

The Old Farmer is Grafton Native

BY PATTY ROY

There's a deep partial solar eclipse heading our way on April 8, 2024. According to eclipse2024.org, a solar eclipse happens when the moon, as it orbits the earth comes between the earth and the sun. This casts a shadow over the earth, preventing sunlight from reaching us. The moon shadow will begin creeping across the sun a little before 2:14 p.m. and wind up its traverse about 4:39 p.m.

To us, it will appear as an arc-like shade moving across the round sun.

Like rainbows, the Northern Lights and less picturesque phenomenon such as blizzards and downpours, the hard evidence that we are merely creatures on a rock circling the sun, never fails to impress.

While most of nature's measurable effects can be predicted ac-



Portrait of Robert Bailey Thomas by Zedekiah Belknap, 1836

curately (or almost accurately), did you ever wonder how folks managed to adjust for vagaries of the weather in the "olden" days? The days when Americans lived more closely to the land, depending

upon it for all their nourishment, for their families and animals alike.

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Grafton's Business Scene – March 2024

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

The end of winter seems to be, for many, a quieter, more reflective time. It seems to be an ideal time to think about how

inspired many with his ability to grow in a way that led to a much-lauded achievement. The defensive coordinator for the Kansas City Chiefs just earned his fourth Super Bowl ring.



we arrived at the place we're at today and how we want to grow and move forward in our lives.

Last month, Grafton High School graduate Steve Spagnuolo

Such athletic achievements are exciting. But some Grafton businesses and organizations are helping individuals, organizations and businesses to grow in other ways as well.

Community Harvest Project is offering a qualified future employee a chance to grow along with the nonprofit. The North Grafton nonprofit farm that supports hunger relief in Massachusetts currently has an opening for a Seasonal Volunteer Assistant. More information and an application can be found on its website, <https://community-harvest.org/open-positions/>.

UniBank, which has a North Grafton branch, is helping local businesses to grow. It supported them by being the Presenting Sponsor (and an exhibitor) for

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ALMANAC

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Well, they got it from a slim volume called "The Old Farmer's Almanac", authored by Robert Bailey Thomas.

Of course, there is a tie-in to Worcester County, and to Grafton in particular.

Thomas, the founder of "The Old Farmer's Almanac" was born on April 24, 1766.

In the 1833 Almanac, Thomas began his "Concise Memoir of the Author and Editor of The (Old) Farmer's Almanac," installments of which were published over a span

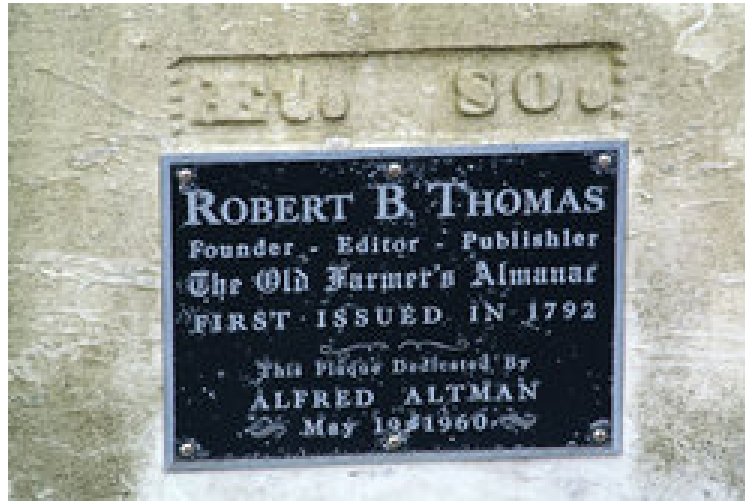
of five years.

Two years before Thomas was born, his father William bought a small farm in Shrewsbury and married Azubah Goodale (not likely to end up on the list of top 100 baby girls' names any time soon) who was from Grafton. The editor and author of "The Farmer's Almanac" was born at his maternal family's Grafton home.

Parents and baby son moved from Grafton to the Shrewsbury farm, located in what is now West Boylston.

There was only one other child born to the family in 1768, a boy named Aaron.

"In our youth, we were brought



up to farming," Thomas wrote. "Our father, quite a scholar for

those days, instructed us at home and sent us to the winter school."

When he was about 17 years old, Robert Thomas' father sent him my father sent him to Spencer to study with Dr. I. Allen to improve his penmanship, a must-have skill for anyone who pursued business. The following winter, he studied arithmetic, under his father's tutelage.

"My father possessed a larger library than usually found in a country town," Thomas wrote. "Among many scientific works, no one engrossed more of my attention than Ferguson's Astronomy. From this work, I first acquired the idea of calculating an Almanack [sic]."

In the fall of 1787, he had an offer to teach school in Princeton. This, he continued until the first of April 1788, when he worked as a farm laborer on his father's farm through the summer. Come the autumn, he headed up a school in Sterling.

In April 1789, he was back on the farm, pursuing his favorite study of astronomy, occasionally doing farm work, and trying his

hand at bookbinding.

"I wanted practical knowledge of the calculations of an Almanack, he wrote. "In September, I journeyed into Vermont to see the then-famous Dr. S. Sternes, who for many years calculated Isaiah Thomas's Almanack, but failed to see him."

Disappointed, he spent the next winter as a school master in Sterling. I pursued my avocations through the summer. There being few books in the country, I found good sales to the storekeepers, schoolmasters, etc.

"In the fall, I called on Isaiah Thomas of Worcester (no relation) to purchase 100 of his Almanacks in sheets, but he refused to let me have them. I was mortified and came home with a determination to have an Almanack of my own," he wrote. "I knew that there were many things in his that were not generally approved of and which I knew I could remedy."

In the spring of 1791, he was back at his father's pursuing teaching, bookbinding and farm work.

After the school year was finished Thomas, he returned to his father's, with a full determination never to resume teaching again. He made up his mind to follow the binding business.

Publishing an almanac remained an obsession, however.

"The last of June or the first of July 1792, I went to Boston and arranged with Osgood Carlton, a teacher of mathematics, to instruct me in astronomy as related to

ALMANAC

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GRAFTON

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the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce Home and Community Expo. The annual family-friendly event returned this year. It included live entertainment, a chowder festival, a scavenger hunt and more. It was held Saturday March 16 at Northbridge High School.

Murphy Academy of Irish Dance just celebrated one of its favorite times of the year. The dance school once again shared its love

and talent for Irish dancing with audiences at many St. Patrick's Day celebrations in the area, including the Worcester County St. Patrick's Day Parade. And one of its dancers grew her dance skills in the presence of international audiences. Last month, she competed at the renowned All Ireland Dancing Championships in Killarney, County Kerry in Ireland.

The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's Women's Success Network and some local banks have also been inspiring people to help growing families get off to a good start. Sponsored by

Homefield Credit Union, Millbury Federal Credit Union, UniBank, Whittin Community Center and the BVCC, the WSN held its annual New Mother Collection Drive to benefit local new moms in need.

These are just some of the local businesses and organizations that have been inspiring growth lately. Since we're still in the first quarter of the year and most days of 2024 and our own goals and hopes for growth are before us, let's use these last weeks of winter to reflect and plant some amazing new dreams!

ALMANAC

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calculating an Almanack. This he readily consented to do," Thomas reported.

two young printers for a certain percentage on all those that should be sold.

"The Farmer's Almanac", first published in 1792 by Robert B. Thomas, was an immediate success. Circulation of its second

edition tripled from 3,000 to 9,000 copies. It sold for six pence, then about four cents in value.

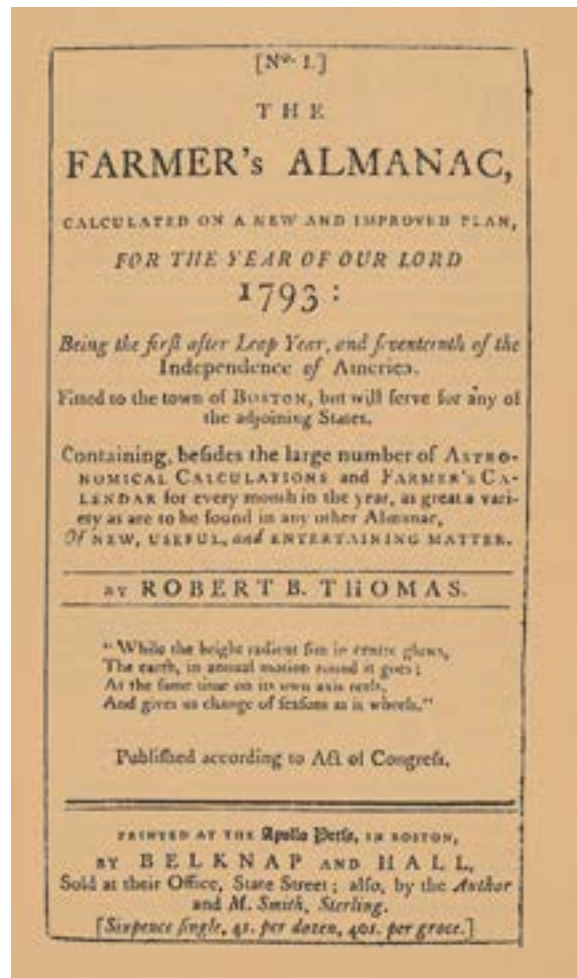
To calculate the Almanac's weather predictions, Thomas studied solar activity, astronomy cycles and weather patterns and used his research to develop a secret forecasting formula, which is still in use today. Other than the Almanac's prognosticators, few people have seen the formula. It is kept in a black tin box at the Almanac offices in Dublin,

from a nail or a string. It was a printed version of the internet with weather prognostications, planting guidelines, moon phases, folklore, home remedies and useful tips for everyday living.

In 1832, with his almanac having survived longer than similarly named competitors, Thomas inserted the word "Old" in the title. In 1848, the book's name was permanently and officially revised to "The Old Farmer's Almanac" by his succeeding editor John Henry Jenks.

Thomas remained the editor until his death at age 80 in 1846, supposedly while reading proofs for the 1847 edition. By then, his was the oldest almanac in the country. He is buried in Legg Cemetery in what is now Sterling.

Today, "The Old Farmer's Almanac" remains the oldest continuously published periodical in North America. And remember, there's a little bit of Grafton in its history.



By the end part of August, he had made all the calculations for an almanac for 1793. Before he left town, he disposed of his copy to

New Hampshire.

Thomas also started drilling a hole through the Almanac so that subscribers could hang it

Grafton Public Library

Toddler Time
Wednesday, March 20; March 27; April 3; April 10

Join this lively program for children aged walking to three years. From 10:30-11 a.m. in Community Meeting Room A. In-person registration required.

Card Games
Wednesday, March 20; March 27; April 3; April 10

Enjoy card games with a STEM-tastic twist. Tailored for kids age 6-11 years.

From 5:30 - 7 p.m. Community Meeting Room A.

Library Babies
Monday, March 25; April 1; April 8 10:30 - 11 a.m. Community Meeting Room A

For the tiniest library users. It's a 20 minute program for those from birth to walking age. Stories, songs, nursery rhymes, finger plays, and bounce activities.

Reads Well with Others
Monday, March 25 from 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. in Group Study Room 228

Book Group Discuss of Emily Wilde's "Encyclopedia of Faeries." In-person registration.

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Sutton Historical Society Events

Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2018, Manchaug Village is located in southwest Sutton, a gem in the Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor. This small

fire which occurred 100 years ago on April 16, 1924. The presentation will include photos of the Village at that time as well as a discussion of events occurring before and after which had an

to the individuals who lived on the property telling the bigger story of life so many years ago. Join us to understand why John Paul Jones may have visited Sutton Center, why a woman may



one-mile square area made national news several times during its time as a company-owned town in the 19th and early 20th centuries. These instances include a voting scandal, immigration issues, religious conversion, fire and flood. Join the Sutton Historical Society at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 18, 2024 at Vaillancourt Folk Art, 9 Main Street, Sutton for a presentation by Christine Watkins, Manchaug Historian, about the disastrous

impact on the Village.

On Tuesday, May 7, 2024 at 1 pm at the Sutton Senior Center, 19 Hough Road, Sutton, the Society will welcome Ed Chrostowski, Metal Detectorist and Society member, who will share his unique finds over several years from local Sutton properties. From Revolutionary War artifacts to everyday items from the 18th and 19th centuries, Ed not only finds the items, but makes every attempt to tie them

have a special heel plate on her shoe, or how spoons were made in the early 19th century. Ed will share some tips for those who may be interested in becoming a detectorist themselves.

Both of these events are free and open to the general public of all ages. Information about all our events and our Society can be found at suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org. Membership is open year-round and members do not have to reside in Sutton.

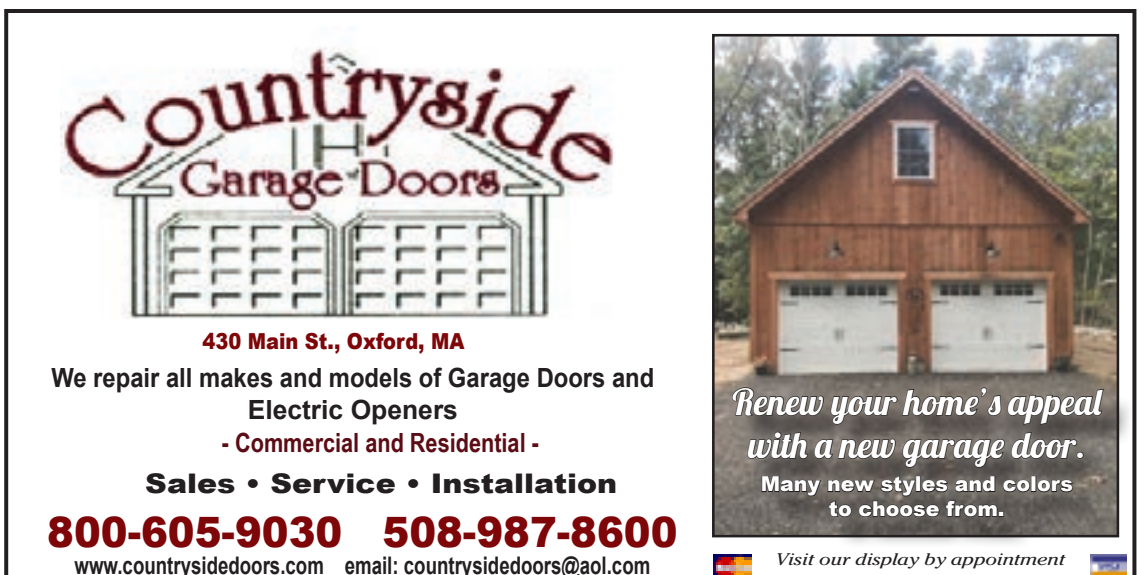
How to Grow Daylilies

The Sutton Garden Club will meet Thursday, April 18 at 7pm and will feature a program, "Daylilies in the Garden", presented by Adele Keohan, Past President of the New England Daylily Society. We will learn about the different Daylily forms and how to select Daylilies for

our gardens. How to care for and propagate these hardy perennial plants will also be discussed. The meeting will take place at the Dudley Gendron Post, 156 Boston Road in Sutton.

Individuals interested in this topic are welcome to attend the meeting. First time visits are free;

subsequent visits will be charged \$5. We also welcome new members throughout the year. Annual membership remains at \$20 individual/\$30 family. Membership forms are available on our website, www.suttongardenclub.typepad.com and at our meetings.



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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 contri-

butions 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 66½. 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:

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Edward Jones Financial Advisor
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Grafton Recreation

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SOCCER AND TRACK & FIELD

The Spring and Summer Brochure is available. To register for Grafton Recreation activities, go to: graftonma.recdesk.com/Community/Home. Join us for a fun eight week sports program for children of all abilities to learn the fundamentals of soccer and track & field. Classes are non-competitive and are perfect for beginners or children who

are looking for small class sizes taught by well-trained coaches. For children ages 2 – 10 years at Nelson Park. Fee \$200. Classes on Sundays, April 28 through June 23. Call with any questions. Register by April 21. <http://tinyurl.com/inclouision24>

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child's progress and can take pride in their achievements in a fun and family-friendly environment. Check out details at <https://tinyurl.com/graftonTKD>. Register GraftonRec.Com

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Family-run Affordable Junk Removal takes the stress out of cleanups

BY CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Whether it's one old fridge in the garage or an entire home of unwanted goods, the team at Affordable Junk Removal offers a cost-efficient, stress-free approach to waste management. "You don't lift a finger," says owner Jason Schadler, who started the company along with his wife Christine in 2005.

The business offers same-day service for both residential and commercial clients across eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island. In addition to junk removal, the company rents 15-yard dumpsters.

As a family-owned and operated company, Schadler says Affordable Junk Removal has lower overhead costs and is more accessible than national competitors. "I answer my phone 24 hours a day," he says. "I was on vacation in Italy and Portugal, and I was still answering my phone on the beach. When you call us, you get me — not an automated machine!"

Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items whenever possible and properly disposes of non-recyclables.

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my



Christine and Jason Schadler, shown here with their children and dog, started Affordable Junk Removal in 2005.

god, I need a tarp."

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as

other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal

Business spotlight

has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Grafton, Millbury and Sutton in particular Schadler says they are proud to have many

repeat customers and friends in the area.

One of the best parts of his job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships with returning customers. "We are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the Blackstone Valley," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call 774-287-1133 or visit affordablejunkremoval.com.

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- In order to be eligible for the disclosed Tier I and Tier II interest rate, Annual Percentage Yield (APY), and refund of domestic ATM Surcharges the following conditions must be met in a given statement cycle.
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17 Nursing Students Pinned

BVT holds pinning ceremony for new nurses

The 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 welcome from Practical Nursing Coordinator Joann L. Monks, 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



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.

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.

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Blackstone Valley Tech Annual Golf Tourney

Register now and support a special cause

Blackstone Valley Tech's 25th Annual Golf Tournament will tee off on Monday, June 10, at Highfields Golf & Country Club in Grafton. Hit the links, show off your skills on the beautiful championship course and

help raise money for a good cause to benefit the Blackstone Valley Tech Education Foundation and Athletic Department activities and programs. Your registration (individual golfer \$150/golf foursome \$600) includes 18 holes

of play, a golf cart, and a buffet dinner. Take part in the silent auction and raffles, all to help support a good cause. If you're not a golfer, you can consider sponsoring a tee, putting green, or a cart to proudly display your company name in the program and during the event.

This event is a joint effort of the Valley Tech Education Foundation and our Athletic Department. Proceeds benefit the enhancement of educational and athletic activities for our students and the community.

Enjoy a day with your golfing buddies. For all tournament details, to view sponsorship opportunities, donate a raffle item, or access the online golfer registration and payment portal, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/golftournament. Register today to secure your spot. Carts are filling fast! The registration deadline is Tuesday, May 28.

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Ebike program extended

The MassBike program got its first funding through the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center's (MassCEC) new Clean Transportation for All Program that is conducting a two year program to distribute approximately 100 electric bicycles and track

are now open to March 31. The program has expanded to Worcester County. More eligible communities along with a new incentive option that provides a 60-75 percent rebate based income level. Residents 18 years and older



their usage in Worcester. Now, with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) and the Worcester Chamber of Commerce, there is a plan to distribute e-bikes to low-income residents in the city.

This year, MassBike received a mini-grant from Mass CEC to launch an expanded Phase 2 of the e-bike program. Applications

who live or work in Auburn, Millbury and Grafton are eligible to apply for the rebate program. Applications are due March 31.

Priority preference will be given to income-qualified applicants. Priority will be given to those whose annual gross household income is below 80 percent of the state median income. Income levels vary by household size.

Contact for more information and application form: <https://www.questionpro.com/a/TakeSurvey?tt=F8Llsum52WOMuk7Y1E>

UFpg%3D%3D&lcfpn=false

Hop into Easter!!!

Easter Bunny will be here
 Saturday & Sunday, March 23 & 24 - 12 to 4pm
 and Saturday, March 30 - 12 to 4pm
 Free to all - Bring your own camera

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Millbury Public Library

ADULT BOOK CLUB

Mon. Mar. 25 @ 4 PM
Join our Director, Ann Dallair, for a book discussion of "This Tender Land" by William Kent Krueger.

Registration Required
April--"A Life in Parts" by Brian Cranston

May--"The Coworker" by Freida McFadden

EPIC TALES WRITING GROUP

Tues. Mar. 26 @ 6 PM
Calling all teen writers! If there is a story you want to write in any format--fanfiction, script writing, D&D campaign etc., come join us for writing time and support. Don't know what to write? We will have prompts available. Snacks and drinks allowed.

Ages 13-18
NO Registration Required

NEW ENGLAND UFOS WITH RONNY LEBLANC

Wed. Mar. 27 @ 6 PM
Join Ronny LeBlanc for a presentation on New England UFOs. Ronny stars in TRAVEL CHANNEL'S Hit Series EXPEDITION BIGFOOT (Season 4 Premieres 2023). He also stars in PARANORMAL CAUGHT ON CAMERA.

Program held at the Asa Waters Mansion

Registration Required
Sponsored by the Friends of the Millbury Public Library

MESSY HANDS!
Monday, April 1 4-5 p.m.

Come join us as we create a messy project either a science activity or art piece.

For Ages 5-7
Registration is required
Life on Mars

Tuesday, April 2 6-7 p.m.
High Touch High Tech New England will present Life on Mars: Get ready for the upcoming eclipse with hands-on modeling of lunar & solar eclipses. Ever wondered what scientists are looking for when they search for signs of life? We will explore this and other questions in this fun, engaging, hands-on program about our cosmic neighborhood.

Sponsored by the Mary B Grogan Grant

CONTACT: Ann Dallair 508-865-1181 adallair@cwmar.org

STORY TIME: 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM
Wednesday, April 3 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Contact: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181

tboulrice@cwmar.org
Come join us to explore early literacy skills with books, finger-plays, songs, sensory play and more! While activities are geared

towards ages 3-5, all ages are welcome.

This event will occur in the Community Room.

No registration required. Please check our calendar on our website for program cancellations.

SOLAR ECLIPSES: TRACKING THE SHADOW OF THE MOON

Thursday, April 4 6-7p.m.
This will be a family friendly presentation about solar eclipses and night sky objects that can be seen in April skies using the library telescope from the Millbury Public Library.

Solar glasses will be handed out to all participants (while supplies last).

Program presented by the Aldrich Astronomical Society - Jim Zebrowski

Sponsored by donations made to the Millbury Public Library

CONTACT: Ann Dallair 508-865-1181 adallair@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

STORY TIME: 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM

Wednesday, April 10 10:30 - 11:30 a.m.

Contact: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181 tboulrice@cwmar.org

Come join us to explore early literacy skills with books, finger-plays, songs, sensory play and more! While activities are geared towards ages 3-5, all ages are welcome.

This event will occur in the Community Room.

No registration required. Please check our calendar on our website for program cancellations.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10 6-7:30 P.M. SHE CAN DO IT: REAL/REEL WOMEN & MIDCENTURY MYSTERIES

Tell a Friend Remind Me Add to Calendar

Join authors Janet Raye Stevens & Sharon Healy-Yang for an engaging, multi-media event revealing some intriguing inspirations for creating a mystery set circa WWII.

Using film clips, anecdotes, and excerpts from their books, Janet and Sharon talk about 1940's women in real as well as 'reel' life and how these smart,

stylish, wise-cracking gals in books and film inspired their own 1940's-set mysteries.

If you love mysteries, movies, and lots of banter, don't miss it!

Sponsored by donations made to the Millbury Public Library

CONTACT: Ann Dallair 508-865-1181 adallair@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

TUESDAY, APRIL 16 3-6 P.M. POKÉMON

Join us for a Pokemon Day at the Millbury Public Library filled with crafts, a raffle, and games. Pokemon Professor Jeffrey Hoyle will be joining us!

For all Pokemon fans.

Registration is Required
CONTACT: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181 tboulrice@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

CONTACT: Ann Dallair 508-865-1181 adallair@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

STORY TIME: WEDNESDAY APRIL 17 10:30 - 11:30 A.M.

Contact: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181 tboulrice@cwmar.org

Come join us to explore early literacy skills with books, finger-plays, songs, sensory play and more! While activities are geared towards ages 3-5, all ages are welcome.

This event will occur in the Community Room.

No registration required. Please check our calendar on our website for program cancellations.

CONTACT: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181 tboulrice@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17 BUILD A MAZE

Help us construct a life size maze in the library using cardboard and Makedo tools to display in the Children's Room

Ages 8-12
Registration Required

CONTACT: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181 tboulrice@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

THURSDAY, APRIL 18 3-5 P.M. 3D PRINT CLUB-SPECIAL EVENT

Bring a canvas bag or a t-shirt

and we will show you how to create a 3D design using Tinkercad that you can iron on!

For All Ages

No Registration Required
CONTACT: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181 tboulrice@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

STORY TIME: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 24 10:30- 11:30 A.M.

Contact: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181 tboulrice@cwmar.org

Come join us to explore early literacy skills with books, finger-plays, songs, sensory play and more! While activities are geared towards ages 3-5, all ages are welcome.

This event will occur in the Community Room.

No registration required. Please check our calendar on our website for program cancellations.

THURSDAY, APRIL 25 5:30-7:30 P.M. SEASCAPES: HOW TO PASTEL PAINT

Greg Maichack will present "Seascapes" a pastel painting workshop for adults and teens 18+.

This pastel painting workshop is designed for both sheer beginners to advanced participants.

This all-new "Seascapes: How to Pastel Paint," is inspired by Winslow Homer's painting "Summer Squall" and "West Point, Prout's Neck." For the first time, we will create the wave effect of spray, embedding pigment particles into the painting. There will be instruction in expressive pastel strokes, blending, slurring, and layering. All will keep their 12x18 pastel painting of their personalized vivid seascape and waves.

Sponsored by the Millbury Cultural Council

CONTACT: Ann Dallair 508-865-1181 adallair@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

REGISTRATION CLOSED. (WAITING LIST FULL) <https://www.millburylibrary.org/>

TUESDAY, APRIL 30 6-7 P.M. EPIC TALES WRITING GROUP

Calling all teen writers! If there is a story you want to write in any format--fanfiction, script writing, D&D campaign etc., come join us for writing time and support. Don't know what to write? We will have prompts available. Snacks and drinks allowed.

For Ages 13-18
No Registration Required

CONTACT: Theresa Boulrice 5088651181 tboulrice@cwmar.org

LOCATION: Millbury Public Library

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All are welcome to attend
Social Activities & Groups
Darts - Tuesdays at 10:30 AM
Cribbage - Wednesdays at 1 PM
Pitch - Thursdays at 10 AM
I'm Sorry - Fridays at 9:30 AM
A fun and easy-to-learn card game
Bingo - Fridays at 1 PM presented by The Friends of Sutton Sutton Elders

Book Club - Our reading group meets monthly hosted at Sutton Library

Computer Club - A social gathering for all skill levels Thursdays at 9 AM led by Paul Holzwarth

Movie & Popcorn (see newsletter)

Health and Wellness
Blood Pressure Clinic - Wednesdays at 10 a. m. A nurse will check your blood pressure, height and weight

Chair Yoga - Mondays at 10 AM and Thursdays at 1 PM. Yoga exercise while seated, focused on stretching and relaxation led by certified instructor Gloria Beaupre

Barre Cardio - Tuesdays at 12:30 PM. Low intensity workout inspired by ballet moves led by certified instructor Crystal Lee

Muscular Strength & Range of Motion Exercise - Wednesdays at 10 AM. Light weights and bands are used to strengthen and tone muscles led by certified instructor Gloria Beaupre

Tai Chi - Thursdays at 9 AM. Gentle & flowing movements for a low-impact workout led by certified instructor Gary Lachapelle

Gentle Mat Yoga - Mondays at 12:30 PM. Combination of gentle positions to increase mindfulness, breath and flexibility led by certified instructor Crystal Lee

Hairdresser
Rita visits monthly to provide \$12 haircuts for men & women. Call to schedule an appointment.

SHINE: Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone
SHINE counselor Pat visits monthly to discuss your health insurance options. Available by appointment.

Senior Services
Director Michelle Edelstein helps with issues including: elder abuse, senior safety, nutritional needs, family support, bereavement, health care & medication, mobility, mental health, substance abuse, financial concerns, legal issues, and more.

Flu Shots
The Sutton Board of Health provides Sutton seniors over age 65 with a free flu shot in October/November. Bring insurance information.

Fuel Assistance (Worcester Community Action Council)

Each season WCAC in Worcester County offers fuel assistance for people in need.

Tri-Valley Elder Services
Helping seniors live independently with dignity in their own homes or settings of their choice. Learn more at trivalleyinc.org.

Guest Speakers
Check our monthly newsletter for free health & wellness programs such as cholesterol & diabetes management, healthy eating & nutrition, osteoporosis, eye care, legal advice, and other topics.



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1 River Street Millbury, MA 508-865-9154

Hours of Operation: Mon-Thur 8am-4pm, Friday 8am-2pm
<https://www.millburyma.gov/>

Tuesday, March 26 Better Breathers at 10:30 a.m. Embrace improved lung health and vitality with the Better Breathers Club facilitated by St. Francis Rehabilitation and Nursing Center.

Blood Pressure Clinic Every Tuesday!! 9:00 am -10:00

Tuesday, March 26 Memory Café at 2:00pm. Create a memory board collage with Julie.

Every Tuesday, Blood Pressure Clinic 9 -10 a.m.

To reserve a spot for lunch, Call Mary (in the kitchen) 508-865-9154 Reservations need to be made 48 hours in advance. (\$3.00 suggested donation) Lunch menu is subject to change.

Weekly Activity Schedule:

Monday 9:30-10:15 a.m. Light Exercise

12 p.m., Lunch
 12:45 p.m. Mahjong Game
 1 p.m. Zumba
 Tuesday 9-10 a.m. Blood Pressure Clinic
 9:30-10:30 a.m. Tai Chi
 12 p.m. Lunch
 1 p.m. Cribbage
 Wednesday 9:30 a.m. Craft Class
 10:30 a.m. Line Dancing
 12:00 p.m. Lunch
 1 p.m. Social Bingo
 Thursday 9 - 10 a.m. Yoga
 10 - 11:30 a.m. Coloring Class

12p.m. Lunch
 1 p.m. Pitch
 Friday 9 a.m. Shopping
 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Light Exercise
 11:30 a.m. Lunch
 Call to schedule Friday shopping, 508-581-7424
 Pick-up at 9 a.m., Return at 11 a.m. The trips will alternate between Market Basket in Shrewsbury and Market 32 in Sutton (every other week).
 Summer Fun trips:
 May 7 to Boston \$99, Duck Boat, Lunch and transportation
 June 4 to Gloucester \$119, Light-

house cruise, lunch and transportation

Call to schedule your appointment with our SHINE Counselor Kaye Peltier 508-865-9154

Applications for SNAP assistance are by appointment only at the Senior Center Call Julie 508-865-9154

Millbury Food Pantry Monday through Thursday 9 a.m.-3 p.m. and Friday 9 a.m. -1 p.m. Pick up is available once a month Please call in advance so we can prepare your pick up! 508-865-9154



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Grafton Senior Center

The Senior Center will be hosting an Open House on Friday, April 26 to showcase their activities and support programs. Enjoy free pizza and raffles.

On Wednesday, March 27, at 11 a.m. please join students from the local 4H club for a piano concert! They will be showcasing their skills in the Bolack Room.

Ongoing activities:
 Blood Pressure Clinic: Thursdays at 11 a.m. Breathing & Healing Chair Yoga: Tuesdays at 9 a.m. and Fridays at 10 a.m. (Free for Grafton Seniors thanks to Friends of Grafton Elders)
 Cardio Barre Exercise: Thursdays at 12 p.m. Congressperson Office Hours: Vary Council on Aging: Meets second Thursday of every month at 2:15 p.m. unless otherwise posted. Crafts: Wednesdays at 9 a.m. When scheduled Day Trips/ Extended Trips: Varies- see newsletter/ brochure rack for details. Dull Men's Club: second

and fourth Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. Duplicate Bridge: Tuesdays & Thursdays at 9 a.m. Fall Prevention Exercise: Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. (Free for Grafton Seniors) Fuel Assistance: See Lisa Kelley for appointment. Hooked on Books Club: First Wednesday of the month at 10:30 a.m. Jog Your Noggin: Spirited conversation with Lisa one Wednesday a month at 10:30 a.m. Line Dancing: Every Friday at 1:00 p.m. \$3 per person. Lunch: Monday- Friday at 11:45 a.m. Suggested donation is \$2.50. Please call 2 days prior for reservation. Mahjong (Chinese Form): Mondays at 9:30 a.m. Mat Yoga: Thursdays at 1p.m. Medical Equipment Loan Closet: walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs, etc. just ask! Nutrition Class: an interesting discussion with Senior Exercise instructor, Wendy Reid. Oldies Singalong: a fun singalong of the classics. One Friday a month. Outreach: Assessing needs and

linking resources. Call for appointment with Lisa. Out to Lunch: Monthly outing to area restaurant. Painting Independently: Fridays 10 a.m. Pinochle: Thursdays 1:30 p.m. Pitch: Monday and Tuesday at 1 p.m. Rummikub: Wednesdays at 1 p.m. Senior Exercise Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. (Free for Grafton Seniors thanks to FOGE) Social Knitting: Mondays at 10:30 a.m. SNAP (Supplemental Food Assistance Program): See Lisa Kelley for appointment. Tax Work Off Program: Call Shannon for more information. Tone and Stretch Exercise: Mondays at 9:30 a.m. Transportation: Call the office for information. Watercoloring Class: Fridays at 1 p.m. Wii-TV Game Exercise: Available in the TV room almost any time! Writer's Group: Meets second and fourth Friday at 1 p.m. Zumba: Wednesdays at 8:45 a.m. (sponsored by FOGE).

Grafton Garden Club Scholarship

The Grafton Garden Club awards a \$500 scholarship each year to Grafton residents who attend or plan to attend an accredited institution and pursue

studies in one of the following fields: agriculture, botany, forestry, horticulture, landscape architecture, environmental science or plant and soil sciences. An application form must be completed and returned with an official transcript of the applicant's grades, a letter of recommendation, and a letter by the applicant stating why s/he is qualified to receive a Grafton Garden Club scholarship. The

student must maintain a grade point average of at least 2.5 during the semester following the granting of the scholarship. The deadline for submission is March 31. Application forms may be obtained from the Guidance Department at Grafton High School, by contacting the Grafton Garden Club, P.O. Box 453 Grafton, MA 01519 or by visiting our web page at www.graftongardenclub.org.



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Senior Scoop Day

On Tuesday, April 23, the BV Hub will welcome over 300 students to a collaborative event uniting high school seniors from across central Massachusetts

will also be provided the opportunity to explore and engage in conversations and interactive activities led by some of our prominent MA business and



who are still considering their post-secondary options with nearby businesses eager to recruit fresh talent. The gathering will take place on the Concourse at Polar Park, where students, schools, businesses, and organizations will come together for a morning dedicated to exploring career options, networking, and conducting interviews.

Senior Scoop youth attendees

workforce professionals. These sessions will highlight the top 10 "most in-demand" workforce skills and emerging job opportunities. Providing participants an opportunity to not only thrive in today's workforce, but to help them prepare for and influence the workforce of the future. Among the towns invited are Grafton, Millbury, Sutton and Oxford.

Kindergarten registration

Grafton Public Schools kindergarten registration 2024-2025 is under way with online registration. Please go to graftonps.org for complete registration information and directions. Children must turn 5 years old on or before September 1, 2024 in order to be eligible for kindergarten in the fall. Kindergarten parent orientation will be held at South Grafton Elementary at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 10 and at North Grafton Elementary, at 6 p.m. on Thursday, April 11. This is a parent-only meeting and will be held in person at each school. Kindergarten screening information will be posted and emailed to those registered, when it is available.



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LIVING WITH LUKE

amyleclaire@hotmail.com

Luke's Birthday Gash

BY AMY LECLAIRE

Luke'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.

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 inves-

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. 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 backyard 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

tigate 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



Luke's vet appointment on his birthday

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



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



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

LUKE

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- by Kelly Hauk



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REAL ESTATE

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

If you're thinking of selling your house this spring, now is the perfect time to start getting it ready. With the market gearing up for its busiest time of year, it'll be important to make sure your house shines



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

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

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 well-maintained 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

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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 Luke."

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 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 – amy@leclair@hotmail.com

Follow Luke on IG – livingwith-lukevalentino



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TALES FROM BEYOND

tomdagostino.com

The Carriage Inn, North Kingstown, Rhode Island

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

The 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 walled-up 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 the day.

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.

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HEALTHIER BAKING

Healthier Baking in the Blackstone Valley

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE
CMGALEONE15@GMAIL.COM

The value of coziness is underrated. Whether it's derived from snuggling with pets, creating a knitted cocoon, or sipping hot cocoa, it's a simple joy that everyone can embrace.

One cozy food is blueberry pie squares. Frequently served warm, the dessert offers warmth, a soothing aroma and as much sweetness as a blueberry pie. And with very little added sugar, it's healthier than many similar treats.

One of the primary reasons that these squares are healthier is because there are no artificial ingredients, colors or preservatives, and there's only a minimal amount of added sugar. Inflammation caused by eating too much sugar can make people more susceptible to most of the worst illnesses, diseases and conditions.

Another good reason to try this recipe is because of the health benefits of blueberries. Blueberries are considered to be a superfood for many reasons. They are certified by the American Heart Association to be a heart-healthy food. Loaded



with antioxidants, they are believed to be beneficial in fighting cancer and in improving brain health. Additionally, the anthocyanins – which give the fruit its deep color

– may have antidiabetic effects. Cinnamon also has antioxidant properties. And cardamom, which is a source of vitamin c, riboflavin, niacin, magnesium and potassium,

has anti-inflammatory properties and can protect against oxidative stress that causes various health conditions.

BLUEBERRY PIE SQUARES

SQUARE CRUST INGREDIENTS:

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

DIRECTIONS:

Combine flour, baking powder and salt in a large bowl. Cut in butter until like peas. Sprinkle vinegar over the mixture. Sprinkle 1 tbsp. of water over part of mixture, toss with a fork, and move moistened dough to the side of the bowl. Repeat with the rest of the mixture, until it's all moistened. Gather dough into two balls, and flatten each one (on a floured surface).

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

SQUARE FILLING INGREDIENTS:

- 3 Cups of Blueberries
- 1 tsp. Cinnamon
- 1 tsp. Cardamom
- ¼ Cup Granulated Sugar
- 3 Tbsp. of Flour

DIRECTIONS:

Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, combine all the filling ingredients. Place the bottom crust on the bottom of a 9X13 rectangular baking dish. Spoon the filling evenly onto the unbaked crust. Cover the filling with the top unbaked crust, and bake the squares for about 40 minutes. Makes about 16-20 squares. Let cool a little and serve warm if desired. Enjoy!

Everyone could benefit from a little more coziness. To find it, why not indulge in a healthier treat? Happy (healthier) baking!



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THE CAR DOCTOR

jpaul@aanortheast.com

Fusion Energi Error Message Relates to Hybrid Drivetrain

Q. I own a 2019 Fusion Energi with 56,000 miles. Recently, I will get seemingly at random, an error



BY JOHN PAUL

message that appears on my dash that says stop safely now. I had the car towed to my local Ford dealer and they had the car for several days and they

said this error message never reappeared and there were no error codes in the computer. When it does appear the car barely accelerates regardless of how much you give it gas. Sometimes just shutting it off and turning it back on corrects the error, but sometimes it just does not go away which is why I had it towed in. Luckily, it only happened while I was driving locally. I am afraid to take it on the parkway or on a long trip until this can be diagnosed and repaired. Can you

shed any light on this?

A. That message is specific to the hybrid drivetrain, and it usually indicates a problem with hybrid battery cooling system. Now, of course it could be wiring or some other component issue but the only times I have seen it is when the hybrid battery temperature gets above the normal rating. As you pointed out, sometimes shutting the car off for a bit restarting it clears the issue. A scan of the car's computer modules needs to be performed to isolate the issue. In addition, and most importantly there is a recall. In Ford's words, there is a chance a fire may break out in the trunk area while driving, increasing the risk of injury. We are asking you to please avoid charging your vehicle until a remedy is available. Some Ford Fusion Energi Plug-in Hybrid models may not start or

may display a "Stop Safely Now" message while driving, followed by a loss of power within a few seconds.

Q. A comment about headlight cleaning, I had the same problem on my 1999 Honda CRV, Foggy headlights. There may be "some" dirt on the outside of the headlight cover which you can clean with a cloth. But do not waste your money or time buying those products that tell you to scrub off the fog. They do not work. In my opinion the only thing that works that brings your headlights back to full brightness is to take your car to a body shop and have the headlight cover assembly replaced. The fog is on the inside of the light, and it can't be cleaned off. I think it is caused by the sun's UV light. I replaced mine and now I am back to full bright headlights.

A. I agree to a point, the spray on easy-to-use products don't work any better than using bug spray. If lens degradation is on the inside the only thing you can do is replace them. Most headlights are made of plastic and exposure to sunlight breaks down the plastic coating, causing discoloration that obscures the amount of light produced. Depending

on where and how the vehicle is used, headlights can begin showing signs of deterioration as early as three years to five years. That being said I have used kits that come with 1500, 2000, and 3000 grit sandpaper and then a polishing compound and a UV sealer and have taken headlights from badly glazed to completely transparent. It is a fair amount of work, but the result was quite good and so far on one of our own cars the lenses are clear one year later.

Q. I own a 2019 Honda CRV that I put new tires on this past November. I do a lot of winter driving in Vermont, and I wanted something better in the snow than my original tires. I went with Firestone Weathergrip tires, and they are a big improvement over what I had. However, I now find that my gas mileage has dropped by about 0.7 MPG. Could it be the tires or is something else going on here?

A. It certainly is possible the tires do not have the same rolling resistance as the original tires, which results in a little less fuel economy. Also, keep in mind the composition of

CAR DOCTOR
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CAR DOCTOR

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winter fuel has less energy in it and seeing up to a 3 to 5% drop and fuel economy is not uncommon. The other thing you may find is, although the tires say they're the same size, they may be a bit larger which will lower the speedometer reading and odometer reading and will result in a false mile per gallon number.

Q. I know you have reviewed or mentioned a few scan tools and other testers in the past. Have you ever heard of the company Topdon. I see ads all over Facebook and YouTube.

A. I have seen the ads as well and recently was contacted by the company and in the near future will be testing out a Bluetooth code reader/scanner and a battery tester. Their products seem pretty impressive, time will tell, so stay tuned.

Q. My wife and I purchased a brand-new Subaru Forester back in April of 2019. The vehicle is full of bells and whistles, sun/moon roof all-wheel drive and so forth. My wife likes the vehicle, but I do not. Here is the problem at hand. The preset buttons on the infotainment system never stay set, no matter how many times I reset them. The vehicle's battery was checked and is good. There were a few recalls on this car (matters taken care of), but nothing related to the radio. I mentioned it to the service technicians at the dealership and I wrote to the corporate office with no results. My wife said, just forget about it and dial the FM stations as needed. I said, if it came as a package with the car and we paid for it then it should be repaired/ fixed or replaced. I have searched the web and other owners of the same model have the same problem. Some have been corrected or replaced.

A. Earlier models had this exact problem, and it was solved with a software update. At this point I would want the dealer to check that all software is up to date. There are about a dozen bulletins about the

infotainment system on this car, but at least the ones that I have access to do not address memory issues. The other issue that has been plaguing some Subaru infotainment system is the touch screen becomes delaminated and causes odd control issues with the radio. I would start with checking the power and ground to the radio and would like to see the software is up to date. If not, chances are the radio control (head unit/display) will need replacement.

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 jppaul@aaanortheast.com. Follow John on Twitter @johnfpaul and friend him on Facebook at mrjohnfpaul.

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SPORTS

Two Coaches Eclipse 400 Wins

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Being able to reach the 400 win mark as a coach on the high school level is a rather incredible feat, but to have two coaches in the same sport in the same high school do it within two weeks of one another is something extraordinary. That is exactly what happened at Millbury High School this winter season as both basketball coaches Steve Reno for the girls and Jim Donnelly coaching the boys got their 400th win on the courts. While they both got the same result, they did it in different ways.

“It’s pretty rare for an AD to have a coach reach a milestone like this, and to have two do it in the same season (weeks from one another) is even rarer,” Millbury Athletic Director Josh MacCreery said. “And while it is cool that they both achieved this around the same time, I really wanted to make sure they got their individual attention as well. It has certainly made for an exciting

winter season!”

While Donnelly has accumulated his 400 wins over 28 years and three different schools Reno has been able to do it all at Millbury throughout his 25 seasons. Although the two coaches got the same result with different approaches, they both got to the finish line with their families in tow.

Donnelly began his coaching career fresh out of college for Oxford and while his first season with the Pirates was not anything to boast about (Oxford went 0-17), it was not going to be a year that would establish the new coach. Through his nine years with Oxford, he was able to build a successful boys basketball program where he accumulated 105 wins.

“I was learning how to coach on the high school level,” Donnelly said. “The kids were playing an unselfish game and by our third year we made it to the Division 2 Final 4 and the following year won the Clark Tournament.”

After nine years the Donnelly

family was in a good place and decided to move to Sutton, where he would coach for another 13 years while capturing another 220 wins.

“My wife is from Sutton and we felt that it was a good situation and figured that our kids would eventually play basketball there,” he said. “Sutton is a good community and although the move included a combination of things, it had nothing to do with not liking Oxford. In fact, it was very hard to leave there.”

While at Sutton, Donnelly guided his teams to four Clark Tournament Championships and an appearance in the State Championship, where the Sammys came up short.

The final leg of getting to 400 has taken place at Millbury over the past six years. Making the move to coach the Woolies had a bunch of factors. The Donnelly was already living in Millbury at the time and when the job vacancy opened, they decided to take the risk.

“It was a rebuilding year, but I had coached my son’s youth basketball teams so I knew a lot for the kids coming up through the system,” he said.

While Donnelly has had bounced around, Reno found his place in Millbury right from the beginning and has been there all 25 years of his coaching career. Within a few weeks of securing the job with the Woolies, he and his wife had their first daughter (Keryn), who would grow up around the game of basketball with her father. As fate would have it, being the girls’ basketball coach, Reno would eventually raise three daughters, all of whom played for him at high school.

“You don’t do this job for the money or the long hours, but instead do it for the kids,” Reno said. “It was a family thing and Keryn would eventually joined my staff a few years ago. I love being around kids and it is really



Boys' basketball Coach Jim Donnelly also hit the noted marker after 28 years coaching the sport. Submitted photo

special to be able to coach with my daughter.”

Much like Donnelly at Oxford, Reno found his first season at the helm to be a tough one, as the girls would go 2-17. At the time the Millbury girls’ basketball program had been in a rut for some years, but Reno got the team to believe in themselves and turn things around quickly. After three seasons, the program was on the positive side of the wins and losses, and have now put together 22 consecutive winning campaigns. The result? Playing basketball at Millbury is much more fun than in the past.

Reno and his teams have won seven Sectional Championships, six Central Mass Titles, gone to five State Finals, only to be the runner-up each year. His first Sectional Championship came in 2007, taking nine years to get the team to this point. Following that first championship Millbury would win five straight Sectional

Titles. The next championship came in 2020 with daughter Keryn being part of his staff for the first year and daughters Shannon and Kelsey both playing on the team. Reno’s team would add another Sectional Championship in 2022, but it was the one previous that will stick in his mind as the most memorable one, as his family was a big part of it.

According to Donnelly, his wife made sure that family and friends were at the game when her husband got that 400th win; including both sons who were playing on the team.

“Getting to a number like this requires a lot of good, committed players,” Donnelly said. “Having those types of athletes is the key to having long term success and without them, I wouldn’t be the coach I am.”

Reno echoed his counterpart with the same type of sentiment.

“It’s the players. They’re the reason we got to 400, I’m just along for the ride,” he emphasized. “We’ve got a good feeder program here and being consistent helps a lot. There is a lot of instability with other schools, who go through multiple coaches. I’ve been lucky to have people along side of me like Junior Varsity coach Michelle Polissack who has been with me for 15-20 years

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SPORTS

SPORTS

continued from page 20

and deserves a lot of credit.”

Having picked up his 400th win just eight days before Donnelly on January 12, Reno is ecstatic that he has not only been able to become a part of the club but to do it with a fellow coach from Millbury.

“I have nothing but respect for all those coaches who have previously reached the milestone,” he said. “There are only 20 other male and female coaches in CMASS who have accomplished the feat, but there is probably no other coaching staff with both the boys’ and girls’ coaches at 400 wins.”

While Reno has a distinct memory with all of his daughters, Donnelly tends to remember the hard losses more than anything else, but he does recall a few games that stick out.

“I remember a game at Bourne, where the AD had the place full and it was like a friendly hostile environment, we had our work cut out for us,” Donnelly said. “My son had a particularly good game and



Girls' basketball coach Steve Reno has notched win # 400 after a 25 year career in Millbury. Submitted photo

helped us to steal a victory at their place. I also remember the first year we won the Clark Tournament; we were not the favorite but we played the right way and had a buzzer beater that got us to the Finals.”

Donnelly went on to note that his teams do not go down without a fight and although he works them hard, he leaves them with lifetime memories.

“You need to continue to battle – it’s not all about wins and losses; it’s how you fell as a group after the game,” he said. “I enjoy the kids coming back and talking about games, remembering everything from that game although it was 15 years ago.”

The Millbury school system

is lucky to have not one, but two coaches that have put a lot of work into having their respective teams help them get 400 wins.

“I always joke with Steve and Jimmy that they are each worth at least 5-7 points a night based on their gameplans and in-game adjustments,” MacCreery said. “It’s an absolute pleasure being able to work with them both because they do things the right way and for the right reasons. They push when they need to and encourage when it’s necessary; I admire them both greatly and couldn’t be happier for them.”

Prayer



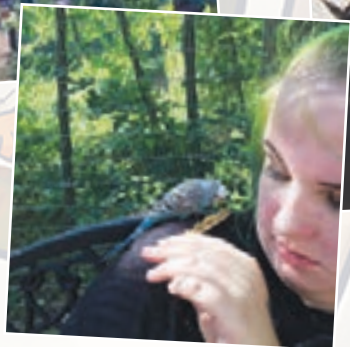
Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil (intention), Amen.

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

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In 2025, Southwick's Zoo will be celebrating 60 years of family fun! Share a photo of your favorite memories at Southwick's Zoo for a chance to win a family four-pack of general admission passes for the 2024 season and make some new memories!

Contest begins April 1, 2024.



Scan to Enter

By entering this contest, you are providing consent for Southwick's Zoo and Our Town Publishing (the publishers of The Yankee Xpress/Blackstone Valley Xpress, Free Press and the newspapers of Local Town Pages) to use your photo(s) for print, digital and social media purposes, and allowing Southwick's Zoo and Our Town Publishing to contact you via email for this promotion or upcoming promotions. Only one winner per household. Cannot be an employee or family member of Southwick's Zoo or Our Town Publishing to win.

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Clean-Up Week

The Grafton Garden Club is hosting Grafton Clean-Up Week Monday, April 15 through Saturday, April 20. Join us on Grafton Common to help clean up the town. Create a team and clean up a neighborhood. Register your team and your clean-up area with Helen Blazis by email: markblazissafaris@gmail.com. Beautify your own yard with a free tree sapling donated by the Grafton Department of Public Works. Refreshments will be provided by the Grafton Garden Club, Pepperoni Express, Savers Bank and Swirls & Scoops. Trash bags can be picked up during Clean-Up Week at Grafton DPW, 67 Old Westborough Road, Grafton.

coupons for lunch are available on the Common on Saturday from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

The Grafton Community Garden will open for the season with refreshments and a general cleaning up of the Garden and environs. The Lee Knowlton Community Garden is located on Estabrook Road, closest to the Old Westborough Road, near the new location of the highway department. Applications for a plot are accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis (existing renters get first renewal right). Applications are available on our website. The cost is \$20 (one-time) to join and \$20 annual rent for a 20' x 20' plot.

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UniBank's Uxbridge Branch To Host A Visit With The Easter Bunny

UniBank will be hosting the Easter Bunny at the bank's Uxbridge branch, located at 25 North Main Street in Uxbridge on Saturday, March 30, 2024 from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Children are invited to visit with the Easter Bunny and participate in festive craft activities. Guests are encouraged to bring a camera to

take photos with the Easter Bunny. Refreshments will be served. This event is free and open to the public.

UniBank is rooted in the Blackstone Valley with assets of \$2.5 billion as of December 31, 2023. A full-service, mutually owned community bank, UniBank has branches in Central Massachusetts and the MetroWest region of Massa-

chusetts. UniBank is dedicated to contributing to the overall quality of life and economic health of the communities it serves, while maintaining a high level of financial soundness and integrity. UniBank is an Equal Housing Lender and Member FDIC. UniBank NMLS #583135. The company website is www.unibank.com.

Fattman to Host Annual Easter Egg Hunt at Waters Farm

State Senator Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton) and his family announced that they are hosting their annual Easter Egg Hunt at Waters Farm in Sutton, on

Saturday, March 30, 2024, rain or shine. NEW THIS YEAR: There will be two separate egg hunt sessions; each family is able to attend only one of the two egg hunt sessions. Registration will begin at 10:30AM, and the first egg hunt will begin promptly at 11AM, with the second one following at 12PM. Admission is free, and hot dogs will be served by the Sutton Lions Club.

Bags will be provided and must be used. Registration is strongly recommended, and can be done at: [https://www.eventbrite.com/e/annual-easter-egg-hunt-tickets-](https://www.eventbrite.com/e/annual-easter-egg-hunt-tickets-857519543037?aff=oddtcreator)

857519543037?aff=oddtcreator

This event is open to families in all the towns of the Blackstone Valley and is sponsored by the Fattman Family and the Waters

Farm Preservation. Families are invited to come down to Waters Farm to hunt for Easter Eggs, see the local farm animals, and maybe even spot a special appearance from the Easter Bunny. Senator Fattman, his family, and Waters Farm hope you will join them to celebrate the blossoming of spring at this local historic treasure in the Blackstone Valley.



Join the Blackstone Valley Coin and Collectibles Club In Celebrating 2024 National Coin Week, April 21-27

The 100th anniversary of National Coin Week is being celebrated April 21-27 with the theme "A Hobby for a Changing World: 100 Years and Counting." From early civilization to today, the state of collecting coins

has reflected societal trends, collaboration among collectors, and shifting interests. The 100th anniversary event will focus on how coinage and money have evolved and changed to embrace varying cultural values over time.

The Blackstone Valley Coin and Collectibles Club is an educational organization dedicated to the fun and friendship of collecting.

The Blackstone Valley Coin and Collectibles Club is celebrating National Coin Week with our regularly scheduled club meeting and monthly coin show. The club meets every 3rd Tuesday of the month at the Uxbridge VFW at 13 Cross Road across the street from the Police Station.

For more information about the Blackstone Valley Coin and Collectibles Club, visit <https://www.facebook.com/BlackstoneValleyCoinClub>.

National Coin Week is sponsored by the American Numismatic Association (ANA). More information, resources and activities are available at www.NationalCoinWeek.org. For information about the ANA, call 719-632-2646. Join the ANA with Sponsor Code 5781!

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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, MARCH 31

• The St. Joseph's Church in Charlton Easter Sunday Service on March 31 at 10 a.m. will live stream on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FYqLQCOYpUk>.

TUESDAY, APRIL 2

• "Local Area Trails & Waterways", photographs by Ray Arnold, will be on display and for sale April 2-30 in the cafe gallery at Booklovers' Gourmet, located at 72 East Main Street, Webster. A meet and greet with the artist will take place on Saturday, April 6 from 12-2 p.m., free and open to the public. The show may be viewed during regular business hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Wednesday 10 a.m.-6 p.m., closed Sunday & Monday. For more information, call 508-949-6232 or email deb@bookloversgourmet.com.

SUNDAY, APRIL 7

• The New England Country Music Club will hold the following dances with live classic country bands at the Progressive Club, 18 Whittin St., Uxbridge:

Sunday, Apr. 7, "Rachel Landry"; Sunday, Apr. 21, "South County Line"; Sunday, May 5, "The Farm Hands".

Doors open at 12:15, live music 1-5 p.m. Snacks may be brought in, cash bar for beverages. www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub

• Vernal Pool Exploration Hike With A Ranger - Join Ranger Viola from 2- 4:00 p.m. at the West Hill Dam office, 518 E. Hartford Avenue, Uxbridge. Join us for a short hike to some resident Vernal Pools, in daylight, to observe if Big Night (mass migration of amphibians) and egg laying have occurred or is occurring. Visitors are currently finding some wood frog egg masses and possible salamander egg deposits, so come explore. Cancelled for heavy rain or snow. For more information we post updates on Facebook and Ranger Viola is happy to take your calls at 978-318-8417. Wear sturdy shoes, bring a water bottle, dress for the weather, be prepared to walk about a mile, round trip, walk through wooded areas, not trails and expect downed trees and logs etc. (walking or hiking stick will be helpful). We expect a range of ages, so under the age of 5 this is highly not recommended. Vernal Pools, only last about a month, fish

cannot live there, spring rains fill them so salamanders and other Vernal Pool species can migrate to the pool they emerged from, long enough to mate and leave their eggs. They only return in future years, eggs hatch and adults emerge before the pools dry out. No gathering of any animals will be permitted. Vernal Pools and these species are highly protected.

SATURDAY, APRIL 13

• St. Peter Parish in Northbridge is having a Ham Dinner on Saturday, April 13th starting at 5:30 pm in the Parish Hall. Bring you family and friends for a wonderful meal and meet some new friends. Tickets are \$17 per dinner and include 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.

• Meet author Ann Watt, whose debut book is a nursing memoir titled, "When Being a Nurse Was Fun: Tales From My Life as a Nurse", on Saturday, April 13, 1-2:30 p.m. at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 East Main Street, Webster. This book signing and presentation is free to attend and signed books will be available for purchase. For more information or to RSVP, call 508-949-6232 or email deb@bookloversgourmet.com. Ann lived in Worcester for a few years and was employed by UMass/Memorial at the University campus. The book starts with a few stories about her nursing training and employment at UMass.

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. • Learn everything about growing "Daylilies in the Garden" at the Sutton Garden Club meeting at 7 p.m. at the A.L. Gendron Post 414, 156 Boston Post Road, Sutton. Adel Keohan will be presenter. • Sutton Historical Society's first speaker presentation 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 25percent 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.

SATURDAY, APRIL 20

• Home Baked Ham & Bean Supper, April 20, 2024 at 5:00 pm in the Community House, 8 Court St, Uxbridge located behind the Uxbridge Town Common. Sponsored by the Uxbridge Congregational Church. Menu includes baked ham, home baked beans, potato salad, coleslaw, brown bread, beverages & dessert. Donation of \$13.00 per adult, children under 6 free. Raffles will also be available. For reservations call 508.244.7849 Limited tickets will be sold at door. Come enjoy great food and fellowship.

SATURDAY, MAY 4

• The Millbury Nature Trails Committee will host an Arbor Day Tree Planting Event at 9 a.m. at the Brierly Conservation Area. Help plant trees and mark a new trail. Rain date is May 11. To register, visit the Nature Trails Facebook page. • 9th Annual Family Fun Fishing Day - Open Sky Community Services and the Blackstone River Watershed Association are excited to co-host the 9th Annual Family Fun Fishing Day at Riverbend Farm in Uxbridge along with our partner organizations, the Blackstone River National Heritage Corridor Volunteers-in-Parks Program, Massachusetts Department of Conservation & Recreation, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife. This year's event will be held on Saturday May 4 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. with a rain date of Sunday, May 5. Prizes offered in four different age groups will be awarded at 1:15 p.m. There will be activities for the whole family, as

well as food and ice cream for purchase, free face painting and raffles. All ages and ability levels are welcome. Fishing poles, bait and instruction will be available with pre-registration and participants are welcome to bring their own. This is a catch and release event for everyone from first time fishers to experienced anglers. Adults must accompany children under 12. Volunteer opportunities are available at openskys.org/fishingvolunteers. Pre-registration will open starting April 5 at thebrwa.org/familyfishing2024. This is a FREE event, but pre-registration is required. Please contact Joanne Holahan at 508-278-5200 with any questions.

• 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. • Sutton Historical Society's first speaker presentation 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 25percent 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.

SATURDAY, JUNE 3

• Saint Peter's Parish in Northbridge will be holding a Yard Sale on Saturday, June 3 rd , 7:30am to 3:00pm in the parish hall. If you are moving, spring cleaning or just have too much clutter, bring us your gently used items for our yard sale. You may drop-off your donations every Saturday from 10:00-1:00pm April through May, starting on Saturday, April 6th at the parish garage. We are accepting kitchen items, home goods, toys, sporting goods, books, small furniture items, clothing for donation and much more. Please see our website for a complete list of what we are accepting. You may also call or email the parish office, if you have any questions: 508-234-2156 or email: parishoffice@stpeterrockdale.org.

HIKES WITH BLACKSTONE VALLEY HERITAGE CORRIDOR HIKES

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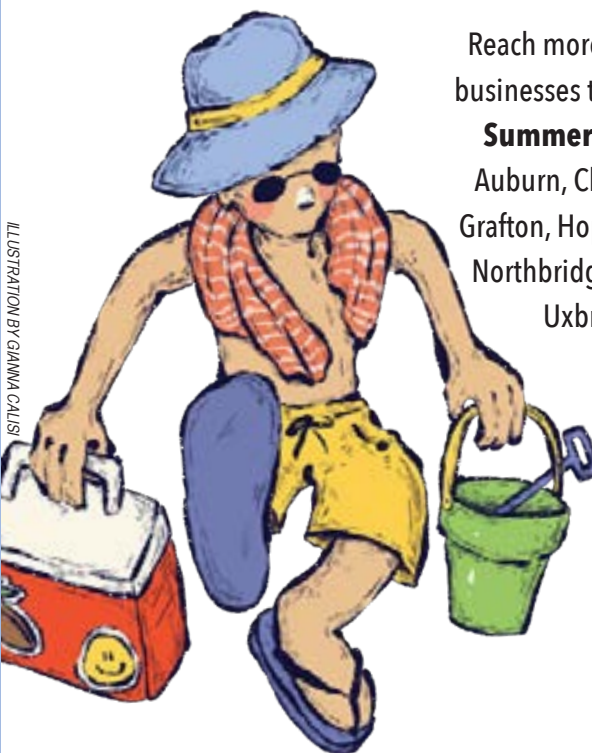


ILLUSTRATION BY GIANNA CALLISI

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