

Restoration of Upton Grange, testament to community and historical preservation



BEFORE (left) - The Upton Grange #125 before it received a complete renovation in 2023. Courtesy of The Upton Historical Commission. **AFTER (right)** - The newly restored Upton Grange #125 with its original paint colors is located at 26 School Street, next to the Police Station (former George S. Ball School) Courtesy of The Upton Historical Commission

By Gina Woelfel

In January 2023, the Upton Grange, a nonpartisan, non-profit community organization serving local needs since 1885, enlisted the help of The Upton Historical Commission to raise

funds for a much-needed renovation of its historic building. Despite a \$20,000 grant from the state Grange organization eight years earlier, which covered only partial repairs to the hall's foundational sill, substantial

work still needed to be addressed.

Upton Grange Hall, originally a schoolhouse constructed around 1850, faced

RESTORATION

continued on page 8

Gofundme set up for family of Nick Shaw

Shaw died unexpectedly on Aug. 22



A gofundme page has been set up to benefit the family of Nick Shaw who died unexpectedly on Aug. 22. He is pictured here with his wife Lisa and their children Carter and Bryson. Source: www.gofundme.com/f/nick-shaw-memorial-fund

Nicholas (Nick) Shaw, 35, of Upton passed away unexpectedly on Aug. 22 following a medical episode while fishing with his wife and children, according to a gofundme page set up to benefit the family.

At press time, the page had raised \$53,325 toward its \$60,000 goal.

Jenna Bissonette is organizing

GOFUNDME

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Upton selects Peter McGowen as Interim Police Chief

McGowen retired as Dover Police Chief in 2023

By Scott Calzolaio

A new interim police chief was appointed by the Upton Select Board after the departure of Chief Michael Bradley in early August.

Retired Dover Police Chief Peter McGowen was appointed during the board meeting on Aug. 6.

McGowen comes with 30 years of small-town police experience. Starting as a patrolman, his 30-year career led him to the chief position in Dover from which he retired in 2023.

The selection process was led through the Select Board, and led by Bradley, Town Administrator Joseph Laydon, and others.

“He was the clear candidate that we thought would be the best fit for our department and lead us through this process,”

Laydon said during the Aug. 6 Select Board meeting.

The interim position will be held until the hiring process is complete for a permanent replacement for Bradley.

The hiring process to obtain a new, permanent police chief in town is known to be a time-consuming undertaking. Laydon said the community can expect to be introduced to candidates in a few months. A new chief will likely be selected within five months or so, he said.

McGowen said he’s happy to take some time to help other towns before he really settles into his retirement, and that he believes he’ll be a good fit here for the interim.

“Chief Bradley and I have similar philosophies and styles, and I’ve worked in small departments my whole career,”



Upton Interim Police Chief Peter McGowen. Source: LinkedIn

McGowen said at the Select Board meeting: “I’ll hold the place together until the next guy comes,” he laughed.

Now-retired Chief Bradley worked for the Upton Police

Department for 30 years, becoming chief in 2008. He retired on Aug. 16 to become the Executive Director of the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association.



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Upton Town Library Calendar of Events

9 Milford Street, Upton • 508-529-6272 • UptonLibrary.org • HOURS: Tues., Wed. & Thurs. 9-8 • Mon., Fri. & Sat. 9-4 • Sun. CLOSED

By Matthew Bachtold, Library Director and Lee Ann Murphy, Children's Librarian

Teen Hangout – Tuesdays & Thursdays 2-5 p.m. *New program just for Teens!*

Teen Hangout is a time just for tweens and teens! Every Tuesday and Thursday after school, we reserve the Classroom as a space for teens to hangout, play video games and board games, make crafts, read, and more! This is a drop-in program.

Tabletop Game Night for Adults – Thursday, Sept. 19 5:15 p.m.

Join our tabletop game series for adults! New games are featured each month such as 7 Wonders, Mysterium, and Azul. Meets every third Thursday of the month from 5:15 - 7:30 p.m. Beginners and experienced players both welcome! Register at uptonlibrary.org.

Special Events

Book Pumpkins - Thursday, Oct. 10, 6 - 7 p.m.

For ages 12 - Adult. This simple pumpkin craft uses old or broken books and paint to make the cutest fall pumpkin fall decoration that can be used for centerpieces or autumn decor. For adults and teens. Materials are provided. Please register for the event at uptonlibrary.com.

Virtual Author Talk Series

View free online author talks, either live or recorded. Register and get more information at the library website, or at www.library.org/uptontownlibrary

Author Talk with *Nate Klemp*: Living with an Expansive Mind in a Distracted World - Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 2 p.m.

Author Talk with *Liane Moriarty*: A Deep Dive in Character Development - Saturday, Sept. 21 at 7 p.m.

Author Talk with the *Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute*: A Journey into the Hidden World of Tropical Bats - Wednesday, Oct. 2 at 2 p.m.

Author Talk with *Silvia Moreno-Garcia*: Liberating Latin

America Genre Fiction - Wednesday, Oct. 9 at 7 p.m.

Children's & Young Adult Events - Bubble Painting – Sept. 18 from 6 - 7 p.m.

Elementary aged patrons can learn how to create a bubble paint solution and create floral artwork with it. For ages 5 to 12. Pre-registration required.

Monthly Library Events – Register now!

All programs and events require pre-registration at uptonlibrary.org or call 508-529-6272. Registrations open the month prior to events.

Baby Storytime – Fridays at 9:30 and 10:30 a.m. Baby Storytime is for ages birth to 3 and is held on Fridays. This is a 20-30-minute lapsit program featuring stories, songs, and nursery rhymes. Pre-registration required. Waitlisted patrons will receive priority for the following month. Now featuring a second session at 10:30 a.m.

Preschool Storytime – Thursdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m. Preschool

Storytime is for ages 3 to 5 and is held on Thursdays. This is a 45-minute program, featuring longer stories, songs, rhymes, and crafts. Pre-registration required. Waitlisted patrons will receive priority for the following month. Now featuring a second session at 10:30 a.m.

Saturday Storytime – Sept. 21 at 9:30 a.m. Once a month we offer a 30-45-minute Saturday Storytime, blending Baby and Preschool storytimes featuring stories, songs, rhymes, and a craft. Can't join us for our weekday programs? This event is just for you! For ages 0-5. Pre-registration required.

Drop-In Storytime – Sept. 16 at 9:30 a.m. Our Children's Department offers a Drop-In Storytime session, once a month. No registration required! This is a blend of our Baby and Preschool Storytimes; however, no craft will be provided. We will feature stories, songs, rhymes, and fun! This will be held in the Greatroom and will be a larger



group size. For ages 0 to 5. *LEGO Club – Sept. 18 at 4 p.m.* This group meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 4 - 5 p.m. This group is led by Library Director, Matthew Bachtold, and is for ages 5 to 12. We provide the LEGOs while you have fun building and making new friends. Pre-registration is required.

Kids' Book Club – Oct. 2 at 4 p.m. Our book club members explore popular juvenile fiction titles on the first Wednesday of

UPTON LIBRARY

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Nipmuc Regional High School teacher Daniels named 2024 MA History Teacher of the Year

Darcy Daniels, a Nipmuc Regional High School history teacher, has been named the 2024 Massachusetts History Teacher of the Year by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History.

Daniels will receive a \$1,000 honorarium, a core archive of American history books, and educational materials curated by the Gilder Lehrman Institute. Additionally, she will be recognized at a local ceremony and join the esteemed group of 53 finalists contending for the 2024 National History Teacher of the Year Award.

The national award winner will be announced later this fall, and they will take home a \$10,000 grand prize at a special ceremony on Oct. 15, at the Harvard Club of New York City.

Established in 2004, this prestigious award recognizes exceptional K-12 teachers for their outstanding contributions to American history education.

Daniels joined the staff at Nipmuc Regional High School in 2022, where she currently teaches U.S. history and is an advisor to both the class of 2026 and a club for immigrant students called Friendly Faces. Daniels is also a tour guide for the Freedom Trail in Boston and is an adjunct history professor at Dean College. An educator for over 20 years in three countries and four states, she is a James Madison Memorial Fellow and a Teach For America alum. She was also featured in the New York Times Best Seller

book, *The Power of Moments: Why Certain Experiences Have Lasting Impact* by Chip and Dan Heath.

"I'm honored to share this award with so many excellent teachers. Critical thinking, civic action and good communication skills are necessary for all Americans today, and they learn those skills through social studies classes," Daniels said. "History sometimes gets overlooked, but I think it's the bedrock of our identity as citizens and I feel honored that I get to teach the subject I love every day."

Presented annually by the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, the nation's leading nonprofit organization dedicated to K-12 American history education, this award honors one K-12 teacher from each state, the District of Columbia, Department of Defense schools and United States Territories.

"Ms. Daniels is a phenomenal teacher who makes critical thinking, civic engagement and historical inquiry come to life each day for her students," said Mary Anne Moran, co-principal of Nipmuc Regional High School.

"She is a personable, kind-hearted, and dedicated educator and leader who makes a positive impact on her students, colleagues and those who are fortunate enough to work with her," added John Clements, co-principal of Nipmuc Regional High School. "We are grateful to have her as a member of the Nipmuc community."



Nipmuc Regional High School history teacher Darcy Daniels has been named the 2024 Massachusetts History Teacher of the Year of the Gilder Lehrman Institute. Photo courtesy Mendon-Upton Regional School District

Daniels is the second educator from Nipmuc Regional High School to be honored as a Massachusetts Teacher of the Year in recent months. In June, Nipmuc Regional High School science teacher Jim Gorman was named Massachusetts STEM Teacher of the Year.

About *The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History*

The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History is

a leading nonprofit organization dedicated to K-12 history education while also serving the general public. The Institute's mission is to promote the knowledge and understanding of American history through educational programs and resources. Learn more at gilderlehrman.org.

Submitted by the Mendon-Upton Regional School District

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How should you respond to market cycles?



Mark Freeman

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The movement of the financial markets can seem mysterious — and yet, if we look back over long periods, we can see definite patterns that consistently repeat themselves. As an investor, how should you respond to these market cycles?

To begin with, it's useful to know something about the nature of a market cycle and its

connection to the business or economic cycle, which describes the fluctuations of the economy between periods of growth and contraction. Issues such as employment, consumer spending, interest rates and inflation can determine the stage of the business cycle. On the other hand, the market cycle refers to what's happening in the financial markets — that is, the performance of all the different types of investments.

The market cycle often anticipates the business cycle. In other words, the stock market may peak, or hit bottom, before the business cycle does the same. That's partially because the financial markets are always looking ahead. If they foresee an event that could boost the business cycle and help the economy, such as the Federal Reserve lowering interest rates, they may become more "bullish" on stocks, thus driving the market up. Conversely, if the markets think

the business cycle will slow down and the economy will contract, they may project a decline in corporate earnings and become more "bearish" on stocks, leading to a market drop.

Once you're familiar with the nature of market cycles, you won't be surprised when they occur. But does that mean you should base your investment strategy on these cycles?

Some people do. If they believe the market cycle is moving through a downward phase, they may try to cut their perceived losses by selling stocks — even those with strong fundamentals and good prospects — and buying lower-risk investments. While these "safer" investments may offer more price stability and a greater degree of preservation of principal, they also won't provide much in the way of growth potential. And you'll need this growth capacity to help reach your long-term goals, including

a comfortable retirement.

On the other hand, when investors think the market cycle is moving upward, they may keep investing in stocks that have become overpriced. In extreme cases, unwarranted investor enthusiasm can lead to events such as the dotcom bubble, which led to a sharp market decline from 2000 through 2002.

Rather than trying to "time" the market, you may well be better off by looking past its cycles and following a long-term, "all-weather" strategy that's appropriate for your goals, risk tolerance, time horizon and need for liquidity. And it's also a good idea to build a diversified portfolio containing U.S. and foreign stocks, mutual funds, corporate bonds, U.S. Treasury securities and other investments. While diversification can't protect against all losses, it can help protect you from market volatility that might primar-

ily affect just one asset class.

Market cycles often draw a lot of attention, and they are relevant to investors in the sense that they can explain what's happening in the markets. Yet, when it comes to investing, it's best not to think of cycles but rather of a long journey — one that, when traveled carefully, can lead to the destinations you seek.

Contact Mark for assistance with your personal finances.

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EEE-positive mosquitos detected in Upton

Protect yourself, your loved ones and your animals

As of the end of August, there have been 76 EEE-positive mosquito samples in several towns in the Commonwealth, including Upton and Dudley in Worcester County, according to the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH).

DPH says there are no risk level changes associated with these findings.

EEE is a rare but serious and potentially fatal disease that can affect people of all ages. EEE is generally spread to humans through the bite of an infected mosquito. The first human infection with EEE virus this year was a male in his 80s exposed in southern Worcester County, in mid-August. At that time, Upton's risk level was elevated to "moderate."

"EEE risk does not end on Labor Day," said State Epidemiologist Dr. Catherine M. Brown. "People should continue to use a mosquito repellent with an EPA-registered active ingredient

any time they are outdoors. As the weather gets cooler, it will be easier to wear long sleeves and pants to reduce exposed skin. We continue to strongly advise that individuals in areas where EEE risk is at high and critical levels reschedule evening outdoor events to avoid peak mosquito biting hours."

People have an important role to play in protecting themselves and their loved ones from illnesses caused by mosquitoes.

Apply Insect Repellent when Outdoors

Use a repellent with an EPA-registered ingredient, such as DEET (N,N-diethyl-m-toluamide), permethrin, picaridin (KBR 3023), or oil of lemon eucalyptus (p-menthane-3,8-diol (PMD) or IR3535) according to the instructions on the product label. DEET products should not be used on infants under two months of age and should be used in concentrations of 30 percent or less on older children.

Oil of lemon eucalyptus should not be used on children under three years of age.

Be Aware of Peak Mosquito Hours

The hours from dusk to dawn are peak biting times for many mosquitoes. Consider rescheduling outdoor activities that occur during evening or early morning in areas of high risk.

Clothing Can Help Reduce Mosquito Bites

Wearing long sleeves, long pants and socks when outdoors will help keep mosquitoes away from your skin.

Drain Standing Water

Mosquitoes lay their eggs in standing water. Limit the number of places around your home for mosquitoes to breed by draining or discarding items that hold water. Check rain gutters and drains. Empty unused flowerpots and wading pools and change the water in birdbaths frequently.

Install or Repair Screens



Keep mosquitoes outside by having tightly fitting screens on all windows and doors.

Protect Your Animals

Animal owners should reduce potential mosquito breeding sites on their property by eliminating standing water from containers such as buckets, tires, and wading pools – especially after heavy rains. Water troughs provide excellent mosquito breeding habitats and should be flushed out at least once a week during the summer months to reduce mosquitoes near paddock areas. Horse owners should keep horses in indoor stalls at night to reduce their risk of exposure to mosquitoes.

Owners should also speak with their veterinarian about mosquito repellents approved for use in animals and vaccinations to prevent West Nile virus (WNV) and EEE. If an animal is suspected of having WNV or EEE, owners are required to report to the Department of Agricultural Resources, Division of Animal Health by calling 617-626-1795, and to the Department of Public Health by

EEE-infected mosquitos have also been found in:

Barnstable County:
Barnstable;

Bristol County:
Bedford, Raynham, Taunton, Westport;

Essex County:
Amesbury, Haverhill

Middlesex County:
Sudbury;

Norfolk County:
Dedham, Medfield;

Plymouth County:
Abington, Carver, Halifax, Kingston, Marion, Middleborough, Plymouth, Rochester, Wareham.

Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health

calling 617-983-6800. More information, including all WNV and EEE positive results, can be found on the Arbovirus Surveillance Information web page at Mosquito-borne Diseases | Mass.gov, which is updated daily, or by calling the DPH Division of Epidemiology at 617-983-6800. *Source: Massachusetts Department of Public Health*

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Mendon welcomes new Principal Assessor



Massachusetts Accredited Assessor No. 1324 from the Massachusetts Association of Assessing Officers. Just last year I graduated with my Bachelor of Science degree from Southern New Hampshire University. Much of the coursework for this degree dealt with GIS (Geographical Information System) in creating maps to show various information such as water ways, well sites, location of landfills, etc.

Personally, I am a lifelong resident of East Bridgewater. My husband and I have four children and three grandsons.

If you have any concerns or questions regarding upcoming exemptions, please stop by or call me at 508-473-2738.

Submitted by Sherrie Bates

GOFUNDME

continued from page 1

this fundraiser on behalf of Lisa Shaw.

The page reads, "Nick was diagnosed with a grade 4 Astrocytoma [an aggressive and terminal form of brain cancer] in January 2022. Nick fought the absolute strongest fight since day 1 of brain cancer; never letting his illness define him. In true Nick fashion, he set his goals high, tackled every appointment and therapy, head on, with grace and gratitude.

"Nick showed up for everyone he loved, especially, his wife and children. Nick was the best dad and most supportive husband, always making sure his family was well taken care of. Nick shared his love of the outdoors with his family spending much of their free time hiking, fishing, boating, watching wildlife

visitors on their trail cam and sitting in their yard enjoying his grass lines. Do we all remember the time he hiked 1.5 miles only 3 days post op from craniotomy #2?! Strong, brave, and courageous doesn't even seem to do him justice.

"The Shaws are some of the strongest people you'll ever encounter but even the strongest people need support. Nick's sudden passing leaves his family with several unanticipated costs on top of navigating life without him. Let's all show up for The Shaws as Nick did for everyone he loved. All contributions will go directly to Lisa, Carter and Bryson to lessen financial stress and allow them to focus on healing."

To donate, visit www.gofundme.com/f/nick-shaw-memorial-fund.

Sources: www.holtfuneralhome.com/obituary/Nicholas-Shaw and gofundme.com

Letter to the Editor:

Hello, my name is Sherrie Bates, I am the new Principal Assessor in Mendon and I am excited to be here. I am looking forward to meeting and working with everyone!

Professionally, I have worked

in the assessing field for a little over 35 years. I started in the Town of East Bridgewater and worked there as the Assistant Assessor for 33 years before taking a position in the Town of Holliston.

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RESTORATION

continued from page 1

significant restoration challenges. Thanks to a dedicated effort led by Ed Phillips, then chairman of the Upton Historical Commission (UHC), and Grange lecturer Kristin Paulson, The Grange Hall has undergone a remarkable transformation, underscoring the power of community support and leadership.

Phillips, serving as the chairman of the UHC, recognized the importance of preserving the Grange's historic integrity. Phillips and the UHC knew the building's historical significance and understood that a broader community effort was necessary to achieve the restoration goals.

Under Phillips' leadership, the UHC played a pivotal role in organizing the restoration efforts. Phillips facilitated a strategic approach to securing funding for the renovation. The UHC recommended that the Grange present its case to the Upton Community Preservation Commission, advocating for financial support. Its efforts paid off when the town allocated \$120,000 from its Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds.

Simultaneously, the UHC applied for a grant from the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC). This process required the Grange to engage an architect before applying, leading to a collaboration with GRLA Architects of Hopkinton. Scott Richardson, an Upton resident, president and co-owner

of GRLA Architects, generously offered his services at a reduced cost.

The grant application process was intricate and demanded a detailed submission. Despite the challenging process, the UHC succeeded in presenting a compelling case.

In June 2023, the MHC awarded the Grange a \$50,000 grant, initially less than the \$80,000 requested. However, unforeseen issues such as termite damage, carpenter ants, and wood rot necessitated additional funds. The contractor's quote for these unexpected repairs led the MHC to increase its contribution by an additional \$13,000, bringing its total support to \$63,000.

The restoration work commenced on April 16, with a completion deadline set for June 30, in accordance with state funding requirements. The renovation included critical repairs to the building's exterior, including the roof, cedar siding, and the replacement of a handicap ramp.

The Upton Historical Society assigned The John Canning Preservation Company to identify the hall's original paint colors. The company conducted a scientific analysis of the architectural finishes, paint, and substrate and discovered only four layers of paint for the past 175 years. They used various processes and techniques to determine the exact color of each layer, enabling them to repaint the entire building in the Grange's original 1850

Treasures found during renovation

Hoping to find something truly unique, Ed Phillips and Ken Paulson cleared out the building's attic while the renovations were underway. While they didn't find any real rarities, they did unearth a collection of very old agricultural ribbons (1930s), Grange grave markers, vintage lights, folding chairs, and surprisingly well-preserved "Welcome Home Hero" flags from WWII.

color palette. The original four-paned windows were preserved to maintain historical accuracy, and a second bathroom was completely rebuilt after years of closure.

History of The Grange

The term "Grange" might be unfamiliar to some. Phillips and Paulson provided a deeper understanding of this historic hall's storied past.

The National Grange, also known as the Order of the Patrons of Husbandry, was founded in 1867 in Washington, DC, and is the oldest agricultural and rural public interest organization in America. It served as a powerful social, political, and educational group for farmers, encouraging families to work together to promote the economic and political well-being of the community and its local agricul-

ture. The National Grange organization has been a driving force behind some of the most progressive legislation in the United States, advocating for issues such as railroad regulations, farm loans, and universal suffrage.

The Grange was the first national organization to grant women a full voice and vote 60 years before the adoption of Universal Suffrage in the United States. Additionally, it was the first national farm organization to initiate efforts to organize African American farmers post-Civil War. The Grange also established mutual insurance companies focusing on serving farm and rural markets, pioneering the provision of property and casualty insurance to Japanese-American farmers returning from internment following WWII.

Paulson states, "There weren't many organizations where women could hold any office. Women voted in The Grange before the government let them vote in America. They held office and they voted. Since the beginning, it's been a family organization, including moms, dads, children, and grandparents. Everybody is together, and where do you find that anywhere else?"

The local Upton Grange chapter is the oldest family organization in Upton. Established by young farmers in 1885, it remains active to this day.

Phillips aptly described the Grange's original goal: "The Grange was a national mission of farmers supporting other

farmers with purchasing power and access to seeds."

The current Grange Hall sits on a lot of land at 26 School Street, which the Town of Upton originally acquired in 1847 to build The Center School for primary and intermediate grades. Built in the Greek Revival style popular in the United States from the 1830s to the 1860s, the schoolhouse, with its symmetrical proportions, pronounced triangular pediment roof and projected front entrance, opened its doors in 1851 and eventually established a high school in 1869, just four years after the Civil War ended.

A student who wanted to enroll in Upton's first high school had to undergo a rigorous examination by the school committee and obtain passing grades in written exams to progress at the end of each year. Some courses studied were Latin, Greek, political economy, math, sciences, and the U.S. Constitution. Exercises in reading, spelling, morals, declamation, composition, and writing were part of everyday assignments. As a requirement for graduation, each student would have to take an oral exam in front of the school committee and the public in a process that lasted all day. Upton celebrated its first high school graduation in 1877 with eight graduates (4 girls & 4 boys) whose motto was "First, but only Pioneers." Susie Hall was the valedictorian.

RESTORATION

continued on page 16

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You've all seen, and been fascinated by, those TV appraisal shows where folks bring in those intriguing objects they've always wondered about and find out what they are, and what they are (or aren't) worth - We're doing that right here in Milford!

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Fall cleanout is greener with *Affordable Junk Removal*

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 of it!

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 above-ground 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 tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

Business spotlight

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.

Affordable Junk Removal is 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 everything!

Contact Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business take care of everything for you. Call Jay Schadler at 774-287-1133 or visit us online at www.affordablejunkremoval.com.

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Debunking common myths in eye care

By Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.
Milford Franklin Eye Center

When it comes to eye health, myths and misconceptions abound, often leading people to adopt unnecessary or even harmful habits. From the belief that carrots significantly improve vision to the notion that sitting too close to the TV damages eyes, it's time to set the record straight. Here, we debunk some of the most common myths in eye care and provide evidence-based advice to help you maintain optimal eye health.

Myth 1: Carrots Improve Your Vision

One of the most persistent myths is that eating carrots can vastly improve your vision. While carrots are indeed rich in vitamin A, which is essential for eye health, they do not possess magical vision-enhancing properties. Vitamin A helps maintain healthy vision, especially in low light conditions, but it won't correct vision problems such as myopia or hyperopia. A balanced diet with a variety of fruits and

vegetables is more beneficial for overall eye health.

Myth 2: Reading in Dim Light Damages Your Eyes

Many of us were warned as children that reading in dim light would harm our eyes. However, this is not true. While reading in low light can cause eye strain and temporary discomfort, it does not cause any long-term damage to your eyes. To reduce eye strain, ensure that your reading area is well-lit and take regular breaks.

Myth 3: Sitting Too Close to the TV Will Ruin Your Eyes

Another common myth is that sitting too close to the television can damage your eyes. While it might cause temporary eye strain or fatigue, there is no evidence to suggest that it leads to permanent eye damage. Modern televisions emit less radiation than older models, making this concern even less relevant today. However, it's always a good idea to maintain a comfortable viewing distance to avoid eye strain.

Myth 4: Wearing Glasses or Contacts Will Weaken Your Eyes

Some people believe that wearing glasses or contact lenses will cause their eyes to become dependent on them and weaken over time. This is not true. Corrective lenses improve vision by compensating for refractive errors, and they do not affect the physical health of your eyes. In fact, wearing the correct prescription can help prevent headaches and eye strain.

Myth 5: Blue Light from Screens Is Dangerous for Your Eyes

With the rise of digital device usage, many products have emerged claiming to protect your eyes from the harmful effects of blue light emitted by screens. However, the evidence supporting the effectiveness of blue light-blocking glasses is lacking. Several studies suggest that blue light-blocking glasses do not significantly improve symptoms of digital eye strain. The American Academy of



Ophthalmology does not recommend any special blue light-blocking eyewear for computer use. Instead, focus on taking regular breaks, practicing the 20-20-20 rule (every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds), and adjusting your screen's brightness to reduce eye strain.

Myth 6: Eye Exercises Can Cure Vision Problems

Various eye exercises are often touted as remedies for conditions like nearsightedness or astigmatism. However, there is no scientific evidence to support the claim that eye exercises can correct these refractive errors. These conditions are caused by the shape of the eyeball or the cornea and cannot be altered through exercises. If you have vision problems, consult an eye care professional for appropriate corrective measures such as glasses, contact lenses, or surgery.

Myth 7: You Don't Need an Eye Exam If You Have Perfect Vision

Even if you have perfect vision, regular eye exams are crucial. Eye exams can detect early signs of diseases like glaucoma, macular degeneration, and diabetic retinopathy, which may not present symptoms until significant damage has occurred. Regular check-ups can help prevent vision loss and ensure early treatment if necessary.

Myth 8: Only Older Adults Need to Worry About Eye Health

While it is true that the risk of many eye diseases increases with age, eye health is important at every stage of life. Conditions such as digital eye strain, dry eye, and even cataracts can affect younger individuals. Protecting

your eyes from UV rays, maintaining a healthy diet, and having regular eye exams are important habits for people of all ages.

Myth 9: Sunglasses Are Only for Sunny Days

Sunglasses are often viewed as a summer accessory, but they are important year-round. UV rays from the sun can damage your eyes even on cloudy days. Wearing sunglasses that block 100% of UV rays can help protect your eyes from harmful effects such as cataracts and macular degeneration. Choose sunglasses that offer full protection and wear them whenever you are outdoors.

Myth 10: A Cataract Must Be 'Ripe' Before It Is Removed

False. With older surgical techniques, it was thought to be safer to remove a cataract when it was "ripe." With today's modern surgical procedures, a cataract can be removed whenever it begins to interfere with a person's vision and activities.

Myth 11: Eyes Can Be Transplanted

False. Medical science has no way to transplant whole eyes. Our eyes are connected to the brain by the optic nerve. Because of this, the eye is never removed from its socket during surgery. The cornea, the clear front part of the eye, has been successfully transplanted for many years. Corneal transplant is sometimes confused with an eye transplant.

Myth 12: Laser-Assisted Cataract Surgery Is the Same as Traditional Cataract Surgery

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MYTHS

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False. The five best-ranked eye hospitals in America offer bladeless laser-assisted cataract surgery. We do too. Bladeless cataract surgery aims for better precision, more safety, and excellent outcomes. The laser's advanced precision and ability to correct astigmatism translate into a better likelihood of seeing well without glasses following cataract surgery. The same laser breaks up and softens the cloudy cataract, so less ultrasound is needed to remove it. Less ultrasound translates into less energy used inside the eye and clearer corneas, which helps produce better vision on the first day after surgery. This becomes even more critical if you have a weak cornea or a small eye with a dense cataract.

Dispelling eye care myths is crucial for maintaining good eye health. Instead of relying on hearsay, base your eye care practices on scientific evidence and professional advice. Regular eye exams, a balanced diet,

proper eyewear, and good screen habits are the cornerstones of healthy vision. By understanding and debunking these common myths, you can take better care of your eyes and enjoy clear vision for years to come.

Our eye center and ophthalmologists have state-of-the-art equipment to diagnose and treat almost any eye problem. At Milford-Franklin Eye Center, we continue to serve our communities with state-of-the-art eye care, surgery locally in Milford, and glasses and contacts. With three offices in Franklin, Milford, and Millis, a dedicated surgery center in Milford, and a 50-staff practice ready to help, there is no need to travel hours for your eye care or surgery. We are the area's leading eye care practice. Give us a call or book your appointment online.

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Taft Public Library Worm Race medalists



On your mark, get set, CRAWL! Pictured are this year's Taft Public Library Worm Race medalists. From left to right: **First Place medalist Annabelle Warminski with her worm Nora, Second Place medalist Julian Hilton with his worm Crazy, Third Place medalist Luna Rizzo with her worm Belle, and Fourth Place medalist Colton Mager with his worm Blue.**

Source: Taft Public Library

A HELPING HAND...

Upton Food Pantry hours

Sept. 24, Oct. 8 and 22 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.

- The Food Pantry serves residents from Upton as well as nearby towns. Proof of income or church affiliation is not required. We offer non-perishable food, toiletries, paper products and infant needs. Donations can be dropped off in our donation shed located outside the church office on 1 Church Street, Upton.

Community supper on Sept. 19

Sept. 19: Community Supper - on the third Thursday of each month from September through June at 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., our Faith in Action committee provides a delicious and nutritious meal for the community. Everyone is welcome. This month, we'll be serving pulled teriyaki chicken over rice and salad. Please call the church office at 508-529-3192 by Sept. 13 to make your reservation.

If your nonprofit organization is located in Upton or Mendon and provides free services to Upton and/or Mendon citizens, email editor@uptonmendonfreepress.com for consideration to be listed in this section.

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Mendon Senior Center events

Regular Weekly Programs:

Walking Group – Monday/Wednesday/Friday – 8:30 a.m.

SHINE – Health Insurance Counseling by Appt. Mondays 12:30 p.m.

Chorus Rehearsal – Monday 1 p.m. beginning Sept. 9 (Call to register)

Chair Exercise – Tuesday/Thursday 9 a.m. (must register; call for availability)

Lunch Club – Tuesday/Thursday 12 p.m. Please make reservations at least 48 hours in advance at 508-478-6175.

Scrabble – Tuesday 9 a.m. (returning in the fall)

Hand, Knee & Foot (Canasta type) – Tuesdays 1 p.m.

Cribbage – Wednesday 9:30 a.m.

Qigong – Wednesday 10 a.m. (seasonal program)

Mah Jong – Wednesday/Thursday 1 p.m.

Yarn Works – Thursday 1 p.m.

Mendon Minstrels Chorus Returns!

The Senior Center Chorus will begin rehearsals this September on Mondays from 1 - 3 p.m., starting Sept. 9. It's not too late to join even if you miss the first few sessions. The chorus, under the direction of Dave

Clinkman, will be focusing on music for the November veteran's program, their upcoming fall program entitled "Dream" as well as their holiday program. New members are welcome! Call the Mendon Senior Center at 508-478-6175 if you are interested in joining.

History with Jim Buckley

Join us on Tuesday, Sept. 24 at 11 a.m. for another riveting history talk with Jim Buckley: The most dangerous job in Washington D.C. Call or stop by the senior center to register for this free program. Consider joining us for lunch afterwards. Please sign up for lunch separately.

Veterans Round Table ~

Thursday Sept. 19, 10:30 a.m.

This meeting is open to veterans and their spouses, widows or widowers to discuss veterans benefits, such as assistance to veterans and their families including, in some cases, dependent children and/or widows of veterans who served in the military and have a discharge rating from active duty services as other than dishonorable. Any veterans are not aware of the benefits that they earned by serving their country (even in

time of peace, or in some cases, not even leaving the United States.) The benefits that will be discussed include state and federal benefits, including financial assistance, health care, GI loans, education, and a variety of other valuable services and benefits that you may have forgotten about since having served in the military, (including reservists, retirees, and members of the US Coast Guard, who are now part of the Federal Department of Homeland Security.) Please join us to find out what you may be eligible for, or a family members may be qualifies for as a spouse. Call 508-478-6175 or stop by the Senior Center to sign up for this program hosted by Mr. Robin Fletcher, Veterans' Services Officer for the Town of Mendon.

Genealogy

Beginning Wednesday, Sept. 25 we will offer the first in a three-part program to help you research your genealogy. This program lead by volunteer Dorothy Garceau is fascinating and free. The course will use videos and charts that can be framed. Please call 508-478-6175 or stop by the Mendon Senior Center to register. (class dates: 9/25, 10/9, 10/23 at 1 p.m.)



Pen Pal Program Returns

–Coming this fall... the Mendon Senior Center is pleased to announce it will be collaborating with eight graders from Benjamin Franklin Charter School in Franklin under the direction of volunteers Cheryl Lemon and Susan Edmondson, We will be exchanging letters once a month during the school year. Seniors interested in adopting a pen pal are encouraged to sign up at the senior center. If you have any questions, please contact director Amy Wilson Kent at 508-478-6175.

Free Fall Prevention Program Beginning Oct. 1

The Mendon Senior Cen-

ter will be hosting the award winning "Matter of Balance" program designed to manage falls and increase activity levels. This free evidence-based program, offered by Tri-Valley, will help participants view falls as controllable, set realistic goals for increasing activity, reduce household fall risk factors and increase strength and flexibility. Sessions will begin Tuesday, Oct. 1 at 1:30 a.m. and will run for eight consecutive weeks until Nov. 19. Each session is 2 hours long. Sneakers or other comfortable sturdy shoes are recommended. Refreshments

MENDON SENIOR CENTER

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FREE HOME BUYER WORKSHOP

When: Wednesday, September 25, 2024 - 6:30 - 8:30pm

Where: Restaurant 45, (45 Milford St, Medway, MA 02053)

Charles River Bank is offering a FREE Home Buyer Workshop. Join Mickee Whitney, AVP & Mortgage Loan Officer (NMLS# 782138) and a panel of local real estate experts – including 2 Realtors®, and a Real Estate Attorney presenting valuable information and tools to acquire the home you desire in this competitive market. There will be an interactive Q&A session following the presentation.

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Mendon public safety log

Calls between July 21 and Aug. 17 included fights, fraud, noise complaints, more. Between July 21 and August 17, the Mendon Police Department and Fire Department responded to hundreds of calls, the majority of which were motor vehicle stops. Numerous other calls were related to 911 calls (including open lines, accidental, hang ups), motor vehicle violations, erratic operators, disabled motor vehicles, fire alarms, burglar alarms, road hazards (wires, etc.), animal issues, suspicious activity, fraud, document service, civil complaints, assist citizens and the public, lockouts, lost/found property, and more. This is not intended to be an exhaustive list.

Other entries of note during the month include:
July 21 at 2:12 a.m., Milford St., fight
July 22 at 3:10 a.m., Kelley Rd., well-being check
July 23 at 9:39 a.m., Hastings St., fraud
July 23 at 1:07 p.m., North Ave., disturbance
July 24 at 10:52 a.m., Hartford Ave East, suspicious activity
July 25 at 4:35 p.m., Cape Rd., suspicious activity
July 25 at 4:54 p.m., Hartford Ave. West, document service
July 26 at 4:35 p.m., Hartford Ave West, document service
July 27 at 1:18 a.m., Puddingstone Ln., carbon monoxide alarm
July 27 at 9:27 p.m., Millville St., noise complaint

July 28 at 12:31 a.m., Milford St., parking complaint
July 28 at 3:59 a.m., Neck Hill Rd., noise complaint
July 29 at 6:33 a.m., Hastings St., well-being check
July 29 at 8:49 p.m., Providence St., suspicious activity
July 29 at 9:06 p.m., Millville St., suspicious activity
July 30 at 2:17 a.m., Cape Rd., suspicious activity
July 30 at 9:59 a.m., Providence St., civil complaint
July 31 at 4:39 a.m., Uxbridge Rd., suspicious activity
Aug. 1 at 3:12 p.m., King Philip Path, message delivery
Aug. 1 at 10:36 p.m., Uxbridge Rd., well-being check
Aug. 2 at 11:25 a.m., Uxbridge Rd., trespass

Aug. 3 at 5:52 p.m., Hartford Ave East, vehicle fire
Aug. 4 at 12:30 a.m., Canal St., fight
Aug. 5 at 11:09 a.m., Southwick St., threats
Aug. 6 at 7:40 p.m., Main St., document service
Aug. 6 at 8:12 p.m., Cape Rd., trespass
Aug. 7 at 11:57 a.m., Taft Ave., well-being check
Aug. 8 at 5:11 p.m., Mowry St., disturbance
Aug. 9 at 3:54 p.m., Butler Rd., fraud
Aug. 10 at 9:36 a.m., Milford St., well-being check
Aug. 10 at 11:09 a.m., Taft Ave., well-being check
Aug. 10 at 11:58 a.m., Dudley Rd., property damage
Aug. 11 at 3:41 a.m., Blackstone

St., suspicious activity
Aug. 12 at 12:10 a.m., Kinsley Ln., message delivery
Aug. 12 at 4:29 a.m., Millville St., carbon monoxide alarm
Aug. 12 at 9:04 a.m., Hastings St., well-being check
Aug. 12 at 6:01 p.m., Bicknell Dr., threats
Aug. 13 at 8:49 p.m., Cemetery St., suspicious activity
Aug. 14 at 6:58 a.m., Cape Rd., noise complaint
Aug. 14 at 9:50 a.m., Cemetery St., property damage
Aug. 15 at 8:12 a.m., Colonial Dr., suspicious activity
Aug. 16 at 6:56 p.m., Taft Ave., fight
Aug. 17 at 11:42 a.m., North Ave., suspicious activity
Source: www.mendonpolice.com/

UPTON LIBRARY

continued from page 3

each month from 4 - 4:45 p.m. For our October meeting, we will be discussing *Indian Shoes* by Cynthia L. Smith. This group is for ages 8-12. We welcome new

members all year round! Pre-registration required.

Tween Book Club – Sept. 19 at 6:30 p.m. This club is especially for our middle grade patrons, ages 10 to 14. This group reads popular middle grade titles selected by our members. For September, we will be discussing the

realistic fiction title *Jawbreaker* by Christina Wyman. We welcome new members all year round! Pre-registration required.

Upton Reads Book Group

An eclectic mix of contemporary literary fiction with meetings on the second Tuesday afternoon and Thursday eve-

ning of each month in the Community Center classroom, with a Zoom remote option.

Tuesday, Oct. 8 at 12:45 p.m., and Thursday, Oct. 10 at 6:45 p.m.: *Tom Lake* by Ann Patchett.

Fic or No Fic Book Group

An adult book group led by Librarian Micaela that alter-

nates fiction and non-fiction selections. Meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 25 at 6:45 p.m.: *Carrie Soto is Back* by Taylor Jenkins Reid. For more info or assistance with any library services, call 508-529-6272 or email mbachtol@cwmar.org

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- 3" Grey Stone
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- Multi-Color River Stone
- Multi-Color River Stone
- 3/8", 3/4" Blue Stone
- 3/4" Processed Gravel
- 3" Processed Gravel
- Recycled Asphalt
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- 3/4" Crusher Run
- Washed Sand
- Mason/Pool Sand
- Stone Dust
- Blue Stone Dust
- Rip Rap
- Fill Clay/General
- Trench Sand

Residents to vote in November on Mendon's proposed Senior and Community Center

Project will be on election ballot and Special Town Meeting warrant

Did you know that the Mendon Senior and Community Center (MSCC) project is continuing?

After receiving additional input from the community, and working with both the Selectboard and the FINCOM, the MSCC Committee is striving to reduce the overall cost while still providing the necessary services.

In 2023, the Senior Center experienced an overall increase of 17% in service requests. Services included, but are not limited to:

- Food Pantry Assistance
- Outreach and Advocacy
- Community Education
- Meals
- Nutritional Programs
- Fitness and Exercise Programs
- Health Screening and Education
- Benefits Counseling

- Fuel Assistance
- Veterans Benefits and Programs

The Center provides many opportunities for socialization including day trips, card games, cribbage, mahjong, walking and knitting groups.

The space in our current location limits the Center's ability to provide increased programming and adequate, safe parking. Programs such as Adult Day Care, memory cafes, intergenerational programs and community access to the Center for meetings and functions are just some of things the new Center could consider providing.

The Committee's vision is that, with increased community access and expanded space, simultaneous events can take place. This would enable veterans, scouts, service agencies, and



town groups and clubs use of the facility while senior activities are in progress.

The proposed Center will be on the Nov. 5 ballot and will also be presented as a warrant article for funding at a Special Town Meeting in November. Please consider supporting this important initiative at the ballot box and at the Special Town Meeting.

Submitted by MSCC Committee Members

Recent Home Sales

Date	Mendon	Amount
08/28/2024	14 King Philip Path	\$800,000
08/23/2024	69 Blackstone St.	\$957,055
08/23/2024	21 King Philip Path	\$855,000
08/19/2024	68 North Ave.	\$835,000
08/16/2024	2 Butler Rd.	\$660,000
08/16/2024	1 Chapin Ct.	\$766,000
08/15/2024	28 Maple St.	\$755,000
08/09/2024	27 Talbott Farm Dr.	\$908,000
08/02/2024	47 Crestview Dr.	\$755,000
07/31/2024	55 Hartford Ave. W.	\$178,000

Date	Upton	Amount
08/30/2024	76 Elm St.	\$575,000
08/30/2024	15 River St.	\$1.11 mil
08/30/2024	158 South St.	\$875,000
08/29/2024	9 Maple St.	\$640,000
08/23/2024	13 Plain St.	\$627,500
08/22/2024	52 Pleasant St.	\$355,000
08/15/2024	29 Warren St.	\$705,000
08/06/2024	9 Juniper Rd.	\$1.01 mil
08/05/2024	12 Knowlton Cir.	\$565,000
08/02/2024	84 Elm St.	\$370,000
07/31/2024	10 Old Grafton Rd.	\$415,000
07/30/2024	39 Westboro Rd.	\$821,000

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Upton Mendon Free Press



The 4-bed, 4-bath, 4,456 square foot house at 9 Juniper Road in Upton recently sold for \$1,005,000. Photo source: Robyn & Sean Sold My House



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Mendon Senior Center hosted Cabaret



On July 31, the Mike and Beth Cabaret performed at the Mendon Senior Center. The program was well received by the Mendon seniors and the room was filled with music and laughter. Source: Mendon Senior Center

Former Nipmuc students' health records to be destroyed

This is a notice to former students of Nipmuc Regional High School who transferred to another school or withdrew prior to graduation, your stu-

dent health records, dated before 2017, will be destroyed on Sept. 30, 2024, in accordance with Code of Massachusetts Regulation 603 CMR 23.06.

Beginning in the spring of 2018, students who graduated from Nipmuc were provided their records at commencement. If you believe your health

record is among these files, and you would like to obtain it, please call the Health Office prior to Sept. 30 at 508-529-2143.



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RESTORATION

continued from page 8

In 1897, the town built a new high school on Main Street, where the Memorial School now stands. The Center School continued to house primary and junior departments until 1924 when the George S. Ball School (the current police station) was built as a replacement on the property next door. The building was then sold in 1926 to the Upton Grange #125 to house its local chapter, and it has been used continuously for monthly meetings, functions, agricultural fairs, and community-based economic development opportunities.

Today, Upton Grange #125 is among the few remaining Grange Halls in the Blackstone Valley, listed on the Massachusetts Register of Historic Places. The second floor houses an original stage with a more than one-hundred-year-old curtain mural featuring a hand-painted farm scene with advertisements of Upton's local businesses from the turn of the 20th century. Paulson fondly remembers the fun she experienced growing up as a Grange member and the one-act plays, literary contests, and poetry they wrote and performed on that stage.

Restoration has been well-received

Recent feedback from Phillips and Paulson indicates that the community has responded positively to the restoration efforts and enjoys seeing this local gem returned to its original splendor. Town Manager Joseph Laydon enjoyed a tour of the building for the first time as this article was being written.

The successful renovation of the Upton Grange stands as a testament to the collaborative efforts of the Upton Historical Commission, the Upton Community Preservation

Commission, and the broader community. Phillips' leadership and Paulson's life-long dedication were instrumental in navigating the complex funding processes and ensuring the preservation of this historic building. The project highlights how community support, strategic planning, and effective leadership can come together to preserve local heritage and community landmarks.

The Upton Grange still participates in various activities and programs, including com-

munity service projects, a college scholarship program for Upton residents, support for the Upton Senior Center, the Upton Citizens and Veterans Awards, Coats 4 Vets, local food drives, a recycled clothing donation shed, and a seed library that encourages residents to participate in a free seed exchange ("Take seeds, leave seeds").

The Grange has established a Building Restoration Fund to help carry out future interior renovations, insulation work, landscaping, and driveway

repairs. You can contribute by donating your time, materials, or money directly. For a tax-deductible receipt, please make checks payable to "Grange Foundation" (with Upton #125 in the memo line) and mail them to Upton Grange at PO Box 605, Upton, Mass. 01568.

For those interested in joining the Upton Grange, the annual membership dues are \$60 a year for all your household's kids, parents, and grandparents. The group meets monthly on the second Thursday at 7 p.m.

New inspiration for 2024 Pan-Mass Challenge

Free Press sportswriter shares personal experience

By Chris Villani

I've taken part in the two-day Dana-Farber Cancer Institute fundraiser, known as the Pan-Mass Challenge, a total of 14 times, the last several with my mother in mind. She passed away in late 2019 following a bout with cancer, and she was a huge PMC supporter.

This year, I had a little more inspiration - about 15 pounds worth. Last November, my wife LeeAnn and I welcomed our son William into the world. Needless to say, things have never been the same since then.

William loves to smile, he loves to swim, and he even

seems to love his vegetables. And, maybe someday, he will learn to love the PMC as well. It was nice having him to show off as I took off from Wellesley to start the 160-mile-plus journey. It was also fun to see him in Brewster as we rode past our second home in Brewster.

William was also on my mind as I approached the Lakeville water stop. For those who are not familiar with the PMC, Lakeville is known as the Pedal Partner stop. The PMC's Pedal Partner program pairs each

PAN-MASS

continued on page 17



Chris gets ready to set off for the 2024 Pan-Mass Challenge after a quick picture with William and his dog, Maverick. Courtesy photo

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PAN-MASS

continued from page 16

PMC team with pediatric patients at the Jimmy Fund. We ride for these kids, and many of them, along with their families, are waiting to say hello when we get to Lakeville.

During the ride, I chatted with a first-year rider and I told her about the Lakeville stop. It seems strategically placed. It's about 25 miles away from the first-day finish line, which is far enough into the ride to be tired and ready for a cold beer and a hot shower, but it's still well over an hour in the saddle before riding into Bourne. It's a stretch where one can start to feel tired and cranky. But, as we ride into Lakeville, we are greeted with oversized photos of the smiling faces of children, some of them nearly as young as William, who are battling cancer. It's a reminder of how indiscriminate the disease can be ... and a little kick in the shorts for the riders that we should suck it up since all we are doing is riding a bike.

The hope is that we do more than that and that events like the PMC ultimately help us win the fight against this dreaded disease. Founded in 1980, the PMC has raised more than \$1 billion for the Jimmy Fund, surpassing that milestone this year. Every rider has one billion reasons to feel hopeful for a better tomorrow. And, in my household, we've recently added one more.

Editor's note: Chris Villani is the Free Press' staff sportswriter

Scan the QR code below to see the Upton and Mendon State Primary Election results on our website



MENDON SENIOR CENTER

continued from page 12

will be served. Space is limited, call Amy at 508-478-6175 or stop in to register at the Senior Center, 62 Providence St.

Qigong – New Fall Session Starting Soon!

Wednesday, Oct. 2 at 10 a.m.
The Mendon Senior Center is pleased to offer an upcoming session of this popular fitness program. Qigong (pronounced Chee-gong) according to instructor Faith Kennedy is "meditation in motion." It utilizes gentle stretching and breathing exercises. Upon finishing this class students will feel relaxed yet energized. Participants will be seated for the majority of the class. The cost of this eight-week session is \$40 payable to the instructor. Classes are held subject to minimum enrollment. Please stop by the center or call 508-478-6175 to register.

Fill-in Lunch Servers Wanted

Volunteers are needed to help



serve Tri-Valley lunch once or twice a month on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Center as well as helping out with special meals. Responsibilities include preparing the dining room for lunch, serving the meal, and cleaning up. Hours are typically 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and you do not have to make a weekly commitment. If you would like to volunteer or learn more about the lunch program, please call Amy at 508-478-6175. Volunteer forms are available at the Senior Center.

Coming Soon! Medicare Open Enrollment

SHINE can help! Call soon to schedule your appointment for any time from Oct. 15

through Dec. 7.

It's that time of year again! If you are enrolled in a Medicare Prescription Drug Plan or a Medicare Advantage Plan (HMO/PPO), you should be mailed an information packet from your plan by the end of September. It is important to understand and save this information because it explains the changes in your plan for 2025. Premiums, deductibles, co-pays, and the drugs covered by your plan can change significantly! Come meet with a SHINE counselor to go over any changes and make sure you're in the right plan for you!

Trained SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone...on Medicare) volunteers offer free, confidential,

and unbiased counseling on Medicare options. To schedule a SHINE appointment, call the Senior Center at 508-478-6175. For other SHINE related matters, call 508-422-9931. Once you get the SHINE answering machine, leave your name, town and number. A volunteer will call you back, as soon as possible.

Salem Day Tour

Join us on Thursday, Oct. 17 for a very full, fascinating day trip to Salem, Massachusetts. Depart the Mendon Senior Center at 8 a.m. and begin your visit with a driving bus tour of Salem followed by buffet lunch at the Hawthorn Hotel. After lunch you'll have a lighthouse and foliage cruise on the harbor; followed by a trip to the Real Pirates Museum and the Gallows Hill Interactive Theatre. Return home to Mendon at 6 p.m. The cost is \$160 per person and includes round-trip transportation, lunch and all attractions. Payment is due by Oct. 1, 2024. For reservations and information, contact Bev Fior 508-473-8382 or bafior@verison.net.



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Taft Public Library Calendar of Events

29 North Avenue, Mendon • 508-473-3259 • TaftPublicLibrary.org • HOURS: Tues. & Wed. 10-7 • Thurs. 3-7 • Fri. 12-5 • Sat. 9-12 • Sun. & Mon. CLOSED

ADULT PROGRAMS SEPTEMBER 2024

Taft Library now has Mango Languages!

Visit the Taft Public Library website for access to the Mango Languages platform. If you have an interest in learning a language, Mango provides lessons in over 70 languages. Children can try their hand at language learning with Mango Little PIM, a platform designed just for them, and for those interested in learning American sign language we provide access to Mango ASL. Mango's Intuitive Language Construction methodology helps build skills in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, culture, comprehension, and retention. To see all of the Mango options the Taft Library offers scroll down the left-hand side of our webpage to the Databases section.

Upcoming Events:

To register for an event, click on the Library Event Calendar & Registration link at the top of the library's homepage (www.taftpubliclibrary.org).

Adult Handcrafting Group

Let's get crafty! Join us on Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 2 p.m. downstairs in the library and get your craft on. Bring your own craft project, whatever it might be, to work on while you visit. Intended for adults. No registration is required. Crafts are NOT supplied.

Adult Book Club

The Adult Book Club will meet again starting in September. Adult Book Clubs are typically held on the second Monday of the month. For upcoming book clubs contact the library at 508-473-3259 to request copies of the books or log in to your account from our website to request them through interlibrary loan. Upcoming books for the Adult Book Club are as follows:

October: *The Firekeeper's Daughter* by Angeline Boulley
November: *The Book of Lost Names* by Kristin Harmel
December: *Oh William!* By Elizabeth Strout

Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club

The Footnotes Nonfiction

Book Club typically meets downstairs in the library on a quarterly basis. This year the group will read five nonfiction titles. Those interested are asked to stop at the downstairs desk to sign the Footnotes registration sheet and pick up a copy of the latest book.

Upcoming books in the Footnotes series:

Thursday, Oct. 24 at 7 p.m.:
Sociopath: A Memoir by Patric Gagne

January (date TBD): *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Woman Who Defied the Puritans* by Eve Laplante

March (date TBD): *The Mysterious Case of Rudolf Diesel: Genius, Power, and Deception on the Eve of World War I* by Douglas Brunt

June (date TBD): *How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America* by Clint Smith

Slow Flow Adult Yoga with Katie Aissis of Sprouting Tree Yoga

Come join Katie Aissis from Sprouting Tree Yoga for Slow Flow Adult Yoga at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 10 upstairs in the library. This Vinyasa style

yoga class links breath to movement in a dynamic sequence of postures. Participants will build strength while also finding moments throughout the practice to quiet the mind and rest the body. This class is appropriate for all levels and no previous yoga experience is necessary. Please bring your own yoga mat. Please register for the program on our website.

Mosaic Pendants with Cheryl Cohen

On Tuesday, Sept. 17 at 6:30 p.m. make a mosaic pendant using adhesive putty in this online class with Cheryl Cohen of Cheryl Cohen Mosaics Art Center. Registration is required as space is limited. Those who sign up will need to stop at the upstairs desk in the library to pick up a kit for the session.

German Conversation Club

Are you looking for a place to practice what German you remember or to improve your German vocabulary? Conversations in German is no pressure, just fun! Lead by Library Assistant (and Mendon resident) Monika Schmid, the group



typically meets the last Monday of each month. Registration is required. To register, visit our website. Next club date: Monday, Sept. 30 at 6 p.m.

Friends of the Taft Public Library Meeting

The Friends of the Library meetings are typically held on the last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. downstairs in the Art Holmes Community Room, unless it falls on a holiday or during a school vacation. All are welcome (and encouraged) to attend. If you plan on attending, it's always a good idea to call the library at 508-473-3259 or email the Friends at friendsoftaftlibrary@gmail.com to confirm the date and time of the meeting. The group will do its best to post any meeting changes on the Taft Library web site.

CHILDREN PROGRAMS - SEPTEMBER 2024

Registration is required for all programs. Please log onto our website: www.taftpubliclibrary.org and find the events page to register along with more information for the programs.

Itty Bitty Story Time

Itty Bitty Storytime is designed for our youngest patrons birth to 3 years old. Join us for a lot of fun on Tuesdays and select Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.

Story & Craft Time

Join us for Story and Craft Time! Perfect for the preschool-aged child! All sessions take place on Tuesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.

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TAFT LIBRARY

continued from page 18

Alphabet Storytime

It's all about the alphabet! Each week we will focus on a different letter. We will read a couple of books, sing songs, and learn about the letter of the week. Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Please note there is no Alphabet Storytime the first Wednesday of the month.

Coffee and Conversations & Puppet Storytime

Dates: Wednesday, Sept. 25, Oct. 30, Nov. 20 and Dec. 18.
Time: 9:15 to 10:15 a.m.
Location: Taft Public Library, 29 North Ave., Mendon
Join us for an informal playtime where families will be able to build social connections and learn about early childhood development and family friendly resources. The library will supply Muffin House Muffins. Please stay for the 10:30 a.m. Puppet Storytime. Join Newton & Friends of Through Me to You Puppetry for songs and stories. At the end of the 30-minute show, children can greet the puppets. Geared for children 2 to 5 years, but all are welcome.

Lego Club

Back by popular demand. During this one-hour building session we will be led by the "Lego Lady" Kim Steadman!

No need to bring any Legos! This program is great for all ages... as long as they don't eat the Legos! Tuesdays: Oct. 8, Nov. 12 and Dec. 10 at 4:30 p.m.

Preschool Kidding Around Yoga

We will learn yoga poses, dance, sing, and meditate. This class is all about fun - all abilities are welcome! Mats are available, or feel free to bring your own. Wednesdays: Oct. 9, Nov. 13 and Dec. 11 at 9:30 a.m.

Puppet Storytime

Through Me to You Puppetry invites you to join Newton and his puppet friends for some Storytime fun! Newton and his friends take turns reading stories and singing songs with the kids. At the end of the show, the kids are invited to say hi to Newton and enjoy puppet free play. Join us on Tuesday, Sept. 17 at 4:30 p.m.

Tutors with Tails

Meet Sprite! Sprite is a therapy dog who loves children and love books. Sprite and her owner Janet will visit the Taft on the last Tuesday of each month. Register today for the opportunity to read to Sprite. Spots are limited.

Book Clubs

6-9 Book Club: We will be reading: *September Sneakers* by Ron Roy. The book club discussion will be held downstairs in the library on Tuesday, Sept. 24 at 5 p.m. The 45-minute book club will include a discussion, pizza and an activity.

Graphic Novel Book Club: This month we will be reading: *Super Side Kicks: No Adults Allowed* by Gavin Aung Than. Join us on Tuesday, Oct. 1 at 5 p.m. to discuss this month's book pick. Pizza and refreshments will be served. Books are available at the upstairs circulation desk.

8-12 Book Club: We will be reading: *The Losers Club* by Andrew Clements. The book club discussion will be held downstairs in the library on Tuesday, Oct. 22 at 5 p.m. The book club will include a discussion, pizza, and refreshments.



Mendon Historical Society hosts Indigenous program on Sept. 28

'Invisible and Eraser of Indigenous People' to be followed by Q&A

The Mendon Historical Society will host a program on Sept. 28 about our Indigenous ancestors.

The program will be presented by Pam Ellis, a Natick Nipmuc citizen, Tribal Historian and Genealogist of the Natick Nipmuc Council, and will be a history of the Native Americans families in our area and a look into their genealogy. It will speak to the "Invisible and Eraser of Indigenous People" and what that means.

The program will begin at 3 p.m. in the Mendon Unitarian Church, followed by a period of Q&A and reception.

We recommend you make reservations by emailing the mendonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com or calling 508-244-7849.

This is a free presentation which will be funded by the Mendon Cultural Council. Donations will be accepted.

Submitted by the Mendon Historical Society

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Upton Senior Center – September events

Grief Support Group - Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

The loss of a loved one is painful and difficult but you are not alone. Find compassion and comfort at this grief support group led by Robin Natanel.

Silver Sisterhood - Wednesday, Sept. 18 at 11 a.m.

Want to connect with other women 55 & older? Join the Silver Sisterhood, a fellowship of senior women interested in making new friends and sharing interests, laughter and support. Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 11 a.m. Registration is required and the group size is limited.

Tai Chi - New Day & Time! Tuesdays at 2:15 p.m.

Tai Chi is a gentle, low-impact form of exercise in which prac-

tioners perform a series of deliberate, flowing motions while focusing on deep, slow breaths. The deliberate movements help people to feel more relaxed, grounded and present in their body. Find out for yourself - join us Tuesdays at 2:15 p.m. \$3 fee.

Senator Fattman Staff Office Hours - Oct. 2 & Nov. 6 9 - 10 a.m.

Senator Ryan Fattman Announces Staff Office Hours: Meet with District Director Amanda Hellyar to seek guidance on issues related to a state agency, find out about upcoming events, and learn more about legislative affairs on Beacon Hill. All are welcome!

Play with Clay! - Monday, Sept. 16 at 10 a.m.

Knead something fun to do?

Join us for a morning of clay-time! Nicole and Paige will help you make a tic-tac-toe board (or trinket of your choice) from air-dry clay. On the first week, we'll craft our clay piece. On the second week, we'll paint our piece to take home. Attendees must sign up for both sessions. **TWO PART CLASS** - must sign up for both.

Crafts with Betty - Friday, Sept. 13 at 9:30 a.m.

Crafts with Betty is back for the Fall! Join Betty Brault for a morning of crafts and conversation.

Grandparent's Day Lunch - Friday, Sept. 13 at 12:30 p.m.

Join us for a delicious lunch in honor of Grandparent's Day! Free for Upton Seniors. \$3 for non-resident seniors.

Mindful Meditation - Friday, Sept. 13 at 1 p.m.

Calm your mind and body so you can acknowledge and accept your thoughts, feelings, and sensations without judgment through Mindful Meditation with Robin Natanel.

Lunch Trip - Monday, Sept. 16 at 12:30 p.m.

By popular demand we will be going to an old favorite... Wong's Chinese Restaurant. Located in Grafton, Wong's offers delicious and authentic fine Chinese. Fans have said they have great portions at very reasonable prices.

Zumba® Gold - Mondays at 2:30 p.m. starting Sept. 16

Zumba® Gold uses Latin and International rhythms that feature low-intensity, low-impact exercises to help you safely reach your wellness goals. The moves are gentle on the joints and slower-paced offering the opportunity for greater range of motion at your own pace. This class is so full of fun and energy you'll forget you're working out and think you're at a party! \$3 fee.

Fresh Food Pantry Day - Friday, Sept. 27 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Are you in need of food assistance? Would you like access to free, fresh foods? Join us for a special fresh food pantry event on Sept. 27, sponsored by Michele Arthur's Fit Life In Leggings group, and organized by Julie DeZutter. Items to be distributed include, but are not limited to, eggs, milk, fruit, bread items and more. Please inquire with the Department of Elder and Social Services staff at 508-529-4558 to register. A registration form must be completed and turned in by Friday, Sept. 20.

Senior Dinner sponsored by Upton Men's Club - Friday, Sept. 20 at 5 p.m.

Looking for a great way to socialize with seniors in our community? Join us for a delightful dinner sponsored by the Upton Men's Club. September's dinner will include hot dogs and hamburgers from the grill along



with a side and special dessert. Free to Upton seniors thanks to the generosity of Upton Men's Club. Please RSVP by Sept. 13 indicating if you would prefer 2 burgers, 2 hot dogs or one of each. Shuttle service available. Doors open at 5 p.m.

What's New with Joint Replacements - Monday, Sept. 30 at 1 p.m.

Join physical therapists Kathy Slattery and Lindsey Schmitt who will talk about new "pathways" for hip and knee replacements including pre-habilitation, joint class and what to expect post-surgical. Occupational and certified hand therapist, Erin Culross, will also share helpful information about thumb joint replacement surgeries. Presented by Milford Regional Sports and Rehabilitation.

WEEKLY PROGRAMS

- Monday:**
10:45 - Strength & Stretch (\$3)
2:30 - Zumba® Gold (\$3)
- Tuesday:**
11:15 - Exercise with Shirley Areano (\$3)
12:30 - Hand & Foot Card Games
1:00 - Grief Support Group
2:15 - Tai-Chi (\$3)
- Wednesday:**
9:30 - Dance Fusion (\$3)
10:45 - Strength & Stretch (\$3)
12:30 - Mahjong Card Games
- Thursday:**
9:00 - Chair Yoga (\$3)
10:00 - Knit & Crotchet Group
11:30 - Learn Mahjong
1:00-3:00 - BINGO
- Friday:**
9:30 - Exercise with Shirley (\$3)
10:45 - Strength & Stretch (\$3)

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

- Trivia Time**—
Monday, Sept. 23 at 12:30 p.m.
Blood Pressure Checks —
Wednesday, Sept. 25 at 12:30 p.m.



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Upton Heritage Day!

- Residents interested in hosting a yard sale at their homes may register online or at the church
- Yard Sale descriptions will be included on a town map
- Sellers receive a sign indicating the place of the sale
- Yard Sale Shoppers can purchase maps at the church beginning at 7:30 am
- For those who live out of town or on the outskirts of town spaces will be available at the VFW in Upton

United Parish will have a Snack Bar serving our popular Apple Crisp with real whipped cream!

Questions call Wayne Phipps at **508-341-0693**

Upton public safety log

Calls between July 26 and Aug. 25 include public drinking threats, missing person, illegal burning.

The Upton Police Department and Fire Department provided a wide range of services between July 26 to Aug. 25 related to motor vehicle violations, disabled and suspicious motor vehicles, traffic enforcement, parking complaints, house lock-outs, road hazards, house and building checks, various alarms, abandoned and accidental 911 calls, close gates, community policing, well-being checks, noise complaints, summons service, court appearances, fundraiser-possible scams, solicitation, fraud, lost/missing/found property, and animal issues (lost, injured, complaints).

Upton also provided occasional mutual aid to Hopkinton, Milford and Northbridge; and daily mutual aid to Hopedale police, fire and EMS.

This is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Other entries of note include:

July 26 at 12:41 p.m., Milford St., lost animal

July 27 at 7:05 p.m., Kiwanis Beach Rd., public drinking, dispersed gathering

July 29 at 4 p.m., Milford St., psych assist/section 12

July 28 at 7:34 p.m., Main St., loud music

July 31 at 11:54 a.m., Howarth Dr., noise complaint

Aug. 1 at 3:49 p.m., Merriam Way, suspicious package/material

Aug. 2 at 11:12 a.m., Glen View St., suspicious person

Aug. 4 at 2:07 p.m., South St., illegal burn

Aug. 5 at 2:34 p.m., Tyler Rd., threats

Aug. 5 at 7:25 p.m., Dairy Dr., disorderly person, services rendered

Aug. 5 at 11:42 p.m., Pleasant St., trespassing

Aug. 6 at 1:21 p.m., Centennial Ct., immediate threat,

Aug. 6 at 6:45 p.m., North St., disorderly person, peace restored

Aug. 7 at 3:35 p.m., Main St., lost/missing person

Aug. 9 at 1:58 a.m., Merriam Way, noise complaint

Aug. 9 at 5:13 p.m., Pleasant St., power outage

Aug. 9 at 5:30 p.m., Knowlton Cir., power outage

Aug. 9 at 5:31 p.m., Maple Ave./Pleasant St., power outage

Aug. 9 at 5:51 p.m., Milford St., box alarm, no action needed

Aug. 10 at 1:28 a.m., Hopkinton Rd., well-being check

Aug. 10 at 3:01 p.m., High St., trespassing

Aug. 10 at 8:49 p.m., East St., loud music complaint

Aug. 12 at 8 a.m., Warrant Rd., water leak

Aug. 12 at 5:36 p.m., North St., disorderly person

Aug. 13 at 1:36 a.m., Field-

stone, noise complaint

Aug. 14 at 2:40 a.m., Milford St., abandoned motor vehicle

Aug. 14 at 12:10 p.m., Old Grafton Rd., brush fire

Aug. 14 at 12:18 p.m., town-wide, power outage

Aug. 16 at 3:19 p.m., N Main St., town bylaw violation

Aug. 17 at 10:27 a.m., Pleasant St., assist with traffic

Aug. 17 at 12:04 p.m., Pleasant St., assist with traffic

Aug. 18 at 7:23 p.m., Christian Hill Rd., disturbance

Aug. 19 at 6:13 p.m., Pearl St., suspicious person

Aug. 20 at 2:01 p.m., School St., car seat installation

Aug. 20 at 3:54 p.m., Walnut St., illegal dumping/littering

Aug. 20 at 6:19 p.m., Stoddard St., brush fire

Aug. 21 at 4:21 p.m., Milford St., suspicious person

Aug. 22 at 1:35 p.m., Glen View St., odor investigation

Aug. 22 at 2:20 p.m.,



Hickory Ln., lost/missing person, returned to home/family
Aug. 22 at 8:09 p.m., Milford St., brush fire
Aug. 23 at 6:24 a.m., School St., cell inspection
Aug. 23 at 6:49 p.m., Main St., water/sewer system check
Aug. 25 at 1:58 p.m., Milford St., suspicious person
Aug. 25 at 6:47 p.m., Kiwanis Beach Rd., preventative patrol
Aug. 25 at 7:05 p.m., Stoddard St., illegal burning

Source: Upton Police Department

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1. What is your favorite animal or attraction at Southwick's Zoo? _____

2. What would you like to see more of in your local newspaper? _____

Name: _____ Phone: _____



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SPORTS

'Scrappy' Nipmuc Volleyball has high hopes for 2024

NRHS girls have sights set on final four

By Chris Villani

During the 2024 preseason, Nipmuc head coach Brian Gerard has been able to see what his team is capable of doing when it plays its game, and what happens when it doesn't. Nipmuc took the first two sets of a scrimmage against Holliston before mistakes and inexperience led to three straight losses.

It has not dampened his enthusiasm for his team's chances. "We are scrappy, we really are," Gerard said. "It's going to come down to them gelling and being on the same page. In the sets we lost, we were out of system more than we were in system. But, in those first two sets, we clicked like we had been doing this all summer long."

Gerard said his team played with a sense of control through the first two sets, and it's something he expects to see more of as the regular season unfolds.

"Our foundation is really good," he said. "Some of our

swing players, once they shake off the nerves and build a little chemistry with the seniors and juniors, I think they will catch on really fast."

Junior Elle Leet is switching positions this fall and will help run the Nipmuc offense as the setter. Gerard will roll out a pair of middle hitters, senior captain Charlotte St. Pierre and junior Kayleigh Fountain, who he said have been "fantastic." At outsider hitter, Nipmuc will feature senior captain Lauren Tabakin and junior Annabel Palmer.

"Annabel might be our top hitter at the moment," Gerard said. "She is very aggressive."

Another captain, Kendal Bradford, will see time at libero. "She is very dependable and has a great serve," the head coach said.

Nipmuc captured the Dual Valley Conference title last season with a perfect 10-0 mark in league play, and Gerard said a repeat performance is the goal this time around. In the 2023



The 2024 Nipmuc girls' volleyball team has high hopes for the upcoming season. Courtesy photo

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state tournament, Nipmuc advanced to the round of 32 before dropping a match Gerard described as a five-set "heart-breaker" to Norwell, a team Nipmuc would not mind seeing again this fall.

"We did not like that at all," Gerard said. "It left a very sour taste in our mouths. But we are very motivated to win the league again and I know these players are hungry."

As for the state tournament, Gerard noted that Nipmuc has advanced to the final eight twice and would love to take another step forward.

"They want the final four," he said. "That's where we want to start the playoffs, not end them."

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SPORTS

Skilled BVT football preps for 2024 season

Beavers return offensive weapons from winning 2023 squad

By Chris Villani

Following a seven-win campaign in 2023, the Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical football team comes into this fall with a wealth of experience in some of the most important positions and with an eye on getting to the postseason.

“We have a good veteran corps of guys in key spots,” said head coach Anthony Landini. “At quarterback, running back, wide receiver, we are pretty experienced.”

Alex Burgos returns for his fourth year at the helm of the Valley Tech offense. The quarterback will lead a balanced attack that includes wide receivers Nick Whitlock and Alex Vosberg and running backs Jeremiah Thomas and Bryce Sheldon.

“We have a lot of skill, that isn’t a problem,” Landini said. “It’s just a matter of filling in those spots on defense and up front. But I think we can throw the ball and our ball distribution

should be a problem for teams. We have guys who can expand the field and run the ball.”

The Beavers’ 2023 campaign included a thrilling matchup with Bay Path in the Vocational Super Bowl that ended in a 42-41 loss.

In addition to the offensive firepower that will be on the field for BVT, the Beavers welcome back Dale Boudreau as a defensive back and kicker. Senior co-captain Kenny Kalvinek will help anchor both the offensive and defensive lines. Aiden Bailer will also see time up front on the offensive line and as a defensive end.

Valley Tech is set to open the season Sept. 13 at St. Bernard’s, but Landini said he is not looking too far ahead.

“I am still trying to figure out what I am going to do during practice today,” Landini said. “I am one of those guys who tries to see how we can get better today.”



QB Alex Burgos is leading an experienced group of skill players this year for BVT. Courtesy photo

Most of the preseason will be spent working on the little things, including game planning and technique, that Landini said can make a significant difference

as the Beavers eye the playoffs. “We have to take it week-to-week and get enough points to make the playoffs in the states,” the coach said. “It’s a goal we

have to work towards. We have to come to practice every day, watch the film, and see where we need to improve. Hopefully, we keep improving.”

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