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South Edition: Douglas, Northbridge, Uxbridge



Central Mass mascots at the Blackstone Valley Annual Home and Community Expo

## **Home and Community Expo is** Fun for the Family

veryone knows that home is where the heart is. And what could be better than giving it a little tender loving care?

The calendar says it's time to visit the Blackstone Valley 24th Annual Home and Community Expo to share the love with your home and family.

Sponsored by UniBank, the show will be held from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 16 at the Northbridge High School Fieldhouse, 427 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville.

"As we gear up for the 24th year of the Home and Community EXPO, we're excited to uphold this tradition in Blackstone Valley. More than just an event, it's where our community gathers and exhibitors showcase their latest and greatest offerings," said Liz O'Neil, event organizer.

Admission is free with a canned or non-perishable food donation for Peace of Bread, or just \$3 without. To make it even easier, free tickets can be grabbed ahead of time on the Chamber of Commerce website at blackstonevalley.org.

> **EXPO** continued on page 2

## **Uxbridge High School** Makes Top 10 in **Educational Innovation**

xbridge High School has been named a 2024 Education Innovation Showcase Top 10 Finalist for the annual ASU/GSV Showcase, one of the

Technology and Innovation Jess Brittingham shared the news recently.

The annual Education Innovation Showcase celebrates K-12 sys-



premier global events in educational innovation. Superintendent Michael Baldassarre, Principal Michael Rubin, and Director of

tems leaders advancing innovation and fostering meaningful change in their schools and communities. This year, the showcase will honor two innovations at different phases of the innovation curve Uxbridge High School's application was submitted in the "impact" category.

This is the first time a Massachusetts program has been showcased at this conference.

The 2024 Education Innovation Showcase will take place on Tuesday, April 18 as part of the Arizona State University (ASU) and Global Silicon Valley (GSV) Summit, held at Manchester Grand Hyatt San

Uxbridge High School submitted its proposal, "Uxbridge High School Innovation Pathways," in January. As part of the application process, Uxbridge submitted a detailed description of the impact of the implementation of the schools' innovation pathway programs.

Linking school, work and career placement, the Uxbridge High School Innovation Pathway and the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce collaborate to ensure that the needs of academic and industry sectors are compatible and integrated, working symbiotically and constructively to merge aca-











#### **EXPO**

continued from page 1

Join us for a day of community spirit and connection!" she said.

Take a look around for products and services to improve your home or maybe just relish a heart-warming day of enjoying local goods and goodies, by heading to the show.

Which will be the favorite clam chowder chosen from among the best of the Blackstone Valley's restaurants? Chowderfest is sponsored by Fidelity Bank and they are waiting for your vote. Compare your vote to the Judges' Choice.

Family entertainment abounds. All eyes will be on a demonstration by Uxbridge K-9 Officer Stockwell while an Irish dance exhibition by Murphy's Academy of Irish Dance will



#### **Exhibitors Eager To Meet Clients**

have your Irish eyes smiling like

a morn' in Spring. A mascot dance-off from Central Mass. teams sounds both entertaining, awe-inspiring and with the crazy potential to change the team you support.

For all the family attending, there is a Kidz Korner with a bouncy obstacle course, Bobo the Clown balloon art and delicious concessions by The Neighborhood Kitchen.

'Swing by the Home and Community EXPO for a day jampacked with fun for everyone!

From tasting the best chowder at the Chowderfest to watching an epic mascot dance-off, there's no shortage of entertainment. Don't miss the Uxbridge K9 demo, Murphy's Irish Step dancers, and the high-energy performance by Family Karate Studios. It's the perfect mix of community spirit, entertainment, and local flavor. Bring the family, meet the heroes of our community, and dive into the best of Blackstone Valley!" said O'Neil.

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Date: March 20, 2024 Place: Blackstone Valley **Chamber of Commerce** 670 Linwood Ave. Bld. A Suite #5 Whitinsville, MA 01588 Time: 10:30am & 6:00pm

Space is limited. Please call and receive your seat: (401) 349-0456

## BLACKSTONE VALLEY 1

Published on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. Direct mailed to nearly 65,000 homes and businesses each month and available on news stands in the region.

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Contact us:

Patty Roy, Editor: proy@theyankeexpress.com

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Jen Schofield, Advertising Director: The Yankee Xpress, Blackstone Valley Xpress, Local Town Pages, Milford and Upton Mendon Free Press; jenschofield@yankeeshopper.net Bill Cronan, Blackstone Xpress North and South (Douglas, Uxbridge, Northbridge;

Millbury, Grafton, Sutton); bcronan@theyankeexpress.com

Diane Galipeau, The Yankee Xpress North and South (Auburn, Charlton, Dudley, Oxford, and Webster); dgalipeau@theyankeexpress.com

Susanne Odell Farber, Upton, Mendon, Hopedale: sue@sodellconsult.com Laura Gleim, Billing & Sales: Igleim@theyankeexpress.com

Kimberly Vasseur, Production Manager Sally Patterson, Graphic Artist

Contributing Writers and Columnists: Tom D'Agostino, Christine Galeone, Amy Palumbo-Leclaire, Mark Marzeotti, John Paul, Janet Stoica, Christopher Tremblay

Blackstone Valley Xpress/@2024

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## **Biennial Quilt Show**

he Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild is pleased to present their biennial quilt show on March 16th and 17th at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School in Upton from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. each day. This year's show is chaired by Annie Bosma and Kathy Sperino. Admission is \$10.00 and children 18 and under are admitted free. On view will be over 200 quilts designed and made by guild members including Guild Challenges, Round Robins, and Youth Quilts. Also on site will be a Silent Auction, Raffle Baskets, a Quilters' Boutique, vendors, and a spectacular raffle quilt made by guild members Grace Aloise and Marcia Nichols.

The Guild's Special Project Charity this year is the Doug Flutie,

Jr. Foundation for Autism. This foundation provides funds to help people affected by autism live life to the fullest. There will be a variety of gift items available for purchase with all proceeds donated to the foundation.

Vendors at this year's show include The Fudge Lady, Anthony's Sewing Machine Service and Repair, Appletree Fabrics, SOKE LLC, Bits and Pieces Quilt Shop, Angel Hair Alpacas, H and H Creations, Adele Scott, Quilters' Loft, Fabritique, Molly's Apothecary, Camp Wool, The Indigo Squirrel, and the Handy Husband. There is a variety of vendors that will appeal to all attendees.

Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild was founded in 1992 by eight women interested in exploring

the art of quilting. Today the guild has a membership of 85 members. Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Mendon. Proceeds from the show are used to provide comfort the area communities through the donation of quilts to those in need of comfort due serious illness, loss of their homes, or personal trauma, those in nursing homes or assisted living facilities and quilts to those suffering from natural disasters or international conflicts. Proceeds are also used to provide scholarships to local art students, provide donations to charitable organizations, and to sponsor families at Christmas.

#### **UXBRIDGE**

continued from page 1

demic and authentic skills through pragmatic student experiences and outcomes. The partnership authenticates learning for students while enhancing career and college outcomes for the Blackstone Valley and beyond. UHS Pathways exist in Advanced Manufacturing, Biomedical Science, Global Business and Logistics, and Information Science/Digital Media.

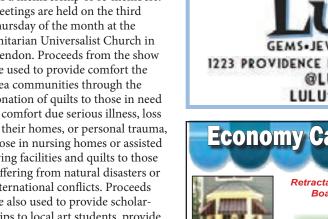
As a result of achieving top 10 status, UHS Principal Mike Rubin will pitch the impact of the school's career pathways to a panel of five judges during the 2024 Education Innovation Showcase. Uxbridge

will compete against four other finalists in the impact phase during the showcase. Two of the five will be selected to present a longer version to the judges. The UHS program was already evaluated by a team of 12 judges who considered several hundred applicants from around the world in the impact category. The program is being emceed by Darryl McDaniels of RunDMC fame.

"I am thrilled to announce that Uxbridge High School has been selected as a 2024 Education Innovation Showcase Top 10 Finalist," said Superintendent Baldassarre. "Our district takes pride in its innovation pathway programs and this recognition is a testimony to

the dedication of our educators who work to ensure meaningful technology integration throughout the district."

Two winners will be selected live, one for Idea and one for Impact. Winners will receive more than \$50,000 in cash and prizes, including a grant and implementation support from Educating All Learners Alliance, a design sprint with Transcend Education, personalized LEAP Learning Framework training, Digital Promise Inclusive Innovation Framework training, consulting with the League of Innovative Schools, and their choice of a League of Innovative Schools event, plus complimentary registration for next year's Summit.











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## **Uxbridge Senior Center**

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tate Rep. Mike Soter and the Uxbridge Elderly Connection will be distributing Easter lunches to Uxbridge residents during the annual Rise Up Initiative on Saturday, March 23. Lunches will be delivered to your home on this day, please call the senior center to reserve your lunch by March 8th. Donations are greatly appreciated and can be sent to the Uxbridge Senior Center at 36 South Main Street, Uxbridge. Please make checks payable to the Uxbridge Elderly Connection. Thank you Rep. Soter for your ongoing support of our seniors!

Last call for Fuel Assistance! The SMOC fuel assistance program for the winter season is ending soon. If you need help with your heating

costs, please call the Center to make an appointment to apply or inquire about eligibility requirements.

The St. Patrick's Party will be held on Friday, March 15 at 12 p.m. Our traditional menu is corned beef and cabbage. Unfortunately, we know some of our seniors will not be able to attend since it is Lent, meat is abstained on Fridays during this time. We considered changing the date; however, we must take into consideration the lack of parking at the center Monday through Thursdays, and the limited schedule of our entertainer. We apologize ahead of time for any inconvenience.

Mondays, March 4 through April 8 The AARP Tax Assistance Program continues. All appointments are currently full and there is a waitlist.

Thursdays, March 14 and 28 at

\*1 p.m. Come play Scrabble! \*Note New Time\* Call us if you'd like to come to lunch and then have a relaxing afternoon playing Scrabble! No Scrabble on March 21.

Monday, March 11 at 1:30 p.m. – Learn the art of Pysanky! Come and learn about the colorful world of Pysanky, the Ukrainian art form in which an egg is designed with traditional folk motifs using wax and dyes. This class is sponsored by the Uxbridge Cultural Council. Registration is required and you must RSVP March 6 and the class is limited to 20.

Tuesday, March 12 at 1 p.m. Uxbridge Library Book Club. They will be discussing "Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt. You are welcome to join us for lunch on this day, just be sure to call ahead to "book" yours! Next month is on Tuesday April 9th.

Tuesday, March 12 at 1 p.m. Benefit Enrollment Specialist – Tri-Valley, Inc. Call the senior center to book an appointment with Katelynn Wackell.

Thursday, March 14 at 2:45–3:45 p.m. New Low Impact Exercise Classes Starting! All classes are held at the senior center satellite campus, McCloskey School, 62 Capron Street, Uxbridge. Sign up for eight weeks at a requested donation of \$25.00. Preregistration is required, stop by the center to pick up your registration and waiver forms.

Thursday, March 21 at 1:30. – 2:30 p.m. New Zumba Classes Starting! All classes are held at the senior center satellite campus, McCloskey School at 62 Capron Street in Uxbridge. Sign up for eight weeks at a requested donation of \$25.00. Preregistration is required, stop by the center to pick up your registration and waiver forms.

Friday, March 15 at 12 p.m. The Annual St. Patrick's Day Celebration sponsored by the Uxbridge Elderly Connection Inc., complete with corn beef & cabbage. Dublin Down will be our entertainers featuring Irish & Celtic music. Call ahead to RSVP.

Friday, March 22 Uxbridge Fire Department Quarterly Lunch. Come join us for lunch and meet the Uxbridge Fire Department. Please RSVP.

Saturday, March 23 at 12 – 1:30 p.m. - Mike Soter's Rise Up Initiative Easter Meal Delivery. Sponsored by the UEC and State Representative Mike Soter. Please call the center by March 8 to reserve your free ham lunch which will be delivered to your door.

Monday, March 25 at 1:30 p.m.

- "Ask the Attorney" with Attorney
Ralph Tepper by appointment only.
Please call 508-278-8622 to schedule

your appointment.

Tuesday, March 26 at 11 a.m. – 12 p.m. Ask the Nurse Free Blood Pressure Clinic with Nancy Favulli, Salmon Health VNA. RSVP to participate and to join us for lunch.

Friday, March 29 Annual Easter Celebration with Tim Brooks, the Crooner At Large. Sponsored by the Uxbridge Elderly Connection Inc. We will also have a special visit from Premeer Real Estate Murray the Easter Bunny! Be sure to call ahead to RSVP.

Friday, March 29 at 12 p.m. March Birthday Cake Celebration!

Monday, April 8 Computer Tutoring with students from BVT. Please call ahead to book an appointment. This will be held on the first Monday of each month.

Card Game played during lunch on Mondays.

Hannaford grocery shopping every Tuesday. Pick-up begins at 8:30 a.m. Please sign up in advance by calling us at 508-278-8622 to reserve your seat on the van.

Knitting Club every Tuesday at 1:30 p.m. Come join the fun!

Every Wednesday at 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. The Uxbridge Senior Center Transportation Program Community Shuttle. This shuttle is for seniors and individuals with disabilities to destinations such as post office, pet care appointments, hair salon or barber, bank, pharmacy & shopping anywhere in the Uxbridge/Northbridge area. Note: this replaces the weekly bank/pharmacy and Shaw's Ocean State rides. Call 508-278-8622 for more information and to book your ride. Requests require a 48-hour notice.

Wednesdays at 1 p.m. "Canasta" Hand, Knee & Foot Card Game

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## How can women bridge the retirement gap?



**Mark Freeman** 

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March 8 is International Women's Day, a day for celebrating all the accomplishments of women around the globe. But many women still need to make up ground in one key area: retirement security.

Women's challenges in achieving a secure retirement are due to several factors, including these:

• Pay gap — It's smaller than it once was, but a wage gap still exists between men and women. In fact, women earn,

on average, about 82 cents for every dollar that men earn, according to the Census Bureau. And even though this gap narrows considerably at higher educational levels, it's still a source of concern. Women who earn less than men will likely contribute less to 401(k) plans and will ultimately see smaller Social Security checks.

- Longer lives At age 65, women live, on average, about 20 more years, compared to almost 17 for men, according to the Social Security Administration. Those extra years mean extra expenses.
- · Caregiving responsibilities – Traditionally, women have done much of the caregiving for young children and older parents. And while this caregiving is done with love, it also comes with financial sacrifice. Consider this: The average employment-related costs for mothers providing unpaid care is nearly \$300,000 over a lifetime, according to the

U.S. Department of Labor which translates to a reduction of 15% of lifetime earnings. Furthermore, time away from the workforce results in fewer contributions to 401(k) and other employer-sponsored retirement plans.

Ultimately, these issues can leave women with a retirement security deficit. Here are some moves that can help close this gap:

Contribute as much as possible to retirement **plans.** Try to contribute as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. Your earnings can grow tax deferred and your contributions can lower your taxable income. (With a Roth 401(k), contributions aren't deductible, but earnings and withdrawals are tax free, provided you meet certain conditions.) At a minimum, contribute enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered, and try to boost your contributions whenever your salary goes up. If you don't have access to a 401(k), but you have earned income, you can contribute to an IRA. Even if you don't have earned income, but you have a spouse who does, you might be eligible to contribute to a spousal IRA.

- Maximize Social Security benefits. You can start taking Social Security at 62, but your monthly checks will be much bigger if you can afford to wait until your full retirement age, which will be around  $66^{1/2}$ . If you are married, you may want to coordinate your benefits with those of your spouse — in some cases, it makes sense for the spouse with the lower benefits to claim first, based on their earnings record, and apply for spousal benefits later, when the spouse with higher benefits begins to collect.
- Build an emergency fund. Try to build an emergency fund containing up to six months' worth of living ex-

penses, with the money kept in a liquid account. Having this fund available will help protect you from having to dip into your retirement accounts for large, unexpected costs, such as a major home or car repair.

It's unfortunate, but women still must travel a more difficult road than men to reach retirement security. But making the right moves can help ease the journey.

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

Mark Freeman Edward Jones Financial Advisor 77 West Main Street, Hopkinton, MA 508-293-4017 Mark. Free man@edwardjones.com

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There are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Maybe walking through your basement has gotten difficult or there is no more room in the attic? Perhaps you are planning to move, and you need to declutter before your open house?

Figuring out who to call can be challenging. If you contact one of the big haulers, they route you to a phone center where they've never even heard of your town, plus their pricing seems vague and full of extra fees. No wonder you've let the stuff pile up—it's too much of a hassle to get rid

Or you can call Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business with deep community roots take care of everything.

Jay Schadler started his business in 2005. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with eight trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate cleanouts. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting.

Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled aboveground pools, hauled away



ancient hot tubs, taken down old fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll come for a single item, or they'll clean out an entire house. And they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

Not everything ends up in a landfill—not if Jay can help it. He first tries to either recycle or donate items. Only after he tries to repurpose items do they end up at the transfer station.

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard dumpster for a week and chucking up to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates that tonnageyou never pay for what you don't

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway special where they'll take away a truckload of your unwanted things if you pile it up. Or if you don't want to lift a finger, then you can point at the items, and the team will fill up their truck and haul away your unwanted things. However you do it, you're left with more space and more peace of mind.



Jay and his team beat the big waste haulers on both price and customer service. When you call Affordable Junk Removal, you aren't connected to an anonymous call center. Your phone call goes right to Jay.

And speaking of pricing, Jay is upfront about it. His website shows the truck sizes and prices, so you can save time knowing your costs before you call for an appointment. There aren't any hidden costs or surprise fees with Affordable Junk Removal.

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fully licensed and fully insured, and they'll treat your property with care and respect.

They also have a thriving commercial business, working with contractors and roofers to clear away debris and keep the job site clean. They can even handle commercial and residential emergencies with same-day service.

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the

restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle every-

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## 17 Nursing Students Pinned

BVT holds pinning ceremony for new nurses

he Moonlight Program in Practical Nursing at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) is challenging and rewarding. Its graduates will tell you that pursuing life-changing training to become a nurse requires a commitment to the coursework and clinicals.

The adult evening program recently recognized the achievements of the Class of 2024 during

a pinning ceremony held at the school. Seventeen proud graduates were pinned and received their nursing certificates, marking the culmination of one and a half years and over 1,090 hours of instruction balanced with work and family obligations. Faculty, staff, and guests joined the students, as well as a guest speaker from the healthcare industry, to share words of inspiration.

The ceremony began with a



The PN Class of 2024. Photo/Courtesy of Blackstone Valley Tech: Back (L-R): Megan Brosnahan, Tiffany Huth, Jadahlis Rosario, Diana Fiaklou, Elizabeth Siaw, and Olamide Sophia Alabi; Middle (L-R): Rachel Minney, Meaghan George, Meredith Mogren, Meghan Bolotin, and Cayleigh Harris; Front (L-R): Ikechukwu (Wilson) Asinobi, Cristiane Padilha, Elizabeth Lobo, Rachel Vachon, Wendy Harper, and Amanda Wright.

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MBA, MSc, RN-BC, RMA, who spoke highly of the successful program, its faculty, and graduates. Monks said, "This class is ready to test for the National Council Licensure Examination-Practical Nurses exam. We're proud of all you have accomplished in our time together."

"Well-trained, you are a valuable resource for the Blackstone Valley residents, hospitals, health care providers, and others," said Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, who spoke about the increasing need for professionally trained nurses. He also recognized one student who chose to attend BVT not once but twice, Rachel Vachon, a graduate of BVT's Health Services program (Class of 2019).

Class President Wilson Asinobi

gave a Class Address. The guest speaker, Melissa Ferguson, BSN, RN, director of nursing at Knollwood Nursing Center, congratulated the graduates on becoming nurses and utilizing their education and training to employ the fundamentals of nursing to make a difference. In addition to the certificates and pins presented, faculty and legislative awards (the Commonwealth of Massachusetts State Senators Ryan Fattman and Rebecca Rausch) provided certificates and Meredith Mogren received the Faculty Recognition Award. Wendy Harper, Cayleigh Harris, Rachel Minney, Meredith Mogren, and Rachel Vachon received an Outstanding Academic Achievement award.





## Fire severely damages Whitinsville mansion

bout 2 a.m. on March 1, fire was reported to have broken out at Whitinsville's Lasell Manor, 120 Hill Street.

According to the Grafton Fire Department Facebook page, the five alarm fire had reached the roof when mutual aid communities reached the site. Grafton's Engine-1 and Tower-1 responded to the scene on a night when temperatures dipped into the teens.

At this time no injuries have





been reported. The State Fire Marshal's office and the Fire District 7 investigating team was called in.

We are relieved to report that all residents & guests who were inside the manor exited safely and there are no known injuries at the time of posting," Estate of Mind, an artists' collective that occupies the property posted on Facebook.

The sprawling mansion, was built in 1890 for Chester Whitin Lasell, president of Whitin Machine Works from 1887-1932. The Shingle style property had over 20,000 square feet of living space, with 23 bedrooms and 13 bath-

The building has had several owners over its 134 years; it last sold on Nov. 1, 2021 for \$1.35 million according to listing service Realtor.com. The property comprising 25 acres was assessed by the town of Northbridge at \$935,000 at

The Diocese of Worcester was once an owner and, among other uses, operated the house as a

retreat space.

The property was sold by the owners of Riverdale Mills Corp, a local wire manufacturer to Clarence Risher, a Google software engineer who planned a co-living

Billing itself as "Estate of Mind," the co-living residence is described on its website as an "intentional community of artists, creatives and makers, with a focus on collaborative projects and events.

The venue was open to the public for various performances and could be booked for gatherings.







Offering a wide variety of services and in-home supports to older adults, younger people with disabilities, caregivers and veterans, often at no cost. For information call (508) 949-6640; visit www.trivalleyinc.org; or email info@tves.org.



## Douglas High alumna speaks at Boston University

illy Bolandrina of Douglas spoke at Boston University (BU) College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) Dean's List Reception. Bolandrina is a full-time senior majoring in Economics and minoring in Hospitality Management and Administration with the School of Hospitality Administration.

Bolandrina is a 2020 Douglas High School alumna where her activities included National Honor Society: Member; Peer Tutor; Marching Band: Color Guard Performer; Student Council Member; Girls' Varsity Cross Country Runner; Girls' Junior Varsity Field Hockey: Athlete and Captain; Girls' Varsity Field Hockey: Marching Band: Color Guard Performer; Student Council Member; Girls'

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Varsity Cross Country Runner; Girls' Junior Varsity Field Hockey: Athlete and Captain; Girls' Varsity Field Hockey: Athlete.

She graduated from DHS with a college preparatory track featuring advanced placement classes in statistics, chemistry, and economics. Bolandrina is also an alumna of Boston's Iskwelahang Pilipino where she was a member of its Rondalla Ensemble. She played banduria, a 14-stringed instrument which is the smallest and highest pitched member in the laud family.

In her student reflection, Bolandrina spoke about her experiences at BU/ in CAS and gave some advice.

"My first semester at BU was a little goofy because it was the fall

Tues.-Sun.

<mark>Japanese Hibachi Steakhouse</mark>

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of 2020, the beginning of the pandemic," she said. "We had COVID testing every day, green badges as requirements to enter buildings, and a really, really empty campus. But honestly, I'm glad that I started at BU at that time because I could constantly say with confidence that things could only get better. I'm really glad to say that things have been trending upwards for me at BU."

Bolandrina said she didn't come to BU knowing exactly what she wanted to do. She said she didn't come with a solid plan of action. She tried a lot of things she thought would be fun or interesting, like various clubs on campus, working at the Dining hall, and exploring downtown Boston with

new friends.

"I think around the time my first year was ending, I found what was really best for me," Bolandrina said. "There was definitely a lot of trial and error, I committed myself to groups I ended up disliking, and worried I was wasting my time! But the overall process helped me find an internship that inspired me, I gained wonderful friends and roommates, and better understood who I am and what I want to do."

She believes, "attacking your challenges and fears with positivity helps strengthen and prepare you to do your best." To her, staying positive after hearing a disappointing result means that you can stay open and ready for the next opportunities.

Bolandrina's activities and societies at BU includes volunteering at the Center for Career Development: Filipino Student Association: Elected Co-Productions Coordinator & Internal Representative; First Year Experience: Peer Mentor & Peer Fellow; Marching Band: Color Guard Performer; Undergraduate Women in Economics: Center for Career Development: Volunteer; Filipino Student Association: Elected Co-Productions Coordinator & Internal Representative; First Year Experience: Peer Mentor & Peer Fellow; Marching Band: Color Guard Performer; Undergraduate Women in Economics: General

"An amazing resource that helped me grow and prepare for life after college is the Yawkey Nonprofit Internship Program," she said. "I had an unpaid internship with Iskwelahang Pilipino, a nonprofit cultural organization that teaches Filipino-American children



Lilly Bolandrina with Stan Sclaroff, Dean of Arts and Science at Boston University

about their culture and heritage. Through BU's Yawkey Program, I received living allowance stipends allowing me to further focus on learning from my internship experience. This is a truly uplifting program that I am very grateful to have participated in."

Stacy Ulrich, BU CAS Director, Office of Student Programs and Leadership, said "every year we host a CAS Dean's List Reception for all first-year students who made the Dean's List in the fall. It is a celebration of their starting out on the right foot academically and also a way for us to encourage them to get more involved during their time at BU. As part of the celebration, we always have a CAS senior speak. This year, we loved that that senior was Lilly Bolandrina."

"I am extremely grateful to have spoken at Boston University's Col-







## Town-wide Cleanup in Douglas

he Douglas Beautification Committee and Conservation Commission welcomes the residents of Douglas, and anyone passionate about the Blackstone Valley, to 'Shake the Frost'-take part in a Town Wide cleanup of our roadways, woods, neighborhoods...wherever trash has found its way, that it doesn't belong.

While this is an invitation for an on-going initiative through the month of April, we will specifically be hosting a trash pickup and drop off event Saturday, April 20 from 8am-2pm. This event is rain or shine. Safety vests, trash bags, pickers and gloves are available 4/20. Collected trash can be dropped at the Douglas Highway Garage 56 Main St. Douglas at the event set up. New this year: Special events are happening at The Town Common (take-home planting station at the Gazebo), The Simon Fairfield Library (face painting and crafts), The E.N Jenckes Store Museum (refreshments for event



Jack Gniadek stands with the bags collected at the 2023 event

attendees), to name a few. Many other businesses in Douglas will be supporting this initiative too.

All ages are encouraged. This is a great opportunity for local groups and sports teams to work together to contribute time to their community. Students that need volunteer hours are welcome! We've had a great youth turnout

in the last few years. Each bag or large item brought to the drop off site, will earn you a raffle ticket for



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#### **DHS ALUMNA**

continued from page 10

lege of Arts & Sciences Dean's List Reception for First Year Students! It felt somewhat surreal to be introduced by Dean Sclaroff and share my experiences and advice with nearly 300 bright and wonderful BU First Years!" Bolandrina

Bolandrina is noted to have an incurable thirst for learning, has grit, passion, and has strong work ethics. Considering Bolandrina's achievements, her speaking at the BU event cannot be emphasized enough. She comes across as a fierce and strong, accomplished

young woman.

"I truly love that the CAS Office of Student Programs & Leadership has been an integral part of my BU journey from its beginning," Bolandrina said. "It has truly been an honor to work with and be constantly inspired by the Director of CAS Student Programs and Leadership, Stacy Ulrich, during my undergraduate experience. I>m tremendously thankful to my parents for supporting me throughout my academic endeavors, coming to hear my speech, and taking photos (plus live streaming the event on Facebook)" Bolandrina shared with a laugh.



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## Douglas Cub Scout Pack 316 Donates Popcorn to Teachers

ub Scout Pack 316 collected Heroes and Helpers donations during their Annual Popcorn Sale, and were able to provide some tasty snacks to the teachers and administrators at Douglas Primary

School and Douglas Elementary School! Thank you to all of our generous supporters who purchased popcorn or made donations. This has allowed the Scouts and exciting activities-- including camping, fishing, hiking, launching rockets, Pinewood Derby races, and more! Our Scouts also serve the community through service

store/scout/P94X0TJZ, where you'll find a delicious selection, plus Heroes and Helpers donations which help provide a gift of popcorn to our first responders, troops







in our Pack to give back to their community, but also to have really cool adventures!

Our Pack provides lifelong memories and friendship for elementary school aged children in Douglas MA and the surrounding area. Our popcorn fundraiser helps Scouts participate in many fun projects such as cleaning up trash for Earth Day and honoring fallen service members by replacing American flags on the graves of veterans in our local cemetery.

If you'd like to support our 2024 campaign, you can buy your own tasty snacks or donate online by visiting https://trails-end.com/

at-home or overseas, veterans, military families, local food banks, and charitable organizations. Your purchases can ship anywhere in the United States. Thank you in advance for supporting Cub Scouts!

For more information or to join Pack 316, please reach out to douglaspack316@gmail.com.



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## 2nd Mock Code Scenario and the Mock Code Team

he Practical Nursing Class of 2024 Mock Code Team (MCT) under the guidance and leadership of Professors Cheryl Cahill, Jennifer DeFilippo, Angela McGrath, and Rianna Romano, prepared and executed the Term 2 Mock Code Scenario. Bay Path

tion and empowered, confident nurses result in a positive response to code events. According to the American Heart Association's Get With The Guidelines (GWTG) resuscitation program, time to first shock is one of four achievement metrics. The guidelines state that

formed to improve resuscitation skills and comfort levels for practical nursing students. The MCT meets for a full day of preparation, with members practicing as much as possible. On Mock Code Day, the MCT runs the code scenarios multiple times. The formation of the MCT increased mock code opportunities and participation three times in an academic year. Participation in mock codes increases the comfort level of practical nursing students. An effective code team is one that acts safely, and efficiently,

and saves lives. The MCT aims to be proficient with skills and knowledge, effective with communication, and highly organized.





Photo shows members of the 2024 MCT from left Ashley Urbain of Paxton, Julie Dodson of West Brookfield, and Patrick Njunge of Worcester demonstrating initial steps in response to a code situation. Other members of the MCT include Victoria Boateng, Melissa Nale, Richard Nsiah, Samantha Stanikmas, and Cynthia Zaya Torres.

Practical Nursing Academy's MCT and Simulation Training improves response to code events. During cardiac arrests, the quick response of a code team requires cohesiveness, timely defibrillation, and clearly defined roles. It is important for members of the healthcare team to intuitively know their role as part of the response team especially during code situations when seconds count.

"It was a great night. The Mock Code Team was amazing and everyone really did a fantastic job!" shared Professor DeFilippo.

'We firmly believe in using simulation training to improve performance," said Gretheline Bolandrina, DHA, MSN Ed, RN, CRRN Academy Director. "We are blessed to have the continued guidance, experience, and expertise of Professors Cahill, DeFilippo, and Romano. We welcome Professor McGrath's assistance this year!" Bolandrina added.

The timely use of defibrilla-

hospitalized patients exhibiting ventricular fibrillation or pulseless ventricular tachycardia should receive defibrillation within two minutes to improve outcomes.

In 2017, the Bay Path Practical Nursing Academy MCT was





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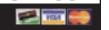
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#### BY AMY LECLAIRE

uke's two-year-old birthday was as interesting as he is.

January 31, the last day of the month, came with a memorable twist. I woke up with inspiration for my pup's party. The Golden girls of the 'hood had been invited.

#### LIVING WITH LUKE

#### amyleclaire@hotmail.com

## Luke's Birthday Gash

Party hats sat on the kitchen table. Pup cakes chilled in the fridge. The only problem was – the birthday boy had a peculiar itch.

"What's the matter, Luke?"
He used his back leg to scratch
the fur below his chin, on the
right side of his neck. Something
in the location of that itch had me
concerned.

"Oh my gosh!" A closer look at his neck revealed a gash about three inches long, one that felt braided and raised, almost as though a small twig was attached to his skin. My mind raced through suspects. Had yesterday's rough-housing with Rosie caused the bruise? Not likely, I thought to myself. The gash was too deep for a dog's nails. Besides, it was already closed and dry. How had I missed this? The gash was wild, undomestic. Wild. The word floated through my mind, and that's when the culprit emerged.

"Jim!" Luke followed me to the bottom of the stairs to help investigate the conflict that was his wild birthday gash. "I think that possum in our yard scratched Luke!" Luke's Daddy trotted down the stairs with bedhead. "Are you ready to play, Daddy?" My heart sank to Luke's innocence. His exuberance can be problematic, yet his intentions are so good. Here's the story.

Luke had recently managed a remarkably long staring contest with a possum who sat stunned at our front steps one night. "Leave him, Luke." My son swiftly guided him back indoors. The full story now crystalized in my mind. That very possum stared at Luke with small beady eyes and a triangular face. "You have a big head." Luke stared back. "You're ugly." His face creased with desire. "Let's wrestle and call it a day." The plot thickened.

Days turned into weeks. We thought the possum had found a new home to visit, perhaps one without a beast four times his size.



Above, handsome birthday boy at 2 years old on Jan. 31, 2024, Luke is ready to celebrate. Below, Luke and Mandy await birthday pupcakes!



Well, apparently, that possum had the brain of a bird. He returned. Jim looked out the kitchen window. The fur on Luke's back was raised. He was obsessed with something and non-compliant. "Luke! Come!" Something wild settled in the air. Luke rarely ignored us. A visit to the backvard confirmed suspicion. The possum lay dead beside our deck. "Let's go in the house, Luke!" A guilty dog was led inside. Meanwhile, Daddy grabbed the shovel to finish Luke's dirty work. Little did he know of the shocker to come. The possum was gone! He had played possum! Of course he had! Possums literally play possum. I later learned that the behavior is involuntary and triggered by fear or stress. Still, a marsupial native to America and whose name is technically spelled opossum (possums are native to Australia)\* was

becoming an itch that couldn't be scratched.

That possum needs to go. Luke could have lost an eye with those claws." I muttered a mother's curse and grabbed my car keys. The story's ending emerged like a scene from a low budget thriller while I drove to the animal hospital. That possum, having felt harassed, was pushing Luke's buttons. Small yet tenacious, the possum has evolved with survival skills to match its claws. Rarely does the possum carry rabies. I turned my blaring music down and thought about this some more. Resurrected from a fake death, and unbeknownst to my family, the marsupial returned to the shrubs at the border of our back yard. Luke had been jutting his head in and out of the shrubs a few days ago. Now it all made sense. Pleasantly surprised to see that his feisty friend was alive and well, Luke couldn't' resist another shot at play. One more sniff. One more poke. Until the possum, enshrouded by a shrub that became his bodyguard, lashed out at Luke's neck with knife-sharp claws.

"I think a possum scratched tuke."

Dr. Yen wiped her glasses. "I just want to kiss you all over!" Luke slurped his vet's face, then tap danced around her.

"It could be."

"What about a rough playdate?"

"It could be."

"A sharp stick?"

"It could be."

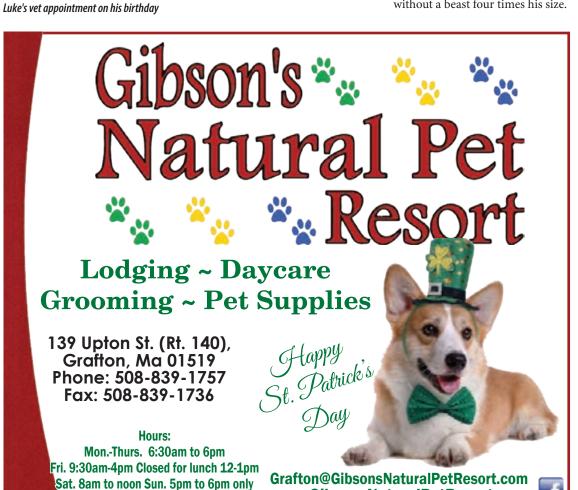
"Watch for redness, swelling or discharge. Luke is going to be fine."

I spent a few hundred dollars on could-be's and a few shots but had the assurance I needed. Luke was going to be fine. The sting of the possum saga faded with that of the veterinarian bill. It was time to party!

The rest of the day unfolded with the fanfare of a two-year-old dog's birthday party. I lit the candle of his cupcake. He sat smiling like a

LUKE

continued on page 15



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#### **REAL ESTATE**

## It's Time to Prepare Your House for a Spring Listing

f you're thinking of selling your house this spring, now is the perfect time to start getting it



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

With the market gearing up for its busiest time of year, it'll be important to make sure your house shines

bright among the competition. Here are some valuable tips you can use to get your house marketready.

Declutter and organize. First impressions matter, and if your house is a mess, that can easily turn off potential buyers. Before listing, take the time to declutter and organize each room. Decluttering is about more than just tidying up - it's about creating a sense of space and openness that allows potential buyers to envision themselves living in your home. Decluttering and organizing your space will go a long way in appealing to potential

buyers. Decluttering will help the buyers see themselves living in your home. Less clutter inside a home also helps a place appear larger and cleaner, which should attract more buyers.

Deep clean your kitchen and bathrooms. The kitchen and bathrooms are focal points for many buyers, and often influence their overall opinion of the house. Ensure these spaces dazzle by giving them a deep cleaning. Pay attention to details like scrubbing grout lines, polishing fixtures, and decluttering countertops. A sparkling kitchen and bathroom can leave a lasting positive impression on potential buyers.

. Maintain your yard. Your home's exterior is the first thing potential buyers see, so it's important to make a good impression from the moment they arrive. A wellmaintained yard not only enhances curb appeal, but also shows buyers the home has been well taken care of. Take the time to spruce up your yard by mowing the lawn, trimming bushes, and clearing away any debris or dead plants. Remember, the goal is to create a welcoming environment that entices buyers to step inside and

imagine themselves living there. A beautifully landscaped front yard can elevate an ordinary house into a charming home and will help your home sell faster and for more money.

Find a Listing Agent. A skilled listing agent is your partner in minimizing stress when selling your home. Lean on your agent for advice on decluttering, staging, and enhancing your home's appeal to potential buyers. Their insights into market trends and recommendations for reliable contractors and stagers are invaluable. The Marzeotti Group can help you with all of that. We will take care of professional photography including drone photos and staging advice to make it look its best, and put your home on the multiple listing service.

By decluttering, deep cleaning, and tidying up your house, you can create a welcoming environment that resonates with buyers and increases your chances of a successful sale. Connect with The Marzeotti Group or a trusted real estate agent for advice on what you need to do to get your house ready to sell this spring.

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#### **LUKE**

continued from page 14

dolphin; chin raised to the jubilee of the birthday song. "Happy Birthday to Luuuuke. Happy Birthday to you!" Friends and family clapped and belted out the song as though Luke was the only dog on the planet. He knew the moment was all about him. "It's my birthday!" His eyes bloomed while I blew out the candle, tore off the wrapper, and fed him a freshly baked, all-natural pumpkin cupcake that took all of three seconds to eat. Like a child denied sugar, he wore the cupcake like a second skin, savoring the taste and licking its residue from his paws. He wore frosting on his nose and chin. Most of all, he wore what it looks like to be a dog loved.

\*The opossum, in this story, was referred to as a possum for syllabic reasons, and for a smoother read.

Write to Amy - amyleclaire@ hotmail.com

Follow Luke on IG – livingwithlukevalentino



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## The Carriage Inn, North Kingstown, Rhode Island

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

he Carriage Inn, located in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, was founded in 1760 as an inn and tavern stop known as Old Acres. After many changes of ownership and renovations, it became Hoof, Fin & Feathers. In 2008, the restaurant's owner brought in Ghost Hunters of Sci-Fi fame to investigate the strange goings-on inside the historic structure. There were several ghosts that allegedly called the place home. In 2014, the establishment changed hands and was renamed Carriage Inn. In 2017, Roy Ring took ownership. Though some renovations were necessary, he was adamant about keeping the building as close as possible to the original inn, when travelers visited in the 18th and 19th centuries. An upper balcony displays carriages and wagons from a long-gone era and be seen as one pulls into the inn's parking lot. Inside, the old fireplaces and other accouterments transport guests back in time to where life was simple and much slower. There is also a walledup door that was once the main entrance to that room, showing yet another almost lost vestige of its former life. It is, at present, a cozy, family-friendly establishment boasting fine dining, an ex-



tensive menu, daily specials, and an atmosphere that is laid back and unpretentious with historic and rustic charm.

Since taking the helm, Roy and his staff have worked to make the Carriage Inn a special place to visit for a drink, a meal, or a special event. They have also experienced a lot of paranormal phenomena that seem to have stayed on through the centuries.

An area near the entrance shows signs of a catastrophic fire that took place in 1957. The stone wall is charred black, and despite many attempts, Ring could not rid the blocks of the stain. He related a story of one of the ghosts, a little boy who is heard crying because his father was killed in the fire. Not only did people hear the phantom sobbing, but Roy took a photo of the wall and caught a misty figure standing in front of it. The visage of a little girl with burn scars is also seen in the lower rooms near the fireplace. She may have been burned in the great fireplace that still occupies that room.

Other strange phenomena include shadows passing through the rooms, a drawer that refused to open until it was good and ready, a lock on a basement door that began swinging on its own, and female voices heard upstairs. Female bartenders have been shoved, slapped on the backside, grabbed by the shoulder and turned around. They also had their hair pulled in front of staff and patrons. Ring said he had witnessed their hair raise and get tugged, causing the bartender's neck to jerk backward. He surmised that men did not like women tending the bar back in

There is also a ghost of a woman who wanders dressed in clothing from the 18th or early 19th century. A man dressed in a black suit is also seen carrying a book. Perhaps the book was a ledger or guest book from when the place was an inn for overnight guests. There are also rumors that the inn was once a brothel, and some of the ghosts

may be from that era in the building's history. Another child also haunts the inn, pleading for someone to play with him. Cold spots that suddenly come and go and disembodied footsteps are common occurrences at the Carriage Inn. The spirits of the inn are not harmful in any way; they go about their business as they did when they were of mortal frame.

Dining With The Dead 1031 is hosting interactive paranormal investigations and dinners at the Carriage Inn throughout 2024. Guests get a wonderful buffet dinner, and the event includes door prizes and a presentation of the inn and its haunts. The guests then break into smaller separate groups, where each group, in turn, investigates the haunted areas of the inn using the equipment that is provided in each room. Guests are encouraged to use their equipment or phones to record the investigation. All evidence from video to audio is then gone over and sent to the guests via email. Visit www. diningwiththedead1031.com for more information.

Other events, including Psychic Nights and Comedy Shows, are held throughout the year. The Carriage Inn is also available for private parties and catering. 1065 Tower Hill Rd, North Kingstown, RI. 401-294-0466.



## Library to go fine-free

hitinsville Social Library will no longer charge late fines on books and many other circulating materials, eliminating a bar-

rier to access and ensuring that all Northbridge residents have free, equitable, and open access to knowledge, opportunity, and entertainment.







## Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil (intention), Amen.

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

The governing body of the library, the Whitinsville Social Library Board of Trustees, voted in favor of removing late fines on Wednesday February 21, 2024. This change went into effect immediately. Whitinsville Social Library joins other large and small public library systems across the country to turn the page on late fines. WSL is the 149th library in its consortium, CWMARS, to go fine free. This change is a part of a national institutional movement, guided by the recommendations of the American Library Association, to increase free public access to library ser-

Going fine free does not mean that patrons will not have to bring library materials back to the library. Items will still have due dates and materials will still need to be returned. Fees for lost or damaged items will remain on the user's account. Most library materials are automatically renewed one time. However, if an item is not returned, or is returned damaged, patrons will still be charged replacement costs.

Existing fines for overdue

items will be forgiven. Overdue fines will continue on very few items: the hotspots, museum passes, and the telescope.

Studies show that libraries that have eliminated late fines see no impact on return rates and in fact, the elimination of fines increases the use of library materials. Whitinsville Social Library's Director Rebecca Sasseville felt it was imperative to create an

environment that feels welcoming rather than punitive for all the library's users. "I look forward to welcoming new and returning patrons to the library because of this wonderful decision by the Board of Trustees."

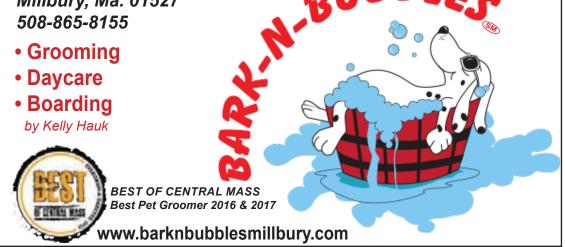
For any questions visit the Library's website northbridgemass. org/WSL or call the Library at 508-234-2151.

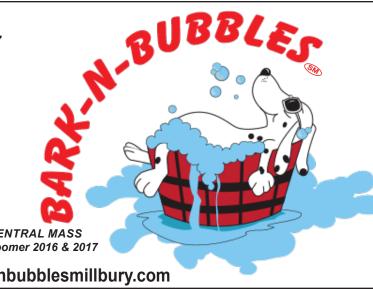
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## A non-dealership fix for GPS?

that temperature using a combina-

tion of the thermostat and cooling

fan. For some Honda models, they

tend to cool a bit when sitting and

return to the normal zone when

on the road. I would consider it

I have a 2020 Honda CRV (touring) the question I • have is regarding temperature gauge. Once the car warms up the gauge sits halfway while driving, but when I sit and in park,

the gauge

BY JOHN PAUL

goes down in temperature towards the cold marking. fluctuation?

Is this normal In most

they come up

engines • once

normal. I have a 2016 Subaru Forester. Recently, the GPS • stopped working, and I hardly used it. I do not want to bring it to a dealership. Do you

that can fix it for me?

Any auto stereo store should be able to help with • this although depending on

know of any place I can bring it to

what is wrong a complete replacement may be cheaper than repairing what you have. The other issue may be the Subaru Starlink System, if it ran on the older 3G cellular network there is nothing you can do other than upgrade the system, at your expense.

In 2017 I bought a new Chevrolet Silverado with • the V-8 engine and 8-speed transmission. Within a year, the transmission started to "bang" and "thud" when slowing and stopping. The frequency of this increased with more miles on the truck. At 30,000 miles, the Chevy dealer drained and refilled transmission with Mobile One "blue" at no charge. This has lessened the occurrence but not eliminated the bang and thud. The Chevy dealers' service department will flush and refill for \$311.00 if I want to give that a try. An internet query reveals numerous problems with these GM 8-speed transmissions and why hasn't GM ordered a recall to install new transmissions?

The 8-speed transmission has been quite problematic • with shift quality the bang and thud as well as a slight vibration is pretty characteristic of the transmission that being said it does seem to last a long time with owners reporting more than 200,000 miles without any repairs. This is most likely the reason that Chevrolet has not come up with a replacement plan. It would not be a typical recall because the transmission is still operational and does not affect the safety of the vehicle again, I would continue to work with the dealer. Let them do the fluid flush if they feel it is worthwhile and also check to see whether there's any software changes that will improve the shift quality. Later model vehicles are using a 10-speed transmission that has been jointly developed with Ford, time will tell if it is better.

On 12/15/23 I purchased a 2017 Ford Explorer • with 70,000 miles and on 1/17/24 the engine started making bad knocking banging sounds and stalled out. I did not try to restart, but rather waited until it cooled and found no oil on the dipstick. Could the engine be blown? Is the vehicle salvageable? I was told it spun something, what would this other than no lubrication?

The engine in the Ford Explorer nas nau ochina sues, but typically at much Explorer has had some ishigher mileage. The idea it had little or no oil in the engine after a little more than 30 days is certainly a problem. At this point, the engine needs to be completely inspected to find the cause of the failure. I suspect the timing chain may have failed which resulted in the knocking banging sound. I assume there is no warranty. At this point a used engine may be the best solution to get your Explorer back on the road.

Can you please explain how the dashboard feature of • telling me the tire pressure works? Are the readings that are displayed on the dash cluster accurate? My tire pressure gauge and the car's reading never seem to match up. Also, can you recommend a good tire gauge? I have four of them, and I get a slightly different reading from each one.

The direct style pressure sensor uses a pressure sensor transmitter/transducer built into the valve stem that sends information to the on-board computer. These systems are typically pretty accurate, powered by a non-replaceable battery with about a 7–10-year life. Regarding tire gauges, a quality pencil gauge Dill/Milton/Ingersol Rand are usually accurate within one PSI, some digital gauge and dial gauges do a little better at 1.5 percent accuracy which on a tire that uses 35 PSI is about ½ pound. The fluid filled gauges are very accurate. But for typical vehicle use almost any gauge that is accurate to 1 PSI is



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## **Opening Day for Farmers Market**

he Douglas Farmers Market Opening Day is Saturday, June 15 at the E.N. Jenckes Store Museum at 283 Main St, Douglas.

The Douglas Farmers Market is a wonderful weekly farmers market held at the E.N. Jenckes Store Museum in Douglas. It is the perfect

stop on a summer Saturday morning to cross paths with others from the community and get your local produce and other artisan goods. Local volunteers are very excited to revive this market event and will run from June 15 to August 31 this

We are still welcoming new vendors of any kind so if you grow it, make it, or bake it, we would love to have you. The market will be open every Saturday morning from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. beginning June 15 through Labor Day Weekend.

For more information about the market, please visit us on Facebook

or email us at douglasfarmersmarketinfo@gmail.com.



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#### **CAR DOCTOR**

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fine. Now if it were aircraft, racing (bikes/motorcycles/cars) or other extremely critical needs then a fluid filled or digital gauge that is periodically checked with a "master gauge" is what you would want. Overall, I have found the TPMS sensor, and a quality gauge agreed within one PSI. Even though a TPMS can deliver accurate alerts

when properly maintained, it is not a replacement for manual air pressure checks, which you should do monthly.

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





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#### **SPORTS**

## Northbridge Girls Starting To Succeed on the Mat

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY, STAFF SPORTS WRITER

hree years ago, the Northbridge wrestling program added girls to the team and although not a lot of girls have taken to the mat, the Rams are starting to have success with some of the girls that have decided to give the sport a try. Juniors Allie Reese and Annah Manning have given the Northbridge wrestling program a shot in the arm for females.

This is our third year having a girls program as part of the high school team at Northbridge and have had four girls spanning the three years," coach Baird Lashley said. "We are always looking for ways to invite more girls to try the sport and hope in the future that we offer 'girls only' practices."

While it was Reese that had the better regular season going 16-3 in her weight class, it was Manning (8-5 during the regular season) that surprised everyone in the post-season. Reese was seeded high in her weight class (113 lbs.) but found that it was a rather large group of girls that she had to take on in the States. The weight class

included 18 athletes and unfortunately the Northbridge wrestler got knocked out in her fifth match and eventually finished fifth, just missing out on advancing to the All-States.

"Allie had a tough tournament, losing to a wrestler she had previously pinned and ultimately took fifth place, just outside the top four that get medals and make it to the All-State Tournament," Lashley said. "She was obviously disappointed, but still had a great season, winning the Invitational Tournament and then leading the way for both our girls and boys as well. She is already making plans to get stronger and come back even better for her senior season."

Northbridge was looking to Reese to become the first female wrestler to reach the All-State for the school. Although she was unable to accomplish the achievement for the Rams wrestling program, Manning picked up the slack and rode a very successful tournament to advance into the next tourna-

"The big surprise was Annah. She fought her way into the semifinals of the D2 State Tournament

SOON!



Allie Reese, left, and Annah Manning, key members on the Northbridge Rams wrestling squad

and eventually finished fourth, making her the first female wrestler to medal at the State level and qualify for the All-State Tournament," The Northbridge coach said. "She was not expected to do this well and in her two of her matches she was losing but came from behind to pin her opponents and gain

the victory. She has lived in the shadow of Allie all season and this is a wonderful victory for her and I am so thrilled that she got to make history for the team."

While the two girls have arrived at the program in different ways they are both shooting for the same result. Reese came from a wres-

tling family where her father (high school and college) and her brother (high school) both wrestled. When the family moved to Northbridge from Ohio she noticed that the Northbridge program had girls wrestling so she thought that she'd give it a trv.

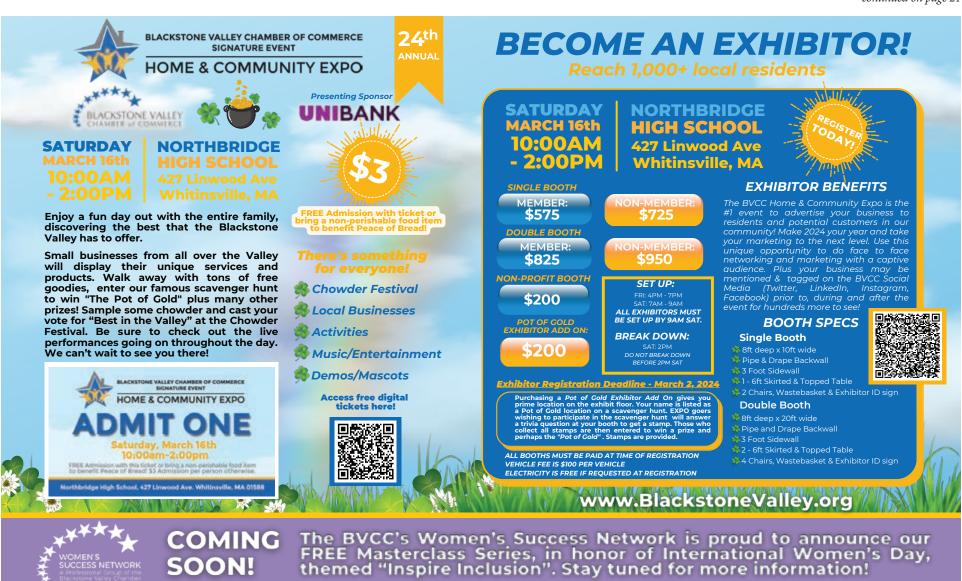
"It was cool, all the coaches were supportive and although I didn't always get to wrestle girls I was having a good time," she said. "There were not too many girls wrestling, so I wrestled whoever showed up. It was tough being that the guys have upper body strength, but I just went out and did my best."

Unlike Reese, Manning was convinced by a friend to get involved and when she first hit the mat she found that she really liked the concept of wrestling, especially team bonding and making new friends.

Although both girls are having success on the mat now, their first year was one that was not a full campaign. Reese dislocated her collar bone and found herself sidelined for about 2 months, while

**SPORTS** 

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#### **SPORTS**

#### **SPORTS**

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Manning did not actually decided to join the team until mid-way through the season.

"Having joined half way through the season I was a new comer that did not do all that well," Manning said. "But decided to come back for another year because I had made lot of new friends and although it was hard work, I was having a lot

Upon getting involved with the Northbridge program, manning never in her wildest dreams thought that she'd have any kind of success, never mind becoming the first female wrestler to earn a spot in the All-State Tournament.

'Coming in I definitely didn't see this happening and never thought that I'd make it this far. Once I started to pick up wins with my hard work, it was a possibility," she said. "Finishing fourth and being the first girl to make it to All-States for Northbridge I felt really proud of myself. Now I want to take it one step further and be successful in the All-State Tournament."

Reese may be disappointed in her performance, but she is not letting it stand in her way. Wrestling

PICK UP!

in her second season she discovered a new- found confidence on the mat whether wrestling girls or boys and is looking to improve upon that for her senior season with the Rams.

"With another year under my belt I am looking to take my wrestling further. It was a really big improvement over my first year and with the MIAA having a State Tournament for girls this year was huge," Reese said. "I am hoping that what we've accomplished this year is that more girls will come out for the team. I am going to try to promote the sport as much as I can and hopefully get other girls to try it out."

Coach Lashley is also hoping that what Reese and Manning accomplished this past season is a bright spot and more girls will come out for the team next winter.

"Allie and Annah are setting a new standard for what we hope for in our girls wrestling team. Annah's medal at the State Tournament will hopefully inspire new girls to join," Lashley said. "Both girls are true teammates and their successes are shared because they have become some of the hardest workers in the wrestling room, diligent in their drilling of techniques with each other and supporting the team through enthusiasm while encouraging teammates."

The duo plans on continuing participating in off-season practices while attending more tournaments to get ready for their senior season. Manning is hoping to get back to the All-States once again next year, while Reese is looking to join her at the tournament.

"It feels nice to set goals for

other girls wrestling at Northbridge High School," Manning said. "When my high school career is over I want to be able to come back and talk to the younger girls and tell them that they can accomplish what I did too if they put in the time and energy."

Reese echoed her teammate's words.

"The biggest take-away that I got with wrestling is that no matter what life throws at you, you still need to get up," she said. "Take the shot, if you don't win right away, don't worry about it. Wrestling is a character builder and one of the best ways to stay in shape; it is not like any other sport."





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## Calling All Singers

he Blackstone Vallev Community Chorus welcomes new and returning singers to Open

Call for the 2024 Spring season! The BVCC is preparing a program of music celebrating American

folk and jazz music. Open Call will take place on Sunday, March 10, at 6 p.m.at the Douglas Municipal

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at 29 Depot Street, Douglas. New members do not need to prepare an audition song, but should come ready to sing. There is a \$35 membership fee to join. Rehearsals take place on Sundays at 6:30 p.m. at the Douglas Municipal Center beginning on March 17.

Center Resource Room located

The Blackstone Valley Community Chorus is a non-audition chorus with people of varied ages and musical abilities brought together by a shared love of music and a commitment to providing our community with exceptional musical experiences. We welcome anyone who would like to join us, we only ask that you have the ability to carry a tune. Whether you enjoy singing at your school, with a church choir, or in your car or shower, we hope you will consider joining our friendly musical family! For more information on the BVCC, visit us on Facebook or at www.bvcchorus.org.

Simon Fairfield Public Library
culture, and class influence of hot

n the second Tuesday night of each month at 6:30 pm, the Intrepid Readers gather to talk about a book of their choice and enjoy homemade refreshments based on the title. On March 12, they will be discussing "Raw Dog: The Naked Truth about Hot Dogs' by Jamie Loftus

Part travelogue, part culinary history, all capitalist critique—comedian Jamie Loftus's debut, "Raw Dog", will take you on a crosscountry road trip in the summer of 2021, and reveal what the creation,

dogs says about America now.

Poor people created them. Rich people found a way to charge fifteen dollars for them. They're high culture, they're low culture, they're sports food, they're kids' food, they're hangover food, and they're deeply American, despite having no basis whatsoever in America's Indigenous traditions. You can love them, you can hate them, but you can't avoid the great American hot dog.

A Best Book of the Year from NPR and Vulture.



lease join us for a Celebration of Irish Music performed by Chris Bilodeau and friends at 7 p.m. St. Patrick's Church, 7 East Street, Whitinsville on March 15. This free event is sponsored by the Northbridge Cultural Council.

Back by popular demand, Jim from Peg's Diner will be cooking

delicious Fish and Chips dinners again this year. Dinner options are baked fish/baked potato & coleslaw or fried fish/fries & coleslaw dinners for \$14. Jimmy's Famous Clam Chowder is available for \$4/ cup or \$6/bowl. Mac & cheese/ fries for \$5. Dinners will be available for in-house dining or pick up on Fridays during Lent (though March 22) from 4:30 to 6:45 p.m. Place orders to go by calling 508-234-3511 after 4 p.m. Payment by Venmo or cash. Thank you for supporting the Youth in Action Summer Service Trip to Nashville.

Also, the Parish is currently selling Spring Calendar Raffles for drawings each day during the month of March. Grand prize \$1000 drawn on March 31st. Calendars can be picked up after weekend masses; at Fish & Chips events; online at mystpatricks.com; or call the rectory at 508-234-5656. Three chances for \$50 or one chance for \$25. Over \$2K in prizes will be awarded and you can win more than once!





# 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 news@theyankeexpress.

#### **SATURDAY, MARCH 9**

• Spring floral arrangement class, 1 p.m. Millbury First Congregational Church 148 West Main St., Millbury. Sandy Michalak of Herbert E. Berg florist will teach participants how to complete their own beautiful, spring, fresh floral arramnement. \$25.00 For class and all materials. Beginners welcome. Advanced registration required by March 2, 2024 by calling janice fortin at 508-826-6381.

#### **WEDNESDAY, MARCH 13**

• Story Time at the Willard House Clock Museum, 11 Willard Street, North Grafton 3:30 - 4:30 p.m. Join us for this free program presented in collaboration with

the Grafton Public Library. Preschoolers will enjoy a few stories, a short museum tour and a craft project. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Siblings are

#### SATURDAY, MARCH 16

• Blackstone Valley Home Expo 10 a.m. — 2 p.m. Sponsored by UniBank Northbridge High School Field House, Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville Admission \$3

For more information visit: blackstonevallev.org: or contact: loneil@blackstonevallev

• Corned Beef and Cabbage Dinner St. Peter Parish in Northbridge is having a Corned Beef & Dinner on Saturday, March 16th starting at 5:30 pm in the Parish Hall. Bring you family and friends for a wonderful meal and Irish Music by Alto Vista. Tickets are \$17 per dinner and include potatoes, carrots, salad and dessert. To go meals will be available for pick up at 5:00pm and all orders must be purchased in advance. "Pay It Forward" purchase an extra dinner and we will deliver it to someone in need in our local community. Please call the parish office at 508-234-2156 or email parishoffice@stpeterrockdale.org to purchase tickets or if you have any questions.

• The United Church of Christ Federated invites the community to an Easter party from 1-3 p.m. Activities include an egg hunt, face painting, Easter cookie decorating and

games (with prizes for all participants), an Easter piñata and the Easter Bunny for photo opportunities. Entrance is free. The United Church of Christ Federated is at 4 Church Street, Webster.

#### **SUNDAY, MARCH 17**

• From 11 a.m. -3 p.m. at the E.N. Jenckes Store Museum, 283 Main St. Douglas Irish Feast: Corned Beef Delight! The Douglas Historical Society is hosting a St. Patrick's Day celebration featuring a delectable Corned Beef Dinner. Attendees can choose to dine in and savor the festive atmosphere or opt for take-out to enjoy the Irish flavors at home. The dinner is priced at \$15 per person.

**Community Connection and Gift Shopping:** This event is not just about the feast; it's an opportunity for the community to come together. Explore the historic E.N. Jenckes Store Museum and immerse yourself in the charm of 1833. The gift shop

will be open to those interested in unique finds and treasures

Get Involved: The Douglas Historical Society welcomes volunteers to contribute to the success of this event. Those interested in participating can contact Laurie Church at (508)259-7087 or email enienckes1833@gmail.com for more details.

#### **THURSDAY, APRIL 18**

• At 7 pm at Vaillancourt Folk Art, 9 Main Street, Manchaug Village, Sutton. Christine Watkins, Sutton Historical Society, will tell the story of the devastating 1924 Manchaug Village fire on its 100th anniversary which burned over 10 acres, left 25 percent of the Village population homeless, destroyed the retail section of the village, and made national news. This presentation will include photos, newspaper summaries, and eyewitness accounts. Come hear how a small community, with the help of generous neighbors,

persevered over a tragedy.

#### HIKES WITH BLACKSTONE VALLEY **HERITAGE CORRIDER HIKES**

The following is a list of hikes in Massachusetts being led by volunteer Trail Ambassador Phil. Phil's hikes begin at 10

Saturday, March 9: Cormier Woods Hike, Uxbridge

Saturday, March 23: Midstate Trail Hike -Part 1, Douglas

Saturday, April 6: Midstate Trail Hike -Part 2, Douglas

Saturday, April 20: Castle Hill Farm Hike, Whitinsville

Saturday, May 4: Mendon Town Forest Hike, Mendon

Saturday, May 18: Wallis Pond Loop Hike, Douglas

Saturday, June 15: Douglas State Forest Hike, Douglas





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