he did) is following roughly along a similar professional path which Courtney was on. They are coping in their own ways but I am proud of how they are



JOURNEY
OF THE
HEART
.....
JERRY
CARTON

years younger than I am (I'll reach the supposedly magic 65 this summer). The three of them are in Baltimore and are dealing their own way. Her friends, scattered from Massachusetts to the west coast are doing likewise. That's all anyone can do anyway, right? For all of us there are okay days and awful days and moments. This is our reality now and forever. It just is.

So here we are. 13 years into this

series of essays. Yes, I write about politics a lot, but all these many years later, my personal favorite piece remains a whimsical one I wrote in 2007 (can it really be that long?) about falling in love with orange creamsicles I used to get seemingly every day that amazingly magical summer at Lickity Splitz. Anyone who follows my columns knows how passionate I am about public policy, about the responsibility we all have to try and make a difference in our communities, and yet if I listed my five favorite columns, none would be about politics. Go figure.

When I started writing *Journey of the Heart* (the title was Ruth's idea), I had a flip phone. Texting? What was texting? One of Courtney's teammates taught me about texting. I saw this girl punching buttons on her phone in, I don't know, 2007, 2008, and asked

Turn To **CARTON** page **A9**

SPORTS

Middle School cheerleaders recognized



Jeff Millman photos

Jessica Higbee (MVP) and Coach Lisa Paulitsky

The Murdock Middle School cheerleading squad officially ended their winter season with an awards ceremony on March 19.

Head Coach, Lisa Paulitsky, along with assistant coaches Tracey West and Michelle Mercier, presented participation certificates and a team picture to each cheerleader.

In addition, the following awards were presented: Emily Wightman – All-Star Academic award, Breylyn Wightman – Most Spirited award, Emily Michaud – Most Improved award, Min D. Merritt – Coaches award, Madison Montana –

Iron Grid award, Kelsey Boucher – Iron Grid award, Abigail Bradley – Iron Grid award, Madison Consentino – All Star Athletic award, Jessica Higbee – Most Valuable Player.

Also recognized were Jasmine Hardy, Hailie Lafrennie, Abigail Trick, Marissa Keeney, Dezzy Schindler-Roberts, and Arielle Benedict.

Coach Paulitsky thanked the administration, athletic director Jenna Whitaker, and the Murdock Sports Boosters for their support of the cheerleading program.

Coach Lisa Paulitsky, Madison Montana, Abby Bradley, Jasmine Hardy, Min D. Merritt, Jessica Higbee, Kelsey Boucher, Emily Michaud, Asst. Coach Michelle Mercier, Emily Wightman, Asst. Coach Tracey West.



MS cheerleading squad (in front - Braelyn Wightman, 2nd row - Jasmine Hardy, Emily Michaud, Min D Merritt, Emily Wightman. Back row - Madison Montana, Abigail Bradley, Jessica Higbee, Kelsey Boucher.



Well, finally!



TALKING SPORTS
.....
JERRY CARTON

We all said it would happen someday. Whether we really believed that or not is another story but we always said it would. Now of course it has — a 16 seed beat a 1 seed, not just any 1 seed but the overall 1 seed in the whole NCAA Tournament, the most stunning, unbelievable, shocking, impossible upset in tournament history. And Virginia's loss was administered, I am proud to say, by a school at which I had matriculated. Yes, I once took a five-week summer (1973) class at UMBC. I

am therefore an alum, sort of at least.

The Retrievers, in retrospect, proved they weren't a fluke the next game when they played Kansas State tougher than the Wildcats likely expected. Good teams come from everywhere, even from a school known more for chess, model UN teams and science and engineering than for basketball. But UMBC, that's the University of Maryland-Baltimore County, had reached the tournament in the first place by beating Vermont at Vermont, who gets there almost every year. That right there is the sign of a good team.

Because everyone loves underdogs and beyond possible underdogs at that, UMBC briefly became the nation's hoop darlings. Where does their win rank in the pantheon of upsets? I'd suggest with

Buster Douglas flattening Mike Tyson, with the 1980 Olympics 'Miracle on Ice', the '69 Mets, Texas Western over Kentucky in the 1966 title game, Onion and Prove Out over Secretariat and in the context of that era, Clay over Liston. It's hard to remember how heavy a favorite Sonny Liston was that night in Miami over the brash challenger who would the next day change his name.

I watched Friday night in disbelief. As the game against the allegedly mighty Cavaliers unfolded, it struck me I'd never seen anything like this since Chaminade's Christmas win over the same UVA program in 1982, but that was at the end of a long international pre-season trip, not the first round of the tournament. The pressure is always on the chalk and the heavier the chalk, the greater the pressure as an expect-

ed rout never happens. UVA isn't the only school which can attest to that. We said goodbye over the weekend to Michigan State, defending champion North Carolina, Xavier, and Cincinnati and this came after Arizona and UVA had been dispatched. March Madness indeed.

So where will UMBC's win be someday catalogued? Very prominently. The Retrievers did something that had never been done before. A future 16 can only match, not surpass their accomplishment. It was the biggest upset in the history of college basketball. Period.

Elsewhere, Opening Day is just about upon us. Yes, the season starts next week. In March. Really. And so that means it's time for the annual exercise in trying to guess how the next 7-plus months will go. Let's call the Yankees as AL

East champs and the Red Sox right behind them followed by the Blue Jays, Rays and woeful O's. The Indians cruise in the Central but the fast improving young White Sox reap the benefits of smart deals and snag a wild card spot. The defending champion Astros canter home in the West with the Angels second. The NL division winners are easy: Washington, Chicago, and Los Angeles stroll to their titles but the surprise comes when the Mets stay healthy and earn a wild card with the other going to St. Louis simply because the Cardinals won't be a three-peat on the outside of the postseason. In the end, Washington gets its first championship since 1924 (Senators over Giants) when the Nats best the Bombers.

Guaranteed. Or not. See you next week.

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Hearing on cannabis regs continued

BY GREG VINE
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

Though not quite as well attended as previous public forums on the matter, a public hearing held Tuesday night to discuss proposed zoning regulations governing marijuana operations in Winchendon revealed divergent opinions among residents regarding a number of issues. After more than two and a-half hours of discussion, the Planning Board voted to continue the hearing until its next meeting.

Initial comments were heard regarding the board's proposal to limit to two the number of recreational cannabis retailers allowed in town. Under state law, the town is required to offer a minimum of two licenses, based on the number of liquor licenses in the community. While the town could make provisions for more than two licenses, it is not allowed to offer fewer than that number.

"I'm a veteran," said resident Carl Cooper, "and I've seen wonderful things cannabis can do to heal others, along with bringing communities together. If you're going to limit these establishments according to your alcohol, I think alcohol is far more harmful than cannabis. If you're going to limit the number of establishments, you're also limiting fiscal possibilities. If you're going to

limit the number to the minimum, I'm in fear you might be missing out on a lot."

"I do just want to clarify," said board Vice Chairman Caitle Kelley, who was leading the hearing, "no more than two adult-use marijuana retailers, those are the retail stores that can sell it. That's not limiting the facilities that can cultivate, process, things like that."

"This (draft bylaw), as it's written, limits the number of retail and the number of medical facilities," said Selectman Audrey LaBrie. "What about the other types of cannabis industry businesses that could come into town? Is it the board's intention to limit anything else?"

"I was under the understanding we were limiting just these types of businesses," said Caitle. "The market will dictate how it plays within Winchendon. There are so many places it would make sense to have cultivation."

Discussion then turned to the topic of a proposed 500-foot buffer zone surrounding "any playground or athletic fields open to the public, recreational facilities such as a YMCA, and parking areas for the bike path." Retail cannabis establishments would be prohibited

Turn To **CANNABIS** page **A9**

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School Committee recognizes Students of the Month

The Winchendon public schools Students of the month were recognized at the School Committee meeting on March 14. Students of the month are nominated by their teachers for various achievements.

Pre-K: Jolee Brown – presented by Ms. Michel. Jolee is a great friend, great student, always ready to learn, invites her peers to play, listens attentively, follows directions, works hard on all projects (especially art) and is kind, respectful and responsible!

Memorial School: David Phillips (2nd grade) – presented by Ms. Michel and Mrs. Maloney. David has made significant personal and academic growth! He has demonstrated increased independence in self care skills and improved ability to ask for assistance as needed. David has been adding word to his reading and vocabulary. He also assists in packing the back packs for the Backpack program.

Toy Town Elementary: Colton Cochran (5th grade) – presented by Ms. Aker and nominated by Mr. Londo. Colton has made huge gains in his academics, demonstrating a positive, “never quit” attitude. He is prepared for classes and always ready to learn.

Murdock Middle School: Lauren Laprise (6th grade) – presented by Ms. Vezina and nominated by the teaching team of Ms. Higgins, Mrs. Landry, Mrs. St. Pierre, and Ms. Rocheleau. Lauren has demonstrated perseverance each day, asking clarifying questions and requesting extra help as needed. She has made great gains at school and at home!

Murdock Academy for Success: Joseph Bonaccolto (9th grade) – presented by Mr. Provost and Mrs. Benedict. Joey was struggling to find meaning at the beginning of the school year, as reflected in poor academic performance. Joe was enrolled in the Academy and made the choice to apply himself in school and at home, making great strides and now passing all classes!!

Murdock High School: Molly Murphy (12th grade) – presented by Mr. Olsen. Molly has consistently demonstrated a positive attitude, a strong work ethic, strong leadership on the field or court and in the classroom, and maturity beyond her years. Molly is planning to attend Worcester State to study education and aspires to become an elementary school teacher.

Congratulations to all!!

Joey Bonaccolto with his dad, and teachers Kris Provost and Becky Benedict



David Phillips with his mom



Molly Murphy with parents Glenn and Jen Murphy



Jolee Brown with her parents Randy and Catherine Brown



Lauren Laprise with her parents



Colton Cochran with his parents Wayne and Susan Cochran

CANNABIS

continued from page A8

from locating within the buffer.

“If we have buffer, for example, around the YMCA,” asked Kelley, “does that eliminate the feasibility of a retail marijuana shop being able to open on Central Street? I feel it does. If we were to include a buffer zone around the YMCA and include Central Street as part of our retail marijuana overlay district, I feel that could get us some legal gray area. Are we being ‘overly burdensome’ now, because we’re going to allow the whole street – only we’re really not going to allow the whole street.”

“I’m totally against any marijuana facility on Central Street,” said resident Rick Ward. “Totally. So, I think the easiest thing, when this is put before the town, is that Central Street is not one of the overlays. Then you don’t have to deal with worrying about the footage and there’s no complication.”

“The Board of Selectmen has said ‘no’ to Central Street,” Ward continued. “The police chief has said ‘no’ to Central Street. The town manager has said ‘no’.”

Board Chairman Guy Corbosiero, taking part by speaker phone, said after visiting marijuana retailers in Colorado he has no problem with such businesses locating on Central Street.

“They are very nondescript,” he said.

“The only thing they have is a sign. There’s not a lot of people in and out, and any people in and out have just a little white paper bag.”

In response to a question from LaBrie, Kelley pointed out that overlay districts currently under consideration include Route 12 near the New Hampshire border, Hillview Industrial Park, Winchendon Springs, Waterville, Central Street, and a portion of Route 202 in the vicinity of the former Stuff ‘n’ Things store.

Resident John Coderre expressed concern about the impact cannabis retailers could have on parking on Central Street and the possibility of loitering around such businesses. He also said pot shops on the town’s main street

could have an impact on the perception people have of Winchendon.

“I’ve been to many places in this country that allow cannabis and have it on their main street,” said Cooper. “Might I add, the further you push it to the outer limits of your community, the less control you’re going to have. If you have right under the nose of the police, the less likely kids are going to be to approach that business. The less likely it is to go out the back door.”

The Planning Board ultimately decided to place all proposed marijuana overlay districts, including Central Street, before voters at the May town meeting. The public hearing will be continued at 6:40 p.m. on April 3 in the town hall auditorium.

CARTON

continued from page A4

what she was doing. “Texting”, she said and gave me a look which clearly suggested I was hopeless. Not only that. She proceeded to get up and yell something like, “hey Courtney your father doesn’t know what a text is.”

Guilty as charged. To this day I don’t tweet, unlike, well, you know. And I miss my flip phone. I have so many apps I have no idea what some of

them are for.

Social media, which only semi-existed in 2005, has dramatically changed our society of course and most assuredly sometimes not for the better. Too many people now have a platform from which they can spew hatred and ignorance and hiding behind online anonymity find like-minded extremists who share and promote their ideology of bigoted, racist filth. Yet at the same time, social media has also provided a platform for rallying around noble causes as well.

Last Wednesday a whole lot of high school students across the country, including from Murdock, walked out of school at 10 a.m. and remained outside until 10:17 in memory of the 17 victims of the Parkland massacre. That demonstration, which for me sparked memories of participating in anti-war demonstrations when I was about their age, was organized nationwide on-line. So has been tomorrow’s march on Washington. Social media can definitely be used for the right things. Let’s keep that in mind

when we bemoan the ugliness.

I’m grateful to have had this space for the last 13 years. I can’t imagine still doing this 13 years from now when I’m closing in on 78 should I live that long, but I will tell you that the opportunity to talk about whatever might be on my mind is one I continue to cherish. Cheaper than therapy some weeks for sure. I cherish too, the feedback I’ve gotten. Anytime you write something which sparks response is a good day’s work. Columnists in general are always hoping

readers care enough one way or the other to write back.

So here we are, heading into the start of the 14th year of these weekly missives. It’s been a blast and while I hope some columns have elicited laughs, I hope even more that some of them might have made readers go “hmm”. That, at least has been the goal. Thanks for reading. Welcome to spring. Finally. It’s been one tough March. And oh yes. Keep writing back. Please. See you next week.

The Big Picture

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Drum teacher Leon LaPlante seeks used instruments and drum stands to help out high school students. (978) 297-1250.

YARD SALES
ATTENTION: yard sale ads here are FREE in the Winchendon Courier. Call (978) 297-0050 and leave a message with date, address and times of your sale and we will add it to the list. Deadline for all sales is Tuesday noon.

The Fitzwilliam Community Church news

Come join us for our annual St. Patrick's Day dinner March 17 at 5 pm. Dinner includes our famous corned beef, cabbage, turnips, carrots, potatoes, Irish soda bread, coffee, punch and dessert for just \$10.

Join us for a thought provoking and entertaining series of movies leading up to Easter on Thursday's during Lent in March. Dinner of soup, salad, bread and beverages will be served. Rev. Craig is presenting some of his favorite movies about the Christ story. We will watch these films in the Fellowship Hall. Bring your camp chairs if they are more comfortable than our regular chairs.

• March 15th, 2018- 6:00 "Jesus Christ Superstar" - A Norman Jewison film adaptation of the Andrew Lloyd Weber Broadway play imagines Christ's story as mash up of ancient Jerusalem and '70s era culture. Big hair, bell-bottoms and an award-winning soundtrack. This is one of Craig's top 10 films. (1 hr. 47 Mins)

• March 22nd, 2018 -6:00 "Jesus Of Montreal" - This winner of Cannes

Film Jury Prize and nominee for 1989 Academy Award imagines that a young playwright is asked to jazz up the staid old passion play for a Montreal Religious Shrine. The playwright hires the "wrong type" of people to be the actors and scandalizes the establishment. Fame tempts the playwright and the actors become hard pressed to distinguish between their onstage and off-stage lives. **WARNING:** There is sex in this film. (2 Hrs.) This is possibly Craig's new favorite.

On Maundy Thursday, March 29 service will be held at 7:30 p.m. There will be a Lenten dinner served before the service starting at 6:00 pm.

A sunrise service will be held on Easter Sunday at the end of Howeville Road. There will be carpooling from the church. After the service, join us for a pancake breakfast at the church, followed by our usual 10 am service.

Our Christmas Craft group continues to meet periodically on Friday afternoon. Please let Marcia Camden know if you would like to be included in communications about this (cammarly@hotmail.com or (603) 585-6728).

hotmail.com or (603) 585-6728).

The Fitzwilliam Community Church and the Fitzwilliam District Nurse Association are looking for potters willing to make bowls for the annual Empty Bowl Event in July. If you are interested contact Barbara Brooks at bbrooks625@gmail.com or call 585-6842.

FITZWILLIAM COMMUNITY CHURCH CONCERT SERIES

Our concert March 18 at 3 pm will feature pianist/organist Deborah Wells Nunes and pianist/organist Bob Johnson. They will make music with both piano and organ, including a four-hand piano piece. You won't want to miss it.

Johnson is the organist/music director at Pilgrim Congregational Church in Leominster. He was interim organist here in Fitzwilliam for 3 1/2 years. Bob is a graduate of the Boston Conservatory of Music and is retired as adjunct faculty at Franklin Pierce University. He is a member of the American Guild of Organists. He also plays tuba in the Temple Town Band.

Bob lives with his wife Kathy on Emerson Pond in Rindge.

Wells Nunes has been an accompanist and organist for too many decades to mention. A classically trained pianist, she moved to the Monadnock area 22 years ago and has been involved with a variety of musical organizations, including the Keene Chorale, Keene Unitarian Universalist Church, Peterborough Unitarian Universalist Church, New Hampshire Dance Institute, Grand Monadnock Youth Choruses, the Waldorf School, the No Name Contra Dance band, and an Oompah Band at East Hill Farm. She is currently organist here at Fitzwilliam Community Church and accompanies the Waldorf School and NNDI. We look forward to seeing you all at the concert.

We are asking \$10 admittance to support the church and our music program. There will also be a reception with lots of good food downstairs after the concert, so you can meet the performers.

CENTER

continued from page A1

building on Central Street. As a result, the Y is unable to offer programs in the gym which were popular in the past.

"Once the new building is ready," said Quinn, "we'll be able to offer programs like basketball and volleyball in the old gym. A lot of people have talked to me about how popular lunch-time basketball used to be. That's something we could see here again."

Each of the three rooms being readied for before and after school programs will be made available to students in grades K-2, 3-4, and 5-6, respectively. Each will have its own

bathroom and will be equipped with a sink for cleanup after such activities as art projects.

The community center also includes rooms for child care and for office and storage space. Quinn said he envisions some of the rooms being used for programs like CPR, first aid, and babysitting classes.

The size of the new building, plus the addition of parking spaces on the north side of the facility, necessitated a reduction in the length of the Clark's popular walking track. One circuit of the track will now be about a quarter-mile instead of its original length of a third of a mile.

In addition to the new community center, the Clark has

plans to transform the room that once housed the Zamboni for the former ice rink, in what is now known as the field house, into a teen center. The cost of that project is pegged at around \$300,000.

The community and teen centers will account for steps two and three in a long-term improvement plan at the Clark.

Phase one, completed a couple of years ago, included the installation of an elevator in the original Clark building, constructed in 1954, along with upgrades to the male and female locker rooms and showers, a new lobby, and the installation of a new fire alarm system. The facility was also made ADA accessible.



Workers construct framing for classrooms, community rooms, and office space in the new community center at the Clark.

LEGALS

MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by Wayne Thomas aka Wayne A. Thomas and Lori B. Thomas aka Lori Thomas to Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., dated September 29, 2016 and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 56050, Page 161; of which Mortgage the undersigned is the present holder for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at Public Auction at 12:00 PM on March 30, 2018 at 32 Mechanic Street, Winchendon, MA, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

A certain tract of land situated in the northerly part of the village in Winchendon, Worcester County, Massachusetts and bounded and described as follows: Commencing at

the northeast corner of the lot on the westerly line of the way known as Mechanic Street, being the southeast corner of the house lot, now or formerly, owned or occupied by Martha Brick; thence Southerly on line of said Mechanic Street 5 rods to a corner marked by an iron pin; thence Westerly at right angles with said Mechanic Street to land now or formerly of Sophia M. Whitney; thence Northerly on said Whitney's line to the southwest corner of said Brick House lot; thence Easterly on line of said Brick's land 6.85 rods to the place of beginning. For title reference see Deed recorded herewith in the Worcester County Registry of Deeds. Book 56050 Page 159

The premises are to be sold subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, building and zoning laws, liens, attorney's fees and costs pursuant to M.G.L.Ch.183A, unpaid taxes, tax titles, water bills, municipal liens

and assessments, rights of tenants and parties in possession.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS (\$5,000.00) in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or money order will be required to be delivered at or before the time the bid is offered. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Foreclosure Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the sale date in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney. The Mortgagee reserves the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, to continue the sale and to amend the terms of the sale by written or oral announcement made before or during the foreclosure sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the

sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication. **TIME WILL BE OF THE ESSENCE.**

Other terms if any, to be announced at the sale.

Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.
Present Holder of said Mortgage,
By Its Attorneys,
ORLANDS PC
PO Box 540540
Waltham, MA 02454
Phone: (781) 790-7800
17-007125

March 9, 2018
March 16, 2018
March 23, 2018

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TheHeartOfMassachusetts.com



LEGALS

MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by Daniel R. Sweet to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Sherwood Mortgage Group, Inc., its successors and assigns, dated August 31, 2001 and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 24759, Page 379 subsequently assigned to Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. by Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 45115, Page 331 and subsequently assigned to HSBC Bank USA, National Association as Trustee for MASTR Reperforming Loan Trust 2005-1 by Wells Fargo Bank, National Association, successor by merger to Wachovia Mortgage Corporation, formerly known as First Union Mortgage Corporation by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 48678, Page 201; of which Mortgage the undersigned is the present holder for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at Public Auction at 12:00 PM on April 9, 2018 at 67 Grove Street, Winchendon, MA, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:

The land in said Winchendon, with the buildings thereon, numbered 67 Grove Street, bounded and described as follows, to wit: COMMENCING at a stone monument on the Northerly side of Grove Street; thence running NORTHEASTERLY on line of land formerly of Willard N. Sawyer et ux, now or formerly or John B. Abood et al, and land formerly of Marion U. Gregory, now or formerly of George W. Gregory et ux, one hundred and thirty-two (132) feet, more or less, to an iron pin in line of land formerly of John R. Fisher; thence NORTHWESTERLY on line of said Fisher land ninety-six and 525/1000 (96.525) feet, more or less, to a stone monument; thence SOUTHWESTERLY on line of land of Henri M. Prescott one hundred thirty and 35/100 (130.35) feet, more or less, to an iron pin in the Northerly line of said Grove Street; thence SOUTHEASTERLY on line of said Grove Street sixteen and one-half (16-1/2) feet, more or less, to a stone monument; thence continuing SOUTHEASTERLY on line of Grove Street sixty-one and 875/1000 (61.875) feet, more or less, to the point of beginning. This conveyance is made subject to all restrictions or record which are now in force and apply. Meaning and intending to convey and hereby conveying the same premises conveyed by Mary E. Young to Clarence L. Lincoln dated April 9, 1915, and recorded with Worcester District registry of Deeds, Book 2950, Page 280. For my title see Estate of Marguerite P. Lincoln, Worcester County Probate Case No. 270638. Clarence L. Lincoln died February 22, 1972, as evidenced by death certificate Recorded herewith, Instrument No. 41156 See Doc # 135081

The premises are to be sold subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, building and zoning laws, liens, attorney's fees and costs pursuant to M.G.L.Ch.183A, unpaid taxes, tax titles, water bills, municipal liens and assessments, rights of tenants and parties in possession.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS (\$5,000.00) in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or money order will be required to be delivered at or before the time the bid is offered. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Foreclosure Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the sale date in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney. The Mortgagee reserves the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, to continue the sale and to amend the terms of the sale by written or oral announcement made before or during the foreclosure sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication. **TIME WILL BE OF THE ESSENCE.**

Other terms if any, to be announced at the sale.

HSBC Bank USA, National Association as Trustee for MASTR Reperforming Loan Trust 2005-1
Present Holder of said Mortgage,
By Its Attorneys,
ORLANDS PC
PO Box 540540

Waltham, MA 02454
Phone: (781) 790-7800
17-009345

March 16, 2018
March 23, 2018
March 30, 2018

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Kimberly Fleurant and Joseph Fleurant, III to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Salem Five Mortgage Company, LLC, dated January 6, 2012 and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 48377, Page 116 as affected by a Loan Modification Agreement recorded with said records at Book 56245, Page 5, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder by assignment from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. as nominee for Salem Five Mortgage Company, LLC to JPMorgan Chase Bank, National Association dated March 30, 2015 and recorded with said Registry on April 3, 2015 at Book 53551, Page 16, for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at Public Auction at 10:00 a.m. on April 4, 2018, on the mortgaged premises located at 41 BROWN STREET, WINCHENDON, Worcester County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,
TO WIT:

A certain parcel of real estate with the buildings thereon, in the Village of Waterville in said Winchendon and numbered 41 Brown Street, and bounded and described as follows: Commencing on the Northerly side of the road leading from Waterville to Hydeville, now Brown Street, at a corner of land now or formerly of Elisha M. Whitney (a drill hole in a stone charged with lead);
Thence North 20° East, 136 feet to a drill hole in a large rock charged with lead;
Thence South 62° 10' East 169.7 feet to a corner;
Thence South 27° 40' West 161 feet to the line of said road;
Thence on line of said road North 47° 30' West about 35 feet and North 53° 45' West about 119 feet to the place of beginning.

Also conveying the right to drain said premises across land in the Southerly side of said road to the river as set forth in deed to Elisha M. Whitney, dated August 27, 1900, and recorded in Book 1943, Page 216.

Being the same premises described in from William W. Whitney and Emily W. Peters, Trustees of the Murdock Trust, to us, dated January 23, 1962, and recorded in Book 4258, Page 315. Subject to rights of Winchendon Electric Light and Power Company under instrument dated November 7, 1933 and recorded in Book 2596, Page 96, if same affects locus. For Mortgagors' title see deed recorded herewith. B. 48377 P114

For consideration paid, the signors of the mortgage to which this Exhibit is attached, (the Mortgage) hereby release any and all rights of homestead in and to the mortgaged premises as against the holder of the Mortgage. It is agreed that any such Homestead shall not have any effect upon the Mortgage and to the extent such Homestead is legally enforceable, shall be subordinated and junior to said Mortgage in every respect.

For mortgagor's(s') title see deed recorded with Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 48377, Page 114.

These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California Street, Newton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

JPMORGAN CHASE BANK,
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

Present holder of said mortgage
By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.
150 California Street
Newton, MA 02458
(617) 558-0500
201707-0108 - PRP
March 9, 2018
March 16, 2018
March 23, 2018

MORTGAGEE'S NOTICE OF SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain Mortgage given by Richard Warpula Jr and Christine Warpula to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Sherwood Mortgage Group, Inc, its successors and assigns, dated July 8, 2002 and recorded with the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 26954, Page 132 subsequently assigned to Chase Home Finance, LLC by Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 45974, Page 82, subsequently assigned to Secretary of Housing and Urban Development by JPMorgan Chase Bank, N.A., S/B/M to Chase Home Finance, LLC by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 52003, Page 255, subsequently assigned to U.S. Bank National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely as Legal Title Trust for LVS Title Trust I by Secretary of Housing and Urban Development by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 55440, Page 375, subsequently assigned to UMB Bank, National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely as Legal Title Trustee for MART Legal Title Trust 2015-NPL1 by US Bank National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely as Legal Title Trustee for LVS Title Trust I by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 54564, Page 294 and subsequently assigned to U.S. Bank National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as Trustee for the RMAC Trust, Series 2016-CTT by UMB Bank, National Association, not in its individual capacity, but solely as Legal Title Trustee for MART Legal Title Trust 2015-NPL1 by assignment recorded in said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds at Book 56992, Page 122; of which Mortgage the undersigned is the present holder for breach of the conditions of said Mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing same will be sold at Public Auction at 1:00 PM on April 13, 2018 at 52 Belmont Avenue, Winchendon, MA, all and singular the premises described in said Mortgage, to wit:
Being Lots 21 and 23 on a plan by George N. Merrill & C. E. dated July 1903, recorded with Worcester District Registry of Deeds in Plan Book 8, Page 21. The premises are conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, Easements, appurtenances, reservations, restrictions, and layouts and takings of record, insofar as they are in force and applicable. For our right in title see deed of Steven C. Amenta, Wendy L. Amenta and Gloria M. Lucas dated July 8, 2002 and recorded immediately prior hereto.

The premises are to be sold subject to and with the benefit of all easements, restrictions, building and zoning laws, liens, attorney's fees and costs pursuant to M.G.L.Ch.183A, unpaid taxes, tax titles, water bills, municipal liens and assessments, rights of tenants and parties in possession.

TERMS OF SALE:

A deposit of FIVE THOUSAND DOLLARS AND 00 CENTS (\$5,000.00) in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or money order will be required to be delivered at or before the time the bid is offered. The successful bidder will be required to execute a Foreclosure Sale Agreement immediately after the close of the bidding. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid within thirty (30) days from the sale date in the form of a certified check, bank treasurer's check or other check satisfactory to Mortgagee's attorney. The Mortgagee reserves the right to bid at the sale, to reject any and all bids, to continue the sale and to amend the terms of the sale by written or oral announcement made before or during the foreclosure sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee or the Mortgagee's attorney. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication. **TIME WILL BE OF THE ESSENCE.**

Other terms if any, to be announced

at the sale.
U.S. Bank National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as trustee for the RMAC Trust, Series 2016-CTT
Present Holder of said Mortgage,
By Its Attorneys,
ORLANDS PC
PO Box 540540
Waltham, MA 02454
Phone: (781) 790-7800
17-008661
March 23, 2018
March 30, 2018
April 6, 2018

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE'S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

Premises: 204 Mill Street, Winchendon, Massachusetts

By virtue and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Justin A. Oakley and Jamie L. Oakley to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for GSF Mortgage Corp., said mortgage dated May 8, 2007, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester) Registry of Deeds, in Book 41121 at Page 182 and now held by Bank of America, N.A., successor by merger to BAC Home Loans Servicing, LP fka Countrywide Home Loans Servicing, LP by virtue of an assignment from Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc. to Bank of America, N.A., successor by merger to BAC Home Loans Servicing, LP fka Countrywide Home Loans Servicing, LP dated September 26, 2011 and recorded October 4, 2011 in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds, in Book 47917 Page 286 for breach of the conditions in said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing the same, will be sold at Public Auction on April 2, 2018 at 12:00 PM Local Time upon the premises, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage, to wit:

The land in the northwesterly part of the village of Winchenden, Worcester County, Massachusetts, known as No. 204 Mill Street with the buildings thereon, bounded and described as follows, viz:

Commencing on the southerly side of Mill Street at a corner of land formerly of Joseph H. Wright; thence On line of said Wright land S. 18° W., one hundred five (105) feet; thence On line of land formerly of Frank L. Leland N. 74° 45' 45' W., forty (40) feet; thence Still on line of said Leland land N. 14° E., eighteen (18) feet; thence On line of land formerly of Asa P. Whitcomb N. 3° 45' E., ninety (90) feet, more or less, to said Mill Street; thence On said Mill Street sixty-three (63) feet to the lace of beginning.

The description of the property that appears in the mortgage to be foreclosed shall control in the event of a typographical error in this publication. For Mortgagors' Title see deed dated 9/30/2003, and recorded in Book 31836 at Page 242 with the Worcester County (Worcester) Registry of Deeds. TERMS OF SALE: Said premises will be sold and conveyed subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, tax titles, municipal liens and assessments, if any, which take precedence over the said mortgage above described.

FIVE THOUSAND (\$5,000.00) Dollars of the purchase price must be paid by a certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check at the time and place of the sale by the purchaser. The balance of the purchase price shall be paid in cash, certified check, bank treasurer's or cashier's check within thirty (30) days after the date of sale. Other terms to be announced at the sale.

BENDETT & MCHUGH, PC
270 Farmington Avenue
Farmington, CT 06032
Attorney for Bank of America, N.A.,
successor by merger to BAC Home
Loans Servicing, LP fka Countrywide
Home Loans Servicing, LP
Present Holder of the Mortgage
(860) 677-2868

March 9, 2018
March 16, 2018
March 23, 2018



CLYDE'S CORNER

Saturday, March 24

DAZED TILL DAWN! At the Winchendon Rod & Gun Club beginning at 9 p.m.

HAM DINNER: The Mason of Artisan Lodge Winchendon will host a ham dinner Saturday, March 24 at 12:30 p.m. at the Old Murdock Senior Center. Please reserve your place before March 14 by calling the Center at (978) 297-3155.

EASTER MEAT SOCIAL: the annual Hawg Hauler Easter meat social is set to begin at 7 p.m. at the American Legion Post 193, 295 School St. Hams, beef, poultry, lobster...get your dinner here! Always a full house, plan to get there early.

ST. PATRICK'S DAY DINNER: Immaculate Heart of Mary hosts a corned beef and cabbage meal at 5:30 p.m. Saturday, March 24 at the Parish Hall. There will be step dancers, and a few tickets are still available. Come celebrate!

Sunday, March 25

BREAKFAST WITH THE BUNNY! Cub Scout Pack 193 is hosting Breakfast with the Easter Bunny Sunday, March 25 7:30-9:30 a.m. at United Parish Church, 39 Front St. All you can eat pancakes, eggs, sausage, home fries, coffee and juice. Adults \$7, children aged 10 and younger \$4 and a family of four or more \$20. Thank you for supporting Cub Scouts!

Thursday, March 29

TIMELY MESSAGE: WINCHENDON SUBSTANCE ABUSE TASK FORCE PRESENTS: Taylor's Message & Not in the Playbook, a community speaker series to raise awareness about, & reduce substance abuse, Thursday, March 29 at 6:30 p.m. at the Winchendon School, 172 Ash Street. This event is free and open to the public, coffee and desserts will be available. Please come early as seating is limited. For questions contact Jennifer Sibley at (978)

868-7174. Kathy Sullivan will be speaking about her daughter, who passed away due to underage drinking. Chris Sullivan, a former Patriots player, will speak about his NFL career and his struggles with addiction.

Wednesday, April 4

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION: Memorial School Kindergarten Registration for school year 2018-19: If your child will be 5 years of age by Aug. 31, 2018 then he/she is eligible for Kindergarten in the Fall of 2018. Open enrollment will begin on Monday, March 12 and run through Friday, April 6 between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. For those parents that are unable to register their child during that time, an evening registration will be held on Wednesday, April 4, between the hours of 5 p.m. and 7 p.m. Registration packets were mailed home on Friday, Feb. 16 (based on town census). If you do not receive a packet and your child is eligible, registration forms will be available on the District website at www.winchendonk12.org or you can call the school at (978) 297-1305 for more information.

Saturday, April 7

IT'S A TRIBUTE: The Sons of the American Legion Post 193 host Petty Larceny, the tribute to Tom Petty in a concert to benefit Children's Hospital beginning at 8 p.m. at the Legion, 295 School St. \$10 in advance (available at the Legion or from any Sons member), \$15 at the door. Raffles, live auction.

Friday, April 20

DINNER & A SHOW: Eugene M Connor Post Auxiliary Unit 193 offers a dinner and a show, with a spaghetti dinner at 6 p.m. and Comedy for a Cause featuring local comedian Jerry Caruso & Friends at 8 p.m. Dinner and show \$20; show only \$15. Tickets for the show

will be available at the door. Proceeds to go toward the Charland Children Education Fund.

Saturday, April 21

BLUES AT ITS BEST: the Winchendon Lions present the Souled Out Show Band at the American Legion Post 193, 295 School St. beginning at 8 p.m. \$15 per person, \$25 per couple. 50/50 raffle and 30 minute live auction. To benefit local activities of the Lions.

Saturday, May 19

OWC: Operation Winchendon Cares - Remembering Our Current Military - to be held on Saturday, May 19, at the American Legion Post 193 on School Street, Winchendon from 9-11 a.m. For updates please visit our Facebook page or our website www.winchendoncares.com.

Sunday, May 20

CHEESE CHASE: Smith's Country Cheese is sponsoring a 5K charity run-walk to benefit the Winchendon police and fire departments. \$20 entry fee now, price increases after April 1. Route will begin and end at picturesque Otter River Road location; visit runsignup.com.

ONGOING PROGRAMS

SUNDAYS

INDIVISIBLE WINCHENDON: The Indivisible Winchendon group meets every Sunday at 12:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon, 126 Central St. to discuss and organize creative, effective resistance to the Trump administration over the long term. We are liberal/progressive but non-partisan. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/381174492262359/>

MONDAY

LEGO CLUB: Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St. hosts a Lego Club for kids aged six-12, 3:30-4:30 p.m. every Monday afternoon the library is open. Show off your creative side. More information about this and other programs by calling (978) 297-0300 or visit townofwinchendon.com/bealsmemoriallibrary.

TUESDAY

WINCHENDON NA MEETING: Hosted by UUCW and led by Winchendon residents, in collaboration with the Central Massachusetts area/New England Region of Narcotics Anonymous. This is an open meeting with general discussion and support, for anyone who is in recovery or wants to be. Please pass on this information to anyone you know who might be interested in, or benefit from, a meeting. We're working hard to get the word out! At the UU Church of Winchendon, 126 Central St, downstairs in the parish hall. Begins at 6:30 p.m.

LEARN: Computer classes for adults are offered on Tuesday afternoons from 3:30-4:30 p.m. at Beals Memorial Library and are open to adults ages 18 and older.

CRAFT FOR ADULTS: On Tuesday nights at 6:30 Beals Memorial Library has an adult craft hour providing a place to meet and do crafts. People bring in things they are working on, and can get help on knitting, crocheting, quilting and discuss different ideas.

TINY TOTS PLAYGROUP: on Tuesday 10-11 at Beals Memorial Library, 50 Pleasant St. for toddlers aged 0-4. Songs, rhymes and sharing.

WEDNESDAY

BINGO! Hyde Park residents hold bingo in the community hall every Wednesday night beginning at 6 p.m. It's inexpensive, just two cards for 5¢, and the community is invited! Anyone over the age of 50 is welcome to join in. We'd love to have more players.

BINGO 2! Old Murdock Senior Center hosts Bingo on Wednesday afternoons at 12:15 p.m.

Popular band rocks the Legion

BY CHRIS MARTIN
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

March 10 the Mychael David Project, formerly known as the Help Wanted Band, performed at the American Legion to play country music, from their CDs and other various artists.

They were supposed to perform at the chili cook-off last year, but got rained out.

The band members are Mychael David on acoustic guitar and vocals, Susan Jayne on vocals, Howie Swett on lead guitar and vocals, Pete Early on bass and vocals, Glen Stegner on keyboard and vocals, and John E. May on drums and vocals.

The first song of the evening was *Nobody Wins* by Rodney Foster.

Other songs played throughout the night were *It's All About Tonight* by Blake Shelton, *Hang on Tight*, *Goodbye is still Goodbye*, *Peaceful Easy Feeling*, *Somedays You Just Gotta Dance*, *Gettin' You Here* by Chris Young, *Man In The Moon Is Crying*, *She's A Good Hearted*

Woman, by Waylon Jennings, *Roll Baby Roll*, *Chasing That Neon Rainbow*, *But I Do, Down To Mississippi and up To No Good*, *Folsom Prison Blues*, by Johnny Cash, *Stranger In My House*, *Tequila Sunrise*, *We Oughta Take it Easy*, *Little by Little*, *The Dog Don't Know Sit*, *Just Look At Us*, *Night Moves*, *On The Road Again*, *"Burning Love"* by Elvis Presley, *Some Gave All*, *Working Man*, *Mustang Sally*, *Little On The Trashy Side*, *Taking Care of Business*, *Put Your Badge Back On*, *Just Like Texas*.

And to wrap up the night they ended with a song called *That Ain't My Truck*.

On Saturday March 24 The Mychael David Project will be performing at Wachusett Mountain Ski Area at 1:00 p.m. Also on Aug. 4 the Mychael David Project will be coming to the chili cook-off.

This event was a fundraiser for the Winchendon Kiwanis and the Backpack program, which serves nearly 100 children with food for the weekends.



Ruth DeAmicis photo

The Mychael David Project had them up on the dance floor.

Program presents YV projects

BY JERRY CARTON
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

Seniors weren't there because they don't have a whole lot of time left at Murdock High School, but freshmen, sophomores and juniors were all in attendance at an assembly last week designed to promote interest and encourage participation in the United Way Youth Venture program.

Representatives from ongoing projects told their schoolmates about what drove them to get involved and MHS champion Kris Provost and Commonwealth Core's Bryan Nolan extolled the virtues of involvement, stressing YV allows students to "be in charge," as Nolan put it, of their own efforts.

"You make the decisions" regarding the direction of projects, he added.

"160,000 kids stay home every day on average across the country because they're being

bullied," Nolan reflected, "so asking yourself, 'how can I make a difference' makes sense. For me, the issue was child hunger but you might have ideas about a lot of issues."

Mental health issues were the reason Hannah Turner began Blue Hands last year and in a brief talk at Thursday's assembly, Turner cited the cooperation from faculty members who provided safe spaces, classrooms where open and honest discussions are consistently welcome.

"There was a stigma about talking about mental health issues," she remarked, pointing out the efforts she, her team, and teachers are making to ease that stigma.

"No one likes being in the hospital," noted Julio Rodriguez, explaining the basis for his project to rebuild video games for distribution to sick kids.

"We're trying to help with the boredom," said Rodriguez, who added

the idea was originally conceived by his brother Felipe.

"We can make them smile," noted Rodriguez.

Provost said there are other ongoing YV projects as well, mentioning the Benches as something of an adjunct to Blue Hands, saying benches will be placed in different places in the school as safe zones. He said a project on teen pregnancy is in the works as well, being organized by Rebecca Stone and that Heather Fasulo is putting one together as well.

Provost pointed out the benefits of the program by saying it represents a way for students to be involved in the community outside of daily academics.

"They can make a difference inside and outside the building," he said, urging younger students to attend Youth Venture meetings which are held after school on Mondays.



"You will drive your own projects," he stressed. Youth Venture's annual Spring Showcase was scheduled for last night at Great Wolf Lodge.

Greg Vine photo

Bryan Nolan of Youth Venture of Northern Worcester County briefs Murdock High School freshmen, sophomores, and juniors on the program during an assembly last Thursday.



SUMMIT

continued from page A1

en teaching methods, while keeping safety, health, and the wellbeing of our children a top priority.”

A parent spoke about the district’s privacy policy regarding the protection of student data and whether the disclosure of data in accordance with the school committee’s contract with the Summit Learning platform is in compliance with applicable Massachusetts state laws, citing Mass Department of Education Laws and Regulations, 603 CMR Section 23.07, Access to Student Records Paragraph (4) – Access of third party states, “No third party shall have access to information in or from a student’s record without the specific informed written consent of the eligible student or parent.”

The parent pointed out they were under the impression the Summit Learning Platform information collection policies, it was noted information is collected but not limited to full names and addresses, user names and passwords, class rosters, student ID number, test scores, grades, standardized test, attendance, suspensions, expulsions, observations, and much more such as internet protocol address, device identifiers, browser types and ISP service providers among others.

The parent pointed out that under Summit policy, the platform not only appears to collect data while students are in class, but also using the platform while at home. Additionally, inappropriate advertisements were also brought to attention.

It was then mentioned that Cheshire Connecticut public schools who had previously rolled out the Summit Learning platform, had then rolled it back after both parental and student outcry.

The Power Point presentation was then continued by Winchendon resident, and student father, who is a science teacher with Narragansett Regional School District Chad Dufour, who was later joined by his wife Amy. The Dufours have a daughter in kindergarten and son in the eighth grade.

Dufour opened with concerns regarding the extensive amount of average daily screen time required by the Summit Learning program.

“The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children

have two hours or less daily of screen time which includes the use of computers, cell phones, televisions, video games, and tablets. Students are reporting they routinely exceed this two hour limit during the school day,” reported Dufour.

“I will be completely honest, it’s one of our concerns the amount of screen time they observe during the day, and then again being asked to do it again when they come home after school. When my son gets home he doesn’t want to do any of that as he has had enough of it during the school day,” added Dufour.

Dufour spoke of instances when students are asked to stay after school, or come in during vacation to get caught up if behind on Summit Learning.

“Given that the WPS does not provide late buses, it’s impossible for many students to stay after school after the day has ended, as they may not have the necessary transportation home and they may not live near the school or their parents may work late. During February break, students did not get their vacation from school as they had to get caught up on Summit Learning. My own son has had to skip out on Scouts meetings to say caught up or ahead of the ‘line of death’ as it is called,” continued Dufour.

It was reported to the committee many students are stressed, anxious, and more from the platform, with parents stating their children are crying on a regular basis according to Dufour, with the students feeling like they cannot get caught up.

Dufour also explained, “Summit also in the middle of the year changed a passing grade from a 3.0 to a 3.5, causing children to have to go back and modify their assignments to then again try to get a passing grade causing more stress on students.”

Dufour spoke of how his own son, who had a grade of an A on studies completed, later found the focus area studies changed, and found Summit changed his grade from an A to a B-later on.

“Changes in the middle of the program are giving children the overwhelming feeling of not being able to keep up even worse,” said Dufour, adding, “Several parents we know of have had to hire tutors to help teach their students on the platform outside of the school day. These parents did not have to do this prior to the implementation of

the summit learning platform.”

Complicating the issue with the learning platform even more, parents reported there have been several instances at the middle school where the wireless network has been down due to technical issues during normal school hours, directly impacting the use of the web based platform.

It was also added that students have been reporting the wireless system cannot support the bandwidth required to support the number of students using the platform.

One parent added, “My son came home and said he wasn’t able to take an assessment because too many kids were using the system, which adversely affects a student’s ability to maintain the required progress.”

An issue was also brought to the discussion of students who live with families who do not have a computer at home, internet access, and thus do not have the ability to work on the platform as required at home, who would then have the only option to stay after school to access the platform, where again transportation could be a significant issue.

“Parents were told ‘Everything in this program can be printed out’ and videos can’t be printed out, you must watch the videos on-line,” added a parent.

Dufour then noted, “The Summit Learning platform takes away the teachers’ role and the teachers become a facilitator, and puts the role of a teacher in to the hands of the student and the computer.”

“My son has always enjoyed school. This year he hates it, dreads it, and doesn’t even want to do it, and the number one reason is because of the Summit platform,” said Dufour.

Suggestions were made which included but were not limited to double block ELA and math classes, keep core teaching staff/lower class sizes, developing and deploying an effective mentoring program, training staff in “keys to literacy” and changing when appropriate to the Khan on-line academy, along with looking at districts with similar socio-economic status and demographics regarding best practices.

Near the presentation closing a Japanese proverb was read, “Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher,” followed by, “Winchendon Public Schools have many great teachers, let’s let them

teach our students again.”

Committee Chair Larry Murphy said, “I just want to thank the people that came forward tonight and the great amount of work that you did. You shared your concerns, they are very specific, and you offered alternatives, and you have certainly given us food for thought. Spend time with the teachers and speaking with staff. We want students to succeed. We will continue to watch this closely, and do our homework, and thank you again for your presentation tonight.”

Dufour said, “We have always defended our schools here in Winchendon. Unfortunately, now due to this learning platform, we do not feel that is something we can do for grades 7 and 8 due to how much our son and his friends have not enjoyed the platform. I am telling you right now that one of the number one reasons children are going to be choosing school choice this year is because of Summit.”

Dufour continued, “If Summit is going to be here, we are going to be looking at school choice for our daughter even at a younger grade level. I don’t believe my daughter would be successful with Summit.”

In closing a student’s mother approached the committee. Visibly fighting back tears she said, “I sit before you not as an educator but a very concerned mother. I have seen my children go from loving school to not wanting to go. I have tried to talk to as many of the students and parents as possible who are involved in Summit. I am getting back the same feedback. They are not happy, and a lot of them say they are not learning. Unfortunately, I come before you with a very heavy heart. Because of our experience, we have started a petition against the Summit Learning platform. I hope you take it seriously, and you reconsider, because our children deserve better.”

Superintendent Steve Haddad reported a parental informational session was previously held at MMS lead by Principal Jessica Vezina on Monday, March 12, where parents were broken in to 3 different groups to observe the Summit Learning platform and receive answers to questions.

On March 20, Haddad said, “Both the school committee and I are truly listening to the parents and will continue to listen all concerns presented, and also continue to evaluate both those and the student’s needs.”

MERITS

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parents and members of the community are more than welcome to come in and see for themselves what Summit is all about and how it works.

“We’re completely transparent. We want to form a partnership with parents. We’re open because we’re proud of our work and what we’re doing here. If parents want to come in and ‘shadow’, we’re fine with that, too,” she stressed, adding she and faculty members are eager to accommodate parental schedules in order to meet with anyone who has questions and concerns.

“And we have tours on Mondays,” she reminded.

To better facilitate communication, Vezina has been sending out her newsletter on a weekly basis. Easily accessible information is posted online on the school’s website and Facebook page and on the Summit page as well.

Vezina strove to clear up misconceptions about Summit, pointing out the program is based on three pillars to the student experience. These include project-based learning where “students spend the majority of their time working alongside teachers and classmates on rich, real world projects,” one-on-one mentoring where “students meet weekly

with a mentor to ensure daily actions and progress align with long term goals,” and individualized pathways, meaning students themselves “are empowered to set goals and deeply understand content by consuming it in a way that is best for them.”

She addressed other concerns. To the complaint that Summit basically absolves teachers of any responsibility and lets computers do all the work, “Teachers are teaching in ways that help students develop critical thinking skills, not just memorize content. You need to be able to think critically in the world today,” she said.

As regards student privacy risks, Vezina cited a response

from Summit Public Schools CEO Diane Tavenner who wrote, “Just like any student records, Summit has strict protocols in place to protect student data...access is limited to teachers and parents. It does not include personal information like addresses, Social Security numbers, race, and economic status.”

To the complaint students are spending too much time in front of a computer screen, “Students,” said Vezina, “spend the majority of their time working with their classmates and teachers on real-world projects in the classroom. Summit doesn’t replace teachers. It’s a tool that enables students and teachers to set

goals, track progress and complete deeper learning projects.”

Fifteen years in, Summit’s experiences, noted Vezina, are demonstrating “promising progress, with gains in test scores, increased attendance and better behavior.”

This year’s sixth graders will be new to Summit come next year (although the program is being expanded to include all three middle school grades), so MMS has scheduled a current sixth grade-parent night on April 5.

“We want to reassure them,” said Vezina.

Next week, additional Q/A and student perspectives.

MARKS

continued from page A1

wires hanging down, holes in roofs or collapsed roofs, exposure to the elements entering a building uncontrolled or unrestricted, various holes in the floors or walls where copper pipes were taken out allowing pathways for a fire to progress, cracked support beams, and more, are just some of the features taken in to consideration when determining if a building should not be entered in case of a fire.

All determinations according to Smith are made by the town building inspector Geoff Newton and himself as the fire chief in a joint determination.

Smith added, “The end result in our mind is to work with the owner on how to bring the building back up to code so it can be in a ‘safe state.’ The goal of the program is to always bring the building to a safe state. If that means the building comes down, or is brought up to code with renovations, that

is up to the owner. We are also really working with the owner to help them against a person potentially getting injured inside the building and the responsibility that would also bring.”

“If a building is brought back to a safe state, there is a process to have the building’s status ‘de-commissioned’ once again safe for firefighters to be able to enter a structure,” advised Smith to potential marked building owners.

Smith also added that both he and the building department would be more than happy to help steer the building’s owners in the right direction when needed for any modifications needed to bring the situation to a positive result.

In closing Smith said, “I think it’s important to building owners they realize they not only have a responsibility to the fire department, but themselves and the town all together to make the buildings safe. We need to make sure the public, public safety community, and community at large is protected.”

MHS

continued from page A1

Parents coming here and advocating for their children in a meaningful way really helped to tell me that I made the right decision.”

King continued, “I am just really thrilled to be here, and making the transition from a large urban district to a smaller district, which is exactly what I was looking for. I think that when you start search for a new leader in a district it can be very stressful, and I think probably more so as the magnitude is greater in a smaller district due to a single person can have a

great effect across a smaller district.”

In closing to the committee King said, “I am really humbled to be selected here, and really looking forward to start getting to work as soon as I possibly can and thank you for having me.”

Committee Chair Larry Murphy replied, “We are thrilled to have you. The site visit was just so impressive.”

Murphy then said to his fellow members, “How many people do you know who are loved in their middle school, and then go to a very challenging alternative school, turn that around, and then have teachers come from the middle school who fly over to the alternative school to make

sure they talk to us and even ask us if we have any openings so they could come with Mr. King?”

Murphy closed with, “That we are just thrilled to have you. We know your already working on a transition plan, and you have to hire an assistant principal pretty soon so you have got your work cut out for you.”

Member Felicia Nurmsen added, “Just hearing the words come out of Steve’s mouth that you’re a data guy makes us very happy to hear that, so we will look forward to that data,” while fellow member Dawn Fronte also jokingly added, “As long as you can explain the data so we can all understand it.”



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Look out below! Hazards cleared with help of FD



Photos by Keith Kent

WFD members carefully reach around the roofs edge to break off over hanging snow, ice, and broken crown molding while avoiding power lines and a large transformer.

BY KEITH KENT
COURIER CORRESPONDENT

With yet another storm blanketing the area, is it any wonder something like this might happen? March 15 at 4:35 p.m., Winchendon Fire was called out to assist at the so called RHI building at 212 Central St. as several safety concerns prompted the owners to call for help.

The structure, currently owned by Michele and Eric Peterson is to be rehabbed into commercial and residential property, but recent attempts to obtain both grant funding or investors to rehabilitate the building have been slow to date.

As the snow, accompanied by high winds, piled on, old crown molding adorning the top of the Central Street side of the RHI building was peeled back and dangerously hanging over the sidewalk where it could have possibly fallen and struck pedestrians.

Additionally, heavy sections of wind-blown ice and snow could be also visibly seen also over hanging portions of the front and the driveway side of the roof top of the structure, prompting the WPD to block off the portion of Central Street between its intersections with Grove and Railroad streets to allow firefighters to begin safely knocking down debris.

With Deputy Chief Ricci Ruschioni realizing the immediate threats imposed by the multiple safety issues, Tower 1 was dispatched to assist as outer access to the very top of the building was a necessity.

Firefighters using extreme caution in the Tower 1 bucket carefully negotiated the roof top area between the structure's front right corner, electrical power lines, and a large transformer using a 10 foot pole to hack away at ice, snow, and the hanging crown molding.

Once the driveway parking side and front of the building were temporarily secured, Ruschioni and fellow firefighters placed caution tape around the front of the building signifying no pedestrian side walk access as further crown molding removal was necessary.

Ruschioni said, "All the safety hazards both over hanging and hanging down from the roof edge could have seriously harmed anybody walking by if they broke free and fell. We have temporarily blocked the sidewalk with caution tape as the owners will have to have somebody return to take down the remaining crown molding on the front of the building.

The WFD cleared the scene at 5:15 p.m. with all hanging safety concerns removed.

As of the following day on Friday, workers were on site at the RHI build-



Winchendon Firefighters secure the frontal and sidewalk perimeter of the abandoned RHI building due to falling debris on Thursday, March 15.

ing removing the remaining loose crown molding and safety hazards so both pedestrians and motor vehicles could again safely pass the structure.

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TIMBER! AND DETOUR!

Photo by Keith Kent

This very large section of fallen pine tree completely blocked off Ash Street near the Winchendon School main offices shortly after noon Friday, March 2 during high winds generated by the strong winter storm. Crews worked in heavy rain and strong winds to clear the road, with National Grid repairing downed lines, necessitating police to close Ash from both its intersections with Hall Road and Cross Street.

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