

Oh My Gourd! A boo-tiful night is in store!

The Sutton Fourth Committee invites you to get ready for this highly anticipated event of the year - the upcoming, thrilling third edition of the "Oh My Gourd, It's the Great Pumpkin Extravaganza" on Saturday, Oct. 28 at the Sutton Town Common. This event is free and open to the general public of all ages.

Brace yourselves as we unveil the most intricately carved pumpkins from our community. Next, steel yourself for a new-this-year a scarecrow contest. There is no entry fee for either contest, but donations are gladly accepted. For more information and to register for either contest, visit thesuttonfourth.org. Pumpkins and scarecrows will be displayed until November 2.

Also included in this year's event is the enchanting witches' dance, a dance performance by Murphy's Academy of Irish Dance, a "Boo Bash" at the Sutton Public Library, a haunting graveyard tour in the Center Cemetery hosted by the Sutton Historical Society, and a Trunk or Treat Extravaganza hosted by the PTO. Don't forget

At last year's Oh My Gourd Event, ghosts danced in front of Polly's Antiques and a tractor displayed plethora of pumpkins. Submitted photos



Public Library
5- 8 p.m. Historic Graveyard Tours – Center Cemetery, 4 Uxbridge Road
5 – 8 p.m. Halloween Village Display – General Rufus Putnam Museum, 4 Uxbridge Road

to step into The General Rufus Putnam Museum, 4 Uxbridge Road, to view the Sutton Historical Society's informative exhibit about the building's 200 years of history, and to view a not-to-be missed, unique miniature Halloween village display.

Events at the Common
All times and locations subject to change – visit thesuttonfourth.org for updates.

4 - 10 p.m. Oh My Gourd Pumpkin and Scarecrow Display
4 - 6 p.m. Boo Bash - Sutton

5 p.m. Murphy's Academy of Irish Dance – Town Common
5 p.m. Sutton Lions Club will be serving food on the Common
5:30 p.m. Witches of Sutton – Town Common
Events at the Sutton Schools - 409 Boston Road
4 p.m. Witches' Dance
5 - 7p.m. Trunk or Treat sponsored by the Sutton PTO (for information about trunk or treat, visit sites.google.com/view/sutton-tort2023/home)



Victory! Eric Shroyer at the completion of his swim. Photo submitted

Distance swim marks a milestone birthday

BY PATTY ROY

Eric Shroyer celebrated his 50th birthday in August, but decided to add a challenge to the festivities by making a long swim around Manchaug Pond.

Rather than setting distance goals, Shroyer headed for landmarks as he rounded the circumference of the lake.

"I swam point to point around

the perimeter of the lake," he said. "The channel where the dam is, and on the other side by old Holbrook Campground, there's a sandbar, Blueberry Island and there's conservation land on one point, the South Cove." Those were the markers he used, familiar to him from boyhood.

He wore no fins, no goggles, no swim shirt, just kept it simple with swimming trunks. Shroyer guessed the water temperature was about 70 degrees. "It was nice, it was a warm night the night before."

He also noted it was cloudy and rainy on the day of his swim "So that lowered the chances of me getting hit by a boat."

Shroyer completed the swim in under two hours, but claims the kudos must be shared.

"My wife Karen really deserves the credit here because she sat next to me in a kayak so I didn't get hit by a boat. She's the real star here," Shroyer said.

Shroyer grew up on the lake and always loved swimming and

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SWIM

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SWIM

continued from page 1

spending time there. "There's a lot of good people on the lake. The Manchaug Pond Foundation does a good job raising money and things like that."

He muses that maybe he caught

the competitive swim bug from his daughter Allie, a senior who swims with the Grafton High School Gators and is a team MVP.

"She would critique my form and tell me how I could do it better," he laughed.

Shrayer did some light training over the summer, extending his swims every time he went in.

"I started from where my family's house is and just kept upping the distance" he said, "until I thought I could do it without drowning."

Reflecting on his long distance swim, Shrayer modestly described his achievement as "nice."

"Yeah, I guess if I'm going to turn

50, I figured I might as well get out there and do something I'd like to do," he said.

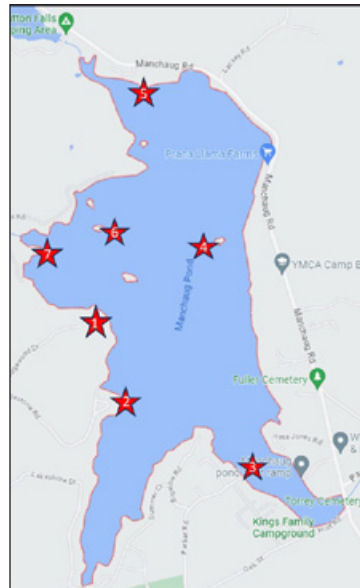
Shrayer also gave credit to The Manchaug Pond Foundation for the healthy, clear condition of the water. They raise funds for tending to this precious resource by running events like the DAM Race 5K and 3K Health Walk on Oct. 14.

The Manchaug Pond Foundation, is a 501c3 non-profit public charity. Race registration begins at 8:30 a.m. with the runners taking off at 9:30 a.m.

The route is a scenic one, skirting the lake, with the start at 19 Hole Road near King's Campground. There is parking at both the start and finish line. Hang around for refreshments after. \$20 to enter. Register at manchaug-pond.org/events-info/damrace/



Above: Shrayer's entrance to the Channel
Below, Manchaug Pond map showing Eric Shrayer's point to point 50th birthday swim.
Photo submitted



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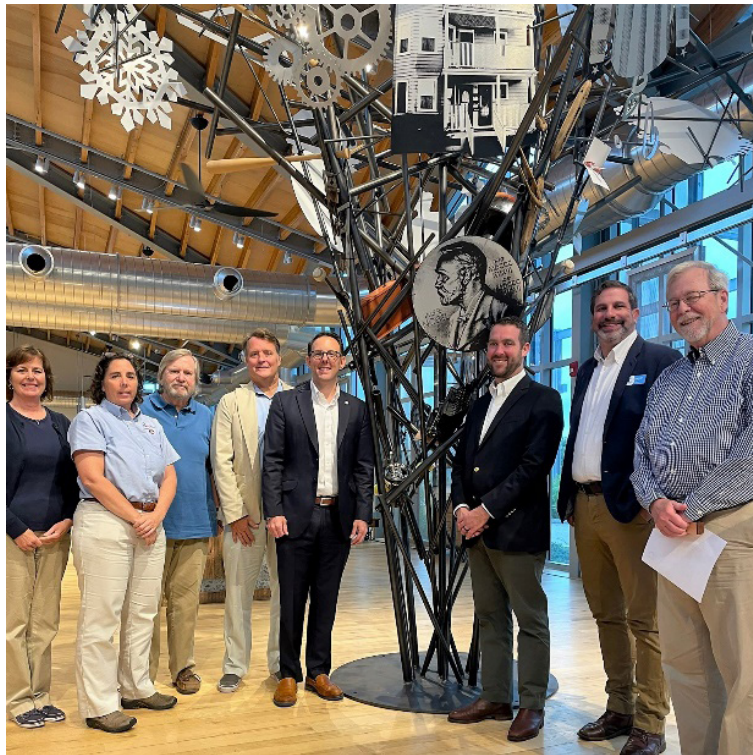
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Blackstone River Valley Heritage Center at Worcester Reopens

The Blackstone River Valley Heritage Center at Worcester (3 Paul Clancy Way, Worcester, MA) has reopened for visitors under the management of the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (MassDCR). Operating hours are Thursday through Sunday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

In July, representatives from MassDCR and Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BHC) were brought together by Senator Michael Moore and Representative Dan Donahue to discuss the reopening of the Worcester Visitor Center and its importance to the community and the region. The Visitor Center opened to the public in October of 2018. Due to COVID, it was closed to the public in March of 2020.

“It was a pleasure to visit the Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center,” Senator Michael Moore announced after his visit to talk about the reopening. “We discussed the history of the Blackstone Valley and the ways we’re sharing its fascinating stories with residents and visitors alike through interactive exhibits. Thank you to Commissioner Arrigo for your incredible work to preserve the history of this great Commonwealth!” The Heritage Center houses several



From left: Susan Hamilton (MassDCR), Jennifer Stowe (MassDCR), Dennis Rice (BHC BoD), Senator Michael Moore, Commissioner Brian Arrigo (MassDCR), Representative Dan Donahue, Devon Kurtz (BHC), and Harry Whitin (BHC BoD). Photo submitted

hands-on exhibits, telling the nationally significant story of the Blackstone River Valley being the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. In addition, there are a number of outdoor exhibits that interpret history and the natural environment. The Heritage Center is also home to the start of a 2.5-mile segment

of the Blackstone River Bikeway that runs to Millbury for a five mile round trip ride.

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All programs are free and open to the public. Bring water, wear sunscreen/bug spray, and dress for the outdoors. Sturdy footwear is strongly recommended for hiking events. An adult must accompany all children. Hiking programs are canceled in inclement weather. For more information call 508-234-9610 or visit: mass.gov/locations/purgatory-chasm-state-reservation

Purgatory Chasm State Reservation is located at 198 Purgatory Road, Sutton MA 01590.

Please note that public programming may be affected by construction projects taking place within the park.

MEET SMOKEY THE BEAR SUNDAY, OCT. 8 1-2 P.M.

For 79 years Smokey has helped park goers understand the importance of using fire responsibly. Help us kick off Fire Prevention Week by meeting Smokey Bear and our Department of Conservation and Recreation firefighters!

Join us at the Pavilion near the chasm's entrance. The event will happen rain or shine, though will cancel for hazardous weather.

CHASM HIKE FRIDAYS 11 A.M. – 12 P.M., SATURDAYS 2-3 P.M., SUNDAYS 3-4 P.M.

Scramble around boulders while taking in the mystery of Purgatory Chasm. Find out about the park's history and cultural influence, the chasm's rock formations, or the wild-life that call the chasm home. Meet at the pavilion at the mouth of the chasm. Appropriate for ages 8 and above. About a half mile over moderate terrain.

CHASM PRIMER SATURDAYS AND SUNDAYS 11:30 A.M.

Find out the chasm's history in just 15 minutes. This is the perfect primer before your hike through the chasm. Meet at the mouth of the chasm. Appropriate for ages 8 and up.

GLACIAL GEOLOGY HIKE MONDAYS 2 - 3:30 P.M.

Discover our glacial past on this one mile hike to Little Purgatory. Meet at the Visitor Center. Suitable for ages 8 and above. About one mile over moderate terrain.

OFF THE BEATEN PATH FRIDAYS 2:30 – 3:30 P.M.

Hiking trails are the heart of our park system and getting outdoors is a great way to exercise. Join us on this recreational hike with other like-minded people. Meet at the Visitor Center. Appropriate for ages 8 and above. About one mile over easy terrain.

ROCK DETECTIVES SATURDAYS 10 – 11 A.M.

Have you ever wondered where rocks come from? See a bunch of different rocks and find out more about where they have been and where they are going. Stay for five minutes or an hour. Meet in the pavilion near the entrance to the chasm. Appropriate for ages 4 and above. The program will be held in the Visitor Center during inclement weather.

SECRETS OF THE SKULL SUNDAYS 10 – 11 A.M.

We can learn many things about how an animal lives by looking at its skull. Join us to look for clues about how different animals survive by examining their skulls. Stay for five minutes or an hour. Meet in the pavilion near the entrance to the chasm. Appropriate for ages 4 and above. The program will be held in the Visitor Center during inclement weather.

TIME TRAVELER TOUR MONDAYS 11 A.M. – 12 P.M.

Take a step back in time! Get an introduction to this unique park as we walk among the historic structures and geological features, jumping around the park's history all the while. Meet at the Visitor Center. Suitable for ages 8 and above. Approximately one mile over easy terrain.

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If you own a small business or are self-employed, you've always got plenty to do, but you can't forget about the days when you'll be less busy — that is, when you're retired. How can you prepare for that time of your life?

One key step is establishing a retirement plan for your business or yourself. And thanks to

the 2022 SECURE 2.0 Act, you can now receive tax credits for opening and administering a 401(k), SEP-IRA or SIMPLE IRA. These aren't the only plans available for small businesses or sole proprietors, but they are among the most popular.

Let's look at each of them:

• **401(k)** – A 401(k) offers several key benefits: First, any earnings growth is tax deferred, and your contributions can be tax deductible. (Taxes are due upon withdrawal, and withdrawals prior to age 59½ may be subject to a 10% penalty.)

If you choose a Roth 401(k), your contributions aren't deductible, but your earnings and withdrawals will be tax free, provided you meet certain conditions. And a 401(k) offers a variety of investment options. If you have workers, you'll need to consider whether to offer match-

ing contributions, which are tax deductible to you, up to the limit of 25% of compensation paid to eligible employees.

But even if you're self-employed, with no employees other than your spouse, you can establish what's known as a "solo" or "owner-only" 401(k). In 2023, you can put in up to \$22,500 as an employee, plus a catch-up contribution of \$7,500 if you're 50 or older, for a total of \$30,000. Plus, you can contribute an additional 25% of earned income as an employer, up to an overall employee and employer maximum of \$66,000 (or \$73,500 if you're 50 or older).

• **SEP-IRA** – An SEP-IRA may be attractive to you if you're self-employed or if you own a business but have few or no employees. That's because you must contribute an equal percentage of your own

compensation to every eligible employee. In 2023, you can contribute up to \$66,000 or 25% of your income, whichever is less.

• **SIMPLE IRA** – A SIMPLE IRA is easy to establish and administer. As with an SEP-IRA, earnings in a SIMPLE IRA can grow on a tax-deferred basis. If you have employees, they aren't required to contribute to this plan — but you are. You must match up to 3% of employees' contributions or provide 2% of their annual salaries, although you do have some flexibility. If your business goes through a rough patch, you can temporarily decrease SIMPLE IRA contributions to 1% for up to two years out of the previous five. Your contributions to your employees' accounts are tax deductible, but in terms of building resources for your own retirement, a SIMPLE IRA may be less appealing because

of its contribution limits, which are relatively low compared to a 401(k) or SEP IRA. In 2023, you can put in up to \$15,500, or \$19,000 if you're 50 or older.

You should consult with your tax advisor to determine which retirement plan is right for you. Your financial advisor can also help you explore your options. And the sooner you put a plan to work, the better.

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QCC awards \$1.2 million under MassReconnect

Quinsigamond Community College has awarded 410 students a total of \$1.2 million to cover tuition, fees and books under Massachusetts's new MassReconnect program that makes community college free for eligible Massachusetts residents

aged 25 and older. QCC's financial aid and admissions department worked rapidly to secure funding for the first group of students who will receive MassReconnect funding for the fall 2023 semester. QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja joined Governor Healey earlier today for

the official announcement of the program. "Governor Healey's MassReconnect initiative will be life-changing for so many residents in the Commonwealth who, until now, have not had the financial means to attain or complete a college education," said Dr. Pedraja. "At QCC, we anticipate MassReconnect to have a major impact on the communities we serve. This initiative will support thousands of Massachusetts residents to achieve their education and occupational goals, while increasing the economic health and prosperity of the Commonwealth. I want to personally thank Governor Healey and the Massachusetts legislature for supporting a program that will change the trajectory of the lives of so many people."

Governor Healey invested \$20 million in MassReconnect for the first year of implementation in her

first budget that she signed earlier this month. This funding covers the full cost of tuition and fees and includes an allowance for books and supplies at each of Massachusetts' 15 community colleges. Additionally, each community college will also receive \$100,000 from this funding to support student and community program awareness, staffing, and program administration.

"MassReconnect will be transformative for thousands of students, for our amazing community colleges, and for our economy," said Governor Healey. "It will bolster the role of community colleges as economic drivers in our state and help us better meet the needs of businesses to find qualified, well-trained workers. We can also make progress in breaking cycles of intergenerational poverty by helping residents complete their higher education credentials so

they can attain good jobs and build a career path. Our administration is grateful for the partnership of the Legislature to move forward on this critical program that will make our state more affordable, competitive and equitable."

Funding from MassReconnect is still available for the fall semester. In order to qualify for MassReconnect, students must be 25 or older on the first day of their classes and be a permanent Massachusetts resident for at least one year at the start of the enrolled term. The program is limited to residents who have not previously earned a college degree (associates or bachelor's) who enroll in at least six credits per semester in an approved program of study leading to an associate degree or certificate at a community college.

To learn more, visit QCC.edu/Massreconnect



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Blackstone Valley Heritage Quilters Guild

The Blackstone Valley Heritage Quilters Guild would like to welcome new members to the guild this season 2023/2024 year. Are you a quilter? Maybe you have thought you might like to improve or learn how to make beautiful, fun quilts. Well, in this guild you will meet many talented ladies always willing to teach and help everyone. You will get to enjoy programs during meetings such as speakers from various quilt shops, like Blackstone Valley Quilt Shop from Rhode Island, the Quilted Crow and more. You will also learn helpful tips at the meetings and attend workshops with very creative ladies sharing their knowledge. BVHQ Guild meets on the last Wednesday of each month from 7-9pm. During

the winter, our meetings are held on Saturdays 1-3pm. All meetings are held at St. Patrick's Church in Whitinsville, with doors opening ½ hour prior to the start of the meetings. Workshops are 8:30-3:00 at St. Peter's Church in Northbridge on the first Saturday of each month. You will have the opportunity to learn hands on at the workshops while making an amazing pattern. This year our first workshop will be a holiday table runner. The runners will be shown at our first meeting. The instructor at the workshop will have samples and instructions as well as one-on-one assistance. These workshops are \$25 for members and \$35 for non-members. You can attend your first meeting free to enjoy and learn about us. We start

Wednesday, September 27, 2023. The doors open at 6:30 and the meeting starts at 7:00. Annual dues are \$30. Attending our meetings, you will have the opportunity of learning amazing tips and tricks along with new skills. Feel free to bring a friend. Please consider joining us this season and start creating your own quilted projects. Dates for meetings, programs, workshops, retreats and mystery trips will be available at the start of the meetings on September 27 at 7:00 at St. Patrick's Church in Whitinsville. The doors open at 6:30. We would love to meet you at our meetings this fall. Come to enjoy a wonderful social evening. For more information contact: Marsha Lambert MLuvs2sew@gmail.com




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Heirloom Emporium Invites Shoppers to Open Gallery and Christmas Preview

Folks who appreciate fine artisanship are invited to spend the afternoon of Sept. 30 at Heirloom Emporium

opportunity to see some of the items we'll be featuring through the holidays and find out how they can customize and order pieces

that Heirloom Emporium is not an antique market: it is a retail gallery carrying new, one-of-a-kind items.

"Heirloom refers to the future, not the past," she said. Heirloom Emporium will also feature the return of "Shut the Box", the gallery's most popular board game of 2022.

"It's an easy game to learn and play," Anderson explained. "It's the perfect family game. You don't need a strategy or skill set to win and it's fast-paced, so there is no chance of getting bored while you play."

Heirloom Emporium offers "Shut the Box" in two sizes along with customized finishes and engraving. Other games that will be available for sampling include "Pegs & Jokers," "Mancala," and "Aggravation."

Heirloom Emporium, a retail gallery featuring fine woodwork



and fine craft, is the retail portion of Heirloom Evolution, the independent woodworking studio of Kevin and Julia Anderson. Heirloom Evolution specializes in custom board games, frames, heirloom quality clocks and ac-

cent furniture, and fine writing instruments. They also offer custom CNC milling and engraving services. More information can be found at www.heirloom-emporium.com or by following them on Facebook and Instagram.

rium and chat with artist-owners, Kevin and Julia Anderson, about their retail gallery, located on the second floor in Manchaug Mills, Sutton. The Open Gallery event will take place from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m., though the retail gallery will remain open until 6 p.m.

According to gallery manager Julia Anderson, "This is a special time set aside for the community to visit our retail gallery, enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, and ask questions about local artists who sell their work in our gallery. We also want to give people an

to make sure they're available in December."

All pieces sold in Heirloom Evolution are handmade by independent artists, Anderson emphasized.

"It's all in the name. It's important to give the name of the artist to the customer when they purchase an item in our store. I want our customer to know what they purchased came from someone in our community, that the artist stands by their work and the buyer can have confidence in the quality of the piece," she added, clarifying

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Fueling Students for Success with Healthy Meals Incentives Grant

The Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) Food Services program is fueling its students for success through high-quality breakfast and lunch offerings that are nutritious and delicious. As a proud recipient of a \$65,800 Healthy Meals Incentives grant from Action for Healthy Kids (AFHK), the funds will support their efforts to enhance the nutritional quality of school meals. The grant is part of an allocation of nearly \$30 million by the USDA Food and Nutrition Service to 264 schools across 44 states and the District of Columbia.

“We’re committed to creating restaurant-quality school meals that contain fresh, nutritious ingredients. Having continued access to nutritious meals promotes student learning and lifelong healthy eating behaviors,” said Chef Eric

Carlson, BVT’s Director of Food Services, who works alongside BVT’s Nutritionist Martha Pellegriano and the Food Services

AFHK and with the support of its partners, the Chef Ann Foundation and Rocky Mountain Center for Health Promotion and Education, will provide BVT’s Food Services staff with in-depth, individualized assistance and opportunities to collaborate during the school year on topics such as menu planning, recipe development, and food safety. With this grant, the school will also modernize its operations with a walk-in refrigerator and meal prep workstations for its cafeteria.

BVT is proud to partner with Action for Healthy Kids and USDA to strengthen its school meal program. To learn more about the Healthy Meals Incentives grant and the tasty items on this month’s lunch menu, visit valleytech.k12.ma.us/foodnutrition.

staff. “To help our students and staff manage their healthy eating habits, our lunch menu includes each item’s nutritional value.”

As part of the USDA’s Healthy Meals Incentives grant program,



200th anniversary for Rufus Putnam Museum

The Sutton Historical Society will hold a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the Rufus Putnam Building on Saturday, Sept. 30 from 12-3 p.m. at the Rufus Putnam Museum, 4 Uxbridge Road.

Historical Society members and the public are invited.

partial use as a school until 1910. In 1872, the first floor housed grades 1-8 while the second floor was dedicated to high school classes. In 1876, the first high school graduating class had five students. A group of 21 women eligible for membership in the Daugh-



This event will replace the annual Wagon and Cart Show which will return in 2024. The Rufus Putnam Building began its life as a building with a joint purpose, built by the Olive Branch Lodge of Master Masons and Sutton Centre School District in 1823 at a cost of \$714.92. The first lodge meeting was held on Jan. 1, 1824. By 1851, the lodge was sold to Sutton School District for at least

ters of the American Revolution (by virtue of being a descendant of a Revolutionary War soldier) founded the organization’s General Rufus Putnam Chapter in 1909. At a town meeting in March 1910, the old school building in Sutton Centre was leased to the Chapter for the period of 10 years at the sum of \$1 per year. By 1934, town population growth necessitated the use of the building as a school and the D.A.R. vacated the premises. However, in 1954 the D.A.R. returned and installed a commemorative display to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the town’s founding. The Sutton Library was housed in the building from 1957 -1982 with the Sutton Historical Society moving in since 1986. The town remains the owner. The celebration will include a reading of a state senate proclamation at 1 p.m. and an unveiling of a plaque donated by the Masons. Historical Society members will talk about and answer questions about the Rufus Putnam Museum building.

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Try Halloween at St-St-Sturbridge Village with Phantoms by Firelight

Sturbridge Village hosts its popular Halloween program for 12 nights this fall and it's bigger than ever. You're invited to step into the fire lit shadows of history and uncover its eerie tales. Learn about

explore history's haunted mysteries.

Don't miss this Halloween spectacular that runs Oct. 6-29 Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, 4:30- 9 p.m. General admission tickets go on sale Sept. 9. Full online ticker prices are

aerial dancers, and dark magicians have been heard about the town. You'll be enraptured by the captivating performances appearing from all corners of the Village.

Clues & Candy is the Village's version of trick-or-treat! Come dressed in costume. This is a fun-filled activity for kids young and old. Collect all the stamps at various locations in the Village to reveal a finished image or travel around and answer all the riddles. At the end, collect a bag full of candy and sweet treats.

Gather around the warm glow of the bonfire and join us for family-friendly, spooky stories around on the Village Common. Our talented narrators will share tales of New England ghosts, haunted houses not too far away, and gruesome legends from the past.

Learn about funeral traditions in the 1830s. Attend a wake, see coffin making in the Cabinetmaking shop, study examples of mourning jewelry and artwork being made from hair. Learn about the history of jack o'lanterns, other-worldly spirits, as well as creepy cures for diseases.

Try stilt walking or create spooky selfie for a spooky selfie contest.

Try a special menu at the Bullard Tavern or the Ox and Yoke Café to sample a spooktacular menu created for Phantoms by Firelight.

On select nights, October 14th, 22nd, and 27th, there will also be

a special author book signing with Thomas D'Agostino, one of the region's most well-known writers and investigators of the paranormal.



the history of Halloween traditions, play games, find treats and listen to ghost stories by the bonfire. Plus, be entertained by the spectacle of mesmerizing performances including fire breathing and flame spinning. Watch acrobats fly high over the Village with their vampire-like ways. From specters to secrets,

\$35 for an adult and \$17.50 for a youth. Members get reduced prices.

The extravaganza continues this year with new featured acts and returning acts to mesmerize and intrigue. Traveling performers take over the entire landscape with their feats of fire-defying dare. Whispering of fire throwers, acrobatics,

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<p>MAYTAG TOP FREEZER 18 CU. FT.</p> <p>\$699⁹⁹</p> <p><small>WAS \$899.99</small></p>	<p>AMANA GAS RANGE #AGR1533CBAS • Stainless Steel</p> <p>\$599⁹⁹</p> <p><small>WAS \$699.99</small></p>	<p>GE FRONT LOAD WASHER #GFWSSOSSNWW</p> <p>\$749⁹⁹</p> <p><small>WAS \$999.99</small></p>	<p>20 CU. FT. CHEST FREEZER</p> <p>\$899⁹⁹</p> <p><small>WAS \$1099.99</small></p>
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LIVING WITH LUKE

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Luke Valentino, a Dog with a Big Head

BY AMY LECLAIRE

Every dog I've owned has captured my heart in a different way. Duke was my humble German Shepherd, unaware of his majestic size, a dog whose stick happened to be a log that he carried around the yard. Max was my childhood flame, the hippie mongrel whose life was taken by the last car he would chase. Lincoln was my bestie, king of this very column, and victor of all things ball related. What about Luke Valentino?

Gosh how I love that meatball. His boxy head, gentle face, and inquisitive mind have had me at hello. His head (though a pedigree perk) has caused grand speculation. "Your dog has a blockhead!" They stalk him on the streets. "I've never seen a bigger block head than his!" They comment at cafes. "That is the blockiest head I've ever seen." Luke glances up at me while the irony settles between us. Luke Valentino is no blockhead. I say this with all due respect to



Clockwise from above: Luke and Rosie play hard, Luke and Rosie pose for the camera, Luke nibbles on a slice of watermelon and Luke Valentino, 18 months.



the blockhead dogs out there (I've owned a few). Some dogs just don't listen, understand, or care to comply. They are the dogs who dash for the woods when you call them

back. They are blockheads.

Luke, a non-blocky, is highly responsive, intelligent, and very capable when it comes to learning commands. He also knows how to do laundry, load the dishwasher, and dig holes for my flowers. Recently, he surprised me with even more knowledge—proper eating etiquette.

"Luke, do you want to try a piece?" He learned how to eat watermelon like a human! He sat, begged, and watched me eat with the attention of an overachiever. His nose moistened. His paw rose slowly from the ground, a trade-off. His eyes held the taste of desire while he watched the watermelon wedge move closer to his mouth.



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by Kelly Hauk

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"Go easy, Luke." He nibbled off the top, chewed, then repeated, just the way he saw me do it. "Good boy!" I imagined him wiping the corners of his mouth with a cloth napkin.

His eating manners have followed him to the front steps, where he sits patiently and watches how the rest of the world works. He knows the rules. He needs to STAY, even when tempted to GO. I've watched him lift his big head to

the fascinating sights on the road. Dogs on leashes and children on scooters fill his gaze. His heart swells with longing. "There goes Oscar, my little dachshund buddy." Every temptation draws him one thought closer to making the right choice. It's not easy for a play-

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BY MARK MARZEOTTI

Whether you're buying your first home or selling once again, it's critical to work with experts who can guide you through each unique step of the process like The Marzeotti Group.

The reality is, not all agents operate the same way. To truly

make a powerful and confident decision as you buy or sell a home, you need a real expert who uses their knowledge of what's really happening with home prices, housing supply, industry projections, and more to give you the best possible advice. Someone who can provide clarity and trust like that is essential to your success.

Housing market headlines are everywhere. Many are quite sensational, ending with exclamation points or predicting doom and gloom for the industry. Unfortunately, when information in the media isn't clear, it can generate a lot of fear and uncertainty for consumers. In the absence of trustworthy, up-to-date information, real estate decisions can be driven by fear, uncertainty, and doubt.

But it doesn't have to be that way. Buying a home is a big decision, and it should be one you feel confident making. You can lean on an expert to help you separate fact from fiction and get the answers you need.

The right agent can assist you in figuring out what's going on at the national level and in your local area. They can qualify headlines using data you can trust. Experts have in-depth knowledge of the industry and can provide facts, so you know how current trends compare to the normal ebbs and flows in the housing market, historical data, and more.

Then, to make sure you have the full picture, an expert can tell you if your local area is following the national trend or if they're seeing something different in your market. Together, you can

use all that information to make the best possible decision.

After all, making a move is a potentially life-changing milestone. It should be something you feel ready for and excited about. And that's where a trusted expert comes in. If you want sound

advice and trusted information about the housing market, reach out to The Marzeotti Group or a trusted real estate professional today.

LUKE

continued from page 10

ful pup to stay put. His pumpkin squash of a head creases. A group of young boys begin a game of Race at the Stop sign down the hill from the front steps. "One, two, three." He listens while they count and smiles. He seems to understand the sequence of numbers. Finally, off they go until out of sight. His smile closes while he concentrates on their disappearance, a sudden wolf in deep thought. "I bet I'm faster than them. The chubby one doesn't stand a chance." Sometimes the dichotomy between what Luke is supposed to do (STAY) and what he wants to do (GO) is just too great.

"Hi Rosie. I'm supposed to stay on my front step now." He watches his favorite Doodle stroll along the sidewalk with her Dog Mom. Typically, he sleeps late and doesn't get to see the early risers. This morning is special. Rosie's playful spirit matches Luke's exuberance. She's sprightly and spunky, known

to bounce across into my yard for a sudden playdate. "Hi Luke. I need to walk today." This morning is different. Rosie needs to pick up the pace and get back home. She cranes her neck back to tell Luke. Still, he remains unconvinced. "Stay a few minutes?" He moves to the middle of the lawn to give her a closer look at his big, handsome head. He stares and smiles, in hopes that she'll reciprocate his advance.

"I have to go now, Luke." Her Dog Mom tugs her forward until she passes by our house. Her pace is a shuffle at best. She's unable to resist Luke's glance. "I-have-to-go-for-a-walk-Luke." Her footsteps continue to stutter. Luke picks up on the cue. "She wants to play just as much as I do. I can feel it."

Suddenly, he breaks the STAY rule. He turns into a blockhead. "ROSIEEEEEEE!!!!" He arrives within seconds at her shoulder and noses her side. "Freedom!" Within seconds the two friends are a tangle of play in my yard. Dog Moms have been had. I should be redirecting my dog to his spot

on the step and exerting a dose of tough love. Instead, I consider the full evidence of his behavior. He stayed on the step while racers sprinted up the road. He learned how to eat watermelon.

Two out of three isn't bad, especially for a dog with a big head.

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SPORTS

Sutton Girls Soccer Looking to 3-Peat

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Over the past two seasons the Sutton girls soccer team has put together two impressive regular seasons, earning a 4 seed in 2021 and a two seed in 2022 entering the Division 5 State Championship Tournament. Once in the post-season, the Suzies have gone 10-0 capturing the state title both years. In 2021 Sutton scored 14 goals while only allowing its opponents 5; last fall while still only allowing its opponents to score 5 times, Sutton was able to tally 23 goals and defeated the

number one seed Monson 3-2 for its second straight Division 5 State Championship.

Having only lost a few starters from last year's squad Coach Jensen Shipp and his team is looking for its third straight state championship.

"We lost a few and some of the girls are going to have to step up if we are to be successful once again," the Sutton Coach said. "There are some holes to fill, but we have some talented individuals who should rise and with new leadership taking over we are looking to be in good shape."

Juniors Addy Jerome, a center forward and Anna Joseph, a center midfielder, along with sophomore Ava Magnuson will be the Suzies tri-captains this fall hoping to guide Sutton back into the post-season.

Despite losing a handful of seniors to graduation, Sutton has 16 returners coming back from last year's team. Over the last two seasons Shipp has seen growth in his team and if they can come out and control possession and dictate the game he firmly believes this team will be right back in the finals.

"We want to be the aggressors and take control, letting the opposition have to adjust to us," Shipp said. "We have experience with so many of our returners and our expectations are high."

When it comes to goals the Sutton coach confirmed that the team discusses that behind closed doors, and it stays within the team. However, they do want to take their past success and raise the bar this year; especially since they have a new challenge in moving up to Division 4.

"Overall, we are not sitting still. We are not satisfied with what we've done over the past two seasons," the Coach said. "We want

to come out and try to do some things that we haven't been able to accomplish."

If Sutton can come out and improve upon their success over the past few seasons the Suzies will be looking real good come next fall as the squad has only two seniors (Keira Fadden and Erica Wallace) on this year's team. Fadden will rotate with the center forwards looking to help the team up top, while Wallace can play just about anywhere on the field and will provide some positive things for the team; she too, like Fadden, will be coming off the bench.

With only two seniors Shipp will be relying on his big junior class to keep the team moving in the right direction over the next two seasons. With so many talented juniors roaming the field, they all find ways to lead the team in their own way.

Offensively, Sutton will look to Magnuson and Jerome to be the main threat in putting the ball into the net. According to Shipp, each girl should be able to score at least 20 goals this season for the Suzies. They are both experienced players that do a fantastic job with the midfield and will also be able to create scoring opportunities for

the other members of the team.

Joseph, who does a little of everything for the squad in the middle, is exceptional at moving the ball up and down the field and her defense usually goes unnoticed, especially in the stats. Shipp feels despite Jerome putting up some quality numbers she is an underrated individual.

The center backs will be sophomore Aby Jenkins and junior Molly Jenkins, two incredibly solid back line players. As the two have gotten older their voices have been starting to get louder on the field in terms of communication. Sophomore Sarah Mendoza will be the third piece back there and will also be a key contributor to the defense on the back line.

The very last line of defense will be sophomore keeper Maddie Nunnemacher. As a freshman last season, she originally split time in goal, but eventually she made the goal keeper position her own. With the goal being her domain, the then freshman made some really big saves for Sutton, especially in the State Championship game.

"Her confidence has continued to rise," Shipp said. "During the off-season she worked incredibly hard and came back to the team this year even better and looking to hold down her position."

Things all seem to be lining up for the Suzies to have another successful regular season as they move toward the State Tournament in hopes of capturing its third straight championship. Although it could be their third title in as many years, this season would be in a tougher division.



Autumn Class Schedule

- Mondays**
9 am - 10 am Booty Barre
7 pm - 8 pm Hatha Restorative Yoga
- Tuesdays**
10:00 am - 11:00 am Vinyasa Yoga
5:30 pm - 6:30 pm Vinyasa Yoga
- Wednesdays**
9 am - 10 am Barre Sculpt
5 pm - 6 pm Barre Strength Cardio
6:30 pm - 7:30 pm Hatha Restorative Yoga
- Thursdays**
9 am - 10 am Barre Strength Cardio
6 pm - 7 pm Slow Flow Yoga
- Fridays**
9:15 am - 10 am Curls & Crunches
- Saturdays**
8:30 am - 9:30 am Hatha Yoga
10 am - 11 am Vinyasa Yoga
- Sundays**
8:30 am - 9:30 am Weekly Rotate Between Barre and Yoga

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bankHometown Awards \$4,000 in Scholarships to Area Grads



Danielle LaPlante



Gianna Solomon



Vanessa Muturi



Cali Brouillard



Jake Black

As part of the bank's charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, and its commitment to youth and education, bankHometown recently awarded \$4,000 in scholarships to graduating seniors of two local high schools.

Five students from Millbury High School and three students from Sutton High School were each awarded \$500 scholarships. The recipients demonstrated both academic achievement and financial need and will be enrolled in a four-year program at an accredited college or university this fall.

"Education is the key to bettering yourself along the road to independence and empowerment," said Robert J. Morton, bankHometown president and CEO. "So bankHometown is pleased to support them as they continue their journey of unlocking their potential through education."

At Millbury High School, Gianna Solomon was awarded the bankHometown Achievement Scholarship and will attend Worcester State University; Cali Brouillard was awarded the bankHometown Leadership Scholarship

and will attend Worcester State University; Danielle LaPlante received the bankHometown Scholarship in Memory of Marjorie Matson, awarded to a student who wants to pursue a career in banking or financial services, and plans to attend the University of Maine; Jake Black received the bankHometown Academic Merit Award and will be attending Boston University; and Vanessa Muturi was awarded the bankHometown Community Service Scholarship in Memory of Gail Higginbottom and will be attending Williams College.

At Sutton High School, Caroline Howe was awarded the bankHometown Academic Merit Scholarship; Maxwell Herbert was awarded the bankHometown Community Spirit Scholarship; and Macy Hutchinson was awarded the bankHometown Leadership Scholarship.

About bankHometown

Founded in 1889, bankHometown is headquartered in Oxford, Massachusetts and has \$1.3 billion in assets and 16 branches located

throughout Central Massachusetts and northeast Connecticut. Through its sponsorship and charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, bankHometown and the Hometown Bank Community Foundation support non-profit organizations and causes throughout Worcester and Windham Counties. In 2022, The Giving Tree donated approximately \$320,000 and over the last decade has donated more than \$2.5 million. For more information, visit bankhometown.com.

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Where are the Remains of Rhode Island's First Settler? Part 2

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

When last we heard of the whereabouts of the Rev. Blackstone's remains, they were interred in the vast works of the Ann & Hope Mill. Did they stay there? Read on to find out. (Missed Part 1? Visit theyankeexpress.com)

According to Amelia Daggert Sheffield who had taken her father's accounts and edited them for the book "A Sketch of the History of Attleborough from its Settlement to the Division," the box was to be buried under the building and the monument erected in his name. A very old postcard of the mill shows the monument beside one of the mill walls.

The monument as described by Mrs. Sheffield stood a few yards from the original grave which was now covered by the Ann & Hope mill. In her own words from the aforementioned book:

"It is of granite about twelve

feet high,-the base five or six feet square and the shaft a foot or more smaller, tapering slightly. It is within the enclosed grounds of the mill, surrounded by the vivid green of a beautiful lawn, being the only object on it."

The front has a cross on it, naming it as the Rev. Blackstone's burial place, as well as the claim that he was a founder of Boston and the first white settler of Rhode Island. The monument's other three sides boast the rest of his lifetime achievements, the date of his settlement in Rhode Island (a year before his friend Roger Williams) and date of his death. All in all, pretty typical of an honorary monument. As for his bones, a certain G.W. Pratt was entrusted to hold onto the wooden box which had been sealed with lead and metal bands until the mill was completed and the monument erected.

For many years the remains of Preacher Blackstone rested with his monument in the industrial clamor of whirring engines and

spindles. The "Spirit of the Gentle Sage" was most definitely out of his environment in this eternal habitat. His mortal coil was untouched from 1889 to the 1940's when the textile industry began a southward migration in search of cheaper labor. Ann & Hope's majestic walls soon held but memories and ghosts of the American Industrial Revolution. As for the monument, the grass grew wild and the stone fell into neglect.

This was short lived, however. World War II gave new life to the mill as a repair depot for armory of the Navy. Now the monument had a new dilemma. The hustle and bustle of trains loading and unloading threatened its existence. The First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland then entered in agreement to move the monument to a piece of their land for further preservation. The Navy agreed and in 1944 William Blackstone's monument was moved to its present location on Broad and Cumberland Streets which overlooks the rear of the great mill.

Were his remains moved with the monument? It was then unclear whether they had been dug up and relocated. It was unclear if they had ever been buried under or near the vast stone to begin with. The town of Cumberland now maintains the minute park where the stone graces the small walkway that encompasses it. The obelisk looks slightly out of place sitting on a corner right next to a sidewalk overlooking what is now deemed as America's first discount store.

The elusive bones can be traced up to the 1960's when James Furay, who was Ann & Hope's plant manager in the 40's, was overseeing a digging project to extend utilities to a newly constructed cottage that was to be used as an office. While digging, the backhoe ran into a box. It was sealed in heavy lead and the corners had been soldered tight. Upon opening it the crew found some bone fragments and very old nails. The box had been buried north of one of the north towers that was razed

during renovations to the mill.

The box sat in a store room until the 1960's when Ann & Hope went through another expansion. It was then that Furay's old office and store room were cleaned and room was made for a new structural enclosure. He had intended to give the box to the Rhode Island Historical Society but never got around to it. No one knows what happened to the box. It obviously, according to these accounts, was not reburied under the monument when the obelisk was moved to its present location.

Did the small coffin containing Reverend Blackstone's remains get thrown out when the store was expanding? If so, then it is more than likely our founder is now buried in the State Landfill. Does that sound like a fitting way to bestow our gratitude for the great Reverend who was the first white settler of our state, rode a bull, (that's right. Not a horse, a bull!) and gave Rhode Island it's famous apples?



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Pricey catalytic converter, exhaust replacement necessary?

Q. I have a 2011 Honda CR-V that I bought new. It has 79,000 miles and runs fine. I have taken good care of it and always used high-quality gasoline. To pass inspection the upper catalytic converter and exhaust manifold needed to be replaced, at a cost of almost \$4,000. I was surprised that it failed so soon. I have driven several Toyotas and other cars over 100,000 miles and never had a catalytic converter fail. Could it have been defective or is there another reason it failed so soon?

A. Normally catalytic converters are designed to last the life of the vehicle. That being said, catalytic converters can fail early from overheating, chemical contamination, poor fuel quality, weird fuel additives, alcohol, and faulty sensors. As an example, a faulty coolant sensor or oxygen

aftermarket converter. Talk to your shop and they will know which ones work best.

Q. I recently had an issue with my 2017 Toyota RAV4 air conditioning which stopped cooling when I turned it on. All I got was warm air and the settings were correct. I called my dealership and was told by the service representative that they would have to drain my air conditioning refrigerant and then put a dye in to see if there was a leak. The cost for that alone would be \$299 and then depending on what they found, there would be an additional cost to repair it. Is this standard procedure for my issue? It just seemed like a money grab to me. After talking to my son, he suggested that I purchase a can of A/C PRO with a hose and my son showed me how to use it and we fixed the problem, and it continues to work fine. Should that have been the first step for the dealership?

A. In my opinion both options are wrong. Adding refrigerant without knowing if

Q. I am an artist and recently purchased a used minivan for going to craft fairs and shows to sell my art. The good news is the family I purchased it from only used it for vacations and as a spare vehicle. The bad news is every state park or attraction they went to they put bumper stickers all over the back hatch. The paint is generally in decent shape, how do I remove the bumper stickers, without damaging the paint?

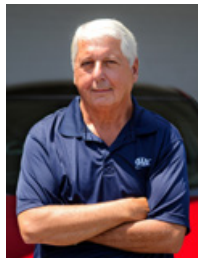
A. Start with giving the car a good wash and then with a hair dryer or heat gun (set on low) warm up the sticker to soften the glue. When it is warm to the touch try to grab the edge of the bumper sticker and once you are able to lift it off, fold it over on itself and continue to apply heat. This is sometimes referred to as 180-degree release which works better than pulling the sticker off as a 90-degree angle. Once you remove the stickers clean up the glue with an adhesive remover such as Goo-Gone or even WD-40 can work. The adhesive remover will also remove the wax, so wash and wax the car to protect the paint.

Q. I recently purchase a 2008 Lexus ES350 with 79,000 miles and it is in remarkable shape considering its age. The gas door states Premium 91 octane gas only. The gas stations have Regular 87 octane, Special 89 octane, and Super 93 octane gas. Which do you recommend I use?

A. According to the Lexus web site 91 octane fuel is the minimum recommended, so that would be premium -highest grade at most pumps. But it is just a recommendation not a requirement. At AAA we did some very scientific testing on vehicles that recommend premium fuel and we found in just about every case that using 87-octane fuel had no or

little effect on fuel economy or performance. If you did notice a very slight reduction in fuel economy and performance, in my opinion it is not enough to justify the 75 cent's difference in cost. Readers, if your vehicle requires premium fuel, you must use it, but if it is recommended you have a 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](https://www.facebook.com/mrjohnfpaul).



BY JOHN PAUL



sensor that causes the car to use too much fuel can overload the converter and cause it to fail. The same type of issue is if you had a spark plug misfiring it will overheat the catalytic converter. The code is most likely a P0420 and although the converter could be faulty an exhaust leak could be the cause. The price of \$4000 is a little high but the shop may be adding time for rusty bolts. You may be able to save some money with a fully compliant

something else is wrong can cause an issue with overcharging. Evacuating the system without knowing if there is an electrical problem first is not a great diagnostic procedure either. In both cases some basic testing should be performed first. The good news is that the air conditioner works, the bad news is that there is most likely a leak. The A/C PRO (a good DIY product) does have a sealer that could slow or even stop a leak.

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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 news@theyankeexpress.com.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

• The UMass Cancer Walk and Run, celebrating twenty-five years of the community's commitment to cancer research, will take place at Polar Park in Worcester. Go to

umasscancerwalk.org or email cancer-walk@umassmed.edu for further details.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

- The Greenway Challenge takes place in the Blackstone Valley and around the region.
- General Rufus Putnam Building & Museum 200th Anniversary Celebration, 4 Uxbridge Rd., 12-3 p.m.
- The Friends of Charlton Public Library continues its September membership drive at the Fall Festival at The Overlook in Charlton on Saturday, September 30, from 11 am to 3 pm. Members of the group will be available to register new and returning members and to answer questions. A selection of used books will be available for purchase. Interested individuals can pick up membership forms at the circulation desk at the Charlton Library. They may also join the organization via PayPal. For more information, email charltonfriends@gmail.com.

• The American Heritage Museum, 568 Main St., Hudson, presents "Battle for the Airfield WW II Re-Enactment Weekend," with over 350 re-enactors from branches of the Allied and Axis military participating in encampments and battles, 8:30 a.m.-5:00 p.m. both days. www.americanheritagemuseum.org or call 978-562-9182.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 9-23

• The Friends of the Simon Fairfield Public Library as Douglas's fourth annual online auction begins. Proceeds benefit the library's capital campaign to renovate the building and make it handicapped accessible. The Friends are also accepting sponsorships from community members or businesses.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14; SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22; FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27

• Book signing with Thomas D'Agostino, author of "A Guide to Haunted New England" from 5:50 – 8 p.m. at Miner Grant Store, Sturbridge Village. You must have ticket to Phantoms by Firelight at Sturbridge Village to access the bookstore.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 15

• Crop Hunger Walk to Benefit Oxford Food Shelf: Please join the Oxford Ecumenical Council, Oxford Food Shelf volunteers and others on Sunday, October 15, for the annual Crop Hunger Walk. It's a fun way to get together with family, friends and neighbors while supporting a worthy cause - helping to end hunger in our community. The Oxford Food Shelf, located on the lower level of the Oxford Community Center, assists individuals and families who live in Oxford or belong to an Oxford church and need help

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4

• New member meeting of the Millbury VFW Post 3329 is held the first Wednesday of every month, 7-9 p.m., 16 South Main St., Millbury.

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5

• The 7th Annual New England Electrical & Alarm Expo takes place from 1:30 to 7:30 p.m. at Twin River Casino, 100 Twin River Road, Lincoln, Rhode Island. The Exhibitor Show Floor opens at 3:30 p.m. More than 400 manufacturers will be represented. Visit neeae.com for further details.

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PUMPKINS, GET YOUR PUMPKINS HERE!

The Pumpkin Patch at the First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn will be open daily 10 a.m. (11 a.m. on Sundays) 'til dusk September 23rd through October 31st. There will be gourds and pumpkins of all sizes and prices – one for every need; be it for your fall decor, carving, baking – you name it! Taking in the beautiful sight of the pumpkins, in combination with the changing leaves and the backdrop of the church steeple – makes it worth the trip! If you have any questions, feel free to call the church office at 508-832-2845. See you there!

with food. The Crop Hunger Walk is an easy 3.5-mile walk through Oxford, beginning at the First Congregational Church on 355 E. Main St. at 1 pm. Registration at the church is at 12:30 pm. Everyone is welcome! Additional information on the Oxford Food Shelf Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/OxfordFoodShelf>. You may also call the Food Shelf at 508-987-1062.

• Grafton recreation Fall Festival: 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. on the Grafton Common. Presented by Kid Hero Books and Feedback Earth. Pumpkin Decorating and scarecrow building contest, food trucks, DJ, carnival games, fun family activities and more!

• St. Patrick's Church Recycling Event, 7 East St. Whitinsville from 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Accepting gently used books (no encyclopedias); gently used textiles/clothing; electronics for a fee (no propane, batteries or lightbulbs); rinsed bottles/cans returnable in Massachusetts (no glass); gently used media (video games, dvd's, cd's, etc.). Paper shredding at \$8 a box, 9 – 11 a.m. only. Please keep items for each station separate. For more information and pricing, email officesupport@mystpatricks.com or call 508-234-5656.

• The Blackstone Valley Crop Hunger Walk

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 21

HAPPENINGS!
continued on page 17

There's still time to enjoy the Big E!

The Big E is an annual event that begins on the second Friday after Labor Day and runs for 17 days. This year Sept. 15 to Oct. 1. What are this years Special and State Days? Experience something new every day of the Fair by aligning your schedule with The Big E's special and state days. Walk through one of the State Buildings and visit its exhibits or watch the Daily Parade, which honors each day in a special way.

- Friday, September 22 - New Hampshire Day
 - Saturday, September 23 - Vermont Day
 - Sunday, September 24 - Grange Day/ Chocolate Milk Day
 - Monday, September 25 - Salute to Springfield
 - Tuesday, September 26 - Salute to Chicopee
 - Wednesday, September 27 - Salute to Agawam
 - Thursday, September 28- Salute to Westfield
 - Friday, September 29 - Harvest New England Day
 - Saturday, September 30 - October Fun Day
 - Sunday, October 1 - Salute to Special Olympics
- Gates open at 8 a.m. Admission is \$20 for adults, \$12 children 6-12, 5 and under free.

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If you pray three times a day, three consecutive days, you will receive your intention, no matter how impossible it may seem. Praise and Thanksgiving please the Heart of God. **Believer**

Local artist receives 41st ArtsWorcester Award

ArtsWorcester has announced that Lora Brueck, artist, librarian, archivist, and volunteer, will be the recipient of the 41st ArtsWorcester Award. The ArtsWorcester Award is given annually to an individual who has made extraordinary contributions to arts and culture in this city. Its recipient list serves as a history of arts leadership in Worcester.

Lora Brueck's artistic career began with photography over forty years ago, and in 1995, she began to make artist books that integrated her photographs with collage, printing, and sewing with a refined standard of craftsmanship. Throughout her practice, Brueck has collaborated with members of the legendary women's artist group



Art XII, the Boston Book Arts Group, the Sunday Photography Group, and F8.

Brueck worked as a librarian at the Gordon Library of Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and served

as WPI's first official archivist. She opened the library's exhibition spaces to Worcester-area artists, offering them a much-needed space to show their work, while ensuring a vibrant arts presence at an engineering school. She was a graduate of Bartlett Jr. Senior High School.

Unsung, often invisible volunteer effort is the backbone of small arts organizations. At ArtsWorcester, Brueck was an exhibitions committee member and board member for decades, selecting, installing, and hosting exhibitions. As one of the early organizers of stART on the Street, Brueck brought steady calm, financial expertise, governance, and community connections. More recently, she has volunteered for the last five

years at the Worcester Historical Museum, digitizing photographs for their special collections.

"Lora is a talented artist and a digital humanities pioneer, and this award recognizes both those qualities," says Juliet Feibel, Executive Director. "But it comes with particular gratitude for the decades of unassuming, effective volunteer labor she has given this city's arts organizations--and the wry wit she brought with it."

The award was given at ArtsWorcester's Season Kickoff, Wednesday, September 20, at 5 p.m. at the Printers Building, followed by the public reception for *Material Needs 2023*.

will start at 9 am at the Village Congregational Church in Whitinsville with registration at 8:30 am. For more information, contact the Blackstone Valley United Methodist Church office at 508-234-2275.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 28

•Historic Cemetery Tour at Sutton Center Town Cemetery, 4 Uxbridge Rd. at 7 p.m. Ree-enactors will tell the tale of early settlers buried in the cemetery.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5

• The Harvest Home 5k Returns! Join Community Harvest Project to celebrate another successful season of volunteer farming for hunger relief. Our 17th Annual Harvest Home Festival & 5K, featuring a 5k and kids fun run, online auction, food and drink, kids activities, hay rides, pumpkin trebuchets, apple cannons, and more is fun for everyone! Our 5k course loops around our farm fields and showcases the beauty of the Grafton farm in the fall. Join us for this special community event, which will help support our neighbors in need! Location: Community Harvest Project, 37 Wheeler Rd, North Grafton - 11 am - 3 pm
5K Check-In: 10:30 am

5K Start: 11 am

Festival admission is included with 5K registration - September 26th - October 16th \$30, October 17th - November 4th \$35 Day of \$40, Kids (18 and under) \$15 pre registration, \$20 day of.

Visit community-harvest.org/events for more information about this year's Harvest Home festival, including the schedule of events!

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 soldier," at the First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, at 7:00 p.m. Go to www.suttonhistoricalsociety.org for further info.

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

• The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's 45th Annual Meeting & Awards Ceremony will be held at Pleasant Valley Country Club on Armsby Road in Sutton from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m. Do you know a business or individual deserving of recognition, or a business that is celebrating a milestone anniversary? Submit your nomination to Liz

O'Neil at loneil@blackstonevalley.org.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2

•Chain of Lights, Sutton's annual town-wide Christmas event. Free trolley rides from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. to participating locations. Food, children's activities, shopping and lots of holiday cheer. Tree lighting with Santa and the Sutton High School Band at 5 p.m. on the Town Common.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5

•Christmas Potluck at 6:30 p.m. First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, Sutton.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

•Midnight, Last Night Cannon firing, M.M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop, 6 Singletary Ave., Sutton.

SATURDAY, MARCH 16 2024

• The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's Home & Community Expo will be held at the Northbridge High School Field House on Linwood Avenue in Whitinsville from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Registration will occur late summer, early fall.

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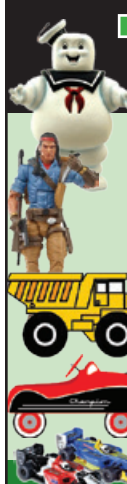
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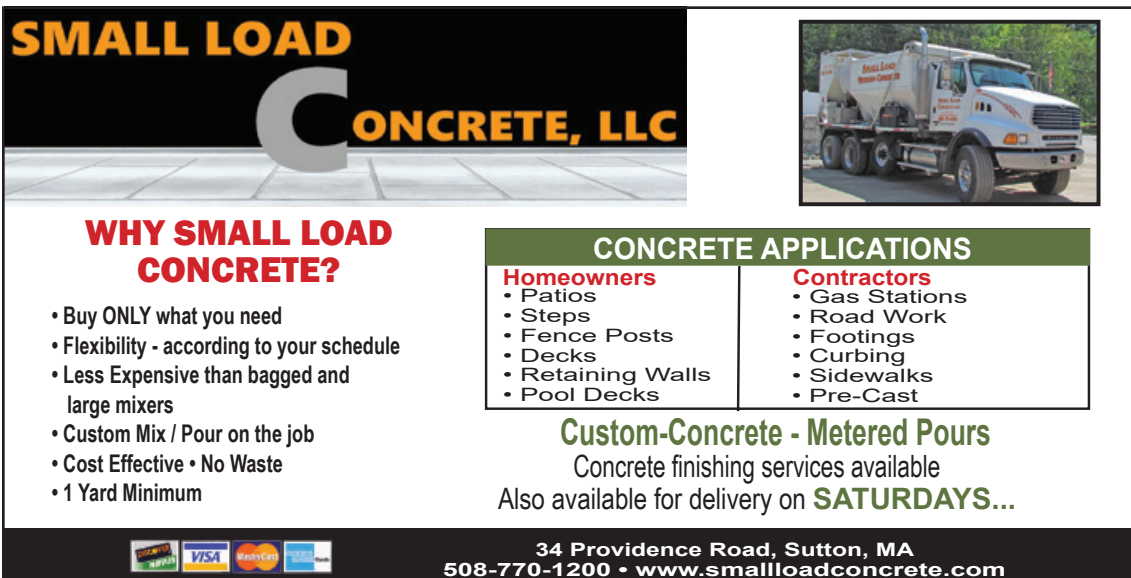
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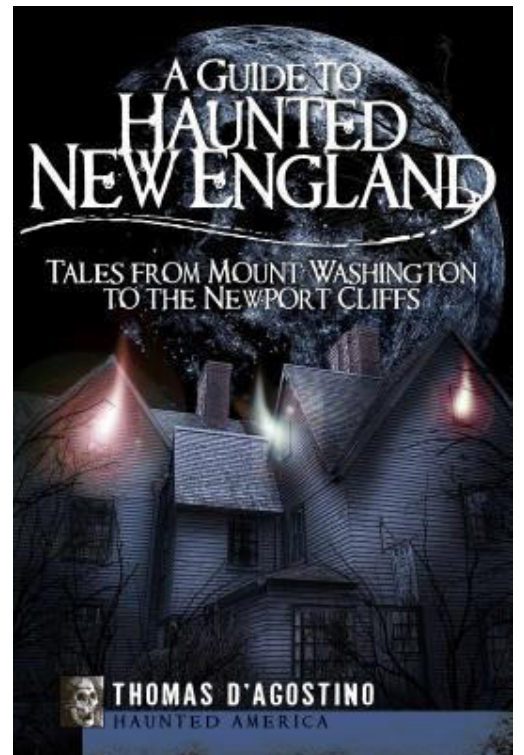
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Sturbridge Village Book Signing

Back by popular demand!

On select nights, join us for a book signing at the Miner Grant Store! Author of *A Guide to Haunted New England*, Thomas D'Agostino is one of the region's most well-known writers and investigators of the paranormal. His article "Rhode Island: Vampire Capital of America" was published in *FATE* magazine in October 2001. As founders of the Paranormal United Research Society, Tom and his wife, Arlene, have been extensively studying and investigating paranormal accounts for over twenty-eight years. In addition, Tom is author to numerous titles on the subject of hauntings in New England. Tom also builds musical instruments, rebuilds clocks and antiques and collects rare books on New England legends, haunts and folklore.

Visit Sturbridge Village on Saturday, Oct. 14; Sunday, Oct. 22; and Friday, Oct. 27 from 5:30 – 8 p.m. You must have a ticket to



Phantoms by Firelight at Sturbridge Village for the same date to access the book signing

Grafton Recreation Youth Basketball

Register at GraftonRec.com

SKILLS, DRILLS AND GAMES: FRIDAYS

Grades 1 – 3 Co-ed
 Grade 1; 5:30 p.m.
 Grade 2; 6:30 p.m.

Grade 3; 7:30 p.m.
 Session 1; Dec. 1 – Jan. 26 (no Dec. 15, 22 or 29)
 Session 2; Feb. 2 – Mar. 15 (no Feb. 23)
 Cost is \$50 per child
 One session allowed per child.
 Grafton residents only.

Grades 4 – 9 Divisions
 Practice: one night per week
 Games: Saturdays
 Grades 4-6 Girls
 Grades 4-6 Boys
 Grades 7-9 Boys
 Cost is \$110 per child

Grades 10-12 Boys
 Practice and games: Tuesdays
 6-7:30 p.m.
 Cost is \$50 per child
 High school varsity players not eligible
 Evaluations held prior to the start of the program. Grades 4-12 program runs Dec. - Mar.

Ignite Success and up your game with BVCC

The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce (BVCC) is proud to launch "Ignite Success" a professional development conference from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 12 at the Community Harvest Project Barn, 37 Wheeler Road, North Grafton. The conference is aimed at professionals in business and non-profits who want to improve their emotional intelligence and learn how to interact with co-workers, customers, sponsors and donors more effectively. Through the power of storytelling, attendees will learn how to hone their decision-making skills and their chances of success in business.

"Whether you are in sales communicating with your customer, a non-profit trying to reach potential donors, or an entrepreneur becoming proficient in story telling is a provocative way to reach your target audience," said Jeannie Herbert, BVCC president and CEO.

Participants will be walked through a framework of storytelling as is used in PBS' "Stories from the Stage," by Cheryl Hamilton, the show's producer and founder of

Stellar Story Company.

Cheryl points out, "Each day we write a story when we decide what to focus on, what we rehash and what we worry about."

Ignite Success: A Professional Development Conference will give you the tools to help drive how you interact with co-workers, form decision-making and ultimately attain success. Facilitators joining Cheryl include Lynn Whitney-Turner, Business Coach and Owner of CoreXP Business Solutions, Andrew Shelffo, Professional Story Teller and Coach, and Elizabeth Solomon, Certified Coleman Emotional Intelligence Coach. While some of the participants are preparing their "Story Slam", they will be joined by a professional panel including John Penrose, CEO Leading Indicator Systems, Inc., Inventor of AgileBrain, Peter Stanton, Publisher Worcester Business Journal, (the media sponsor) and Moe Belliveau, Executive Director of the Greater East Hampton Chamber of Commerce and whose Ignite conference we are modeled from. They will be discussing "Why Our Story con-

nections Matter".

Register online at www.blackstonevalley.org/events. The Conference includes presenter materials, continental breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks. Members 200.00, future members 275.00
Group discounts available.

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