

OBITUARIES

Joyce B. Cook, 91

F I S K D A L E / SOUTHBRIDGE- Joyce (Bover) Cook, 91, of Main St., passed away peacefully on Saturday, April 10th, in the Southbridge Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center.

She leaves two daughters, Abigail Veshia and her husband Michael of Southbridge and Sydney O'Connor and her husband Jerome of Moultonborough, NH; two grandsons, Mark Denault and his wife April of Southbridge and James Denault of Framingham; her great granddaughter, Samantha Denault; two brothers, Raymon Bover, and Douglas Bover and his wife Lynne; and two sisters, Irene Hull and Ann Reed. She was predeceased by Charles Bover, Peter Bover, Gloria Brooks and Beverly Kaye. She was born in Brattleboro, VT, the daughter of the late Harold G. and Anna (Gembarowski) Bover.

Joyce started playing the piano at the age of 3. This passion continued throughout her life and took her to many venues. At 18, she had a jazz



trio on Nantucket; in the 1970's she was employed as a harpsichordist at The Club 33 as well as a pianist at the Blue Bayou Restaurant in Disneyland CA. After this, she played a grand piano in the lobby of the South Coast Plaza Hotel in Costa Mesa, CA. Her final "gig" was entertaining the residents of the Southbridge Rehab. Joyce did not have a mean bone in her body and was adored

by everyone she met. Joyce was a friend of Bill W. for over 60 years.

Joyce's family is deeply indebted to the angels at Southbridge Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center who treated her with great care, love and dignity during her two years there. They would also like to thank the caregivers of the Hospice of Western and Central MA.

Joyce's funeral services and burial will be private. There are no calling hours.

The Daniel T. Morrill Funeral Home, 130 Hamilton St., Southbridge, directed arrangements.

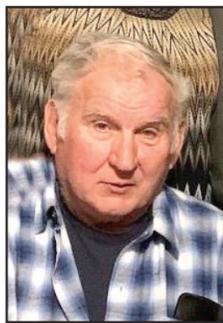
www.morrillfuneralhome.com

Gerard J. "Gerry" Morin, 77

BRIMFIELD- Gerard J. Morin, 77, of Brimfield, died on Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at his home following a brief period of declining health.

He leaves his loving wife of nearly 57 years, Janelle N. (Odiorne) Morin; four daughters, Shirley McGann of Phoenix, AZ, Sheila Browne and her husband Dean of Palmer, Sharon Morin of Brimfield, and Shelley Smith and her husband Steve of Hudson, NH; four grandchildren, Austin and Taylor Browne, Thomas Lynds, and P.J. Smith; two sisters, Cecile Smith and Anne Guay; four brothers, Robert, Richard, Donald, and Paul, as well as many friends. He was born in Palmer, son of the late Lionel and Lucy (Gothier) Morin. He grew up in Warren on the family farm and then moved to Brimfield where he and Janelle have been for the past 54 years.

Gerry was well known around Brimfield where he served on the Conservation Commission for several years, as well as on the Board of Selectman. He and Janelle owned and operated Indian Hill Farm since 1967. A Holstein Dairy Farm for decades, and later converting to raising beef cattle, Gerry was always busy with the farm, and continued to grow and harvest hay. Around the farm, there was always work to be done, or repairs to be made. He loved animals, and cared that they were taken care of. If



a neighboring farm was short on hay, Gerry was always willing to share what he had. He had a fondness for forest management, logging, and stone wall preservation. Although he never actually ever retired, it was in his later years that he was able to enjoy playing cards, craps, and traveling to the casinos. He and Janelle often traveled to the local casinos to try their luck, as well as to Las Vegas, where they were able to enjoy their time during those special get-aways together.

He loved his "girls," and was a devoted husband, father and grandfather. He will be sadly missed by all of them.

Calling hours for Gerry were held on Tuesday, April 20, 2021 from 9 to 11AM in the Varnum Funeral Home, 43 East Main St., in West Brookfield. Following the calling hours, a Graveside Committal Service was held in Brimfield Cemetery at 11:30AM, where he was laid to rest. Face coverings and social distancing guidelines must be followed while in the funeral home and at the cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to either the Brimfield Ambulance Service, the Brimfield Fire Department, or the Brimfield Police Department, 34 Wales Rd., Brimfield, MA 01010.

An online guest book is available at varnumfuneralhome.com

TLSD Conference keynote speaker discusses attaining equity in higher education

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College was host to the 2021 Teaching, Learning, and Student Development (TLSD) Conference earlier this month. This year's conference was held virtually with over 1,000 attendees from all 15 Massachusetts Community Colleges in attendance. The main focus of the Conference was the disparities students of color face in the higher education system.

"This is a time where we have reached a crossroad in our nation and as educators we can lead the discussion on systemic racism and bridge the gap that divides our nation," said QCC President Luis G. Pedraja, Ph.D.

The event featured keynote speaker Danette Howard, Ph.D., Senior Vice President & Chief Policy Officer for the Lumina Foundation, and offered attendees 36 breakout sessions, access to teaching resources, as well as live questions and answers periods with speakers and presenters.

"COVID-19 has exposed inequities across our state, and it has been made clear that we in higher education must look in the mirror and be willing to change the way we do business," said Carlos E. Santiago, Massachusetts Commissioner of Higher Education.

Keynote Speaker Dr. Howard has spent the bulk of her career improving and increasing student access and success in postsecondary education. She oversees several of the Lumina Foundation's key strategies to increase Americans' attainment of high-quality postsecondary degrees and credentials, including strategic work in both state and federal policy and efforts to leverage states as the drivers of credential attainment. She also leads the Foundation's Equity First efforts to embed racial equity and justice in all aspects of Lumina's strategic work and operations.

"Most of us are still reeling from 2020. It seems the ground is still shifting beneath our feet," Dr. Howard said, noting the nation was dealing with two pandemics – the COVID-19 pandemic and the country's reckoning of the sordid history of racism.

During her keynote, Dr. Howard addressed the disproportionate way in which the COVID-19 virus affected communities of color, devastat-

ing those already struggling to survive. When the pandemic struck and colleges and universities went to 100 percent virtual learning, inequities in these communities widened, as many students were without broadband access and depended upon smartphone connectivity for access to their courses. She suggested it might be time to consider broadband access, "in the same way we think of electricity and water."

Additionally, with today's students representing 42 percent people of color, 40 percent working full-time, 37 percent non-traditional students 25 years of age or older, and 40 percent attending community college, there is a need for an equity lens to be used in higher education that honors students' lived experiences.

"These students need to be identified and supported," Dr. Howard said.

When it comes to overall educational attainment (associate degree or higher), Massachusetts exceeded the national average (61.6 vs. 51.9 percent), yet it lags behind in short-term credentials, which are of particular benefit to under-privileged and under-served communities.

"What could community colleges be doing to lean into the need to have short-term credentials?" she posed.

Another area Dr. Howard addressed as a way toward equity is assisting the thousands of adult learners who started college but never finished. In Massachusetts alone, 636,015 people have some college credit but no degree.

"How do we put a strategy and plan in place to target this population?" she asked.

In 2020, the Lumina Foundation recognized Massachusetts as one of five states that have demonstrated a commitment to improve higher education attainment for students of color.

"The nation is watching Massachusetts with great interest to see what you do with equity," Dr. Howard said, adding, "Justice is achieved when the underlying policies, practices and root causes of inequitable outcomes are eliminated."

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.

TLSD Conference keynote speaker discusses attaining equity in higher education

WORCESTER — Dr. Moses Dixon, Executive Director & CEO of Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging and Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis are pleased to announce ElderCare 2021 - "Communities of Strength, A Celebration of Older Americans." This year, ElderCare 2021 will be a virtual pre-recorded 90-minute broadcast featuring an impressive guest speaker lineup, educational & public safety presentations, messages of support for older adults as well as local resources.

"We are particularly excited about this year's ElderCare event because it is launching during Older Americans month and the theme for this year is 'Communities of Strength.' This year's theme is very important after a year of COVID-19 and the devastation it's caused for older Americans. We look for events such as this to be a part of that community of strength for older adults in Central Massachusetts," said Dr. Moses Dixon, Executive Director & CEO of Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging.

ElderCare 2021 will premiere on May 3, 2021 on most local cable access stations across Worcester County as well "CMAA SeniorConnection" on YouTube. Topics will include; Truths & Myths About COVID-19, Safeguarding Seniors, CBD Use for Older Adults, Mental Health

for Seniors and Elder Law. A distinguished panel of guest speakers include; Dr. Erik Dickson, President & CEO of UMass Memorial Healthcare & Hospital, Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis, Executive Director & CEO of Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging, Dr. Moses Dixon, Elder Law Attorney Polly Tatum and experts on CBD, Mental Health and a COVID-19 Vaccination Panel.

"The Worcester County Sheriff's Office is excited to be part of this tremendous virtual event for our seniors. In addition to important health, wellness and public safety information, the program promises to be highly informative and entertaining. We are proud to partner with the Central Massachusetts Agency on Aging for ElderCare 2021, providing a wealth of important information for older adults from the comfort and safety of their home," said Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis.

Contributing sponsors for ElderCare 2021 include, UMass Memorial Health Care, University of Massachusetts Medical School, Reliant Medical Group, Unibank, Fallon Health, WTAG, District Attorney Joseph D. Early's Office.

For more information please contact Amber Krasinski at akrasinski@seniorconnection.org or 774-239-5961.

NICHOLS

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riential learning programs such as the Nichols Consulting Group and the Center for Intelligent Process Automation, and co-curricular initiatives such as the Institute for Women's Leadership and the Emerging Leaders Program.

"The Bicentennial Campaign has shown what we can achieve with visionary leadership, an engaged community, and a compelling case for support," says Co-chair John Davis.

"By preparing Nichols for the next stage in its evolution, it has funded a wealth of resources to prepare our students for theirs – modern facilities, life-changing scholarships, distinctive learning experiences, and purposeful leadership development."

Co-chair Gerald Fels adds, "The campaign's impact on the future of Nichols cannot be overstated. The celebration of our bicentennial was a turning point, and the campaign allowed us to aspire to that next milestone – a third century of educating leaders."

The campaign inspired an unprecedented level of giving among alumni, friends, faculty, staff, parents and

students, drawing more than 20 gifts over \$1 million, including four gifts of \$5 million, and more than \$8 million in deferred gift commitments to help secure the college's future, reports Bill Pieczynski, vice president of advancement at Nichols.

"Through their generous contributions, our donors have demonstrated their commitment to our mission and endorsed our vision of Nichols as a college of choice for business and leadership education," he adds.

About Nichols College

Nichols College is a college of choice for business and leadership education as a result of its distinctive career-focused and leadership-based approaches to learning, both in and out of the classroom, and through impactful research and professional education. Students thrive in a learning and living environment that is supported by an experiential business curriculum and a strong liberal arts foundation aimed at transforming them into tomorrow's leaders. Nichols offers master's degrees in business, leadership, accounting, and counterterrorism, as well as a range of certificate programs, to promote career advancement for today's professionals.

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