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1765 Paxton Community News

PaxtonCommunityNews.com

April 17, 2024

Eclipse Darkens Sky, Creates Light in Community



Top Left: The view of the Great North American Eclipse reached nearly 95% totality on April 8, 2024

Bottom Left: Jim Collins, a retired teacher from Auburn Middle School, expresses his love of community during the 2024 North American Eclipse.

Photo Credit: Caitlin V. Reidy



Top Right: Mike Lenox and his wife Sam view the solar eclipse on Wachusett Mountain at 3:30 p.m. The skies were darkened and the sun was an orange sliver in the sky.

Bottom Right: Around 3:27 p.m., the skies darkened as the solar eclipse approached near totality.

Photo Credit: Caitlin V. Reidy



by Caitlin V. Reidy

The Great North American Eclipse swept through Massachusetts after 2 p.m. on April 8, 2024. In some areas, including Wachusett Mountain, near totality reached about 95% coverage.

The highest elevation in Central Massachusetts, Wachusett Mountain attracted a crowd of about 100 people, despite the icy hike to the summit. The eclipse began around 2:14 p.m. and peaked at 3:30 p.m. By 3:27 p.m.

the skies were visibly darkened, and the air became cooler, causing several people to put on extra layers.

As the sky became darker, birds stopped chirping, dogs started barking, and the soft hum of excited eclipse-viewers permeated the air.

Mike Lenox, who works in Concord, hiked Wachusett Mountain with his wife, Sam to witness the event. Lenox said he witnessed the 2017 eclipse from Wachusett Mountain's summit.

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Paxton PTO is teaming up with CharCUTERie Woo!

Save the date for a fun night out! Tuesday, April 23rd, Paxton PTO is teaming up with CharCUTERie Woo! Join us at Seven Saws Sky Deck at Soccer Asylum 6-8pm!

Includes one drink of choice from the brewery, the palm leaf platter, all the ingredients, the board accessories, and the step-by-step instruction on how to build your board. Bring your friends with you for a night of laughs, cheese and drinks! Cost is \$75

For more information or to sign up, go to <https://charcuteriewoo.com/event/paxton-center-school-pto-fundraiser/>

More Players Needed For Paxton Little League

Paxton Little League is looking for a few more players between the ages of 8-10 to play AAA baseball. Registration will stay open until they have 11 players per team.

Paxton Little League will also be looking for junior umpires for the 2024 season. Interested umpires should reach out to cfarrarpll@gmail.com.

Paxton's Annual Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting is scheduled for Monday, May 6th at 7pm at Paxton Center School.

An override ballot question is expected to be on the ballot this year. The Selectboard recently released a statement regarding this. <https://www.townofpaxton.net/home/news/select-board-explains-need-override>

From Friends of the Council On Aging (FOCOA)

The Friends of the Council on Aging's Mission is to support and promote programs and activities of the Paxton Council on Aging to enhance the lives of Paxton Seniors. You do not have to be a member of the Friends to attend activities at the Senior Center.

Board members are elected annually. This year's meeting was held on April 9th at the Senior Center, followed by entertainment and lunch. Monthly meetings are held on the second Tuesday of the month at the Senior Center.

The Friends group sponsors events and activities in cooperation with the Director of the Senior Center. There are a variety of activities offered at the center – stop by to see what might interest you.

An exciting part of the FOCO program will be bus trips to interesting places. The first trip is planned for May.

FOCOA is planning a luncheon at Hartman's Herb Farm in Barre, MA on June 2, 2024. Come to the Senior Center to find out more details.

**TOWN OF PAXTON RECREATION
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Pre-K (age 4) through 6th Grade Camp plus 7th and 8th grade Jr C.I.T program:

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Come enjoy the summer with your friends and counselors. Your day will include scheduled fun activities, including sports (whiffleball, basketball, soccer, and volleyball), nature walks, water fun, arts & crafts, playground, fishing, swimming, field trips (extra fee) and much more. Rainy day activities planned.

Starting June 18th to August 9th 8 weeks of fun! Additional fee for field trips.

- There is a \$50 per week, per child deposit upon time of registration. This deposit will be applied to the balance on each week's fee.
- Payments may be made online or by cash/check payable to the town of Paxton.
- All balances will need to be paid in full by June 1st. After June 1st there will be an additional \$15 added to each week, and each child's fee.
- All balances are due at least one week in advance.
- There are no refunds or credits for cancellations or changes after June 1st.
- Early drop off from 8:00 to 9:00 is \$10.00 each day per family or \$40 per week per family.
- Half Days run 9:00 to 1:30 and Full Days run 9:00 to 4:00.

**For registration forms or more info, go to:
<https://www.townofpaxton.net/recreation>**

Learn, Lead, Grow. Girl Scouts Offer Free Info Sessions

April 27th at the Rutland Public Library and

April 28th at the Paxton Senior Center

If you've wondered if Girl Scouts is the right fit for your child or even if you just need answers to question about Girl Scouts before you decide, you are invited to a FREE Introduction to Girl Scouts on Thursday April 27 in Rutland or Friday April 28 in Paxton, from 6:00 to 7:00 PM. Adults will have the opportunity to ask their questions while girls experience what a typical Girl Scout meeting is like.

Please visit <https://www.gscwm.org/en/get-involved/Learn-About-Girl-Scouts.html> to RSVP for this event.



Letters to the Editor

Letters should be no more than 300 words, and must include the writer's name, address, phone number and signature. Only name, street name and town will be printed. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. On occasion, letters up to 500 words may be published as opinion pieces, at the editor's discretion. Send email to sterlingmeetinghousenews@gmail.com or mail to: Sterling Meetinghouse News, 35 Redemption Rock Trail, Sterling, MA 01564.

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Sterling Meetinghouse News is mailed free of charge to all postal patrons of Sterling. We are not liable for typographical errors in advertisements.

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DCR Free Program: Watershed Wednesdays Speaker Series

CLIMATE RESILIENCY

MAY 15, 6:30-7:30 pm

Hear how changes in climate affect the way storms and hazards impact natural, cultural, and recreational resources from DCR's Director of Climate Resilience.

The full schedule can be found online at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/wachusett-watershed-wednesday-events-2024/download>

Document Shredding at Wachusett Recycling Center

Document shredding May 18th from 9am-12pm at the Wachusett Recycling Center. This is open to residents of Boylston, Holden, Paxton, Princeton, Rutland, Sterling and West Boylston only.

Please bring ONLY confidential documents to be shred so we don't run out of space in the truck. Please recycle non-confidential materials (envelopes, folders, inserts) in your regular curbside recycling or in our Mixed Paper Recycling container in Center Circle on any day that we are open. We'll be holding 3 events in 2024: May 18, 2024, August 17, 2024, October 19, 2024.

The first 2 boxes are free and fees are \$2 for each box after that.

CALLING ALL LOCAL MUSICIANS!!!

The 38th Paxton Summer Jam, Paxton's annual celebration of live local music, will take place Saturday June 15, 2024, from noon to 8 PM at the Paxton Bandstand at the Paxton Center Fields. The show features amateur musicians of all ages and skill levels. For information on how you can participate please contact Doug Moore 508 340 5012. dougmoorewsma@gmail.com Please help us spread the word. The event is sponsored by Paxton Cultural Council and Paxton Recreation.



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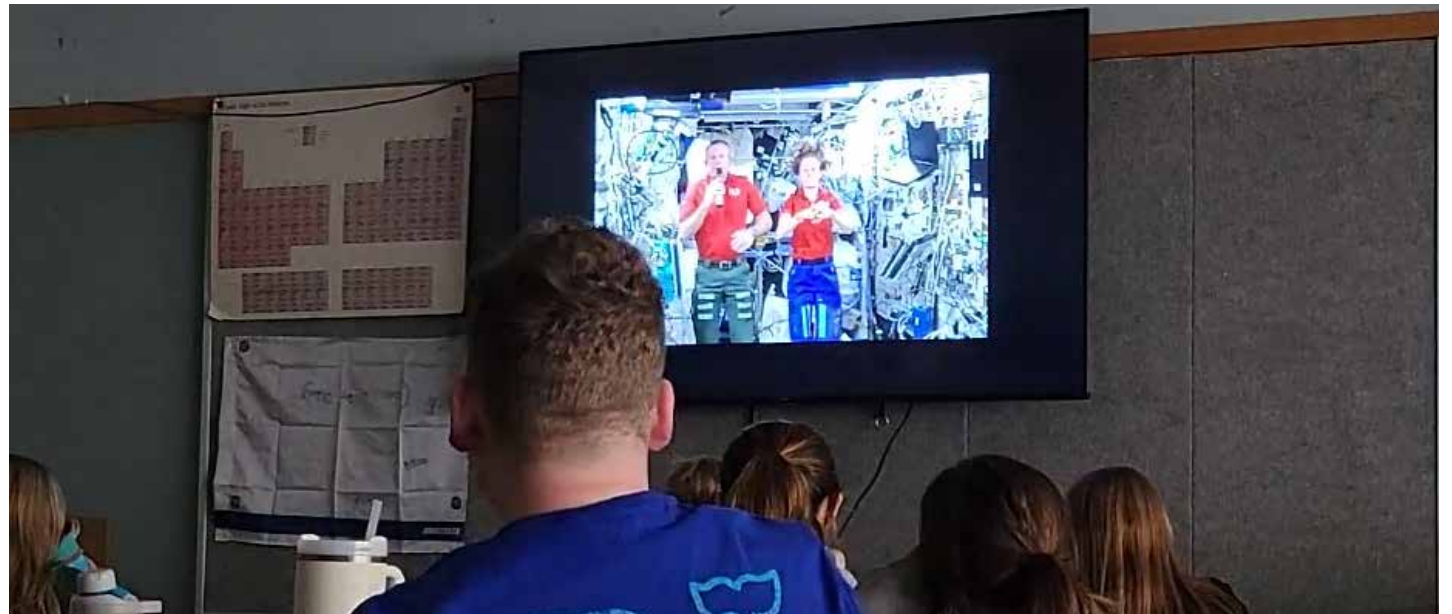
Out of This World! The International Space Station Astronaut's Take Wachusett School District Student Questions in a Q&A

by Kristen Levine

In a broadcast across the Wachusett Regional School District in Sterling, Princeton, Paxton, Rutland, and Holden, on Friday, February 9, students across several schools had the chance to hear their own questions answered by two astronauts, Flight Engineer Loral O'Hara and Commander Andreas "Andy" Morganen, live on the International Space Station. The twenty minute Q&A session, termed a "downlink", was arranged by district school psychologist Beth Foley in partnership with NASA's Johnson Space Center In-Flight Education program.

"I had been working with the Civil Air Patrol to get rocketry supplies for the students. I wanted them to have the hands-on experience of building and flying rockets," Foley said. "[The students] were very enthusiastic; this led me to start thinking outside the box about what else might pique their interests about space and STEAM. I reached out to my contact at Civil Air Patrol and she listened to my idea...she offered me an email to NASA."

STEAM, or Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics, forms a core spotlight of the school



Students in 7th and 8th grade teacher Mrs. Danielle Billia-Shaveet's class, watching the NASA TV downlink with astronauts Loral O'Hara and Andreas "Andy" Morganen.

Photo Contributed

district's educational plans. Principal Alfred Thompson of Thomas Prince Elementary School found the downlink event to be in line with the district's goals.

"There's a focus on STEAM activities through the school year," Thompson said. "[The downlink] generated a lot of questions from students. It's pretty cool to see and hear astronauts answering."

Beyond building anticipation for the event, Foley noted that gaining NASA's approval not only for student questions, but to be selected as participants, was a long and involved process.

"I [had] never communicated with NASA before," Foley said of the application process. "They were very helpful, as I had a steep learning curve on their processes and

requirements. The student questions [were] impressive and well thought out...the students were excited as we submitted their questions and heard they were accepted."

Foley credited Wachusett school district teachers Jamie Hughes of Central Tree Middle School and Julie Rocznik of Thomas Prince as part of the application, saying, "[The

CONTINUED PAGE 11

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Garden Guru: Spring is Here!

By Mark Packard



It's time to get a fresh coat of mulch spread in your flower gardens. Adding an inch of mulch to your garden beds will provide weed protection and enhance the look of your landscape. Make sure you cut a nice deep edge for that professional look. When you mulch, don't fill the edge with mulch. Leave it exposed and keep the edge clean using your string trimmer on its edge every time you mow. There are different qualities of mulch. Some places are selling dyed wood chips. This is not mulch. Bark mulch is made from the bark of trees during the debarking process. Mulch is used to retain moisture for the plants, prevent weeds, and break down slowly to add nutrients to the soil. Some mulches are color enhanced for consistency. Some are not colored at all. I do not recommend using stone in your beds because the stone will hold the summer heat and dry out your plants. Stone does not create nutrients and does not prevent weeds.

I always get the same question at this time of year. "Is it too early to plant?" You can plant trees, shrubs, and perennials any time of year. Basically, if you can stick a shovel in the ground, you can plant. It is too early to plant most annuals, vegetables and herbs. We can still get some harsh temperatures this spring that would kill tender plants. The old school belief is not to plant vegetables, herbs and summer annuals like Petunias and Geraniums until after the full moon in May. The Full moon in May is also known as "the flower moon" This year the full moon is May 23rd.

Pansies are a cold tolerant annual that can take a frost and even light snow! They can be planted now and will continue to bloom until the temperatures get hot. Annuals need to be replanted every year. Perennials come back every year which is more cost effective and less work in the spring. With the right landscape design, you can mix



perennials, shrubs and trees to have color all year. The reason people still use annuals is because they bloom for a long time instead of just a few weeks like perennials and shrubs. There are however, re-blooming shrubs and perennials that will blossom a second time giving a longer bloom season. The re-blooming Hydrangea was one of the first but now there are re-blooming Lilacs, Dianthus, Weigela and more!

Gardening questions? Please call 978-407-2568.

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Tax Talks

with Jennifer Lovett, IRS Enrolled Agent (EA)

(Owner/operator of Liberty Tax Service in Holden, Clinton, Framingham, Marlborough, Worcester, Spencer and Athol)

Hey there, savvy citizens of Central Massachusetts! Jennifer here, your go-to tax guru and Enrolled Agent with the IRS, ready to dish out some essential advice as we navigate the wild world of tax season. Listen up, folks, because I'm about to share some wisdom hotter than freshly brewed coffee on a frosty morning. Make sure if you are not confident that you check in with someone before filing that extension to see if a last-minute IRA contribution will work in your favor this year. This year's tax deadline, April 17th, is creeping closer by the day, and trust me, ignoring that deadline is like playing a game of financial chicken with the IRS, you'll end up with egg on your face, and not the Easter kind.

Filing your Massachusetts and federal tax returns before the deadline isn't just a suggestion, it is a crucial step to avoid those dreaded penalties and interest. Uncle Sam doesn't take kindly to tardy taxpayers, and those penalties can add up faster than you can say "deduction." But fear not my friends, because there's a lifeline in this sea of tax turmoil: the glorious tax extension. Yes, you heard me right! If life has thrown you a curveball and you know you won't make that April 17th deadline, filing for an extension can be a game-changer. Before you do, make sure if you are not confident that you check in with someone before filing that extension to see if a last-minute IRA contribution will work in your favor this year, that benefit does not get afforded an extension and must be made by the April 17th.

Imagine this: you're knee-deep in receipts, buried in forms, and suddenly it hits you, Tax Day is right around the corner, and you're nowhere near ready. Instead of panicking like a deer caught in headlights, simply file for an extension, and ta-da! You've bought yourself an extra six months to tackle those tax tasks without the stress. Buying yourself time can help



you get organized and make sure you're not paying more than your fair share to Uncle Sam.

Filing an extension isn't a get-out-of-jail-free card—it's a strategic move that requires careful planning. Make sure to estimate your tax liability as accurately as possible to avoid any surprises down the road, and remember, an extension only grants you more time to file, not to pay. If you owe taxes, be sure to send in your payment by the original deadline to avoid those pesky interest charges. You can rely on the safe-harbor rule that by law you're protected from a failure to pay a penalty when conditions are met.

Now, I know tax season isn't exactly a walk in the park, but fear not, armed with a little know-how, a dash of patience, and maybe a sprinkle of humor, you'll breeze through those tax forms like a pro. So go ahead, tackle those tax documents with confidence and if you ever need a helping hand, or just some tax-related banter, don't hesitate to reach out to a trusted tax preparer for some help.



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3/4" Round	(Tan)	\$60
2" Round	(Tan)	\$60
3/8" River Rock	(Gray Mix)	\$150
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Loam		\$44
Compost	(Organic)	\$88
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Karen's Market Analysis April 2024

By Karen Packard

May and June are usually the best months to sell a home so I thought I would pass along some tips needed to get your house ready to sell.

Remember the 60-second rule: That's all the time you have to create a winning first impression. Here are some simple to significant ways to maximize your home's appeal. For the exterior, keep the grass cut and remove any yard clutter like kids' toys. Keep your flower beds weeded and mulched and put some fresh annuals in pots near the walkway, mailbox and front door. This will add a pop of color and show you like to keep your house well maintained. Touch up any paint on fences, shed or siding if needed. Buyers don't want to see deferred maintenance and wonder what else you haven't kept up with. Wash windows inside and out. Making the windows sparkle adds to the appeal and helps the interior look fresh and clean as well.



For the interior of your home, stand in the doorway to each room... try to look from the eyes of a buyer. Evaluate the furniture in each room and remove anything that interrupts "the flow" or makes the room appear smaller. Consider renting a storage unit to move items off-site. Decluttering is the best way to spend your time when getting your house ready to sell. Clean and organize cabinets, closets and bookshelves. Clean all light fixtures and ceiling fans. Shampoo carpets if needed to remove stains. Remove excessive wall hangings and knick-knacks to make the walls less cluttered. Repair all plumbing leaks, including faucets and drain traps. If the walls have scuff marks, use a magic eraser to remove as many as possible. This can be a quick fix and the walls will look fresh without needing to repaint.

Many people ask me if the basement and garage need to be emptied when selling. Organizing those areas is important and making sure they are swept and clean. You do not need to empty them completely.

Sold Single Family Homes in Paxton from Jan-March 2024

- 26 Lawrence St. Sale Price \$270,000
- 639 Pleasant St. Sale Price \$385,000
- 6 Crestwood Rd. Sale Price \$405,000
- 166 Richards Ave. Sale Price \$500,000
- 444 Marshall St. Sale Price \$500,000
- 10 Dunanderry Way Sale Price \$556,000
- 209 Pleasant St. Sale Price \$649,000
- 545 Marshall St. Sale Price \$699,000
- 92 Suomi St. Sale Price \$700,000
- 33 Crowningshield Dr. Sale Price \$740,000
- 9 Wildewood Dr. Sale Price \$900,000

*Recent sales information is from the MLS, it does not include private sales.

Buyers can look pass boxes of items that have been packed and piled neatly in the basement or garage.

My advice for the day of showings is to open all draperies and window shades during daylight hours and turn on all lights even during the day. Open windows an hour before showing to circulate fresh air if it's a nice day. Open all the doors between rooms to give an inviting feeling. Place fresh flowers on kitchen or dining room table. Remove or secure pets during showings so they do not endanger a buyer or distract them from falling in love with the house. All jewelry and small valuables should be stored in a safety deposit box or in a locked closet. Beds should be made & clothes picked up. Bathrooms should be clean, with towels folded and toilet lid down. When you leave the house, please leave it as if you know it is going to be shown. You never know when the right person is going to look at it!

I hope this helps get your house ready to sell. If you have any questions or would like me to take a walk through your property for advice on what needs to be done before listing your home, feel free to reach out anytime at kpackardrealtor@gmail.com or call/text 978-407-2568.

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10 West Specialty Market: Local Store Delights with a Range of Offerings

by Gordon Keegan

When is a convenience store not a convenience store? When it's 10 West Specialty Market, that's when. Because there's more packed into this little building located at 10 West Street in Paxton, than meets the eye. It's literally a cornucopia of a market, combined with fresh take-home meals, combined with an atmosphere that literally says, "Come on in and have some fun!" No kidding!

The proprietors of this emporium are Darlene Walsh and her husband Thomas, two Paxtonites that not only enjoy running this quaint country store, but believe in being good neighbors. Darlene is an active member of the Paxton Lion's Club, and she and her husband are volunteers at the South Worcester Neighborhood Center. Ten West is also a generous food donor to the Paxton Senior Center. Plus, they have donated bag lunches for military participants for the 20th anniversary of 9/11, and more. If there's a need, the Walsh family is generously there to help, and to give back to the community.

10 West is also a real family business with sons Matthew and Justin pitching in lend a hand. "They're a huge help," Darlene says, "and they help us keep things humming."

What keeps patrons coming back and back to 10 West Specialty Market? Well, aside from the homey, friendly

atmosphere, the wide array of food and ready-to-eat delicious meals are the big attraction.

If you're a seafood lover, you're going to love what you'll find at 10 West. With daily fresh seafood deliveries they offer such tasty treats as baked stuffed haddock, shrimp, salmon burgers and a whole lot more. Also a variety of meats like Dom's marinated steak tips, and sausages, plus Boar's Head meats and cheeses. Tatnuck ready-made Italian sandwiches are a big seller, as are 10 West's chicken pot pie, mac and cheese, homemade soups, stuffed shells, and homemade meatballs. Care for something a little more substantial? They have it. You can feast on their shepherd's pie, chicken parm over penne or chicken broccoli, all of which comes with garlic bread and salad. With the variety of lunches and dinners at 10 West, you may never need to turn on your stove again!

But if this all sounds too good to be true, it's not. The internet's Yelp, where people give their unsolicited comments on virtually every type of business, has a section where customers gave their opinion of 10 West. Listen:

"We like the owner, Darlene. She makes everything she serves, so we like that personal touch."

"Awesome food, prepared and grocer style shop. Much larger inside than



Darlene Walsh at her pastry stand.

Photo Contributed

perceived from the outside. Staff available and helpful. One of my go to's for friendly and fresh!"

"Ten West is amazingly delicious, clean, and friendly. Yummmmmmy! Homemade soups, sandwiches, and Seafood and much much more!!!!"

Needless to say, 10 West was consistently rated as a 5-Star business that customers

love to patronize and visit.

So, whether you're looking for a great cup of morning coffee with a pastry or roll, a great sandwich for lunch (or dinner), or a full meal, you'll do yourself a favor if you look at 10 West. Friendly atmosphere, great food, and a convenient location. You're going to love it!

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Younger workers must balance financial priorities

If you're a younger worker just starting out in your career, you've got tremendous personal and professional opportunities ahead of you. But this is also when you will need to make some key decisions — especially about

your financial priorities.

When considering your priorities, you may find it helpful to look at these three areas:

- **Paying off debts** – If you're like many young working people, one of your biggest debts may be your student loans — and paying these down is, by necessity, a priority, because falling behind on your student loan payments can lead to late fees and other problems. So, if you haven't done so already, you may want to enroll in autopay, which will help you stay current on your loan and possibly earn a rate reduction.

- **Saving for short-term goals** – At this stage of your life, you may be thinking about saving for at least one or two significant short-term goals, such as a wedding or a down payment to a house — or perhaps both. Obviously, your ability to save for these goals will depend on your income, your current cost of living and your debt situation. But if a wedding or a new home is indeed a priority for you, you'll want to look at what's possible, in terms of putting money away. Since you know you'll need a certain amount of money at a given time, you may want to automatically move a set amount from your checking or savings account each month to a low-risk account whose principal is essentially protected. You might not earn a lot on such an account, but at the same time, you won't have to worry about a drop in value just when you need to take out the money.

- **Saving for retirement** – Even though you may just be at the beginning of your working life, it's not too soon to begin preparing for its conclusion. You could spend two, or even three, decades in an active retirement, so you will need to accumulate considerable financial resources. Fortunately, here's an area in which you may be able to get some help, starting right away. If you work for a mid-size or large company, your employer may well offer a 401(k) or similar retirement plan. Your pre-tax salary deferral contributions are generally not taxable, so the more you put in, the lower your taxable income. Plus, your earnings can grow on a tax-deferred basis. (If your employer offers a Roth 401(k), your contributions will be taxable, but withdrawals will be tax-free, provided you meet certain conditions.) These days, even many small employers often offer some type of retirement plan, so it's likely to your benefit to take full advantage of it by contributing as much as you can afford.

Prioritizing these long-term savings goals, and striving to meet them with the appropriate solutions, can certainly be challenging. But as a young worker, you have the greatest — and most irreplaceable — asset on your side: time. So, make the most of it. Think carefully about your needs and options and take the steps that enable you to keep making progress toward all your objectives.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

Edward Jones, Member SIPC

For more information please contact Christina Lashua at Christina.lashua@edwardjones.com

MONTH OF MAY 2024 EVENTS AT THE PAXTON SENIOR CENTER 17 WEST STREET, PAXTON, MA

Schoolhouse Café

The Café will be open on Wednesday May 1st at 9:30AM. Come socialize and enjoy the coffee and tasty pastries.

Exercise

Mindful Movement Class on Friday May 3rd and subsequent Fridays at 11AM. Enjoy an exercise class to increase your strength and balance. Donation \$3.

Piano Lessons

Come learn to play the piano starting 9:30AM on Friday, May 3rd and subsequent Fridays. Cost is \$5. Schedule your lesson at (508) 756-2833.

Pitch

Come play pitch on Tuesday and Thursday every week at 12:15PM.

Veteran's Group on Wednesday, May 8th at 10:30AM. Program will be presented on the History of the Coast Guard.

Health Program

On Thursday, May 9th at 10AM, the Massachusetts College of Pharmacology will present a program on COPD.

Book Club

On Monday May 13th at 11AM, the club will study Remarkably Bright Creatures by Shelby Vanpelt.

Historical Program

On Thursday May 16th at 11AM, meet Abby Kelley Foster and Stephen Foster as they present letters they shared as supporters of the abolition of slavery. (Sponsored by a Paxton Cultural Council Grant, the Paxton Council on Aging, and the Paxton Historical Commission)

Paxton Senior Center Spring Art Show

Six Paxton residents: Charles Belisle, Anita Fenton, Ann McDougale, Carol Morin, Cheryl Rossier, and Robert Thorn will be exhibiting artwork composed of mixed media such as acrylic, watercolor and oil paintings, ink drawing, and textiles in the Senior Center Art Gallery. The show will be open from 10AM to 1PM and continues until the end of May. Come vote for the Best in Show art work.

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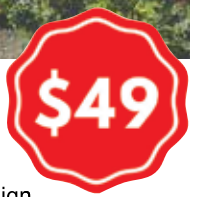


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STEP 2

Our designers will pick a selection of flowers, shrubs, and trees from our garden center that will compliment your yard and suit your individual needs.

Once they arrive at your house, all of the plants will be laid out in the exact spots that they will be planted.

STEP 3

Once the design is complete and you're happy with the selections, the plants stay right where they are. You can request that our install crew return and plant them for you at an additional cost, or you can choose to install the plants yourself. And that's it!

Congratulations To The Champions

by Paxton Recreation

On Friday night March 22nd was the 3rd - 5th grade dodgeball tournament. It was awesome. We had 22 teams and so many amazing uniforms. Congratulations to the 3rd to 5th grade dodgeball champions: "The Chili Cheese Dogs." 2nd place went to "Nuke Squad." Congratulations to the 1st place winners in the uniform contest "Moo Cows." 2nd place for uniforms: "The Rising Dragons" and 3rd place: "The Bulldogs."

On March 29, we held the 6th - 8th grade dodgeball tournament. It was so much fun. Congratulations to the 6th - 8th grade dodgeball champions: "The Palumbo Bros." 2nd place went to "The Railers." Congratulations to the 1st place winners in the uniform contest "Lucky Ducks." 2nd place for uniforms went to "Alien Invasion."

Thank you to all the players. You all did great!

Special thanks to Chuck Putney for making this happen and running all the tournaments. (You are the best!)

Thank you to the referees: Luke Putney, Kiara Kelly, Cassie Pingitore, Jack Kelly, Colby Larson, and Colton Prince.

Thank you to the celebrity judges: Donna Parsons, Kristin Steinmetz, the Paxton MA Police Department, and Larry Sponberg.

Thank you to Still Four Corners for donating gift cards for the uniform contest.

Thank you to Violet Putney, Diane McMorrow, Heather Larson and the 7th grade helpers.

Thank you to Still Four Corners for donating gift cards for the uniform contest.

Thank you to Mrs Prince and the 7th grade helpers.



ECLIPSE DARKENS SKY from page 1

"It's worth it to make the hike up," Lenox said. "It's a once in a lifetime opportunity."

John Howe Jr. from Boylston, said he hiked up the mountain because of its high point in Central Massachusetts. He said he climbed up the mountain around 9 a.m. to avoid potential crowds.

With several of Wachusett's trails still covered in snow from the ski season and recent weather, people from all ages filed in as the peak of the eclipse approached.

Some people had forgotten solar glasses and filters to witness the eclipse. Strangers became friends, as individuals shared glasses and camera filters.

Jim Collins, a retired teacher from Auburn, said he shared his glasses with people he met while viewing the eclipse.

"It's about community," Collins said. "This is a special mountain. I've brought my classes up here."

Dr. Luke Moore, Research Assistant Professor of Astronomy at Boston University, said this eclipse is special because there won't be another total eclipse in the United States for another generation.

"They [solar eclipses] are one of the oldest and most awe inspiring and fear-inducing astronomical phenomena that humans have regularly observed," Dr. Moore said. "Even when we understand them, and precisely predict them, a total eclipse is an eerie experience."

Dr. Moore said the temperature becomes cooler during an eclipse for the same reason it becomes darker when night approaches. Solar radiation is temporarily unable to reach the Earth's surface, he said.

"It will be cooler and darker the more the sun is obscured," Dr. Moore said.

According to NASA, the next total solar eclipse will be visible in the United States on August 23, 2044.

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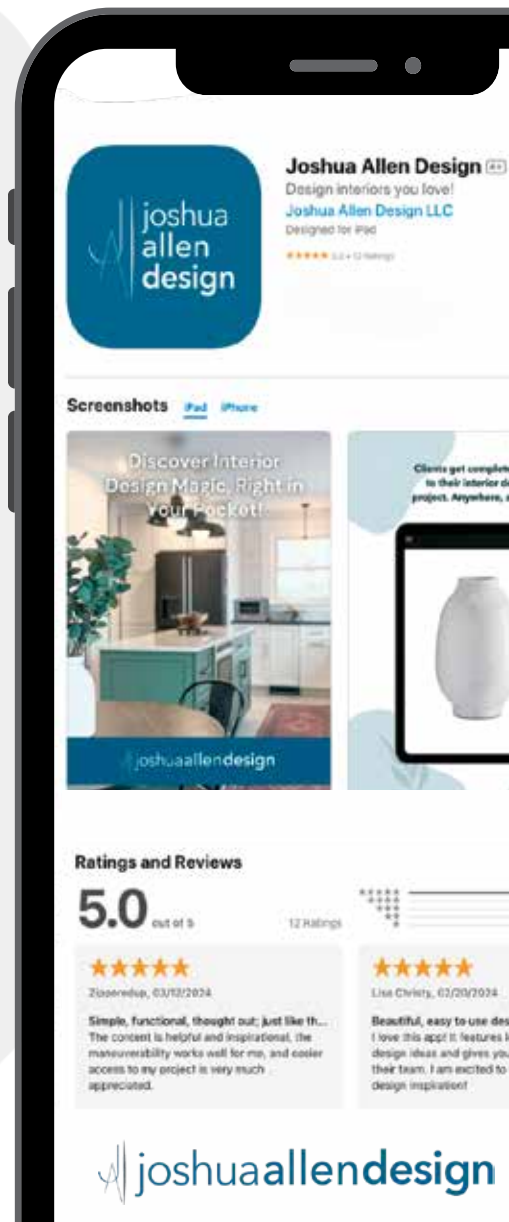
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OUT OF THIS WORLD! from page 4

process] was long, because I had never done anything like this before. [NASA] was asking for lesson plans, which I as a school psychologist don't do. I enlisted the help of Jaime Hughes for a lesson plan and Julie Rocznik helped me align the state standards with the proposal."

While astronomy and aeronautics wasn't the primary focus of the semester's current lesson plans, Foley confirmed that the ISS and general space are part of STEAM curriculum standards. In the spirit of preparing for the downlink, teachers talked about space ahead of time to stoke further interest. The school IT department had a hand in setting up connections across classrooms for the NASA TV Live broadcast, and bulletin boards around the school announced the upcoming downlink and district participation.

The International Space Station, the largest space station yet built, was a collaborative effort of fifteen countries over ten years to assemble in low Earth orbit, sitting typically 254 miles above the planet. The station has been in operation since 2000, with seven years left of usability. In 2031, the ISS will be disassembled and sent back to Earth by crashing into the Pacific Ocean. Other stations, such as the commercial space station Starlab, and NASA's proposed Lunar Gateway station, will eventually fill the gap left by the ISS's decommissioning. Until its retirement, the ISS will continue to host astronauts from across the world: its current mission,

Expedition 70, has the mission goals of "[studying] an array of microgravity phenomena to benefit humans living on and off the Earth... [astronauts] will also explore heart health, cancer treatments, space manufacturing techniques, and more during their long-duration stay in Earth orbit", per the official NASA mission summary.

As communications with the ISS are a delicate balancing act of connectivity and orbital location, questions from students were pre-recorded and sent to the astronauts to be answered live. Instead of typical questions such as 'how does an astronaut sleep in space?', student submissions varied from asking when and why the ISS was built to spacewalk safety protocols, and were answered earnestly and with clear enjoyment by O'Hara and Mogensen.

Elementary-grade student Gabriella Tibeau asked, "The ocean remains largely unexplored; do you feel there are things we can learn from space that will help us explore the ocean?"

O'Hara, whose engineering specialties include deep sea research, answered, "There's a lot of crossover between ocean science and space science. [Ocean and space] scientists are already working together and learning from each other. One of my favorite areas of research right now is ocean worlds, [and] studying oceans on other planets. Scientists are sharing technologies and the methodologies they use to conduct their research and their exploration in order to better understand both

how we can explore Earth's oceans better, and then also someday oceans on other planets."

Another student, Jay Spanetelot, asked what many people are most curious about regarding space travel: "When you're launching a spacecraft with you and your colleagues, do you feel any fear? If so, does that fear fade once you're in space?"

Mogensen, a seasoned astronaut with over 208 days logged in space, answered: "I think fear is a completely natural thing; all humans feel fear. The important thing is how you react to it. Through our training, we learned to set aside fear and maybe even use it in a positive way to heighten our senses, to react quicker, [and] to think quicker. The really important thing is that you don't let fear consume you [and] don't let it become panic, in which case you typically respond in a slower, poor manner. Fear is completely normal. The important thing is how you use it [and] how you respond to it.

Towards the end of the downlink,

student Joseph Wadeen asked, "What are the pros and cons of being an astronaut?"

"I think there are a lot of pros, I don't know about cons," O'Hara replied, with optimism and enthusiasm. "I love exploration and the discovery and the adventure that it brings. I love being part of something that's so much bigger than myself, like the International Space Station program, that brings countries together doing something that we work for the benefit of humanity. If you have to come up with some cons, if you don't like traveling it's probably not the job for you."

The downlink ended with thanks to Foley and In-Flight Education, as well as thanks to the Wachusett school district for its participation. While no future plans with NASA downlinks are in the works for the district, with spaceflight operations such as the upcoming Artemis lunar landing missions, there are many opportunities for students, teachers, and space enthusiasts alike to keep looking skyward.

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or call Karen Packard at 978-407-2568

Pick It Up Paxton: Earth Day Celebration

PRESS RELEASE

From April 22 (Earth Day) through May 1, get out and pick up the loose trash in your neighborhood or sign up to tackle an area of town.

Pellegrino Trucking Company Inc. has once again offered to donate a dumpster for litter you have collected during the cleanup! (Thank you, Marc Pellegrino!)

The Soccer Asylum has offered to host the dumpster at the back right of their parking lot!

**Please note the dumpster is for bagged trash only not "stuff" you want to get rid of.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE! Step 1: Choose an area of town! Be sure to find and complete the volunteer form. Link to the Google Form is found in this website

<https://sites.google.com/view/pick-it-up-paxton/home>

Step 2: Pick up trash! The cleanup dates are April 22 and May 1, but any day is a great day to pick up trash. Be sure to wear gloves and be safe - watch for cars and hazardous materials and broken glass.

Step 3: Dispose of the trash! Bring the trash to the dumpster at the Soccer Asylum, 603 Pleasant St., Paxton, MA. The dumpster is at the



back right of the parking lot. Please note: the dumpster is for bagged trash collected during the cleanup!

Step 4: Spread the word! Tell you friends, and post a picture of your crew to social media with the cleanup hashtags: #PickItUpPaxton #NoMoreLitter #EarthDay2024 #PaxtonMA. Like us on Facebook, post to Paxton Neighbors, and tag

us @PickItUpPaxton.

Step 5: Celebrate! You've earned it!

The Dumpster Ten Commandments 1. Dumpster is for the trash and litter collected during the cleanup, not for personal use. 2. No hazardous materials (gasoline, motor oils, propane tanks, flammable liquids, oil-based paints, car or motorcycle batteries, antifreeze) 3. No cement,

brick, stone, dirt. 4. No yard waste - grass, trees, leaves, bushes etc. 5. No appliances. 6. No electronics. 7. No power equipment/yard tools. 8. No box springs, mattresses. 9. No tires.

10. Do not overload dumpster - nothing over the top. Please follow the guidelines - this is a donated dumpster and a volunteer-run event.

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