

## Networking is backbone of WSN's aim for continued growth

BY ROD LEE

No one needs to tell members of the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce's Women's Success Network (WSN) how important connections made through face-to-face contact with other professionals in various business and social settings are.

As the WSN's Pat Hurton says, the word 'network' "is in our title."

The WSN's Pat Baker, a senior vice president/manager with UniBank, puts it like this:

"Our WSN networking events are places where dreams are revealed, partnerships forged, friendships made, mentors found, and new beginnings start to take shape. It is where resources are offered and skills are shared. We are women committed to helping other women achieve their vision of success."

The results of a study conducted by the Kellogg School of Management underscores the importance of networking for women. Professor Brian Uzzi, a co-author of the study, says 77% of the highest-achieving women in the study had strong ties with an inner circle of two to three other women. The research also showed that women who can share career advice are nearly three times more likely to get a better job than women who don't



Alise Breton, Jeannie Hebert, Pat Hurton and Heather Elster are four professionals who have benefitted from membership in the Women's Success Network (WSN) of the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce.

have this support.

Jeannie Hebert, president and CEO of the Blackstone Valley Chamber and the force behind formation of the Women's Success Network, said dur-

ing a telephone conversation on September 19th that networking

### NETWORKING

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## Healey strikes the right notes in remarks to BV Chamber

BY ROD LEE

If Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey is successful in her bid to win the contest for governor next month,

engaging and on-message from the start to the finish of her talk as guest speaker for the Chamber's first get-together of the fall, Ms. Healey, who was looking sharp in an autumn-colored blazer and



Attorney General Maura Healey addresses the September 29th breakfast meeting of the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce.

she will probably look back at an appearance at a Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce breakfast meeting on September 29th as a significant step along the way.

Petite, personable, polite,

black slacks, appeared to make a good impression on those in attendance at the Charles F. Minney

### HEALEY

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## NETWORKING

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has been “one of the most important aspects of my career.”

Over the years, Ms. Hebert said, “I have been able to meet and work with a number of people who have given me valuable mentorship. In every business I’ve worked in, dental hygiene, candy, the CVB (Convention & Visitors Bureau), WICN and of course the Chamber, networking with different individuals gives you a different perspective; and when you build your repertoire you can always reach out to anyone” from this pool of contacts for support.

Ms. Hebert cites establishment of the education hub within the Chamber’s

offices on Linwood Ave. in Whitinsville as evidence of this. The hub is flourishing.

“In building the school, for instance, I didn’t know anything about that. Jack Healy of MassMEP encouraged me, before he retired,” she said.

Like so many women in the workplace, Jeanie Hebert initially found networking to be somewhat of a scary proposition.

“It was very imposing at first,” she said. “I didn’t want to go to events without someone with me! I chuckle about that today. It’s off-putting until you get your sea legs and find your voice.”

“Everyone is afraid of networking at first.

“WSN is about putting people at ease.”

Ms. Hurton notes that networking “is a significant

component of our mission.

It is not just exchanging business cards; it is building relationships based on trust involving give and take. It is about helping people know who you are and it is about giving so you can help others.”

As a newcomer to the area, Paula Bertou says the Women’s Success Network has been every bit as welcoming to her as Whitinsville-based Fulcrum Acoustic co-founder David Gunness was.

“I moved here in May from upstate New York and found out about WSN through emails—we are members of the Blackstone Valley Chamber,” Ms. Bertou said. “I enjoyed meeting everyone involved. We went to a steamers event and I ran into some of the ladies there. Heather Elster is right



UniBank’s Pat Baker says networking opportunities made available to members of the BV Chamber’s Women’s Success Network are beneficial in a number of ways.

across the street from me at the Community Center (on Main St., opposite the Shop) so I chatted with her. I am on the WSN’s Community Support Committee. It’s interesting to see the leadership at work.”

With Fulcrum Acoustic, a professional loudspeaker manufacturer whose products are known for their “stunning output and unmatched clarity even at high SPLs in the smallest enclosures possible” according to the company, “I have been doing accounting and admin stuff and my job is to know what kind of services are available to us,” Ms. Bertou said.

WSN is one of these, for her.

More information about the Women’s Success Network can be found on the Chamber’s website, www.blackstonevalley.org.

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

## Operation Coast Sweep



On September 20, 2022, forty five students from Northbridge High School descended on Nantasket Beach in Hull Massachusetts with the objective of cleaning it. This community service project was done in partnership with Coastsweep.gov and the Department of Conservation and Recreation. The students collected dozens of bags of assorted trash for proper disposal. Items included multiple forms of

plastic, abandoned lobster traps that had washed ashore, netting, an old mattress, plus assorted bottles and cans. Removing these items made the environment safer for wildlife and beach goers alike. The students took great pride in helping restore Nantasket to its pristine condition.

## Douglas Cub Scout Pack Can Drive and Popcorn Fundraiser

Come support Cub Scout Pack 316 by visiting us at the Douglas Fire Department at 64 Main St, Douglas, MA 01516 from 9am-noon on Saturday, October 8th. We’re accepting clean, redeemable cans and bottles. There will also be delicious popcorn available for sale, and all money raised will directly support our Scout Pack!

Our Pack provides lifelong memories and friendship for elementary school aged children in Douglas MA and the surrounding area. Scouts participate in many fun and exciting activities-- including camping, fishing, hiking, launching rockets, Pinewood Derby races, and more! Our Scouts also serve the community through service projects such as cleaning up trash

for Earth Day and honoring fallen service members by replacing American flags on the graves of veterans in our local cemetery.

If you’re unable to make it during the listed times, you can donate online by visiting <https://trails-end.com/store/scout/P94X0TJZ>, where you’ll find other delicious treats not available in person. Heroes and Helpers donations are also available -- send a gift of popcorn to our first responders, troops at-home or overseas, veterans, military families, local food banks, and charitable organizations! Don’t worry, your purchases can ship anywhere in the United States.

For more information on Pack 316, please reach out to [douglasp316@gmail.com](mailto:douglasp316@gmail.com).

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**HEALEY**

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VFW Post 3329 in Millbury.

This, after arriving late. “Is she here?” Chamber President and CEO Jeannie Hebert asked, shortly after 8:00 a.m.

“Yes, but give her two minutes,” came the reply.

Ms. Healey more than made up for the tardiness, which didn’t amount to anything anyway, with an informative talk and by patiently answering a number of questions afterward. She also spent time with several members of the media before departing with her trusty press secretary, Karissa Hand, by her side.

An overriding concern of Ms. Hebert’s, as expressed to this publication a few weeks ago, was whether Ms. Healey will be as attentive to the Blackstone Valley as Gov. Charlie Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito have been. The perception is that Ms. Healey isn’t as familiar with Central Massachusetts and the Blackstone Valley as they are.

Ms. Healey addressed this very subject more than once, however, effectively putting the matter to rest with her oft-repeated assertion that she wants to



*Bob Minarik, lead economic development official in Douglas, uses a hand-held microphone to ask Maura Healey a question about the lack of infrastructure to support “pad-ready sites” in the community.*

be “governor for all the people.”

Ms. Healey even commended her host on a comment Ms. Hebert made at the outset of the meeting even though she wasn’t in the room to hear it at the time; namely, that the Chamber is the only organization of its kind in the U.S. “to build our own education training center.”

“I know this Chamber is a force to be reckoned with and punches above its weight,” Ms. Healey said, in acknowledgement of its achievements under Ms. Hebert’s direction—a principal example of which is the education hub on Lin-

wood Ave. in Whitinsville.

Ms. Healey likewise punches above her weight.

“The basketball thing throws people, because I only stand five-foot-four,” she said, with a smile.

The eldest of five children, she was born in Massachusetts but grew up in Hampton Falls, N.H., a community still claiming a population of “only about two thousand people,” she said. “I was raised mostly by my mom. My mother sold her wedding ring in order to build a basketball court for us. I worked at the Hampton Beach Casino... and learned more there than at Harvard.”

Getting to the heart of her speech, she said “I think Massachusetts is the best state in the country. The No. 1 concern I have is affordability. The average price for a home in this area is over \$500,000. We have a housing issue across all sectors, which is why I have called for a secretary of housing with a dedicated focus.”

Tax relief, affordable and safe public transit, maintaining sustained investments with Chapter 90 monies and responding to the needs of her constituents if elected governor are all top-of-mind, she said.

“I said to the mayors yesterday, ‘I want your wish lists.’”

Ms. Healey comes over as something of a charmer. But she also has a reputation as being a woman of steel, as evidenced by having taken on “big banks and prosperous for-profit colleges” as AG.

She realizes that the city of Boston commands much attention.

“I think too much of the economic focus has been in Boston. Let’s spread the wealth!” she said.

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

# Alerting seniors to scams and frauds

In a recent visit to the Northbridge Senior Center at Plummer Place, Kevin Donahue of the Worcester County District Attorney’s office shared

scams, gift-card scams and charity-donation scams—educating his audience on how to tell which programs and charities are legitimate and how to rule out anyone who may be a potential



with seniors and older adults an informative talk on “Don’t Be Fooled: The Latest Scams and Frauds.” Amy Cowen, program and volunteer coordinator at the Senior Center, said Mr. Donahue covered Internet scams, phone/mail scams, door-to-door scams, email “phishing” scams, texting

scammer. “I learned so much!” attendee Nancy Hill, a Board member of Friends of Northbridge Elders (FINE), said. For more info from the DA’s office, call 508-755-8601 or visit [www.worcesterda.com](http://www.worcesterda.com). For info on future programs at Plummer Place, call 508-234-2002.



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# Xpressly Yours ... a letter from the editor

## Museum deftly captures Samuel Slater's perilous journey



At times the folks at Samuel Slater Experience must feel a little like the man for whom the museum on Ray Street in Webster is named.

Their task in establishing SSE as a major area attraction may be less daunting than fledging industrialist Samuel Slater's was in setting sail for America in 1789 at the age of twenty-one and bringing with him from his native England "trade secrets" involving cotton spinning that put his very life in jeopardy.

The assignment Barbara Van Reed, Reanna Kuzdzal, Sally Patterson, Connie Gallant and their cohorts have been given in carrying forward Chris Rob-

ert's goal of educating the public about Samuel Slater's importance to the area's manufacturing legacy and to the development of the town of Webster is one they find both absorbing — and challenging — as he did his own breakout role.

Typical for Ms. Van Reed and her colleagues were the difficulties that put a wrinkle in plans at SSE to take part in Smithsonian Magazine's 18th annual "Museum Day," on September 17th.

"Are all these cars here for the museum?" I asked her, upon arriving and discovering that there was nary a parking spot to be had in any direction.

"No," she said. She was positioned along Memorial Drive near its intersection with Ray Street. She was trying to direct motorists into a lot behind the museum, if in fact SSE was their destination. Unfortunately, many of them were headed instead to events taking place in the Memorial Athletic Field complex.



Not heeding a warning from his mentor, Jedediah Strutt, of possible dire consequences if he took his manufacturing ambitions from England to America did not stop Samuel Slater, pictured here in character in the Samuel Slater Experience on Ray Street in Webster. The rest is history.

"Our first rodeo and no parking. I'm waiting for our sign guy to show up," Ms. Van Reed said, of the attempt that would be made to let people know there was something else going on in the neighborhood. Meanwhile, she was doing the best she could.

Samuel Slater, of course, faced his own adversities, principal among them a warning from his men-

tor, Jedediah Strutt, not to betray the confidences of those in his native England from whom he had been learning textiles since he was fourteen years old.

Mr. Strutt (1726-1797) was a hosier and cotton spinner who pioneered the production of ribbed stockings—on his "Derby Rib" machine.

You will be branded a traitor, Mr. Strutt told Samuel.

The only good outcome of that alert, as it turned out, was young Sam acquiring the rhymed moniker that has stuck with him to this day: "Slater the Traitor." Patrons of the museum will encounter the phrase at least once during their walk through the interactive exhibits, this while watching a video of Samuel Slater's treacherous voyage

across the Atlantic and hearing him having second thoughts about the wisdom of his decision to leave England.

"He was twenty-one and trapped between the old world and the new," Sally Patterson told me, as we stood on "the ship" Sam effected his passage on.

"The boat was built in Georgia, taken apart, and rebuilt here," Ms. Patterson said. "A Bartlett class just had their reunion here."

Speaking of which, SSE is doing just fine in booking events, including school trips and private functions, Ms. Van Reed said.

"Our street promotion program (Welcome Webster Days) has also been amazingly popular," Ms. Van Reed said. This has consisted of free admission for Webster residents, based on their street address.

Museum Day on September 17th is being followed by "A Night at the Museum" on Friday, October 14th, featuring "Mark and Raianne" performing "an intimate concert along the museum's recreation of Webster's Main St., circa 1915." Mark and Rianna will be accompanied by their studio band of Doug Williamson on piano and guitar, Peter Hart on pedal steel and dobro, and Zack Ciras on upright bass.

This is a free event offered by the Webster Cultural Council. Andy's Neighborhood Center will provide a cash bar "in

the lobby of the Maanexit Hotel."

A visit to Samuel Slater Experience almost certainly means an encounter with Richard Clark, a guide whose enthusiasm for young Sam's story is infectious.

"We make a big thing of 'Slater the Traitor.' Mr. Clark told me, as he warmed to the sight of another person he could enlighten.

"The George White biography of Samuel Slater, we take that as the definitive life story," Mr. Clark said. "Sam was six-foot, two hundred pounds when he met Hannah Wilkinson, a Quaker. She passed away in 1812, on their anniversary, leaving him with six young boys. He married again, with a pre-nuptial! The lawyers must have been licking their chops."

Docents like Richard Clark are essential to making Samuel Slater Experience worthwhile for patrons of the museum. He relishes his role. He is happy to be involved with the museum.

"I'm from Rhode Island, originally," he said. "My family had connections to the textile industry and I was a history major in college. It was kind of in the air, if you will."

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

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# LMT Oil Delivers With Community Involvement

LMT Oil is not new to Charlton and surrounding areas.

The company has been delivering goods and services for the past six years, but owner Tom Dolan has been doing service work on heating systems and air conditioners for 11 years.

The company is small — with six employees — and family owned, and loves being part of the community.

## Business spotlight

“We are a small, family owned business but we are always looking to grow with our community, so we are always looking for experienced help,” said Holly Dancause.



LMT Oil delivers home heating oil, and also does service on heating, air conditioning systems, and heat pumps. They do installations as well.

But delivering oil isn't the only part of the business they love.

“We love being part of the community. Because we live in this community, as well, we get to know our customers, which creates a more personal relationship with them. Tom's kids, who the company is named after, go to our local schools, so he likes to be able to give back to the school community by making donations each year. He donates money to a classroom each year to purchase books every month for each child from the Scholastic Book Club,” said Dancause.

One recent challenge has been the increase in prices over the last year.

“It's been difficult for everyone, especially our customers. We have done our best to keep our prices low so we can be more affordable to our customers. Unfortunately with the rising cost of home heating oil as well as the diesel we need to transport to customers, it has made it difficult. We have encouraged customers who are considerably concerned about this upcoming winter's prices to consider applying for Fuel Assistance through the Worcester Community Action Council. We do accept Fuel Assistance customers,” she said.

LMT Oil can be reached by phone at 508-434-1335.

### With the colder months ahead, LMT Oil offered some advice for customers:

- Get a heating system tune-up — it will ensure you get the maximum performance out of your heating system.
- Open shades and drapes when the sun is out to help warm your home. Close them when the sun goes down to reduce heat loss through drafty windows.
- Turn down the thermostat at night and when you are away from home; even slightly lowering your thermostat during the day may save on your heating bill.
- Insulate pipes to guard against heat loss and to prevent them from freezing.
- Stop heat loss by weather proofing your home. Such as eliminating any gaps between your door and threshold. Caulk or re-caulk exterior spaces between the windows and walls of your home.
- Remove, cover or close air conditioning units and vents when not in use.
- Do not place furniture in front of radiators; it will block heat from circulating.
- For additional tips they can go to Mass Save to have an Energy Audit performed on their home. Mass Save is a helpful program to many of our customers.

Hopefully these tips can help save customers some money this winter.



Company president Thomas Dolan named the company after his three children; Lillian, Madison and Thomas



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# Now is the time to get on board for Shop Small 01588!

BY ROD LEE

With October comes Yom Kippur, Columbus Day, Halloween—and the initial stirrings of excitement for Shop Small 01588, which will be celebrating its ninth

year in the Church St. area of downtown Whitinsville in 2022.

The 2021 version of Shop Small 01588 was “awesome” with eighteen local businesses taking part, Christine Guanipa, owner and operator of Little Man

Handbags & Accessories at 110 Church St. (2nd Floor), said.

These included Ms. Guanipa’s own business along with Crescent Studio, Family Karate Center, Harbro Sales & Service, Driven Elite Training, Flower Shop,

Furiends Gourmet Pet Treats, Katalina’s Boutique, LuLu’s Jewelry & Gifts and Lularoe/Kathy Bartlett Pop-Up at LuLu’s, The Crafty Nest DIY, The Green Plate, Whitin Community Center, Schotanus Design Center and Wood Shop at The Pop-



Shop Small 01588 may be only a little more than a month away, but Church Street in downtown Whitinsville is already a happening place—as evidenced by the Village Congregational Church’s Harvest Festival and a Book Sale at the Whitinsville Social Library, held in tandem, on September 24th. Rosa Ristaino of Mendon and Diane Bousquet of Whitinsville purchased plants from Genie Stack’s Nature’s Bounty booth at the Harvest Festival; meanwhile Jim Seitz came away with an armful of mostly science fiction reading at the library’s Book Sale.

Up at Schotanus, The Daily Grind Barbershop and UniBank.

Also Folklore Gift Shop, which has since been melded into LuLu’s storefront in the former Baker Building, 68 Church St.

This year’s Shop Small 01588 will again be “passport-style” and it will run for a full week, from a start date on “Small Business Saturday”—November 26—through the following

Saturday, December 3rd, Ms. Guanipa said. Shoppers can return their passport stamp cards to Schotanus Design Center, 83 Church St., to be eligible for prizes.

Time is of the essence for merchants to register for Shop Small 01588. Deadline for doing so is October 21.

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

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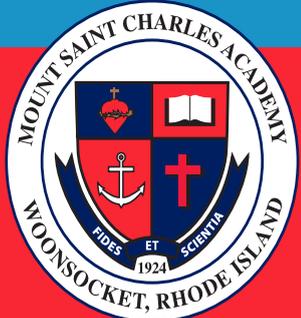
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# Mulhane Home for Funerals marks 150 years as a town asset

BY ROD LEE

Few people can say with certainty what the town of Millbury felt and looked like one hundred fifty years ago. But this much we know: Mulhane Home for Funerals opened for business in 1872, and is still going strong today.

of time.

Besides extensive renovations that were undertaken between 1980 and 1993, the home has undergone more recent upgrades as well.

“We have added additions and taken down walls to open up the area,” Matt Mulhane said on September 12th. “We’ve made

Stu Mulhane has affiliations with the Millbury Veterans Council, the Charles F. Minney VFW Post, Devoe-Taylor American Legion Post No. 9, the Millbury Lions Club, the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Brigid Church and Millbury National Bank.

He has been on the Board of Directors of Mill-

achievement in ground operations against hostile forces while serving with the U.S. Army’s 25th infantry division in Vietnam.

Both Mulhanes are “well-connected in the community,” Ms. Marcum said on September 13th.

Stuart is modest and reserved, Ms. Marcum said.

“He is very quiet. He doesn’t like to be the center of attention. He does like chocolate though! That will get his attention! He is Steady Eddie, a big supporter of the elderly and the Lions Club.”

John T. Latino Jr., VP and COO of Millbury National Bank, agrees with Ms. Marcum’s appraisal.

“Stu is very humble but when he opens his mouth you should listen,” Mr. Latino said.

Millbury National boasts impressive longevity of its own, having been founded in 1825.

Mr. Latino said the bank and Mulhane Home for Funerals have adjusted to the difficulties imposed by the Covid-19 pandemic, which explains why both institutions are doing well.

Small-business activity is picking up, post-pandemic, Mr. Latino said.

“Covid limited their business,” he said, of Mulhane Home for Funerals. “Mulhane is an example of how small businesses” can adapt and move forward from adversity.

Matt Mulhane said working in the funeral trade can be stressful. He



Stuart Mulhane and his son Matthew greet spectators during a Fourth of July parade.



The Buck Homestead on Main Street in Millbury, home of Mulhane Home for Funerals since 1938.

Stuart Mulhane and his son Matthew are not making a big deal about the 150th anniversary, or the fact that they are the fourth and fifth generation care keepers of an enterprise that has demonstrated staying power while earning the respect of the communities it serves.

Like the family itself, the former Buck Homestead at 45 Main St. in the heart of Millbury Center—the only address Mulhane has known since being purchased by Joseph Mulhane and his son Dennis Sr. in 1938—has stood the test

things as large as we can to accommodate any kind of service.”

Stu Mulhane joined the company in 1969, Matt Mulhane in 2003, fresh out of Colby-Sawyer College with a Bachelor’s degree in Business Management. Matt became the company’s fifth fully licensed embalmer and funeral director in 2009.

Their credentials as prominent “Millburyites” and active members of a number of civic-minded organizations are a reflection of their commitment to municipal life.

bury National Bank since 1990, as was his father Dennis before him, according to MNB President and CEO Kate Marcum.

Matt Mulhane is an assistant football coach with the Sutton-Douglas program. He joined the Board of Directors of Millbury National Bank in 2021. Like his dad, he is a member of the Millbury Lions Club.

Stu Mulhane is also a decorated military veteran who received a Purple Heart for wounds incurred in action and the Bronze Star for meritorious

has drawn on his father’s many years of experience to chart his own path.

“We have tried to get the word out to let people know” about the 150th, he said. “People do come up to us and congratulate us. We’ve served generations and generations. Families talk about my grandfather.”

With the improvements they have continued to make in the property, Stu and Matt Mulhane have stayed true to the original vision put forth by Joseph Mulhane and Dennis Sr., who chose the name “Mulhane Home for Funerals” as a way to make families feel comfortable in a welcoming environment.

The funeral industry has changed, with different kinds of services for different people, Matt Mulhane said. Mulhane Home for Funerals understands this,

and offers not only funeral services and memorial services but personal video tributes, customized online memorials, funeral pre-planning, sharing of service details with friends and family, burial, cremation and grief support.

As Mr. Latino says, “they have changed a lot of the services to offer more, with technology.”

“No one wants to come here,” Matt Mulhane acknowledges, of families’ reluctance to say goodbye to loved ones. “But everyone wants to do something.”

Matthew actually started his career at Mulhane at a young age, doing “painting and small jobs.”

Asked if he still takes on painting tasks, he says, “yes, when it’s called for.”

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

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# Gazebo Palooza sets the stage for 5th annual SSFA

BY ROD LEE

**G**azebo Palooza held just off the Grafton Town Common on September 17th gave organizers a chance to show off local food and local artisans. It also provided them

with an opportunity to tout the upcoming fifth annual Small Stones Festival of the Arts, which begins October 14th and runs through the 23rd.

“We have so many restaurants, a raffle, a silent auction and a number of

vendors,” Ken Crater said, of activity taking place on a warm late-fall afternoon.

For Mr. Crater and other members of the SSFA organizing committee—Jennifer Behymer, Sue Cardosi, Gary Cunningham, Bonnie Frederico, Carol Frieswick,

Bob Hassinger, James Hunt, Carolyn Kinloch-Winkler, Christina Larson, Sean Padgett, Nancy Rosenberg, Neil Rosenberg, Catherine Thornton, Bennie Thornton, Kathy Vandenengel and Dana Wilson—Gazebo Palooza is the perfect



Kenneth C. Crater, president of Grafton Arts Inc., talks about the Small Stones Festival of the Arts during Gazebo Palooza. SSFA runs from October 14th to the 23rd and all events are free.

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warmup act for what has become a gigantic production staged in partnership with Apple Tree Arts, the Grafton Public Library, the Grafton Congregational Church, and a host of supporters.

SSFA officially gets underway with the Opening

Night and Awards ceremony from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Friday, October 14th in the Great Hall, One Grafton Common, 2nd Floor.

Another staple of the Festival, on Saturday, October 15th at 7:00 p.m. at the Congregational Church of Grafton, 30 Grafton Com-

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mon, will be a rendition of "Envisioning Abstract Form and Structure"—a lecture and demonstration concert—by the Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra (CHSO). Admission is free.

and galleries in the area, select from among the five hundred entries received the one hundred forty-four works to be exhibited. Jurors for the Fine Art Photography portion of

and people. Mr. Pope is a devoted advocate for the visual arts, music and art education and has worked for many years as executive director, curator and gallery manager at the Zullo Gal-

Gage on Friday, October 21st at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room of the GPL.

Mr. Gage's most recent work is "Greek Fire," a dual biography of opera diva Maria Callas and tycoon Aristotle Onassis. "The book distinguishes not only its subjects but the craft of biography as well," The Washington Post wrote, in a review.

"This was a real coup," for the Small Stones Festival of the Arts to land Nicholas Gage as a speaker, Mr. Crater said.

Helen Whall too. "She

just made a big donation to Holy Cross," he said.

"I originally brought this idea to Apple Tree Arts," Mr. Crater said. "They had restored the Great Hall and there wasn't a lot going on. I thought, why not a multi-genre and multi-artist program? It's turned into something a lot larger than we had thought possible. Always in our mind was to get the painters and photographers involved and give them a chance to sell their work close to the holidays. It's been a labor of love for them but a chance to work some magic too. They are so

encouraging and grateful. For some, it's their first opportunity to get published" and recognized.

Taking a break at Gazebo Palooza, Bonnie Frederico said "I was on the first committee. I try to be a jack of all trades, wherever I'm needed. Today I'm working on the silent auction. Small Stones Festival of the Arts has grown and so have the entries."

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.



Mark Manzella of Worcester performs at Gazebo Palooza.

Donations are welcomed.

Then Paul Surpaine, founder and director of the CHSO, joins the players in a performance of Mozart's "Quintet for Clarinet and Strings." The work is considered "one of Mozart's most mature chamber music masterpieces—standard classic quartet form Plus One," Mr. Surpaine says.

The performance will serve as a preview of the Claflin Hill Apple Tree Arts Chamber Series scheduled for November 19th. Three concerts are planned.

A highlight of the Festival, Dana Wilson notes, is a juried exhibition of painting and photography, featuring "the finest work of our region's best talents." A panel of six judges, distinguished by long experience either as practicing artists or in a curatorial capacity at some of the leading museums

SSFA include Al Weems, Lauren Szumita and David DeMelim. Mr. Weems is a commercial and fine-art photographer with a focus on environmental portraiture. Ms. Szumita is curator at the Fitchburg Art Museum where she oversees a rotating exhibition schedule featuring contemporary artists from New England—and the museum's permanent collection. Mr. DeMelimis is a Rhode Island-based photographer who explores the intersection of art and technology.

Jo Ellen Reinhardt, Susan Termyn and William Pope serve as jurors for the Fine Art Painting exhibition. Ms. Reinhardt's artwork captures the unique beauty in a portrait, still life and landscape. Ms. Termyn is a representational painter and well-known for her impressions of New England's landscape, seascapes

lery Center for the Arts.

SSFA 2022 is sprinkled with events that are bound to draw enthusiastic audiences. Jim Welu, celebrated for his stewardship of the Worcester Art Museum, will give an Artist and Juror Talk in the Great Hall on Sunday, October 16 at 1:00 p.m., for instance.

Dr. Helen Whall, English professor emerita of the College of the Holy Cross, will present a program entitled "Shakespeare Now and Then" in the Community Room of the Grafton Public Library on Saturday, October 15th at 3:00 p.m.

Michael Rose, gallery manager of the historic Providence Art Club, will talk about "How to Market Your Art" in the Great Hall on Wednesday, October 16th at 6:00 p.m.

"A Writer's Odyssey" remarks will be delivered by Grafton's own Nicholas

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# Opportunity knocks and Grafton Grill & Crust jumps in

BY ROD LEE

Steve Belfiore was probably just being modest or maybe it was because he and son Drew were busy serving food at the Gazebo Palooza to benefit the Small Stones Festival of the Arts on September 17th; either way, his description of the family's Grafton Grill & Crust restaurant was low key.

"We've been in business six years, and two years with Mooving Cow, our ice cream," Mr. Belfiore said.

"We're an American grill, fish, burgers, apps, and wood-fired pizza."

This only tells part of Grafton Grill & Crust's story; and it's an interest-

ing one.

Upon relocating to Grafton fourteen or so years ago, Steve and Lori Belfiore wanted to take advantage of Steve's passion for food, which had manifested itself from the age of fourteen when he was shucking clams at a small oyster house in Woods Hole.

More recently, he had worked in the corporate wireless industry for Sprint, AT&T and Radio Shack. Lori had previously been employed with Bose in advertising.

Both were keen on seeing "a Boston-type restaurant" establish a presence in Grafton. It was, in their view, the only thing missing in their adopted com-

munity. They were initially thinking of a bagel shop, pizza or an upscale burger eatery.

When the property that had been known by various names—The Wonder Restaurant, Sebastian's and Bridge Street Bistro—went up for auction and didn't sell, it was "now or never," the Belfiore's say.

Grafton Grill & Crust has thus found a home at 10 Bridge St. in North Grafton

### MORE RESTAURANTS, DEARLY MISSED

Lawrence Bonetti of Uxbridge wrote this in an email on September 12th, in response to the previous week's Feisty Fork column lamenting once-popular

restaurants in the Blackstone Valley that are now long-shuttered and seemingly abandoned:

*I read with interest your article about restaurants that have closed in the area. I would like to add two more.*

*NV Café (N. Uxbridge)*

*Besides the good food, this place was famous for the tombstone erected at the front entrance, dedicated to the 1946 Red Sox and their famous loss to the St. Louis Cardinals in the World Series.*

*Kites Restaurant (S. Grafton)*

*Famous for their steaks. [I am] not originally from the area, but I have visited all of the places mentioned. All gone but not forgotten.*

*News for The Feisty Fork? Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.*



Steve Belfiore, with son Drew (top), representing Grafton Grill & Crust and Mooving Cow (ice cream), and Nikki Hewey and Stacey Bernard from Post Office Pub, were among food establishment personnel taking part in Gazebo Palooza on September 17th. The event was a fundraiser for the fifth annual Small Stones Festival of the Arts (SSFA).

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## At the Jenckes store...

This antique coffee grinder is one of many items on display at the E.N.

Jenckes store in downtown Douglas. A genuine American general store, the Greek-revival two-story wood-frame structure was built in 1833 by Elias Balcome and is now operated by the Douglas Historical Society. The store was scheduled to be open for Octoberfest in Douglas on October 1<sup>st</sup> and is also open most Saturdays.



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NOTE: Community bulletin board-type items are welcome for inclusion in the Happenings! section of the Xpress newspapers. Please allow enough lead time for publication. Email your calendar or event notice to rodlee.1963@gmail.com.

**UPCOMING AT INDIAN RANCH IN WEBSTER:**

October 8, Jamey Johnson Live in Concert, 1:00 p.m. Tickets are available at www.indianranch.com, by calling 1-800-514-3849 or at the Indian Ranch Box Office.

**THROUGH OCTOBER 29**

• An art exhibition featuring alcohol and ink paintings by Linda Littleton will be on display in the café gallery of Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main St., Webster. A reception for the artist is scheduled for Friday, October 14th from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. Call 508-949-6232 for further info.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8**

• An Indian Princess tour of Webster Lake will take place at 9:45 a.m. Call 508-943-3871 or go to <https://indianranch.com/events> for more info.  
• The General Ebenezer Learned DAR Chapter of Oxford is hosting a talk to answer the question "Was There Silver in Them There Towns?" and a discussion of the history of silver in American domestic life at 1:00 p.m. in the Oxford Police

Department's Training/Community Room, 503 Main St. Dennis Knight, long-time collector and dealer, will give an illustrated history of silver from Colonial times to the 20th Century. Mr. Knight's presentation will include items from his own collection to show how silver went from being made by small-town local artisans to large manufacturing in cities, from coinage to elegant dining settings and more. The public is invited to bring an item to be identified and perhaps given some insight as to its origin. The event is free but donations to the Oxford Food Pantry would be appreciated.

• Upton VFW Post 5594 will wrap up its summer series of flea markets at 15 Milford St. (Rt. 14). Spaces are \$10 each or \$15 if a banquet-sized table is needed. Parking is free. Call David Kennedy at 508-529-3314 or visit the Post's Facebook page for more details.

**OCTOBER 8-9**

• "The Battle for the Airfield WWII Re-Enactment" will take place at the American Heritage Museum, 568 Main St., Hudson. This is a WWII living history event with over 350 re-enactors representing several branches of Allied and Axis military in two large-scale battles daily. Re-enactor encampments will be open all day for both Axis and Allied soldiers. There will also be a WWII veterans roundtable daily in the hangar. Tank rides will be available all weekend for

an additional charge. Visit [www.americanheritagemuseum.org](http://www.americanheritagemuseum.org) for more info.

**OCTOBER 9-23**

• The Friends of the Simon Fairfield Public Library in Douglas will conduct a fall online auction, with all proceeds going toward the Library Building Fund. The Friends are seeking donations of crafts, services, gift baskets, antiques and "what-have-you" for this event. For more information, visit [mysfpl.org](http://mysfpl.org).

**OCTOBER 11 & 25**

• "Meet the Candidate," Terry Burke Dotson, at the Millbury Public Library, 128 Elm St., 5:00 to 6:00 p.m.

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12**

• Come to the Northbridge Senior Center, 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, for Frank Ruscitti's "Music Review" from 2:00 to 3:00 p.m. Mr. Ruscitti will share a "walk" through various original recordings from his musical collection. Sign up in the main office or call 508-234-2002.

**OCTOBER 12 & 19**

• "Meet the Candidate," Terry Burke Dotson, Oxford Public Library, 339 Main St., 5:00-6:00 p.m.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 14**

• Duranarama will take place at Samuel Slater's Restaurant at Indian Ranch in Webster. Show time is 8:00 p.m. Call 508-943-3871 or go to <https://indianranch.com/events> for more info.

**OCTOBER 14-23**

• The fifth annual Small Stones Festival of the Arts will take place in the Great Hall of Apple Tree Arts, One Grafton Common, 2nd Floor, in the Community Room of the Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, Rear Entrance, and at the Congregational Church of Grafton, 30 Grafton Common. SSFA begins with an Opening Event and awards in the Great Hall on the 14th from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. This is followed by the exhibition of juried art and photography

throughout the dates involved. The Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra will perform; Dr. Helen Whall will present on "Shakespeare Now and Then;" Nicholas Gage will talk on "A Writer's Odyssey;" Michael Rose will share his thoughts on "How to Market Your Art;" Annie Adams Fields will present "Victorian Gossip Girl;" and there will be artist and juror talks. Go to [smallstones-festival.org](http://smallstones-festival.org) for full details.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15**

• St. Patrick's Fall Recycling event will take place from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at 7 East St., Whitinsville. Profits will benefit upcoming YIA (Youth in Action) service projects. There will be on-site paper shredding, electronics recycling for a fee and a collection of bottles and cans and textiles. For more information and pricing, call 508-234-5656 or email [officesupport@mystpatricks.co](mailto:officesupport@mystpatricks.co). Cash preferred.  
• Open Sky Community Services' 8th annual Valley Bag Toss, an inclusive corn-hole tournament open to all individuals and all skill levels, will be held at Alternatives' Whitin Mill on Douglas Road from noon to 5:00 p.m.  
• A Harvest Supper to benefit the Auburn Historical Society and Museum will be held at Pakachoag Church on Pakachoag St., Auburn, at 6:00 p.m. The menu is roast pork, seasonal vegetables and

apple crisp. Patrons can dine in or dine out. There will be gift baskets for sale and a 50/50 drawing. Tickets are \$15 each and may be purchased at the museum, 41 South St., on Tuesday or Saturday between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Tickets may also be purchased by

calling 508-832-6856 or with a check to the museum, 41 South St., Auburn 01501. Tickets must be purchased by October 8th. Baskets will be on view at the museum the morning of October 15th and tickets for the 50/50 may be bought then too. Winners do not



*Dr. Helen Whall Shakespeare Now and Then*    *Nicholas Gage A Writer's Odyssey*    *Michael Rose How to Market Your Art*    *Judith Kalaora as Annie Adams Fields*



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[SmallStonesFestival.org](http://SmallStonesFestival.org) for information



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**HAPPENINGS!**

*continued from page 11*

have to be present for the drawing and will be notified.

**OCTOBER 15-16**

• Waters Farm Days, a fall tradition, will take place at 53 Waters Road, Sutton, offering attendees an opportunity to learn about New England farm life in the 18th and 19th centuries. Highlights include tours of the farm house and the maple sugar house, a blacksmith at work and shingle making. There will also be tractor pulls, displays of farm equipment, a car show, farm animals, children's activities, crafters and more.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16**

• The New England Country Music Club presents live music by Rustic Country at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:30 p.m. with entertainment from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub.

**OCTOBER 17 & 26**

• "Meet the Candidate," Terry Burke Dotson, Auburn Public Library, 369 Southbridge St., Auburn, 5:00-6:00 p.m.

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18**

• A Free Flu Shot Clinic is being offered at the Uxbridge Senior Center, 36 S. Main St. from 9:00 a.m. to noon, courtesy of Hanaford Supermarket's pharmacy. All are welcome; the 65+ flu vaccine will be available to those who want the shot. Please bring insurance cards with you; no copays are required. Call the Senior Center at 508-278-8622 to obtain registration forms before attending this event.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22**

• The Pike 100.1 Halloween "Boos" Cruise with Chuck Perkins is scheduled for 5:45 p.m. Call 508-943-3871 or go to <https://indianranch.com/events> for more info.  
• The Worcester Model Railroaders, Inc. will be holding an open house from 10 a.m.-3p.m. at 14 Railroad Ave, Webster. On display

will be two layouts: a 40'x60' HO, Digitrax, DCC operated layout representing central New England railroading from Providence up into the Worcester area, and the second layout is a three rail O gauge, 9'x30' in size. Trackwork is complete and scenery is 80% finished. Both layouts will be operating and you will be welcome to join the operating session on the HO layout. Admission is free but donations are welcome. More information can be found at [www.wmrr.org](http://www.wmrr.org) as well as on FB.

**OCTOBER 24-25**

• An AARP Safe Driver Course with Instructor Phyllis Masso is being offered at the Northbridge Senior Center, 20 Highland St., Whitinsville. Those taking the course may be eligible for a discount on their car insurance (consult your insurance agent for details). The classroom course is \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for nonmembers. Space is limited. Register by calling Michelle at 508-234-2002. Participants must attend both sessions to complete the course.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 27**

• The Northbridge Senior Center, 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, will host a "Pumpkins & Pranks" Halloween Party from 12 noon to 2:00 p.m., featuring a luncheon and a magician. Costumes are highly encouraged and there will be prizes in several categories. Tickets are \$5 and must be purchased at the main office prior to the event.

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28**

• The Millbury Senior Center's Halloween Party will be held from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., at the Center, 1 River St. Call 508-865-9154 to RSVP.

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29**

• UniBank will offer a Community Shred even at its Sutton North branch, 29 Galaxy Pass, Sutton, from 9:00 a.m. to noon.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2**

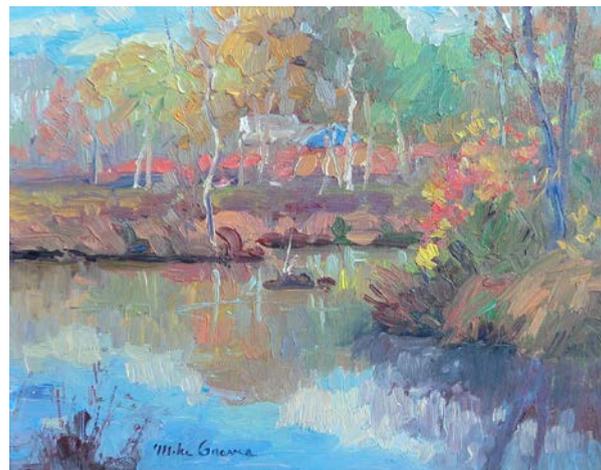
• "Heart to Home" will present a hot-lunch event at the Northbridge Senior Center, 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, at 11:30 a.m. Heart to Home provides a selection of over 160 frozen meals that can be stored in the freezer until ready to heat and enjoy. Come in for a free lunch—either honey rosemary chicken or crumb-topped cod in lemon sauce—trivia and a raffle-prize giveaway. Sign up with Amy; space is limited.

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3**

• Join BCBS at the Northbridge Senior Center, 20 Highland St., for a free seminar on the difference between Medicare Supplement plans and Medicare Advantage plans, 11:00 a.m. Sign up in the main office or call 508-234-2002.

**NOVEMBER 4-5**

• The Gladys E. Kelly Library in Webster will host "Mini-Golf in the



An original painting by award-winning Millbury artist Michael Graves will be among the items up for purchase during the Friends of the Simon Fairfield Public Library's Online Auction, October 9-23. Open bidding for Mr. Graves' painting and such other featured items as a Harry Potter signed first edition, a handcrafted knife by Jim Saviano, beautiful gift baskets, gift certificates, vacation packages, antique and vintage items and items of local historical significance has started. The Friends thank sponsors for donations that make this year's auction catalog the best ever. All proceeds benefit the library's building fund campaign including handicapped access. Go to <https://mysfpl.org> to place your bid(s).

Stacks," featuring a putting course set up between the bookshelves. On Friday from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. the event will be for adults only with a minimum donation of \$10 per person. Beer, wine and soda will be offered for a small fee Snacks will be free. Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. is for families with a \$5 donation for adults and no admission charge for children. All donations will go directly to the library to fund future events.

**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6**

• The New England Country Music Club presents live music by Al Carter at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:30 p.m. with entertainment from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub.

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 9**

• A Lunch and Learn program featuring a visit by Blackstone Valley Physical Therapy Associates will be held at the Northbridge Senior Center, 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Instruction will be provided on safely using assistive devices that are often recommended after falls or setbacks. Sign up at the front desk.

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11**

• A Fundraiser for Friends of Northbridge Elders (FINE) featuring "A Night of Spirit Messages" with Dr. Cathy Ripley Greene, psychic medium, will be held

from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus, 77 Prescott St., Whitinsville. Tickets are \$50. There will be a cash bar and snacks will be provided. Tickets may be purchased at the Senior Center, 20 Highland St., Whitinsville.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12**

• St. Denis Church's Holiday Fair will be held from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at 23 Manchaug Rd., Douglas, featuring crafts, raffles, baked goods and a kids table. Luncheon will be served from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Vendor spaces are available. Go to SaintDenisChurch.com for more info and updates. Online! . . . coming soon. . . baskets in our holiday raffle; tickets are \$3 each or ten for \$15. Drawing is on November 12, no need to be present to win and tickets will be available at the Fair on the 12th.

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 19**

• The Blackstone Valley Wine & Chocolate Tasting with a live auction, raffles, prizes and vendors will be held at Blissful Meadows Golf Club, 801 Chocolog Road, Uxbridge, at 7:00 p.m. This event is offered in collaboration with Marty's Fine Wines, The Candy Shoppe and The Afterglow Boutique. Tickets are \$40, \$50 at the door and may be purchased at UniBank in Whitinsville or Uxbridge or online at [www.facebook.com/BVWinetasting](http://www.facebook.com/BVWinetasting). Proceeds benefit the Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter and the Blackstone Valley Rotary Scholarship Fund.

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**Mold:** Since a roof leak adds moisture to a home, mold can start growing in your attic. Mold doesn't just look unsightly; it can also lead to several health issues.

**Slip -and- fall incidents:** A roof leak can result in a puddle on the floor, putting you and your family members at risk of slipping and falling.

**Higher energy bills:** A roof leak can also increase your energy bills - all the water from the leak can saturate the insulation in your attic and prevent it from doing its job.

**Fire hazard:** A leaky roof can pose a fire threat if it reaches the electrical wiring in your home.

**Damaged home structure:** If a leak isn't addressed soon enough, it can lead to structural damage to your home.

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# Prepare your garden for winter's onslaught

Individuals who don't live near the equator or in another warm climate know that winter will rear its chilly head this year. Cold temperatures and snowy conditions may be excellent for skiing and sledding, but gardeners recognize these conditions are not ideal for their plants.

The inevitable slowing of activity in the garden during fall marks a time to shift attention from

constant plant care to preparing the landscape for next season. It may be tempting to simply let Mother Nature take over, but a little pre-winter TLC can ensure gardens make it through winter unscathed.

**Remove spent plants**  
Decomposing organic material is the basis for compost and other fertilizers. However, vegetable plants that are left to sit can lead to decay in the gar-

den. Decaying plants can serve as hosts for pest populations and diseases. Rotting vegetables also can drop unwanted seeds into the soil, which eventually can strip nutrients that normally would go to next year's crops.

Ornamental plants and perennials can be cut back in fall. Cut down stalks and remove leaves.

**Plant a cover crop**  
The gardening resource *This Is My Garden* recommends planting a cover crop to set the stage for a successful spring. A cover crop protects the soil and can return nutrients to it. When the soil is bare during winter, weed seeds can easily blow in and lie in wait, ultimately becoming a problem during the

ensuing year. Cover crops can include clover or field peas, which will increase the levels of available nitrogen.

**Amend the soil**  
Fall is a perfect time to add soil amendments, such as manure and compost. These fertilizers will add nutrients and break down gradually, enriching the soil over the winter.

**Replenish mulch**  
Gardeners may have added mulch around shrubs and other areas of the landscape early in the season because it is attractive. But mulch also does much to reduce water loss and protect the soil from erosion. It may inhibit weed growth as well. Replacing mulch when the mercury drops can in-



Adding a layer of mulch around plants can insulate roots and the soil against hard frosts.

insulate the soil, which helps to regulate soil temperature. A thick layer of mulch around root vegetables left in the garden can offer protection against hard frosts.

**Divide bulbs**  
Divide plant bulbs and plant them where you want flowers like daffodils and tulips to grow in the spring.

**Prune dormant plants**  
Wait until plants are dormant to prune them and adjust their shape. Most shrubs

and trees should be pruned in late winter, right before new growth.

**Move potted plants**  
Bring delicate plants into a sheltered area, such as a greenhouse or indoor garage, so they can continue to thrive during the winter.

Fall and winter still provide opportunities to spend time in the garden. At this point in the year, gardeners can prepare landscapes for the next season.



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*Terri and Mike*

## Here's a tip...

**By JoAnn Derson**

- Apricots are a relative of the peach, and they can be ripened just like a peach can -- in a paper bag on the counter. They should be refrigerated when ripe.
- "I went to a tag sale and purchased a set of really cute flowerpots for barely anything. I like them so much that I am using them inside my house. They are holding utensils in the kitchen, and remotes and other odds and ends in the living room. They are great!" -- S.I.
- Laundry baskets can be your best friends when decluttering the house. Go from room to room collecting the clutter in a laundry basket, then bring it to a central location to sort and redistribute items that belong in each room.
- When purchasing school supplies, remember that paper, pencils, etc., typically aren't on sale mid-year, so stocking up is a good idea. Just make sure the deal you are getting is a good one. Then put it away for distribution later!
- Pint-size water bottles are great for refilling with milk. The

- milk boxes at the grocery store are so expensive, and this way, I can control how chocolatey the chocolate milk is. -- C.C.
  - Add these to the list of items to eliminate the odor of cooking cabbage: a heel of bread, a whole walnut or a pinch of baking soda.
  - \* To travel with pleated skirts, use this packing trick: Turn the skirt inside out and straighten all the pleats. Then tape the bottom so that all the pleats are held together. Next, feed the skirt into a leg of pantyhose with the foot cut off. You end up with a nice tube, which you can tuck into the sides of your luggage.
  - \* When traveling for more than a few days, stick your plants into the bathtub with a little bit of water. They soak it up, and you don't have to have someone come over and water your plants. This will only work for a week or less, though. -- John McF.
  - \* I keep grocery lists on my computer. When I am going to go shopping, I print out the list and fold the paper in half. Then I slip my coupons into the fold. Keeps them handy when I am shopping. -- Reader
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# A beginner's guide to fall planting and maintenance

Spring and summer are perhaps the busiest times of year for gardeners. However, fall also is a prime time to tend to gardens. The tree and bare root retailer Bower & Branch advises that soil temperatures in many regions of the country may still be warm enough to encourage root growth well into the start of winter. Furthermore, fall is often the ideal time to plant, fertilize and keep a garden going or to get a head start on next year's bounty.

Here are some tips to make the most of the fall gardening season.

- Think about fall annuals and bulb planting. Near the end of September, start planting cool-weather-loving pansies and violas for pops of color as summer flowers fade. Also, it's a good idea to stock up on bulbs that will bloom in the months to come before they sell out in stores. Wait until the temperatures really cool

down before planting them in desired spots for spring sprouts.

- Sow salad seeds. Lettuce, spinach, radishes, and arugula tolerate cooler temperatures. Try new and interesting lettuce varieties and enjoy salads well into the fall season.

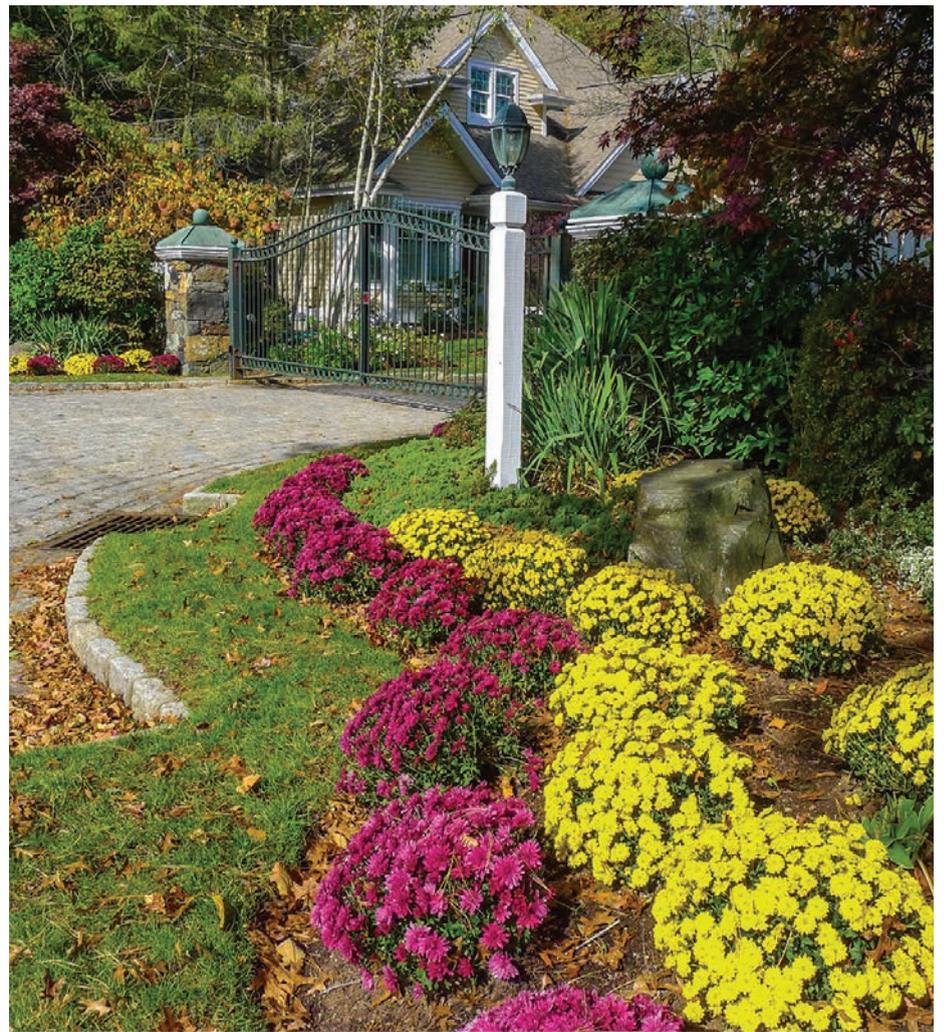
- Take inventory of the sun. Positioning a garden carefully means maximizing hours of sunlight, which begin to dwindle in the fall. Experts say gardens grow best in sunny locations that receive six hours of direct sunlight each day. This is where container gardens can be helpful, as they allow gardeners to move plants into spots that will get ample sunlight.

- Fill in landscaping gaps. Some fall plants can add color around the landscape and brighten up homes to add curb appeal. In addition to pansies and violas, asters, kale and chrysanthemums are fall blooms. Keep in mind

that mums can come back year after year. So take them out of those flower pots and get them into the ground. They can be enjoyed next year as well, sprouting in early spring and developing leaves and buds through late summer.

- Clean up unwanted growth. Fall is an ideal time to cut back spent vegetable plants and get rid of errant weeds. Rather than bagging leaves, mow them with a grass catcher and then add the mix to a vegetable garden as an excellent soil insulator. The nitrogen and carbon will fertilize the soil, enhancing growing possibilities and limiting weed growth.

- Propagate plants in the fall. As temperatures gradually begin to cool, start taking cuttings from perennials, gathering seed pods from azaleas and rhododendrons and dividing hardwood cuttings, says the resource Gardening Know



How. Consult with a garden center or horticulturist on the proper ways to propagate stems using rooting hormone and other techniques.

- Continue to water

plants. Water is essential in the fall and winter as roots can still be growing. Gradually reduce watering duration as plants go dormant.

Fall planting and

maintenance can extend gardening season and improve the chances of growing a healthy spring garden.

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## Fireplace trends help create attractive, comfortable rooms

Fireplaces are useful features in a home. Fireplaces are sources of ambient heat and also add style to indoor spaces.

Fireplaces can complement just about any interior style. Fireplaces can be traditional and burn wood or connect to a home's natural gas supply for on-demand ambiance.

What's more, fireplaces may come in vented or ventless varieties, depending on homeowners' preferences and what is allowed by community building codes. That means a chimney or flue may not be needed — expanding the list of rooms where a fireplace can be installed.

Certain trends have emerged among fireplace fans in recent years. Here's a look at what's getting consumers fired up about these home decor elements.

- Minimalist style: Many

fireplaces are designed in neutral colors with minimal trim that directs focus on the fire and not the appliance. When the fireplace is not in use, it blends in with surroundings and will not compete for attention with other design elements.

- Convertible fireplaces: Homeowners can choose between open or sealed fireplaces. A convertible fireplace enables homeowners to have the best features of these options. A convertible fireplace can be converted to wood from gas, or the opposite, in as little as 30 minutes.

- Nature-inspired materials: Natural stone continues to be a material of choice in fireplace surrounds. Light colors work well for a fireplace, and also fit with today's lighter color interior design preferences. Natural stone

also works perfectly with both contemporary and rustic decor.

- Vintage fireplaces: Vintage continues to be a buzzword in 2022, and the choice to go vintage also applies to fireplace styles. A room decorated in vintage elements can be complemented with a vintage fireplace or one designed to look vintage.

- Integrate into wall decor: Fireplaces that are built right into a wall save space. One can have a television and a fireplace on the same wall. These types of fireplaces work well in modern home designs. Other fireplaces may be built into bookshelves or other wall features.

Fireplaces can improve the appeal of a home. Various trends are popular this year, making fireplaces highly coveted features.



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# 7 characteristics of modern houses

Homes contain a variety of components that appeal to homeowners with different ideas about the perfect place to call home. That starts with the style of a home.

Buildings are classified according to their components. A Craftsman style home will have a covered porch with a set of wide base columns, while a Cape Cod home is often defined by a gabled roof and dormer windows. Modern houses, which are sometimes called contemporary homes even though the terms are not interchangeable, will have their own sets of unique characteristics. Here's a look at seven features that make modern homes unique.

**1. Minimalist approach:** Contemporary and modern homes both employ an approach that leans toward minimalism, including clean

design lines. Spaces are open and airy without the clutter of too many ornate architectural details. While modern homes may have some curvature to their design, contemporary ones are all about an angular look.

**2. Neutral color palette:** Modern homes tend to utilize a neutral color palette. Modern homes may use 'earthy' elements, such as wood and brick, in ways that do not look rustic. Contemporary homes rely on a color palette of black and white with shades of gray or other neutral colors.

**3. Geometric shapes:** Modern homes have strong horizontal and vertical elements that showcase geometric shapes in their designs. Contemporary homes often have flat roofs, while modern homes may not.

**4. Large, unadorned windows:** Most modern homes showcase a lot of natural light by utilizing large windows that are not covered up by heavy window treatments or elements like shutters and thick trims. Large windows are the focus of the interior and shift attention to the view outdoors.

**5. Open floor concept:** A hallmark of modern interior design, the open concept floor plan removes many of the walls that tend to separate common areas of a home. This helps to foster the spread of natural light and maintains the emphasis on simplicity of design.

**6. Smart elements:** Thanks to the proliferation of smart technology, smart homes are cropping up with greater frequency. While smart devices can be included in any home



style, they tend to feel like they were designed specifically for modern homes. In a similar vein, modern homes may include environmentally friendly elements, such as solar panels, upcycled materials, added insulation, and energy efficient lighting.

**7. Updated kitchen spaces:** The clean lines and attention to technology and open space generally extends

to modern kitchens. Modern kitchens tend to feature efficient, top-tier appliances with additional storage and space amenities that keep the room from

feeling cluttered. While some may consider modern homes austere, many others are right at home among their clean lines and airy spaces.



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# Signs your gutters are in need of repair

Fall is a great time to tackle projects around the house. The weather each fall allows homeowners to make improvements to their homes' exteriors without worrying about extreme heat or cold, while interior projects like painting are made easier because homeowners can open the windows to allow for proper ventilation.

Fall also marks a great time to prepare for upcoming projects that can make winter work that much easier. For example, fall is a great time to take stock of your gutters so you can address any issues before leaves begin to fall or the first snowstorm touches down.

Compromised gutters can contribute to water issues in basements and adversely affect a home's foundation if not addressed immediately, so it behooves homeowners to learn the signs that gutters are in need of repair or replacement.

• Gutter hanging off the home: Gutters were once installed predominantly with spikes. However, many industry professionals now install gutters with hanger brackets. Why the change? Spikes loosen over time, leading to the gutters hanging off the home. That can contribute to serious issues if left untreated. Gutters hanging off the home need not necessarily be

replaced, but rather secured to the home, ideally with hanger brackets instead of spikes. Brackets hook into the front of the gutter and are then screwed into the fascia of a home. A professional who specializes in gutter repair can perform this task relatively quickly, and it's an inexpensive yet highly effective solution.

• Gutter separation: Gutters that are no longer fastened together can leak and contribute to issues that affect the home's foundation, siding and appearance. Clogs and the accumulation of debris can cause gutters to separate because they are not designed to hold too much weight. Replacement of separated gutters may or may not be necessary depending on how big the problem is and the condition of the existing gutters. If replacement is not necessary, separated gutters may be remedied by securing the joints,

another relatively simple and inexpensive fix.

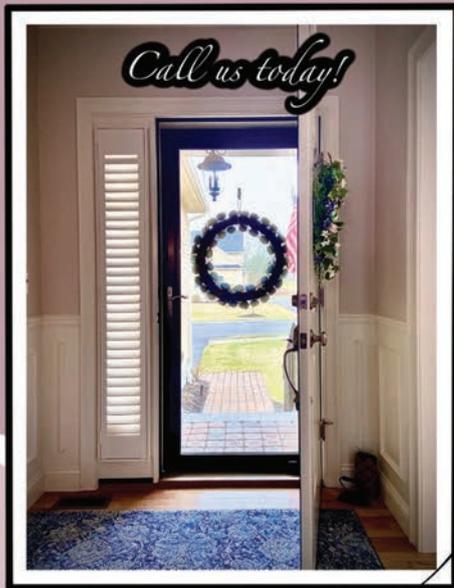
• Peeling exterior paint: Paint that appears to be peeling off of your home may indicate that water is seeping over the edge of the gutter closest to your home. When that happens, water is coming down the side of the house, causing the paint to peel. In such instances, replacing the gutters is often necessary.

• Basement flooding: Not all signs of deteriorating gutters are outside a home. Many a homeowner has been flummoxed by flooding in their basements, and such flooding can be caused by aging, ineffective gutters. That's because deteriorating gutters sometimes allow water to leak near the foundation of a home, contributing to basement flooding.

Fall is an ideal time to inspect gutters and have any issues fixed before leaves begin to fall or harsh winter weather arrives.

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# Gourds, squashes and pumpkins, oh my!

Halloween takes place during a time of year characterized by earth-colored chrysanthemums, leaf-lined walkways and crisp autumn air. As colorful as the costumes children wear for trick-or-treating may be, nature's beauty is unsurpassed this time of year, and the scores of pumpkins, gourds and squashes on display only add to that colorful melange.

The Cucurbitaceae family may be best known for pumpkins, squash and gourds, but there actually are 800 species that belong to this family. While they share many of the same properties, these fruits each have their own unique attributes.

The main differences between squashes, gourds and pumpkins is their intended purposes - whether they're ornamental or edible.

**Squash**  
Squashes come in summer and winter varieties.

Winter ones do not actually grow in the winter; in fact, they're harvested in late summer and early fall, but the name references the hard shell casing that protects the tender pulp inside. Zucchini are summer squash because their outer flesh is tender, while butternut, acorn, spaghetti, and hubbard squashes are winter squashes because they feature a tough skin. Even though it takes some effort to crack that shell, the dense, nutrient-rich flesh inside is well worth the workout.

**Gourds**  
Gourds are essentially ornamental squashes; they aren't cultivated for eating. Instead they are bred to look beautiful and unique in autumn centerpieces. Types of gourds include autumn wing gourd, warted gourds, turban gourds, and bottle gourds. Each gourd is

unique in its shape and color.

**Pumpkins**  
Pumpkins come in ornamental and edible varieties. Even though all pumpkins can be consumed, some taste better than others. Small pumpkins tend to be decorative because, according to Nutritious Life, they do not have enough meat inside to make them worthy of cooking. However, sugar pumpkins are best for baking and cooking favorite recipes, states the resource Pumpkin Nook.

The festive hues and flavors of squashes, gourds and pumpkins are one more thing that makes Halloween and autumn special.



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# Southwick's Festival of Illumination returns with new features

Southwick Zoo's popular Festival of Illumination is back for a four-month run, bigger and better than ever.

Belinda Mazur, marketing manager for the Festival of Illumination, said this year's theme is "Once Upon a Time." The event began September 1st and continues through December 31st from 5:30 to 10:00 p.m.

Ms. Mazur said a VIP kickoff held on September 7th was well-attended and featured remarks by Sen. Ryan Fattman, Rep. Brian Murray, Bill Burns of the Performance Food Group, Peter Brewer who is president of Southwick's Zoo, Past President Justine Brewer, Betsey Brewer of Earth Ltd. at Southwick's Zoo and Justin Corsa and Meng Liu of the Zigong Lantern Group.

Working again with the award-winning Zigong Lantern family, the Festival of Illumination will offer zoo visitors a look at extraordinary Chinese lanterns utilized in larger-than-life exhibits to showcase myths, legends and fairytales from around the globe.

Ms. Mazur described the experience as "a journey through forgotten stories of myths, legends and fairy tales. So amazing!"

There is also a new twist for 2022 that will add an exciting component to the production. There will be live entertainment, Chinese acrobats, an Asian marketplace, interactive exhibits, specialty foods, and more.

Then on November 26th zoo patrons will be able to enjoy Southwick's tradi-



tional Winter Wonderland holiday lights in combination with holiday-themed Chinese lanterns.

Ms. Mazur recommends that those planning to take

in the Festival of Illumination purchase their tickets in advance. This can be done at [www.festivalofillumination.com](http://www.festivalofillumination.com) or [www.southwickzoo.com](http://www.southwickzoo.com).

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Coming in the Blackstone Valley Xpress North on October 21st, a profile of the Hare family of Harbro Auto Sales as the dealership looks forward to a 50th anniversary in 2023.



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**WSN Ladies On The Lake**  
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Held at Indian Ranch in Webster, MA aboard the beautiful Indian Princess



**Medicare Advisors: A Presentation About Navigating Medicare**  
October 13, 2022 | 8:30am-9:30am  
Held at the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce Office, in Whitinsville, MA



**Business Executive Roundtable With Clear Vision Alliance**  
October 18, 2022 | 8:30am-11:00am  
Virtual Meeting



**Association Health Plan Info Session**  
October 19, 2022  
8:30am-9:30am  
Held at the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce Office, in Whitinsville, MA



**WSN Commerce On The Common**  
November 2, 2022 | 5:30pm-8:00pm  
Held at the Grafton Common, in Grafton, MA



**BVCC 44th Annual Meeting & Awards Ceremony**  
November 16, 2022 | 7:30am-10:00am  
Held at Pleasant Valley Country Club, in Sutton, MA

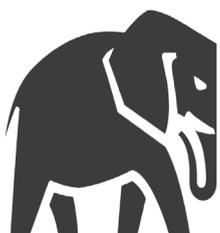


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LIVING WITH LUKE

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# Luke reveals a stubborn side

BY AMY LECLAIRE

Life has been far more interesting with a puppy named Luke Valentino. He entered my life on Friday, March 25th

“There you are! I can’t believe it’s you again!” He awakens to the sight of me and wiggles in a circle around me. The routine is utterly fantastic.

“Hi Luke!” We’ve been apart for over nine hours and I’m so ready to reunite. “How is my puppy?” He tells me how he is with whimpers of joy, a sneaker in his mouth. “I just can’t believe this is happening!! You’re here again and it’s

about being with us—and this is no exaggeration. Their love is unconditional, boundless. They see no baggage, hold no grudges, and appreciate us exactly as we are.

“You’re such a good boy, Luke!” Positive affirmations are everywhere. Social media, inspirational quotes and Wall Art remind us to Be Positive and Live Well. Dogs naturally understand the vibe. “I really am a good boy.” He smiles as dogs do, with genuine innocence and appreciation for living. “Watch how good I am at finding my spot. I’ll go sit down and you get my breakfast ready. Sound good?” He sits regally, posing like a dog model preparing for a headshot, then studies me. “She’s going to make coffee, fill my water bowl and scoop up my cup of dog food, then add some water.” His eyes are glued to my moves. “I just can’t believe this is happening. My meal really is on its way!”

He jumps off of his spot. “Let’s just get on with eating!” He’s mastered having patience since he was eight weeks old. I want to sustain the achievement, one built on both our efforts. “Luke, go sit at your spot.” He tap dances back to his spot and does his best to sit still but—

“She remembered the blueberries!!” I finally set the bowl down and another pie-eating contest begins. Sometimes I can’t believe how much Luke Valentino embodies his name, one

that contains the letters L, O, V, E (just as his cousin, Lincoln Veto did). Other times I can’t believe how stubborn he is.

\* \* \*

“Luke!!” I trot, barefooted, into my neighbor’s backyard, where my pup has crossed a border of shrubs to chase after a bunny.

He zigs. He zags. He zooms. Then he finds himself in the middle of the road in front of both our houses. I watch him from a distance. A light bulb has gone off in his boxy puppy head. “How did I get here?” I watch him put two and two together. “What just happened? Something doesn’t feel right. Where’s my family?”

I approach him. “Get over here, Luke.” He freezes to the sight of me. “Hi Momma.” Then he shows me some sass. “Ha hah!” I lunge for his collar but he dodges me as though we’re competing in a game of flag football. “Bet you can’t catch me!”

Truth. I’m cannot catch a 55-pound puppy who’s built like a miniature Rob Gronkowski. “Let’s go back to Luke’s house!” I reach into a pocket of invisible dog incentives. “I got something for Luke!” He knows the phrase. His head squares while he pauses to think it over. I’ve been very consistent with food rewards and am hoping to capitalize on the tactic. I move towards him.

“Let’s play Keep Away instead!” Baby Gronk isn’t sold on another kibble. He



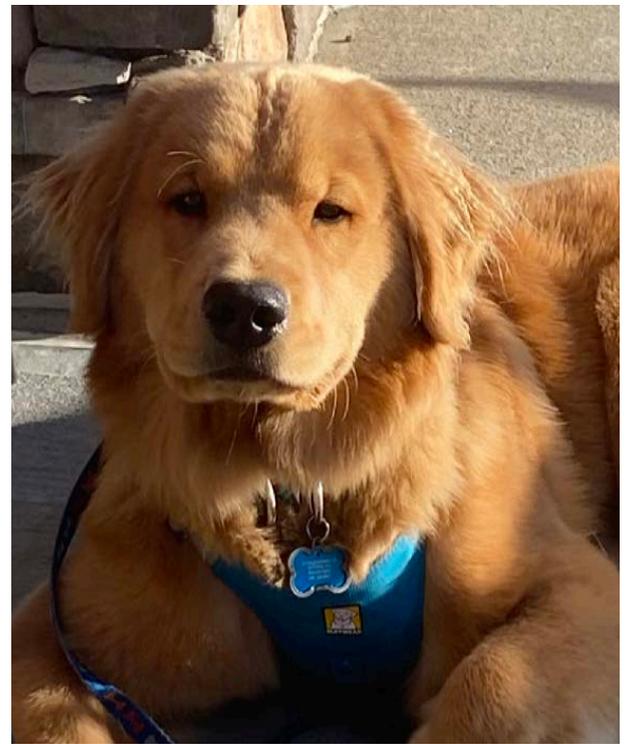
Above, Luke plays with Ellie. Below, Luke at eight months old.



Luke sits at his spot.

at 11:00 a.m. He stole my heart at noon.

going to be such a great day!” Dogs are ecstatic



LUKE

continued on page 25



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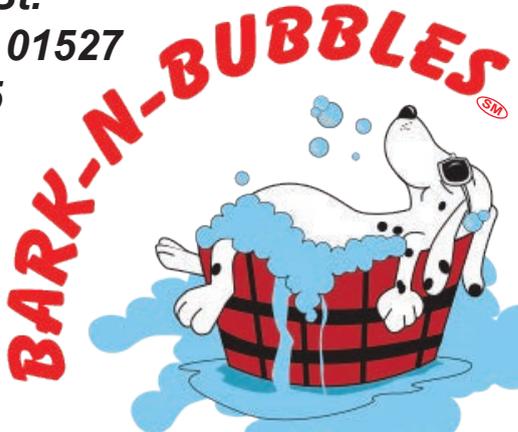
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# Multiple spirits haunt the Shanley Hotel – Part II

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

Here is the second part of the two-part series on the haunted Shanley Hotel in upstate New York.

In 2001 the property was purchased and renovated by Salvatore Nicosia. Sadly Salvatore passed away in 2017, and one year later, the building was once again abandoned and up for sale. It reopened under new management in 2018 and has since become a destination for paranormal enthusiasts. Connecticut Paranormal Research Team founder Christine Peer worked with Sal at the hotel on weekends for eight years. She and her husband, Dan, witnessed countless para-

normal phenomena.

According to Christine, in 1915, Dr. Walter Nelson Thayer backed his car out of the alley between his home and the hotel and accidentally ran over a boy named Jonathan. Jonathan was taken to his third-floor room, where he died a few days later. His body was taken for burial, but his spirit remained, and to this day, he is one of the more active ghosts in the hotel. Jonathan's spirit became attached to Christine more than the others. The husband and wife research team would learn much more about the Shanley during their tenure there. Christine stated, "not only are there residual haunts, most of the haunts are

intelligent. Each night the occurrences guests and [I] experienced would always be different. It was like the hotel was still in operation to the deceased that once visited. You never knew which spirit was going to come through and let you know they were there. I, along with several guests, have experienced seeing an apparition somewhere in the building, hearing footsteps going up and down the hallways when everyone is in one location together and seeing and hearing door knobs turning and doors opening or closing on their own."

Christine would help get the rooms ready for the arrival of guests. She considered those moments

"quality time" with the spirits who would often call her name or use other ways to let her know they were there with her. One strange incident in particular sometimes happened while she was folding laundry downstairs.

She would hear a ball bouncing on the staircase in the hall. As she approached the staircase, she would watch the ball roll from the third-floor landing, turn the corner, bounce down the stairs to the second floor, and eventually roll into the room where she was folding the laundry. She would carry the ball back up the stairs and place it back in the room where Jonathan died. Within a few minutes, the ball would come rolling

back into the room she was working in. It appeared that Jonathan felt like playing a game.

One time, while her daughters were staying the weekend, Christine decided to give them a tour of the third-floor rooms. As soon as they came to Jonathan's room, they all heard a little boy's voice say, "Don't be scared; come in and play." Her daughters became frightened and ran back downstairs. They would later ask to buy toys for the little ghost boy so he would have some to play with. Guests also began to bring toys for both Jonathan and Rosie.

Christine, Dan, and their paranormal research team continue to make the Shan-

ley Hotel their home base. They are always excited about visiting there because they never know who will "pop by" to visit and chat with them.

The hotel has 35 rooms, secret passages, a basement, an attic, quite an illustrious history, and plenty of ghosts. Guests can bring their own equipment, or it is furnished for use. The hotel also has ghost hunting equipment in the gift shop for sale. No weapons or alcohol are allowed on the premises. For more information and booking, go to [www.thehauntedshanleyhotel.com](http://www.thehauntedshanleyhotel.com).

## LUKE

continued from page 24

gallops further away from me then lowers his head in mischief, game on.

I have to be smarter. My pup is on the loose in the road and thinks he's being funny. "Bye, Luke." I cross over the sidewalk and head into my yard. I keep walking away until we're parted at a distance curious enough to keep him engaged. "Where are you going? You're really going to leave me?" I make my way up to my deck and exaggerate the role of saddened Dog Mom. "I was hoping Luke would come home today." I even use his baby name. "I don't know what I'll do without my Lukey." He perks up and stiffens to my tone of voice. "I'm right here, Momma!!! Stay right there!! Coming home now!!!"

He rushes back to me as though auditioning for a role in Lassie. We reunite on the deck. "There's no place like home!" Dogs tell it like it is. I massage his ears. He lifts his head and smiles, his tongue hanging out of one side of his

mouth. "Do you think I could have a few blueberries now that I've listened so well?"

Reverse psychology worked for a while. Until Luke's paws grew bigger, along with his will to do things his way. Walks have become more a chore than a score, and I'm partially to blame. I've introduced Luke to a variety of friends and he remembers exactly where they all live. He's wrestled and romped with Kaiser. He's played Chase with Rosie. He's pulled me onto Benny's front lawn for a quick game of let's-sniff-each-other.

Luke's popularity, however charming, has become problematic.

Every time we pass by the homes of his friends, he stops and sits. "I'm stopping to play with Kai." He glances up at me casually. "I'm not moving until I see my friend." My puppy appears calm and poised, as though he has all day to wait. Truthfully, he does. He's a dog. He lives in the moment and has no agenda. As a Dog Person, I empathize at first. "Kai has been a good friend, hasn't he?" It's the truth. Kai has

allowed a feisty Luke to jump on his back, tear at his ears and be aggressive. Kai is twice Luke's size. He could easily pin my pup to the ground. Instead, a dog with a notably high self-esteem backs off and lets the crazy pup win. I endorse the friendship. Still, my patience has run thin. "Kai went for a ride, Luke." The white lie slips out easily.

"Woo, woo, woo, woo." My cover is blown. Kai calls back to his young friend from the front window. "I see you, Luke! I want to play, too, but I'm door-blocked! Maybe there's a way you can let me out!"

I feel vulnerable sud-

denly, manipulated by a pair of dogs with a bond. Luke pulls and stretches closer to his doggie pal in the window. He's panting and desperate, as though his life suddenly depends on a reunion.

C'mon, Luke. We need to go see Daddy." I pull him forward while he puts on his brakes, apparently unimpressed by the thought of Daddy. "Let's go home." He retracts and slips out of his harness until it rests on his head like the veil of a nun. "Luke, please." I pull him some more. His face folds up to convey The Joker's smile. "Aren't I cute?" The struggle lingers and starts to feel embarrassing. My

neighbors have very possibly witnessed the scene from high windows. "Cute pup but, gosh, he's stubborn. Nice girl, terrible dog trainer." My tone of voice darkens with impatience. "Luke Valentino!" I reach for the back loop of his harness, but he flattens himself to the ground, a cartoon just run over. His eyes roll up to me in mischief. "I just want to play with Kai."

Somehow I muster up the energy to scoop him beneath the legs and shuffle ahead as though carrying an overweight lamb. I set him down at the next house, thankfully that of a non-dog owner. "Let's go, Luke." He trots beside me,

the incident already a distant memory (because he's a dog), and we make our way home. I bring him a bowl of fresh ice water and place it down on his favorite spot at the front steps. Then, as though bobbing for apples, he draws out cube after cube and chews. He reminds me of Charlie Brown's Snoopy, crunching away at the ice cubes casually, as though the world is put on hold for him. Ice chips and water dribble from his mouth while I kiss his head. Luke Valentino has a stubborn side, but I still love him to pieces.

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REAL ESTATE

# Buyers are regaining some of their negotiation power in today's housing market



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

If you're thinking about buying a home today, there's good news. Even though it's still a sellers' market, it's a more moderate sellers' market than last year. And the days of feeling like you may need to waive contingencies (home inspections, appraisals, etc.) or pay drastically over asking price to get your

offer considered may be coming to a close.

Today, you should have less competition and more negotiating power as a buyer. That's because buyer demand and bidding wars is easing this year. So, if bidding wars were the biggest factor that had you frustrated, here are two trends that may be just what you need to re-enter the market.

The return of contingencies. Over the last two years, more buyers were willing to skip important steps in the home buying process, like inspections or the appraisal, to try to win a bidding war. But now, fewer people are waiving the inspection and appraisal.

The latest data from the National Association of Realtors (NAR) shows the percentage of buyers waiving their home inspection and appraisal is declining. And a recent survey from realtor.com confirms more sellers are accepting offers that include these conditions today. According to their August study:

95% of sellers reported buyers requested a home inspection; also, 67% of sellers negotiated with buyers on repairs as a result of the inspection findings

This goes to show buyers are more able to include these conditions in their offers today and negotiate as needed based

on the outcome of the inspection.

Sellers are more willing to help with closing costs. Generally, closing costs range between 2% and 5% of the purchase price for the home. Before the pandemic, it was a common negotiation tactic for sellers to cover some of the buyer's closing costs to sweeten the deal. This didn't happen as much during the peak buyer frenzy over the past two years. Today, as the market shifts and demand slows, data from realtor.com suggests this is making a comeback. A recent article shows 32% of sellers paid some or all of their buyer's closing costs. This may be a negotiation tool you'll

see as you go to purchase a home. Just keep in mind, limits on closing cost credits are set by your lender and can vary by state and loan type. Work closely with your loan advisor to understand how much a seller can contribute to closing costs in your area.

So regardless of the extremely competitive housing market of the past several years, today's data suggests negotiations are starting to come back on the table. This is good news if you're planning to enter the housing market.

To find out how the market is shifting in your area, connect with a team member of Marzeotti-group.net/617-519-1871 or your trusted Realtor today.

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# A little corrosion is enough to cause problems



BY JOHN PAUL

the connections. I have seen on multiple occasions that where several items share one ground a little corrosion it enough to cause problems.

**Q.** My 2017 GM truck has both low beams out. One day they worked and one day they didn't. I have a friend with a fancy computer scanner, and he said there were three codes. The codes were for headlight control circuits. What kind of problems am I looking at?

**A.** I suspect there is nothing wrong more than the bulbs need replacing. Headlight bulbs have pretty specific hour ratings and they both likely failed within a few days of each other and you never noticed until both failed. Start with some basic testing at the bulbs.

**Q.** In a past column, you had a reader that was looking for a mid-sized SUV that had some off-road capability but wasn't too "macho." I believe you recommended the Honda Passport and maybe a Subaru. I'm actually looking for something a bit more rugged. I looked at Jeeps, but there are just too

many of them. I looked at the Ford Bronco, but there is a long wait and dealers are marking them up too high. What am I missing?

**A.** You are correct there are a lot of Jeeps because they are still wildly popular, and some people are paying \$10,000 or more for a Bronco. One vehicle that may work is the Toyota 4Runner. This is a solid vehicle that although matured has not lost its truck roots. The 4Runner is very capable off-road and has all the latest safety and convenience technology. The non-turbo-charged V-6 engine may seem dated by contemporary standards, but it makes 270 horsepower and can tow 5000 pounds. The interior is comfortable and the seats supportive. Fuel economy on the other hand is terrible with an EPA rating of 17 MPG combined city/highway. If fuel economy isn't a concern the 4Runner by Toyota may be a good fit.

**Q.** I have a 2010 Hyundai Elantra and the passenger side air conditioner vent has cold air coming from it, but the driver's side is warm. This is a basic car, so no fancy AC system with dual

temperature settings. What is wrong?

**A.** The first place to start is to inspect the air conditioner pressure readings. At 12 years old the system has probably lost some refrigerant. Since the air conditioner evaporator is located on the passenger side if in fact the system is low on "charge" it is possible the passenger side would be cooler than the driver's side air. If this is the case, the system should be checked for leaks. If there appears to be no leaks, recharging the system should get the air conditioner fully operational again.

**Q.** My 2015 Ford Escape has the oil light on. The engine is quiet, and I replaced the oil sender unit with a Ford part and the light is still on. Any ideas?

**A.** Although your ear tells you the engine is quiet, I would still want to check the oil pressure with a mechanical gauge. You should see 30-60 pounds of oil pressure at 2000 RPM. In this case I did a little research on AllData (the technical database I use) in their community page. I found a very similar

concern. In this case the BLU/BRN wire from the oil sender to the car's computer was shorted against the engine block near the starter motor. When the wire was repaired, the light operated normally. This would be a good place to start.

**Q.** I just purchased a classic 1994 Chevy Caprice wagon for my beach house. This boat of a car is powered by a fuel injected 5.7-liter V-8 engine. It is like driving around on your sofa. I love this car; I can put my wind surfing stuff in it and carry just about anything. The one problem is the engine stumbles, but never stalls. I have replaced the spark-plugs and the spark looks strong and bright and the check engine light is off. The engine runs smooth so I'm guessing compression is good. Any ideas?

**A.** If this was being diagnosed in a shop, the next step or perhaps the first step would have been to check for engine codes and fuel trim reading. The next step would be to look at fuel pressure. In some cases, technicians will hook up a fuel gauge and mount it where they can see it. Then

drive the car until it stumbles. With the ignition ON Engine OFF there should be 41.0 to 47.0 pounds of fuel pressure. With the engine running there should be 3-10 PSI less. When driving the car if the fuel pressure drops off considerably the issue could be a clogged fuel filter or weak fuel pump.

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

**Q.** I have a 15-year-old Chevrolet truck with a V-8 engine, and it cranks forever before it starts. I have replaced the fuel pump, fuel pump relay and the computer and it still doesn't start correctly. I have spent way too much money and my wife said just get rid of the truck. I don't have a lot of skill with voltmeters; is there something else I should be looking for?

**A.** Replacing parts without testing circuits can result in spending a lot of money with no results. Start with looking at power and ground to the fuel pump relay. The first place I would start is to look for a grounding block and check

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SPORTS

# Douglas's Hogan brothers twins at home, at school, on the golf course

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

While the modern day of golf originated in Scotland during the 15th Century, it was only about four years ago that the Hogan twins were introduced to the game. Their grandfather had a membership at Pleasant Valley Country Club in Sutton and played frequently. Ultimately he took the twins, Andrew, and William, to the club with him, where they would play a few holes.

Eventually those few holes expanded to playing all 18 holes on the course.

The Hogan twins, who also play basketball and baseball, find that golf is not only fun, but challenging in a way that one needs a strong mental game to succeed as well. Although they initially got involved with golf in the seventh grade, they really didn't play competitively at first, instead they were being students of the game and absorbing as much as they could while learning.

In the beginning the Hogan's were shooting an average in the 50's, but by the end of their first year on the golf course they saw their average drop to the mid to high 40's. When they first made the Douglas varsity golf team as eighth graders they found themselves in the middle of the pack but knew that they had the potential to get better.

"We were young, but not intimidated by the older golfers on the team at all, it was a learning experience," Andrew said. "By the end of

that year we had some decent scores in the low 40's, but nothing would have been possible if it wasn't for the help from our captain Sam Bloniasz that year. He not only made the game fun, but he complimented and helped us to grow our game."

As freshmen the twins took over the top two spots on the team when Douglas lost one of its best golfers to hockey that year. Although the Tigers had themselves a solid team that fall, Covid had other ideas and shut the



The Hogan twins of Douglas are pointing the Tigers' golf team toward a successful fall season. Photo submitted





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season down. Not being able to do much during the pandemic, the Hogans found themselves practicing every chance they got. William was working on his driving off the tee, his chipping and working on his irons, while his older brother Andrew, by a mere 30 minutes, found that he was having trouble with his shots.

As sophomores the twins help lead Douglas into the District Tournament, the

first time Tiger golfers had been there since 2014. This year as juniors the twins and their Douglas teammates are once again hoping to return to the District Tournament but are looking to improve upon what they built last fall.

"I know that I need to play much more consistent if we are to go further this year," William said. "I seem to struggle after I have a bad hole and it gets in my head. I need to focus more

and move on from the last hole and think about the next one.”

Andrew, who was only three shots from qualifying for the State Tournament last year, is hoping to deduct those strokes from his score while improving his short game, an area that can truly impact your score.

While the Hogans are hoping to improve upon their game, Douglas Coach Kevin Riordan has two athletes that will do anything for their team.

“They both are capable of maintaining the game well. More importantly though they both stress team first and will do whatever is best for the team,” the coach said. “They never balk at anything that I ask them to do, that is one reason why they are co-captains this season. Having some younger players that are learning the game makes it tough to play stroke play but having William and Andrew shooting in the high 30’s to low 40’s helps.”

The Douglas coach sees a lot of similarities in the twin’s golf games on the course.

“Having been trained the same way by the same trainer the twins have similar styles,” he said. “And

although they are both very competitive, they also root for one another. When I’m out there golfing with them I don’t want to get in their way of learning, because they both can already beat me.”

As competitive siblings you would think that they would both believe that they were the better golfer, but it seems that the two are both in the same camp when it comes to the top golfer.

“I’d have to say Andrew used to be the better golfer by at least two or three shots,” William said. “But now we are pretty even and have about the same handicaps, although our games are uniquely different.”

Andrew agreed with his twin brother, saying that although he is the better putter, William is a better chipper and the two are relatively close when it comes to their driving accuracy.

With their junior seasons just getting underway the Hogans have almost two full years of high school golf before they head off to college where they both would like to continue playing.

“I want to play golf in college, but I’m not really

thinking about it so much right now as there is still so much time to figure it all out,” Andrew said. “I know that I have to get involved in some big tournaments and will most likely have to go to school in the South, but right now I don’t really know what’s going to happen.”

William also wants to continue playing golf after high school, but he too hasn’t really put too much thought into it as of yet.

“I need to work hard over the next two years if I want to play golf in college,” William said. “Next summer I’m going to have to take part in a lot more tournaments as that’s where colleges seem to recognize golfers.”

Having almost two full years to invest in their golf games both Hogans should have colleges knocking at their doors to have them play for them. The big question is where will they go and will the two of them play at the same college?

Only time will tell, but for now they are playing for Douglas High School and looking to get back into the post-season with their teammates.

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# Community Center offers Spooktacular Halloween events

The Whitin Community Center (WCC) is pleased to announce our very exciting Halloween Events this October! First and NEW this year is Nightmare on Main

Street in Whitin Park on Saturday, October 22nd, 2022. Returning on Friday, October 28th, 2022, is our very popular Annual Event Halloween Haunted Swim Party & Halloween Cos-

tume Roller Skating Party, located inside the WCC, at 60 Main Street, Whitinsville MA. NEW this year is our Outdoor Haunted trail for Middle School & Up in

Whitin Park. Nightmare on Main Street will be held on Saturday, October 22nd, 2022, from 7:30-9:30pm. This event will also have food trucks. Proceeds will benefit the WCC's FREE Youth Outreach Programs. We are still looking for a few more creative and outgoing adult actors/actresses, who love Halloween, to play a role in this event. If you're interested, please reach out to Jenn Castro at Jennifer.Castro@ourgym.org or 508.234.8184 Ext. 128.

Join us for our 6th Annual Halloween Haunted Swim Party with two swim times from 5:30pm-7:00pm & 7:15pm-8:45pm! All ages are invited to our spooktacular event in the WCC's Competition Pool! Everyone can swim to some fun Halloween tunes, play with inflatable pool toys, and experience a howling good time! Space is limited. To add more to this

Halloween bash, we will also be hosting our 10th Annual Halloween Costume Roller Skating Party in the WCC's Gymnasium with two skate times: 5:30pm-7:00pm & 7:15pm-8:45pm. Children ages 12 and under are invited to skate with their Halloween Costumes, to some spooky Halloween tunes in our Gymnasium! This event is always well attended, and space is limited. Concessions will be sold in the Lobby.

The cost for the Nightmare on Main Street is \$10 per person. The Haunted Swim Party and Costume Roller Skating Party is \$5 per child/per event/per session. Parents are FREE. Proceeds benefit the WCC's Youth Outreach Program & Blackstone Valley Children's Place Playground Fund. The Whitin Community

Center is committed to enhancing the health and well-being of individuals and families and building a strong community in the Blackstone Valley. We offer social, recreational, educational, and outreach programs that bring community members of all ages and backgrounds together. The Whitin Community Center is the Blackstone Valley's most complete family and recreation center with two swimming pools, a gym, fitness center, early learning programs, summer camps and a seven and a half acre park. For more information call 508.234.8184 or visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com.



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DETAIL

# Manchaug Pond Foundation is Cleaning Up!

The Manchaug Pond Foundation will be holding their Fall Clean Up of scenic Manchaug Pond on Saturday, October 22nd, 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.



The effort is scheduled to take place Saturday, October 22, 2022, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon with vol-

unteers meeting at the state Public Access Boat Ramp on Torrey Road in Sutton. Volunteers will hit the pave-

ment 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. We ask that everyone follow state regulations for social distancing. Rain date will be Sunday, October 23rd and the rain date notice will be posted on the Manchaug Pond Foundation's Facebook page and website.

The Manchaug Pond Foundation'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 water-

shed 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. Edu-

cational 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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