

April 23-May 28, 2021

Influx of new business
re-energizes
Millbury Center

By Rod Lee

In what appears to be almost an overnight transformation, Millbury Center is suddenly alive with new commercial activity.

“For a little town, we’re doing pretty well,” Liz Dowdy said on the afternoon of April 7, as she and several companions talked over their food order at a table at Mykonos Café & Bakery on Elm St.

Mykonos sits next to the Elm Draught House Cinema on the south side of Elm St. “The Elm,” along with the Asa Waters Mansion

a block of so away, is one of Millbury’s most historic and coveted buildings.

Mykonos is also located directly opposite A&D Pizzeria & Pub. It is the latest business venture for the Christos and Sonja Andrianopoulos family, whose establishment dates to 1988.

“It was a bar before!” Ms. Dowdy said with a shudder of disapproval, by way of complementing the Andrianopouloses on what they have

Continued on page 2



Friends Maryann Bourdeau, Nancy Sharron, Ann Jandron, Jo-ann Dunn (“I’m the mama bear”) and Liz Dowdy chat in Mykonos Café & Bakery at 49 Elm St. in Millbury Center on April 7. “We’re the knitters at the Senior Center,” which is currently closed, giving them more time for mixing and mingling, they said.

EARTH, Ltd. educates and inspires to aid animals and the environment

By Christine Galeone

Did you know that there are five species of rhinoceros in the world? Did you know that three of those

species are critically endangered due to illegal hunting done through international crime syndicates?

Many people aren’t aware of these kinds of threats to wildlife. Betsey Brewer, the founder and executive director of EARTH, Limited said, “Wildlife crime is one of the worst problems on the planet.”

Thankfully, Brewer and her extremely dedicated team of educators, staff and volunteers at the conservation education nonprofit are working to combat the problem. But that’s just part of what the nonprofit does. Through its fun, educational programs, it’s helping children and adults to better understand and appreciate the great and small creatures that share this world with us. And by doing so, it motivates people to try to protect and preserve those creatures and the environment.

Based at Southwick’s Zoo in Mendon, the nonprofit provides “zoo visitors and the community with high quality educational programming.” In addition to presentations at the zoo’s EARTH

Continued on page 3



An Endangered White Rhino at Southwick’s Zoo. (Courtesy of EARTH, Ltd. website)

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GRAFTON BUSINESS
Vibrant nature of spring
PAGE 4

AMERICAN HERITAGE MUSEUM
Story of the military
PAGE 6

MYKONOS CAFÉ & BAKERY
A dream come true
PAGE 10

LIVING WITH LINCOLN
Day old cheese
PAGE 15

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MILLBURY

Continued
accomplished at 49 Elm St. The building is attractive from the outside, and clean and well-lit inside.

The mood among merchants in Millbury Center is understandably bright these days, then, despite the lingering effects of the pandemic. Some would say it

defies logic that such bustle could be happening with the economy still trying to regain some traction.

"We opened in December of 2019, the worst possible time," Jason "Jay" Rondeau of Penny Pinchers, a craft brewery, said. "COVID-19 hit." Mr. Rondeau and his partner, Jody Barton, did not give up, even though they

had never undertaken such a venture before. Taking over space that had formerly housed a second-hand store, and Paul's Center Bakery, they were determined to bring their dream to fruition.

"I was a home brewer for fifteen years, and Jody dabbled in it," Mr. Rondeau said. "The town has been great. Everyone is happy and enjoying the beer."

Penny Pinchers' current hours are 1:00-10:00 on Fridays and Saturdays, and 1:00 to 5:00 on Sundays.

Why that name? "We started on a Groupon, and I'm frugal," Mr. Rondeau said.

"We'll eventually have live music and trivia," he said.

Sara Toedt, who operates the Ivy Harper hair salon with Melissa Ragaini in the storefront at 79 Elm St., next to Penny Pinchers, was "with another salon, in Sutton. We saw this spot. We both graduated together." Hence their decision to start a salon of their own.

Ivy Harper, which takes

its name in part as a tribute to Martha Matilda Harper, who Ms. Toedt says "opened the first one hundred salons in the 1800s," is just another example of retailers' newfound interest in Millbury Center.

The atmosphere in Millbury Center is embellished too by the reopening of the popular Calabria Restaurant at 7 S. Main St. Calabria features Italian fare.

Breaking away from her duties servicing a crowded late lunch-hour crowd in the dining room on April 7, Manager Taylor Ritchie said Calabria was only closed for about two months last summer and is back better than ever with pretty much the same menu and adjusted prices.

Calabria is open for lunch and dinner.

Ms. Ritchie credits Calabria's resurgence to the fact that "we weren't down that long" and to a carryover staff. "I worked for the previous owners and Maria Spiro is still our chef. The community was pretty excited that we're going to stay open," Ms. Ritchie said.

Ms. Ritchie said "even a year ago there wasn't that much happening in the center of Millbury." Ms. Ritchie and Ms. Spiro (who is a co-owner with John Drenzo) are pleased to see new shops opening their doors.

"We're a community,"



Tim Benoit of Timothy Jay Sweets, 97 Elm St., says his cupcake-themed business will benefit if outdoor seating is installed for residents of Millbury on S. Main St.—as is being discussed.

Ms. Ritchie said of the Elm St.-S.Main-N. Main St. neighborhood Just around the corner from Calabria, at 97 Elm St., is Timothy Jay Sweets, which Timothy Benoit launched "about a year ago, four days before the pandemic hit," he says. Construction work in front of his shop posed some difficulty at the beginning. "There was nowhere to park," he says. Worse, "there was a generator right in front of my door." Town Planning Director Laurie Connors helped Mr. Ben-

oit resolve that issue.

With the pandemic easing, Mr. Benoit is eager to capitalize on the message he conveys to customers: "when in doubt, cupcake it out."

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.

Turn to page 10 for Mykonos Cafe & Bakery and A&D Pizza restaurant review



Jay Rondeau operates Penny Pinchers Brewing Co. at 75 Elm St. with partner Jody Barton. Penny Pinchers is open weekends for beer tasting and is looking forward to offering music and events in the near future.

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EARTH, Ltd.**Continued from front page**

Discovery Center and Bird Show Arena, the programs include spring and summer day camps for kids in grades K-9, rhino encounters with the zoo's two endangered white rhinos, sloth encounters, the Junior Zookeeping Program for kids ages 6-16 and the ZooMobile Outreach Program. It also partners with and supports various environmental and conservation initiatives throughout the world – including the Trumpeter Swan Restoration

Project that strives to restore the trumpeter swan to its natural Iowa habitat and Project Rhino, which fights poaching and enables rhino conservation.

Although the nonprofit has managed to keep raising awareness and support for conservation efforts, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted EARTH, Ltd. "It's been very difficult," Brewer said. She noted that maintaining funding for a small nonprofit has been challenging during the pandemic, and the EARTH Discovery

Center had to be closed last year. But the center will re-open in a limited capacity this year. She added, "I have some amazing educators. They redesigned everything in the center. I'm excited for people to see that."

During the pandemic, the nonprofit has also done significantly less in-person ZooMobile programs for schools, libraries and other organizations. Instead, it created live and pre-recorded virtual ZooMobile programs that include animals that would normally travel with

the EARTH, Ltd. educators. "It's starting to pick up momentum, now," Brewer, who's also a Board member of the Zoological Association of America, said of the virtual programs that might continue after the pandemic. "We're moving forward, so it's a good thing."

And while the nonprofit moves forward, the kids it has educated are moving forward in their desire to help animals and the environment. Brewer said that seeing their passion to protect animals grow over the years is very rewarding. "I can't tell you how many kids I've seen grow up," Brewer said. "I've had kids say that it changed their lives."

When asked how people can help EARTH, Ltd. during the pandemic, Brewer said that one way is by becoming an EARTH, Ltd. member or by making a monetary donation. But she also hopes that people will share what they've learned about rhinos and other endangered/threatened species, so that more people will support the



Betsey Brewer, Executive Director of EARTH, Ltd. visits an endangered white rhino at Southwick's Zoo.

conservationists working in the field to protect the animals. "They're the unsung heroes," she shared. "No doubt about that."

More information about the nonprofit is available on the EARTH, Ltd. website,

www.earthltd.org.

If you would like to suggest a Blackstone Valley nonprofit or initiative for this series, please contact Christine at cmgaleone15@gmail.com.



Trumpeter Swan Cygnets at Southwick's Zoo. (Courtesy of EARTH, Ltd. website)

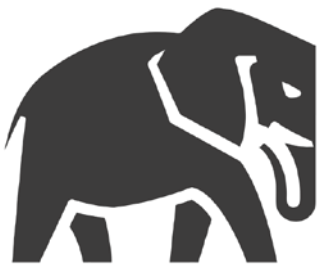


EARTH, Ltd. educator Diana Waterman gives a presentation featuring a macaw.

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Grafton’s Business Scene

Reflecting the vibrant nature of spring

By Christine Galeone

If you’ve been for a drive in the Blackstone Valley lately, you’ve probably noticed them. The bright yellow forsythia bushes, the deep purple rhododendrons and the beautiful pink cherry blossom trees adorn the roadsides and yards with outstanding vibrancy. But the positive growth and energy they inspire extend beyond drivers.

Recently, several Grafton businesses and organizations have been reflecting the vibrant nature of spring. They’ve been celebrating milestones, reinventing themselves, and expanding to the delight of many of the people they serve.

In addition to a wide array of flowers, bushes, trees, mulch, yard and garden supplies, fairy garden supplies and gifts, **Perreault Nursery & Landscape Supply** in North Grafton has something wonderful to celebrate. This month, the nursery celebrated its 30th anniversary. On its Facebook page, a post read, “Since then, we

have grown in so many ways and are proud to continue serving our family of loyal gardening enthusiasts. Thanks to all of you for getting us here.....we look forward to 30 more!”

On Friday, May 7 through Friday, May 14, **Community Harvest Project** will hold its annual **Plantapalooza** fundraiser. The North Grafton nonprofit farm that supports hunger relief in Massachusetts will again hold the fundraiser online in order to ensure safety. Sponsored by **Wegmans** and **Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation**, the online store can be found by going to <https://community-harvest.org/events/>. Purchased plants can be picked up at the farm on Saturday, May 15.

Another farm re-opened earlier than usual and is looking forward to some exciting new ventures. **Houlden Farm**, the multi-generational family-owned farm that sells a variety of its produce along with dairy items, baked goods and more, re-opened on April 5. This year, it launched its first CSA (Community-Supported Ag-

riculture). Although that one is now closed, the farm may hold another in the fall. It’s also expanding parking, its store and its family-friendly animal enclosure, where families can visit with goats and pigs. Additionally, the Houlden family hopes to add a walking trail, events and a food truck with farm-to-table meals.

Elsewhere in North Grafton, **Koopman Lumber**, the hardware and paint store, has been expanding in a different way. The store recently expanded its hours of operation. Its Grafton, Whitinsville and Uxbridge locations are now open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and from 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday. As of the time this column was written, the business also has several new job openings at its Grafton location, as well as at other locations.

Some North Grafton restaurants have been reinventing the way they serve their customers. Recently, **Cancun’s Family Mexican Restaurant**, the **Post Office Pub**, **Pub 122** and **Reunion Tap & Table** requested and received permission



A Greenhouse at Perreault Nursery and Landscape Supply, the North Grafton Business that was started by Joe Perreault in April 1991. (Courtesy of Perreault Nursery website)

from the **Grafton Planning Board** to move to increased outdoor seating until December 1. Moving more of the dining experiences outdoors allows the restaurants to safely accommodate more of their customers. Additionally, **Reunion Tap & Table** received approval from the **Select Board** to

bring live outdoor music back to its restaurant.

Seeing the abundance of brilliant colors decorating the area is uplifting. But it’s just as encouraging to see so many businesses and organizations being rejuvenated during this season of growth and renewal.

Please note that this infor-

mation was correct at the time the column was written. However, because the pandemic is rapidly changing things, it’s best to check the websites and social media pages of any business to see if new changes have been implemented.

Contact Christine with your business news items at cmgaleone15@gmail.com.



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Whitin Community Center celebrates selection as beneficiary of Hannaford Community Bag Program

WHITINSVILLE- The Whitin Community Center (WCC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to enhancing the health and well-being of individuals and families and to building a strong community in the Blackstone Valley, has been selected as a benefiting non-profit of the Hannaford Helps Community Bag Program fundraiser for the month of May by Hannaford in Uxbridge.

The Whitin Community Center will receive a \$1 donation every time a \$2.50

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95 Armsby Rd., Sutton

AHM brings story of armor, tanks, war and history to life

By Rod Lee

Proud as members of the Collings Foundation family are about the impressive array of tanks, armor and military apparatus that has been assembled at the American Heritage Museum in Stow, the real satisfaction for them comes in knowing the people and the history behind the exhibits and the stories of battles from the Revolutionary War to the present day.

Jacques M. Littlefield is one of those individuals whose name will be permanently associated with the American Heritage Museum.

As Hunter Chaney, who is director of marketing for the AHM, explained on March 24, while giving a visitor a guided tour of the more than 65,000-square-foot building, the Museum came into being only after the Collings Foundation was selected to receive "The Jacques M. Littlefield Collection" in 2013.

Mr. Littlefield, from the San Jose area of California, had "amassed the largest privately held collection of tanks and

military equipment" in existence, Mr. Chaney said. He died of pancreatic cancer in 2009. "In 2013, his foundation and family chose us to get the collection, which consisted of two hundred forty tanks and armored vehicles. Duplicates and extras were auctioned off. We received the rest. The proceeds from the sale went toward funding this museum."

The American Heritage Museum sits at the terminus of a long and winding road off Main St. (MA 62) on the Hudson/Stow town line, in a pastoral setting that seems incongruous with such displays as the "WWI Trench Experience," "Clash of Steel" and "War on Terror." Mr. Chaney said the museum began as "living history events, ice skating festivals, sleigh rides and classic car rallies" but is now "actually three museums" with a hangar and a classic car barn—and there is "a 2200-foot airstrip in back."

The Collings Foundation was started in 1979 by Bob and Caroline Collings, who still live

"on the other end of the property," Mr. Chaney said. Their son, Rob, is now executive director of the Foundation.

As the Collings family notes in a brochure, the AHM was designed "to fully engage people in understanding our turbulent past. In this remarkable place, American history will be explored, studied and, most of all, remembered. Through educational interpretation and a chronologically arranged series of dioramas and exhibits, the AHM brings the history of our veterans to life."

Unfortunately, Nathan Hall, driver of the M1A1 Abrams "White 2" tank in Iraq, is, like Mr. Littlefield, no longer with us. Mr. Hall died from a blood clot during his battle with leukemia on March 2. But before his passing Mr. Hall was able to see the restored M1A1 again, on the floor of the AHM—and to lend a poignant element to that moment.

The tank was on patrol near Falluja on August 3, 2006 when an IED blew up. Shrapnel damaged the tank



The display that greets visitors when they arrive at the American Heritage Museum in Stow.

and killed its highly respected commander, Sgt. George Ulloa Jr. The American Heritage Museum received the Abrams tank on a long-term loan from the Marine Corps Museum, tracked down the surviving crew and invited the crew and Sgt. Ulloa's widow Maria Ulloa to Stow, where a heart-wrenching video of their ordeal was recorded in front of the Abrams.

It was during this visit that Nathan Hall mentioned to Bob Collings that "something was missing." When he and his crew were assigned to the tank, he pointed out, he christened it with the name "SPAWN" on the barrel with colored pens. In a Facebook post announcing Nathan Hall's death, the AHM said Mr. Collings responded "you put it on the first time, there is no one more qualified to put it on again!"

Returning two weeks later with his wife and young daughter, Nathan stayed late into the

night and with Rob Collings looking on, he recreated the artwork with Sharpies.

Both Nathan and Nick Johns ("White 2" loader) came to the grand opening of the museum in May of 2019. "Nathan was so excited that he could not sleep," the AHM said on Facebook. "He told us the flight was delayed and he was crawling out of his skin just to get here...such a change from the tough Marine who was full of pain and tears on his first visit. Other veterans have told us of the therapeutic nature of the AHM, but it has never been so apparent to us as with Nathan. Unfortunately, that was the last visit Nathan had to the AHM as [his] health struggles started shortly after that."

Mr. Chaney said a memorial for Nathan Hall will be held in August "with family and crew" present.

Its activities curtailed by the pandemic, the American Heritage Museum is "chaf-

ing at the bit" to return to its regular programming, which involves a host of events for adults and children alike. Recently, for instance, the museum sponsored "the Ultimate WWII Tank Driving Experience," a sweepstakes fundraiser with the winner and a guest drawn on March 31. The prize: a chance to drive "the M24 Chaffee, M4 Sherman and ultra-rare M26 Pershing." The goal of the campaign was to raise \$100,000. "We're at \$97,000 and hoping to break \$100,000," Mr. Chaney said.

"Like all museums, the revenue faucet has shut off so this is a great way to raise money," he said.

A walkthrough of the museum is truly mesmerizing with film and sound effects provided by Boston Productions Inc. Theater 2, the WWI Trench Experience, for example, features sleeping quarters, bombs, vibrations, flashes, barbed wire, pickaxes and helmets. It is an interactive experience.

"This museum as a whole is unique on a global scale," Mr. Chaney said. "Some of the artifacts are all that are left in the world."

The American Heritage Museum is open Wednesday-Sunday. For more information, go to AmericanHeritageMuseum.org or call 978-562-9182.

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.



An overhead view of the floor of the American Heritage Museum. Exhibits light up as footage about them are shown.



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Living well and looking good

TB test recommended only for those at risk

By Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a nursing student in my 30s and originally from the Philippines. As part of my testing, I had a skin test for tuberculosis, which was positive. I had a friend in the hospital recently with tuberculosis. My doctor has recommended that I get treated for latent tuberculosis. What does this mean? – A.C.S.

ANSWER: Most people who are exposed to tuberculosis will not develop the disease. Some people will develop “latent” infection. This means there is active tuberculosis bacteria in their body, but their system is keeping it from becoming a full-blown infection. People in this situ-

ation are at risk of the latent tuberculosis escaping the immune system and developing into tuberculosis. Treatment of the latent tuberculosis is intended to reduce the risk of this happening.

Testing is recommended only for people who are likely to be treated. You have two reasons to be tested: First, as a health care worker – congratulations on becoming a nurse, we need you! – you are at risk of acquiring tuberculosis infection and should be screened. Second, people born in the Philippines are at risk for having acquired tuberculosis, often in childhood.

People in their 30s are gen-

erally at very low risk of serious side effects from the medications used to treat latent tuberculosis infection. Isoniazid (INH) and rifampin are the medicines commonly used. Since the risk of developing disease later in life is much higher than the risk of a serious side effect, treatment is recommended in your case.

Cold feet

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm an 85-year-old woman with no major health problems. I lead an active life and exercise

daily. About four years ago, I began being bothered by cold feet at night. At first, I could just wear socks to bed. Now I must put my feet in an electric heated pouch in my bed, which doesn't stay in place. When I travel, I take the heated insoles skiers use to keep their feet warm.

Without some device, I'm kept awake by a feeling of icy soles. I am not diabetic. I've described the problem to a neurologist, a rheumatologist and my primary caregiver. No one has explained what

causes the icy feet or if there's any cure. Is there one? – J.S.

ANSWER: There are quite a few possible causes for your cold feet, and your doctors need to first identify why they are cold. To do this, they should start by checking the blood flow to the feet. At age 85, the likelihood of blockages to the arteries in your feet are pretty high. A simple test can make the diagnosis. Since blockages in the feet predict blockages in the heart too, it's important to know. Treatment can improve symptoms as well as reduce risk of a heart attack.

Severe anemia and low thyroid levels can cause very cold feet. Nerve damage is common in diabetes and unusual without it, but a neurologist should have found physi-

cal findings for neurologic causes.

Raynaud's syndrome, which usually happens in the hands, occasionally affects the feet preferentially to the hands. Medicines, especially beta blockers, can cause cold feet.

Sometimes there isn't a known cause, and physicians are left advising on treatments to relieve symptoms. I wouldn't give up before a circulation test, however.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. (c) 2021 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved

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Millbury Senior Center

MILLBURY - The Millbury Senior Center, 1 River St., has listed the following activities.

Senior work - off program, for eligible seniors, 60 or older who are residents of Millbury. Receive up to \$1,500 per year that can be used to pay real estate property tax in return for voluntary service at a town department. For more information or to pick up an application please call the center at 508-865-9154.

Exercise classes - beginning on Monday, April 26, Mondays and Fridays 9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Classes are held inside with limited capacity. Reservations required, please call the center at 508-865-9154.

Walking Club - starting on Tuesday, May 4, Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m. We will be walking around the garden. This will be followed by coffee in the garden.

Social Bingo - beginning on Wednesday, May 5, at 12:30 p.m.

will be outside weather permitting. Bring your pennies. Registration required. Please call the center at 508-865-9154.

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Four tips from the PT to get ready for spring

By Dr. Sean T Lordan

It's officially spring here in New England and finally winter is behind us. Being cooped up has been a staple of our lives this past year, so today I would like to provide some tips to help you have a great spring. This article specifically speaks to those who are baby boomers and are at an advanced age. My goal as a Physical Therapist is to guide people in moving and feeling as well as they can. Below are a few tips to do just that.

1. *Make it a habit to get outside.* The benefits of spending time in the sun (safely) are endless. The sun is at its highest angle in the sky during mid summer— so spring is a great time to get outside and catch some rays without the looming fear of sunburn. When your skin is exposed to sunlight it makes Vitamin D from cholesterol. Vitamin D is called the “sunshine vitamin” and helps to counteract the effects of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) and can boost your mood and happiness. If you are prone to sunburns or have a history of skin cancer, consult your PCP before spending extended time in the sun.

2. *While outside, try picking up a new hobby.* Preferably pick a hobby that requires

you to be active. Some of my favorites are hiking, golf, tennis and running. While performing your new hobby you are actually killing two birds with one stone. First, you're getting your recommended daily allotment of exercise. Second, every time you do something new, your brain is forced to “re-wire” to learn and adapt to that activity. This is called neuroplasticity, and it helps prevent premature Alzheimers and some other forms of Dementia.

3. *Stay social, even in isolated times.* Connect with a distant family member via zoom who you haven't seen in a while. Travel to

a different part of the state you've never been and try a new restaurant (take-out if you must). Aim to talk to one new person a day for a week. The benefits of this exercise will astound you. During an experiment on a Chicago train years ago, researchers asked riders if they would be happier to speak to no one or to chat casually with a stranger while on their way to work in the morning. Although almost all participants thought that they would be happier if they kept to themselves, happiness scores zoomed when they engaged with their train neighbors in conversation. Amazing things

happen when we try something new.

4. *Volunteer your time.* The benefits of donating your time (notice I didn't say money) are well recorded. When volunteering you are exhibiting that the common good is more important than your own self interest. You are putting others needs before your own. I truly believe in the law of what goes around, comes around. The more you can do to help improve the quality of other peoples lives, the better. Find a way to add value

to someone else's life and it will come back to you in spades.

There you have it, this month's edition of “4 Tips From Your Neighborhood PT!” As always if you have any questions for me personally I can be reached at (508) 861-1010 or drlordan@conciergephysicaltherapy.com



Dr. Sean T. Lordan

Tracks. He is the Owner of Concierge Physical Therapy with locations in Sutton, and coming soon in May 2021 to Shrewsbury.

Dr. Sean T. Lordan PT, DPT, OCS, CSCS is a Board Certified Doctor of Physical Therapy and the Author of 11 Winning Secrets To Stop Aging In Its

MFB names mortgage loan specialist

MILFORD - Milford Federal Bank appoints Alycia McCallum to the position of Mortgage Loan Specialist.

McCallum, a native of Hopedale, is active in the Corridor 9/495 Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Milford Area Chamber of Commerce, where she received the Extra Step Award for outstanding initiative.

She brings 22 years of experience in the residential mortgage industry and will be responsible for mortgage sales in the Metro West area. She can be reached at the bank's 246 Main Street, Milford office



Alycia McCallum

at 508-381-5242 or 774-462-2158. Facebook.



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Restaurant review

Mykonos Café & Bakery is a dream come true

A & D Pizzeria and Pub kicks it up a notch and renovates

By Janet Stoica

A short trip to Millbury could be your most rewarding 2021 adventure since we've all started to wander out of our homes lately.

The first stop might be the recently opened Mykonos Café & Bakery on Elm Street, possibly the most spectacular

bakery in the area.

This unique, relaxing place takes you into its arms with the heavenly aromas of freshly baked croissants, rolls, and muffins and scores of American, Greek, and Italian pastries, that make it difficult to pick just one. Of course, you cannot and will

not pick just one...please, have two, or even take some of these delectable confections home to your family and friends.

Also look for the spanakopita (spinach pie), the baklava, spinach and feta calzones, cheese pies, koulouria (sesame and honey sweets), kataifi (walnuts

served in a finely stranded pastry), saragli (rolled baklava with spices and nuts), sizeable cinnamon rolls, fruit macaroons, cannolis, cheese pies, cheesecake rounds, eclairs, and Danish, altogether the wonderful display of an artful bakery at its finest.

Bagel varieties are plentiful from plain to sesame to French toast with or without butter or cream cheese varieties.

For breakfast, try the avocado toast, which is made with fresh-sliced avocado, one or two eggs on your choice of bread (my choice was a flaky croissant), and, if you like, bacon or sausage. The bread is lightly drizzled with olive oil and sprinkled with hot pepper flakes, just enough to give it a kick. You are in flavor town heaven, make no mistake about it.

For lunch, try one of the several daily soups, perhaps their signature Greek lemon soup.

Mykonos Café & Bakery presents a neat, clean, and charming environment for their customers to enjoy. Sure, take your laptop or iPad here to work, play, or read and settle into one of the high-back chairs



Chris and Sonja Andrianopoulos

by the large front windows, the comfy upholstered chairs, or a centered table.

I haven't seen a bake shop like this since the days of Lederman's and Widoff's on Water Street in Worcester, which brings me to Chris Andrianopoulos, owner of A & D Pizzeria and Pub, located across the street from Mykonos Café & Bakery and husband of Mykonos' owner, Sonja Andrianopoulos.

It seems that Chris, who was born and brought up in Worcester, used to visit the Water Street

bakeries when he was a kid. As a tribute to his vivid recollections of those aromatic and delightful emporiums, Chris now bakes wonderfully soft and light bulkie rolls on the weekends for his wife's bakery. He also includes rolls, breads, bagels, spinach pies, and stuffed grape leaves while in his baking zone.

But the full-time bakers here are the rock stars of Mykonos Bakery: Sonja's parents, Natasha and George Andrea. They operated their own bakery in Greece before emigrating to the

Continued on next page



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Sonja Andrianopoulos is a financial bank adviser who works full-time at a Boston banking institution. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in math and computer science and an MBA from Clark University. She is currently working on her PhD in finance.

Sonja and Chris met at a dance held by St. Spyridon Church in Worcester. Married since 2004, they have two children in high school.

All along she's had a vision: "This bakery has been my goal for the last 10 years. I grew up in my parents' bakery in Greece and it is a pleasure to have my dream realized."

"This used to be a drinking establishment," Chris said. "When the former owner wanted to sell, I knew this would be a good opportunity for Sonja. When we purchased the property last year, we completely renovated the building, putting in floor-to-ceiling windows at the building front, skylights, walls, painting, tile work, and fixtures."

Mykonos has been open since January 23. "We're still looking at our menu offerings and operations," says Sonja. "Soon we hope to have a grand opening but not until we feel it's right. We're letting our customers decide what their favorites

are, and we will focus on those choices."

Catering for corporate functions and parties is on the menu too.

And the name? Daughter Sophia picked the bakery name as it is one of the Greek islands they all hope to visit in the near future. Their son, George, once had the task of peeling a 50 lb. sack of onions. George's lesson in hard labor left an impression on him.

"This bakery is an option for our children's future," explained Sonja. "I wanted to bring something from my homeland here. This is a passion for me and my parents and, frankly, I want to teach my children work ethics and want them to see what manual labor is like." Chris further stated, "We don't want them to take everything for granted. We want them to know where they came from. Teaching them life lessons is so important."

Chris also described how A & D Pizzeria and Pub was recently renovated. "We updated and redecorated our restaurant and bar area. We'll have a new pub-style menu, but the bar area is not open yet. We're waiting for the COVID situation to stabilize and hope to re-open soon. We finished putting the final touches on the bar area a few weeks ago and will continue to make a few more updates, including hiring more staff. We also have a very nice function room that can accommodate 75 patrons. Our ideas came from

many sources, including visits to Boston's North End and Federal Hill restaurants."

The new bar is u-shaped, includes a seamless granite countertop, along with mahogany wood flairs, and unique pendant cylinder lighting over the bar seating area. The pizzeria's restaurant is bright, orderly, and well-lit with several booths available for diners. Its menu is filled with appetizing selections, including cocktails, soups and salads, calzones, gourmet pizzas, specialty subs and clubs, burgers and wraps, beef and chicken, pasta and seafood, desserts, plus a kids menu. "We still serve up our prime rib special on weekends," says Chris, "and weather-permitting, our outside patio is very popular."

The couple has given back to the town too by sponsoring local baseball and basketball teams, and delivered complimentary pizza and subs to the local police, fire, and emergency personnel. They are generous to many worth causes in town and the surrounding area.

Mykonos Café & Bakery, 49 Elm Street, Millbury; phone: (508) 917-8127. Hours: 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Mon-Sat; Sunday 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. www.mykonosbakery.com FB: Mykonos Café & Bakery. A & D Pizzeria and Pub, 60 Elm Street, Millbury. Phone: (508) 865-9013. Hours: 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. daily. www.adpizzapub.com FB: A & D Pizza and Pub.

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Chris Andrianopoulos at the newly refurbished pub bar.



Customers browse through the bakery's display cases.



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Donna's Day: creative family fun

Repurpose bottles for Earth Day fun

By Donna Erickson

This spring, as we just passed Earth Day on Thursday, April 22, the thought hits me how I'm actually very grateful for recycling and the way my family, the neighborhood and our city has embraced it. It was so difficult when we started out, wasn't it? But now, we do it as

second nature.

I'm not sure if the world turns a little easier because I no longer toss soup cans, pickle jars and newspapers into the garbage bin. But the idea of recycling makes sense, because it causes each of us, as members of families and the larger community, to be responsible for what we consume.

When we're not sorting the recycled items for curbside pick-up, we're scrubbing them out to be reused and repurposed. If it's a plastic deli tub, it may end up in a lunch bag as a veggie container. A half-gallon milk carton is easily transformed into a bird feeder, and cardboard egg cups are perfect compartments for growing seedlings that will be transplanted into the summer garden.

And then there are all those



clear plastic bottles that juice, peanuts and flavored waters come in. Peel off the labels, wash them inside and out, and make some fun! Here are some quick magnetic attractions that will captivate your preschoolers.

Fireworks

Cut up brightly colored pipe cleaners into 1-or-2-inch pieces and drop them inside a bottle. Twist and glue the cap

on tightly. Find a magnet in your toolbox (or pick one up at your local hardware store) and let your child discover the fun of moving the inside pieces around with a magnet from the outside of the bottle. Sometimes the pipe cleaner bits connect in clusters that burst out like fireworks.

Hide and seek

Fill a bottle two-thirds with uncooked rice. Toss in several metal paper clips. Twist and glue the cap on tightly. Shake so that the paper clips hide within the rice. Move a magnet around the outside of the bottle, twisting and turning it slightly. The paper clips will come out of the rice as they are attracted to the magnet. Drag the magnet this way and that, and challenge your child to collect them all.

Find more recipes and family fun at www.donnaerickson.com. Write to Donna at Info@donnaerickson.com. (c) 2021 Donna Erickson. Distributed by King Features Syndicate.

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Creative Mother's Day celebration and gift ideas

On Sunday, May 9, 2021, millions of people will celebrate the special women in their lives, particularly the mothers, grandmothers and stepmothers who often tirelessly care for those they love.

Created by Anna Jarvis in the early 20th century and designated an official United States holiday in 1914, Mother's Day is a special day in many families. Apart from birthdays, primary female caregivers may not always get the recognition they deserve, nor be entitled to a day to kick back and relax and let others take the helm. Mother's Day entitles them to something special.

Even though the way people have been living has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic, Mother's Day may be the first holiday on the calendar when the world can finally regain some sense of normalcy. But caution should still prevail during Mother's Day celebrations. Thankfully, there are plenty of creative ways to celebrate mothers and mother figures this year.

- Dine truly 'al fresco.' Outdoor dining has become commonplace, and even before it was a safety measure, enjoying a meal on a sun-soaked patio or overlooking a body of water was popular. If you're worried about limited restaurant space or crowds, plan a picnic at a scenic location, such as a botanical garden or county park. Include Mom's favorite foods and enjoy the fresh air and delicious foods together.

- Create a photo slideshow. Digital photos have eclipsed prints in many people's hearts. But too often digital photos never get seen after they're initially taken. That can change when you compile a slideshow of favorite photos from childhood and even present-day photos that Mom is sure to appreciate. Use sentimental music or Mom's favorite songs as the soundtrack, and include some inspirational quotations or personal voiceovers. This is one gift that can be shared in person or over group meeting apps.

- Get involved together. An especially meaningful way to honor a mother who is always giving her time and love is to become involved in a difference-making organization. Joint volunteerism is a great way to spend more time together working toward a worthy goal.

- Enjoy her hobbies and interests. Devote a day or more to trying Mom's interests and hobbies, whether they include hitting the links, knitting, singing in the church choir, or digging in her garden.

- Send an edible gift. If you can't be there to celebrate with Mom in person, have a special meal delivered to her door. Then enjoy the same foods with her via Google Meet, Facetime or Zoom. Don't forget a tasty cocktail so you can toast the special woman in your life.





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Chuckie is still searching for his furever home

We are sad to report that Chuckie has come back to Dog Orphans. Over the last few weeks the children in the home started showing signs of being allergic to him. Mom tried everything to help soothe their symptoms but they are very young and limited to what they can have. It became unfair to the kids. While in the home Chuckie also started to show signs of

being very dominant over the younger of the two kids, who was one. He would get jealous for attention and snap at him. That being said, Chuckie's new home needs no young children (teenage and up) and no other pets as he does not like cats and can be dog selective. Chuckie's return did not have to do with his potty habits.

This is Chuckie. Chuckie is a 2-1/2 year old mix breed weighing about 30 lbs. and is now full grown. Chuckie has had a challenging journey prior to coming to Dog Orphans. Chuckie and his friend Zorro (who has been adopted) were thrown out on a busy highway like they were garbage. Chuckie unfortunately got the worst of this horrible act. Chuckie had been hit by several cars on this busy highway. He was not hit just once, not twice, but three times. Chuckie was left for dead. No one cared to stop for him. No one offered help to stop traffic from hitting him again and again. Those who had hit Chuckie just kept on driving as if it was nothing. Chuckie was looked at as just another worthless stray dog.



But, our partner rescue in Georgia got Chuckie to safety and had him examined by their vet. To everyone's surprise, Chuckie had no broken bones and escaped this horrible episode with just some road rash. The vets in Georgia cleared him for adoption and the rescue team sent him up north to us at Dog Orphans. We then placed Chuckie in a wonderful home where we thought it would be his last stop. Unfortunately that wasn't the case. Once in his new home Chuckie had shown signs of having issues going potty. It was as if he didn't know he had to go to the bathroom. He had challenges trying to go "number two" properly. He couldn't stand to

poop and would fall over or start running as he tried to relieve himself. Chuckie needs assistance to go number two. You have to hold his back end up so he can relieve himself properly and not make a mess on accident

So when Chuckie returned, we took Chuckie to our vet for further x-rays and testing. It turns out Chuckie's spine is a little crooked now as a result of being hit several times. Those injuries have caused neurological damage to his spine and nerves. Chuckie is now unable to position himself like a normal dog to poop and when he tries to lift his leg Chuckie falls. The muscle strength is there, but the nerve damage is enough to cause him to become unbalanced.

Now knowing all of this, we are afraid no one will want to adopt Chuckie. Who is going to want a dog that will require extra attention, learn his body language when he has to poop and possibly have him in a diaper? Who wants to be in that position for the rest of Chuckie's life? But it is spring

and we believe there is a home out there for a dog like Chuckie. He may be special needs physically, but this boy has the absolute best personality and is so full of love. He is always so happy to see people and rolls over immediately for belly rubs while smiling and crying softly out of excitement. If he could snuggle with his humans 24/7, he absolutely would. But don't let that snuggle bug fool you. Chuckie loves his toys like no other. Chuckie could chase a ball for hours, throw his stuffies in the air and catch them over and over again. His neurological issues do not slow him down one bit. He may have a silly gate to his back legs when running and walking, but he has found a way to run and play just like every other dog. Chuckie cannot live with cats, and can be dog selective. That being said, Chuckie needs to be the only pet in the home. What we feel and believe is that all Chuckie



wants is love, attention within the right home and that special owner. Chuckie has those eyes that can suck you right in. We know Chuckie will have some challenges, but if everyone could just share Chuckie's story even once, well... we may be he will finally land his furever home!

If you are interested in Chuckie please give Dog Orphans a call 508-476-1855.

Paws corner

Outdoor cats risk more than disease

By Sam Mazzotta

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: Your recent answer on whether cats can get COVID-19 is correct: There is very little data, and only a few recorded cases, of house pets testing positive for this coronavirus. So the risk of pets getting ill from it may be low, but I think that a much higher risk for cats is when they're allowed to roam outside. Not only can they be exposed to feline diseases like FIV, but the critters they catch,

like small lizards and songbirds, may also carry diseases. For example, many songbirds carry salmonella, a bacterial infection that can be fatal to cats. - Greg DEAR GREG: That's absolutely right, as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention mentions on its website (www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/COVID-19 and Animals). Thank you for pointing this out.

I've written frequently about the risks faced by cats

that are allowed to roam outdoors - from being struck by vehicles to being attacked by feral cats or other wildlife, like coyotes. Outdoor cats also are direct threats to other wildlife. I'm sure most cat owners are familiar with the 2013 study published in Smithsonian Magazine that estimated about 2.4 billion birds and around 12.3 billion small animals are killed by outdoor cats each year.

While feral cats certainly are part of the problem, we can at least keep our housecats from contributing to the massive number of small critters killed each year.

Folks, keep your cats indoors. If you've got a cat that insists on being outside, find a compromise: perhaps a screened enclosure in the backyard or a window seat, so your cat can watch the world go by. Bolstering bird populations and reducing the

risk of transmitted diseases is worth it.

Sun exposure nearly does in Guinea pigs

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I have two guinea pigs. Yesterday, I took them outside to get some sun. When I came back outside about 15 minutes later, they were both lying in their cage, completely stiff, as if they had been dead for hours. I thought they were dead. I brought them inside and was getting everything ready to bury them when one of them stirred very slowly, and then the other. Today, they are not as active, and they aren't eating and only taking a little water when I give it to them through a dropper. What happened to them? Will they be OK? - Analia R.

DEAR ANALIA: Guinea pigs, also known as cavies, cannot regulate their body temperature very well. They should never be put into direct sunlight or a hot room. Your pets suffered heat

stroke from being out in the sun, even though it was just a few minutes. This is most often fatal. I'm very surprised that they are both alive.

They need to be treated very gently for the next several days. Contact their veterinarian (one who specializes in exotic pets), but do not bring them until the vet tells you to do so. Moving them can be very stressful. Continue gently giving them water through a dropper or syringe a few drops at a time. Place little bits of cucumber, lettuce or melon nearby; these have high water content and some nutrients.

Cavies are extremely sensitive to sudden temperature changes, loud noises or rough handling. Be gentle with them and keep them in a comfortable location, out of direct sunlight. Send your comments, tips or questions to ask@pawscorner.com. (c) 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.

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Living with Lincoln

Day Old Cheese

By Amy Palumbo-LeClaire

The cat is out of the bag. I'd do almost anything for my dog. Even if that means hustling a slice of cheese for him. Here's the story.

Lincoln has been on a strict diet due to a few senior issues, along with a firm desire to offer him the very best nutrition amid his golden years. He's made it to the final stretch. A bad habit needed to go.

Dunkin's Munchkins.

I cannot possibly put a price tag on the joy accrued from countless Dunkin' Donuts drive-thru runs over the last ten years. In Pavlovian fashion, Lincoln came to associate the entire Dunkin experience with pure joy. He learned the physics of my Honda Pilot while it rounded the drive-thru, the peculiar way in which a square box speaks, and the sweetened scent of the air while, head-out-window, he sniffed and

salivated. Every moment became one step closer to the blessed window, where kind people wearing brown and pink passed out small, edible balls. He studied these people over and over again, fixing his eyes on their hands from the vantage point of the opened back seat window. His chunky smile puffed to the very sight of them until—suddenly—the people appeared before his very eyes.

"Oh my gosh that is the cutest dog I've ever seen! Can he have a munchkin?"

"The driver in the car behind you wants to pay for your coffee."

"Do you mind if I post your dog on my Snapchat?"

Lincoln became a Dunkin' celebrity, the doggie in the window who cost nothing to flirt with. Shamelessly, he lapped up every handout.

"There's jelly in this ball!" He could barely hold back his joy for the donut holes and held me accountable for extras given. "Not to be a nudge, but I saw the person place a tire-shaped ball in the bag." He stood formidable, propped like a security guard on the console, a spot of jelly at his nostril while he held me hostage at the

wheel. "Lincoln. Go sit down, please."

I had created a monster. "Is this what heaven feels like?" Yet it was a happy monster. He inhaled crumbs from cracks between the leather seats and stalked wedges of donut beneath them. Like a drunken toddler, Lincoln was high on Dunkin's munchkins. I needed to act fast, and help him attach "an experience" to a Dunkin' run, not a donut hole. A clean diet had already made a significant impact on his health. His golden years were becoming brighter. He needed to stay the course. But how?

"Can my dog have a slice of day-old cheese, please?" I spat a tried solution from the passenger side of my husband's Infiniti one day. "Day old cheese?" A rash climbed his neck. "You can't just ask them to give you a slice of cheese!" He chided me with authority.

"Don't be ridiculous." I puffed. "They're a billion-dollar conglomerate. Our dog may not be alive tomorrow and you're worried about them losing a few pennies." Lincoln narrowed his eyes to the conversation. "I bet they throw away day old cheese anyway." His blonde lashes still, he transcribed the braille of our conversation with intellect. "Wah, wah, wah, wah, wah. Cheese. Wah, wah, wahhanna. Cheese. Wahnanna. Cheese."

Shhh. Lincoln shuffled back to the window. The kind person was on her way back. He sat politely and broke into smile, a twinkle in his eye. We shut up.

"You're such a good dog! Here you go!"

He took.

The people dressed in brown and pink had so many reasons to say no:

"We don't give away cheese."

"The practice is not sanitary."

"Giving away cheese is against policy."

"You need to pay for what you take home here."

Instead, the kind hearts of Dunkin' Donuts enabled a troubling sense of entitlement.

"Oh my gosh – look at him! Can he have two slices?"

"He is the cutest."

"I've read his column! One more slice for Lincoln!"

They passed the cheese. Lincoln licked his choppers.

We drove away in silence. I couldn't help but reflect on my behavior. Had I committed a small crime? A spot of guilt poked at my conscience while I fastened my seatbelt and thought harder. How inappropriate was my request? Like the warm scent of butter-crunch, the truth came to me. I was able to trace my behavior back to my ancestry.

Nana!

My late grandmother, Madeleine Stelluti-Palumbo, an Italian immigrant, was a phenomenal cook. She was also fanatical about ensuring that not a morsel would go to waste. She would find a snip of arugula and turn it into a stew. Or whip up a frittata using overripe peppers and a few eggs. She would even napkin-wrap slices of bread taken from restaurant tables, and stow them away in her purse. "Me save," she'd say.

Deep down, was saving cheese in my DNA?

My gaze settled on Lincoln.



Lincoln gobbles up a slice of day old cheese.



Happy with how the moment has unfolded.

He laid comfortably in the back seat and licked his leonine paws, thoroughly satisfied with how the day had unfolded. Then, at random, he lifted his big head, stared at me, and broke into an easy smile.

"Good boy, Lincoln."

If loving my dog too much is a crime, I'll have to plead guilty.

Tell me your dog story.

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Spring clean-up of Manchaug Pond

SUTTON/DOUGLAS: The Manchaug Pond Foundation will be holding their Spring Clean Up of scenic Manchaug Pond on Saturday, April 24, volunteers are invited to join members and Friends of the Manchaug Pond Foundation in cleaning up Manchaug Pond and its watershed. Volunteers with boats are also welcome to help us clean up coves. Volunteer time will support the MPF's third s319 Non-point Source Pollution Grant requirements which was awarded in the Fall of 2020 by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

The effort is scheduled to take place Saturday, April 24, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon,

with volunteers meeting at the state public access boat ramp on Torrey Road in Sutton. Volunteers will hit the pavement with garbage bags in hand to clean the roadsides, shoreline, and boat ramp - all areas within the Manchaug Pond watershed. Good company, beautiful scenery, safety vests, rubber gloves, and garbage bags will be provided. Masks will be required while at the boat ramp meeting area, hand sanitizer will be available, and we ask that everyone follow state regulations for social distancing. Rain date will be Sunday, April 25 and the rain date notice will be posted on the Manchaug Pond Foundation's Facebook page and website.

The Manchaug Pond Foun-

ation's educational events look to improve the water quality of the picturesque 380 acre community lake, which lies within Douglas and Sutton, through the education of the many users and watershed residents. Educational information on residential Low Impact Development (LID) techniques such as landscaping with buffer zones and rain gardens to limit runoff of fertilizer nutrients are available on the Foundation's website. Educational materials have been made possible by the MPF's previous two water quality grants awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. For more information visit manchaugpond.org

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Tales from beyond

The Devil's Hole, Woonsocket, Rhode Island

By Thomas D'Agostino

Many years ago, French Canadian immigrants began settling in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. Life was hard for these poor folk and they toiled from sun up to sun down building a life for their families. Even today, the visual history of their legacy is prominent in the local cemeteries, street names, and architecture of the area.

A certain Catholic priest desired to erect a beautiful stone church for his parishioners but found it difficult, as they were all committed to their day long jobs at the local mills. The priest looked to the heavens for guidance and his prayers were quickly answered when, one night, the Virgin Mary appeared to him with a gift.

"Outside in your yard, you will find a fine horse that will easily cart all the stone you need to build a church. He has the strength of many horses and will easily carry any load you set upon him. But, under no circumstances must you ever remove his bridle, for it is sanctified. If you remove the bridle, the horse will vanish in an instant."

The next morning, the priest found the horse as stated, with a glistening bridle around its face. He was an enormous beast, black as the deepest night with glowing red eyes. It did not take long before the priest surmised that it was an incarnation of the devil himself. He named it "Old Nick" and presented it to the foreman to assist in carting the stones for the project. The foreman was also warned to never remove the bridle and duly obeyed the priest's request. Old Nick tirelessly moved all the stone needed to build a fine church.

One day the foreman could not make it to work and a new foreman was called in to oversee the completion of the church. The new foreman was forewarned of the bridle and set about his tasks with his new workmate, Old Nick. He and Old Nick got along real fine and soon became friends. The young foreman was not very smart, but always performed a hard day's labor with no complaint.

On a very hot summer day, the foreman took the horse

to the Blackstone River to cool down. As the foreman splashed around in the cool water, he looked over at Old Nick, who appeared to be hot and thirsty. The man decided to remove the bridle so the horse could get a cool drink. As soon as the bridle was let loose, the horse gave an earth shattering neigh, then kicked the young man into the river. Old Nick leaped across the Blackstone in one bound, landing on a ledge. His impact split the ledge and the horse quickly vanished into the crevice.

When the priest discovered what had transpired, he rushed to the scene but he was too late, the horse had returned to hell. For many years after, the area of the chasm was prone to unholy happenings. Horses would buck and shy as they neared the hole, wagons would lose

their wheels and unearthly wailing was often heard emanating from the rock. Witnesses also reported wolf-like creatures entering and emerging from the evil hole. It was clear to all that the devil had created a portal to this realm to punish the parishioners for keeping him captive.

A new priest came to lead the parish and decided enough was enough. He placed a wooden cross over the hole, sprinkled it with holy water and said several prayers. The hellish doings ceased as far as anyone knew and the devil never returned. The Devil's Hole is located in the Fairmont section of Woonsocket but no one is really sure where it is.

Thomas D'Agostino and his wife Arlene Nicholson are seasoned paranormal investigators, authors, and co-organizers of Para-

Dinner with the dead

Thomas D'Agostino and Arlene Nicholson will be hosting another interactive paranormal investigation dinner at the Public House in Sturbridge on Tuesday, April 27, at 6:30 p.m.

They will also host another special interactive paranormal investigation dinner at the Colonial Inn in Concord on Tuesday, May 11, at 6 p.m.

For info and tickets on both events, go to www.dining-withthedead1031.com. Seating is limited.



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BVT announces second trimester Commendation List, recognizing academic achievements and vocational excellences

UPTON – Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick has released the following Commendation List for the second trimester of the 2020–2021 academic school year at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School.

To be named to the Commendation List, students must meet rigorous standards that include maintaining a grade point average of 88 percent or above in each technical, related, and academic course for the trimester. Students are listed by grade level, hometown, and alphabetically by their last name. To view the entire Commendation List for the second trimester, please visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/2commendationlist.

SENIORS (Class of 2021)

Douglas - Giannah Downen, Health Services; Kayla Drew, Culinary Arts; Ryleigh Flansburg, Dental Assisting; Krista Helstrom, Multimedia Communications; Madison Mathieu, Electrical; and Luke Morrison, Electronics & Engineering Technology.

Grafton - Rebecca Ashmore, Electronics & Engineering Technology; and Audrey Karyabdi, Dental Assisting.

Millbury - Nicholas Healey, Electrical; Evan Pariseau, Engineering & Robotics; Nicole Rannikko, Health Services; Noah Thomas, Painting & Design Technology; Abigail Weagle, Health Services.

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Sutton - Gwyneth Dube, Health Services; Sarah Grant, Multimedia Communications; Kyleigh Leonard, Automotive Technology; Camilla Moroney, Health Services; Coryn Myette, Drafting & Design Technology; and Kaitlyn Reed, Health Services.

Uxbridge - Amber Ells, Painting & Design Technology; Nolan Holt, Culinary Arts; Riley Holt, Engineering & Robotics; Abigail Lane, Engineering & Robotics;

Aisha Lutwama, Culinary Arts; Robert Mellen, Engineering & Robotics; Abril Sanchez, Multimedia Communications; Ines Taipina, Business & Entrepreneurship; Emily Warner, Culinary Arts; and Lia Zajas, Multimedia Communications.

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Grafton - Jordyn Carroll, Health Services; Juliana Errara, Health Services; Hailey Lutjelusche, Engineering & Robotics; Noah Mariano, Engineering & Robotics; Owen Mathieu, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration; Ashley Waldo, Plumbing; and Henry Warfield, Electronics & Engineering Technology.

Millbury - Natalie Rutkiewicz, Cosmetology; and Brooke Vailancourt, Dental Assisting.

Northbridge - Vanessa Calles, Drafting & Design Technology; Riley Driver, Electrical; Sam Grilli, Drafting & Design Technology; and Emily Wildfeuer, Drafting & Design Technology.

Sutton - Samuel Judson, Drafting & Design Technology; Haley Kirouac, Engineering & Robotics; Ryann Lombardi, Health Services; Adrian Lowell, Information Technology; Aidan McGrail, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Paige McMullan, Painting & Design Technology; Colin Medeiros, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Lena Paroulidis, Plumbing; and Benjamin Tufts, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication.

Uxbridge - Isabel Cahill, Multimedia Communications; Max-

well Guyton, Engineering & Robotics; Autumn Herrick, Electrical; Jack Moscatelli, Cosmetology; and Jayda Paxton, Painting & Design Technology.

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Grafton - James Benoit, Electrical; Caitlin Brown, Dental Assisting; Lourenco DaSilva, Information Technology; Alison Graves, Construction Technology; Skyla Jack, Construction Technology; Carlie Jensen, Painting & Design Technology; Ethan Keenan, Health Services; Soumith Madadi, Information Technology; Ava Mills, Engineering & Robotics; Joshua Mumford, Automotive Collision Repair & Refinishing; Grant Purcell, Engineering & Robotics; Haleigh Reynolds, Dental Assisting; Lily Turcotte, Construction Technology; Nicholas Valoras, Engineering & Robotics; Madeline White, Multimedia Communications; and Casey Wong, Engineering & Robotics.

Millbury - Michael Borowski, Multimedia Communications; Nicole Boucher, Health Services; Lillian Bousquet, Health Services; Ava Lawton, Engineering & Robotics; Madison Moore, Painting & Design Technology; McKenna-Morin, Engineering & Robotics; James Richert, Advanced Manu-

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Sutton - David Garabedian, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration; Michaela Gledhill, Construction Technology; Christopher Gubbins, Construction Technology; Julianna Hawley, Multimedia Communications; and Macyn White, Construction Technology.

Uxbridge - Yara Alomar, Health Services; Noah Cahill, Engineering & Robotics; Caitlyn DeLuca, Cosmetology; Avery Herrick, Multimedia Communications; Makaylah Holzman, Engineering & Robotics; Trevor Horgan, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Sean Knox, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Jillian Lutton, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration; Grace Mathieu, Engineering & Robotics; Olivia Stefanick, Electrical; and Joshua Thompson, Multimedia Communications.

Sutton Garden Club plant sale

Sutton Garden Club is pleased to announce that its annual Plant Sale will be held on Sutton Common on Sunday, May 16, 12 noon - 3 p.m., with a rain date of Sunday, May 23. All applicable COVID safety precautions will be observed.

SGC members will be potting up hundreds of plants from our gardens this spring in preparation for the sale. Since we were not able to have our Plant Sale last year due to the pandemic, SGC gardeners have that many more plants to share at the Plant Sale this May.

Proceeds from the Plant Sale fund our community efforts, including Bandstand and Manchaug Square plantings and maintenance during the summer, decorations and wreaths for the Bandstand and Commons at Christmastime and our Scholarship Fund. The Plant Sale also helps funds our gardening and other programs during the year. Any updates regarding the Plant Sale, including rain date, will be posted on our website, SuttonGardenClub.com, and on our Facebook page. Sharon McCann-Kling

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Many thanks

To the editor,

The weekend of April 4, my family hosted an annual Easter event in the town in Sutton. This event has been in existence for years, but last year we had to pivot away from the experience, as we were facing the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. We wanted to put emphasis on an event this year, as COVID-19 has caused us to entirely restructure “normal” events to meet modern restrictions. In that regard, we moved from a traditional Easter egg hunt, to a drive-through “Hopalong” event, where kids were driven through a series of different sights and were ultimately given little bags of goodies to take home. Kids got to see live animals, the Easter bunny, and much more on the beautiful property of Waters Farm.

While this was modified from its normal form, it filled me with hope and gratitude for better days to come. We saw around 400 cars pass through the day’s festivities in a two-hour span. During these challenging times, people have had to be innovative with events so that we may continue to uphold our local traditions. So many people went into making this event a success, and I wanted to take time to thank those that helped shine a light in our community last week.

First, I wanted to thank the sponsors of the event, for their generous financial donations to make the day possible. Without them, we would not have been able to provide everything that was available to the kids. Those sponsors include **Al’s Rubbish and Container Rental Service, Whittier Farms, Allcare Medical Supply, the Lion’s Club, Bank Hometown, and IBA Print Shop.** Additionally, on the day of the event, I want to thank all of the volunteers who willingly gave up their time and talent to make the day a success. Particularly, I would like to thank the **Scouts of America** for lending their time on the day of to set up and leading up to the event to stuff the goodie bags.

Thank you to members of the **Lion’s Club** for coming on the day of to help with the event. Thank you to the **4-H Club** for lending us your livestock, expertise, and time to bring delight to the children. Thank you to the **Sutton Police Officers** who came with their cruisers to participate in the event. Two people in particular deserve special thanks: thank you to **Cheryl Rawinski**, Sutton’s public health nurse who kept us safe by making sure that we were compliant with COVID-19 policies, and thank you to **Kylie Gibbons**, a friend and member of my staff, for coordinating the activities and volunteers throughout the day—her hard work significantly contributed to the success of the event. And finally, thank you again to all the volunteers who showed up to make the day a success. I am eternally grateful.

Sincerely,
Ryan Fattman & Family

BVT launches meal delivery service

Delivering nutritious meals to its students is possible with a \$75,000 grant

UPTON – The Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District (BVT) is the proud recipient of a \$75,000 Share Our Strength’s No Kid Hungry grant. The funding will allow BVT to take its Drive-up Meal Service off-campus and on the road, expanding access to nutritious school meals through a new Meal Delivery Service. The program is open to all BVT students during the 2020–2021 school year.

Whether students are on campus or in distance learning, having continued access to nutritious meals is vital to

their health and wellbeing. Childhood hunger can have a devastating and long-lasting effect on a child’s physical, emotional, and academic wellbeing. The free Meal Delivery Service addresses issues of food access and economic inequalities many students face during the COVID-19 pandemic by utilizing their School Based Health Center to support the needs of its students enrolled in the program.

The delivery service provides a more convenient, user-friendly meal distribution plan for students, as they, or their parents, will no longer have to commute to pick-up the meals at BVT. This program removes the most prominent financial/transportation barriers to ensure students with the greatest need for food receive

nutritious meals during the pandemic. The service is appealing now to a more significant number of students and parents who need the meals.

BVT can effectively address requests for food assistance with the No Kid Hungry grant. The grant supports equipment and supply expenses related to trans-

porting and distributing packages of meals directly to its students in the 13-town district and additional support services available through the School Based Health Center. For more information or to sign up your BVT student, please visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/mealdeliveryservice.

Twice Blessed Thrift Shop reopening

Sacred Heart Church “Twice Blessed” Thrift Shop, 187 Hopedale St., Hopedale will hold a grand reopening on Saturday, May 1. New store hours are 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon first Saturday each month. During the Covid-19 Pandemic our thoughts and

prayers are with all who are directly impacted as well as the first responders and essential workers. For information call 508.473.1900, sacred-hearthopdale.org. Like us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/twiceblessedthriftshop-hopdale/



• On April 27, 4977 B.C., the universe is created, according to German mathematician and astronomer Johannes Kepler. Scientists in the 20th century developed the Big Bang theory, which showed Kepler’s calculations were off by about 13.7 billion years.

• On May 2, 1939, New York Yankees first baseman Lou Gehrig benches himself for poor play and ends his streak of consecutive games played at 2,130. The left-handed slugger led the American League in RBIs five times.

• On May 1, 1941, “Citizen Kane” makes its debut at the RKO Palace Theater in New York City. The film about a publishing tycoon’s dying words consistently ranks at the top of film critics’ lists of America’s greatest films.

• On April 26, 1986, the world’s worst nuclear accident occurs at the Chernobyl nuclear plant near Kiev in Ukraine. An estimated 4,000 clean-up workers died from radiation poisoning and a large area of land may not be livable for almost 150 years.
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Samuel Slater EXPERIENCE

Do you have any old things?

Many area residents have donated their antique items to the Samuel Slater Experience, but a few more are still needed to complete all the exhibits. Here is a list. If you have any these and are willing to part with them, please contact Olivia Spratt at ospratt@samuelslaterexperience.org or call the museum at 508-461-2955. Please include a photo with your email.

100-year-old bikes

Travel trunks and suitcases

Old wood barrels, boxes, crates, old rope

Crockery, glassware, lamps, silverware, tinware,

nickel-plated ware from early 1900s-1925

Sets of matching hairbrush, comb, mirror

from early 1900s

Appliances such as washing machines,

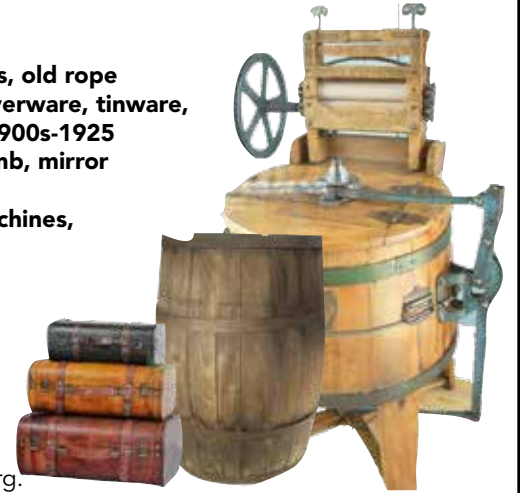
wringers, stoves, refrigerator,

all from 1910-1925

Horse-drawn open bed wagon

Skeleton keys

To find out more about the Samuel Slater Experience, visit the website at <https://samuelslaterexperience.org>.



Prayer

O, most beautiful flower of Mount Carmel,
Fruit of the vine, splendorous of heaven.
Blessed Mother of the Son of God,
Immaculate Virgin, assist me in this my necessity.
O, Star of the Sea, help me and show herein you are my mother.
O, Holy Mary, Mother of God, Queen of Heaven and earth,
I humbly beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succor me in my necessity.
There are none that can withstand your power,
O, show me here you are my mother.
O, Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.
Sweet Mother, I place this cause in your hands.
Amen. EMH

Prayer



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

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

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20 CU. FT. UPRIGHT FREEZER Reg. \$899 ⁹⁹ \$899⁹⁹	GE COMBO WASHER & DRYER Reg. \$1,599 ⁹⁹ \$1,299⁹⁹	DELUXE ELECTRIC DRYER Reg. \$499 ⁹⁹ \$449⁹⁹	5 CU FT CHEST FREEZER Reg. \$199 ⁹⁹ \$199⁹⁹	DELUXE DISHWASHER Reg. \$399 ⁹⁹ \$349⁹⁹	KAYAKS IN STOCK Mon. Fri. 10-8; Sat. 9-8; Sun. 10-7 140 Main St., Spencer, MA 508-885-9343
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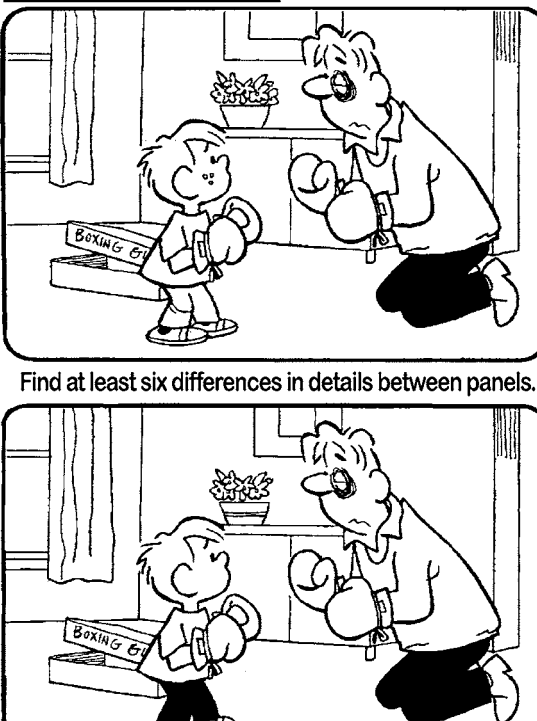
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BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



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Q & A with The Car Doctor

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Q. I sent my son to my local gas station for an annual Massachusetts vehicle inspection and while there he said there was a special for oil change. He called me and it sounded like a good idea, so I said okay. When they finished he said the car did not pass inspection. I have never had a car that did not pass inspection. They also said that it would be another fee for reinspection. They also told me I should drive it for 30 miles at 55 mph and come back. Is this a rip-off and can I take it elsewhere for inspection at this point? Do I have any recourse? The car is a 2018 Acura with only 13,000 miles on it?

A. If the car failed an emissions system issue, you have 60 days to get it retested. If you go back to the same inspection facility within the 60 days, the re-test is free. The hint may be that the shop told you to drive the car at highway speeds for 30 miles, this sounds like the emissions monitors have not set. I am curious that when the oil change was performed, the mechanic cleared the computer memory rather than just resetting the oil change monitor. By doing this the monitors would need to be set before the car would pass the emissions testing. You can also contact the Massachusetts program administrator www.mavehiclecheck.com. I have called and emailed them in the past and found them very helpful.

Q. I don't think you can answer my question, but I would like your professional opinion. In January, my 2011 Chevy Cruze with the 1.4 L turbo engine needed a new water pump. I noticed steam coming from under the hood. The car never overheated, just steam from coolant leaking on the engine. The car was at my local mechanic's shop all day to replace the water pump and I just drove it home a couple of miles that evening. The next morning, I took it for a test drive to see if there was any steam and after a couple of miles I stopped at a red light and the transmission made an unusual clunking sound when I stopped. When the light turned green, the car wouldn't move and the engine revved like it was in neutral. The transmission had completely failed, and the car only had 45,000 miles on it. So, my question is: could the me-

chanic have done something unintentional to cause the failure, like mistakenly draining the transmission fluid? I guess it could be a coincidence, but I find it odd that the transmission failed right after the water pump was replaced, and it had no previous indications of problems shifting.

A. The water pump on the Cruze is a straightforward repair and replacing the water pump would have no impact on the transmission. Interesting to note, depending on when the car was purchased and when the water pump was replaced, it may have been under an extended warranty. Some Cruze models had water pumps that had a warranty for 10 years or 100,000 miles (whichever comes first). It couldn't hurt to send your repair receipt to GM customer relations to see if you can get reimbursed for the repair. The transmission, although somewhat problematic, has no such provision.

Q. I heard your positive review of the Chevy Bolt and I am considering buying electric. I like the car, it's small, nimble and still pretty roomy. My problem is spending \$40,000 for a small car. Do you think prices will come down?

A. Just like anything that gets popular, prices will adjust. If you live in Massachusetts or Rhode Island, there are some great discounts with www.greenenergyconsumers.org. Once you are on their site, go to the "drive green" page. I saw a base model 2021 Chevrolet Bolt (\$36,620 MSRP) at a local dealer with the variety of incentives stacked together selling for \$15,995.

Q. I have a boat with a 2.5 liter four-cylinder Chevy engine. The engine runs great but has an oil leak. Unlike my old truck that leaks a little oil on the ground, I hate having oil leaking in the boat. What do you think of oil stop-leak products?

A. I am generally not a fan of "mechanic in a bottle" type products. That being said, working on a boat with an in-board engine isn't fun. Readers have told me they have had some luck with Lucas Oil Stop Leak and AT 205. I have a 12-year-old VW with an oil leak and may try AT 205, stay tuned.

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Cruising scene 2021

Car and truck shows, cruise nights back in business

By Jim Weicherding

Well folks, it's no longer 2020 and that is a welcome relief. Especially for all of us muscle car, classic car and truck, hot rod and rat rod enthusiasts across the area.

The month of May is traditionally the starting month for area car and truck shows as well as cruise nights in this region every spring. Last year, we didn't have much activity but that's about to change this season. It won't start out

like normal, but thanks to the ongoing vaccination efforts by the states' departments of health across this region, we will start to see a gradual return to normal. I'm certain that facemasks will still be a requirement for the rest of this year, even though outdoor activities such as car shows and cruise nights are very safe due to physical distance and they take place outside where the chances of contracting COVID and

other new strains would be higher.

All the same, the cruisin' scene is underway even if we do have some state guidelines and protective requirements still in place for our own protection. We normally publish area car shows and cruise night dates, times and locations during the late spring, summer and fall months and plan on doing so again this cruisin' season.

As of publication, the weekly cruise nights across the region just started and are as follows: Tri-State Cruisers, Saturday Cruise Nights, located at Pizza 101, in Pomfret, Connecticut; Mass Cruisers, bi-weekly Thursday Cruise Nights at Bass Pro Shop in Foxboro; A&W weekly Tuesday Cruise Nights on Route 44 in Smithfield, Rhode Island; Frederickson Farms weekly Wednesday Cruise Nights on Route 102 in North Scituate, Rhode Island; RI Chevy Owners Association, weekly Friday Cruise Nights at McDonald's on Mendon Road in Cumberland, Rhode Island.

If you have information about any weekly cruise nights and/or weekend car shows across the area please send that information to jwpiscis14@aol.com and put Cruisin' Scene in the subject box to avoid getting lost in my spam folder. Looking forward to seeing all of you again for this Cruisin' Car Show Season in 2021. "Drive safe, drive serious" and remember to always "buckle up."



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Mark Marzeotti

Not only does the house you're selling have a fresh coat of paint you changed out the light fixtures in the bathroom and upgraded the stove. But is it enough to impress the home appraiser who's come to assess your house's value? There are quite a few factors that go into a home appraisal.

What does a home appraiser look for? A home appraiser's role is to determine a home's value by investigating the property's location, square footage, condition, number of rooms and any renovations or additions. They'll also look at recent sales of similar homes in the neighborhood.

So, what are some of the key external factors they'll consider? Like many parts of a home appraisal, much of this is beyond your control:

- The location. Everything from the quality of the school district to the proximity to employment opportunities gets factored in here. An appraiser will also consider things like entertainment (is there a movie theater or restaurants nearby?) as well as likelihood of any impact from a natural disaster (say, if it's in a flood zone).
- Land use. If you look at the neighborhood, is it suburban, rural or urban? What percentage of the land is used for homes vs. businesses? Are there a lot of wide open spaces (parks, etc.) or is it very dense?
- The size of your lot. Do you have space to expand? A backyard? Room to grow? This can affect your appraisal amount.
- Access to public utilities. Everything from water to sewage—a home appraiser will want to know if hookups are available.
- Parking. This applies to the quality of the driveway (is it paved? dirt? something else?) to the size of your garage (or lack of one, if that's the case).
- The year your property was built. The age of your property is something a home appraiser considers, but his or her assessment can be affected by maintenance.
- The roof and foundation type. Newer homes typically utilize newer materials. Same applies to your home's siding, windows and doors (anything that's more energy-efficient will give your home an automatic uptick in value).
- Square footage. Also, the number of bedrooms and bathrooms.
- Basement and attic features. Do you have a finished basement and attic? Can it be turned into a playroom? Or is it more of a crawl space?
- Recent renovations. They'll particularly look at kitchens and bathrooms.

While the buyer's bank typically chooses the home appraiser, it's worth noting that the person they select is someone who has to be certified in your state, which means they have to adhere to the Appraisal Foundation's Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice. Your REALTOR can guide you on this. A good way to think of a home appraiser is to consider them a neutral party. Their number one goal is to confirm that the price of the home is fair to everyone—the buyer, the seller and the bank.

The appraisal happens after an offer is made, but before that deal has closed. And if the home

What hurts a home appraisal? 6 common factors to consider

appraisal comes in and the price is off the mark? If the appraised value is higher than the offer, then there's typically no issue in terms of the loan, but if the appraisal is lower, this can be tricky since the lender will only loan money up to the appraised amount. The impact for the seller is that the buyer could pull their offer. This is where your REALTOR can help you with the additional negotiation to keep this deal on track.

Home appraisal factors you can control

There are quite a few factors that you have the power to change ahead of an assessment by a home appraiser. Yes, things like your home's location or recent sales in the neighborhood play a part, but you can control any renovations you've done or will do to your home. For instance, if you've built an addition like another bedroom or turned a dingy basement into a gorgeous rec room, this should raise your home's value.

Make sure you hold onto any records of renovations you've done and keep in mind that what you paid for these renovations may not boost your home's value dollar for dollar.

Other factors you can control:

1. A leaky roof. One of the worst things you can do is delay on necessary maintenance. It's that leaky roof or the deck repair you've neglected for years—over time they'll become much more costly or extensive problems.
2. Dated finishes or appliances. Things like worn-out countertops or bathroom tiles that need to be re-grouted all have an impact on the final assessment of your home

before a sale. So take the time, and put in the money to fix these things before putting your home on the market.

Just be mindful that you don't over-improve (go too fancy or too niche with your design choices on hardware or bathtubs, etc.) since you want a look that will appeal to the maximum number of buyers. (One man's walk-in wine cellar is another man's giant headache.)

3. Obvious repairs. Let's say you had someone in to assess that roof repair and you're on it—your REALTOR will make it clear to your home appraiser that this will be done by the time of the sale, so that they don't take that amount off the final value of the home.

Make sure to also honestly consider any renovations or changes you've made for the worse—particularly any amenities you've removed. For instance, if you've torn down a wall to prioritize an open floor plan, but eliminated a bedroom in the process or removed a jacuzzi from the backyard, this could detract from your home's appraised value. Think long and hard before you remove any features from your home.

Home appraisal factors you can't control

OK, so how about the things you can't control? Most of this comes down to your home's location:

1. The value of nearby listings. Like we said, it's not just the internal factors of your home that make a difference—a lot is tied to how your home measures up against other listings in your area. (In the real estate world, this is referred to an assessment of comparable sales.)

In this sense, an appraiser will consider your house's square footage and number of stories in comparison to similar models. This applies to amenities, too. Let's say your home has a two-car garage. What are other homes with these types of features selling for nearby?

A good appraiser will consider multiple properties and be wary of outliers. (Say, that bargain listing right across the street from the highway off-ramp.)

2. Market conditions. This is about supply and demand. If your home is in an area with decreasing prices or vacancies and foreclosures, this could negatively affect your home's value. But if sales are on the rise and the future trajectory of your area looks positive (growing employment ops, for example), this all affects the price.

That said, if you're fielding multiple offers on your property, your REALTOR will let your appraiser know. (That could be a testament to not just value and future value, but also improving market conditions.)

3. A busy street. If your home is off a freeway or near a bustling shopping district with loads of outdoor restaurants, that can lower the final appraisal. Bottom Line: Consult your agent—and a home inspector—ahead of time

A REALTOR is trained to foresee potential problem areas. Have a conversation with them about any anxieties you have, but also do a walk-through to talk through the obvious changes you can make ahead of a home appraisal—all to ensure you get the top dollar you deserve.

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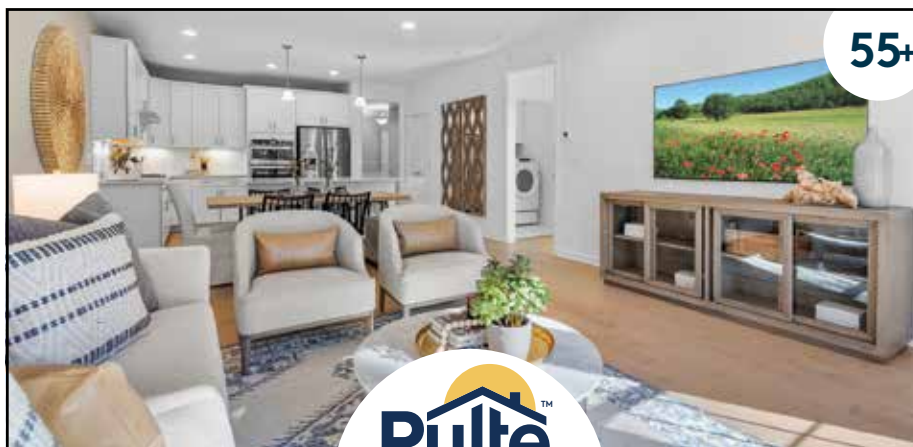
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