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WARMER
 High: 65
 Low: 42

Sentinel & Enterprise

Monday, April 8, 2024 \$2.50 FACEBOOK.COM/SENTINELANDENTERPRISE TWITTER.COM/SENTANDENT sentinelandenterprise.com

SOLAR ECLIPSE

Watch parties in North Central Mass.

By **Brendan Lewis**
News@sentinelandenterprise.com

Weather reports indicate clear skies are ahead for those interested in watching the solar eclipse and, in North Central Massachusetts, a variety of watch parties have been scheduled and are open to all.

The events include regular solar eclipse watch parties, special teen activities and even an "Eclipse Henna" gathering, with an event in every corner of the region.

Check them out below:

- **Solar Eclipse Watch Party:** 2:15-4 p.m.; Hazen Memorial Library, 3 Keady Way, Shirley. Enjoy an Alien Scavenger Hunt and a STEM Astronaut Training Course; solar glasses will be available. Register by calling 978-425-2661.
- **Teen Drop-In – Make an Eclipse Button:** 2:20-3:35 p.m.; Fitchburg Public Library, 166 Boulder Drive. Make an Eclipse Day button, many designs available. 978-829-1789.

- **Solar Eclipse Viewing Party:** 2:30-3:45 p.m.; Lunenburg Public Library, 1023 Massachusetts Ave. Enjoy crafts, coloring pages, lawn games, snacks, and ISO approved eclipse glasses for the first 100 people to register. Weather permitting. Register at lunenburglibrary.org.
- **Watch the Solar Eclipse:** 2:30-4 p.m.; Townsend Public Library, 12 Dudley Road. Weather permitting, meet at the library to watch the solar eclipse. townsendlib.org.

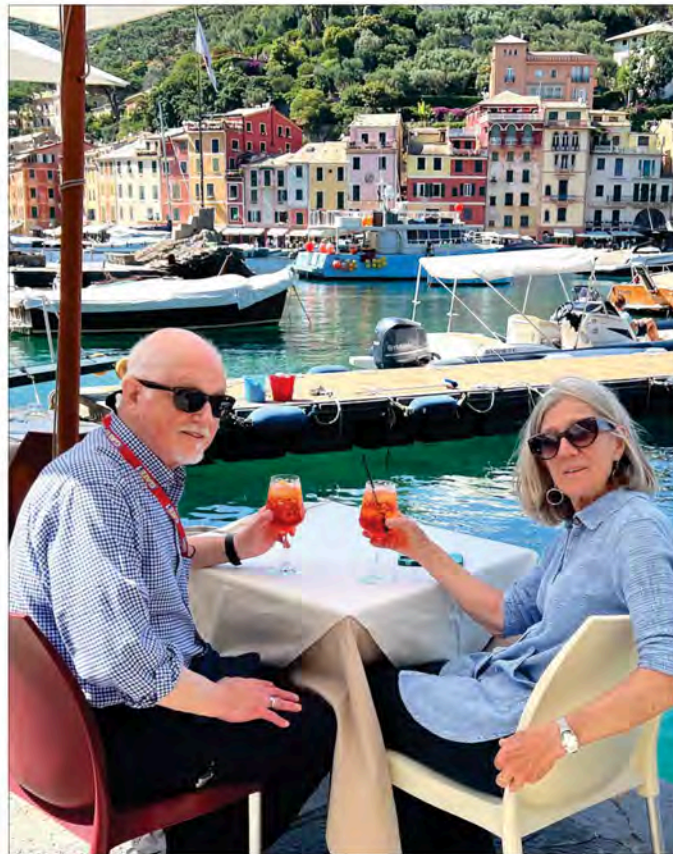


Gatherings of many types have been planned in north Worcester County for the eclipse on April 8, 2024.

KYLE GREEN - (508) 573-5544 / TNS

FITCHBURG STATE UNIVERSITY

CHEERS TO ITALY!



COURTESY OF VIN IALENTI

Vin Ialenti, president of Fitchburg State University's Center for Italian Culture, is pictured with his wife, Sharon Ialenti, enjoying an Aperol Spritz in beautiful Portofino, Italy, where they visited this past October.

Learn how to become an Italian citizen at Fitchburg State

By **Cheryl A. Cuddahy**
 Correspondent

FITCHBURG » The Center for Italian Culture at Fitchburg State University is serving what they see as a growing population of U.S. citizens looking to make their love for Italy official. Next, Tuesday, April 16, the University is offering a free online course at 6 p.m. called "Introduction to

Obtaining Italian Citizenship." Vin Ialenti, president of the Center for Italian Culture, believes there is a strong movement of Italian Americans who are interested in being recognized as Italian citizens.

"We are fortunate that the United States allows its citizens to have dual citizenship without renouncing their US citizenship," he said.

The custom webinar program, hosted by genealogists and members of the Vermont Italian Cultural Association, Lisa DeNatale (President), Mark D'Ambrosi, and Jerry Carbone, is free and open to the public. Attendees are asked to register in advance at fitchburgstate.edu/novo-mondo.

Ialenti adds that there are at least four Facebook sites that

deal with the questions and issues of how to be recognized as Italian Citizens.

"I received my dual citizenship in 2017," said Ialenti. "I have seen the presentation that the Vermont team is doing, and it will be a great start for folks thinking about if they can obtain their Italian citizenship. After viewing it, I thought how

ITALY » PAGE 8

HEALTH CARE

Law change may help physician assistants fill labor gap

Doctors' group warns change may affect quality of care

By **Allison Kuznitz**
 State House News Service

BOSTON » Dressed in white lab coats, nearly 200 physician assistant students and providers on Thursday pitched their potential to help solve a health care workforce shortage that could worsen given the challenges facing Massachusetts hospitals owned by Steward Health Care.

The leader of the Massachusetts Association of PAs (MAPA) said removing an administrative licensure barrier for physician assistants and allowing them to practice without having a supervising physician could become an urgent need should there be an exodus of providers from Steward Health Care facilities.

Existing law requires PAs to file a "supervising physician" form with the state in order to care for patients. But PAs may be blocked from doing their jobs if their physician leaves a practice and they cannot find a new supervisor within 30 days, said Duncan Daviau, president of MAPA.

"A lot of people may choose to leave Steward with what's going on," Daviau told the News Service, following an advocacy event at the Grand Staircase. "They may be supervising physicians, and then these PAs, if they want to stay on at Steward and take care of their patients, now the onus is on them to find a new supervising physician."

PAs, who are taught at the master's level, must also complete more than 2,000 hours of clinical training, he said. Some PAs serve as people's primary care providers.

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State Rep. Christine Barber discussed the importance of physician assistants during a Massachusetts Association of PAs advocacy event at the State House on Thursday, April 4, 2024.

B4 LIFESTYLES

Monday, April 8, 2024 » MORE AT FACEBOOK.COM/SENTINELANDENTERPRISE AND TWITTER.COM/SENTINENT

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ADVICE

Finding peace after a loved one loses their battle to addiction

DEAR READERS » A great many of you wrote in with stories of your own about the pain of caring for a loved one who is in the middle of an addiction. Below are two letters that I hope bring some comfort to those living with loved ones who are struggling with addiction to know they are not alone. I also encourage family members to attend Al-Anon meetings.



Annie Lane
Dear Annie

DEAR ANNIE » About a week ago, "Heartbroken Grandpa" sent a letter about his granddaughter's addiction and death. He wonders if there was something else he should have done. I've been there. My son also had an addiction, but his was with alcohol.

We did everything that we could. He knew that he was an alcoholic; he tried to get away from it. He would attend AA meetings, and then after a week or two, he would stop going and be back to drinking again. This pattern was repeated several times. He entered detox centers several times. We even had an intervention.

All of this was in vain, because he always returned to drinking. He seemed helpless to control the addiction, and this helplessness took its toll. He also ended up dead, by his own hand.

That was many years ago, and he was only a few years older than the granddaughter in the letter. So, "Heartbroken Grandpa," let go of the guilt; there probably was nothing that you could have done to change the situation. Just pray for her, as I pray for my son every day. Be at peace.

— Still Heartbroken

DEAR ANNIE » I really appreciate your response to "Heartbroken Grandpa," whose family members regret that they had made the difficult tough love decision to separate themselves from the destructive, addicted granddaughter, only to see their prayers for her go unanswered.

Addiction is truly a cruel beast, as you wisely noted, and one of its nastiest twists of the knife is the fantasy that applying good, commonsense solutions to chaos will necessarily prevail. Yes, tough love and prayer often can work, but not always, because addiction is a relational disorder that can separate individuals from needed communities, as well as a medical disorder and, of course, a spiritual separation.

Grandpa is heartbroken because what is being asked of him is almost impossible. Whereas love unifies, addiction separates, and there is no one correct path but to remember your words — "your granddaughter was so much more than her addiction." The future of any successful solution to the addictions that plague us must start with that unifying thought: the addict is so much more than their addiction.

Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creators.com.

TRAVEL



Nataloda Bay's public beach, beside the Intercontinental Hotel & Resort, is one of Viti Levu's best.

STEVE HAGGERTY — TNS

Lush foliage, dazzling beaches & more put Fiji's islands on the map

By Anne Z. Cooke

NADI, FIJI ISLANDS » "That's Tom Hanks' island, in 'Cast Away' the movie," said the passenger sitting nearby, on the rear deck. We'd seen him standing in line, a college kid in a red shirt, packing and repacking a knapsack while we waited to board the early morning ferry out of Viti Levu, largest of Fiji's 330 islands. Leaning over the railing, he pointed at the horizon and a faint grey-green shape.

"Its real name is Modiriki, and it's small, just 100 acres," he said. "But the beach is awesome. Tourists can't wait to go."

No surprise there. For most South Pacific travelers, nothing rivals Fiji's sandy beaches, palm-shaded gardens, starry nights and Melanesian hospitality. We'd island-hopped over the years, tried a dozen different beach resorts, and liked most of them. Until 2019, when we joined a hiking group for a long look at the island's mountains.

Finally last fall, with COVID in decline and Fiji open for tourists, we hopped a plane and headed back. Finding hotels wasn't easy, but we crossed our fingers, found five with rooms and struck gold at three places begging for a repeat visit.

The Fiji Orchid, a stately manor house near Viti Levu's northwest shore and the former home of Hollywood actor Raymond Burr, star of the detective series "Perry Mason," felt nothing like a hotel and everything like a home away from home.

Hotel Manager Deepika Dimlesh arranged an authentic Fijian dinner, and co-owner Gordon Lawrie told tales of Fiji life in the early days. Though Nadi (NAN-dee) International Airport was 20 minutes away, our bure (BOO-ray, room, house), one of six in the lush tropical garden, was as quiet as a cemetery.

"We've had guests who stayed for weeks," said Dimlesh at dinner.

Curious about Lautoka, Viti Levu's second-largest town on the northwest shore, we hired tour guide and driver Kesho



Navala Village, Fiji's last traditionally thatched village, is an hour from the Fiji Orchid Hotel and welcomes visitors.

STEVE HAGGERTY — TNS

Goundar, who (like many Fijians) speaks Fijian, English and Hindi. Stopping at the town's huge covered market, he bought a couple of kava "sticks," the gifts we would need — for the chief — if we visited a village.

Then it was on to the Sabeto Mountains and the Garden of the Sleeping Giant. A popular park, it was founded by Burr, a worldwide orchid collector. Hundreds of orchids, planted along the trail to the summit, a huge head-like rock, are the highlight of a visit. And the adjacent forest — a tower of vines, shadowy branches and strange flowers — was a set waiting for a movie.

The next day we headed upcountry to Navala Village, the country's last thatched village, driving past barnyards, gardens, sugar cane fields, villages, the occasional manufacturing plant, and Methodist, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu and Catholic-oriented primary schools.

At first glance Navala looked empty, until guide Mark Navaroka came out to collect our \$25 entrance fee and a kava stick for the chief. "This is how

we used to build houses," he said, leading us inside the chief's official structure, where a couple of village leaders sat cross-legged, talking. "They built it in 1954 when five dying Catholic villages joined together," he continued, leading the way to the school and church.

Turning onto the Nausori Highland Road — not another car in sight — we hunched uphill over a rocky, pot-holed track for more than an hour, each hill steeper than the one before, until we rounded the top, a photographer's delight. Finally, around the corner, we passed two hunters on horseback with rifles and dogs.

Moving to Viti Levu's southwest corner, we checked into the Intercontinental Fiji Golf Resort & Spa, a 35-acre landscaped property on Nataloda Bay. The hotel was as busy as a country club on a holiday weekend. Dads and kids played volleyball; moms worked out at a fitness center. We spotted kids racing hermit crabs, and others learning Fijian words and Polynesian dances. Memus at the hotel's sev-

eral restaurants listed continental and some Fijian dishes.

Coaxed into trying the Jet Ski "experience," we flew over the waves, riding tandem behind two watersports guides. But the skies were trumped by the hotel's Coral Planting project, headed by marine scientists Lawaci Koroyawa and Luke Romatanababa. Joining them in the water, we learned how to plant healthy corals onto damaged reefs. Most memorable was the river cruise with Singatoka River Safari. Wide and long, the river winds through an endless valley, weaving past rocky hills, farms and meadows. Children splashed in it and men scrubbed their horses, waving as we passed. Pastoral and peaceful, it was a nod to an older century.

The 35-mile-long trip ended at a village, with a tour, lunch at the community center and a kava ceremony — shared cups — with the chief and town fathers. Kava is calming, some say. Just more weak tea, say others.

As our last week approached, we took the ferry to Lomani Island Resort — yes, an adults-only beach resort — on Malolo Lailai island, a single hour's ferry ride to the mainland and Nadi International Airport. You can stay overnight and still make it to the airport on time.

But it wasn't the beach that earned the gold star. It was the charming cottages, each with a private yard and plunge pool.

"It's peaceful here," said Shelley White, the general manager, when we met at the cocktail hour. "And quiet. But with Nadi next door, we stay busy with weddings and anniversaries, and lately, even business retreats," she said.

"Still, we love to have visitors like you, people who know this place and like it," she added, with a puckish smile. "Let me know the next time you travel. I might decide to come along."



The Nausori Highland Road, scaling ancient lava slopes, reveals the origins of Fiji's birth.

STEVE HAGGERTY — TNS

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