

Lisa Meunier honored with Service Above Self Award

STURBRIDGE — Sturbridge Rotary Club President David Zonia presented Lisa Meunier, Lead Nurse for the Union 61 School District, with the Sturbridge Rotary “Service Above Self Award” 2021.

The event took place at a special ‘surprise’ meeting held at the Publick House Historic Inn in Sturbridge. Attended by over 50 family, friends and colleagues, Lisa was honored for all her sterling efforts working with Burgess Elementary School families in need. Sturbridge Rotary partners with Lisa especially at Christmas where food, clothing, toys, gift vouchers, etc. are provided to the Burgess families in need. Lisa is also involved with Rotary’s connection to the Comfort Zone Camp which helps children overcome trauma of losing someone close to them. Beyond Rotary, Lisa is well known for the many other ways in which she helps

the local community. The name of the award, Service Above Self, is Rotary’s motto and we can think of no one who demonstrates this more than Lisa by volunteering her time and talents to help others.

This special event was the first post-pandemic in-person meeting of the Sturbridge Rotary Club. Among those attending was Sturbridge Town Administrator Jeff

Bridges, Selectman Mary Dowling, Police Chief Earl Dessert, Assistant Superintendent of Schools Jodi Bourassa, Director of Special Education Brenda Looney, Burgess Elementary School Principal Kathy Pelley, plus many Burgess teaching and nursing staff, Lisa’s proud parents Doris and Bill Brown and many Rotarians from both the Sturbridge Rotary Club and the Brookfields Rotary Club and their guests. About Rotary



Photo Courtesy

Sturbridge Rotary Club Secretary Linda Zonia (left) presents award to Lisa Meunier.

The Sturbridge Rotary Club has been providing humanitarian service to the local and international community for nearly 50 years. Club members develop community service projects that address many of today’s most critical issues including hunger, as

well as support programs and educational opportunities for youth. For additional information on the Club, please visit www.sturbridgerotary.org or visit www.facebook.com/sturbridgerotary.

QCC and MWCC collaborate on new program partnerships

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) President Luis G. Pedraja, Ph.D. and Mount Wachusett Community College (MWCC) President James L. Vander Hooven, Ed.D. have forged a new transfer agreement between the two Central Massachusetts community colleges, strengthening an already strong partnership.

The agreement will enable QCC students to seamlessly transfer to MWCC after they have completed their general education courses, in order to earn an Associate Degree in either Physical Therapist Assisting or Veterinary Technology. MWCC students will have a similar reciprocal transfer opportunity with QCC. MWCC students interested in an Associate Degree in Radiologic Technology or Respiratory Care can transfer into QCC’s programs once their general education courses are completed.

“We serve the community and our communities are not defined by rigid boundaries; they blend into one another,” President Pedraja said. “I think it is critical to create partnerships such as this one that will allow us to provide services to a greater number of

students.” “One of the areas in Massachusetts that all community colleges are looking for are ways to partner with one another so that we are not duplicating all of the services we offer. I think the proximity of QCC and MWCC offers us an opportunity for unique partnerships and this is a perfect example of how we can do that,” said President Vander Hooven.

Both presidents see these types of agreements only increasing in the future to meet the needs of a diverse student population that community colleges such as MWCC and QCC historically serve.

“It can’t be about competing against one another. We’re all part of the Commonwealth and we are all working to help our students to ensure they are successful,” said President Pedraja.

Visit QCC or MWCC to learn more about these new program partnerships.

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508.854.7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu

Country Bank announces promotions

REGION — Country Bank, a full-service financial institution serving central and western Massachusetts, is pleased to announce recent staff promotions.

Julie Yi has been promoted to Senior Vice President, Controller and Operations. She has extensive experience in finance and operations and serves on Country Bank’s senior management team. Yi holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Accounting from the University of Nevada Las Vegas and is a Certified Public Accountant.

Justin Calheno has been promoted to Assistant Vice President, Retail Lending. He holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Management from Westfield State University and is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies. Calheno serves as a Board Member for the Ludlow Boys and Girls Club.

Lisa Saletnik has been promoted to Assistant Vice President, Business Systems. She holds an Associate’s Degree from Baypath University in Health Science and is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies.

Mackenna Hogan has been promoted to Commercial Banking Administration Officer.

She holds a Bachelor of Finance Degree from UMass Amherst.

Antonio Palano has been promoted to Assistant Vice President, Retail Lending. He holds an Associate’s Degree in Business Administration from Springfield Technical Community College.

Newly appointed officers include Sam Pursey, Erin Skoczylas, Ashley Swett and Sarah Yurkunas.

Sam Pursey has been promoted to Relationship Management Officer. Pursey holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Finance from UMass Amherst.

Erin Skoczylas has been promoted to Assistant Controller. She holds a Bachelor of Business Administration from Western New England University, an Associate’s degree in Business Administration from Springfield Technical Community College, and is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies.

Ashley Swett has been promoted to Customer Care Center Officer. She is a graduate of The New England School for Financial Studies.

Sarah Yurkunas has been promoted to Relationship Management Officer. Sarah holds a Bachelor of Science in Business from Baypath

University, a certificate from the Massachusetts Bankers Association in Fundamentals of Credit Analysis: Intro to Commercial Lending, and is currently enrolled in the New England School for Financial Studies Program.

“I am thrilled to congratulate Julie, Justin, Tony, Lisa, Mackenna, Sam, Erin, Ashley and Sarah on their promotions and all of the accomplishments that got them here; they are a key part of our success. We’re pleased to provide the opportunities for our people to develop not only within their roles today, but into new opportunities tomorrow. These team members embody our corporate values of iSTEP – Integrity, Service, Teamwork, Excellence and Prosperity,” stated Miriam Siegel, First Senior Vice President of Human Resources.

About Country Bank Country Bank is a full-service mutual community bank serving central and western Massachusetts with 14 offices in Ware, Palmer, West Brookfield, Brimfield, Belchertown, Wilbraham, Ludlow, Leicester, Paxton, Charlton, and Worcester. Country Bank is a member of FDIC, DIF, and the SUM network. Country Bank can be reached at 800-322-8233 or online at countrybank.com.

Friday’s Child



Jayven Age 14

Hi! My name is Jayven and I like to play board games and football!

Jayven is an inquisitive boy of African-American and Hispanic descent. He loves board games and is always happy to play one, either with his friends or with an adult. Jayven also likes to be outside, and his favorite outdoor activity is playing football, which he is currently doing with Pop Warner Football. Jayven likes playing football so much that when he grows up, he would like to play for the NFL. Just in case he isn’t drafted, though, he is also considering careers as a detective or as a piano teacher. Jayven is currently doing well in school.

Legally freed for adoption, Jayven is looking for a loving and patient family of any constellation, with or without other children in the home. Jayven is very close with his young brother and has expressed a desire to be a role model for him. An ideal family for Jayven will be open to helping him maintain this relationship.

Who Can Adopt?

Can you provide the guidance, love and stability that a child needs? If you’re at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ singles and couples.

The process to adopt a child from foster care requires training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you, and if so, to help connect you with a child or sibling group that your family will be a good match for.

To learn more about adoption from foster care, call the Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) at 617-964-6273 or visit www.ma-reinc.org. The sooner you call, the sooner a waiting child will have a permanent place to call home.

Southbridge Public Schools to offer no-cost meals to qualifying students

SOUTHBIDGE — Southbridge Public Schools will be participating in the National School Lunch Program and the School Breakfast Program for the 2021 – 2022 school year. As part of this program, Eastford Road School, Charlton Street School, West Street School, Southbridge Middle/ High School, and the Southbridge Academy will offer healthy meals every school day. Breakfast and lunch will be provided at no cost. Household applications for free and reduced price meals will not be collected.

Studies have shown that children who are not hungry perform better in school. By providing breakfast/lunch to all children at no charge, we can create a better learning environment for our students.

The school breakfast and lunch that we serve follows U.S. Department of Agriculture guidelines for healthy school meals. Please encourage your children to participate in the school meal programs.

All meals will be served to all students at no charge.

Non-Discrimination Statement In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have