Ipswich Local News

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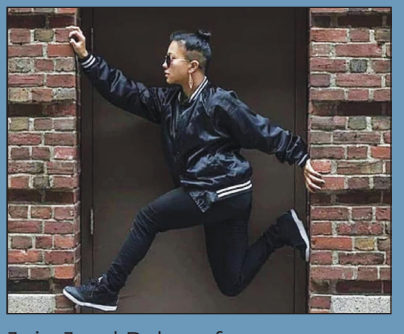
Ipswich resident and scientist John Wigglesworth will speak about his recent trip to the Arctic Circle on January 15 at the Heard House. See story, page 5.

Want to learn video? For free? ICAM is hosting three free video workshops for Ipswich residents. For more information, please turn to page 13.



Join Jeryl Palana for a community Hip Hop workshop at the Ipswich Moving Company on Saturday, January 11. Cost is $20. Classes are 1 to 2 p.m. for ages 8 to 12 and 2:15 to 3:15 p.m. for ages 12+. To register, email jenny@ipswichmovingco.org.

Investigation of dam removal continues

Select board seeking grants to research feasibility of removing Ipswich Mills Dam

by John Muldoon
Ipswich Local News

IPSWICH — The select board has taken another step in its investigation into whether the Ipswich Mills Dam should be removed.

The board voted 4-0-1 on Monday night to send a "letter of support for the NOAA grant application for dam removal mitigation design plans."

Some sort of dam has existed in the area since the mid-17th century, and the current structure was built in the 19th century to provide water power to the mills nearby.

However, the dam has been blamed for causing both extensive ecological damage and for exacerbating floods.

Despite the 4-0-1 vote this week, selectperson Linda Alexson said she was not in favor of removing the dam at this time.

She said she wanted to see how much the project would cost and where it fit in the list of expensive town projects, along with upgrades to roads, schools, water and wastewater, and the public safety buildings.

The letter sent to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) applies for a grant to explore what kind of mitigation is needed if the dam were to be removed.

Town manager Tony Marino said two applications were made, for a total of $200,000: One to NOAA and the other to the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP).

The applications were structured so that the town's contribution to this phase of the project would be $25,000. There will likely be a separate warrant article at the May 12 town meeting to discuss the proposal, Marino said.

see page 12

White sheep leads black sheep through town

by John Muldoon
Ipswich Local News

IPSWICH — Police found themselves shepherding a wayward flock home with their cruisers on Thursday, January 2, after a group of sheep got loose downtown.

"It was quite the sight," said Patti Ford, who took a number of pictures of the breakout. One of her photos showed 10 sheep wandering down the street.

The call came in at around 9:45 a.m. In an update to officers, the dispatcher radioed he had gotten calls from "Bialek all the way down to DJ's."

The herd is kept on Linebrook Road and was recently moved there from its last pasture on Hearbreak Road, police said.

The first officer in the area radioed that he found the sheep near the car wash. "They're going to be downtown in about a minute," he added.

Charming ovine or master escape artist? Detective Jimmy Perez masterminded a daring escape last week and led his partners in crime down Washington Street.

One officer went to get in front of them while another suggested the dispatcher call the MBTA in case the sheep wandered into even more

continued on page 10

Martial arts teacher becomes a student overseas

Mark Warner brings new fighting styles back from the Philippines and Indonesia to his Ipswich classes

by Kimberly Mavroides

Mark Warner, owner of Mark Warner's Professional Martial Arts Academy in downtown Ipswich, has been practicing martial arts since the age of 16. But even after 45 of practice and more than 20 years as a teacher and studio owner, he still considers himself a student. He recently traveled overseas to deepen his connection to his practice, refine his teaching techniques, and bring new information back to his students.

"All these years later, and I'm still learning," Warner said. "In order to give everything I can to my students, I have to keep learning."

Back in October, Warner traveled to the Philippines and Indonesia with a group put together by Michael and May Williams of the Martial Arts Research Institute in Salem. The group travels abroad every other year to train with experts. On the off years, the experts come here.

Back row (L-R): Shirley Stahlinski, Guru Rob Stahlinski, Vincent Larusso, Grandmaster Jerson Nene Tortal, Guru Michael Williams. Front row: Justin Umal Tashi, Mark Warner, Guru May William, Guru Joe Bucaria, Guru John Savage (photo courtesy Mark Warner).

Mark Warner and friends in Indonesia this past October (photo courtesy Mark Warner).

The group first traveled to the Philippines, where they trained for eight hours each day in Dekiti-Tirsia Siradas, an ancient Filipino combat and survival system indigenous to the island of Negros. The technique is very combative with emphasis on impact and bladed weapons as well as empty hand techniques and even firearms. It was used in combat against the Japanese Imperial invasion of the Philippines during World War II.

The intensive daily seminars were led by the 82-year old Grandmaster Jerson Tortal, a member of the Tortal Clan, which created the discipline.

"It was almost like a college course in martial arts," Warner said. "We were deepening what we already know and learning new methods of passing the art to our own students."

From the Philippines, the group traveled to Indonesia, where they trained with Grandmaster Edward Lebe in Baringin Sakti Silat, a mostly open hand art, in triple-digit weather each day.

"We were all hot and tired, but to us it felt like vacation," Warner said. "Most people go on vacation to relax, but I go on vacation to train. I train for weeks on end, and I once again get to become the student."

Warner coaches both Dekiti-Tirsia Siradas and Baringin Sakti Silat at his school.

"The different styles of martial arts can be like different culinary experiences," Warner said. "All chicken is the same, but the spices you put in it will give it the different flavor."

When he travels for trainings, it is with the intent to bring back what he says are more refined aspects of the arts to his students.

"These arts are thousands of years old, and they are taught person to person, coach to student," Warner said. "It is my job to pass along the sheer essence of these arts to my students so that the traditions can continue. To go back to the country it came from, learn from the grandmasters, and then bring the art to my students — that is how real martial arts should be taught."

Warner said he was never sure what he wanted to do for his career until the day he opened his studio.

"As soon as I opened my school, that was that," Warner said. "The other day, I saw people getting on the highway and thought to myself, 'Oh, those poor people are going to work,' but I was going to work, too. It just doesn't feel like work to me."

Ipswich Local News

Ipswich Local News is in the process of becoming a 501(c)(3) or non-profit operation. It is published weekly, and 6,800 copies are mailed to homes and businesses in Ipswich; 200 more are distributed locally.

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Group protests Trump's military escalation against Iran

Threat of retaliation in response to killing of Iranian general prompts small demonstration on Town Hill

Protesting the escalation of tension in the Middle East this past weekend were Blaine Hebbel, Wendy Dabovich, Lakshmi Sirois, Barbara Smith, and John Schuchardt.

by John Muldoon
Ipswich Local News

IPSWICH — Unhappy with the president's escalation of tension in the Middle East, a small group staged a protest on Saturday morning at the base of Town Hill.

Lakshmi Sirois of Ipswich Community Action said the demonstration was in response to the assassination of Iranian General Qasem Soleimani "and the threat of retaliation."

Protester Barbara Smith said, "An impeached criminal in the White House should not have the power to create so much chaos and danger in the world."

"And unilaterally," Wendy Dabcovich added. "That's the biggest problem we have: We are losing our democracy here."

President Donald Trump's order to kill the Iranian general on Friday, January 3, caused international shock and promises of reprisals from Iran.

Smith called on Republicans to stand up to Trump, saying he was making it more dangerous for Americans around the world.

"We need Republicans to care," Sirois agreed. "Republicans are going to be killed just as much as Democrats are going to be killed."

"We don't need war. We can solve problems in a better way," Dabcovich said.

She also called on Republicans to exercise fiscal restraint. War is profitable for a few people, but the money could be better spent elsewhere, she argued.

Dabcovich noted oil stocks and defense company stocks have soared since the assassination.

Also present was poet Blaine Hebbel. He recited one of his works that said of Trump, "Putin's playing you like Nero's fiddle."

COMMENTARY

Ipswich farmers and gardeners come together to find common ground

by Charlotte Kahn

Farming has long been part of life on this marshy, hilly coast. Attracted by the area's abundant nuts, berries, shellfish, and fish, early inhabitants cultivated corn here more than a thousand years ago, supplemented later by beans and squash — the mutually beneficial "three sisters" of Native American agriculture.

Felled by disease brought by European traders to which they had no immunity in the early 1600s, the decimated native population reluctantly relinquished much of their communal farmland to English settlers.

Founded in 1634, Ipswich contains one of America's oldest continuously operated farms, Appleton Farm, established in 1638 by a land grant from the town to Samuel Appleton to grow vegetables, corn, and hay.

Centuries later, Appleton Farm is still producing, joined today by Marini's Farm, Russell Orchards, Three Sisters Farm, Northern Lights Farm, numerous hay farms, horse and cattle operations, and nearby Alprilla Farm, Green Meadows Farm, Iron Ox Farm, and Tendercrop Farm.

Together, these farms anchor the region's pastoral identity and offer a rare measure of regional food security.

A $10 million Open Space Bond passed by Ipswich Town Meeting in 2000 helped purchase farmland for future generations, but farmland remains at risk — competing with development, stressed by droughts that limit irrigation, and undermined by arguably unnecessary regulations and plans that weigh on farmers' slim profit margins.

In recent years, for example, farmers found themselves at odds with the Ipswich Department of Health over uniquely rigorous interpretations of state law at the Ipswich Farmers' Market, compared to more lenient interpretations at markets in Newburyport, Newbury, and Salem, effectively shutting it down.

Last year, the Board of Health almost issued a ruling that would prevent Marini from fertilizing a leased field — the back acreage of the new Linebrook Road/Mile Lane development — by restricting the farm's use of nitrogen to compensate for nitrogen use in the development.

And now the Ipswich Water Department is considering a new public well that could suck dry Marini's strawberry fields and more. If Ipswich wants to retain its working farms, a little more understanding of farmers' challenges would go a long way.

Historically, farmers and gardeners have not seen their efforts as two sides of one coin.

That changed last year, when the Ipswich Garden Club invited Jay Stanbury, head of the Ipswich Agricultural Commission, as a speaker.

Clearly Ipswich's gardeners face many of the same challenges as its farmers: a growing concern about the vagaries of the weather as climate change takes hold; a greater understanding of the hazards of herbicides, pesticides, and excess fertilizer; the need to reduce outdoor watering during droughts; the decline of pollinators and pest-controlling birds as invasive species encroach and natural habitats retreat.

Stanbury made it clear that he is committed to finding common ground with those whose work and lives dovetail with the interests of farmers. "I try hard to be conciliatory and cooperative and to find common ground," he said in a recent interview.

To that end, the Agricultural Commission voted to use part of its annual budget to bring together farmers, gardeners, public officials, and interested residents to explore common ground through a series of talks and workshops.

The first Common Ground program will be held at Gathr on Wednesday, January 22, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. (snow date: January 29). Featuring Caro Roszwell, Education Director of the Northeast Organic Farmers Association (NOFA), the program will focus on "Soil Health."

Space is limited, so please register at www.eventbrite.com/e/common-ground-farmers-gardeners-together-tickets-88169271665.

There is no charge, but contributions are welcome. The event includes a light buffet supper. Please bring your own beverage. Water will be available.

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LETTER

Demand answers at budget meetings

To the editor:

Yes, this is the time for you, the voter, to speak up. That is, if you are allowed to, although it is your right — and, of course, your duty — as a citizen.

Watch it when you go to town meeting and try to speak but are told by the moderator you should have gone to budget meetings to ask questions.

When you go to a budget meeting and listen to department staff tell all the great wonderful results of their past year and how they will need more money, and no official questions or challenges them, that's when citizens should speak up.

Just like you do at your home, office, or favorite watering hole.

As an example, last year I questioned several department heads and asked why they couldn't get by with the same budget and not increase their budget.

Of course, they all said they "had" to have an increase. Wouldn't you like to tell your employer you had to have a raise?

Example: Last year I asked if a department couldn't do without a $3,000 increase. A defensive reaction followed, including reasons of how good and how hard the staff worked.

Isn't that what they get paid for?

Two select board members chimed in, saying that I was asking department heads the same questions. Yes, I was — because that's why I was there.

I was asking questions that the town officials could/should be doing, as they are the stewards of the taxpayer dollars.

Now back to the $3,000 issue: You never know where a question will lead you.

Seems one staff member was taking a special class on the town's dime and time. Later they added a little salt into the answer when they told us the staff member was getting a $2,500 stipend, too.

So, taxpayers are busting their tails working harder than ever to get by for their families and homes.

So now the town pays "stipends" for staff to do their jobs. What say you?

So now it's budget time. Show up at budget meetings, especially experienced numbers people. Be prepared to ask questions, take notes, and don't take interruptions from the very officials who should be looking out for your hard-earned paycheck.

Remember when the moderator tells you at town meeting you should have asked questions at budget meetings ... but at budget meetings officials won't let you get to ask.

Is this why folks are reluctant to participate?

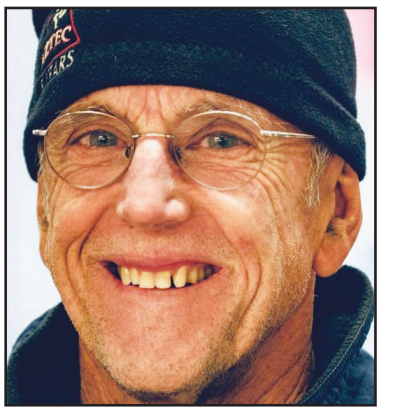
Folks in town keep telling me that town has already decided beforehand, could this be the reason a quorum (200 voters) is hard to get.

Communications and real transparency of complete expenditures is badly needed. After all, they are your tax dollars.

Ask questions and expect candid answers.

Phil Goguen
Kingfisher Road
Ipswich

Local adventurer explores 'surprisingly warm' Arctic


John Wigglesworth of Ipswich will tell of his research trip to the Arctic.

Capt. John Wigglesworth of Ipswich recently voyaged beyond the Arctic Circle to investigate the surprisingly warm waters north of Alaska.

In Ipswich on January 15, he will give an illustrated talk about his adventure: "Polar Bears, Walruses, and the Beaufort Sea."

Wigglesworth, a science and math teacher at Beverly's Waring School, was joined by a team of scientists aboard the research vessel Sikuliaq in August 2018.

The Arctic is one of the fastest-warming regions in the world.

The National Science Foundation backed the voyage to help resolve questions about the interplay of climate, ocean water, and planetary health.

Part of the Ipswich Museum's Wednesday Evening Lecture series, the event takes place on Jan. 15 at 7:30 p.m. at the Heard House, 54 South Main Street. Free admission for members; non-members pay $10. The venue is handicapped accessible. For more information, call 978-356-2811 or visit ipswichmuseum.org.

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Nourish. Engage. Educate.

Three Sisters gets new boss

by John Muldoon
Ipswich Local News

IPSWICH — There's a small farm where the new boss has big plans to get better known around town.

In the job for just over a month, Pilar Redmond is the new executive director of the Three Sisters Garden Project on Jeffrey's Neck Road.

Redmond said not everyone in town knows about the farm, and she wants to spread the word about what it does. "I'm excited to get out and have people know who we are."

With strong ties to the Cuvilly Preschool and Kindergarten and links to other schools in the area, Redmond said she wants to expand Three Sisters' education program to "not only the school kids but the public."

"Whether they're around a pig or a plant, not everybody has that opportunity," she noted.

With a background in environmental education, Redmond brings her experience at Appleton Farms to her new role.

While working for Appleton's owners, The Trustees of Reservations, she spent four years as their education manager, running summer camps and other programs and the engagement team.

"I learned a lot over there. It was a great place to work, great experience," she said.

But Redmond left in the dead of winter to take over at Three Sisters, saying it is the best time to start on a farm. "I'm super-excited for the new season and seeing everything come back to life."

Three Sisters' mission is to "create and grow an agricultural program that integrates sustainable farmland stewardship, food-based community engagement, and education," according to its website.

The organization has 150 farm-share customers in its community-supported agriculture program (CSA).

It also grows food specifically to donate to local charities. "A big part of our mission is food access — donating a lot of our food to local food pantries," Redmond said.

Three Sisters also offers subsidized food shares to local families who need help getting by, she added.

"It's really important to get real food into people.," Redmond said. "I feel people have a right to that, and not everybody has the accessibility to it."

Pilar Redmond takes the role of executive director of Three Sisters Garden Project.

Located on an old 170-acre dairy farm, Three Sisters uses the farm's four acres for vegetables and keeps some animals.

It and Cuvilly share property leased from the Sisters of Notre Dame, whose mission includes education and helping people in poverty.

Redmond works with a small staff that includes a full-time farmer and seasonal help. "We'll be hiring for them very, very soon, because the season starts way sooner than anyone knows."

The farm also attracts lots of volunteers who help in all aspects of the work. "We're always looking for helping hands," Redmond said.

Meanwhile, Three Sisters also acts as a training and education center for students and young farmers learning the trade.

Redmond grew up in a rural area of upstate New York and has always been drawn back to agriculture, she said.

That, and her interest in education, form the basis of her work in Three Sisters.

"I know how important it is to make a difference in our food system, because without a strong food system, we don't have much else that's strong," Redmond said.

From there, she plans to connect with the land and local communities.

Although not certified organic, the farm uses organic practices, stays away from genetically modified material, and doesn't use pesticides or herbicides, Redmond said. "We want our food to be as safe and healthy as possible."

Meanwhile, Three Sisters will continue its shared programming with Cuvilly, where the kids enjoy programs such as "Farm Friday."

As part of the organization's public outreach, it is hosting a fundraising dinner on January 16 at Ascension Church.

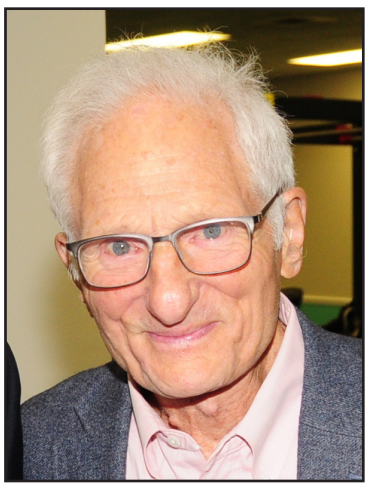
Remond also encourages the public to drop by to Three Sisters' seedling sale in spring. "I'm just looking forward to doing more things like that and having people connect with us."

OPINION

After a slow start, the Ipswich YMCA is now a key center in town

by Bill Wasserman

It was on December 31, 1999, according to folks with a better memory than I, exactly 20 years ago last Tuesday when a dedication ceremony for the new building of the Ipswich YMCA was held. That day was remembered last this December 31 at a breakfast celebration.



Lucia Greenough remembers the 1999 event … and also that the facility actually opened for use two days later on January 2. You can still catch Lucia, with her hair all wet in the morning after a lap swim, at the Y. She is among the many who get to the Y one way or another to keep their movement going and to say hello to their friends.

The Y didn't come easily to Ipswich. In the mid-nineties, Jack Meany, then-director of the Northshore YMCA, had wanted to build a facility in Ipswich for several years. He was persuaded that the Y had to become an Ipswich presence before it could seek the couple of millions of dollars in donations necessary to erect a building.

So Jack opted for a modest rental at Boone Hall at Ascension Memorial Church. And there, over several years, led by Darlene Moulton, now head of human services at Northshore YMCA, the Ipswich Y took shape and generated enough interest so that the fundraising solicitations, when they came about, fell on fertile ground.

If you look at the list of the donors, it's clear the Y won across-the-board support. The Ipswich Cooperative Bank, a predecessor of the Institution for Savings, lead the field, followed by the First National Bank of Ipswich, whose largest shareholders then were the Ted Raymond family. Ipswich Shellfish Company, owned by the Pappas family, was up there, too. And the list, which started with contributions in the thousands, went all the way down to individual contributions of 10 dollars, mindfully watched over by the treasurer, the late Cub Morgan.

The deal would not have been possible, however, without the cooperation of the VFW, whose building was the basis for the new structure. The Y and the officers of the VFW worked through a deal which continues to this day.

And after that opening, what happened?

The start was slow. There were years before the Y started to break even and cease to be a drag on the rest of the Northshore YMCA. Then things began to move. It was probably a question of time and of able leadership. For more than a decade, the Ipswich Y was led by the late Jerry Beauchamp, a diligent runner and greatly respected person in town. He set the Ipswich Y on a course towards today's membership of just under 7,000. Now the Ipswich Y is led by Chris Bevilacqua, who has broadened its mission: it is not just a gym — it is a place where cancer victims have a place, where community gatherings include families concerned with addiction, where exercise class after class is peopled with women, and where little kids get childcare.

The Ipswich Y has become a key center in town. It is a place to meet, a place where community has a meaning.

Congratulations, Y. You've had a fine 20-year beginning. Keep up the good work.

Is one copy of the Ipswich Local News just not enough?

Contact news@ipswichlocalnews.com to arrange to receive extra copies of the paper.

LETTER

Grants support arts in Ipswich

To the editor:

The Ipswich Cultural Council is pleased to announce that its grants will once again support artists and organizations for 2020. With a record number of 22 applications, the council ultimately funded 13 applicants most beneficial to Ipswich for a total of $7,400.

Appointed by the select board, our ICC consists of ten members with various arts backgrounds. It is one of 350 volunteer councils across the state that funds thousands of arts and humanities programs that enhance the state's cultural life.

The Massachusetts Cultural Council, as a state funding agency, allocates funds based upon population, and this year the allocation to Ipswich was $6,000. The additional funds raised for Ipswich grants came from our annual Art Show and Sale and the Arts and Illumination weekend.

The funded grants include support for Chorus Northshore Messiah; Ipswich River Watershed "Oceans of Rivers" program; The Musary, a musical instrument lending program; Ipswich Museum's "Sally's Butterfly Meadow Program" and Jenny Slew History Alive play; Council on Aging's "Jazzin' the Blues" music program; "Americans who tell the Truth II"; the Ipswich Community Band concert series; "Koukla Teaching Greek Dancing" for youth; "Verse/Visual" poetry and photography; NMYO youth orchestra concerts; Ipswich Public Library's "Tanglewood Marionettes"; and Ipswich Moving Company's "Air Meets Water III."

We look forward to continuing the Annual Art Show and Sale and supporting in a collaborative way the community-wide Arts and Illumination weekend.

Applications for the 2021 grants will be accepted in the fall of 2020. Information on that process and funding guidelines is available online at mass-culture.org/Ipswich or through our email listed below.

We will be asking for community input on a survey we are requested to do every three years and would love your input to help us serve the community in the best possible way. Survey forms will be at the Ipswich Library in February and March and on social media. Please contact us with any questions or comments on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/Ipswich-Cultural-Council-179736442086660/ or ipswichculturalcouncil@gmail.com.

Michael McGrath
Ipswich Cultural Council

50+ job networking group open to Essex Co. residents

A networking group that addresses the issues of age bias in hiring, workforce re-entry, and career redirection for job seekers age 50 and over will begin meeting soon.

Under the direction of the Ipswich Senior Center, the program is for residents of Essex County and will meet at Ipswich Town Hall on a bi-monthly basis beginning Monday, Jan. 13, at 4:30 p.m.

"This is a perfect opportunity for anyone who has lost a job, is re-entering the workforce, or is looking for a new career experience," Sheila Taylor, the center's director, said in a press release.

The topic for the first meeting is self-assessment and transferable skills.

Future topics include interviewing techniques, résumés and cover letters, networking, utilizing local career centers, and LinkedIn and other social media platforms.

Subsequent meetings will be held on the second and fourth Mondays of each month from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Doors open at 4 p.m. for informal networking.

While this program is being held in Ipswich, people age 50+ from all over the region are welcome to attend.

There are similar workshops held in North Andover on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month at 4:30 p.m. and in Danvers on the second and fourth Wednesdays of every month at 9:30 a.m.

The program is free and preregistration is required at www.mocoonline.com/50plusregistration.

The **Ipswich Local News** goes into the new year with gratitude and hope.

We have gratitude for the generous support of our advertisers, who took a leap of faith to try our product.

And we have gratitude to the Ipswich readers who have cheered us on and to those who have supported us with contributions.

We have hope. Hope that we can become an even better newspaper – a newspaper that reliably brings you the local news and serves as a community embracer helping collectively to gather our Ipswich wits and act with wisdom and compassion.

John Muldoon, editor and publisher
Bill Wasserman, advertising sales and consultant

What's on in Ipswich?

Wednesday, January 8

Meditation for Fundamental Wellbeing. Free/donation. Town Hall, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, January 9

Pasta Making Workshop. Appleton Farms, 6 p.m.

Music at The Brewer's Table: Headlands, John Rockwell, Eric Wilson, and Amy Rich. 8 p.m.

Friday, January 10

Dunes by the Light of the Wolf Moon. Castle Hill, 4:30 p.m.

Farm-to-Kitchen Cooking Class: Comfort Food. Appleton Farms, 6 p.m.

Music at The Brewer's Table: The Surnames. Ipswich Ale, 8 p.m.

Friday Night Flights. Cocktails and tastings at Privateer Rum. 11 Brady Drive, 4 to 7 p.m.

Saturday, January 11

Ipswich Democratic Town Committee meeting. Ipswich Public Library. 9:30 a.m.

Guest of the Cranes. Castle Hill, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tours leave every hour.

Hip Hop Workshops. Ipswich Moving Company, Cogswell St. 1 and 2:15 p.m.

Crane Beach Photo Safari. Castle Hill, 3:30 p.m.

Sunday, January 12

Crane Beach Birding Safari, Castle Hill, 8:30 a.m.

Guest of the Cranes. Castle Hill, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Tours leave every hour.

Mindful Winter Hike. Castle Hill, 10 a.m.

Fundamentals of Cheesemaking with Luca. Appleton Farms, 10 a.m.

Baking School: Essential Breads. Appleton Farms, 1 p.m.

Ipswich River Watershed Directors' Walk and Talk. Mass Audubon, 1 p.m.

Farm-to-Kitchen Cooking Classes: Spices and Flavors of India. Appleton Farms, 4 p.m.

Monday, January 13

Dinner Bell community meal. Masonic Lodge, Topsfield Road, 5 p.m.

Tuesday, January 14

Jazz at The May Flower. Depot Square, 7-10 p.m.

To find out more about these events, visit the online calendar at bit.ly/iln-events

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Y celebrates 20 years on County Rd.

(Photo via Ipswich YMCA's Facebook page.)

by Bill Wasserman

Twenty years ago, on December 31, 1999, the Ipswich Family Y first opened its doors at its facility off County Road.

That day was marked this past week — on December 31, 2019 — with a continental breakfast celebration.

About 30 members, including many board members, gathered.

They heard from Executive Director Chris Bevilacqua and board president Denald Down tell how the Y was, and is, "supported generously" by the community and how the Y has broadened its programs for all ages and a variety of needs.

Bevilacqua told of the critical part that the Ipswich unit of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, which shares the property, has played in the Y's history.

He recognized both the present commander, Frank Lindquist, and Jake Burrage, now 102, who was instrumental in arranging the agreement with the Y in 1999.

Bevilacqua noted that membership at the Ipswich YMCA is now approaching 7,000.

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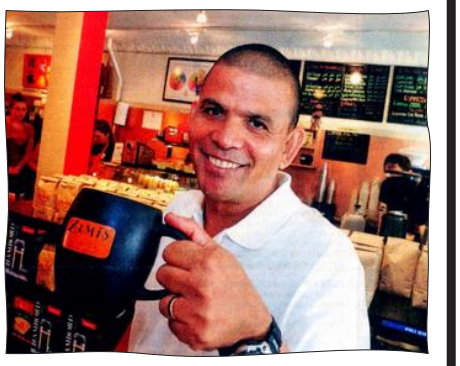

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Sheep on the lam knew exactly what they were doing

IPSWICH — Described as "an escape mastermind," Detective Jimmy Perez is the one who keeps leading the rest astray. He also likes a neck rub and will wag his tail when you're nice to him.

He's not a cop or even a police K-9. He's a Shetland sheep with a mind and a personality all of his own. And he was behind last week's breakout down Washington Street.

Not even one of the two black sheep, Jimmy and nine others were eventually coralled and herded back home by police in their cruisers, much to the delight of many local residents.

A smart and curious animal, Jimmy approaches humans and will sniff them to check them out.

A primitive breed from remote islands 110 miles off the coast of Scotland, the 10 Shetland sheep, who live on Linebrook Rd. not far from Bialek Park, were just trying to get "home," said owner Deanna Gallagher.

She and her family moved into their new house just last week from Heartbreak Road, she said.

And Jimmy, with his intelligence and knack for opening gates, exhibited instinctual behavior called "hefting," she explained.

This is where a flock will try to return to the pasture they are familiar with. As the sheep are new to Linebrook Road, Gallagher said she knew immediately they were making a "beeline" for Heartbreak Road.

And, looking at the route on a map, it makes sense. There's a river in the way, of course, but the sheep were definitely on the right track.

The sheep were trucked in on Saturday and had broken out by Thursday. To help them get familiar with their new surroundings, Gallagher is now feeding them cider doughnuts for breakfast, petting them a lot, and trying to get them as comfortable as possible in their new abode.

Det. Jimmy Perez and pals escaped from their new home on Linebrook road to return to their old pasture on Heartbreak Road via Washington Street (photo courtesy Karl Kastorf).

"These sheep have a bit of a criminal history," Gallagher said. They have broken out before on Heartbreak Road, where they have indulged in some of the neighbors' "investment plantings," she explained.

This time around, her 15-year-old son hosted a sleepover. One of the visitors went to see the sheep in the pasture behind the house and inadvertently left the gate open.

That presented no challenge for the ringleader, Detective Jimmy Perez, Gallagher said.

"He knows when a storm is coming. He knows how to avoid traffic. He knows how to open gates ... he's got all the wild genius in him still," she said.

Gallagher has had the sheep for 30 months. Interested in permaculture, she used them to get rid of "masses of poison ivy" on Heartbreak Road.

"They eat everything. They're like goats," Gallagher said. The key difference is that the Shetlands have a nice personality, she added.

"They're quite photogenic. They smile, they love having their pictures taken. and they are fabulously friendly. They're smart as anything because they were never homogenized," she said.

"They were big favorites of runners and hikers along Heartbreak Road," Gallagher said.

Asked why she had the flock, Gallagher said she always wanted sheep when she was young.

She also thought it would be a good idea for her five-year-old so he could learn about farming, animals, and food.

The sheep also continue the town's agricultural heritage that has been largely lost, Gallagher said, noting that much of the New England landscape was formed by early settlers and their vast sheep flocks.

But people have lost that connection, Gallagher says. "They're completely divorced from the food that they eat and the clothes that they wear."

"I would rather have a hair in my soup that the Polartec that's going into the ocean," she added.

"I knew about Shetlands, and I decided on Shetlands because of their size," she said.

"You can't make money off of sheep unless you're willing to eat them. But you can have a cottage industry that pays for itself, eventually," Gallagher said. But given the work involved, it is something she does for the love of it, she said.

Sheep improve the land and carbon-sequester, which means they take more carbon out of the atmosphere than they put into it, Gallagher said. "They deposit much more [carbon] than they emit,"

She plans to have kids come in this spring to learn about sheep, how fleeces work, and help give them "haircuts."

"These guys are friendly enough to let that happen," she noted.

An educator in her day job, Gallagher said she will welcome people to her new farm, where they interact with the sheep and learn more about their role in farming and food production.

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from page 1

harm's way.

However, another update noted the sheep didn't make it onto the tracks and that they had stopped in the middle of the road, near the intersection with Mineral Street.

"One of them's named Brunehilde, if you need a reference," an officer said.

"They have fabulous personalities. They used to talk to me all the time as I ran by" on Heartbreak Road, Sue Markos said on a Facebook post about the incident.

One commenter, Meaghan Rygiel, recorded a video and said three teenagers tried to help corral the herd, "and the sheep were NOT having it!!"

However, the animals were later spotted following a woman with a bowl of food. That woman turned out to be the flock's owner, Deanna Gallagher.

Ultimately, police helped usher the sheep back to their pasture. "They were 'herding' them with the cruisers!" Anne Bonazoli said.

Get cooking with artisan workshops at Appleton Farms

Expanded culinary and artisan offerings at Appleton Farms to usher in new decade

Appleton Farms has announced a series of artisan workshops to raise your bread, chocolate, pasta, and cocktail-making to the next level.

"The farm is pleased to announce that starting in January we will be expanding our culinary and artisan program offerings with new seasonal cooking classes and workshops every day of the week," organizers said.

"Like the seasons, our classes, events, and workshops transition throughout the year to stay in lock-step with the freshest ingredients delivered daily from our farm, other North Shore farmers, and local food artisans," they added.

For January, February, and March, organizers said they "have something for everyone: hands-on cooking classes with international flavors, baking and pasta-making workshops, and mixology classes for the season."

Artisan workshops

"We've tapped our celebrated local artisan community to lead our hands-on culinary workshops," organizers said.

- Bread-making workshops with A&J King Artisan Bakers
- Pasta and cheese-making workshops with Luca Mignogna of Wolf Meadow Farm
- Chocolate-making classes with Ovedia Artisan Chocolates
- Mixology classes with Privateer Rum
- Wine tasting and pairing workshops with The Urban Chef

Farm-to-kitchen cooking classes

"Learn new flavor profiles and culinary skills with our hands-on cooking classes that feature a three-course seasonal menu," organizers said.

"Our talented chefs guide our visitors through each recipe, and guests work together to make each course, enjoying a full meal at the end. All classes are BYOB," they added.

This winter, classes focus on flavors from Italy and India; a class dedicated to warming soups, stews, and chowders; a dedicated New England comfort foods class; and a show-stopping vegetable class.

A complete listing of programs can be found at www.thetrustees.org/things-to-do/events.html.

Members of The Trustees qualify for discounts between 20% and 50%.

Little cow yearns to join the herd at Appleton Farms (photo by Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism).

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Select board newslets

Staff changes, board changes, road repairs, and warrant open

Staff changes

Just wrapping up his first day on the job, Jay Wassouf was introduced to the select board on Monday as the town's new IT director.

He said he has 22 years in technology and comes to Ipswich with experience as a network administrator in the Andover and Masconomet school systems.

He noted the last IT director, Greg Parachojuk, was almost 20 years in the job before he retired. "I hope to be here that long as well," Wassouf said.

Meanwhile, in the fire department, Pat Dingle has been promoted to the position of lieutenant. He was one of three finalists for the role, town manager Tony Marino told the board.

Dingle will now take over fire prevention responsibilities, which is normal for newly promoted lieutenants, Marino said.

Terry Anderson has retired as housing coordinator and his part-time job has been posted.

Board changes

Peter Soffron was appointed as a new member of the shellfish advisory board.

Antigone Simmons and Kristen Seashore were appointed to the board of registrars, while Kathie Eliopoulos stepped down from that board.

There were seven applicants for two empty seats on the Council on Aging board, Marino reported.

Two were chosen as full members, two others as alternates, and the other three agreed to serve on the Friends of the Council on Aging board, he added.

Marino said he was glad roles were found for all, because he didn't like to turn volunteers away.

There are still openings on the agricultural commission (three alternates), conservation commission, Ipswich Housing Partnership, audit committee, cultural council, recreation committee, Bay Circuit Trail committee, design review board, shellfish advisory subcommitee, Bialek Park planning committee, Eight Towns and The Great Marsh Coalition, shade tree and beautification, climate resiliency committee, government study, wastewater subcommittee,cemetery and parks commission, historical commission, and the water advisory committee.

Application forms can be found online.

More road repairs

A healthy state budget means municipalities will get extra to help maintain their roads. Marino said Ipswich can expect a $44,034 boost this year.

Town meeting warrant open

The select board voted to open the warrant for this spring's town meeting, which is set for May 12.

The warrant will stay open until noon on Feb. 24.

Selectperson Linda Alexson asked about the task force set up by the fall town meeting to recommend changes to warrant-opening timetables.

Marino said it has yet to meet. He expects the finance committee will appoint its representative next week.

Ipswich's Charlie Henderson tries to intercept a ball between Amesbury's Kyle Donovan (#5) and Camden Keliher. Playing at home last Friday, the Tigers lost to Amesbury 64-37.

from page 1

Clams flattened?

Alexson said she heard concerns from shellfish harvesters about the effects on clam flats downstream.

Selectperson Kerry Mackin said the feasibility study showed that sediment trapped behind the dam was "relatively clean."

The release of the sediment would actually improve the marsh, since it is being eroded, she added.

Returning to costs, Marino said the total removal cost could reach between $400,000 and $500,000.

However, mitigation is typically more expensive, he noted.

Protecting EBSCO, in particular, could be between one and two million dollars, he added.

Marino noted EBSCO has also written a letter of support as long as work does not impact its facility or its operations.

"We're not supporting removal of the dam by doing this?" Alexson asked.

"We're not committing to removing the dam by doing this," chairman William Whitmore said.

He described the application as an expression of interest in pursuing the project.

Mackin said it is "one of the most ecologically damaging dams on the Atlantic coast north of Virginia."

"The town owns it, and it is our responsibility," she added.

"There are costs to removing it, but there are known costs to keeping it. We know there's increased flooding" with the dam in place, Whitmore noted.

When the vote came, selectperson Nishan Mootafian abstained, citing a relative who works at EBSCO.

Whitmore asked that the board discuss the matter at its two meetings in February.

He also suggested a presentation and update from the Ipswich River Watershed Association (IRWA), followed by questions and answers.

Prank or fundraiser? Nancy Soucy of High Street woke up to a 'heart attack' last week.

'Heart attack' on High Street

An overnight prank has left a resident confused, but charmed, on High Street.

Nancy Soucy woke up yesterday to find several dozen handmade hearts adorning the front yard of her home and business, Ipswich Pottery.

"I cannot imagine who did this in the middle of the night," she said.

Some hearts were attached to cars and the garage doors. Others, with hand-drawn faces and decorations, were glued to tongue depressors and stuck in the ground. There was also a red balloon.

Soucy didn't know if it was an early Valentine's Day prank, high school hijinks, or maybe even some kind of fundraiser.

She did note, however, that the hearts were better than flamingos.

ICAM to offer free video workshops

ICAM (Ipswich Community Access Media) is hosting free video production workshops for individuals who live, work, and/or attend school in Ipswich.

Residents interested in creating, producing, or starring in their own video production are welcome to sign up for this workshop.

There are three classes total to complete one full workshop, and they will meet on consecutive following Mondays starting in the new year.

Session 1 will meet January 27 and February 3 and 10. This class is offered in the afternoon only from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Session 2 will meet February 24 and March 2 and 9. Afternoon class will run from 3 to 4:30 and an evening class will run from 6:30 to 8.

These workshops teach video basics, including cameras and lighting techniques, along with basic audio/microphone training. Instructor Beth Meyer, ICAM executive director, and Alex Derderian, ICAM production coordinator, will guide participants through the equipment training and introduce basic TV show pre-production, production, and post-production skills.

Participants who complete a full workshop will be automatically qualified to receive further one-to-one training for video editing, special effects, and graphics.

All equipment is provided free of charge from the ICAM station.

Register via email: icamipswichVideo@gmail.com or call 978-356-0353.

Space is limited.

The ICAM Studio is located at 127 High Street in Ipswich.

Job opening ...

Ipswich Local News is looking for an advertising manager.

The job is primarily selling advertising for the weekly newspaper and website to businesses in and around Ipswich.

Applicant should have some experience, or demonstrate a capacity, for writing advertising copy and making layouts and should be at ease in making sales calls in person and on the phone. (A car is necessary.)

In addition the candidate will be expected to keep "run sheets" and to dummy the ads in the weekly newspaper; these latter are skills that can be taught.

The job requires about 24 hours a week. That could be over three days or four. Hours are flexible.

Person must be a self-starter.

Applicants should have a passion for helping to publish the Ipswich Local News. If they get the job, they will be key to its future.

Interested? Contact **Bill Wasserman** at **(978) 500 6077** or **wassyw@verizon.net** for more information.

Obituaries

Robert H. Cronin

Robert H. Cronin Sr., 95, husband of the late Jennie M. (Ross) Cronin of Hamilton, died on Monday, December 23, 2019, in the Kaplan Family Hospice House following his sudden illness.

Born in Ipswich on December 7, 1924, he was the son of the late Frederick Sr. and Catherine (Matheson) Cronin.

He was raised in Ipswich and was a graduate of Ipswich High School.

He enlisted in the U.S. Navy during World War II and proudly served two tours of duty: in the European Theater on a minesweeper off of Normandy during the invasion, and then in the Pacific as a motor machinist's mate.

Following his honorable discharge, the Cronins married and lived in Asbury Grove in Hamilton before moving to Beech Street.

He was employed as a portrait photographer by the House of Hinlin, formerly in Ipswich, and later as a master tech with the Brunning Corporation.

After retiring, along with his wife, he owned and operated Antiques and Elderly Things in Essex for many years.

He was founder and former president of the Hamilton Rod and Gun Club, a long-time member of the AP Gardner Post, and a member of the Hamilton Conservation committee.

He also enjoyed fishing in the local waters.

Along the way he found the time to write two books, How A Toothpick Sailor Survived Normandy, a story about his time on a Navy minesweeper during WW II, and Behind the Red Door, a story of experiences of an antique shop owner.

He was a member of the First United Methodist Church in Hamilton.

He is survived by his son, Donald M. Cronin, of Danvers; his daughter, Rebecca Ann Wingate, of Hawaii; and a grandson, Daniel Cronin, of Deerfield, N.H.

He was the father of the late Robert H. Cronin Jr., formerly of Lynn; and the brother of the late Frederick Cronin Jr., formerly of Connecticut; Richard Cronin, formerly of Harvard, Mass.; Jeannette Wood, formerly of Kansas; and Grace Sahovey, formerly of Beverly.

His funeral service will be held graveside at the Hamilton Cemetery, South Hamilton on Saturday, January 11, 2020, at 11 a.m.

A gathering will follow at the AP Gardner Post 194, 37 School Street, South Hamilton.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to A.P. Gardner Post 194, 37 School Street, South Hamilton, MA 01982.

Arrangements are by the Whittier-Porter Funeral Home of Ipswich.

William Henry Smith

William Henry Smith, 96, of North Fort Myers, Fla., and Belchertown, formerly of Rowley, passed away peacefully on December 28, 2019.

He was born in Rowley on August 11, 1923. His is predeceased by his parents Henry Smith and Florence Kneeland.

Bill married his best friend and loving wife Beth (Smith) Fuller on September 12, 1943, in Ipswich, and shared over 71 years of marriage.

Both Bill and Beth were graduates of Ipswich High School. Bill was a WWII veteran proudly serving in the Merchant Marines.

Bill was an avid sports enthusiast his entire life. He excelled in baseball and football at Ipswich High School and was inducted into the IHS Athletic Hall of Fame.

He was also a longtime member of the Rowley Rams baseball team and played for the team during the 1938 Championship season.

He was inducted into the Intertown Twilight League Baseball Hall of Fame.

Bowling was a favorite pastime, and for many years Bill was a member of the Rowley men's and couples' leagues.

He also was an avid fisherman who enjoyed the sport with family and friends in the estuaries of Plum Island Sound and Ipswich Bay.

Bill was also an ardent Patriots and Red Sox fan, even from afar.

In his younger years, Bill was a clam digger extraordinaire, who, with his wife, Beth, built a successful seafood business, Smith Seafoods, in Rowley with extended operations from Maine to Maryland.

Bill was a lifelong learner who embraced new technologies and instilled a passion for life in all members of his family.

He closely followed all his children's and grandchildren's many activities and accomplishments until his final days.

Bill and Beth enjoyed retirement and friendship at Six Lakes Country Club in North Fort Myers.

His greatest passions there were golfing and playing pool, where he achieved numerous tournament championships and holes-in-one. He enjoyed coming north every summer to visit family and friends.

In addition to his parents, Bill was preceded in death by his loving wife, Beth, and his sister, Pauline DiLeo.

He is survived by his sons, William ("Butch") and his wife, Diane, and Robert and his wife, Charlene; his daughters, Jody McLeod and her husband, Virgil, and Beth Terry. He has six grandchildren: Michael, Jennifer, Christine, Sam, Briana, and Jeremy, eight great-grandchildren; and five great-great grandchildren.

Services will be private, followed by burial in the Rowley Cemetery.

Family rebuilding nearly a year after devastating fire

by John Muldoon
Ipswich Local News

IPSWICH — Almost a year after a devastating fire leveled her house, Renee Moses decided to take out an ad to thank the town.

"The whole community came together [after the fire]. I was at my mother's house, and people just kept coming and coming," she said recently of the ad she placed in the paper before Christmas.

The Moses family lost their Town Farm Road home, furniture, and clothing on February 12, 2019, after fire broke out in the early morning hours.

After losing most — but not all — of their possessions, and living in a camper and other people's houses, the family is now in the process of rebuilding.

Although frustrated with the length of time it is taking, lifelong Ipswich resident Renee Moses said, "I love my property. I like where I live."

The fire left little of the house, apart from a pile of charred wood.

The blaze started at around 1:10 a.m. outside the building. The time and location gave the fire a strong head start before it was discovered.

"There was nothing left. The house was completely right down to the ground," Renee said.

The other two people in the house at the time were her husband, Wayne, and her niece, Alicia Thereault.

At the time, she had a cast on her foot and was sleeping on first floor. Wayne's pickup was lost in the blaze, but he put Renee in her truck and parked it up the street, facing away from the fire.

She said she was glad he parked it that direction.

The Moses family: Wayne, Garrett, Renee, Cassandra, and her son, Allan (courtesy photo)

"That way I didn't have to look at everything happening. I couldn't be one of those people standing out there crying," she said.

But despite the destruction, the family made some interesting finds in the wreckage, Renee said.

One was pocketbook found by firefighters that contained a necklace. "There are three hearts on it, and there were three of us were in the fire," Renee said of the coincidence.

Another find was of the family's treasured photographs. Renee had kept stacks of pictures in boxes, which turned up among the ruins.

"Isn't that crazy? We just kept finding them in clumps," she said.

Renee said they peeled the photos apart and cleaned them off, but there was still an odor of smoke off them. So she sent them off to have the smell removed. By the time that project was over, 2,000 pictures had been saved, she said.

Another curious find was her wedding ring. She thought she had stored her wedding ring and other jewelry in a safe upstairs with important family documents.

The safe was found after the fire, but the ring was nowhere to be seen. Wayne later stumbled upon it while poking through the wreckage, Renee said. "How does that happen?"

But the family lost vehicles, their clothes, and furniture — and, most importantly, a place to live.

They got an RV for their backyard, but "that's only a two/three season camper," Renee said.

Once cold weather began to close in, the family had to shut the doors and windows for winter, which gave Renee cabin fever. "Ugh, I got to get out of here," she laughed.

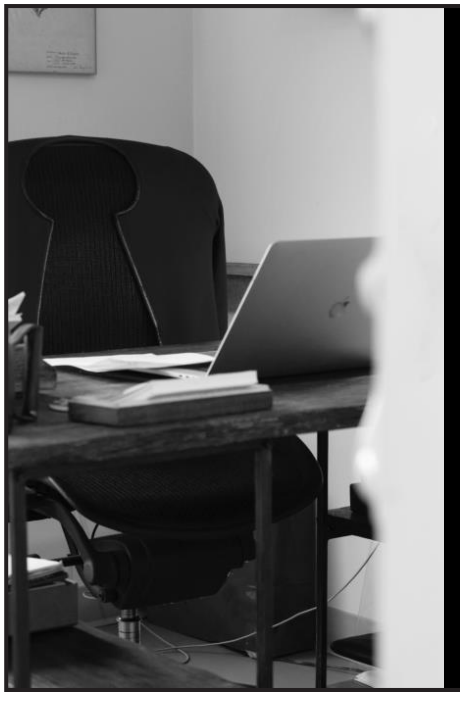
Renee went to live with her daughter; Wayne is with her mother; Alicia went to Florida, and her son, Garrett, is in Haverhill.

Her daughter, Cassandra, and her then three-year-old, Allan, were "in between" at the time, but "most of her stuff was in my house," Renee said.

An additional problem with RV living at this point is that heavy excavation and construction work is underway, making the site a difficult place be around.

Asked if there were any lessons, Moses advised checking that fire extinguishers are adequately sized. "And don't be a pack rat," she quipped.

In a touch of grim humor, she added, "I cleaned out my attic, and I'll get my new kitchen. You gotta laugh."



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LEGAL NOTICE

ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

The Ipswich Zoning Board of Appeals will hold a public hearing on Thursday, **January 23, 2020,** at 7:30 p.m. in Room A of the Town Hall, 25 Green Street, to act on the following petitions pursuant to the Ipswich Protective Zoning Bylaw:

3 Bay View Road, Kathy and Thomas Stringer request a variance pursuant to, but not limited to, sections IX.K and VI Table of Dimensional and Density F.21 for a **second story addition** (700 square feet) exceeding the 30% allowable floor area by 4% at 3 Bay View Road (Assessor's Map 24A, Lot 111)

Paula and Charles Reggio request a special permit pursuant to, but not limited to sections XI.J – V. D Table of Use Regulations for a **private guest house** in the same footprint as the existing pool house at **43 Plover Hill Road** (Assessor's Map 23B, Lot 002A)

Petitions may be viewed during regular business hours at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, 25 Green Street.

Robert Gambale, Chairman
Ipswich Zoning Board of Appeals

Winter/spring technology classes at library

The Ipswich Public Library will offer the following winter/spring lineup of technology classes:

• Your New Gadget (January 25)

• Planning For Your Website (February 22)

• WordPress 101 (March 28)

• Writing Well for the Web (April 25)

• Cloud Storage (May 16)

• Google Drive and Office Suites (June 13)

All classes are free and open to the general public at the Ipswich Public Library, 25 North Main Street. Registration is not required.

All classes are held on Saturdays and run from 10 a.m. to noon.

Detailed class descriptions can be found on the library's website.

For more information, contact assistant library director Genevieve Picard at gpicard@ipswichlibrary.org or 978-356-6648, ext. 3017.

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