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Navy Vet Adelard Leo Marier is grand marshal for Memorial Day Parade

A Grand Marshal has been defined as a person who has been honored as the ceremonial leader of a parade. They can be seen in open convertibles, waving at throngs of onlookers standing along a predetermined route.

Famous Grand Marshals include: Frank Sinatra, Erma Bombeck and Shirley Temple. The Grand Marshal's tenure is usually for a single parade and he or she is not to be confused with the Drum Major. The D-M is always the tallest dude, wears a visored bearskin headpiece, carries a mace, leads the band, and knows how to strut. The whistle is his or hers for as long as they want to keep it.

Del Marier has been honored by the Webster Dudley Veterans' Council in being named Grand Marshal of the 2023 Memorial Day Parade.

Del is a lifelong resident of Webster, having been born in 1932 in a modest home on Upland Ave. He has resided in almost every neighborhood in town. Del is content anywhere, as long as it is in Webster. Although the name 'Adelard' is of German origin, Del's father was French and his mother was Polish... and, he says, that is why he went to St. Joseph School. Eight years with the Felician Sisters prepared him for his stint at Bartlett High

School, but not for the tragedy that would soon occur. Del's dad was involved in a serious accident that would keep him out of work for a long time. Del was an only child. He left school at age sixteen and entered the workforce to help out with expenses at home. He found steady work at the Webster Shoe Company. Job Title: Rougher!

In 1951 there was a war on the Korean Peninsula that got the attention of the United Nations. Del and two of his buddies, Bob Lavallee and Roger Daviau, enlisted in the U.S. Navy. After taking the oath the recruits were sent to Newport, Rhode Island for twelve weeks of boot camp. Indoctrination was not at all like high school. The boys endured the tough curriculum, graduated, and watched for the posting of new assignments, Lavallee became a Seabee. Daviau's new duty station remains a mystery.

Del Marier was ordered to report to the USS POCONO AGC-16, at the Brooklyn Navy Yard. He had won a Ticket to Paradise in the U.S. Navy Lottery. POCONO had recently been recommissioned and was being refitted. Seaman Marier was assigned to the Deck Force, a.k.a. Deck Apes, who excelled at swabbing decks and chipping paint. They were a vital part in keeping a ship 'Ship-Shape.' When work



was completed at the Navy Yard, POCONO and her new crew set sail for Norfolk, Virginia.

USS POCONO AGC-16 was an Adirondack Class Amphibious Command Ship, light on weapons but a heavyweight in communications. She was fitted with two five-inch 38 single barrel gun mounts backed up by several 40mm and 20mm AA guns. A third five-inch gun mount was removed and replaced with a helicopter pad at the Admiral's request, sort of a 'rank has privileges' upgrade. The AGC was most often found at the center of the formation, protected by Cruisers and Destroyers. The Task Group also included supply ships of every kind necessary for the mission. The area of operations included



Carla Morano, right, who is retiring as director of Jack & Jill Preschool in North Oxford, is joined by her sisters Carrie Cross-Tiraboschi and Candy Lirange at a celebration of Ms. Morano's contributions to the school on May 7th.

Carla Morano leaves important legacy at Jack & Jill Preschool

BY ROD LEE

Something of a fuss is being made about Carla Morano's imminent retirement as director of the Jack & Jill Pre-School in North Oxford—appropriately so.

Ms. Morano is the daughter of Betty Cross Fisher, who founded the school fifty-eight years ago—in 1965. What began as Ms. Cross Fisher's belief that kids in Auburn and Oxford should be able to go to kindergarten when there were no such programs in the public schools at the time has grown into a much larger operation. Housed at The First Baptist

Church on Main Street, the school started with a first class of less than a dozen. Ms. Morano's sister Candace "Candy" L. Lirange was in that first class. Today there are sixty-five students—three, four and five year-olds—from fourteen different towns, and a staff of twelve. There is also a waiting list for admittance.

Education is a cornerstone of Ms. Morano's family's public life. Her sister Candy Lirange is a Spanish teacher at Oxford High

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PARADE

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the East Coast south to the Caribbean Sea, the Gulf of Mexico, the North American Mainland, the area east of Central America and north of South America. Ports in Haiti, Costa Rica, Puerto Rico, Bahamas, St. Maarten and New Orleans were visited when not training. Drills were held day and night: gunnery practice, general quarters 'Man Your Battle Stations', or Man Overboard. It was tiring and a weekend on the beaches of Nassau was always a welcome diversion. USS MT. MCKINLEY AGC7 and USS ELDORADO AGC11 were seeing action in Korea. The POCONO was on 'stand by', awaiting rotation to the 7th Fleet in the Pacific. The call never came...it was disappointing.

By this time Del had his sea legs and was as 'salty' as a sailor could be. He transferred to the Quartermaster Section and became a Helmsman, steering the ship through treacherous waters and violent storms (like in the movies). Other duties included mopping, cleaning, chipping and painting and caring for Navigational Charts and Publications. He also assisted the Deck Officer and Navigator when called upon. Occasionally, Del would write a letter to Mom and Dad...and Joan.

Del and Joan both attended St. Joseph School. Despite the fact that Joan was always one grade ahead of Del, the youngsters got along well and a romance blossomed as the years flew by. Adelard and Joan were married in 1952. Del remained at the helm of the POCONO until his commitment to the Navy expired.



Del Marier, a U.S. Navy veteran and lifelong resident of Webster, will serve as grand marshal for the Webster Dudley Memorial Day Parade.

Mr. Marier as a U.S. Navy seaman; and the USS Pocono.



Joan continued helping out at the family business.

The POCONO was homeported in Norfolk and Del was able to

hitchhike home as the schedule allowed. Early in 1955 Del took a discharge rather than a bonus for re-enlistment. The newlyweds could settle back into life together in Webster...maybe even start a family. Del went to work for Piasta Dairy, peddling milk while pumping gas at his father-in-law's garage, Bruno's Citgo, on East Main Street. Mr. Woznicki was thrilled to have Del and daughter Joan helping out. And someday his four grandchildren may even take over the business.

The Mariers were a working class family, they had the necessities, more frugal than flamboyant, both parents were gainfully employed and contributors to society. Joanie worked for the Post Office in Shrewsbury, and Del was a factory guy, cotton, wool, shoes or Security. He retired at age seventy-six when Anglo Fabrics replaced the Security Guards with cameras. It is ironic that the factory burned down shortly thereafter

Life at sea is just a memory now. Del lives in a comfortable apartment at Golden Heights, the senior housing facility on Slater Street that gets its name from the dandelion displays, prevalent at the site or more likely it refers to the 'Golden Years' that the residents are experiencing.

The Happy Helmsman is a member of the Webster-Dudley Post 184 American Legion and the Polish American Vets. He is also the recipient of the National Defense Service Medal, and an honorable discharge. Del served his country faithfully and is deserving of the title "GRAND MARSHAL".

Seaman Marier will be back in the wheelhouse one more time, guiding a convoy of comrades through the harbor of his hometown on Memorial Day, while a grateful nation pauses in respect.

Steady as you go, Del, the POCONO ain't what she used to be!

Submitted by Don Wayman, 2023

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Xpressly Yours ... a letter from the editor

Northbridge salutes Harry Berkowitz for dedicated service to the town

By 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.



BY ROD LEE

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 Meet-

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

With the Planning Board he has led the applause for creation



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.

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."

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.



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MORANO

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and runs a Spanish program for preschoolers at Jack & Jill. Ms. Morano's husband Rocco J. Morano is a retired elementary-school principal.

"So many kids have gone through that school, six of us," Ms. Lirange said.

Ms. Morano was treated to a sendoff at Oxford High School on Sunday, May 7th. She was recognized too at a meeting of the Oxford Board of Selectmen. "The chairman of the Board of Selectmen came here and members of the Oxford Police Department

were at the meeting and their children went to Jack & Jill too," Ms. Morano said from her office on May 16th.

"This year alone we have so many parents who were students here. One teacher, half of her class went here."

Ms. Morano's involvement with the Jack & Jill Pre-School, and her family's, is pretty special. All three of Ms. Morano's children attended, as did other family members. Ms. Morano started as a teacher at Jack and Jill in 1988 and took over as director in 1998, following four others who had held the position.

"It definitely has grown," Ms. Moran said, of the school. "At one point we had one hundred thirty-

two students but some parents wanted longer days than we were able to offer them.

"I feel like it's a very special place here," she said. "Such harmony with the staff and the parents. We just had a fancy dance at Oxford High and the parents put so much energy into it."

Ms. Morano's children are now 45, 44 and 39 "and they definitely have that pride" of having attended Jack & Jill, she said. "Schools tell us which kids went to Jack & Jill. The state of education is always changing. We want our own students to have an edge and be fully confident and go off to further learning with strong skills."

Retirement "will be bittersweet,



Recently, Jack & Jill Preschool donated a large box of Legos to Sherry's House, a reflection of the school's philosophy of "learning through play."

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but it's time and time for new ideas."

As for her own future plans, "I enjoy gardening, reading and we are go to do some traveling. I don't know what my next chapter will be but I'm a high-energy person.

"I've always had a dream of working with children."

Addressing the mark that Carla Morano has left on the school, Jane Toner said "she has had a considerable influence in her role as director, meeting the needs in the community at an accredited, safe and nurturing place for preschool children to thrive."

In fact, Ms. Morano points out that "we are licensed by the state and also nationally accredited. We were just re-accredited for another five years, that's a high pinnacle to

achieve. There are not too many schools around that have that distinction."

The school's relationship with The First Baptist Church has been integral to its success.

"It has been a good partnership, because we like supporting each other. We have the whole downstairs."

Melissa Borgeson, who has been on the staff of Jack & Jill Preschool five years, has been in training and will succeed Ms. Morano as director."

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Immigrants: Chi Vo, from Vietnam to a life in America

BY JANET STOICA

This is the third in a series of articles about local immigrants and their lives in the United States, why they came, how they lived, and what their outlook is about this country.

Chi Vo's family story is the makings of an adventure movie. Danger, pirates, fear so great that it stuns you, and an ending that makes me shout for America and all its goodness.

It was truly a dark and stormy night when Chi Vo's parents took all the strength and guts they could possible muster to leave Vietnam in 1978. The country had fallen into a horrible situation after the terrible war. Chi's parents, Doi and Yen Nguyen, sold everything they had and took their small son, Vu, and one-and-a-half year old daughter, Chi, with them to a secluded waterfront site to board a raft with another family whom they had paid to transport them to Thailand in the dark of night. From Thailand they hoped to make their way to a refugee camp and prayed that America was in their future.

These brave people! Who am I to write about such bravery? I must now stop for a minute to thank my own immigrant grandparents for seeking a better life here in the United States. Why do people come to our country? What is the attraction? It is surely something that most of us Americans take for granted.....the ability to make a great and successful life, the ability to speak out when we know something is not right, and the freedom to be as triumphant as we want to be. These goals have become muddled a bit along the way as each generation may take many things for granted but our great service men and women have provided us with the strength and stability to achieve whatever goals we choose.

"My parents prayed to every God there could ever be," said Chi. "They prayed not to be captured by Thai pirates who ran rampant in the South China Sea.



A Chi Vo family photo: Tyler, Colin, Chi, Dylan and Ryan.

The pirates raped women, killed children in front of their parents, and decapitated husbands. Their fears were strong and their hopes were high to make it to Thailand, about 800 miles by sea. They had risked everything. Her mother was pregnant with her younger brother. They made it to Bangkok, Thailand and found their way to a refugee camp. Somehow, they lucked out and were connected with the Worcester MA chapter of Catholic Charities and were one of the first Vietnamese refugee families to arrive in Worcester."

Catholic Charities helped them find housing and a job for her dad. They also provided a tutor for her parents to learn English and to assist them on their path to U.S. citizenship. Her parents were eager to become Americans. They studied diligently and passed their exams very successfully paving the way for their young children to qualify as U.S. citizens too. "I cannot give enough praise to Catholic Charities," said Chi. "They helped my parents tremendously."

Chi's mom, Yen, stayed home to care for the now family of four children until Thanh, the youngest child, was in third grade. Yen went to work as a laborer, like

her husband, at a wire company in Worcester. Both parents now worked 12 hours per day 7 days per week. "They wanted a better life for us," said Chi. "Soon we

moved out of the projects and into our own home. Catholic Charities further assisted with sponsorship of my grandmother who soon helped with taking care of us while our parents were working. Most of our family is here in the U.S. now. We are so very, very grateful for all the priests and nuns who helped our family come to this country and who assisted them in studying hard to become citizens. We all made it work."

Chi graduated from Nichols College with a Bachelor's degree in Business Management and is currently working on her Master's degree. After high school she began employment with Mapfre Insurance of Webster and worked her way up to Senior Manager in Business Development. She currently works for a large banking and financial services company in the greater Boston area where she enjoys her position of Senior Vice President and Director of Opera-

tions. She has three boys. Tyler is a student at a local college, Dylan who is a certified hydraulic aircraft mechanic and also a college student while being employed as a pharmacy technician, and Colin who is a high honors high school student and is also on his school golf, tennis, and ski teams. Her nephew, Ryan, is also a big part of her family.

Chi's hardworking dad is now retired from his labors and she thanks her beloved mom, Yen, for all the guidance and strength she instilled in her. "I would not be where I am today if it weren't for my mom," she said. "My goal is to be half the woman she was." Her mom passed from cancer in 2010 at the age of 59.

Remember, remember always, that all of us, and you and I especially, are descended from immigrants. Franklin D. Roosevelt

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 BLACKSTONE VALLEY Xpress

Family-owned Blackmer Farms brimming with plants, vegetables

BY JANET STOICA

The Blackmer family's fifth generation is carrying on the family name and business while being proud to do so as they look forward to providing their home-grown plants and vegetables to the local community for many years to come.

"We offer our customers what they like and are happy to do so," said Michaela Kelley, wife of Dan Kelley whose grandparents worked the land. "This working farm was originally a dairy operation. In the 1960's a decision was made to close the dairy operation and transition to a fresh vegetable and greenhouse business. Sweet corn was the first product offered and the expansion to where we are today has just flourished. Lots of the family's hard work has produced wonderful plants, vegetables, and our own farm-raised cuts of USDA beef, pork, and chicken."

This bountiful and palate-pleasing agricultural marketplace is just a short hop over the Connecticut state line and you'll be happy you took the short scenic ride to their greenhouses.



Jessica, Michaela and Daniel, part of the welcoming team at family-owned Blackmer Farms.

Blackmer's opened for the season to its loyal customers in April and on Memorial Day weekend will offer beautiful cemetery baskets as well. There are plenty of annual and perennial plants for the public to pick from whether in attractive hanging baskets or plastic six-packs for your home garden. The greenhouse will be open for customers in May and June for those wanting decorative plants such as superbell petunias (a hummingbird favorite), impatiens, and Dragon Wing begonias (a robust and heat-tolerant variety producing abundant flowers all summer). Also in the mix are geraniums, verbena, and fuchsia.

Their vegetable plant offerings are many with over forty varieties of tomatoes and peppers. "Every customer has their own personal favorite of plants that they come here for," said Ms. Kelley, "but some of our tomato varieties are Big Boy, Roma, Sun Sugar cherry tomatoes, and super-sweet cherry tomatoes. We grow and seed everything ourselves in February and work the greenhouses for three months growing everything from seed. When the plants come in they're the size of your thumb. We nurture the baby plants. We do buy seeds from various seed companies and grow our plants from those."

Their pepper varieties include jalapeño and Carolina Reapers which Guinness World Records declared to be the hottest chili pepper in the world. The Carolina registers 1,641,183 SHU on the Scoville Scale of heat pungency. That's enough to make you sweat 'til January! Of course, Blackmer's also carries a nice selection of bell peppers of many colors as well as

banana peppers. Additional vegetable plants include Marketmore cucumbers, pickling cukes; summer, zucchini, butternut and acorn squash; classic eggplant; candy and red onions; leeks; Bravo and Blue Lagoon cabbage; broccoli, cauliflower, and Brussel sprouts. All of these vegetable plants are available



through May and June or until they are sold out. Get 'em fast and while they last!

Of course, no vegetable listing would be complete without mentioning that when the time is right, their own sweet corn is available for us to relish in the good ol' summertime! Two varieties of sweet corn that patrons enjoy are butter and sugar (the white and gold kernels) and Silver Queen (white kernels). Other items for summer purchase are their own tomatoes, summer squash, zucchini, eggplant, peppers, and fresh fruit from other local farms that includes apples, peaches (if available, as the frost this past year hindered the peach crop), blueberries, and sweet plums.

In 2017, the farm began selling

Lip Sync'ing at Dudley MS

The 13th annual Lip Sync contest was held at Dudley Middle School on May 12th. This highly anticipated event featured nine acts presented by student groups with a wide variety of song and dance routines. The DMS Jazz Band presented a concert following intermission when the students and attendees submitted their ballots to determine prize winners. The finale of the evening featured the DMS teachers in a "Taylor Swift Mash-up." The grand prize winners were the 8th Grade DMS football players for their act "Material Girl/Pretty Girls Walk." The players donated their prize money to the Webster-Dudley Food Share. Photos by Sally Patterson.



its own pasture-raised USDA-certified beef (including porterhouse and other steak cuts, tenderloins, boneless sirloin, ribeyes, and roasts); non-GMO pork (chops, sausage, ribs, and bacon); and non-GMO free-range chicken (whole and half-cuts).

The fall will bring live seasonal decorations in addition to corn stalks, mums, pumpkins, jack-o'-lanterns, and gourds for your home's embellishment. The farm also sells hay (round and rectangular bales) to horse farms and anyone else in need of the product. Blackmer Farm, 441 Quinebaug

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Chester P. Tuttle Post 279 marking a 100th anniversary

BY ROD LEE

Memorial Day 2023 and the week or so beyond that occasion will be extra special for members of the Chester P. Tuttle Post 279 American Legion in Auburn this year, as the facility celebrates its 100th anniversary.

Tom O'Rourke who is sergeant-at-arms and also incoming commander of the Post, and Happy Erickson, who sits on the E-Board, are co-chairs for the festivities, which will be observed on Sunday, June 4th starting with a social hour

from noon to 1:00 p.m.

Past Commander Rich Larson will serve as master of ceremonies for the event. Remarks will be offered by Mr. O'Rourke and Sally Nay, who is deputy commander. A meal and entertainment will follow.

The program booklet produced for the anniversary celebration includes a sketch of Phyllis Gallant, Pharmacist 3rd Class in the U.S. Navy upon her discharge in 1946. Now 102 years old, Ms. Gallant joined Post 279 and served as assistant chaplain and held the title of chaplain or assistant chaplain for

fifty-four years. She has been presented with the Boston Post Cane as the town's oldest resident, and the Riley Award for community service. She is well remembered for the many years she spun tickets for the Post's meat raffle, and is still a welcome sight at the Post, at the bar "having a beer with the guys," Mr. O'Rourke says.

"As a Post we are doing quite well," Mr. Erickson said on May 17th. He was CPT Post 279's chef for thirty-eight years, going back to the Post's days operating out of an old schoolhouse on Southbridge St.

Activities that take place throughout the week include the "Dream Wheels of New England's Tuesday Night Cruising" through October 10th. This began on May 16th, Organizer John Weston said, "and we had thirty to thirty-five cars the first night."

Tuesday Night Cruising features antique cars and trucks, collectible late models, military vehicles, off-road race cars, motorcycles, a BBQ, an outdoor bar, special surprises, a 50/50 raffle "and more."

Post 279 will again an active role in Auburn's Memorial Day Parade

CHESTER P TUTTLE POST 279



Tom O'Rourke and Happy Erickson are co-chairs of the Chester P. Tuttle Post 279 American Legion's 100th anniversary festivities, which will take place on June 4th.

on Monday, May 29th. Parade staging will take place at 9:00 a.m. for the 1st Division, 2nd Division and 3rd Division with step-off at 10:00 a.m. This follows a service at Bethel Lutheran Church on Sunday, May 28th at 9:00 a.m.

The Memorial Day Committee includes Steven Gallant, commander, Bill MacLean, finance officer, Eric Sunden, Sr. vice commander, Tina Sunden, auxiliary historian, John Lauzon, Post commander, John Doherty from the E-Board, Millie Larson, auxiliary president, David Gallant, SAL commander and Giuelana Valera, auxiliary.

Steve Gallant is grand marshal for the parade, the Order of March for which will include the Auburn Fire Department, Auburn Middle

School Band, Auburn Police Department, Auburn Explorer Scouts, Auburn Boy Scouts, Auburn Girl Scouts, Auburn Campfire Girls, Auburn Blue Birds, Auburn Brownies, Auburn Cub Scouts and McCoy Action Karate.

Remembrance exercises will also take place at Hillside Cemetery. Chester P. Tuttle was wounded in France on October 31, 1918 and died the following day. His body was brought to Auburn in 1921 for services at the First Congregational Church, of which he was a member. He interned in the Tuttle family lot in Hillside Cemetery.

A raising of the flag will take place at Post 279 at 1:00 p.m.

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Getting You
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Webster Recreation announces jet ski races, other events

BY JANET STOICA

According to Webster's Recreation Director, Carole Marchand, upcoming activities the town has planned are many and sure to attract town residents for fun and relaxation.

June 3 and 4: Jet Ski Races at Memorial Beach. Come enjoy a weekend of entertainment while athletes race their jet skis right off the beach.

July 3: Fireworks Display at Memorial Beach. Rain Date July 5. An amazing display of fireworks over the water. Memorial Beach will open at 5 p.m. \$10 per vehicle and \$2 per person walking in. Boat ramp is closed all day.

July 12: August 9: Annual Summer Concert Series. Free events at French River Park with a rain location at Town Hall Auditorium. Music starts at 6 p.m. Come enjoy a variety of music on Wednesdays throughout the summer. Musical schedules as follows: July 12 - Pulaski Brass Band which will be held at the Town Hall Auditorium regardless of weather; July 19 - Jumpin Juba; July 26 - Mark Mandeville and Rianne Richards; and August 2 - Bad News Jazz



Band. August 9 - TBA.

July 13-16: The Fire Department will be hosting their Annual Carnival at the walking track at Memorial Beach. Great fun and the proceeds benefit Webster Fire Social and Relief Club which uses the money for equipment and training.

August 1: The Annual Police National Night out at the beach. Lots of fun for everyone in the family.

September 16-17 Rev3 will be back with a variety of races including a Triathlon Sprint and a Half Iron Man. The boat ramp will be closed until 1 pm on the 16th and

all day on the 17th.

October 21-22: Two day food truck festival! Great food and great music. Boat ramp will be closed for the weekend. Memorial Beach Park will open at noon both days.

Memorial Beach is staffed daily starting mid-June. Weekdays it is staffed from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and weekends from 7 a.m. -8 p.m. Main gate is opened at 7 a.m. daily and closed at 9 p.m. on weekdays and 8 p.m. on weekends. Please be mindful of these hours especially when you are out on a boat.



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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 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 they impressed they



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



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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.

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



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.

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 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 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.

HAPPENINGS!

continued on page 12

INDIAN RANCH

 JUNE 3 • 1PM	 JUNE 30 • 7PM AUGUST 25 • 7PM	 JUNE 11 • 1PM	 JUNE 17 • 1PM
 JULY 1 • 1PM	 JULY 9 • 1PM	 JULY 15 • 1PM	 JULY 22 • 1PM
 JULY 1 • 1PM	 JULY 23 • 1PM	 JULY 27 • 7PM	 JULY 29 • 1PM
 A TRIBUTE TO ABBA AUGUST 4 • 7PM	 AUGUST 6 • 1PM	 AUGUST 12 • 1PM	 JULY 30 • 1PM
 AUGUST 13 • 1PM	 AUGUST 18 • 7PM	 AUGUST 19 • 12PM	 SEPTEMBER 2 • 1PM
 SEPTEMBER 4 • 1PM	 SEPTEMBER 9 • 12PM	 SEPTEMBER 24 • 12PM	 2023 ACOUSTIC TOUR SEPTEMBER 30 • 1PM OCTOBER 1 • 1PM

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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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LAKE TOUR / JUNE 11 / 10AM
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LAKE TOUR / JUNE 17 / 10AM
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LAKE TOUR / JULY 1 / 10AM
MARGARITAVILLE CRUISE / JULY 6 / 6:30PM
LAKE TOUR / JULY 9 / 10AM
LAKE TOUR / JULY 15 / 10AM
100 FM THE PIKE BOAT SCOOTIN BOOGIE CRUISE
HOSTED BY CHUCK PERKS / JULY 15 / 6:30PM
LAKE TOUR / JULY 22 / 10AM
LAKE TOUR / JULY 23 / 10AM
LAKE TOUR / JULY 27 / 4PM
LAKE TOUR / JULY 29 / 10AM
LAKE TOUR / JULY 30 / 10AM
MARGARITAVILLE CRUISE / AUGUST 3 / 6:30PM
100 FM THE PIKE 80'S CRUISE HOSTED BY CHUCK PERKS
AUGUST 19 / 6:30PM
100 FM THE PIKE 90'S CRUISE HOSTED BY CHUCK PERKS
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HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 11

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 Confer-

ence 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 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 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.

• 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. 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@sbcglobal.net.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7

• Come experience the refined folk music



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

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 at the main office.

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

FRIDAY, JUNE 9

• The Sutton Historical Society will host a Brown Bag Picnic Reunion on the Sutton Town Common in commemoration of the 200th anniversary of the construction of the General Rufus Putnam Museum building at 4 Uxbridge Road. This Picnic Reunion is for

HAPPENINGS!

continued on page 13

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HAPPENINGS!

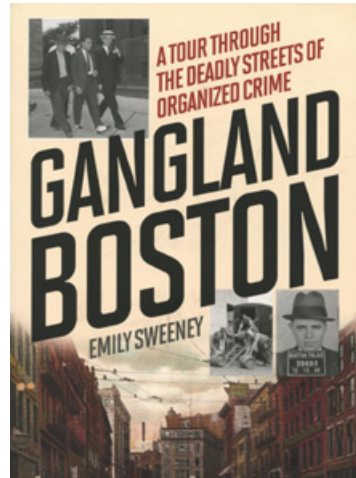
continued from page 12

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 Sutton 1704@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.



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.

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-historicalsocietyinc.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 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 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.

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

• Rumours: 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.

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Motorcycle fundraiser for Boys & Girls Club a great success!

BY JANET STOICA

They had a beautiful day on Saturday, May 6, to gather together in their riding group for one of the worthiest causes in our area helping the Webster-Dudley Boys & Girls Club.

This type of fundraiser hadn't been done in years but with Aaron Peek's brilliant efforts to put this event together, the charitable ride raised \$18,850 that will go a long way to assist with youth summer programs. "The sponsorships we had really made a huge difference," said Mr. Peek, "and our riders brought in \$5,000. This was the first one for the Club put on by Oxford's American Legion Post 58 and along with Christopher Battista of the Combat Vets group we ended up with 100 cycles and 142 participants. Big thanks go out to our sponsors for their awesome generosity, our riders, volunteers from the Post itself along with the auxiliary, Sons of American Legion Post 58, and the Boys and Girls Club board members. We also have to mention the publicity that The Yankee Xpress gave us which helped tremendously. We can't thank everyone enough for making this happen. We're looking forward to another event next May."

Liz Hamilton, Executive Direc-



Riders for the Boys & Girls Club fundraiser register and prepare for their ride.

tor of The Boys & Girls Club of Webster-Dudley, stated "We are grateful for the support we receive every year from our generous community. A great example is Aaron Peek and his friends putting their

heart into the bike ride event. The proceeds from the ride will benefit our kids by providing them with discounted or free summer programming, ensuring that cost will not be a barrier for families. The

average summer camp or program costs are between \$250-\$400 per week. Thanks to the support of the community and donations from the bike ride, we will charge \$75 per week and provide scholarships

to families who may need additional financial support."

Ms. Hamilton also mentioned that their eight-week summer program for kids, ages 5-13, includes varied activities including STEM, the arts, athletics, games, and other events. In addition they provide free lunch and snacks to all club members and field trips to Canobie Lake Park, Legoland, Mystic Aquarium, and more. For their teens, they will host Teen Nites throughout the summer where they will participate in a job-preparation program, babysitting certification, and financial literacy. The club is also teaming up with a local driving school to provide free driver's education.

The club is celebrating its 60th year as an organization, are excited about their local impact, and look forward to a future working with a community that truly cares about kids. To learn more about the local club and programs, please visit www.bgcwebsterdudley.org.

"We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future."
-Franklin Roosevelt

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Bay Path adds newborn assessments to the Nursing Program

Effectively training nursing students for real life-or-death situations is a difficult task. Nursing students rely on proper training for the necessary, life-saving techniques. Preparations for responding to

very thorough and Professor Olivar made it fun! “Usually, nursing students read about the newborn assessments or listen to faculty presentations,” but with these neonatal babies, the nursing

decisions, even simple ones such as naming the manikin. “We love that our alumni are supporting current cohorts even after they have left, continuing to recognize that nursing is vital to improving healthcare for all,” said Bolandrina. “We are extremely appreciative of the generosity of time, inspiration, and camaraderie from the alumni, and the opportunities it provides the current students in their practical nursing education,” concluded Bolandrina.

Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy runs a 40-week, (10-month), full-time, Monday through Friday, evening program. The program begins mid-August and is completed in late

June. Graduates receive a Practical Nursing Certificate and are eligible to take the NCLEX-PN licensure exam. The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is fully approved by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Executive Office of Health and

Human Services Department of Public Health, Board of Registration in Nursing (www.mass.gov/dph/boards/rn). The Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy is accredited by the Commission on Occupational Education (www.council.org).



emergencies include the basics of assessment skills. Nursing students at Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy now have a new tool that will give them a better idea of what it is like to assess a newborn and eventually, what it is like to respond to a visible, tangible medical crisis.

Due to Dr. Ana Olivar’s innovative teaching style and methods, and funding from Perkin’s Fund Code 453 Grant, Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy was able to acquire Anatomy Lab Neonatal babies: Manikin boys and Manikin girls, which are life-like manikins that will provide students with experience in newborn assessments in a safe, controlled environment. Student feedback includes: “The newborn assessment was a great addition to our curriculum, I think that type of education is much more valuable than lecture by itself.” “The newborn assessment was

students will be able to learn through visual and tactile cues,” said Grehline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN, Academy Director. “These new babies are a valuable addition to our Nursing Program,” said Bolandrina. “It provides our students with a realistic assessment experience and prepares them for their future careers as healthcare professionals.”

A name reveal ceremony is being planned. Alumni are welcome and encouraged to participate. Gender-neutral names are being considered. However, the idea of alumni adopting babies to honor someone, be it faculty, peers, or family members is also being considered. In addition to honoring alumni, the PN staff and faculty wanted the students in the program not only to have access to something important to their overall training but to be engaged and involved in

Lake Chagogagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg



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Greatest Hits Cannabis earns Chamber's Silver Hammer Award

Greatest Hits Cannabis Co. has been awarded the prestigious "Silver Hammer Award" by the Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce. The award is given yearly by the Chamber at an annual ceremony to acknowledge construction or rehabilitation projects that have an extraordinary visual and aesthetic impact on our physical landscape and that bring new life to some of the region's most historic assets.

Greatest Hits CEO Joe Villatico

said "we are proud to not only receive this award but also determined to continue our policy of community involvement."

Management and employees of Greatest Hits take the acknowledgement very seriously and participate in a wide variety of community initiatives.

"It is in our DNA to help the community in whatever way we can and many times we cooperate with existing community-based organizations to do so," Mr. Vil-

latico said. "We also strive to make our facilities as visually appealing as possible, so that our customers can enjoy the most pleasant experience."

Greatest Hits Cannabis Co. is a three-part endeavor, starting with retail locations in Dudley, Taunton and soon-to-open Lynn.

Both cultivation and manufacturing operations will be added in the near future.



A sharp-looking interior is part of the appeal management and staff at Greatest Hits Cannabis's Dudley location has created.

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1st Choice Automotive: Detailing and much more, in Oxford

A building at 381 Main St. in Oxford has become the home of 1st Choice Automotive, a sales, service and detailing business owned and operated by Joshua Tyck and Diana Hryzan.

1st Choice opened in January and is a multi-faceted venture for the couple.

"We do detailing, oil changes, tune-ups and car service," Ms. Hryzan said on May 3rd. "We will also be selling used cars. This is a new business for myself and my boyfriend. We have four bays in the building altogether and are offering a spring special for detailing starting at \$150, a full detailing inside and out."

The couple also has a food truck on site that will be available to rent "and an ice cream truck is coming."

Mr. Tyck owned a detailing shop a while ago and is a carpenter by trade. "I'm a mom of three who got roped into this for the fun," she said.

Both are residents of Oxford.



Before and after photos, reflective of the detailing work done at 1st Choice Automotive in Oxford.

Both do detailing. Both are eager to host a grand opening for 1st Choice Automotive later this month.

Detailing is a cornerstone of the business. "Normally we need about four hours to do the job and customers can leave the car for the day and we offer rides if they need them," Ms. Hryzan said.

She describes 1st Choice Automotive as a "community-oriented" venture.

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.

A neighborly Boston Marathon for Douglas's Kelly Manning

BY ROD LEE

Kelly Manning, who is assistant fire chief in the town of Douglas, knows all about the heart-break that can come to runners in the Boston Marathon; and not just from that famous hill competitors have to deal with late in the race.

Taking part in the 127th Boston Marathon on April 17th—her third—Ms. Manning finished with a time of 4 hours and 24 minutes.

"It was not my best but with this being the tenth anniversary of the bombing I wanted to run," she said during a telephone conversation on May 1st.

Assistant Chief Manning is used to overcoming challenges, as for instance when she puts in the work on trails and obstacles courses necessary to be in condition to run 26.2 miles.

Also, in 2020, she was named full-time assistant fire chief in Douglas after fourteen years as a call member of the Douglas FD. Her promotion generated a flood of congratulations. "Hell of a firefighter and an absolute vault of knowledge. Any department is lucky to have her," Sean Matthew wrote on Facebook. "A well-deserved promotion and it's fantastic to see female leadership in the fire service," was the comment posted by Michelle Wills.

Disappointed as she was with the clocking she posted in the nation's most famous foot race, Ms.

Manning was pleased that she was presented with a medal at the finish line by Wanda Reynolds of Webster. Entirely a coincidence, but satisfying in that Ms. Manning knows members of Ms. Reynolds' family; it was a neighbor-to-neighbor moment that left both smiling. It is also one of those many stories that come out of the Boston Marathon that makes the event a world-renowned drawing card.

As evidence that she is not deterred by her performance, Ms. Manning was planning to run the Providence Marathon the first weekend in May in an attempt to qualify for Boston 2024.

Her Boston debut came in 2019 when she ran in memory of fallen Worcester firefighter Chris Roy, in support of Firefighter Roy's daughter.

As for Ms. Reynolds, she is apparently one of the thousands of volunteers who keep the Boston Marathon working like a fine watch. They hail from at least forty-four states and nineteen countries, and include medical personnel, law enforcement and security, according to the Boston Athletic Association.

Ms. Reynolds did not immediately respond to an email requesting comment about her experience greeting Ms. Manning on race day.

Meanwhile, a longtime volunteer, who has been associated with the Boston Marathon for approximately thirty years, snapped a photo of Ms. Reynolds with Ms. Manning on



Douglas Fire Department Assistant Chief Kelly Manning receives her medal from Wanda Reynolds of Webster after finishing the 2023 Boston Marathon.

Boylston Street; he wishes to remain anonymous, saying "this story is about them, not me."

Ms. Manning describes the Boston Marathon as "one of the toughest" races, requiring "a lot of training."

She can take pride in the fact that both elite women's marathon running, and, similarly, amateur participation in the sport, is growing, hitting new heights every year, according to The New York Times.

Boston's ranks are expanding even faster, year-to-year, than those of the men. Fourteen of this year's elite women runners at the start of the Boston Marathon had previously run a marathon in under 2:21.

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SPORTS

Bartlett High softball in building mode this season

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Last spring the Bartlett softball team finished the regular season around .500, earning itself a spot in the Division 4 State Tournament. Unfortunately, once in the tournament the Indians were not able to make it past their first game and succumbed to Abington 9-3.

Regrettably Coach Courtney Stawiecki will be returning only five athletes to this year's team from the previous team. Stawiecki only has fifteen players on her roster this year and out of the ten newcomers, eight have never played the sport.

Vicky Spitz, the Indians' first baseman, was lost for the season due to an injury sustained during the basketball season and was not cleared to play softball this spring.

"The loss of Vicky completely changes the dynamic of our infield, and we are forced to consistently move people around," the Bartlett coach said.

Sophomores Taryn Gerber and Dakota Vaudriul will make up the Indians' battery. Gerber will

be located behind the plate full-time this year after only getting into one contest as a catcher last spring. She found herself mostly as a utility player as a freshman. Vaudriul was a left fielder for Stawiecki last season but will be in the circle this year for Bartlett. Last season she had encountered a shoulder injury and wasn't allowed to pitch.

The other three athletes to return to the field this year are all seniors: Camryn Philips, Elizabeth Adams and Dawanee Phangthavong. Philips, according to the coach, was groomed to be a second baseman with smoothness to her game, but she will also play first and shortstop as well. The senior is trying to step up for the squad and taking more of a leadership role and communicating with the team.

Adams will be playing first base as well as sharing time with Dakota pitching and Phangthavong is moving over from right field into center, where she will take command of the outfield. Phangthavong has the range to play center while helping out the corner outfielders, which are typically new and unestablished



The Bartlett High softball team, hoping for a return to the state tournament.

players. Outside of Vaudriul, Phangthavong is the team's only other experienced outfielder.

Despite having such a small team with only five returning players the coach is looking for growth throughout the season from her athletes. As they continue to play the sport she is hoping that they become more consist defensively, while putting together at bats at the plate.

Following the season Stawiecki is really hoping that the new kids decide to come back next year with some experience under their belts.

"After the five seniors graduate that will leave us with only nine

returners for next year if they all decide to come back," she said. "It's tough because of the numbers we don't even have a junior varsity program to pull from."

According to Stawiecki, the younger kids are just not getting involved with the sport of softball anymore, leaving the high school without any type of feeder program.

"It's not that we're losing the girls to other sports, the girls are just not playing softball. Historically, you have kids moving through the rec leagues into middle school and then into high school, but not lately," she said.

"The rec league programs are not

even getting the girls and they are having number issues as well. In fact, we're not the only school to have low numbers playing the sport, a lot of schools are also having the number issues as well."

While she still has a full team Stawiecki is hoping that her squad continues to build upon the program while improving the athletes on the field in hopes of returning to the tournament once again. Hopefully this time around Bartlett can take its success deeper into the tournament which in turn will open the eyes of some of the younger girls who will want to play for the team next spring.

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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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LIVING WITH LUKE

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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



Behaving like a gentleman at Barnes & Noble

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 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

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, informally 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,



Playtime with Golden pal, Tucker

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.

along with sound research that a "later neuter" is 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



Luke shows his serious side

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 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 retrievers. 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

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LUKE

continued on page 21

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 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



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

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 20

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



Luke on the lookout

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 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 knelt by the dogs' side and fought to pry Kyle's mouth from Luke's 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 Insta-

gram @ 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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To help achieve your financial goals, you may need to invest in the financial markets throughout your life. However, at times your investment expectations may differ from actual returns, triggering a variety of emotions. So, what are reasonable expectations to have about your investments?



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

Ideally, you hope that your investment portfolio will eventually help you meet your goals, both your short-term ones, such as a cross-country vacation, and the long-term ones, such as a comfortable retirement. But your expectations may be affected by several factors, including the following:

Misunderstanding – Various factors in the economy and the

financial markets trigger different reactions in different types of investments — so you should expect different results. When you own stocks, you can generally expect greater price volatility in the short term. Over time, though, the “up” and “down” years tend to average out. When you own bonds, you can expect less volatility than individual stocks, but that’s not to say that bond prices never change. Generally, when interest rates rise, you can anticipate that the value of your existing, lower-paying bonds may decrease, and when rates fall, the value of your bonds may increase.

Recency bias – Investors exhibit “recency bias” when they place too much emphasis on recent events in the financial markets, expecting that those same events will happen again. But these expectations can lead to negative behavior. For example, in 2018, the Dow Jones Industrial Average fell almost 6% – so investors subject to recency bias might have concluded it was best to stay out of the markets for a while. But the Dow jumped more than 22% the very next year. Of course, the reverse can also be true: In 2021, the Dow rose almost 19%, so investors who might have been susceptible to recency bias may have thought they were in for more big gains right away — but in 2022, the Dow fell almost 9%. Here’s the bottom line: Recency bias may cloud your expectations about your investments’

performance — and it’s essentially impossible to predict accurately what will happen to the financial markets in any given year.

Anchoring – Another type of investment behavior is known as “anchoring” — an excessive reliance on your original conviction in an investment. So, for instance, if you bought stock in a company you thought had great prospects, you might want to keep your shares year after year, even after evidence emerges that the company has real risks — for example, poor management, or its products could become outdated, or it could be part of an industry that’s in decline. But if you stick with your initial belief that the company will inevitably do well, and you’re not open to new sources of information about this investment, your expectations may never be met.

In many areas of life, reality may differ from our expectations — and that can certainly be true for our investments. Being familiar with the factors that can shape your expectations can help you maintain a realistic outlook about your investments.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert Street, Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com. Edward Jones Member SIPC



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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



BY JOHN PAUL

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 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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