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May 26 - June 23, 2023

## Manchaug Mills a magnet for business, including retail

BY ROD LEE

**M**anchaug Mills will celebrate a 200th birthday in 2026.

Constructed of granite from a quarry in neighboring Douglas, the building was initially a cotton mill and the place where the Fruit of the Loom brand got its start.

Manchaug Mills is the only remaining mill of three manufacturing facilities that once operated in the quiet village of Manchaug. Its story as told by the management team of Mark and Debra Dunleavy is one of impressive durability, inspired renovation—and successful adaptation.

Talking about the current status of Manchaug Mills on the morning of May 10th, the Dunleavy's said there has "definitely been a shift, post-Covid," with "more hobbyists and more retail" having taken up residence. They join a mixed bag of other businesses including world-renowned Vaillancourt Folk Art, which has been an anchor tenant on the first floor for years.



**MILLS** Julia Anderson of Heirloom Emporium at Manchaug Mills.

continued on page 2



The Bread Guy cast and crew, in the store in North Grafton on May 18: Kim, Julia, Micaela, Brandon and Owner Chuck Brown.

## The Bread Guy delivers a whole loaf of happiness

BY ROD LEE

**W**hat is a man who is experiencing some stress after a long stint in education do to find relief?

Why, bake bread of course.

"I was stressed, I'm sixty, that's enough, I did my thirty-five years," Chuck Brown, the Bread Guy in North Grafton, said on the morning of May 18th.

It helps bring comfort to him that

Mr. Brown sings, too, including at St. James Church for the 9 o'clock Mass; and that he is possessed of a jocular nature, as for instance when, uncertain of the purpose of a first-time visitor to the store he chirped, as he pointed to one of his staff people, "I didn't do it, it's her."

His upbeat personality goes

**BREAD GUY**

continued on page 3

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## MILLS

continued from page 1

“We’re lucky to have Vallaincourt,” the Dunleavy’s said.

In an age when many old mills are being repurposed as housing, Manchaug Mills is somewhat of an anomaly, with its continuing concentration on providing space for commercial activity. Manchaug Mills also offers a warehousing component.

Artisans like Abbie Lawrence of Bad-Bisque Ceramics are taking full advantage of the opportunity to set up shop at Manchaug Mills.

“It’s great,” Ms. Lawrence said of her new address. “Before I had a studio in my apartment, so this is a big step up.”

She was working on a beer mug for a brewery in Rhode Island as we spoke.

On the website for Bad-Bisque Ceramics, Ms. Lawrence describes

herself as “primarily a literacy tutor in the Worcester Public Schools and a restaurant server.” Her passion, however, is working with clay. Her artistic exploration was inspired “by my dad, who is a potter, painter, sculptor, stone mason and teacher. From a young age he taught my sisters and I to get messy at creative, and that even a wacky and ‘ruined’ piece is a valuable learning experience.”

Keith Downer, owner of Blackstone Valley Auctions & Estates, which deals in “art, arms and antiques,” said the reason he chose Manchaug Mills from which to function is “history and hosts.” The building is on the National Historic Register and the Dunleavy’s are wonderful to work with.

“What they have done is amazing,” Mr. Downer said, of improvements that have been made to the building—inside and out.

“This just works out for both of



Kelly Weagle of REV Fitness Center and Keith Downer of Blackstone Valley Auctions & Estates have found a niche for their respective businesses at Manchaug Mills.



us.”

Mr. Downer is still in the process of moving in, and notes that his wife Tammy, Mark and April Brown and

Laura Jette are all essential operatives in the business.

Kelly Weagle, Julia Anderson, Jennifer Gavaletz and Anjelica Gigniliat all feel that Manchaug Mills is a perfect location for their businesses, which, like Asymmetric Training and Assessment Group and Truman Studios, have infused the building with new energy.

“An excellent space, I love it,” Ms. Weagle said.

She has been in the fitness industry a long time. “The original boutique gym,” REV offers a smorgasbord of ways to get and stay healthy including spin classes, strength training, fitness boot camps, stretch and flex and personal and small group instruction.

“Our classes are designed for multiple levels of participation from beginner to the most advanced,” REV’s promotional literature points out.

Like Bad-Bisque Ceramics, Julia Anderson’s Heirloom Emporium has moved to Manchaug Mills from a residential setting; in Ms. Anderson’s case, a studio in her home.

Ms. Anderson specializes in fine woodwork and craft, “self-care for your home at Manchaug Mills” as she says on her business card. Her husband, Kevin Anderson, a physician and a woodworker, is key to the venture.

“When he comes home he puts on his superhero cape and goes to the basement and fires up the equipment,” Ms. Anderson said. “He loves the games,” as for example creating cribbage boards.

Together, Julia and her husband have populated Heirloom Emporium’s location at Manchaug Mills with fine woodcraft and décor, accent furniture, family board games, fine writing instruments and more.

“We complement each other,” she says.

Ms. Gigniliat’s Indigo Enchantments is right at home at Manchaug Mills.

“I opened here April 1st, I was downstairs,” she said, of her suite,



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## MILLS

continued on page 3

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## MILLS

*continued from page 2*

now on the second floor.

Indigo Enchantments' mantra is "Awaken the Power within and Heal Holistically with Magick," with services that include aromatherapy—Ms. Gignilliat's specialty.

"I have a lot of interest in classes," she said. "If people just give this a chance...and there are no bad side effects!"

Ms. Gavaletz's law practice is "flourishing" in space she took over at Manchaug Mills after opening her firm.

Real estate conveyances, mortgage lending and estate planning are her primary focus.

Family-run Vaillancourt Folk Art, of which Gary and Judi Vaillancourt's son Luke is now president, offers dramatic proof that retail can



**Abbie Lawrence at work in her Bad-Bisque Cermaics studio at Manchaug Mills.**

be a good fit at Manchaug Mills.

The Vaillancourts have continually reinvented their business from its initial concentration on chalkware, Christmas ornaments and Santa's.

The store's "34th annual Starlight Santa" is now in pre-order but Vaillancourt also produces a Valentine's Santa, a Nantucket Santa and a Spring Santa—for example.

"Our Nantucket Santa is our most successful and selling worldwide," Gary Vaillancourt said.

"We do all the major holidays now," he said.

A holiday-themed "outside market" the Vaillancourt family has instituted with the blessing of Mark and Deb Dunleavy is just one of the latest bright ideas to perpetuate Vaillancourt Folk Art's incredible run.

There is now, too, a Vaillancourt wine, "a fabulous Cabernet" according to Luke Vaillancourt. It is crafted by a vineyard in California. And a German "Gluehwein," a hot spiced "glow wine" that has been received "exceptionally well," Gary Vaillancourt says.

Vaillancourt Folk Art has been featured on Chronicle "three times in the last ten years."

Taking the operation outside and by offering "the best European Christmas" has added a new dimension to the Vaillancourt experience.

Working closely with nearby District V and the Sutton Historical Society, Vaillancourt will host "The Manchaug Stroll" on December 9th, with walking tours.

The goal now, Gary Vaillancourt said, is "to create a Hallmark movie set."

That would come as no surprise at all, given what Vaillancourt Folk Art has already accomplished.

Asymmetric Training and Assessment Group LLC—ATAG—has had a presence in the mill since about 2013, Ron Tetreau said. ATAG specializes in training for tactical law enforcement personnel and civilians,

providing "the latest tactical techniques and procedures "using your facility, saving your agency logistical costs while offering your personnel the best course of instruction possible."

ATAG has worked with the Woonsocket Police Department's Special Rescue Team (SRT) and "our own U.S. Special Operations Forces."

"I have known Mark Dunleavy all my life," Mr. Tetreau said. "We were police officers together. The mill is great. Even during Covid when getting classroom space was difficult Mark and Deb allowed us to use hall space on the second floor."

Accommodation to their tenants' needs is key to the Dunleavy's management philosophy, which accounts for the repeated praise they receive from occupants of the building.

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

## BREAD GUY

*continued from page 1*

hand-in-hand with the mantra he has adopted for his venture: "great bread equals great happiness." The expression is posted in the window

School's GAIN, or Grafton Achieving Independence Now, program. The idea, which was presented to him by Superintendent of Schools Jay Cummings and Special Education Assistant Director Nicole McDonald, was to find a business and



**A baguette from the Bread Guy store, fresh out of the oven.**

at the front of the store.

"I was a music teacher and I conduct the Grafton Community Chorus," he said.

The Bread Guy occupies a spot, in a small plaza on Worcester Street. Mr. Brown's business has been in the location for only seven weeks or so but is already receiving rave reviews from customers (a cranberry walnut baguette with Craisins attracted my attention, and cost just five dollars).

"I did this out of my house for two years," Mr. Brown said, while also conversing with a group of patrons who had just come in the door. "I started making bread for friends and was doing 300 to 400 loaves a week, using two small residential ovens."

Now he is doing sixty to seventy loaves a day, and one hundred or more on weekends.

The Bread Guy's story is not limited to the commodity he makes. It is also related to the partnership he has forged with the Grafton Public

help special-needs kids," he said.

With Mr. Brown's own background in special education and as a former teacher and principal, the proposal clicked in his mind; especially coming out of COVID, when he was looking for a new start. He now employs several post-graduate students, age 18 to 22.

His wife Patty Brown, who is director of human resources for the Marlborough Public Schools, and his daughter Cassie, who is 16, help out in the store.

Moving the operation out of his home and into a retail space was a bit scary, Mr. Brown said, but the school system helped facilitate that transition and everything is going smoothly so far.

Mr. Brown is well known around the area for his bread, and will be making an appearance at farmers' markets in Westborough and Grafton this summer.

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# Xpressly Yours ... a letter from the editor

## Northbridge salutes Harry Berkowitz for dedicated service to the town



BY ROD LEE

**B**y his reckoning, Harry Berkowitz first got involved in town politics in Northbridge in 1972, when he served on a study committee for Lasell Field—prior to the complex being turned over to the School Department.

So even though the plaque Mr. Berkowitz received recently from the Northbridge Board of Selectmen in appreciation of his more than thirty years of service to the

community was entirely fitting, he has actually been active in municipal matters for a much longer period of time.

He still is, in fact. Yes, he has shed some of the roles and responsibilities he previously shouldered. But he remains a member of the Cable Advisory Committee and president of NCTV. He remains a stalwart supporter of Town Meeting and a dedicated voter. He also hosts several local-access television shows and a radio show on WCRN 830 AM. He has forged strong connections with the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Northbridge Senior Center.

Many residents of Northbridge will undoubtedly associate Mr. Berkowitz's name with the Planning Board, for good reason. As a former member and former chair of the Planning Board, he has consistently advocated for development and growth in the interest of making Northbridge a more desirable place to live and work.

"I want people to know we are not anti-business. I have always been pro-business for Northbridge," he said during a conversation in the living room of his home on Benson Road on April 25th.

During his lengthy stint as a community warrior, he has served in a number of capacities. None of



Harry Berkowitz was recently presented with a plaque by Northbridge Selectmen Chair Russ Collins, congratulating him for more than thirty years of service to the town.

these are dearer to his heart than Planning Board and NCTV.

With the Planning Board he has led the applause for creation of a new police station and a new Walmart, redevelopment of the Linwood Mill and the Whitinsville Plaza, and construction of a new fire station—which is now underway. He has championed such projects as the Stone Hill Condominiums on Church Street for 55-and-over adults and is eager to see "retail and condos" come to land opposite the sewer beds on Providence Road.

With NCTV, working in concert with Director Bill Tartaglia and his team, he has overseen the steady

expansion of the station's programming lineup—one of the most diverse around.

NCTV owes much to Mr. Berkowitz's influence during its transition from a small storefront on Church St. to Providence Road and eventually to more suitable quarters at the American Legion Post in Rockdale; and to establishing itself as a nonprofit, independent of the Board of Selectmen and the town.

"It has been easy for me to be involved because I love it," he says. "It keeps me young."

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# When can you choose retirement?



Mark Freeman

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Many people of retirement age have achieved this type of control. In fact, two-thirds of workers ages 65 and older say they work primarily because

they want to, not because they have to, according to a 2021 study by Edward Jones and Age Wave. But that means that one-third of workers in this age group feel financially compelled to work. This doesn't necessarily mean they dislike the work they do — but it's probably fair to say they would have liked the option of not working. How can you give yourself this choice?

You can start by asking yourself these questions:

• **When do I want to retire?**

You'll want to identify the age at which you wish to retire. You may change your mind later and move this date up or back, but it's a good idea to have a target in mind.

• **What sort of retirement lifestyle do I want?**

When you retire, do you anticipate staying close to home

and pursuing your hobbies, or do you hope to travel the world? Would you like to spend your time volunteering? Open your own business or do some consulting? Clearly, some of these choices will require more resources than others, so you'll want to follow a financial strategy that aligns with the retirement lifestyle you intend to pursue.

• **Am I saving and investing enough?**

As you chart your course toward your retirement journey, you'll want to assess the sources of income you'll have available. If you think you may be falling short of achieving your retirement goals, you may need to consider saving more.

• **When should I start taking Social Security?**

You can begin collecting Social Security benefits as early as 62, but your monthly payments will be much bigger if you wait until your "full" retirement age, which will likely be between 66 and 67. Your decision about when to take Social Security will depend on several factors, including your other sources of income and your family history of longevity. Of course, as you're probably aware, the Social Security system is facing significant financial stress, so it's possible that we may see changes to Social Security, based on actions Congress could take. In any case, you might want to be fairly conservative in estimating how much Social Security can contribute to your retirement income.

By addressing the above questions, you can get a clearer

sense of when you might reach the point at which work is optional. But you'll also need to consider other factors, too, such as how much you enjoy working or when your spouse or partner is planning to retire. In any case, the sooner you start planning for this next phase of your life, the better position you'll be in when it's time to make the transition.

If you would like to discuss your personal situation with a financial advisor contact:

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# BVCC-WSN's Ladies on the Lake returns

The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's Women's Success Network announces the return of Ladies on the Lake on June 22nd, with a rain date of June 29th, aboard the beautiful Indian Princess docked at Indian Ranch in Webster.

This tranquil networking event will begin at 6:00 p.m. and go until 8:00 p.m. with boarding to begin at 5:45pm. Pre-registration is required, and is open to Members and Future Members of the Chamber.

This highly anticipated event features a fabulous evening of networking, quintessential hors d'oeuvres, libations and spectacular views. Docked at Indian Ranch, the Indian Princess is a modern day replica of the river boats once seen cruising the Mississippi River. She is one of the few authentic riverboats left in the United States today, using her stern wheels as her only means of propulsion. Cruise with your crew for a unique voyage not to forget!



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Register online at [www.blackstonevalley.org/events](http://www.blackstonevalley.org/events). Members \$40, Future Members \$50. Please RSVP by June 15, 2023. For more information, please contact Liz O'Neil at 508.234.9090 ext. 102 or email Liz at [loneil@blackstonevalley.org](mailto:loneil@blackstonevalley.org).

the community can learn about the myriad ways cannabis can be used to enhance people's lives. Discern'd's highly trained staff will take the time to listen to customers' wants, needs and objectives to provide an assortment of product selections that can optimize their lifestyle.

"I enjoy discussing cannabis with my fellow Chamber members because there's much intrigue around the industry, and those conversations with business professionals help to further break down stigmas associated with the industry," Allan Villatoro, MBA, chief executive officer of Discern'd, said. "I look forward to welcoming Blackstone Valley Chamber members and the public into our store where we strive to continue those conversations with our certified cannabis professionals."

**THE CHAMBER CELEBRATED A RIBBON-CUTTING CEREMONY ON MAY 18TH FOR THE NEW DISCERN'D CANNABIS PURVEYORS AT 130 WORCESTER STREET IN NORTH GRAFTON.**

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# Community Quilt Art Project on display at Grafton Public Library

“Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life” - Pablo Picasso

Many people around the world create art as a means to create peace and happiness and to also deal with stress and trauma. In May of 2021, staff and library patrons expressed their thoughts and emotions in either vertical or horizontal line format on an eight-inch square canvas. Four curated collective art quilts are the results of each beautiful piece.

For a preview, please visit [https://youtu.be/n\\_-xaAw-GuT8](https://youtu.be/n_-xaAw-GuT8). Stop in at the Grafton Public Library at 35 Grafton Common, during operating hours to view the quilts on display—one in the lower level lobby and three on the upper level near the public access computers.

For details, please contact Library Director Beth Schreiber at 508-839-4649 x1836 or by email at [gallowayb@graftonlibrary.org](mailto:gallowayb@graftonlibrary.org).

During the week of May 8-13, Grafton Public Library circulated

2,300 items, received 469 items in transit and sent 521 items. GPL requested 473 items and filled 414 hold requests; registered 17 pa-

The most popular book of the week was “Lessons in Chemistry” by Bonnie Garmus. The GPL hosted 32 meetings in the conference and tutoring rooms for 134 people including the Grafton Democratic Town Committee, Grafton Soccer Board of Directors, Small Stones planning, Girl Scouts Troop 65197, Girl Scouts’ Grafton Lakes Service Unit as well as private-work, study, home school and tutoring sessions.

Recently the GPL hosted its annual Community Read Book Discussion, with “Love & Saffron” by Kim Ray discussed, according to Heidi Fowler. Ms. Fowler dressed as Immy, from the part of the book where she so bravely travels to surprise Joan with an in-person visit. She wears a “shirtwaist dress” she’d carefully chosen. Casual, but not too casual, with a flared skirt because the popular pencil skirts “do nothing for my stout legs—so that was the look I was going for.”



Heidi Fowler, dressed for the Grafton Public Library’s annual Community Read Book Discussion.

trons for library cards, and added 65 new items.



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- Trish Hampton (Dog-collars & bow ties)
- Unibank
- Woodshop at The 933

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- Blue Zone Integrated Fitness
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- Face Painting (FREE)
- Family Karate Center
- Massachusetts Army National Guard
- Massachusetts State Police Museum & Learning Center
- Music Man Dj'ing
- Northbridge Girl Scouts Troop
- Northbridge Youth Lacrosse
- The Crafty Nest DIY
- Whitin Community Center

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# Harbro Auto Sales celebrating 50 years in business

BY ROD LEE

Mike Hare, who is a principal in Harbro Auto Sales, believes that family and faith are why the dealership has survived and flourished for fifty years now.

Harbro, with locations in Whitinsville and Webster, is operating in typical low-key fashion as the business celebrates its golden anniversary. But this does not mean the

milestone is going unrecognized. For brothers Mike and Mark Hare, there is enormous satisfaction in carrying on a venture started in 1973 by their father Tim and Tim's brother Dave (recently deceased).

They take pride too in knowing that younger members of the family are now part of Harbro, which is highly respected in the Blackstone Valley and South County.

Mike Hare credits this to his



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elders' insistence on honesty and integrity. "We want people to have the right moral compass," he says. "I attribute that to my dad and my Uncle Dave; and my grandfather raised them that way."

Mike is three and a half years older than Mark. Both were introduced to the business at a young age. "As soon as I could hold a screwdriver my dad had

me working in the bicycle shop, on pedals and reflectors and then I graduated to helping build bikes, then washing cars, emptying trash. I couldn't reach the roof of the cars, I wasn't tall enough. I literally grew up in the store. I think it was more of a babysitting thing! The conversation, it was interesting for a kid to

be around that environment. I chose management, sales and finance. Day-to-day, Mark



**HARBRO**

*continued on page 9*

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# Corridor is rich in opportunities for volunteer involvement

There are many opportunities to volunteer in the Blackstone Valley River Valley National Heritage Corridor this year. If you would like to get involved with the Volunteers-in-parks program, reach out to Molly Cardoza, director of volunteer and community engagement at [mcardoza@BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org](mailto:mcardoza@BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org). On April 19th, during National Volunteer Week, Independent Sector announced that the hourly value of a volunteer increased from \$29.95 to \$31.80. Learn more at <https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>.

The (second) First Strike Festival is happening at Old Slater Mill National Historic Landmark at 67 Roosevelt Ave. in Pawtucket on Saturday, May 13th from 1:00 to 6:00 p.m. Nearly two hundred years ago, more than one hundred women weavers launched the first wage workers' strike in the U.S. To remember this important act of solidarity, the National Park Service will host a free festival each May at Old Slater Mill. Learn a new dance, participate in a community songwriting workshop, play an old-fashioned game, or enjoy live music.

The Kelly and Ashton Mill Junior Ranger Booklet is a self-guided adventure around the



National Park Service rangers are a backbone of all that happens in the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor; as are volunteers.

Blackstone River State Park. Aspiring Junior Rangers of all ages are encouraged to pick up a booklet and explore the history and natural beauty of this area. These Junior Ranger activities inspire creativity, reflection, imagination and stewardship. Booklets can be picked

up at the Kelly House Museum of Transportation, 1075 Lower River Road, Lincoln, Rhode Island, during operation hours. Booklets are also available at Old Slater Mill.

Ranger Walkabouts resume on Thursdays evenings at 6:30 p.m., June 1st through August 31st. Find all the details at <https://www.nps.gov/blrv/planyourvisit/calendar.htm>.

Join a National Park Ranger for a bike ride along the Blackstone River Bikeway on Wednesdays starting July 5 through September 27 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. Each week will feature a different theme. Learn more at <https://www.nps.gov/thingstodo/bike-the-blackstone.htm>.

Robert Wakeling has joined the BRV National Historical Park as a seasonal park ranger. Mr. Wakeling hails from Mansfield and has worked for the NPS at other park sites including the Adams National Historical Park.

For more on all of the activities and events happening in the Corridor, go to [www.BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org](http://www.BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org).

## HARBRO

*continued from page 8*

oversees inventory, mechanical prep, service, reconditioning. I still work most Saturdays. We work hand-in-hand on most management decisions and those areas blend a lot. We are



Harbro brothers Dave and Tim Hare

on the phone with each other at all hours of the day."

With so many loved ones including sons and daughters and nieces and nephews involved, "I think of it as almost a family farm," Mike says.

One aspect of plans to mark the 50th has been a renovation of the building on Providence Road in Whitinsville.

Best of all, "being a small business you can get home to see your family at night," Mike says.

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# Southwick's Zoo in the running in 'Quest for the Best' contest

Wednesday, May 31st will be the last chance to cast a vote for Southwick's Zoo in FM 101.3's "Quest for the Best" contest.

Southwick's is nominated in four categories including Best Family Attraction, Best Annual Event/Festival, Best Holiday Experience and Best Children's Birthday Party Venue.

The Savanna Grille is back at Southwick's Zoo. Visit Southwick's

Zoo on June 10th from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. for live music at the Savanna Grille from Shady Armadillo, with food concessions from the zoo's pop-up restaurant, and a cash bar.

There is a new arrival at Southwick's Zoo. Meet Enzi, the male Reticulated Giraffe. At just over fifteen months old, this beautiful animal joins the herd of female giraffes at the zoo.

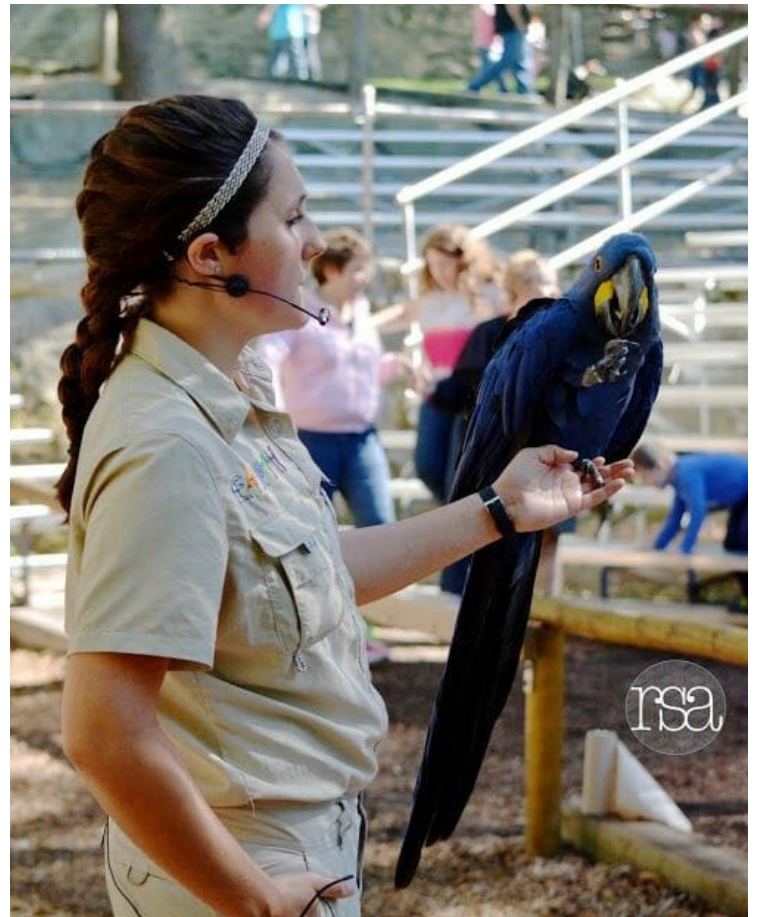
Beginning Memorial Day week-

end, Southwick's Zoo's Birds Taking Flight program will be offered daily at 11:30 a.m. and at 1:00 p.m. in the Show Arena.

Brand new at Southwick's Zoo this year is Elm Farm Creamery on site, with hard ice cream, milkshakes and frozen treats.

Drop by Galliford's Restaurant & Tavern for lunch or dinner. Call 508-0928 for reservations.

June events at Southwick's include Passionate About Primates



The Birds in Flight program starts Memorial Day weekend at Southwick's Zoo in Mendon.



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on the 11th, Father's Day Weekend on the 17th, and Zoo Neighbors Day on the 26th.

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Go to [www.southwickzoo.com](http://www.southwickzoo.com) for more details.

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# Grafton Farmers Market is back — and on the Common again

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

**H**ave you heard that old adage proclaiming that the early bird catches the worm? It's generally true.



A vendor booth at a previous Grafton Farmers Market (submitted photo)

Although it's not good for the worms, it's certainly advantageous for the birds and their families.

Knowing about a popular event in advance and arriving early can give you the opportunity to get a good seat, to get a parking space, and to browse and purchase from a greater selection of items if there will be vendors there. Being early can also sometimes come with rewards such as discounts. Thankfully, in Grafton, there are several businesses and organizations that are giving people the chance to reap all the rewards of being early birds.

Beginning Wednesday, June 14, people can come together to appreciate the joys of nature and community while supporting small businesses. The **Grafton Farmers Market**, which will be held every Wednesday from 2 p.m. until 6 p.m. will return for the season on that day. And this year, it's returning to its original location on the Grafton Com-

mon. With a variety of vendors (which vary each week), the volunteer-run market works hard to achieve its goal of providing "fresh, local food directly from farmers to consumers." Its ven-

dors offer an array of local produce, baked goods, jams, syrups, candy, natural skincare items, handcrafted gifts and more.

**Grafton Recreation** recently announced that it will be holding two free fun family events. On Saturday, June 24 from 10 a.m. until noon – with 10 to 10:30 being sensory friendly – at Millbury Street School, kids can explore a variety of big rigs during **Big Truck Day**. Prior to that event, on Thursday June 22, families are invited to bring lawn chairs or blankets to gather at the Grafton Common under the stars to watch "DC League of Super Pets." The free film, presented by **Quite Fetching Barkery & Pet Boutique**, starts at dusk. Beginning at 6:30, people can participate in activities and visit vendors including **Bay Path Humane Society of Hopkinton**, **Safe with Us** animal rescue, **Veterinary Emergency Group**, **Waggy Tails Dog Grooming** and **Worcester Animal Rescue League**.

Another much anticipated event is happening in town Saturday, June 17. Starting at 9 in the morning and going until 3 p.m. is the **54<sup>th</sup> Annual Antiques and Arts Fair**, which will be held on the Grafton Common. Admission is \$5.00. A fundraiser for the **Grafton Historical Society**, the fair will feature food, antiques and collectibles vendors. There will also be music and antique appraisals.

For parents of kids who enjoy dancing, **Dance It Up** is one business that has early registration summer camp offerings for kids of all ages. For kids ages 3-6, it has **Pink Princess & Magical Fai-**

**rytale Camp**. For those ages 4-9, there will be **Dancing Dolls Camp** (for kids and their dolls). Kids ages 7-11 can also participate in the studio's **Musical Theatre Broadway camp**. The registration fee for each of these camps is \$25 less if you register by May 28. Cost, registration information and availability can be found on the dance studio's website, [www.danceitup.com](http://www.danceitup.com).

Before their fall classes begin, **Murphy Academy of Irish Dance** is offering a chance for kids ages 3-8 to try Irish dance, this August, at their **Try It Out Camp**. The dance school, which just celebrated its 6<sup>th</sup> anniver-

sary, has pricing and registration information on its website, [www.murphyacademy.com/summer](http://www.murphyacademy.com/summer).

We're grateful for the opportunities that Grafton organizations and businesses offer local families and individuals. And on this Memorial Day weekend and always, we're especially grateful for the freedom that so many of our brave military members gave their lives to protect.

Contact Christine with your business news items at [cmgaleone15@gmail.com](mailto:cmgaleone15@gmail.com).

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# BVT announces second trimester Commendation List

**B**lackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) has released the Superintendent-Director's Commendation List for the second trimester of the 2022-2023 school year. To be named to the Commendation List, students must meet rigorous standards, such as maintaining a grade point average of 88 percent or above in each technical, related, and academic course for the trimester. To view the complete list, visit [www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/2tcommendationlist](http://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/2tcommendationlist).

The following students, grouped by grade level and hometown, were named to the second trimester Commendation List:

## SENIORS (CLASS OF 2023)

**DOUGLAS** Brett Staples, Electronics & Engineering Technology; and Julia White,

Cosmetology.

**GRAFTON** Juliana Errara, Health Services; Noah Mariano, Engineering & Robotics; and Henry Warfield, Electronics & Engineering Technology.

**NORTHBRIDGE** Sam Grilli, Drafting & Design; Maya Laydon, Construction Technology; Noah Malkasian, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Gradie Sanford, Drafting & Design; and Emily Wildfeuer, Drafting & Design.

Sutton Benjamin Judson, Automotive Collision Repair & Refinishing; Samuel Judson, Drafting & Design Technology; Haley Kirouac, Engineering & Robotics; Ryann Lombardi, Health Services; Colin Medeiros, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Olivia Oikle, Health Services, and Evan Thebearge Electronics & Engineering Technology.

**UXBRIDGE** Mackenzie Barnicle, Culinary Arts; Isabel Cahill, Multimedia Communica-

tions; Isabella Gannon, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Maxwell Guyton, Engineering & Robotics; and Sunny Moscatelli, Cosmetology.

## JUNIORS (CLASS OF 2024)

**DOUGLAS** Laney Beahn, Engineering; Mary Chrul, Health Services; Jack Dooner, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Baron Sherry, Engineering; Tyler Stevens, Information Technology; and Sorcha Twohig-Mann, Health Services.

**GRAFTON** Caitlin Brown, Dental Assisting; Danica Fiore, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Alison Graves, Construction Technology; Carlie Jensen, Painting & Design Technology; Soumith Madadi, Information Technology; Grant Purcell, Engineering & Robotics; Nicholas Valoras, Engineering & Robotics; and John Wingate, Engineering & Robotics.

**MILLBURY** Jacob Decatur, Information

Technology; Ava Lawton, Engineering & Robotics; Braelyn Piscitelli, Cosmetology; James Richert, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Isabella Rose, Health Services; and Emma Shum, Dental Assisting.

**NORTHBRIDGE** Giovanni Biagioni, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Logan Feehan, Painting & Design Technology; Yaliz Jimenez, Health Services; Catherine Kingsbury, Culinary Arts; Izamar Laboy Villegas, Information Technology; Lily Marshall, Dental Assisting; Ella Rogozenski, Engineering & Robotics; and Jonathon Spiller, Painting & Design Technology.

**SUTTON** Christopher Gubbins, Construction Technology; Julianna Hawley, Multimedia Communications; Peyton Nolan, Multimedia Communications; and Alexandra Nunnemacher, Painting & Design Technology.

**UXBRIDGE** Yara Alomar, Health Services; Savannah Brodeur, Cosmetology; Noah Cahill, Engineering & Robotics; Victoria Cieply, Dental Assisting; Avery Herrick, Multimedia Communications; Trevor Horgan, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Sean Knox, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Grace Mathieu, Engineering & Robotics; Marissa Osimo, Health Services; and Samuel Waugh, Electrical.

## SOPHOMORES (CLASS OF 2025)

**DOUGLAS** Dale Boudreau, Electrical; Haley Chamberlain, Cosmetology; Kaylie Ciccone, Health Services; Justin Dooner, Engineering & Robotics; Emily Muniz, Engineering & Robotics; Om Patel, Engineering & Robotics; Samantha Pinto, Health Services; Jaden Roddick, Multimedia Communications; Addison Taylor, Health Services; and Willow Windoloski, Electronics & Engineering Technology.

**GRAFTON** Audrey Bell, Engineering & Robotics; Steven Caya, Engineering & Robotics; Zoey Dauderis, Health Services; Raghav Dave, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Rowan Hackett, Multimedia Communications; Nora Iadarola, Multimedia Communications; Christopher Joiner, Biotechnology; Keyara Jones, Health Services; Ella McCann, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Brodie Remillard, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Carly Simpson, Health Services; Daniel Warfield, Electronics; and Robert Wells, Electrical.

**MILLBURY** Mason Diosomito, Engineering & Robotics; Ethan Ikeda, Construction Technology; Gianna Konisky, Engineering & Robotics; Maya Lorian, Health Services; Maeghan Plourde, Health Services; and Jayden Quang, Engineering & Robotics.

**NORTHBRIDGE** Ava Bates, Cosmetology; Kayla Chausse, Cosmetology; Perry Derkosrofan, Construction Technology; Sosie Derkosrofan, Health Services; Zabel Derkosrofan, Information Technology; Abigail Dineen, Dental Assisting; Faith Ellis, Multimedia Communications; Conner Gomez, Engineering & Robotics; Mara Keane, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Dylan Leeds, Engineering & Robotics; Haley Marston, Dental Assisting; Markas Petone, Health Services; Sean Russo, Information Technology; Delaney Sanford, Culinary Arts; Eva Schairer, Health Services; Scarlet Sergel, Dental Assisting; and Alexa Seward, Engineering & Robotics.

**SUTTON** Emma Cliadakis, Culinary Arts; Tyler Houlihan, Health Services; and Caroline Martin, Engineering & Robotics.

**UXBRIDGE** Alexi Cox, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Samantha Fairhurst, Health Services; Samuel Kirby, Electrical; Mikaela Swanson, Biotechnology; and Stephanie Zaitoun, Engineering & Robotics.

## FRESHMEN (CLASS OF 2026)


**DOUGLAS** Francesca Aquilino, Cosmetology; Maddison Dos Santos, HVAC&R; Leopaul Gamelin, HVAC&R; Caitlin Kelly, Health Services; Zachary Mitchell, HVAC&R; and Sophie Rivard, Engineering & Robotics.

**GRAFTON** Logan Black, Electrical; Kevin Magill, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Luke O'Rourke, Electronics & Engineering Technology; and Delaney Waldo, Biotechnology.

**MILLBURY** Allison Garden, Engineering & Robotics; Lily Kelley, Multimedia Communications; Giana Piscitelli, Cosmetology; Isabella Raymond, Health Services; and Julie Wenson, Health Services.

**NORTHBRIDGE** Isabelle Balon, Biotechnology; Autumn Gromelski, Culinary Arts; Aidan Naughton, Information Technology; Emersen Polymeros, Construction Technology; Jacob Poole, Information Technology; Allegra Sadik, Health Services; Logan Tetreault, Information Technology; and Adalynn Wooster, Cosmetology.

**UXBRIDGE** Breanna Donahue, Electrical; Gabrielle Gannon, Engineering & Robotics; Brooke Gniadek, Cosmetology; Veronica Jordan, Health Services; Isabella McLaughlin, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Daniel Noel, Engineering; Abigail Thompson, Painting & Design Technology; and Parker Waugh, Electronics.




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ralphdeady@gmail.com

# Sen. Moore: \$18.3 million coming in grants for Respite Initiatives

The Healey-Driscoll Administration has awarded \$18.3M to organizations and communities across Massachusetts to create or enhance services that provide short-term relief to family members or primary caregivers of individuals with complex needs. Seven Hills Fam-

ily Services, an organization offering services in Worcester and through Massachusetts, has been selected to receive a \$520,273 grant to support their programs.

The 42 awardees demonstrated innovative strategies to deliver person-centered respite care in new or enhanced ways. The fund-

ed proposals will support caregivers with reprieve as they care for individuals with chronic or other health conditions, disabilities, or functional limitations.

Funding may also support addressing workforce needs of home- and community-based service providers and ensuring improved access to services that are sensitive to diversity and inclusivity. Award amounts range from \$40,000 to \$1.2 million.

"Individuals with disabilities and chronic health conditions can sometimes have complex needs that require round-the-clock attentive care," said Senator Michael Moore (D-Millbury). "Seven Hills Family Services offers critical respite programs for individuals throughout the Commonwealth, allowing caregivers the opportunity to rest and recharge. I'm happy to hear that the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the Executive Office of Health and Human Services have allocated funds to support these vital services."

"So many people in our state act as primary caregivers for others every single day," said Secretary of Health and Human Services Kate Walsh. "It is im-

portant to provide these caregivers with the opportunity to rest, while still ensuring continuity and high-level quality of care that is both culturally and linguistically appropriate to those who rely on them."

Grant funding comes from Medicaid Home and Community Based Services under the American Rescue Plan Act. In 2021, Massachusetts created a plan to use the federal funding for enhancing, expanding, and strengthening home- and community-based services as well as behavioral health services.

#### RECIPIENTS INCLUDE:

AgeSpan, Inc.  
South Shore Support Serv Inc.  
Mystic Valley Elder Services, Inc.  
Lynn ADHC, LLC  
Opportunities for Inclusion  
The Arc of Bristol County  
Federation for Children with Special Needs  
Senior Care Inc  
Home for Little Wanderers, Inc.  
Southwest Boston Senior SRVS  
LUK Crisis Center, Inc.  
Metrocare, LLC  
Advocates Inc.  
Boss Lady Sister LLC

People Incorporated  
Childrens Hospital Corporation  
Tri-Valley Inc.  
Cooley Dickinson Hospital, Inc.  
Town of Dennis  
Archangels  
Grow Associates Inc.  
Town of Burlington  
Mental Health Association  
Bay Cove Human Services Inc.  
Alzheimer's Family Caregiver Support  
Lifepath, Inc.  
Martha's Vineyard Center for Living  
Charles River Association For  
The Arc of Greater Plymouth  
City of New Bedford  
Town of Bourne  
Toward Independent Living & Learning  
Seven Hills Family Services Inc.  
Northeast Arc, Inc.  
Premier Home Healthcare of MA  
WestMass Eldercare Inc.  
Incompass Human Services  
Emissary Health, Inc.  
Riverside Community Care Inc.  
Magnifique Health  
East Point ADHC LLC  
House of Possibilities Inc.

## At the SSE: Women and children on the time clock

Women and children have always worked. But throughout much of history, their jobs were often domestic – around the home, the farm, or the neighborhood.

The Industrial Revolution changed that. Women and children began to work outside the home, and sometimes even far from home.

They were cheap labor for America's expanding industries. The 1870 federal census showed 1 out of 8 children were employed, a number that would rise to 1 in 5 by 1900. And these were children as young as 10, sometimes even younger.

At the start of the 20th Century, the political winds began to change. Hiring children became less acceptable and companies like Hopedale's Draper Corporation rewrote their own history to hide their workers' past.

Join historian and Hopedale Women's History Project founder Linda Hixon to learn more about women and children in the working world and how their labor helped shape this country.

Ms. Hixon's presentation will be held on Saturday, June 10, from 11 a.m. to noon at the Samuel Slater Experience, 31 Ray Street, Webster. The event is free; registration is



Girls at work in the mill exhibit at Samuel Slater's Experience

requested at Eventbrite.com.

Women and Children on the Time Clock is sponsored in part by the Webster Cultural Council.

#### ABOUT SAMUEL SLATER EXPERIENCE

Samuel Slater Experience opened last year to tell the story of Samuel Slater, the beginnings of the American Industrial Revolution, and Slater's impact on mill towns such as Webster, Massachusetts. Described as "Disney-like," Samuel Slater Experience employs state-of-the-art 4-D digital technology with immersive video and interactive exhibits to recreate two time periods: the early 1800s and the early 1900s. For more information and tickets, visit [www.samuel Slater Experience.org](http://www.samuel Slater Experience.org).



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# Ribbon-cutting event set for The Pewter Pot

Join the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce on Friday, June 16 at 11:00 a.m. for a grand opening ribbon-cutting ceremony at The Pewter Pot, 670 Linwood Ave.

The Pewter Pot is a family owned store located in the former Linwood Mill Payroll building. The Pewter Pot is a good old fashioned Primitive Country Store selling Amish furniture, country and primitive décor, housewares,

gifts and hometown Americana. Browse their fantastically beautiful handcrafted Amish furniture from Pennsylvania Dutch country, crafts, handmade personal items such as candles, soap, home decor, natural dog treats, antiques and collectibles, seasonal items and so much more.

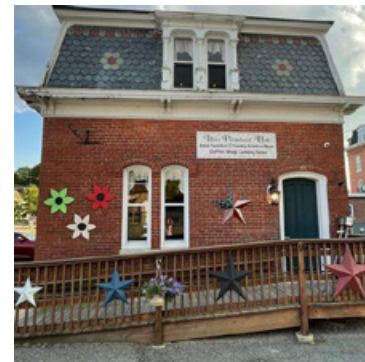
Jeannie Hebert, president and CEO of the Blackstone Valley Chamber, said, "The Chamber is delighted to welcome The Pewter

Pot to the Blackstone Valley with its rustic, old-fashioned country store. As soon as you walk into their store, your senses will flourish with the warm aromas of fresh wood, burning candles, and coffee, and you will feel at home with their wide variety of delightfully handcrafted Amish furniture. If you are looking for a gift for that special someone or simply would like to add a new addition to your home, The Pew-

ter Pot is absolutely the place to shop!"

This event is free and open to the public. We hope to see you there!

The Mission of the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce is to preserve and enhance the economic vitality of the Blackstone Valley by addressing the needs and concerns of businesses and providing leadership, support and resources in connection with is-



sues which impact commerce and the quality of life in the Valley.

# Northbridge Dull Men's Club up and running

Any doubts about whether formation of a Northbridge Dull Men's Club would be a success have quickly been dispelled.

The group, organized under the direction of Amy Cowen who is programs and volunteer coordinator at the Northbridge Senior Cen-

ter, has already had two meetings and chosen a charity to support: needy seniors in Northbridge.

The Northbridge Dull Men's Club has also been invited to the DMC Annual Picnic, which will take place on Tuesday, August 15th at the Northborough Senior Center, where members of the Northbridge DMC will get a chance to meet other clubs.

### BLOOD DRIVE IN MILLBURY

Staff at the Millbury Senior Center reminds residents that a Blood Drive for Boston Children's Hospital will be held on Friday, June 9th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at St. Brigid's Church, 59 North St.

Contact Susan Rogers at [srogers@millburyma.gov](mailto:srogers@millburyma.gov) to sign up.

Recently, Sheriff Lew Evangelidis visited the Millbury Senior Center for a Volunteer Luncheon and Denise Thompson was named Volunteer of the Year. Sheriff Lew's Annual Picnic will be held on June 10th at SAC Park in Shrewsbury.

### NEW KNITTING CLUB IN SUTTON

The Sutton Senior Center announces the start of a Knitting Club, named "Unravelled." Interested seniors are asked to bring their own projects, needles and



yarn. Learn new tips and tricks and Linda Carlson will demonstrate how to knit stuffed cats.

*There is always something brewing by way of activities at the Sutton Senior Center.*



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HEALTHY BAKING IN THE BLACKSTONE VALLEY

# Pineapple coconut squares offer a taste of summer

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

What comes to mind when you think about pineapples and coconuts? Many people immediately imagine a tropical paradise – a sunny haven of relaxation.

Although summer is still weeks away, there have been plenty of warm breezes, vibrant flowers and hammocks gracing backyards throughout the region. So, adding some pineapples and coconut to your late spring diet seems entirely appropriate.

One way to combine the summery staples is to use them in a dessert. Pineapple coconut squares require only a handful of ingredients, and they're healthier than many more common seasonal treats.

One of the primary reasons that these squares are healthier than warm weather indulgences such as popsicles, ice cream cones and s'mores is because there are no artificial ingredients, colors or preservatives, and there's no added sugar. Inflammation caused by eating too much sugar can make us more susceptible to most of the worst illnesses, diseases and conditions.

Another good reason to try this recipe is because of the health benefits of pineapples. The golden-hued fruit contains plenty of vitamin C, which amplifies the power of your immune system and might help fight heart disease, cancer and arthritis, and pineapples are rich in fiber, B vitamins and manganese. Additionally, it's believed to be the

only food that contains an enzyme called bromelain. Bromelain aids in skin and tissue repair, and it fights inflammation.

**PINEAPPLE COCONUT SQUARES**

**Square Crust Ingredients:**

- 2 Cups of Flour
- ¾ Cup of Butter (melted to the consistency of shortening)
- ½ tsp. Baking Powder
- ½ tsp. Salt (omit if using salted butter)
- ½ tsp. white vinegar
- 10 tbsp. cold water

**Directions:**

Combine flour, baking powder and salt in a large bowl.

Cut in butter until like peas.

Sprinkle vinegar over the mixture.

Sprinkle 1 tbsp. of water over part of mixture, toss with a fork, and move moistened dough to the side of the bowl. Repeat with the rest of the mixture, until it's all moistened.

Gather dough into two balls, and flatten each one (on a floured surface).

Roll each ball of dough into a 1/8 inch thick crust.

**Square Filling Ingredients:**

- 4 ½ Cups of Drained Crushed Pineapple in 100% pineapple juice (or two 20 oz. cans)
- 1 Cup of Unsweetened Shredded Coconut
- 1 tsp. Cinnamon
- 3 Tbsp. of Flour

**Directions:**

Pre-heat the oven to 400 degrees.

In a large bowl, combine all the filling ingredients.

Place the bottom crust on the bottom of a 9X13 rectangular baking dish.

Spoon the filling evenly onto the unbaked crust.

Cover the filling with the top un-

baked crust, and bake the squares for about 45 minutes. Makes about 16-20 squares.

Let cool a little and serve warm if desired. Enjoy!

We all need to visit sunny havens

of relaxation from time to time – whether they are tropical paradises, nearby parks or backyards. Of course, it's also helpful to have desserts that are like little slices of summer. Happy (healthier) baking!

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# Back at the one-and-only Carl's, in Oxford

BY ROD LEE

Some businesses don't change much, over the years, and shouldn't. They are familiar. Old favorites. Carl's on Main Street in Oxford

Center is just such a place.

From a parking spot in front of the diner on a recent Thursday morning, it didn't even look as if the lights were on inside.

Entry from the side, either side, is by way of a sliding door that has



The counter at Carl's in Oxford on a weekday morning, just before the breakfast rush began in earnest.

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stood the test of time.

There was only one person at the counter at 8:30 a.m. Soon, however, more people began trickling in.

The décor is the same as it has been for quite a while. The menu that is posted just below the ceiling is handwritten. The stools are black leather. One was missing a seat. A sunflower was sticking out of the post that would have held the seat. Signage is of a jocular nature. "Danger Men Working." "No Whining." A mannequin occupies spot in the middle of the floor.

Joey Patrock, who works for the Patrick automotive dealership, showed up at 8:45 for a prearranged breakfast. He had issued a forewarning via text message the evening before: "Don't judge me. I love bacon!"

The reply was, "Carl's is the right place for that."

Joey was told of a visit to Carl's with two brother-in-law's years ago, how impressed they were with the portions that they received.

"We don't get that back in New York State," they said.

The conversation quickly turned to fishing, a pastime that Joey enjoys.

"I feed the bass at the pond at my mom's house hot dogs," he said.

"They love them!"

"Really? Raw?"

"Yes."

"My mother said to me 'they're not getting Kayem anymore. They'll get Market Basket hot dogs!'"

After that it was the Celtics and how they had blown Game 5 against the Atlanta Hawks at TD Garden twelve hours or so earlier; agreement that Jason Tatum deserves some of the criticism that comes his way for occasional sloppy ball-handling and passing—even though he is a great offensive threat.

Joey ordered eggs, bacon, home fries and toast. With a chocolate milk. I ordered pancakes and bacon. With coffee. Carl's threw in home fries as an extra for me.

"This is breakfast, lunch and dinner," I joked, straining to finish what had been put in front of me on separate plates.

Goodbyes were exchanged.

"We'll do this again," we said.

A month, a year from now, Carl's will look and feel no different.

It's about the food.

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Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

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# Happenings!

**NOTE:** Community bulletin board-type items are welcome for inclusion in the Happenings! section of the Xpress newspapers. Please allow enough lead time for publication. Email your calendar or event notice to [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com).

## MAY 27 & 28

World War II armor roars to life at the American Heritage Museum's Tank Demonstration Weekend, 568 Main St., Hudson. Joining the M4 Sherman and the M24 Chaffee will be the M18 Hellcat, the M26 Pershing and the M5 Stuart with driving demonstrations, rides and the first public unveiling of the M36 Jackson Tank Destroyer. These remarkable vehicles will take center stage each day for the Parade of Armor from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Rides and drives on the Sherman, Chaffee and Jackson will be available. Bring a blanket



The American Heritage Museum in Hudson's Tank Demonstration Weekend takes place May 27 and 28. World War II veterans Bill Purple, Alfred Consigli and Russ Phipps will be on hand to offer remarks.

and sit on the hill or bring folding chairs and sit on the flat areas at the top and bottom of the hill to watch the action. The AHM's special World War II veteran guests will be joining the program's narrator to tell their stories. Included in the price of admission is access to all three buildings on the grounds including the aircraft hangar and antique car museum. Gates open at 9:00 a.m. and close at 5:00 p.m. Allow at least three to four hours for your visit.

## THROUGH MAY 31

Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main St., Webster, presents "The Sea of Art is Endless," a group show featuring Bartlett High School student artwork in various media including

digital, 3-D and prints of original work. Every new generation of art supplies the art world with a seemingly endless amount of creative ideas and new perspectives. Booklovers' Gourmet will be closed Saturday, May 27, Sunday, May 28 and Monday, May 29 for the Memorial Day weekend.

## SATURDAY, MAY 27

The Douglas Historical Society will present Two Quilts of Valor to servicemen from the Blackstone Valley at 2:30 p.m. at the E.N. Jenckes Store Museum on Main St.

## MAY 27-29

Discover how New England farmers used the wool from their sheep in the 1830s at Old Sturbridge Village's annual Wool Days. Farmers will give their sheep their annual "haircut" while costumed historians demonstrate the entire wool textile process, from scouring and carding the wool to dyeing, spinning and then knitting the dyed yarn.

## SUNDAY, MAY 28

The Town of Blackstone's Memorial Day Celebration will step off from the Common at 1:00 p.m. and proceed down Main St. to St. Paul St. and conclude with a ceremony in front of the Municipal Center. Festivities

will include musical entertainment, a fire truck golf ball drop and fireworks at 9:30 p.m. This year there will also be remembrances at the Civil War Monument at the intersection of Canal and Bridge streets on Saturday, May 27th at 1:00 p.m.

## MONDAY, MAY 29 (MEMORIAL DAY)

The Town of Uxbridge's annual Memorial Day Parade will start at 9:00 a.m. at the Whitin Elementary School on Granite St. and proceed from there to Wesgan Square and then onto Veterans Memorial Gym at

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- FACE 2 FACE: TRIBUTE TO ELTON JOHN & BILLY JOEL ..... AUGUST 18 • 7PM
- THE PIKE HAIRFEST ..... AUGUST 19 • 12PM
- GEORGE THOROGOOD & THE DESTROYERS ..... SEPTEMBER 2 • 1PM
- RILEY GREEN ..... SEPTEMBER 4 • 1PM
- THE PIKE ROKFEST ..... SEPTEMBER 9 • 12PM
- NASH ICON LOCAL COUNTRYFEST ..... SEPTEMBER 24 • 12PM

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## HAPPENINGS!

continued on page 18

**HAPPENINGS!**

*continued from page 17*

the McCloskey Building and the Revolutionary Monument at Prospect Hill. Ceremonies will include a WWI Cannon Rededication on the Common, a performance of works by the 215th Army National Guard Marching Band, and an appearance by vehicles from the 182nd.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 2**

• The new Dull Men's Club at Plummer Place (the Northbridge Senior Center), 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, meets from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Coffee and donuts. Contact Amy Cowen to sign up.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 3**

• St. Peter's Parish, 39 Church Ave., Northbridge, is hosting a Yard Sale and Vendor Fair from 7:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Rain date is Saturday, June 10th. Volunteers will be available to pick up donated items. Vendors are welcome. Vendor tables may be secured for \$40. Call 508-234-2156 or email parishoffice@stpeterrockdale.org for more information.

• Valley Chapel in Uxbridge will host the Iron Sharpens Iron National Men's Conference from 8:30 a.m. to 12:55 p.m. This is a half-day Equipping Conference with seminars specific to men of all ages and walks of life. For more information or to register go to <https://ironsharpensiron.net/>.  
• "A History of Howard Johnson's: How a Massachusetts Soda Fountain Became an American Icon," with historian, author and current professor of history at Boston University Anthony Sammarco as presenter, will be held at Plummer Place (the Northbridge Senior Center) from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

A Q&A will follow. Light refreshments will be served. Sign up in the main office.  
• New England mystery author Debi Graham-Leard returns to Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main St., Webster from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. to chat about her most recently published novel, "The Life She Left Behind." Ms. Graham-Leard will also discuss the fifth book in the Gwen Andrews Series, "Regrets Only," due out this summer. Call 508-949-6232 or visit [debigrahamleard.com](http://debigrahamleard.com) for more information.

• The Village Congregational Church, 5 Church St., Whitinsville, will present a special musical event in the form of a joint handbell concert at 7:00 p.m.. This "Twice as Nice" performance will feature the Shoreline Ringers from southeastern Connecticut, an ensemble that has played throughout New England, and the Merrimack Valley Ringers. Now in their 21st season, the Merrimack Valley Ringers delight in sharing the art of handbells and handchimes with their audience—and thrilled to be reuniting with the Shoreline Ringers as they did in the recent past for a show in Putnam, Connecticut.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 4**

• A Welcome Summer Family Breakfast will be held at St. Denis Church, 23 Manchaug Road, Douglas, from 8:00 a.m. to noon; \$8 for adults, \$4 for children age 6-12. Featuring pancakes, scrambled eggs, home fries, sausages, coffee, tea and juice. Also summer raffles and more. Purchase tickets in advance at [SaintDenisChurch.com](http://SaintDenisChurch.com) or at the door.  
• The Sutton Preservationist 4H Club will host its second annual Coffee with Cows event on the Sutton Town Common. Last year the club reached out to other nonprofit organizations including the Lions Club, the

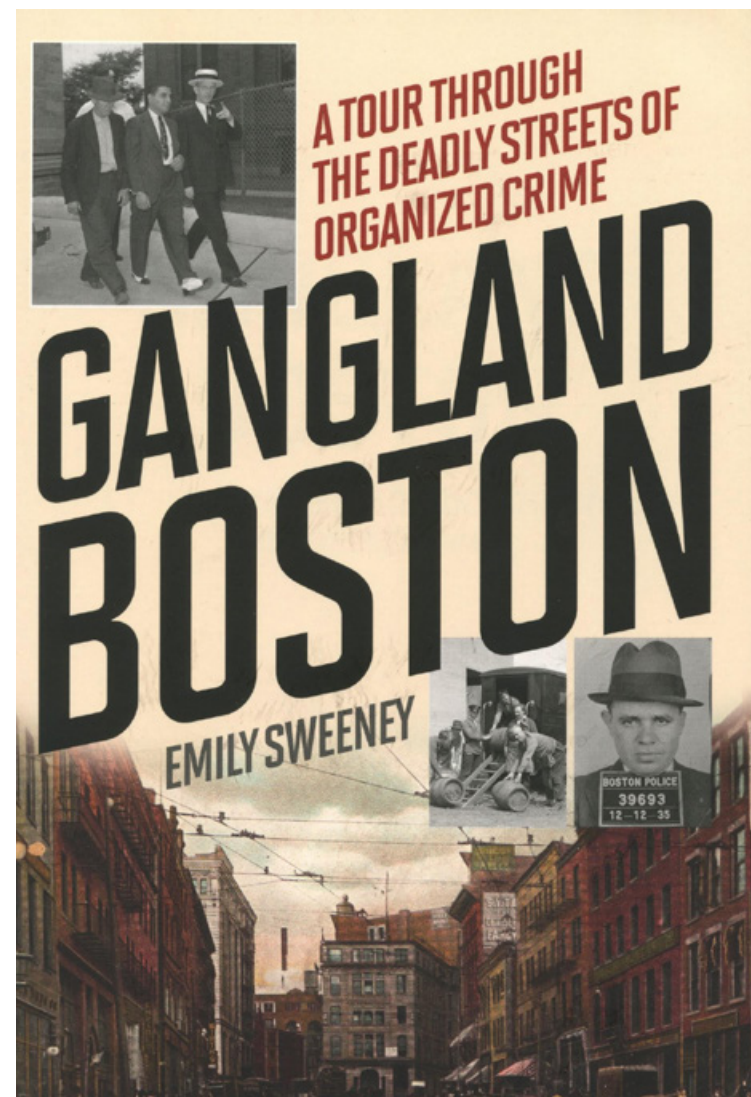
Green Bean Project, the Congregational Church, the Historical Society and the Cultural Council to join in staging this event.

**TUESDAY, JUNE 6**

• Join the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's Food, Beverage and Hospitality Network for a Business After Hours networking event hosted by Rushford & Sons Brewhouse, 8 Grove St., Upton, 5:30-7:30 p.m. [www.blackstonevalley.org/events](http://www.blackstonevalley.org/events).  
• Democrats in the town of Webster will convene in person at 6:00 p.m. at the Gladys E. Kelly Public Library, 2 Lake St., to elect seven delegates and four alternates to the 2023 Democratic Convention. The meeting will be held in the Local History Room on the second floor. Registered and pre-registered Democrats in Webster who will be 16 years old by May 23, 2023 may vote and be elected as delegates or alternates during the caucus. Youth (age 16 to 35), people with disabilities, people of color and members of the LGBTQ+ community not elected as delegates or alternates are encouraged to apply to be add-on delegates at the caucus or by visiting [massdems.org/convention](http://massdems.org/convention). The 2023 Convention will be held Saturday, September 23 at the Tsongas Center in Lowell, where delegates will assemble to adopt a party agenda and/or platform. For more information about the caucus and to get involved with the Webster Democratic Town Committee, contact or text Tom Klebart at 860-614-6135 or email [tomkleb@sbcglobel.net](mailto:tomkleb@sbcglobel.net).

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7**

• Come experience the refined folk music for modern times with Mark Mandeville and Rainne Richards at Plummer Place (the Northbridge Senior Center), 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Sign up



Emily Sweeney will share thoughts on her "Gangland Boston" works at a meeting of the Millbury Historical Society at the Asa Waters Mansion in Millbury on June 8th.

at the main office.

of the books afterwards. This is a free event. Light refreshments will be available.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 8**

• The Annual Meeting of the Millbury Historical Society will be held at 7:00 p.m. at the Asa Waters Mansion, 123 Elm St., Millbury. Boston Globe Reporter Emily Sweeney will share the inside scoop on her books "Boston Organized Crime" and "Gangland Boston," and will sign purchased copies

**FRIDAY, JUNE 9**

• The Sutton Historical Society will host a Brown Bag Picnic Reunion on the Sutton Town Common in commemoration of the

**HAPPENINGS!**

*continued on page 19*

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**HAPPENINGS!**

*continued from page 18*

200th anniversary of the construction of the General Rufus Putnam Museum building at 4 Uxbridge Road. This Picnic Reunion is for anyone who attended school in the building during its time as both an elementary and a high school. For more information or to share memories about the many uses to which the building has been put, including as a Masonic Hall, a DAR facility, a public school and a library, email Sutton1704@gmail.com.

• The Millbury Women's Club will host "Under the Tent," a concert with singing sensation Dan the Singing Trooper and his wife Mary Colarusso a coloratura soprano performing. There will be a cash bar, raffles and an evening of "incredibly beautiful and inspirational" entertainment. Contact Jane Cheetham for tickets at jane.cheetham@gmail.com. Space is limited.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 10**

• Picnic in the Park, the Whitin Community Center's popular event with food trucks, live entertainment, community vendors, a doll and pet parade, a dunk tank and more, returns to Whitin Park, 60 Main St., Whitinsville. Visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com for further details.

• St. Patrick's Church's Spring Recycling Event will take place at 7 East St., Whitinsville, from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Profits

will benefit upcoming YIA service projects. Accepting gently used books (no encyclopedias), gently used textiles/clothing, electronics for a fee (no propane, batteries, light bulbs), rinsed bottles/cans returnable in MA, paper shredding (\$8 a box, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. only). Please keep items for each station separate. For more information and electronics pricing, call 508-234-5656 or email officesupport@mystpatricks.com.

• The Auburn Historical Society & Museum will host a Yard Sale, 40 South St., Auburn, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. No Early Birds please.

• Soorp Asdvadzadin Armenian Church, 315 Church St., Whitinsville, will host its annual Community Yard Sale from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Vendor space is available. For reservations, email Jeff at katama@gmail.com.

• The Douglas Historical Society's Rhubarbs Challenge on Main Street is back. Entries will be accepted between 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. with judging set to begin at 11:00 a.m.

• Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main St., Webster, presents "An Evening of Music with Sam Bowen and Blue Cat Groove," an award-winning blues band based in New England. Doors open at 6:00 p.m. for the 6:30 p.m. show. General admission tickets are limited and can be purchased in person at Booklovers' Gourmet, by calling 508-949-6232 or online at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/581099784097.

• Get The Led Out performs at Indian Ranch, 200 Gore Road, Webster, 7:00 p.m. www.

indianranch.com.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 11**

• The New England Country Music Club hosts the Rustic Country band for entertainment and dancing at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m. with live music from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub.

• Kip Moore performs at Indian Ranch, 200 Gore Road, Webster, 1:00 p.m. www.indianranch.com.

**MONDAY, JUNE 12**

• Blackstone Valley Tech's 24th annual golf tournament will be held at Highfields Golf & Country Club, 42 Magill Drive, Grafton will proceed benefitting the school's Education Foundation and Athletic Department activities and programs. Registration is \$150 for individuals and \$125 per person for a foursome and includes 18 holes on the championship course, golf cart and a buffet dinner. There will be a silent auction and raffles. To register, support the event as a sponsor or donate a raffle item, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/golftournament.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14**

• Lifelong Whitinsville resident and Telegram & Gazette writer Bill Ballou will present a history of the Whitin family at Plummer Place (the Northbridge Senior Center) from 9:30 to 10:15 a.m. Sign up in

the main office.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 15**

• The Dudley Grange's annual Strawberry Festival will be held on the Grange's grounds on Dudley Hill at 139 Center Road.

• The New Sound Assembly Barbershop Chorus will perform at Plummer Place (the Northbridge Senior Center) from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. Sign up in the main office.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 17**

• The Sutton Historical Society will host its Annual Town-Wide Yard Sale from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Participant registration forms can be found at sutton-historicalsoceityinc.org. Cost to take part is \$10. New this year is the option to pay via UNIPAY. The Society accepts yard sale donations; please not items such as TVs, computers, monitors, upholstered furniture or clothes. Contact

sutton1704@gmail.com to donate.

• The Friends of the Sutton Public Library will host a Book Sale from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., rain or shine. Donations of books can be made the week prior to the event.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 22**

• "What's Up Doc," a women's health forum, will be held from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. at Plummer Place (the Northbridge Senior Center), 20 Highland St., Whitinsville. This workshop will feature an open discussion with a panel including a female psychologist, a female psychiatrist "and our very own Dr. Maggie," a family medicine provider. Bring your questions, drop them off at the Center or email Amy at acowen@northbridgemass.org. Refreshments will be served. Sign up in

**HAPPENINGS!**

*continued on page 20*

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"What's up bud?"

**HAPPENINGS!**

*continued from page 19*

the main office.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 25**

• The New England Country Music Club hosts the Rhode Island Rednecks for entertainment and dancing at the Progressive Club, 18 Whittin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m. with live music from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. www.facebook.com/NECountry-MusicClub.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 29**

• Dan Fontaine, an Elvis tribute artist, will

return to Plummer Place (the Northbridge Senior Center), 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, for a performance from 12:00 noon to 1:30 p.m. Lunch is a Memphis-themed barbecue. Tickets are \$10 each with a limit of two tickets per person.

**SATURDAY, JULY 1**

• Chase Rice performs at Indian Ranch, 200 Gore Road, Webster, 1:00 p.m. www.indianranch.com.

**JULY 2-OCTOBER 1**

• Daniels Farmstead in Blackstone is open for its 13th season of Farmers' Markets, every Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Email info@danielsfarmstead.org for further details or visit the Daniels Farmstead Foundation website at www.danielsfarmstead.org.

**SUNDAY, JULY 9**

• Rumors: The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Tribute Show, takes the stage at Indian Ranch, 200 Gore Road, 1:00 p.m. www.indianranch.com.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 26**

• The 2nd Annual Parking Lot Craft Fair sponsored by the Auburn Historical Society & Museum will be held at 41 South St., Auburn, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., rain or

shine. Vendors are welcome. Contact Helen at auburnmuseum@verizon.net to reserve a space for \$15.

**TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5**

• The Sutton Historical Society welcomes Andrew Noone, author of "Bathsheba Spooner: A Revolutionary Murder Conspiracy," at the First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, Sutton, at 7:00 p.m. Go to www.suttonhistoricalsociety.org for further info.

**TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 7**

• The Sutton Historical Society welcomes Mark Savoio of the Thompson Historical Society for the presentation "The Mass 15th of the Civil War and Wilder Holbrook, Sutton," at the First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, at 7:00 p.m. Go to www.suttonhistoricalsociety.org for further info.



Mystery Writer Debi Graham-Leard makes a return appearance to Booklovers' Gourmet in Webster on June 3rd to discuss her latest work.

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**Saturday, July 29th**  
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# 24 BVT students have Georgia on Their Minds

The SkillsUSA Massachusetts 49th Annual State Leadership & Skills Conference was held at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) on April 28th. SkillsUSA welcomed contestants across the Commonwealth, representing the talent pipeline for skilled trades, to test their occupational training in the Massachusetts SkillsUSA Championships Career Competitions, a showcase of talent for students enrolled in vocational, technical, and health education.

It was the seventeenth consecutive year BVT had hosted the prestigious Olympic-style career competition, with thousands of students judged by business professionals according to industry and employment standards. The Massachusetts Secretary of Education, Patrick Tutwiler, visited the campus to experience the event. It was the first time he had visited the campus since his appointment to the position in January.

The annual event was an impressive display of vocational-technical training at its finest. BVT had 128 students test their vocational-technical ability in 60 competitions with remarkable results: 25 Gold, 19 Silver and 18 Bronze for a total of 62 medals.

The gold medalists earn the right to represent SkillsUSA Massachusetts and compete with champions from all over the country at the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, this June. The exception is the Cosmo under 500 and Safety Poster Design Team gold medalists who only compete at the state level and do not advance. However, Kallie Allen and the Safety Poster Design Team winners will serve as National Voting Delegates. The complete list of medalists is available at [www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa](http://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa).

The BVT students who earned medals at the State Leadership & Skills Conference are listed alphabetically by hometown:

## BELLINGHAM

Gold: Lucien Stenehjem; Robotics and Automation Tech.  
Silver: Nicholas Cummings, CNC 3 Axis Milling Programmer; Sophie Jacobson, Promotional Bulletin Board; and Sara Lewis, Principles of Technology.  
Bronze: Dimana Hristova, Mechatronics.

## BLACKSTONE

Gold: Addison Baldini (model), Cosmetology under 500 Hours; Daniel Cardone, Web Design; and Carolyn Powers, Collision Damage Appraisal.

Silver: Evan Bouvier, Photography.  
Bronze: Dominic Felaco, Entrepreneurship.

## DOUGLAS

National Parliamentarian: Hunter Clafin  
Gold: Haley Chamberlin, Cosmetology under 500 Hours; Om Patel, Mobile Robotics; Skyler Robinson, Restaurant Service; and Brett Staples, Web Design.  
Silver: Julia White, Esthetics.  
Bronze: Laney Beahn, Entrepreneurship; Baron Sherry, Mechatronics; and Chloe Vescio, Prepared Speech.

## GRAFTON

Gold: Caitlin Brown, Health Occupations Portfolio; Ava Mills, Career Pathways Showcase Industrial & Engineering Tech; and Grant Purcell, Career Pathways Showcase Industrial & Engineering Tech.  
Silver: Caroline Brown, Sticker Design; Soumith Madadi, Computer Programming; Owen Mathieu, HVAC/R; Ryan St. Angelo, Culinary Arts; and Annika Welles, Job Skill Demo A.  
Bronze: George Mahassel, Cabinetmaking; Noah Mariano, Related Technical Math; and

Nicholas Valoras, Entrepreneurship.

## HOPEDALE

State Officer Elect: Kallie Allen  
National Voting Delegates: Kallie Allen and Ella Foster.  
Gold: Ella Foster, Safety Poster Design Team.

## MENDON

Gold: Naomi Tsuda, Baking & Pastry Arts.  
Silver: Josh Blalock, Diesel Equipment Technology.  
Bronze: Natalia Vazquez, Engineering Technology.

## MILFORD

Gold: William Naff, Automotive Service Technology.  
Silver: Igor Freeman, Additive Manufacturing; and Emma Sanborn, Promotional Bulletin Board.  
Bronze: Colin Chambless, Engineering Technology.

## MILLBURY

National Voting Delegate: Allison Garden  
Gold: Allison Garden, Safety Poster Design Team.  
Silver: Mason Diosomito, Mechatronics; Madison Moore, Promotional Bulletin Board; and Jayden Quang, Mechatronics.  
Bronze: Hannah Murphy, Photography; and Natalie Rutkiewicz, Esthetics.

## NORTHBRIDGE

Gold: Riley Driver, Industrial Motor Control; Dylan Leeds, Mobile Robotics; and Emily Wildfeuer, Architectural Drafting.  
Bronze: Ella Rogozenski, Entrepreneurship.

## SUTTON

Gold: Scott Glode, Electrical Construction Wiring; Benjamin Judson, Automotive Refinishing Technology; and Caroline Martin, Additive Manufacturing.  
Silver: Samuel Judson, Technical Drafting.  
Bronze: Marcel Peladeau, Welding.

## UPTON

Gold: Jacob Giancola, Robotics and Automation Tech; and Katelyn Steele, Related Technical Math.  
Silver: Gillian Yordanopoulos (model), Esthetics.

## UXBRIDGE

Gold: Samantha Makynen, Additive Manufacturing; and Grace Mathieu, Career Pathways Showcase Industrial & Engineering Tech.  
Silver: Makaylah Holzman, Additive Manufacturing.

Bronze: Mia Bellacqua (model), Esthetics; Maxwell Guyton, Engineering Technology; Cole Pinchuck, HVAC/R; and Samuel Waugh, Electrical Construction Wiring.

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# Suddenly, Luke Valentino is showing an aggressive side

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

I grew up in the seventies, at a time when dogs got into dog fights. That was the way it was back then. We didn't talk about latest research, or things like unneutered pets, food aggression and male dominance. My dog, Max, a free-spirited mongrel said to be part Rhodesian, would

taunt our next-door neighbor's dog Lido, an eternal barker with a scruffy beard and venomous teeth. Lido used to body-slam the front door when I delivered the newspaper to his house. He appeared tall and awkward, an oversized Jack Russell that would have been cute—if only he was seven times smaller.

"Sorry you're on a leash, Lido. I won't be long." Max adored Lido's yard. He would trot over and sniff overturned flowerpots while Lido stretched to the furthest



Behaving like a gentleman at Barnes & Noble

point possible to reach a wanted dog.

Until the unlucky day came. Lido broke free.

"He's going to kill him!" I watched Max rumble with the beast, not knowing that my small mongrel would take it like a champ. He limped home with one eye shut, and sipped water from an outside puddle. Then he lied down, placed a defeated head over his paws, and shook off the fight. "Win some, lose some." Sigh.

Max was my favorite. He died tragically after being struck by the last car he would ever chase on Rockland Road, Auburn. He was only seven and died in my father's arms, right in front of my house. I went to school the next day feeling nauseous.

Fast forward forty-five years. I might be old, but I'm still a Dog Person. Luke is my third male Golden, and the oldest to remain unneutered. His handsome looks qualify him to be a stud, infor-

mally speaking. But imagine if Luke could be an actual Stud? Imagine if we could watch him grow old with a chunky Leo or Lila, one of his very own pups? The vision, along with sound research that a "later neuter" is

learned that Luke is not alone here. Other males have disrespected him. They've growled in his face and picked fights when he's tried to play. I've yelled at the offenders, using my stern teacher's voice. "You be nice to Luke! He was just trying to play!" Nevertheless, dogs will be dogs. And male hormones will rage with scents we can't quite understand. I can't help but think that Luke's intact (big?) balls are part of the problem. Worse, unlike Lincoln, a gentle giant who just wanted to play ball, Luke loves to play rough. He doesn't know when to back down. He doesn't know when enough is enough. More sadly, he's learning the hard way what Max had learned in the hood. "You win some, you lose some." Some males just want to be boss.

The German Shepherd we met at the dog park was no exception. I noticed him casually playing with a Frisbee while Luke trotted aside another girl in the play group. Upon entering the gate, I had been told that the male shepherd is "keeping everyone in line." I've always appreciated the breed, having grown up with four (at different life phases). I understand them. A German Shepherd is loyal, but often aggressively so and they're not quite as affectionate as Golden. Given Luke's recent track record, who could judge on that front? I wanted to earn Kyle's trust. I spoke kindly to the lean shepherd and pet his head. More interested in the Frisbee, he looked away and did his own thing. Before long, Luke wanted to make friends. He trotted into Kyle's space. "Hi, I'm Luke Valentino Let's wrestle!"

Kyle snarled and snapped back. "How dare you ask me to play!! I don't play. I'm the boss of this turf." Luke did not submit, as other dogs had known to do. "What's your problem?" He growled back and showed his teeth. For a split second, I thought (and hoped) that the two males would come to an agreement. "I'm strong. I'm strong! I like to play. I like to play!" Let's both be strong and play." Not a chance. A full-fledged dog fight ensued within seconds. What should have been grumbling, rough play took a dangerous turn. Despite my experience



Playtime with Golden pal, Tucker

considered better for your male, has kept me from scheduling the surgery. Consequently, Luke is fifteen months going on fifteen. Pardon the smack talk, but he's grown a set of balls.

"Luke!!!"

As though defending me from a pack of hyenas, he shows his teeth and snaps in the face of certain males. His sudden aggression has taken me by surprise. A bulldog named Jackson faced his wrath recently. Stocky and patient, the bulldog sat at the threshold of a dog-friendly bar in Millbury. By virtue of his pedigree, he wore a permanent Joker smile while he watched Luke walk in.

"What is wrong with your face!!! Did you have a fight with a frying pan?!" My pup went crazy, a big teddy bear with an unruly temper. Joker Jax, innocent and hated on, looked away. "I'm so sorry. My dog hasn't yet processed the face of a bulldog yet." Seconds after the words slipped from my mouth, I wanted to take them back "Why did I say that? Everyone knows bulldogs are ugly-cute." I tried again. "Luke has been acting adolescent lately."

His adolescent behavior may be rearing its big head, but I've



Luke shows his serious side

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LUKE

continued on page 23

REAL ESTATE

# The Power of Pre-Approval

If you're buying a home this spring, today's housing market can feel like a challenge. With so few homes on the market right now, plus higher mortgage rates, it's essential to have a firm grasp



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

on your home buying budget. You'll also need a sense of determination to find the right house and act quickly when you go to put in an offer. One thing you can do to help you prepare is to get pre-approved.

To understand why it's such an important step, you need to know what pre-approval is. As part of the process, a lender looks at

your finances to determine what they'd be willing to loan you. From there, your lender will give you a pre-approval letter to help you understand how much money you can borrow. Marzeotti Group can provide a referral with great lenders. Give us a call today!

Essentially, a pre-approval is an indication from your lender that they are willing to lend you a certain amount of money to buy your future home. Keep in mind that the loan amount in the pre-approval letter is typically the lender's maximum offer. Ultimately, you should only borrow an amount you are comfortable repaying.

Basically, pre-approval gives you critical information about the home buying process that will help you understand how much you may be able to borrow so you have a better understanding of your options. And with higher mortgage rates impacting affordability for many buyers today, a solid under-

standing of your numbers is even more important.

Pre-Approval helps show you're a serious buyer and most times is required to even get in to see a home for sale.

That's not the only thing pre-approval can do. Another added benefit is it can help a seller feel more confident in your offer because it shows you're serious about buying their house. And, with sellers seeing a slight increase in the number of offers again this spring, making a strong offer when you find the perfect house is key.

Getting pre-approved is an important first step when you're buying a home. It lets you know what you can borrow for your loan and shows sellers you're serious. Contact The Marzeotti Group or with a local Realtor and a trusted lender so you have the tools you need to purchase a home in today's market.

## LUKE

continued from page 22

in handling dogs, I felt suddenly terrified. The shepherd pinned my precious Luke to the ground by the neck. "That's a puppy!!" The owner screamed. "Get off him!!" My heart pounded. I stomped my foot down and jumped to the rescue with a firm command. "OFF!"

Kyle was oblivious. He held his ground and kept a clutched mouth on Luke's neck. I kneeled by the dogs' side and fought to pry Kyle's mouth from Luke's



Luke on the lookout

neck in the same way I might extract a stolen piece of tissue. I've done this a thousand times. My love for Luke began to overshadow any fear. I would not walk out of the park with nausea in my gut. I would not allow my pup to feel pain. While I worked on Kyle's mouth, the owner was able to clip him onto a leash and pull him off Luke. She was terribly upset and apologetic. I sat beside my dog and pet his head. I comforted and pet him soothingly.

"You're okay, Luke. You're okay. Let's go have some water." Luke truly was okay. He sat, smiled, and panted the way dogs do. The moment came and went. He would move on because he's a dog. Dogs don't stay stuck the way people do. Still, I hugged and babied him some more. "I'm so sorry this happened to you." I took him to the pet store to pick out a stuffed animal. Max never got a second chance. Luke did! I left the dog park misty-eyed and relieved, knowing that the incident would mark my last one for a very long time. Dogs will be dogs. But the cost of losing Luke is too great. Besides, his own puppies may need him someday.

Stay tuned for more on Living with Luke.

Find Luke Valentino on Instagram @ livingwithlukevalentino

Write to me at amyleclaire@hotmail.com

*\*\*Please note – I have changed the name of the German Shepherd and did not mention the name of the Dog Park in order to protect the integrity of both. As dog owners and those advocating for the wellness of pets, we are doing our best. Sometimes we fall short.*

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SPORTS

# Millbury baseball captains look to pass on their knowledge

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

As the 2023 Millbury baseball campaign began coach Ron Silvestri found that he had only two seniors who would be taking to the diamond this spring. Having only two upperclassmen to grace the roster the Woolies coach knew that next season would be one made up with a majority of younger athletes. With that said, he knew that in order to be successful his senior captains Matt Kelly and Nick Kolifrath would have to pass along what they knew to the younger players.

“They both not only excel on the field, but in the classroom as well,” Silvestri said. “They’ll be leading a very young team this year and will need to get them prepared in terms of knowledge of the game.”

Both athletes have been playing baseball their entire life. Kolifrath originally wanted to play the sport in college, because it was a game that he enjoyed, and he wanted to follow in the footsteps of an older brother who plays for St Michaels College in Colchester, Vermont. While Kolifrath will be attending Western New England College in Springfield it will be football and not baseball.

Kelly, who is also a two-sport athlete (he also plays basketball), will be attending the University of Connecticut in Storrs where he too is not scheduled to play baseball for the Huskies. While the duo has not been given scholarships to play baseball they both are thinking about trying out for their respective colleges when the seasons get underway next spring.

Kolifrath can play third, first or catcher, but this season with the Woolies in need of a first baseman he will spend the majority of his time on the field on the right side of the field, but he would much



Millbury High baseball captains Nick Kolifrath (left) and Matt Kelly.

rather be playing the hot corner.

“With the need, I’m transitioning back to play first base, but I’d much rather be playing third. I like making diving plays and show off my arm across the diamond,” he said. “In regard to playing first, it is something the team needs and I’m up for the challenge to be ready and help out the team.”

As for Kelly, he is a centerfielder by trade, but being a lefty, he is somewhat of a valuable commodity on the mound. Thus far the senior is hitting around .380 at the plate but is also 2-0 on the hill with an .90 ERA.

The duo captain tandem is hoping to get the squad ready to not only learn this year but take the Millbury baseball program to the next level once they have vacated the school.

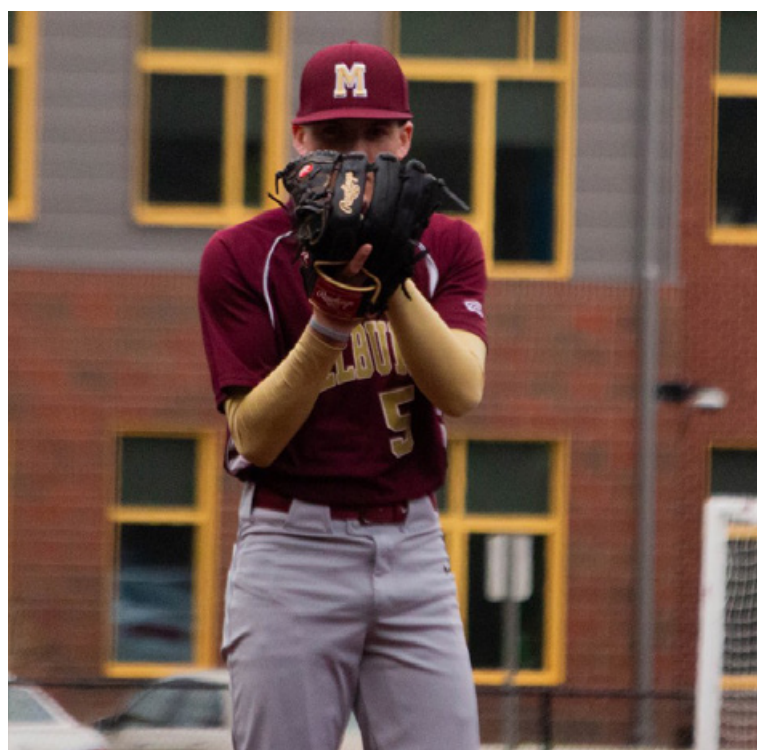
“As a captain I want to have them focus during practice and

pay full attention to what they are being taught so that come game time they are ready to go,” Kelly said. “Things are working out good so far, but they still need to keep up with it. Hard work pays off and elevate your game top the next level.”

Kolifrath also believes that working hard will eventually get the younger kids to that next plateau, but he wants them to pay attention while being humble.

“Baseball is a failure sport; the good players will only hit the ball three or four times out of ten at bats. You’ve got to learn from the ups and downs and stay positive,” he said. “One mistake doesn’t determine the whole game. You need to focus, fight through it, and move on while staying upbeat.”

According to the two captains the younger players are definitely improving as the year goes along and are learning from their



mistakes. With so many talented freshman and sophomores Kolifrath believes that if they continue to improve this group of athletes should be able to make a run in the State Tournament in two years.

On the diamond both athletes are hoping that the team can go at least .500, make the playoffs, the Central Mass Tournament, and the State Tournament. Over the past two seasons the Woolies have made the post-season but unfortunately have not been able to get out of the first round. In 2021, playing in the Central Mass Division 3 Tournament, Millbury was knocked out by Uxbridge in the opening round and last year the same thing happened in the Division 4 State Tournament as BVT sent the Woolies packing.

While those goals are fine and dandy, the captain’s top goal is to get Coach Silvestri his 600th win. In order to reach that milestone, the Woolies will need to secure fourteen wins. At the time of this writing Millbury was 7-3 and halfway to getting their coach’s next milestone. The Woolies’ three losses have all come by one run and were all winnable, so the

duo is quite confident that they will eclipse the 14 wins.

“The coach has put a lot of time into this program and is probably the best coach Millbury has ever had,” Kelly said. “To get him those 14 wins would be really cool and mean even more to us if we were the team that helped him do it.”

Kelly’s counterpart echoed his sentiments.

“I really hope that we can help the coach get his 600th win,” Kolifrath said. “He has put so much into this program and helping him get to that milestone would really mean a lot to us.”

Being only seven wins away from topping the 600-win mark, it looks very positive that the Woolies can get Silvestri that milestone this year, especially the way the team has been playing in the first half of the season. If for some reason they are unable to secure that magical win this year, Kelly and Kolifrath can take solace in the fact that they help build the team along with mentoring the younger players who will take the coach to the top of the mountain.

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# The story of Lightning, an adventuresome sheep

FROM DOUGLAS ORCHARD AND FARM

This is the story of our runaway sheep, for those who have not yet heard it.

On February 25th, we adopted five purebred Icelandic sheep. In transferring them into the fenced enclosure, four of the five sheep ran off. After three hours we got all but one of them back. The last sheep was so fast and would bolt when approached, so we named

her Lightning.

Our wonderful Douglas community would call the farm with sightings. A plan was laid out to capture her, but to no avail. She had quite the adventure while away “on the lam.” She would dart in and out of a horse barn to eat hay, made a dog friend, and surprised the locals by walking down the street. It’s not every day you see a sheep hanging out in your neighborhood.

Then something miraculous and magical happened late at night on March 9th. Farmer Nick was checking on the animals at the farm when much to his surprise he spotted Lightning. She was standing beside her four buddies, though on different sides of the fence. When Farmer Nick walked toward her she bolted and ran, consistent with her MO. She ran across to the farm’s country store. But then, much to Farmer Nick’s surprise, she went around the back of the farm and up through an open gate



that connects to the pasture where the four other Icelandic sheep are—and plowed through a fence to be with them. Farmer Nick was able to rush around and close the gate behind her!

Now she is happily reunited with her sheep family.

We don’t know how it happened that she made her way back to the farm after so many sightings on Pine Street.

We would like to thank all the people on Pine Street who were involved in trying to capture her and the worry that was involved in trying to get her back to the farm.

We end this missing sheep



story on a great note! And again we appreciate all the comments and reaching out from our local community. There were over five hundred likes and many comments on Facebook during Lightning’s escapades!

You can come to Douglas Orchard & Farm in Douglas to see

our five Icelandic sheep girls, happily together again.

Lightning has the lightest colored wool and we think she stands a little taller than her friends, proud of her adventures!

[douglasorchardandfarm.com](http://douglasorchardandfarm.com).

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THE CAR DOCTOR

jpaul@aanortheast.com

# Crankshaft position sensor may be culprit in engine failure

**Q.** I have a 2001 Jeep Grand Cherokee. Several months ago, it would not start and the light with the key symbol with the line through it was on and it would not start. Prior to this it would occasionally shut off while I was driving. My mechanic said it was the skim module. I took it in, and he advised me that the PCM was bad. I found the part on eBay, and he installed and programmed it. It ran fine, but



BY JOHN PAUL

then it started randomly shutting off again. I brought it back to my mechanic and he could not find anything wrong. He said to drive it for a little bit to get the PCM to "set." It was fine for a week, no issue and it began randomly shutting off again when I am driving. When it happens, I just put it in park, turn the ignition to off, and turn it on again, and it starts right back up. I am going to call my mechanic again today. Have you heard of anything like this? Any insight would be appreciated.

**A.** It sounds like you may have had two problems, the key indicator, certainly could have been the SKIM (Sentry Key

Immobilizer Module), and the ECM (main computer) needs to see that signal for the car to start. I would have the technician look at the crankshaft sensor as well as checking for codes. The crankshaft position sensor is a common failure in these Jeep engines.

**Q.** I bought two new front tires in January. The tires are fine, but Saturday I went to check the tire pressure in the front tires and the valve stem on the left front tire broke in half deflating the tire. We had the car towed and the tire store called and said would it not be covered under the tire warranty. The car is 14 years old, and they told me that replacing the stem is standard practice. They said the part is about \$85.00 and with labor it will come to about \$115.00. Is that within the normal range and should they have covered the cost of the repair since the valve stem might have been damaged when they replaced the tires?

**A.** Chances are if the metal valve stem was damaged when the tires were

installed it would have failed much earlier. You have been lucky so far since the typical life of a direct reading tire pressure sensor is seven to 10 years. As for cost the factory sensor (the tire store probably used a quality generic sensor) is about \$128 and some shops will charge a minimum of one hour labor to install the sensor, rebalance the tire and program the new sensor. Although \$115 is expensive for a valve stem, the price was certainly fair.

**Q.** We currently own a 2017 Mazda CX-5 and spend our summers from June through September in Vermont. We are seriously considering a Hybrid SUV. Electric charging stations are not readily available where we live. There are rumors that the elected officials would like to install charging stations throughout the city. It is a 210-mile trip from our apartment to Vermont. A midsize SUV suits our needs, we do a lot of day trips. We are considering the KIA Sportage. We would consider other makes as well and our budget

is \$40,000.

**A.** To me it seems like at least for the near future a plug-in hybrid (PHEV) may be the best choice rather than a full electric vehicle. I recently evaluated the Hyundai Santa Fe. It was in the upper trim level called calligraphy. This model was a plug-in hybrid. It delivered about 30 miles of all electric range with a total range of about 450 miles. For 30 miles of range may your day-to-day driving and although you can charge at any level II charging station, you can also charge overnight on 120-volt outlet which may work out nicely at your Vermont home. Although slightly smaller the Toyota RAV4 Prime is also a particularly good choice.

*John Paul is AAA Northeast's Car Doctor. He has over forty years' experience and is an ASE-certified master technician. He will answer readers' questions each week. Email your questions to jpaul@aanortheast.com. Follow John on Twitter @johnfpaul and friend him on Facebook at mrjohnfpaul.*

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TALES FROM BEYOND

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# Ghost Cats, Part II: More common than you might think

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

We are not the only ones who have a ghost cat in their lives. General Stanton Inn in Charlestown, Rhode Island has three known ghosts, the general, his wife, and an unidentified cat. No one knows who the cat is, but bartenders and patrons often feel the ghostly feline rub up against their legs. Many have seen the dark shadow of a cat moving about the tavern and heard ethereal “meows” coming from areas at the inn.

Ciro's Restaurant in Woonsocket, Rhode Island has a celebrated history regarding everything from a speakeasy to a brothel. The upstairs is decorated like Henry the Eighth's Tudor mansion and hosts several paranormal entities, one being a kitty.

Several of the staff have closed up during the night and have heard a cat meowing in the castle-style dining room known as Hampton Court. One staff member saw the cat, thought it had somehow got in, and went upstairs unnoticed. She turned for a moment to bring it a drink, and when she turned back, it had vanished. A subsequent search proved no cat was ever in the building, at least no living one.

Hammond Castle in Gloucester, Massachusetts, was built by inventor John Hays Hammond Jr. He let his favorite pets, cats, run among the many ancient artifacts he displayed. Hammond was also a paranormal enthusiast and performed many experiments inside the castle with the likes of a Faraday cage.

It was well known that Hammond wanted to be reincarnated as a cat after his mortal body was committed to the earth. Shortly after his death, a black cat appeared at the castle, lying in Hammond's favorite chair. From the moment the strange kitty entered the castle, it was familiar with the layout. It would go right to Hammond's favorite rooms at certain times of the day, much like the inventor did, and found solace in that same chair Hammond also found.

Each time the cat died, another would reappear in its

place. Ghost? Reincarnation? Attraction from some ethereal power? No one is sure, but to this day, one can tour the castle and perhaps meet the little furry cat that seems to have dominion over the other ghosts of the castle.

The Orleans Inn, located in Orleans, Massachusetts, is home to two ghost cats that live in Room 4. The cats belonged to two women who bought the inn around 1900. They kept many cats, and two of them have survived in spirit to this day. People hear them purring and meowing, and sometimes when they open the door to the room, they feel invisible fur brushing against their legs as the ghost mousers either enter or leave the apartment.

Christy Parrish of the Oliver House in Middleborough, Massachusetts, has realized that one of the several ghosts that still occupy the house is an orange tabby named “Merragold.”

Merragold belonged to Sally Hutchinson Oliver, the original and first lady of the house. The building was erected in 1769 for Dr. Peter Oliver Jr. and his wife, Sally. The Olivers may be among the several ghosts that haunt the mansion along with Merragold. Many people have seen the ghost cat wandering among the rooms throughout the years. Investigators have also caught Merragold on audio either meowing, purring, or just making the general noises that cats are known for. The house is leased for daytime or overnight investigations, as it is very active and tenanted with many who once lived there in the mortal frame.

These are just some of the stories where ghost cats still make themselves known to those who loved them. They are an amazing breed and known to be intuitive. It may be comforting to know that your little guy or girl will still be there for who knows how long, if not in the physical sense, at least the spiritual one.

One more anecdote. In England, it was well known that a black cat crossing your path was bad luck; in America, it is just the opposite.

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