The Yankee Xpress

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SOUTH EDITION: Charlton, Dudley & Webster

September 13, 2024

Lafayette, you are here!

he French hero of the American Revolution, the Marquis de Lafayette, made a farewell tour of the United States in 1824, highlighting the friendship between the his home country and the states, visiting the cities and towns of the young country, and welcomed by throngs of cheering

For the 200th anniversary of this event, The American Friends of Lafavette hosted a commemorative tour which passed through Worcester County on Sept. 3. It was headed by a costumed interpreter of the Marquis (historical re-enactor Michael Halbert) and accompanied by members of local historical societies playing the parts of early American supernumeraries, including militia, fife and drum musicians and ordinary citizens.

The main means of transportation for the nobleman over various legs of the trip were stagecoach, horseback, canal barge, and steamboat.



Above, The Marquis de Lafayette arrives at the Rider Tavern in Charlton.

Left, the crown gathers for Lafayette's

LAFAYETTE continued on page 2



Webster Welcomes **New Senior Center Director**

BY JANET STOICA jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

hen the former Senior Center Director retired, the position was a great fit for Carole Marchand, Webster's part-time Recreation Director. Most towns' Recreation and Senior Centers work hand-in-hand. With her Bachelor's Degree in Business Management, Marchand was wellprepared to handle the daily activities of the Webster Senior Center. In May 2024, she was approached by the Town Administrator, Rick LaFond, to assume the senior center's directorship and it has been smooth sailing ever since. Director Marchand now handles both the Recreation and Senior Center Departments.

Webster never had a Recreation

Director until several years ago but when Marchand spoke with the previous Town Administrator, Doug Willardson, he felt she would be a good fit. She took classes in recreation management with other towns to learn more about what should be on her and the town's agenda. "Some towns do control little leagues and summer camps," said Marchand, "but that's with boards made up of seven or eight people. Our Webster residents seem happy with the recreation department activities and our Senior Center attendees appear satisfied with the events currently happening. It's my second month here and I'm still checking out what our attendees like and don't like. One of the main

SENIOR CENTER

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LAFAYETTE

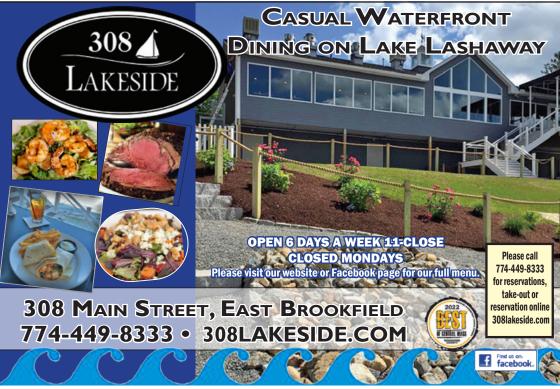
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During the New England leg of his tour, Lafayette made a stop at Wilson's Coffee House in Charlton (later the Rider Tavern) and now maintained by the Charlton Historical Society (CHS).

At the time of the original visit, cavalry from Dudley, Southbridge and Sturbridge joined together, all under the command of a Captain Shumway. The General Lafavette arrived around 4 p.m. and was received with a salute from the cavalry and cheers and applause from the citizens.

The Marquis was greeted by







Lafayette addressing the crowd at Sturbridge Common Above left, The Sturbridge Militia at attention during La Fayette's speech

the Reverend Mr. Rich: "General La Fayette, the inhabitants of Charlton hold in grateful remembrance the very important services, which you, Sir, have rendered their beloved country. They cordially unite with their fellow-citizens throughout the Union in the heart-cheering congratulations excited by your

recent arrival in America and visit through the states. Accept, Sir, our assurance of a hearty welcome, and the expression of our best wishes for your personal happiness.

LAFAYETTE

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1½ LBS. NEW YORK SIRLOIN STEAK OR

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SENIOR CENTER

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concerns is longer hours so now we are open until 4 p.m. We have also changed our opening hours to 9 a.m. as there aren't too many individuals who arrive before 9.

Marchand also states that movies are back at the center as of September 4. Additionally, on the first Thursday of the month, there will be new entertainment scheduled for the evening from 5:45 - 6:45p.m. After a dinner hour where seniors are on their own, activities will begin such as music and dancing, magicians, musicians, comedians, and paint nights. There will be light refreshments. New suggestions are welcomed and appreciated.

"All of our attendees have been super-friendly and welcoming," says Marchand, "there really

haven't been any challenges to speak of. We have a self check-in kiosk to record those in attendance and are trying to encourage more people to use the check-in. Any time people use our services, it demonstrates our service capabilities and helps toward our state formula grants. The grants are based on the senior population in Webster but it also helps to show the amount of seniors who are using our facility. We are also happy to welcome any senior citizens from any other town."

Bingo on Tuesdays at 1 p.m. is always a big draw. The games are held until 3:15 p.m. or so and always brings in a big crowd. The game is run like clockwork by their own group of seniors. The center also has pitch leagues, chair dancing, cribbage groups, knitting groups, and mahjong players. The center is also looking at having a casino night. All events are listed in their monthly newsletter which

can be reviewed online at www. webster-ma.gov and by navigating to the Senior Center tab.

We are currently working with the local and state Councils on Aging to learn about more senior services and what we can offer here," said Marchand, "everything seems to be going smoothly. Tri-Valley, Inc. of Dudley delivers hot and nutritious meals to us Tuesday - Friday and all seniors are welcome to dine with us for a nominal suggested donation of \$3. All are welcome and a two-day notice is required for our meal program. On average we have 30-40 diners daily. We also offer a hot dog or potato or pasta bar often which everyone

really seems to enjoy. There are 90 seats in our dining room. We also have a hair salon with very reasonable pricing. Walk-ins are welcome on Wednesdays but Tuesdays and

Thursdays are by appointment.

Webster Senior Center, 5 Church Street, Webster MA 01570. Hours: 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Phone: (508) 949-





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LAFAYETTE

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Lafayette's response was typically gracious: "The repeated expressions of kindness and esteem which I have received since my arrival in this country render me unable to express the high delight with which I behold the grateful sensibility of the American people."

Lafayette had some refreshments at the coffee house and was introduced to a number of the citizens.

The General expressed his high commendation of the appearance of the cavalry, and the fine style by which they performed the duties of escort.

The Charlton Historical Society maintains the Rider Tavern

and has had a display about Lafayette's visit for many years. The Lafayette Trail recently placed one of its markers in Charlton on the grounds of the Rider Tavern.

Across the street from the tavern was the Charlton Militia's drilling field.

Lafayette's final stop in Massachusetts was Sturbridge, where he was greeted with a triumphal arch of greens on the Common and by music from the Uxbridge Grenadiers. Two shots were fired from a cannon by the Sturbridge Artillery and the hurrahs of thousands of civilians. Included toasts from distinguished role playing guests from Old Sturbridge Village and performances by the Old Sturbridge Villages singers.







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Pearle L. Crawford Library Programs and Events

40 Schofield Avenue, Dudley Join us for one of our programs at the Pearle! To register, www.crawfordlibrary.org or 508-949-8021 September is Library Card Sign up Month! The theme this year is



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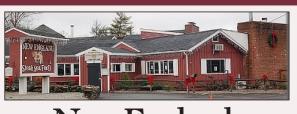
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JOIN US FOR A MINI QUILT SHOW!

Our local "Pearle Quilters" are showing off their talents for the month of September. Please come and view their beautiful creations hanging in the Fels Room. This group is always looking for new members. They meet weekly to socialize and exchange ideas and techniques related to quilting. A small reception will be held on Wednesday, Sept 18th 2:00-4:30. Refreshments will be served and are funded by the Hugh W. & Harriet K. Crawford Endowment Fund for the Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library.

GENTLE YOGA

Mondays in September, 10-11am Fels Community Room Join instructors Erin & Jia, for traditional "on the mat" yoga class with 15 minute relaxation at the end.

Bring your own mat. Wear layers, do not eat heavily 1.5-2 hours before class.

MOVIES @ THE PEARLE!!

Tuesdays in September at 1:00 September 17: Kingdom of Planet of the Apes

September 24: Unsung Hero

MAHJONG AT THE PEARLE

Wednesday in Sept., 10:00-12:30 Fels Community Room

The game consists of players competing to form distinct sets or pairs of tiles, similar to gin rummy.

Everyone welcome, registration not required.

SEED SAVING WITH LANETTE!

Monday, Sept. 16, 6:00-7:30 Learn how and why you should collect and save seeds from many of the plants in your garden.

Join Lanette Lepper, a member of the Dudley Agricultural Commission and Quiet Corner Garden Club, to learn helpful tips and techniques

This program is sponsored by the Dudley Agricultural Commission & the Town of Dudley.

FALL OFFICE HOURS WITH SENATOR FATTMAN'S STAFF AND STATE REPRE-**SENTATIVE JOHN MARSI**

Wednesday, Sept. 18, 10:30-

Meet with District Director Amanda Hellyar and John Marsi 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 RISE WITH DIANE GODFREY-TRUE CRIME EVENT

Thursday, Sept. 19, 6:00-7:30 Do you enjoy true crime? Interested in a peek behind the courtroom scene?

Join Podcasters Jordan Rich & Diane Godfrey as they share all the real ins & outs of true crime! Diane will be onsite for a live discussion. Registration required.

QUEEN ELIZABETH II "HER MAJESTY" PERFORMED BY SHERYL FAYE

Saturday, Sept. 21, 11-12:30 Sheryl Faye presents Historical Women-Queen Elizabeth II "Her

She was a true icon, inspiring people around the world with her strength, courage, resilience, and dedication to a life of service. For 70 years, she remained a constant presence as sovereign, shepherding the people of the UK through both joyful times and darker periods of challenge and uncertainty. An enduring admiration for Queen Elizabeth II united people across the Commonwealth. Registration is required.

Charlton Public Library Wants YOU!

... to get a Library Card

eptember is Library Card Sign-up Month, and Charlton Library wants to put library cards into the hands of every resident who doesn't already have a card...no matter if you are five or ninety-five years old! With a library card you can discover new and exciting worlds! Sure you can use it to borrow books, books on CD, DVDs, magazines, puzzles,

museum passes, hotspots, and a whole bunch of other cool stuff (did you know we have a metal detector, ukuleles, an ice cream maker, bocce, badminton, disc golf, AND now pickleball paddles?!) A library card also gets you access to streaming movies, downloadable eBooks and audiobooks, online educational resources, Do-It-Yourself classes, concerts, and research

databases! There is so much you can access with a library card...and all free to you! If you don't already have a card, stop by Charlton Public Library during the month of September to get one and you will be entered into a drawing to win a Chromebook! Charlton Public Library is located at 40 Main Street in Charlton.

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Webster Development, Town Hall Grandeur, and Refugee Center Update

jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

cGovern Lane and Brian Avenue in Webster are on a developer's agenda. The road is the last thoroughfare on the right after the Harrington/UMass campus on Thompson Road. The town of Thompson, Connecticut has granted a construction project permit with the only access road being through the town of Webster. Thompson has approved major construction for 30-plus condominiums and townhouses, but never properly notified Webster as an abutter, according to Town Administrator Rick LaFond. The entire situation is under appeal by Webster in a Connecticut court. The only access to the large construction project is through the town of Webster. Will construction vehicles like heavy dump trucks and land-clearing machinery soon be pummeling and destroying the pavement of Thompson Road, McGovern Lane, and Brian Avenue? Will Webster receive all the negative heavy construction dust, debris, and traffic without any tax benefits? How will fire trucks and emergency vehicles gain access to the sizeable development? The fragile roads

leading to the proposed development were certainly not meant for heavy equipment rolling through.

'We are certainly displeased over the lack of concern by the town of Thompson," said LaFond.

The town of Webster has received a generous and incredible offer from local resident Christopher Robert. The local businessman has offered to restore the town's auditorium and town hall to its former magnificence. Visions of Worcester's Mechanics Hall are in order for Mr. Robert's inspirations. The auditorium has approximately an 1,100-1,200 seat capacity and according to Wikipedia "was built in 1927-28 to a design by Michael Dyer and Company, whose later work included several other notable municipal buildings in Massachusetts. The two and a half brick story building is laid in Flemish bond, with paneled concrete corner quoins. Like the former Anthony Sitkowski school, now senior housing, it has a hip roof, denticulated cornice, and wide frieze. The school's cupola was moved to top the town hall at this time, and the work done at this time included construction of an auditorium that joined the town hall and school together."

There will be an article regard-

ing the offer at the upcoming town meeting to be held on Monday, October 21.

An update on the Beacon Street refugee center located off Lake Street indicates that the site is still in its site-planning stage with the town Planning Board. A Planning Board hearing is scheduled for Monday, September 23. According to the town's consulting engineer, 33 items needed to be dealt with including access for fire apparatus to the side and rear of the building as well as parking and drainage issues. New plans were submitted on Sunday, one day before the Planning Board's last meeting, where requirements still had not met the Planning Board's conditions. In September the plans will be approved or denied. Neighbors have been sued for use of Rosemont Street as an access road. however, the neighbors do not own the street. A title search must be conducted by the developer and the land court judge has established a January 2025 hearing to review the title search submission.

Town Administrator LaFond also advises that a Mexican restaurant has applied for occupancy in the former Stave and Still restaurant located at 131 Main Street.



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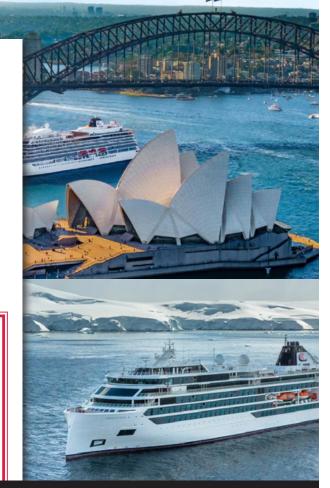
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Second Annual Gala Event At Gladys E. Kelly Public Library

second "Bites, Books and Blooms" fundraising event is coming to the Gladys E.

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Kelly library on Thursday, October 17, from 6 until 8 pm. If you missed the first one, now is your

chance to attend the event that was the talk of the town. Prepare for an evening of tasty local food,

and the chance to stroll through unique floral displays depicting books and poems. Local florists, clubs, churches and some crafty individuals are busy choosing a favorite literary item to portray in a diorama of flowers that will inspire our imaginations. This year's event will feature hors

music, a beer and wine cash bar,

d'oeuvres from Webster's own Bistro Eighty Ates along with live music from the Carlos Odria Trio.

Haven't visited the Gladys E. Kelly Library yet? It is an architectural gem and, increasingly, a center of community life for Webster and surrounding towns. In addition to book clubs and lectures, the library hosts concerts, yoga classes, a board games club, and a cookbook club with monthly dinners. And that's just the adult programming. There are even more activities for children. In July, total attendance at library programs was 2400.

Money raised in this fundraiser will go to the Friends of the Library, supporting these programs as well as a new outreach program for all young children residing in Webster: Dolly Parton's Imagination Library. Any

Webster resident aged 0-5 years can receive one free book per month mailed to his or her home. The Library Friends pay for the postage, so there is absolutely no cost to the family. Imagine that! Please encourage any young families you know to visit the library and sign up to raise lifelong readers.

Get your fundraiser tickets now at \$35 each at the library, on our website (gladyskellylibrary. org), or by scanning this QR code. You can also support the library programs by donating a gift card or basket for the evening's raffle. If interested in contributing an item, contact Martina Koziak at ma2622@charter.net.



Hours: Mon-Sat 8am - 11pm • Sun 10 am - 10 pm



Finding an Electrician Fried My Nerves

BY JANET STOICA jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

ometimes you are the fool of all fools and that's how I feel right now. I had been searching relentlessly for an electrician to add extra electrical outlets, light switches, lighting, and a remote-controlled skylight. I suppose \$5,000 worth of electrical work is small potatoes these days and most individuals and companies can't be bothered. I must've phoned eight different individuals and companies who either never returned my voicemail or were disinterested unless I was rewiring my entire home.

I also had one individual referred to me who came immediately to my home with his notepad and trusty pen to take notes and offer suggestions for the work I required. When I opened my front door to greet him, however, he reeked of stale alcohol. I listened to his life story but, of course, I knew he was already off my list even though he seemed to be a likeable fellow. He promised me that he'd "get right back to me with his estimate." Needless to say, I never heard from him. No big surprise, I guess.

I finally phoned my local Home Depot thinking that they might have individuals registered with their professional desk. I received about four responses of which one was a local electrician who lived two towns over from me. I phoned the guy and after ex-

changing pleasantries and what my electrical needs were, we made an appointment for him to visit in a few days. He also told me that he charged a \$50 fee for his appointment but that the fee would be taken off my final bill if I hired

An older gentlemen, he seemed very nice, well-dressed, and listened to what I wanted to have done while also making suggestions along the way. He gave me his calling card which stated "master electrician" and he went over some of the jobs he had done in the past. When I mentioned that I was also considering updating my outdoor security, he showed me his cellphone's live feed for the security cameras he had installed at his own home. Everything looked very legit and I had already decided that he would be my final choice after all the disinterested people that I had previously encountered. I wrote him his \$50 check and mentioned that Mondays and Tuesdays would be the best days for him to visit and begin his work. He then advised me that "he always golfs on Tuesdays" so that day would be out. I accepted his schedule and told him that I'd look forward to his estimate and that he could begin working at his earliest opportunity. We shook hands and he left.

When I had not heard from him 10 days later, I texted him to ask for my estimate. His reply was that he was "so busy and

that he'd get the estimate to me either today or tomorrow." I also noted that he had cashed my \$50 check right away. In the following days, I waited and waited with no communication from him finally realizing that I'd been defrauded and what an ignorant idiot I was for writing that check. I had never/ever been asked to write a check for an estimate for any work on my home before. And then, to add insult to injury and fraud, he must've recently responded to a Home Depot inquiry regarding his visit to my home and the status of same. On August 31, almost two months after contacting me, he advised Home Depot that he could not perform the work at my home!

Caveat Emptor! Let the buyer beware!

The silver (or gold) lining to my story is that a considerate friend then referred a most wonderful and detail-oriented electrician to me. Not only is this young man honest, caring, and kind but I'm sure I will never find anyone as excellent as he is. He has done all the electrical work I have requested and has completed each request to the highest of standards. Thank you, Paul, you are The best!



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Dudley Citizens' Fire **Academy**

he Dudley Fire Department is hosting a Citizens' Fire Academy for people aged 18 or older who live or work in the town of Dudley. There will be eight weeks of three-hour classes (approximately 20 hours of instruction). Classes meet at 6 p.m. starting Oct. 2 at the Dudley Fire Department, 128 West Main Street, Class size is limited to 12 students. For more information and an enrollment form, visit www.dudleyma.gov/ fire-department.

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All signs point to "yes" for Bartlett High football

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY, STAFF SPORTS WRITER

ach and every year the Bartlett High School football team under the guidance of Dean Laboissonniere begins the season with two goals in mind: make the Division 8 tournament and beat Southbridge in the Thanksgiving Day game.

While the Indians were able to edge their rivals 10-8 last Thanksgiving, the annual Turkey Day game has been a back-and-forth event for the two schools. Over the 103 year rivalry, the Pioneers

CELEBRATING

GRAPHIC

hold a 55-46-2 record over the Indians and despite Bartlett winning the game last fall, Southbridge had won the previous four years.

With the Bartlett coach feeling really good about the upcoming season, he is hoping that his team can be one of the 16 teams that will vie for the Division 8 Championship.

"I believe that we have a legitimate shot at being one of those teams that make it into the Division 8 playoff bracket," Laboissonniere said. "Winning the South Worcester County League doesn't really matter anymore with

YEARS!

the new playoff format. Our goal is to be one of the teams to make a push for the playoffs."

Having completed the regular season at 5-6 last year, Laboissonniere will be returning a lot of

sophomores and juniors form last year's squad and although they are a year older, the overall team is still relatively young. Bartlett graduated four seniors from last year's near .500 team including the leading and number three rushers.

Although the Indians will not have half of their running back corps from a year ago, Laboissonniere will be relying on sophomore Josh Ramirez to take the reins and run with a purpose as he tucks the football under his arm. Ramirez will be stepping into the team's lead back this season.

"He'll be our go-to guy. As our tailback this year, we're hoping for a big season from him; he's a shifty runner with good speed and sees the field well," the Bartlett coach said. "Last year he was our fullback and although a little undersized for the position, he played it tough and give us an explosiveness that was not there typically."

Another big offensive returner will be junior quarterback Lawrence Smith. Last fall the then sophomore found himself as the Indians starting quarterback and will once again give Bartlett a dual

threat behind center.

"He is a dual threat, but we're primarily a run first team," the coach said. "He has improved his arm strength and accuracy over the off season. He has one of the

field, he should be a good leader for us this season."

Defensively Laboissonniere will have sophomores Cam Forsytag and Xavier Butler returning to shore up the line this fall. Butler

> saw some time last year as a freshman as a linebacker and will return to that position once again while Forsytag was a defensive end as a freshman and will be moved to the linebacking position this year, where the coach has said he's worked extremely hard in the off-season to get ready for the new position.

Junior Izayah Perry, a two-year starter at defensive end will once again line up in the position for the Indians this fall. Laboissonniere has

seen a huge improvement from last year and will be expecting big things from the junior this season.

Although these athletes are the tip of the iceberg when it comes to Bartlett football, the Coach noted there is a lot of excellent talent that graces this year's roster. The squad may be young on the lines, but are deeper at the skill position on both sides of the ball, which should help the Indians accomplish their pre-season goals.



strongest arms that have come

15 years."

through this program in the last

Slot receiver junior Kenny Ar-

pin, who will also see action as a

defensive back for Bartlett, is also

back and looking to once again

lead the team in receiving yards.

"Being a run first team, he

didn't have a lot of eye-popping

sonniere said. "But he was able

to make some big catcher in big

spots, usually in traffic. Having a

basketball background, you can

stats for us last year," Labois-



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TALES FROM BEYOND

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The Ghost Of Giles Corey

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

he Howard Street Cemetery in Salem, Massachusetts is a regular stop on ghost tours. The many ancient graves are worth the trek alone, but it is another eerie sighting that the tour goers want to see, yet most Salem residents shudder at the thought of. The graveyard, dating back to 1801 was the field where Giles Corey met his tragic end during the Salem witch hysteria of 1692. Sheriff George Corwin condemned him for witchcraft. When asked to enter a plea, he used the legal tactic of "standing mute" and therefore his land could not be confiscated. With no plea entered, Corey technically remained innocent, and his property could not be legally seized.

On September 19, 1692, in an attempt to get a plea from the 81 year old man, Giles Corey was placed in the field under great boulders where the Howard Street Cemetery now sits. It is right behind the old Salem Prison which recently became apartments. When asked to enter a plea, he just said, "more weight." This went on for three days.

Before he died from the im-

mense weight of the boulders that were placed upon him, he cursed the village of Salem and all sheriffs who would ever preside in the little hamlet. The personal curse he placed on Corwin went to the effect that he would someday choke on his own blood. It seems that his curse has had some sort of influence on the town. Records reveal that every sheriff of Salem has since suffered the same illness resulting in death or an early retirement due to a heart or blood related malady. Corwin died at the age of 30 from a heart attack on April 12, 1696.

There is a legend that Giles Corey's ghost always appears before something tragic happens. His ghost was seen roaming the cemetery just before the Salem fire of June 25, 1914 that destroyed 1,376 buildings and made over 18,000 people homeless or jobless. Corey's ghost has been reported just before other smaller but significant terrible events in the Witch City. Many tourists have taken photographs of what appears to be either Corey's ghost or one of the many others that are said to roam this active burial ground.

Giles Corey's burial site remains

unknown to this day. George Corwin's remains were hidden in the cellar of the family home out of the fear that the angry people of Salem who were wronged by his hand would tear his corpse to shreds. He was later buried in the Howard Street Cemetery in the family plot.

One more interesting note; the cemetery was opened in 1801 and the first interment was a 2nd mate aboard the Belisarius named Benjamin Ropes who died tragically, oddly enough, after being crushed to death by the foretopmast of the

After meandering through the Howard Street Cemetery, take a trip to the Charter Street Burial Ground where the Salem witchcraft memorials are. This is actually the most popular of the Salem graveyards. It is here that the memorial to the people who were executed for the crime of witchcraft sits. Stone slabs mark the memory and death of each of the nineteen victims. There are claims that the place is haunted. People have seen apparitions and heard unearthly screams from the cemetery. Perhaps the spirits of those who perished due to the witch trials either at the gallows or in jail still wail for

revenge and restitution. If you visit the graveyard you will see that the memorial is not accessible from the burial ground. Even in death long after the persecutions have ended, these individuals are still kept apart

from their peers. Infamous witch judge Jonathan Hathorne is buried there. His descendant, Nathaniel Hawthorne added a "W" to his name in order to separate himself from the horrible family legacy.

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he New Hampshire motto, "Live Free or Die" couldn't have been more relevant this past August. Luke's annual trip (of two) to the White Mountains, NH was full of all that he loved about the great outdoors. There was so much to see and smell and hear. He especially loved sleeping at the foot of our bedside in a charming cottage that smelled of wood and honey. Who would have guessed that the tide of our trip would

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

We took Luke to the Basin, a sought-out New Hampshire destination full of lavish attractions. The experience was both primal and positive for Luke. Rugged trails frosted with sticks and stones whet his palette, though his mind remained doggishly onetrack. "THERE'S WATER DOWN THERE!! I'M NOT KIDDING YOU!" There was no denying the scent of glistening streams down below. Even if we could manage to deter Luke, how would we sleep at night knowing that we pulled him away from one of mother earth's natural wonders? We tightened our bootstraps and trucked downhill.

Shades of green and gold shimmered like a desert of shiny pennies in the natural pool before us. Rays of sunlight beamed down on the water's surface. Ripples of

LIVING WITH LUKE

amyleclaire@hotmail.com

Luke Travels Upstream at New Hampshire's Doggie Dive

light danced. We were in heaven, it seemed. Luke shot a glance at the water then—sold—pulled us forward like a drug-sniffing canine. "Luke. Easy!" He was euphoric, high on the prospect of immersing himself in one of New Hampshire's greatest treasures, the wondrous basin. He stretched. He sniffed.

He darted this way and that, barking at rushes of water. "I'm not afraid of you! I've fought the hose water rush for onepoint-five years now!"

Luke may have been fearless, but we were not. My husband's knees knocked to the cry of Luke's water passion. What if he was swallowed up and taken down stream? I worried that me might tear an ACL, given so many slippery rocks. "What a beautiful dog!" We buried our fears in the comfort of fellow hikers-that and Luke's research.

My dog proved a careful observer. He crouched down low. He sniffed out what did and didn't make sense, even

for an expert swimmer. He noted the intensity and force of water explosions at certain sections. His big head creased in awareness. He backed off. He tested the waters with a tentative paw. Luke was determined to make informed

choices. Survival was in his genes. He may not be the fittest, but he was certainly the fluffiest. Moreover, this pedigree descended from a long line of thinkers. He looked up at us for a verdict. "You're being such a good boy, Luke." We unhitched him and allowed him to swim in the baby pool on the opnook in the back end of the woods with flat rocks situated between two natural pools. The expansive landscape offered a perfect means to sit on a towel, sunbathe, or, in the case of this Friday, take your dog to a water park. Our private beach had apparently gained notoriety. "This is Luke," I hol-

lered down from the high incline leading to the beach. "He's friendly, but occasionally shows same-sex aggression." My voice became the echo of a mickey mouse game. Owners tightened their grips on dog leashes and gossiped about Luke. Oblivious, he puffed his mane out like Mufasa of the Lion King and stood like a statue on a high ledge. Big dogs pinned their ears back. Small dogs closed their tiny, barky mouths.

"Let's go."

We bumbled clumsily down the trail leading to the natural beach. Elena, a happy-go-lucky silver lab, mouthed a tennis ball and greeted

me with a full body shake and shower. "Sorry about that," her owner apologized. "No worries! I was hot anyway," I lied. Dog People have learned from their dogs to not sweat the small stuff. Elena eved Luke adoringly, but he ignored the opposite sex. In fact, he ignored every sex on the dog beach.

"I haven't swum in twenty-four hours." Unleashed, the stud melted into the water and paddled gracefully. Then, something changed. As though wanting to separate himself from the hype of the Doggie Dive, he began to paddle further down the river. We all raised a brow. "Where's Luke headed?" The scene falls on me now like a 35-millimeter slide shot of my childhood. "Remember the time when we visited the river and Luke...."

The current takes him by surprise. I can see him whimper upon discovering that the water resists his paddle. He's learned that he's not able to freely swim back in the direction he came from. He's suddenly nervous. Dogs need to sense exactly how to return home. At the same time, he boasts a side of himself that is hugely strong. His big head bobs over the water while his paws and full body operate like a small motor. My pup, a playful swimmer, is literally traveling upstream. He cannot go with the flow, lest he be taken by the river's current. I've been navigating these rivers for over forty years. I've got to lure Luke away from panic. I climb onto an island of smooth stones and stand perpendicular to him. "C'mon, Luke. Swim this way." I can tell that he's working towards me, but it's not easy. A woman stands above us at the cliff bordering the river. Her fingers rest on her chest. "We are all praying for

The moment is both redundant and significant. I've been here before. I've done this before. "You can do it, Luke." By this time, I'm side-stroking my way in the direction he needs to follow. His wet bear cub face bobs above the water. He's paddling against the current with his chunky paws until, finally, something clicks. "I gotta go get Momma.

Luke makes his way out of the

"Yayyyyy, Luke!! The entire Dog Park had been watching an episode of The Day Luke Got Stuck in a Current. Dogs sat still and stared. Smokers paused between puffs. Elena dropped her ball. One dog lover stood ankle deep at the shore with a bag of Doritos. "Can I give him one?

My mind's eye traces over the casual manner by which Luke munched the chip, shook off the incident, and went back in the water with better understanding of how the river works. He even found a boulder to climb upon to regroup if needed.

My dog would rather die than live without freedom. I couldn't agree with him more.

Write to Amy amyleclaire@hotmail.com

Follow Luke on IG @livingwithlukevalentino



posite side of the falls.

"Look at the doggie learning to swim, honey!" Every Dog Mom has experienced that momentwhen her dog's behavior falls somewhere between being cute and bizarre. "He's making his own fun with the bubbles!" Indeed, he was. "It's his thing." I responded, while an oblivious Luke paddled like an unathletic seal. He flapped at the water to create bubbles, then chased them down with a biting mouth. Perhaps we should have cut our losses and settled on one dynamic swim for Luke.

New Hampshire, ever outdoorsy, held more water opportunity.

The Bretton Woods River had been a historic hideaway spot, a

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REAL ESTATE

Today's Biggest Housing Market Myths

ave you ever heard the phrase: don't believe everything you hear? That's especially true if you're thinking about buying or selling a home in today's housing market. There's a lot of misinformation out there. And right now, making sure you have someone you can go to for trustworthy information is extra

important.

If vou partner

with a

real estate

agent, they

can clear



up some common misconceptions BY MARK MARZEOTTI and reassure vou

by backing them up with facts. Here are just a few misconceptions we can help disprove.

1. I'll get a better deal once prices crash: If you've heard home prices are going to come crashing down, it's time to look at what's actually happening. While prices vary by local market, there's a lot of data out there from numerous sources that shows a crash is not going to happen. Back in 2008, there was a dramatic oversupply of homes that led to prices crashing. Across the board, there's an undersupply of homes for sale today. That makes this market a whole different scenario.

So, if you think waiting will score you a deal, know that data shows there's not a crash on the horizon,

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and waiting isn't going to pay off the way you'd hoped.

2. I won't be able to find anything to buy: If this nagging fear about finding the right home if you move is still holding you back, you probably haven't talked with an expert real estate agent lately. Throughout the year, the supply of homes for sale has grown. Data from Realtor.com helps put this into context. While there are still fewer homes on the market than in a more normal year like 2019, inventory is still above where it was at this time last year.

The supply of homes for sale is improving. Pre-pandemic inventory was -28.7%. Today year over year we are at 35.6%. That is a lot to choose from.

So, if you're remembering all that media coverage about recordlow supply during the pandemic, you can rest a bit easier. While the market isn't back to normal just yet, inventory is moving in a healthier direction and that means as your options improve, you can let go of this now outdated myth because finding a home to buy won't feel quite so impossible anymore.

3. I have to wait until I have enough for a 20% down payment: Many people still believe you need a 20% down payment to buy a home.

mately 90% of consumers overstate or don't know the minimum required down pay-

ment for a typical mortgage. Firsttime homebuyers are typically only putting down 6%. That's far less than the 20% so many people think they need. Repeat buyers are closer to 20% at 17% because they have so much equity built up in their current house that can be used to make a larger down payment for their next move.

This goes to show you don't have to put 20% down, unless it's specified by your loan type or lender. Many people put down a lot less. Not to mention, depending on the type of home loan you get, you may only need to put 3.5% or even 0% down. So, if you're buying your first home, you likely don't need nearly as much for your down payment as you may think.

If you put your move on pause because you heard one or more of these myths yourself, it's time to talk to the Marzeotti Group or another trusted agent. An expert agent has more data and the facts, just like this, to reassure you and help break through any misconceptions that may be holding you back.







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Irregular Starts? Voltage Test the Battery

My Ford Taurus has a problem that if the car sits • for three or four days it will not start. If I get a jump start it fires right up. My battery and starter were fine and everything else tested okay could it be a sensor or fuel pump?

If the car starts with a jump and the call fully charged, I would problem jump and the battery is look for an electrical problem. On some Ford vehicles the battery ground cable has been known to cause intermittent no-start problems. A technician with a voltmeter will perform a "voltage-drop" test to determine the cause of your car's intermittent no-start problem. If you cannot get the car to a garage look for dirty/ corroded connections. Start with the battery and work as far as you can, cleaning on the way.

I have a 2018 Acura RDX with only 29,000 miles • on it. When applying the brakes there is a thumping sound

from the right front. I checked the tire and there is no visible damage. The brake rotor also looks okay. The warranty has long expired what could be wrong?

A thumping sound is typically a lose compo-• nent or an out or round brake rotor. The issue could be a loose caliper mount, pad moving or even a suspension part. At this point, the only thing to do is take the car to a repair shop and demonstrate the problem and have them perform an inspection of the braking and suspension system.

I added about a halfgallon of blue window • washer fluid to my coolant by mistake a couple of days ago. This is a new car to me (I have had it six months) and I feel like an idiot, did I do any damage? Do I need to have the system flushed and new antifreeze added or is it okay to leave it as is?

This is actually a fairly common occurrence - you • are not an idiot. Window washer fluid is mostly alcohol and water so there shouldn't be any engine harm. What I would be more concerned about is that you needed to add that much fluid to the engine cooling system in only six months. You should have the cooling system checked for a possible leak.

I recently purchased a five-year-old Lexus and • took it to my own mechanic to have it checked after I bought it. When she scanned the computer, she found a dozen fault codes. Now the car ran great, and the check engine light was off. When I went back to the dealer, they checked it over and replaced the battery. Could the battery really be causing all those codes?

A good battery is critical to the proper operation of newer cars. Battery

voltage that is low or varying can

cause all kinds of mischief with computer-controlled systems. My suggestion is drive the car for a couple of hundred miles and then rescan the computer.



BY IOHN PAUL

I have heard you mention WORX tools on your • radio program, are they really any good?

I have several WORX tools, from a weed trimmer, leaf blower to an impact wrench and light duty angle grinder and been quite happy with the overall performance. One reason I like them is they all share the same 20-volt battery. So, the chances of always having a fully charged battery are quite good.

I just inherited a 2014 Honda CRV with only • 52,000 miles on it. When I am accelerating normally from 25 mph to around 40 mph, sometimes I feel the engine bogging down and have this shuddering/ vibration. Other times the car runs great. Since the car did not cost me anything I am willing to put money into it. Is this a known issue and what can I do to fix it?

If the engine is running properly, I would be look-• ing at a possible transmission issue. Honda did issue a technical service bulletin (not a recall or warranty extension) with a computer update and transmission fluid replacement. In some cases, the transmission may need to be replaced. I would try changing the transmission fluid (use only Honda fluid), in many cases this cures this symptom.





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What can insurance do for you?

t's probably not on your calendar, but September is Life Insurance Awareness Month. And it's indeed a pretty good idea to be aware of what life insurance can do for you.

Life insurance can help you in two main ways. First, life insur-



BY DENNIS **ANTONOPOULOS**

ance policies offer a death benefit that can assist your family if you're no longer around. And second, some types of life insurance offer the chance to

build cash value, which can work for you during your lifetime.

Let's look at the death benefit first. If something were to happen to you, your life insurance proceeds could help your family meet at least three major needs:

Paying a mortgage - The biggest expense many families face is their monthly mortgage. If you weren't around, could your family continue paying the mortgage? Or would they have to move? With a sufficient life insurance death benefit, they could remain in their home, meeting the monthly mortgage payments, or perhaps pay off

the loan entirely (although this might not be in their best financial interest).

Paying for education - If you have young children, you may already be saving for their college education — because you know college is expensive. Without your income, would college, or some other form of post-secondary education or training, still be realistic? Again, the proceeds from an insurance policy could make the difference.

Paying off debts – You might have a car loan, credit card debt or other financial obligations. If your surviving spouse is a joint account holder for these debts, they could still be liable for paying them off. But insurance proceeds could be used to retire the debts immediately, or over time.

All life insurance policies offer a death benefit. But permanent insurance, unlike term insurance, also offers the chance to build cash value — which can be a valuable supplement to your IRA and 401(k) or other retirement accounts.

A cash value policy such as whole life also can provide flexibility for changing financial needs or emergencies in retirement. And here's another key advantage: Because this type of policy provides fixed, guaranteed returns, it is not

dependent on the performance of the financial markets and is thus insulated from the market downturns that can happen while you're retired. So, taking money from the cash value of your whole life policy may help you avoid selling investments that have temporarily declined in value.

Keep in mind, though, that the premiums for a cash value policy will generally be substantially higher than those for term insurance. That's why some people choose to "buy term and invest the difference" rather than purchase a permanent life policy with cash value. Whether this strategy is right for you depends on a few different factors, perhaps the most important of which is your ability and willingness to consistently invest the money you would have otherwise placed in a cash value

In any case, should you choose cash value insurance, you generally have three ways to get at the money: withdrawals, loans or surrender of the policy. You'll want to weigh all the factors involved including taxes and the effect on the policy's death benefit — when deciding on how to access the cash

Life Insurance Awareness Month ends on Sept. 30. But your need for life insurance, and the poten-

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11:30 am Lunch

1:00 pm Mahjong

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tial benefits it provides, can last a lifetime.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

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

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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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SATURDAY, SEPT 14

- The St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Mary's of Uxbridge will host their annual fundraiser "The Friends of the Poor Walk" at 9 a.m. at St. Mary's Church 77 Mendon Street, Uxbridge. Walkers will meet at the handicapped entrance and then walk or run the town loop at 9:30 a.m. For more information, call 508-278-2226.
- Pasta & Meatball Dinner at St. Peter Parish in Northbridge on Saturday, September 14th 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 \$15 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. Please call the parish office at 508-234-2156 or email parishoffice@stpeterrockdale.org to purchase tickets or if you have any questions.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

• The Douglas Sunshine Club is planning a trip to explore the British Landscapes in Sept. 2025! We will be traveling with Collette Travel for an adventure starting in Edinburgh, Scotland, and then down though England completing our tour in London. Anyone interested is welcome to join us for a special travel presentation on September 18 at 6:30 pm with a Collette representative who will describe the itinerary and travel arrangements at 6:30 pm

at the Douglas Adult Social Center located at 331 Main St., Douglas. This will be a 10 day tour September 7-16, 2025 with a pre-night option in Edinburgh, a post-night option in London and a tour extension in Paris. Please call the center to sign up for this presentation at 508-476-2283 and for more information about the tour call Pam at 508-476-4474.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

- Paul D'Angelo set to headline Comedy night at Slater's at 7:30 pm With special guests Dave Rattigan & Jim Ruberti. Doors open at 6:30 PM; show starts at 7:30 PM. Tickets are on-sale now at www.samuelslaters.com. Samuel Slater's Restaurant is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster.
- View the Night Sky at River Bend Farm, 287 Oak St., Uxbridge.

Gather with local astronomers to view the night sky. All events are on Friday evenings. Details on what you'll see are on our events calendar.

September 20 at 7 p.m.; October 25 at 6 p.m.; November 15 at 5:30 p.m.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

• The Sixth Annual Lions Club Car Show will be held from 10 a.m. — 2 p.m. at Valley Chapel, 14 Hunter Road, Uxbridge. All cars, motorcycles and trucks are welcome. The event benefits the Lions Club's many community programs. Music, picnic fare, local vendors and Sweet Wise Ice Cream Truck will also be on hand. Registration fee for

Auburn High School Class of 1974 - 50th Reunion

September 28, 2024, Auburn Elks. 4-9 p.m. \$45 check payable to: Jill Dagilis - PO Box 20776, Chandler St., Worcester, MA 01602

vehicles is \$15. Admission is free. More than 100 vehicles entered last year. Registration is available in advance by sending a check to Uxbridge Lions Club, P.O. Box 455, North Uxbridge MA 01538. Include name, phone number, vehicle make and model.

• Dog Orphans Inc., 90 Webster Street, Douglas is holding an Open House from 10 a.m. — 2 p.m. Stop by with your formerly orphaned dog to say Hi!

There will be raffles, nail trimming for dogs and cats, professional photos by Brielle, hamburgers and hotdogs and a watermelon-eating contest for dogs.

SEPT. 21 - OCT 31

• The Pumpkin Patch at the First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn will be open daily 10 a.m. 'til dusk September 21st through October 31st. There will be gourds and pumpkins of all sizes and prices — one for every need; be it for your fall decor, carving, baking — you name it! The pumpkins are raised and harvested by the Navajos on their reservation in New Mexico. The money they receive helps their schools and other programs and a percent-

age of the sales helps our church as well. Thank you in advance for your support. If you have any questions, feel free to call the church office at 508-832-2845.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

• The New England Country Music Club will sponsor a dance with live classic country band Rachel & Western Partners at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., N. Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m., music 1-5 p.m., \$11 for non-members. Snacks may be brought in, cash bar for beverages. FMI: http://www.Facebook.com/NECountry-MusicClub.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 23

• The 18th Annual Uxbridge Senior Center Gold Outing sponsored by the Uxbridge Elderly Connection at the Whitinsville Golf Club . The event will begin at 12 p.m. with a shotgun start . Teams of four may sign up to play for \$100 per golfer and nine holes in-

HAPPENINGS!

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ACOUSTIC PERFORMANCES BY:

KEVIN HERCHEN, WHITNEY DOUCET

PLUS - A SPECIAL PERFORMANCE BY:
RICKY DURAN

RICKT DOKA

SEPTEMBER 22 • 12PM







The Indian Ranch Box Office is open Monday, Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday (10AM - 3PM), and Friday (10AM - 5PM). Tickets are also available by phone: 1-800-514-ETIX (3849). All events are rain or shine. No refunds. For ticketing and group sales, contact tickets@indianranch.com or call 508-943-3871. For information on private events, banquets and renting the Indian Princess Paddlewheel Boat, contact banquets@samuelslaters.com. Indian Ranch is less than an hour's drive from Boston, Providence, Hartford and Springfield. Indian Ranch is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster, MA.

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at TheBigE.com or connecting on

social media.

Legendary Band America to Perform at The Big E

the East Coast and fourth largest

Fair in North America, returns

to West Springfield, Mass., Sept.

The iconic multi-platinum-selling group AMERICA, and special guest Jim Messina, will perform a night of timeless hits at Big E Arena, Sunday, September 22, as part of AMERICA's Ride On Tour. Concert tickets, and a limited number of passes for the AMERICA Meet and Greet Experience with Dewey Bunnell, went on sale April 5, Concert tickets include admission to The Big E when purchased online prior to show date.

Known for their timeless magic and powerful performances, the Grammy Award-winning perennial classic-rock favorite will draw on their deep catalog of hits including signature song "A Horse With No Name," a Number One hit on Billboard's Hot 100 in 1972.

For more information on America with special guest Iim Messina at The Big E Arena, visit TheBigE.com.

The Big E, the largest event on

13-29. Stay up to date on year-

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HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 14

cluding greens fees, cart, gift bad and buffet supper. A full sponsor package includes green fees for a foursome, cart, gift bag, additional four dinners at your reserved table, tee sign, special recognition on golf program and event press and announced recognition at the awards supper. The event benefits the Uxbridge Senior Center.

• SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

Upton's Annual Heritage Day Festival will take place beginning at 9 a.m. Activities will take place in and around Upton center. The Society is grateful for Unibank's continued sponsorship of our annual event. Mark your calendar. This event is always a great time and the variety of events offer

something for everyone. If circumstances require that it be cancelled a decision will be announced on or before September 25

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12

• St. Patrick's Church Autumn Recycling Event. 8am - 1pm. 7 East St, Whitinsville. We will be accepting gently used books (no encyclopedias) & media; gently used textiles/clothing & accessories; electronics for a fee (no propane, batteries, lightbulbs); rinsed bottles/cans returnable in MA (no glass). Please keep items for each station separate. For more information & pricing, email officesupport@mystpatricks.com or call 508-234-5656.

THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

• Coin Show at the VFW Post 1385. 13 Cross Road, Uxbridge. 3-7 p.m. Free Admission, Free Appraisals



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