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August 2023

Karen Watson Riding PMC for the First Time

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY

Bellingham's Karen Watson will be climbing aboard a bike during the first weekend of August to help a friend in need. More specifically, Watson will be riding the Pan Mass Challenge's Wellesley Century, a 101.4-mile ride from Wellesley to Dighton and then loop back to Wellesley on Sunday August 6th in support of the Dana Farber Cancer Institute.

Recently Watson received a call from one of her Assumption University classmates, Angela Corby, asking her if she wanted to take part in the 101-mile ride. Immediately, the Bellingham resident told her friend yes, as it was to help another Assumption schoolmate, Amy Ennis who has been battling stage 4 colon cancer for the past seven years.

"For me, it was not a difficult decision to say yes as it's the least that I can do," Watson said. "I'm riding because I can;



Karen Watson, of Bellingham will ride over 100 miles for Dana Farber.

I said yes first and then had to figure it out as it was going to be a physical challenge. Being

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Members of the Pacific Pickles- Maxx Laren, Dylan Harris and Morgan Henshaw stand on the mound discussing game strategy.

Fifth-Graders Organize Their Own Summer Wiffleball League

By SYDNEY KEANE

Raising an ambitious incoming sixth grade son by the name of Logan, Kerry Vilorio has a lot of cause to be a proud Bellingham Middle School parent. However, when Logan came home one day at the end of June with a QR code printed on a piece of paper, Kerry was shocked to learn about the then

week-old Bellingham Wiffleball League.

Naturally interested in her son's newfound summer activity, Kerry followed the QR code's link to the BWL's website which Logan then informed her had been created by a friend's older

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PMC

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aware that I have the physical ability to do this is important, it's an opportunity to remind me that I can."

The Pan Mass Challenge raises more money for charity than any other athletic fundraising event in the country with 100% of the funds going to the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, a world leader in adult and pediatric cancer treatment and research, and the Jimmy Fund. Since Billy Starr began the event in 1980, the PMC has donated over \$900 million to Dana Farber.

Watson knew that things were going to have to start from scratch and build upon that to get to the point of the actual 101-mile ride. She has not really been on a long-distance bike ride in some time, and the only time that she has gotten on a bike has been to pedal around the neighborhood with her son.

"This is not the first time that Amy has suggested something like this, (giving her only a few months to train). She is the Queen of Ideas; 20 years ago, she got me to do a three-day 380-mile bike ride with her," Watson said. "This time, it's for a close friend and Angela's best friend. It's going to be a process and not

being a cyclist, after this is over I probably won't get on a bike for a very long time."

During the few months that she had to get ready for her endeavor, Watson had two goals that she set for herself. First was the financial fundraising part of it, where she wanted to raise \$3000, and at the time of this writing, she had recently surpassed that figure and should be well above it by the time the ride begins. Secondly was the physical part where she needed to get herself prepared and ready to sit on a bike over the 100-plus mile ride. Not only that, but she also had to find someone who had a bike that she could borrow (which she did).

"I've been generally blown away with all the support that I have received in such a short period of time for my ride," Watson said. "Facebook is a wonderful thing – you can connect with friends near and far."

As if her initial reason to ride wasn't enough motivation, Watson received news in June that her friend and co-worker is now relying on Dana Farber for care. Although it was not her initial plan to support her co-worker she will definitely be thinking about her throughout the entire ride.

Since day one, her husband has been very supportive of her decision to take on the 101-mile

trek and has been out on the roads riding with her.

"It's been a battle, but a lot of fun, and I'm doing it because I can," she said. "My husband has been very supportive of me and so many others rely on Dana Farber for care and being able to help makes me happy."

Having run the Boston Marathon for Dana Farber in 2008, Watson knows how supportive the people were along that route and expects that it will be much the same when she's atop the bike riding.

Together with Angela, the women will be riding alongside a third rider in Paul Piselli come that first weekend in August.

Caring for Pets in the Heat and Storms

BY SYDNEY KEANE

Entering August and early September, Massachusetts, like a majority of the United States, is predicted to experience what NOAA calls "hotter-than-average" summers. In fact, this past June was recorded as one of Earth's hottest Junes, with the average surface temperature de-

viating about 1.9 degrees Fahrenheit higher than usual.

In addition to heat concerns, parts of western Massachusetts are predicted to experience above average levels of precipitation during the hurricane season, a period lasting from June 1 to November 30.

Though the longer reaching concerns of such weather may not impact our daily lives, safety measures and prevention strategies are an important part of getting through the hazy, stormy days of summer, both for people and their animal companions alike.

Although it may seem obvious, "What's good for us is good for our pets," says Kris Kiser, President of the TurfMutt Foun-



Pepper enjoying a nap in the AC after running around in the summer heat.

dation, an environmental education and stewardship program.

In general, thinking of your pets in a storm is similar to thinking of loved ones; it's best to keep them close, indoors, and in sight. When it gets hot or stormy and we go inside, our pets should

come. Not only does this protect them from harsh environments and weather, but this also ensures they stay safe out of reach from shifting furniture and storm debris.

Outside of the more natural strategies for protecting your pets, it is also helpful to consider resources for emergencies that could potentially separate you from your pet. For example, in the event it makes sense to vacate, placing your pet in safe care is critical if he or she cannot stay with you.

This means researching local boarding facilities for animals, such as shelters or even some vets that can care for pets in such situations. On top of this, it is useful to pack a bag with all relevant

necessities, so if an emergency situation should arise, your pet is ready to go with necessities like food, medication, and all other items required for their best care.

Outside of these extreme events and emergencies, general heat, especially for certain breeds, can be detrimental to the health of your furry friends. To best understand your specific pet, it is wise to consult vets and other reliable resources on your animal's unique needs, whether that be walking them at night or shaving them more frequently than you would in the winter.

Lastly, make sure both you and your pet stay hydrated for the days you are able to get outside, be active, and truly enjoy the abnormal heat waves.

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Jen Schofield
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jenschofield@localtownpages.com

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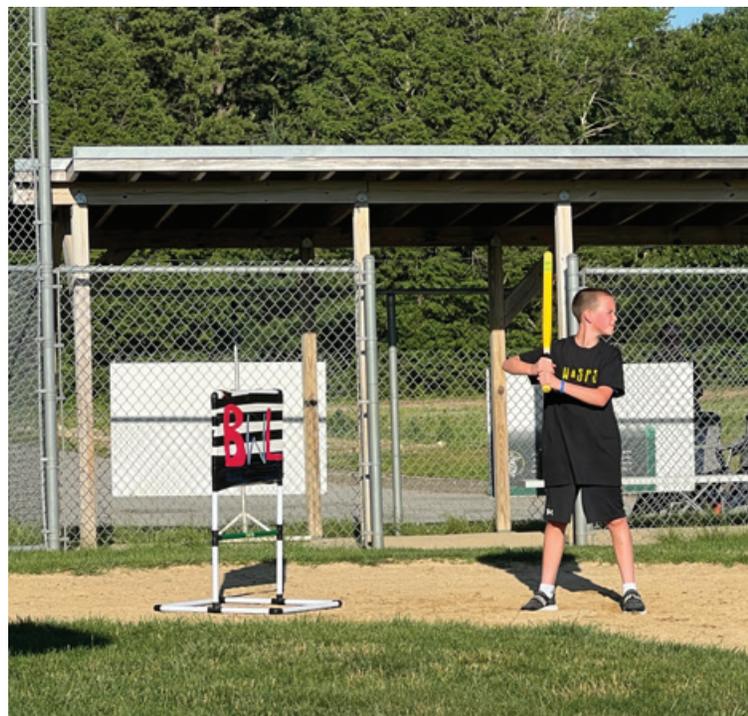
brother Ben Laren, as a Bellingham incoming eighth grader.

“I scanned the code,” Kerry shared, “and saw a website showing approximately 30 fellow fifth graders listed team names, captains, rules, games schedules for multiple weeks as well as tournament brackets for future tournament purposes.”

But, not only was the website created by a student, the entire league had been organized and orchestrated by a group of Logan’s fifth grade classmates, including Ben’s younger brother Maxx Dylan Harris, and Morgan Henshaw.

Interestingly, the kids developed their own nontraditional rules for the BWL that account for the small-scale nature of the league and make for an interesting game. For example, the rules listed on the website include, but are not limited to, the following:

- All teams make playoffs
- Playoffs series are 2 games and a 3rd if needed.
- No corked bats. You can customize them, but not so many layers of tape.
- Doubleheaders count as one game



In conversation, Kerry elaborated on rule number three, explaining that the kids use custom bats designed by players on the team with colorful tapes and designs, intended for shared use among the six teams. In addition to bats, the players may also share roles on a team, subbing in for opposing team members if needed to keep the games going.

For example, though Logan plays for the Western Wasps, if another BWL player is absent for any reason, Logan may be allowed to step in to play for

the Pacific Pickles, the Northern Ninjas, Eastern Energy, the Atlantic Avengers, or the Coastal Comets.

Of course, any kids’ league benefits endlessly from parent involvement, and several BWL parents were happy to step in as asked to provide their kids with team clothing and field scheduling. Ben and Maxx’s parents Brian and Vanessa Laren along with Shelly Dupuis, took it upon themselves to customize and distribute six different styles of t-shirts with the kids’

names to each of the six teams, which barely made it in time for the first games on June 23 and 24. The game schedule runs through July with the first round of playoffs scheduled for the weekend of July 23.

With support from the town fields on Harpen Street, the kids have been allowed to play an average of three scheduled games each week at 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. on Saturdays.

All assistance considered, the kids showed impressive initiative with the majority of planning occurring before parents had knowledge of the league’s existence until the night of the first game.

“...a Facebook message was created to a large group of us which were the parents of all children participating,” Kerry Vilorio shared, “The message stated that this really is a ‘thing’ and that the team names, schedule and tournament are really taking place. Many parents were not aware that this was even happening! I, as well as many of the other parents, are so impressed that a wonderful group of 5th graders were able to develop and complete this task from start to finish asking for absolutely no help from parents.”

Since the first game, the teams have played four week-

ends total, and according to parents in the audience, the kids have been getting more comfortable with running the league from all angles. This means that the kids call all plays themselves, and resolve any tension on the field by their own unique conflict resolution strategies.

Though most games run smoothly, Kerry laughed as she told me about Brooke Harris who was in charge of working the radio for players’ “walk-up” songs, or the chosen songs that accompany each player as he or she walks onto the field. During one game, Brooke took it upon herself to switch the music to Frozen’s “Let It Go” during a bout of confusion over a play to remind players to keep it calm on the fields and enjoy the fun, summer spirits of the wiffleball league that they worked so hard to create for themselves.

In another attempt to improve the game for everyone involved, a player by the name of Spencer Lavallee brought a newly purchased radar gun to a recent game to show the speed of the wiffle ball pitches during the Wasps/Avengers game.

For those looking to attend any games, visit the BWL website for a schedule.

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VFW and its Patriotic Murals

BY DAVE DUNBAR

There are some brand new hand-painted, patriotic murals on the southern end of the Bellingham VFW building on South Main Street.

When viewing these five different and colorful murals, words that may come to mind include courage, perseverance, respect, and victory.

The murals were produced by about a dozen Bellingham High School students in the advanced art program and recently presented to the VFW post. Commander Kevin Calnan says, "This helps us connect with the community. The kids in school are getting involved and learning about patriotism."

Students researched themes for the murals and then painted them. This is the second year students have provided colorful, meaningful murals for the VFW in a program that started under the late Tom Lane, the Post's former commander.

"The murals were a little smaller this year," explains VFW member Joe Ebert, who coordi-

nated the effort. "The kids were told to paint what they think, and it was a tool for them" to explore history, our armed forces, and veterans. To the students, Ebert says: "Thank you! Any vet who sees these murals will realize they represent what America is. No politics here."

"Love of America is a good thing," observes Calnan, "not a bad thing. We need to nourish the concept that our flag should be honored and respected. Patriotism is alive and well in Bellingham!"

For creating the murals, each student will get a gift card according to Calnan, "a small thank you for dressing up the post."

Post Quartermaster Chris Condon says the murals look "fantastic!" He adds, "We asked the students to produce this art out of their own inspiration to represent vets, the VFW, and patriotism."

"Customers all love the murals," says Butch Buckley. He tends bar at the post about 20 hours a week. "I like them,"



Standing behind the new patriotic murals are, from left, Post Commander Kevin Calnan, Quartermaster Chris Condon, and VFW member Joe Ebert. The Post hopes to update the murals each year with help from the young artists at Bellingham High.

adds customer Kathy Champeau. Her son is a veteran, and she appreciates the way he, and

all other vets, are being honored by the murals.

You can find out more about

Bellingham's VFW Post by visiting its Facebook page or going to www.vfw7272.org

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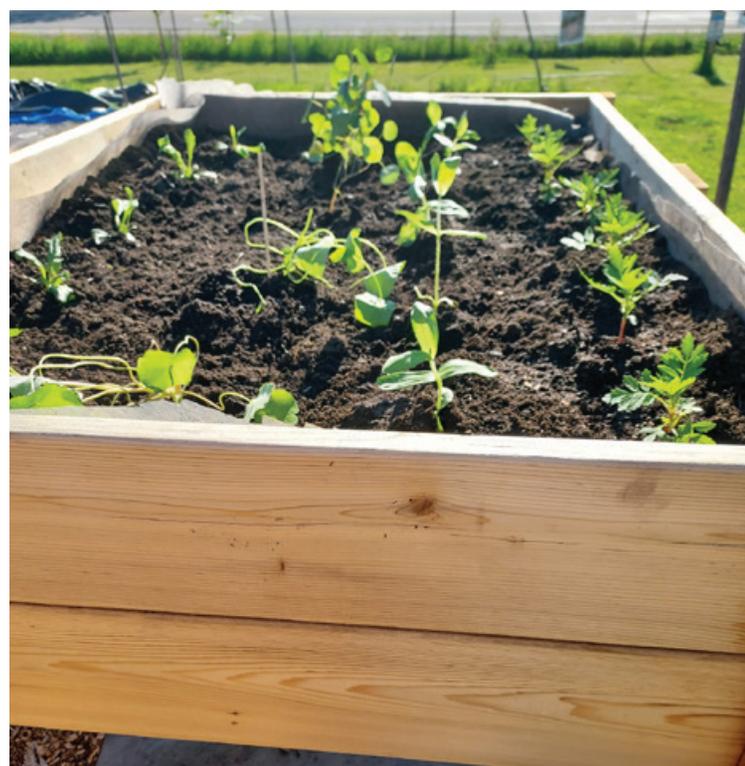
Bellingham Garden Club Shares Harvest, Plans for Fall

The Bellingham Garden Club was in full harvest in mid-July, despite the rainy weather. The group planted another bunch of sweet organic pumpkins again this year for the community to come and purchase in the Fall at the Farmstand.

The Bellingham Community Garden Farmstand is open Saturday mornings at 200 Center St., Bellingham.

For more information, visit <https://bellinghamgardenclubofma.com> or find Bellingham Garden Club of MA on Facebook.

Photos by Mickey DeFosses



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Bellingham Looking to Become Age/Dementia Friendly

B: DAVE DUNBAR

“We don’t know what we don’t know,” observed Kay Page, the chair of the local committee looking into how Bellingham can become designated an Age/Dementia Friendly town.

The subject is huge, and the unknowns numerous. What actually constitutes “Age/Dementia Friendly” and who says so? What does Bellingham already do/have that makes it Friendly, and what more needs to be done? Who’s going to pay for changes to things like parks, buildings, shopping areas? Finding out “what we don’t know” is key to going forward.

Age and dementia friendly community initiatives aim to promote a high quality of life for each person regardless of age, physical or cognitive abilities. Housing, transportation, outdoors and buildings, public

safety, and social inclusion are all areas to be considered.

“The town and I are making wholeheartedly to developing Bellingham into the age and dementia friendly community that our citizens deserve,” says Kelly Grant, a Select Board member.

Grant, and seven others, are on the “Age/Dementia Friendly Bellingham Committee” chaired by Kay Page (who also chairs the Council on Aging).

Father Al Faretra of Saint Blaise Catholic Church in Bellingham is a committee member. “Systems established supposedly to make things easier have actually made it harder for some people,” he observed at a meeting last month.

Take the town’s permitting process, for example. Want a permit to burn brush in your yard? You’ll be asked to fill out an application online. But not everyone, especially seniors, can

do that.

“We need to do a better job of helping our older adults,” observes Josie Dutil, executive director of the town’s Senior Center. “They need help with technology, like computers. They need to feel valued.”

Dutil explains, “Age Friendly towns can address sidewalks on streets for strollers and walkers, park benches that include arm rests in the middle, paint and floor colors that enhance diminished vision and much more.”

Police Chief Ken Fitzgerald and Fire Chief Bill Miller exchanged thoughts about the permitting processes in town, the value of responding to calls for help that might seem unimportant, dealing with levels of state and local government going paperless, and figuring out ways to stay in touch with seniors. Both chiefs are on the Age/Dementia Friendly Bellingham Commit-

tee, and they were present at last month’s meeting.

Over the next few weeks, committee members will be developing plans that include recruiting additional members, talking with leaders in nearby towns that have become age and dementia friendly, surveying Bellingham residents, exploring available grant money, and finding out more about establishing an elder services ombudsman position.

On the national front, AARP engages with elected officials, partner organizations and local leaders to guide communities through the age-friendly network’s assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. “Well-designed, age-friendly communities foster economic growth and make for happier, healthier residents of all ages,” according to the AARP website.

Kelly Grant notes some of the topics the town is already exploring: streamlining library services so they become more user friendly, utilizing “Code Red” calling ability to reach folks without computers, and offering training on age and dementia to town employees.

At the Senior Center, “Coffee & Conversation” is offered every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. It’s a free-flowing discussion about many topics, and one of them could be Age/Dementia Friendly communities. If you have thoughts on the subject, here’s your opportunity to share them.

And then on September 12, the “Age/Dementia Friendly Bellingham Committee” will meet at the Senior Center. If you would like to learn more or get involved, then please contact Kay Page at (508) 966-1804 or email kaepage609@gmail.com



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Family-Run Affordable Junk Removal Takes the Stress Out of Cleanups

BY CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

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

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

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

Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible, properly disposes of non-recyclables and resells many items at the Schadlers' secondhand store, Resellables. "We opened that store in Bellingham because we hated to see things thrown away," Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends



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

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what

Business spotlight

I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

The Schadlers say that Bellingham has been an excellent hometown for both Affordable Junk Removal and their Resellables shop, and they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the area.

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

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

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

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South Main Roadwork Ahead of Schedule

BY DAVE DUNBAR

You may have noticed some road work along South Main Street over the past few weeks. But wait, there's more.

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation calls it Project 60887. It's also called South Main Street Reconstruction Project. It has been called other things, too.

Whatever you call it, it extends 1.6 miles from Douglas Drive north to Route 140. It's a \$5.3-million project that began with a proposal and design plan from the Town of Bellingham in July 2017.

MassDOT approved it – and will pay for it – and, depending on who you ask, it should be completed as early as this month or maybe by year's end.

"We think folks will be happy with the end product," says Jesse Riedle, director of the town's Department of Public Works. "It's been better than we expected and is running about a year ahead of schedule."

What is running about a year

behind schedule is the separate "Town Center Intersection Improvement Project." And that is where South Main Street and Route 140 meet. Mostly, the delay was caused by utility poles... who owns them, who's going to move them, who owns the transmission lines on the poles and who's going to move them.

Here's a portion of the description of the South Main Street work as posted on the MassDOT website: "Roadway reconstruction and resurfacing; reconstruction of sidewalks and wheelchair ramps; updating of the traffic signals at the intersection of South Main and Blackstone Streets; new signs and pavement markings; and drainage system improvements." Also included are five-foot wide bicycle lanes in each direction.

State Representative Mike Soter is keeping an eye on the project. "We are constantly in touch with the DOT District 3 Director to ensure that everything is going smoothly and that

the project is going according to plan."

On stretches of the roadway, says Riedle, "existing pavement was removed, and they are putting down a nine-inch base of concrete, dirt, and asphalt mix, then five inches of asphalt, and a three-inch finishing layer. We've straightened the road and lowered it in some spots to help with drainage."

At this time last year, the DPW met with homeowners and businesses in Bellingham "to try to avoid problems, make changes to the design of the project and do some preparatory work." In 2021, the town initiated the South Main Street Water Project which replaced failing water services.

Charged with bringing some traffic order to this construction chaos is the Bellingham Police Department. "Our job," says Sergeant Christopher Padula, "is traffic flow... and, especially, the public safety aspect. We're working on multiple projects at the same time."



Along South Main Street, you can drive on smooth, new, wider pavement and see sidewalks appearing on each side of the road as well as new curbing. Bike lanes are planned as well.

Chief Ken Fitzgerald adds, "We have an average of 10 officers on duty every weekday. They all volunteer and some are Bellingham police officers as well as others from the Sheriff's department and surrounding towns." All paid for by the state.

Not every officer is directing traffic. "The one you see standing around is probably waiting to direct repositioning of equipment like paving apparatus and incoming shipments of materi-

als," explains Chief Fitzgerald. "Altogether, we have 28 people from the top down involved in this project."

On a side note, the Chief says that by the end of the year "five new officers will be coming in and by then, we will be close to fully staffed."

Riedle, the DPW boss, has advice for motorists transiting the work area. "Avoid the area if you can. Be patient with delays, watch out, and be safe."

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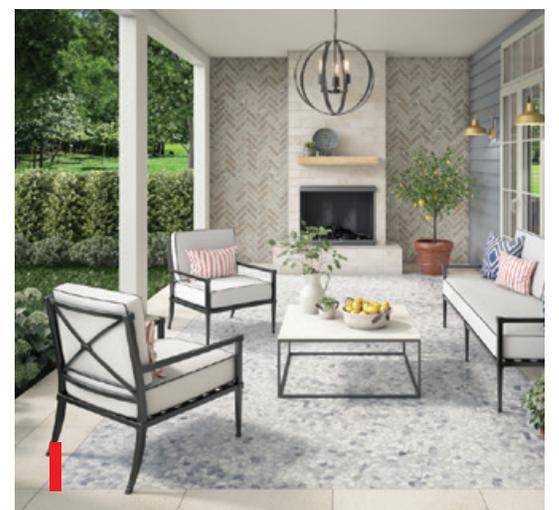
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Your Money, Your Independence

Yes, Even the Nasdaq-100 Index Rebalances. What About You?

On July 24th a special rebalance was held to reduce the Nasdaq 100 Index's concentration in its largest holdings.

This is the third such special rebalancing (1998, 2011) as part of the methodology that states:

"A special rebalance may be conducted at any time based on the weighting restrictions described in the index rebalance procedure if it is determined to be necessary to maintain the integrity of the Index".

Some questions to consider:

- What is the potential impact to you as an index investor?
- Do you practice a similar rebalance process for individual holdings and asset classes?

How did we get here?

The performance of a small group of mega-cap stocks drove returns for the index and the broader market. These stocks include:

- Microsoft (Year-to-date return as of 7/17/23 is 38.9%)
- Apple (45.5%)
- NVIDIA (188.7%)
- Amazon (51.4%)
- Tesla (118.9%)
- Meta Platforms (144.4%)



Glenn Brown

- Alphabet Class A (32.0%) and Class C (31.7%).

These seven companies (combining Alphabet's share classes) represented over 55% weighting of the index and will reduce to 38% with smaller companies within the index being purchased.

Potential impact to index investors.

Selling high-performing stocks comes with the potential for a tax bill for funds.

Per Morningstar, "Mutual funds may be especially susceptible to capital gains distributions. An ETF like QQQ is among the most heavily traded securities in

the United States, which results in plenty of opportunities for it to utilize in-kind creations and redemptions to purge low tax-basis securities, making capital gains distributions unlikely."

The importance of rebalancing.

A challenge investors have with rebalancing is selling or trimming winners and reallocating proceeds to other areas of a portfolio, including underperformers.

Some envision these 7 companies to continue their dominance, but consider Top 5 Nasdaq-100 holdings in 1998: Microsoft, Cisco Systems, Intel, Dell and Worldcom, yes that Worldcom. By 2008, only Microsoft was still in Top 5 and it had a total 10-year return of -33%. Again, negative 33%.

In ten years the leadership will look different, so will returns.

Rebalancing asset classes within diversified portfolios.

Given S&P 500 Index 15 year outperformance over other asset classes and recency bias toward

4% money markets, many avoid rebalancing or other asset classes entirely like bonds, small company stocks, international stocks, REITs, commodities, gold, etc.

Again, the next 10 years will not look like the past 10 years.

For example, on January 1, 2000 a diversified portfolio of index funds may have included S&P 500 Index, US Bonds (Barclays US Aggregate Bond Index), International Stocks (MSCI EAFE Index) and Gold.

By start of 2010, total returns were Gold 274%, US Bonds 84%, International Stocks 12% and S&P 500 Index -9%, aka "The Lost Decade".

Go out to January 1, 2017, US Bonds 137% are still outperforming S&P 500 Index 112%.

Some would argue it made sense not to rebalance, until see a rebalance to "out of favor" S&P 500 Index to start 2010 would lead 7 years later US Bonds 30%

and S&P 500 133%. As for top performer during 2000's Gold, it was the worst at 5%.

There's more to consider that allowed in this space, consider reaching out to your Certified Financial Planner to discuss further.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

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3. Sharon and John purchase and install solar panels on their roof. During a hailstorm, the solar panels are damaged. The damage to the solar panels would not be covered since they forgot to tell their insurance agent about them. True or false?

Answer 1: True. Answer 2: False, whatever portion of the tree is on each person's property is now their responsibility: 90 percent neighbor, 10 percent June and Scotty. Answer 3: False, dwelling coverage will apply.

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Marano: New School Year Will Be 'A Good Experience'

Municipal Spotlight

By KEN HAMWEY
BULLETIN STAFF WRITER

Peter Marano is beginning his ninth year as Bellingham's School Superintendent and he's optimistic that 2023-24 will be a "good experience" for students, teachers and administrators, especially with COVID-19 in their rear-view mirrors.

The 50-year-old educator points to continued upgrades in curriculum, educational programs and building improvements. He's also confident that there'll be a smooth transition to two new principals at the elementary level and he's aiming for a full staff of teachers and administrators to start the year. He also is pleased that athletics and other extra-curricula activities are in a good place.

Before his appointment as superintendent, Marano was a guidance counsellor, assistant principal, and principal during a 24-year career. He has his bachelors' and masters' degrees

in counselling from Assumption College and an EDD in educational leadership from the University of New England.

"We made significant progress during the 2022-23 year moving past the Covid-19 restrictions," Marano said. "The teachers, nurses and administrators met the needs of students educationally and on a social and emotional front. We also increased our curriculum with new programs.

Here's a thumbnail look at some of the topics Marano addressed as he anticipates the 2023-24 school year that begins on Aug. 30.

ENROLLMENT — The 2022-23 enrollment in Bellingham's five schools was 1,916 and Marano doesn't anticipate a significant increase or decrease in the year ahead.

CURRICULUM — An English Language Arts program upgrade will continue in grades K-8. Marano calls the project "a robust program for all students." Grades K-5 will be in the third year of a new math program called "Bridges." The superintendent

says the results of this new approach "have been excellent." An added focus for 2023-24 will be on a new social studies/civics program.

TRANSPORTATION — Marano says that Vendetti Bus Company will continue to transport students. "We're pleased with the level of service they've provided; it's been a 40-year partnership," he said.

NURSES — Each of the five schools will have one nurse on duty but a licensed practical nurse (LPN) will be available "to help support any additional needs at the five schools."

TEACHERS — Marano expects to fill any vacancies before the new school year begins. "I'm proud of the way our staff has adapted to meet the needs of all our students," he said. "During the COVID years, our teachers, nurses, custodians, and administrators met the challenges and did what was right for students. The pandemic affected the students learning, health and social and emotional well-being."

BUILDINGS — The two elementary schools (Stall Brook



Peter Marano will begin his ninth year as Bellingham's School Superintendent next month.



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Also, when you're helping your parents water the yard, make sure not to water the plants too much—remember that a little sprinkle goes a long way!

Check Back Each Month for more Helpful Ways to Save!



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and DiPietro) will now have entrapment entrances, which allows an individual to proceed past the first set of doors. Then, facing a secretary behind a glass shield, entry into the building will occur if cleared by a Raptor System. That device scans a driver's license that instantly provides information on an individual's past. "The Raptor System ensures safety for all teachers and students in a building," Marano said. "All five schools will have the system."

ATHLETICS — Marano likes the competitive drive of student-athletes. "They compete at a high level in the Tri Valley League and we want to encourage more students to participate in interscholastic sports."

ADMINISTRATION — Two new principals will be on board—Shannon Barca at Stall Brook and Kerry Sankey at DiPietro. "Dr. Kerry Sankey comes to us from Mansfield," Marano said. "She has a great deal of experience and will do a wonderful job. Mrs. Barca comes to us with a great deal of experience and is dedicated in creating a school environment that is inclu-

sive, welcoming, supportive, and filled with joy." Transportation Director Michael Roche is leaving and so, too, is Joanne Rebelo, who worked as the Director of Finance. "Erica Monteiro, who previously was Payroll Director in Franklin, has been hired as the new Director of Finance."

GRANTS — The district applied for and was given an Innovation Pathway Grant of \$150,000 last year. "It provides students with a dedicated pathway to post-secondary education for those interested in a manufacturing or health science career," Marano said. "Some of that money enables us to hire an internship coordinator who works with local businesses to place students in internships."

2023-24 BUDGET — The school budget is approximately \$33.5 million, up \$1.2 million from last year. Approved at the May Town Meeting, the increase is 4.93 percent.

COLLEGE-BOUND — The 2023 graduating class included 116 seniors. Eighty percent (93) will be attending two or four-year colleges or universities.

We've Got Champions, Yes We Do! BVT Students Earn Medals at National SkillsUSA Competition

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) students proved their vocational-technical ability at the 59th annual SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, June 19-23. The event is the world's largest showcase of career and technical education students.

The highlight of the conference is the SkillsUSA Championships, where more than 6,500 outstanding career and technical education students – all state contest winners from across the nation – compete in 110 hands-on skill and leadership competitions. Students work against the clock and each other, proving their expertise in occupations such as electronics, computer-aided drafting, precision machining, medical assisting, and culinary arts.

In the third and final stage of the SkillsUSA competition series, BVT students competed with impressive results. Once again,

the student competitors demonstrated their career-technical expertise and proudly claimed one gold, three silver, and three bronze medals. All contestants who medaled or met a threshold contest score for their event as an indicator of proficiency were awarded Skill Point Certificates.

“Our students continually strive to perfect the skills needed to compete against the best vocational-technical students in the SkillsUSA District, State, and National Championships,” said Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick. “In 2023, our students proved their technical skills are among the best in the country by earning 173 medals at all three levels.

The following BVT students placed in the top 10 at the 2023 SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference Championships and earned Skill Point Certificates. More details are available at www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa.

Bellingham

Bronze: Lucien Stenehjem, Robotics & Automation Technology.

Blackstone

Silver: Daniel Cardone, Web Design.

7th place: Carolyn Powers, Collision Damage Appraisal.

Douglas

National Parliamentarian: Hunter Clafin.

7th place: Skyler Robinson, Restaurant Service.

Grafton

Gold: Caitlin Brown, Health Occupations Professional Portfolio.

5th place: Grant Purcell, Career Pathways Showcase/ Industry & Engineering; and Ava Mills, Career Pathways Showcase/Industry & Engineering.

Hopedale

State Officer Elect: Kallie Allen.

National Voting Delegate: Kallie Allen and Ella Foster.

Mendon

Silver: Natalia Vazquez, Web Design.

5th place: Naomi Tsuda, Commercial Baking.

Millbury

National Voting Delegate: Allison Garden.

Northbridge

Silver: Riley Driver, Industrial Motor Control.

Bronze: Emily Wildfeuer, Architectural Drafting.

Upton

Bronze: Jacob Giancola, Robotics & Automation Technology.

Uxbridge

5th place: Grace Mathieu, Career Pathways Showcase/ Industry & Engineering.

About Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT):

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School serves the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. Located in the heart of the Blackstone Valley, BVT creates a positive learning community that prepares students for personal and professional success in an internationally competitive society through a fusion of rigorous vocational, technical, and academic skills.

Concerts on the Grass 2023

BELLINGHAM TOWN COMMON

Wednesday June 28. 6pm – 8pm. Kids Night with Wayne Potash and Trevor the Games Man.

Sponsored by Bellingham Town Common Trustees

Wednesday July 12. 6pm – 7pm – Free pony rides. 6:30pm – 8:30pm Morse Code (classic rock).

Opening Act: **The Wild Beyond** (classic rock)

Wednesday July 19. 6pm - 7pm. Free pony rides., 6:30pm – 8:30pm Riverboat Stompers (Dixieland)

Wednesday July 26. 6pm – 7pm. Free pony rides., 6:30pm – 8:30pm Back Pages. (rock and pop).

MENDON TOWN BEACH

Wednesday Aug 2. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm., 6:30pm – 8:30pm. Brass Connection (brass band).

Wednesday Aug 9. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm., 6:30pm – 8:30pm Tobe Rode (60s, 70s, 80s rock)

Wednesday Aug 16. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm., 6:30pm – 8:30pm Jesse Liam (contemporary pop)



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Milford -Franklin Eye Center

Decades of Service to the Community and a New Provider

BY: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.
MILFORD FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

Milford-Franklin Eye Center has been providing excellent eye care to the community for decades. With much excitement, we are happy to announce that Dr. Jorge Arroyo will join our team as our practicing vitreoretinal specialist and Chief of our Retina Service. Dr. Arroyo will see patients every Monday in our Franklin office.

With offices located in Milford, Franklin and our new office in Millis, our own award-winning surgery center in Milford and a support staff of 50, we are proud to be the leading medical and surgical eye care center in the area and one of the major eye care centers in the State. We are also one of the rare ophthalmology practices to own and operate our own surgical center, the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford. No longer need to travel miles and hours to have cataract surgery!

Experienced eye physicians/surgeons and 5 optometrists are here to provide comprehensive and excellent eye care for the entire family. If your eyecare provider is still asking you to travel for eyecare to far away practices and surgery centers, we are here to help.

Dr. Roger Kaldawy is an experienced eye physician and surgeon and the area's only full-time specialist in corneal diseases. Having completed his training in Ophthalmology at the University of Rochester and his fellowship in Cornea and Refractive Surgery at the prestigious Department of Ophthalmology of the University of Iowa, Dr. Kaldawy served as Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at Boston University where he was Director of the Cornea and External Disease program and trained fellows and residents in Ophthalmology. Some of the physicians he trained are now in academic and private practices in Massa-

chusetts and around the world. Dr. Kaldawy published research articles in peer-reviewed academic journals and has been invited as a guest speaker to many prestigious academic programs in the US and around the world. Dr. Kaldawy is proud to be the first surgeon in central Massachusetts and among a handful of surgeons in the State to have performed DSAEK corneal transplantation. With special interest in cataract surgery, Dr. Kaldawy has performed over 30,000 procedures and surgeries and was the first surgeon in the area to offer the highly advanced accommodating implants. Dr. Kaldawy was the first surgeon in the area to offer bladeless laser assisted Femto cataract surgery. This laser procedure is offered locally at the Cataract and Laser Surgery Center of Milford. Dr. Kaldawy also serves as the Medical Director of the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford.

Dr. Jorge Arroyo is our practicing vitreoretinal specialist and Chief of Retina Service. He received his undergraduate degree at Amherst College, medical de-



gree at Yale University School of Medicine, and completed his ophthalmology residency at the University of California, San Francisco, and vitreoretinal surgery fellowship at Duke University Eye Center. Dr. Arroyo has over 20 years of experience training doctors and fellows at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical School/Harvard Medical School. Dr. Arroyo is a member of the Retina Society, Macula Society, American Society of Retina Specialists, the international Club Jules Gonin, and the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Dr. Arroyo is the immediate past president of the New England Ophthalmological Society and continues to serve as a board member. Dr. Arroyo has published over 60 publications in peer-reviewed journals on macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vein occlusion, vitreomacular traction syndrome, and retinal detachment.

Dr. Shalin Zia, O.D. received her Bachelor of Science degree from Purdue University in 2014 and her Doctor of Optometry from Indiana University in 2018. She moved to Massachusetts from the Midwest after getting married. Dr. Zia has many years of experience, spending several years in private practice. She enjoys seeing patients of all ages. She is proficient in routine eye care, contact lens fitting, and diagnosing and treating various eye diseases. In her free time, she enjoys working out, listening to podcasts, and spending time with family.

Dr. Adams, graduated from John Carroll University, Bachelor of Science, summa cum laude, in 1995. He completed his Masters in Biochemistry from Ohio State University in 1997. In 2003 he received his Doctorate from the New England College of Optometry. Dr. Adams has advanced training in corneal pathology, specialty contact lenses, ocular disease, and laser refractive surgery.

Dr. Mai-Khuyen Nguyen joined Milford-Franklin Eye Center from the New England Carpenters Benefit Fund - Vi-

sion Center, where she served as Head of Optometry. She has over 10 years of experience in comprehensive eye exams for adult, geriatric, pediatric, and special needs populations. Her experience includes performing contact lens fitting and managing contact lens complications. Dr. Nguyen is also experienced in glasses fitting and lens edging. Her charitable activities include participating in Boston Cares program and the Boston Special Olympics.

Dr. Donald L. Conn, OD will join our team in our state-of-the-art medical offices in Franklin, Milford and Millis starting August 2022. Dr. Conn is a comprehensive optometrist offering the latest in comprehensive eye care for the entire family. Dr. Conn earned his Bachelor of Science from College of the Holy Cross in 2016. He then went on to earn his Doctor of Optometry degree from New England College of Optometry in 2021. He completed a residency in ocular disease and Primary care at the Bedford VA in June 2022. His clinical experience also includes clinical rotations at Lahey Hospital & Medical Center, Boston Medical Center, and South Boston Community Health Center. Dr. Conn will join our team in August of 2022. He is experienced in providing care to patients of all ages including adults, geriatrics, and pediatric populations. Outside of work Dr. Conn enjoys long distance running and spending time with friends and family.

Dr. Purvi Patel, OD originally from the tri-state area, received her bachelor's degree from The College of New Jersey in 1996 and her Doctor of Optometry from the State University of NY College of Optometry in 2000 through a joint accelerated B.S.-O.D. program. She then completed a residency in Ocular Disease and Special Testing. In 2003, Dr. Patel joined the New England College of Optometry



MILFORD - FRANKLIN EYE CENTER



Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.



Jorge G. Arroyo, M.D.



Dr. Mai-Khuyen Nguyen, O.D.



Michael R. Adams, O.D.



Shalin Zia, O.D.



Donald L. Conn, O.D.



Dr. Purvi Patel, O.D.



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EYES

continued from page 12

as Clinical Assistant Professor. Through her role as Director of Eye Care Services at Whittier Street Health Center and then The Dimock Center, one of the largest community health centers in Boston, Dr. Patel brings with her teaching and leadership experience. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, with a history of publishing, presenting, and lecturing. During the last 10 years, Dr. Patel has transitioned to direct care and worked in collaboration with ophthalmology. Most recently, Dr. Patel completed a postdoctoral certificate for the treatment & management of glaucoma. Dr. Patel has clinical interests in diabetes, glaucoma, community-based eye and vision care, public health & epidemiology. Dr. Patel currently lives in Dover, MA with her husband and 3 daughters. She enjoys traveling abroad, reading and tennis.

Milford-Franklin Eye Center realizes you have choices when it comes to eye care. We are different. We focus on excellent and advanced eye care and treat our

patients as if each one is family. We have surgical results that rival those of major centers in Boston—we can prove it. We are from the community, most of us live in the community and our focus is to serve the community. You will see us in the office, at the local supermarket and in the ER at 1 AM if there is a need for our care. Our focus is on you, your vision, and excellent results. We are available in your backyard and proud to offer world class cataract surgery closer to home: Here in Milford! Our optical shop has its own dedicated lab and can cut and finish your glasses while you wait. All new patients receive a free pair of select glasses. We offer after-hours, same day emergency appointments and Saturday appointments. We have great management focused on quality customer care. Four decades serving our communities and going strong. We remain dedicated to the best in eye medicine and surgery closer to home.

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The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Docket No. 23E0019PP

Norfolk Probate and Family Court
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CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION TO PARTITION 433 CENTER STREET BELLINGHAM, MA
In the matter of: Petition to Partition 433 Center Street Bellingham, MA

To William H. Hodge, Jr. and to all other interested person, a petition has been presented to said Court by Sharon M. Strese of Bellingham in the country of Norfolk representing that they hold as tenant in common a 50% undivided part or share of certain land lying in Bellingham in the County of Norfolk, and briefly described as follows 433 Center Street Bellingham, MA and setting forth that they desire that all of said land may be sold at sale or public auction for not less than \$1,000,000.00 One Million dollars and praying that partition may be made of all the land aforesaid according to law, and to that end that a commissioner be appointed to make such partition and be order to make safe and conveyance of all or any part of said land which the court finds cannot be advantageously divided, either at private sale or public auction, and be ordered to distribute and pay over the net proceeds thereof in such manner to make the partition just and equal.

If you desire to object you or your attorney should file a written appearance and answer in said Court at Canton before ten o'clock in the forenoon on the August 16, 2023 the return day of this citation.

ORDER OF NOTICE

It is ORDERED that notice of said proceedings be given by delivering or mailing by registered or certified mail a coy of the forgoing citation to all persons intersted whose addresses are know fourteen days at least before said return day, and if any person is not so served, by mailing a copy thereof to he last know address of such person fourteen days at least before said return day, and by publishing a copy thereof once in each week for three successive weeks in a newspaper published in the town where said property is held, the last publication to be one day at least before said return day.

WITNESS, Hon. Patricia Gorman, First Justice of the Court
Date: July 10, 2023

Colleen McBrierley
Register of Probate

Town Clerk Announces Special Election

Bellingham Town Clerk, Larry Sposato, announces a Special Election to be held on Tuesday, August 29, 2023, from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. at the Bellingham High School Gymnasium. The election is being held to fill the remainder of a Select Board term vacated by resignation. The seat will be up for election again in June of 2024.



Nomination papers will be available beginning at start of business on June 26, 2023 and must be returned to the Town Clerk's office no later than close of business on July 17, 2023. Nomination papers will be available throughout that period. The last day to withdraw from the election will be July 24, 2023.

Although there will be no scheduled early voting hours or generalized vote-by-mail, any registered voter who is not able to come to the polls may request an absentee ballot or vote at the Town Clerk's office. Absentee ballots must be received back by 8:00 p.m. on August 29, 2023; voting-in-office ends at noon on August 28, 2023. Permanent absentee voters who checked off the "all elections this year" box need not re-apply for a ballot.

If you have any questions, you may contact the Town Clerk's office by emailing town-clerk@bellinghamma.org, or by calling (508) 657-2830.

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Gilly's House Plans 2nd Annual Summerfest

By GRACE ALLEN

On Sunday, August 27, Gilly's House will host the second annual Summerfest, a family-friendly, alcohol-free fundraiser from noon to 6 p.m. at the Wrentham Developmental Center complex, 131 Emerald Street in Wrentham. All are welcome.

The event will feature live music, food, restaurant tastings, soft drinks, kids' activities, special guest appearances, and more. Everything is included in the \$50 ticket price, and children accompanied by an adult are free.

Gilly's House, a non-profit facility located in Wrentham, offers a comprehensive life-skills transitional program for young men who have successfully completed a residential treatment program. The sober home was founded by David and Barbara Gillmeister in memory of their son Steven.

Massachusetts is suffering from an exponential increase in opioid-related overdoses, overdose deaths, and people seeking substance-use treatment. In 2022, there were 2,357 overdose deaths in the state, a new record high and surpassing 2021's tally by 57.

"Now more than ever, addiction is affecting so many people and so many families," said Barbara Gillmeister. "It's just so difficult to recover and stay in recovery, and there's so little long-term help available. There's no financial support from the government for the residents, nor for the house. It's all community support for Gilly's House, and we are so grateful for the tsunami of support we have from the community."

Gillmeister noted that last year's Summerfest was a success with hundreds of people attending. Like last year, proceeds from the event will go towards Gilly's House upgrades as well as its scholarship fund.

One of the highlights of Summerfest will be a restaurant cook-off with many local restaurants participating. People can sample the food and then vote on their favorites. James Arsenault, owner of James' Breakfast and More, is organizing the cook-off.

Comedian Michael Petit will serve as Summerfest emcee.



Students from King Philip High School's community service group, KP Cares, will organize and run children's activities throughout the day.

The Norfolk Lions will serve hamburgers, hotdogs, chips, and beverages.

Entertainment scheduled throughout the day includes a petting zoo, magic shows, a drumming circle, and caricature drawings. There will be a bouncy house, blow-up obstacle course, dunk tank, and an ice cream truck.

The Wrentham Fire Department will provide a "Touch-a-Truck" experience for kids.

Pat the Patriot and the New England Patriots cheerleaders will be on site. Keith Birchall, aka the Silver Bullet, will be available for photos with the Superbowl rings.

Attendees can peruse various healthy living resource tables. Contact Maureen Cappuccino at maureen@gillyshouse.com if your organization would like a free resource table at the event.

Summerfest will be held rain or shine. Organizers suggest attendees bring chairs and blankets to sit on while enjoying the music and food. Bathroom facilities will be available.

Tickets for Summerfest can be purchased at any time at <https://gillyshouse.com>, or by scanning the QR code at the end of this article or on posted flyers. Tickets are tax deductible.

Sponsorships ranging from

\$250 to \$5,000 are available. Visit the Gilly's House website for more information or contact Barbara Gillmeister at barbara@gillyshouse.com with any questions.



FAMILY SOBER EVENT SUNDAY, AUGUST 27TH, 12-6 PM

Wrentham Developmental Center
131 Emerald Street, Wrentham, MA



\$50 per Admission Ticket

Kids are FREE including Food & Activities!

Face Painting - Arts & Crafts - Bouncy House - Petting Zoo
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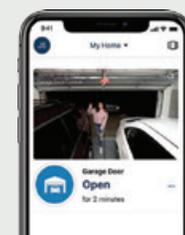
Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Chips & Drinks
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Special Guest Appearance by Pat the Patriot!



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Exsultet! Women's Premier Chorus Auditions August 28th

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cal periods and cultures and incorporates readings and poetry into our performances.

Exsultet! has openings for Soprano 1 singers for the 2023-2024 season. Auditions will take place on Monday, August 28th at 7:30 p.m. at First Congregational Church, 725 Washington Street, Holliston, MA.



- Exsultet! rehearsals for the 2023-2024 Season will be on Monday nights from 7:00-9:00pm in preparation for our two concert weekends this year. We typically perform our Holiday Concert in early December and our Spring Concert in early May.
- To audition, download the audition piece from our website, and prepare to rehearse and sing it with the group. At the end of rehearsal, you will be asked to sing your part in a trio or quartet. Come prepared to sing, work hard, and have fun!
- Please contact Carrie Klimeczko at carrie7975@gmail.com for more information and to schedule a specific audition time.
- Visit www.exsultet.us to learn more about the audition process.

Senior Center News Briefs & Events

ENERGY VIBRATIONS — What vibe do you contribute? Senior Center Director Josie Dutil investigates the impact of vibes we meet the workplace with. Tuesday, September 24, at 1 p.m.

FUEL ASSISTANCE — Renewals for fuel assistance should be coming in the mail starting this month from the Southern Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC). Please call Lisa Loo at the Senior Center as soon as possible to schedule your appointment to complete your renewal application. Appointments for new applications for the 2023 – 2024 fuel assistance season will not begin until October. The fuel assistance season runs from November 1st, 2023, to April 30th, 2024.

COFFEE & CONVERSATION — Every Tuesday at 9:30am. Sometimes, we'll have a surprise guest or two that you will not want to miss. Call ahead, please, and reserve your seat at the table.

ELLIS ISLAND— Its history, other inspection sites, and a history of immigration to our country.

The History of Ellis Island 1630-2012. Who was processed at Ellis Island and what did that involve? How did the Legislation of Immigration affect Ellis Island? Join presenter Seema-Jayne

Kenney on Friday, September 29 at 1 p.m. for an illuminating look at Ellis Island.

CANNING — Join Kate Donovan, the owner of Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens, for a presentation on “canning our garden goodies.” Thursday, August 10, 1pm. Please call ahead to reserve your seat.

Upcoming Events

AUGUST 12, SATURDAY — Cookout at the Center, plus viewing of Bellingham Days fireworks. 5:30 p.m.

VIRTUALLY YOURS — Every Monday at 9 a.m. The Spiritual Book Club meets via Zoom. Discussion currently is about The Signature of All Things. Contact Josie Dutil at (508) 966-0398 to sign up.

MEN'S GROUP — meets every Wednesday at 11 a.m. at Devlin's.

BLOOD PRESSURE — Come have it checked on Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

ENHANCE FITNESS — Classes are held Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday at 8 a.m. and also on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday at 11:30 a.m. All classes are currently full. Call for more information.

Zentangle — Monthly classes are off for August.

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Bellingham Historical Commission Announces Summer Hours for Ernest A. Taft Historical Museum

The Ernest A. Taft Historical Museum, 3 Common Street, the brick building located in the Town Hall Complex across from Walgreens, will be open the following days from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. this summer:

Wednesday, August 9th

We are also open by appointment! Email history@bellinghamma.org to set up an appointment.

Our Saturday hours will resume after Labor Day!

Hope to see you at the museum soon!

Concerts on the Grass Continue in Mendon

Mendon Town Beach

Wednesday, August 2

- Free Pony Rides – 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Brass Connection (brass band)

Wednesday, August 9

- Free Pony Rides – 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Tobe Rode (60s, 70s, 80s rock)

Wednesday, August 16

- Free Pony Rides – 6:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
- 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – Jesse Liam (contemporary pop)

Bellingham Town Wide Shred Event

Saturday, August 12, 2023, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m.

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10 Mechanic Street, Bellingham, Mass.

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HCA Call for Haunts

Hopkinton Center for the Arts (HCA) and Metrowest YMCA are teaming up to bring an even bigger Wicked Weekend experience this October! We are seeking volunteers in a number of areas. Read on to see what sort of positions are available.

Wicked Weekend will entail a Haunted Town (at YMCA), along with a family-friendly Monster Mash and our annual Wicked 5k run.

Actors Wanted: Zombies, Monsters, Clowns, Ghouls and other creatures of the night.

Love to get your creep on? This position is for you!

- **Tour Guides**
Are you passionate about storytelling?
- **Makeup Artist**
Can you create the look for our monsters, zombies and creepy peeps? Can you bring to life unreal characters? Can you transform our actors into flesh eating zombies? This is for you!
- **Lighting Tech**
Love making things “pop?” Have an eye for making things stand out for the best aesthetic? Join the stage crew in bringing our dead to life. This position is for

those with utmost vision and creativity. At The Haunt it’s what is seen as well as unseen that makes the experience!

- **Set Construction**
Love Building cool stuff and we mean really cool stuff? Are you creative and able to build off the vision of the set designer? Enjoy working outdoors?
- **Prop Designer / Artist**
Have a passion for creating life-like objects? Have a strong stomach for whipping up some blood and guts? Join our Prop team in making something as simple as a table to a severed hand.
- **Box Office Manager / Ticket Team / Hospitality**
Do you love working with the public? Are you an organized guru? Let’s put those skills to use!

Email info@hopartscenter.org if you are interested in a particular position.

Library Featured Collection of the Month: Library of Things

The Bellingham Public Library has more than just books that you can check out with your Bellingham Library card! The “Library of Things” is a collection of kits, equipment, and more. This collection offers patrons a chance to try new things. All items are on a first-come, first-served basis, except for a few items that can be reserved. The collection is always growing, and a few new items have just been added this summer! There are six categories of items: Adult Memory Kits, Audiovisual Equipment, Board Games, House and Home, Recreation and Crafts, and Science and Technology. Three items that can be reserved: the telescope, WiFi Hotspots, and a Meeting Owl Pro to host hybrid meetings.

Adult Memory Kits stimulate conversation with people who have memory issues. Topics include: the decades of the 1950’s and 1960’s and the four seasons. These kits can be checked out for 3 weeks with no renewals, which is a week longer than the other items in the Library of Things collection.

Audiovisual Equipment is a selection of equipment to play and create audio and video, including: a Blu-ray player, Bluetooth speakers, cameras and so much more! Just in this summer: a portable DVD player and a digital voice recorder!

The library has a large collection of Board Games that can be checked out, from classics like Candyland, Chutes and Ladders, Cribbage, and Scrabble to contemporary games like Catan, Pandemic, and Ticket to Ride. Just in this summer: Chess, Pokemon Labyrinth, Escape Room the Game, Doodle Face Game, Pete the Cat the Missing Cupcakes Game, Scavenger Hunt indoor/outdoor card game for kids, and Clue.

The **House and Home** category is a selection of items used around the home, including environmental monitoring equipment, small tools, office equipment, etc. Just added to

this collection: portable handheld steamer and a white noise machine.

Recreation and Crafts consists of outdoor lawn games, bike supplies, craft equipment and supplies, musical instruments, party equipment, and more. New items added to this category include: fort building kit, Magna-Tile Animals, outdoor carnival games, scoop ball set, time activity set, jewelry making supplies kit, button maker machine, story pebbles, and a balloon pump.

The Science and Technology category includes computer equipment, robots, science kits, educational game systems, engineering kits, etc. Added recently to this collection: Bloxels build-your-own video game, and a Botley Coding Robot activity set.

There are also a number of children’s kits available for borrowing, and just some examples are alphabet learning locks, floor puzzles, build and learn geometric shapes, house building engineering center, mood and emotions mirrors, number-bots, simple words learning locks, and tower of sight words.

The items in this collection circulate for 2 weeks with no renewals. To learn more, go to the Bellingham Library’s website and click on “Kits, Equipment & More!”

Bernadette D. Rivard
Library Director
Bellingham Public Library
100 Blackstone Street
Bellingham MA 02019
508-966-1660
508-966-3189 fax
brivard@bellinghamma.org

Your work day/hours may not be the same as mine. So please don't feel obligated to respond outside of your normal working hours.

“Truth will ultimately prevail where there is pains taken to bring it to light.”

George Washington, Letter to Charles M. Thurston, Sunday, August 10, 1794

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Library News

For updates to library programs and services, please see the library website, www.bellingham-library.org. Click on the red alert banner on the top of the page for details.

Summer Hours

Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Friday 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Saturday hours resume on September 9th

Friends of the Library Book Sale in August!

The Friends of the Library will be holding their Summer Book Sale in the Community Room at the Library between August 23rd and 26th. Check the library calendar for details of the times of the sale. Wednesday the 23rd will be a special preview sale for members of the Friends of the Library only! Join at the door for as little as \$10 and get first dibs on the thousands of books (and more) that will be available for sale, most for \$1 or less!

Special Programs

Summer Reading Continues through August 18th. If you haven't already signed up for Summer Reading, it's not too late. See Miss Laura in the Children's Room for details! Thank you to the Friends of the Library and the Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation for sponsoring this year's Summer Reading Program! Remember to stop by and pick up or reserve your copy of your school Summer Reading assigned titles!

August Children's Program Schedule - all programs end by August 18th, unless otherwise indicated! Check the library calendar for details and to register!

- Mondays - Each week's Codeword Hunt starts on Mondays
- Mondays from 6-7 p.m. - Sign up for a 15-minute reading spot with Freedom the Reading Dog!
- Tuesdays at 10 a.m. - Summer Sensory Story & Play with Miss Melissa, drop in!
- Tuesdays at 12 noon - Picnic Stories on the Town Common, weather permitting!
- Wednesdays at 10 a.m. - Summer Ring a Ding, drop in!
- Wednesdays at 12 noon - Summer Krafty Kids with Miss Diane, please register for each session.
- Thursdays at 10 a.m. - Summer Family Movie Fun
- Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. - Summer Starlight Story Time, drop in!
- Fridays - Each week's Summer Brain Buster starts on Friday!
- Fridays at 11 a.m. - Summer Baby Time, drop in!
- Tuesday, August 1st at 6:30 p.m. - Davis Bates Storyteller for all ages!
- Monday, August 7th at 6 p.m. - Toe Jam Puppet Band on the Bellingham Town Common!
- Tuesday & Wednesday, 8th and 9th from 6-8 p.m. - Camp Millionaire is back! Fun way to learn about money, finances and more! For ages 8-12, please register. Must be able to attend both days.

- Thursday, August 10th at 3:30 p.m. - Tweens & Teens: Venetian Mask Decorating. Please register!
- Friday, August 11th at 4 p.m. - Tweens & Teens: Super Smash Bros. Ultimate Tournament. Limited to 20 participants so please register early!
- Wednesday, August 16th at 6 p.m. - Ukulele Lessons with Julie Stepanek - We'll have 24 ukuleles for registered participants. If you have your own ukulele, feel free to come without registering.
- Friday, August 18th - End of Summer Reading Ice Pop Party. Drop in anytime between 12:30 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. and have some fun with ice pops, music and bubbles as we have a party to celebrate the closing of the Summer Reading Program.

After School Programs

Our afterschool programs will resume on August 30th when school starts. Check the library calendar for details on August registration dates for the ASK (Grades 4-6) program! Registration is mandatory for children in grades 4-6 to attend the program.

Other Adult Programs

Additional details of these programs are available on the library calendar (<https://bit.ly/3xMECCt>)

- Book Club generally meets on the first Monday of the month. Email Reference Librarian Cecily Christensen at cchriste@cwmar.org for details.
- Friends of the Library generally meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Email library@bellinghamlibrary.org for details.
- The Library Board of Trustees generally meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. Email-

library@bellinghamlibrary.org for details.

- Adult Writing Group is back to meeting at the library. Their new meeting date is the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 pm. Email marjorie@marjorieturner.com for details.
- Bellingham Skein Artists Meet at the Library! This group of knitters, crocheters and other skein artists meet in the Teen Room of the library on Wednesdays from 6-8 pm and all levels, beginners included, are welcome to join. Don't have knitting or crochet needles? Did you know the library has a set in our library of things? You can borrow them to try before investing in your own!
- Yoga! Check the library calendar for details on dates and times and to register. Space is limited so registration is required.

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Sports

B.H.S. Athletic Hall of Fame – Class of 2023

By MICHAEL CONNOR

Last month, The Bellingham Athletic Booster Club “B.A.B.C.,” in conjunction with the Bellingham Athletic Department introduced you to three Class of 2023 inductees into the Bellingham High School Ath-

letic Hall of Fame: the Bulletin’s own Ken Hamwey, Michael Trudeau, and the 1996 D2 State Champion Field Hockey Team.

This month we showcase two more inductees.

Dave Gibbs enters the H.O.F. as a coach but he is more than

that to his players and people who know him. The 1966 graduate of Millbury High School played football (end/defensive back), basketball (guard) and baseball (centerfield) for the Woolies and would go on to graduate from Springfield College.

Prior to joining the BHS coaching staff, he served as defensive coordinator for Medfield football and most notably coached Medfield Varsity basketball where his Big Blue teams were 125-47 in his eight seasons there. He would join the Blackhawks coaching staff and coach another eight seasons compiling a 103-65 record that included a Tri-Valley League title and was named the Mass. State Coaches Association Coach of Year and Boston Globe Division 3 Coach of the Year that championship season.

“I was blessed to coach my two sons, Mike and Matt, at Bellingham,” says Gibbs. “I had cooperative parents and players who bought into the work ethic of Hawk Hoop. I had outstanding assistant coaches in John Clancy and Barry Hutchinson (HOF-2021). And the administration of Roger Canestrari (HOF-2019) and George Anderson (HOF-2018) were coop-

erative in helping us create the basketball culture we wanted at Bellingham High.”

Current Varsity Basketball Coach, TJ Chiappone, noted that “Coach was a pleasure to play for ... he serves as one of his role models in life and certainly a coaching role model who coined the phrase HAWK HOOP.”

Our second showcased inductee for this edition is Roderic “Rick” Smith. The product of Algonquin Regional H.S. where he was a three-sport athlete (football, baseball, & Track) would go on to Fitchburg State College and began a short-lived teaching career before finding his calling in Journalism.

Over a 39-year career which began at what was then the *South Middlesex News* (later named the *Middlesex News*) and today known to all as the *MetroWest Daily News* he was a mainstay on the sidelines at most high schools, yet he admittedly described a career highlight of covering Boston College football during the Doug Flutie years and standing in the back of the end zone for the Miracle in Miami pass.

As a forty-year resident of Bellingham, he had a natural connection to the Blackhawks and relished seeing his sons

Brett (Class of 1989- football & basketball) and Greg (Class of 1994 – football, basketball, & baseball) play. His connection to the Blackhawks showed in his writing. He wrote and recounts with ease most, if not all, of the Blackhawks highlights ranging from the early Field Hockey & Football state championships to Basketball and most recently the State Baseball & Softball Championship in 2014; the year he retired.

In retirement, he still contributed to the *Milford Daily News* and *MetroWest Daily News* with his “Whatever happened to” articles. This fall, Rick can still be found on the sidelines of a Friday night football game. Once a Blackhawk, always a Blackhawk.

Leading up to the induction ceremony on Friday, November 17, 2023 at the Coachmen’s Lodge we will be showcasing six more inductees in coming editions Justin Bernard (football), Beth (Thornton) Cutler (field hockey), Carrie (Leoncavallo) Wernig (field hockey), Bob McManus (hockey), Justin Park (hockey) and Joanne Paquette (field hockey). We are grateful to have the forum of the *Bellingham Bulletin*.

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Sports

Mantegani: The Right Coach At The Right Time

Boys Volleyball Program on Winning Track

By KEN HAMWEY
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

When a school starts a new athletic program, its most important decision is selecting a coach. Five years ago at Bellingham High, Steve Mantegani was chosen to guide its new boys volleyball team and he was the right person at the right time.

That was in 2019 when the Blackhawks finished their first season winless at 0-16. The next season was canceled because of COVID-19 and the third year was reduced to 10 matches with no playoff format. Still in its infancy, the team ended with a 1-9 record in 2021. The 2022 contingent started the turn-around, compiling a 10-9 record before bowing in the tournament to Holyoke.

Last spring, Mantegani and his Blackhawks rolled to a 16-4 record, qualified for the play-offs again, but lost in the first round to Ludlow in three close matches. Although the program is officially five years old, it excelled last spring in what basically was its third season.

Sometimes a fledgling program gets a coach who might be impatient. Or a coach who may get uptight because losing occurs too frequently. Directing a new interscholastic team takes a special individual, primarily because the growing pains will be often, the journey will be arduous, and frequent setbacks can be discouraging.

The 52-year-old Mantegani, who's coached the BHS girls volleyball team for the last seven years, obviously has the demeanor, the personality and the experience to cope with all the nuances linked to a start-up program.

When he competed at Milford High in volleyball and wrestling, he was a sectional champion in wrestling. A sophomore on the Scarlet Hawks' first-year volleyball team, he earned all-star honors as a junior and senior. His coach was the late Linda Zacchilli, one of the most dynamic volleyball coaches in the state. She, too, coached the

girls squad and later started a boys program.

"Linda was a great volleyball coach and her husband (Nick) was a superb wrestling coach," Mantegani said. "Linda was tough but fair and she expected a lot no matter how new we were to volleyball. She emphasized that hard work would get results and she never treated us like a new team. That inspired us."

When Mantegani started the boys program, he focused on three key aspects — "get the kids to love the sport; teach the basics; and rely on a disciplined approach in practice."

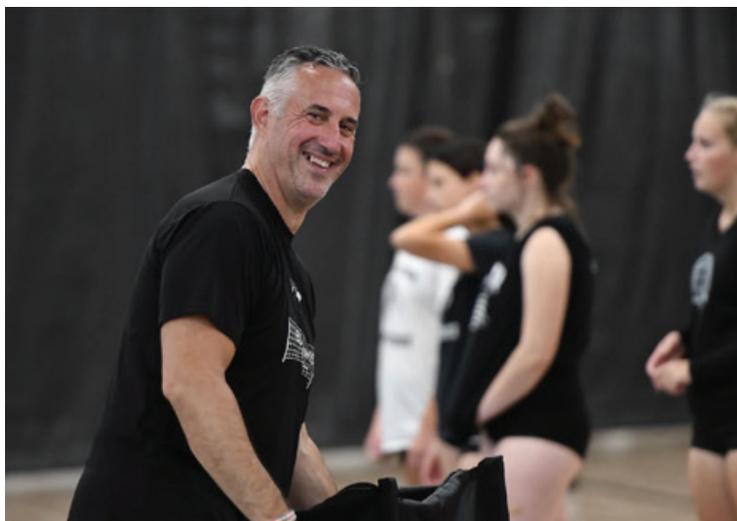
"It's a plus when players develop passion for a sport," Mantegani offered. "Stressing basics is vital because you can't play the sport without fundamental skills. And, disciplined practices help players believe they will win soon."

When recruiting players for a new program, Mantegani learned what attributes were important by watching the kind of competitors Linda Zacchilli preferred.

"What I look for are hard-working kids who are dedicated and willing to learn," said Mantegani. "Hard-working players always give 100 percent, they don't miss practice because they're committed, and they're eager to learn."

Mantegani also puts a high priority on athleticism because a quality athlete usually adjusts quickly to the skills needed for volleyball. But, he also knows that recruiting players sometimes requires help from others.

"I encourage our players to get their friends to try out," he noted. "We get boys who've excelled in soccer because their friends convinced them to add another sport. Another avenue is having someone in the school system who will talk with perspective players. They can talk about playing time, eligibility or whatever is on a boy's mind. My two sons promote BHS volleyball — one plays in our program and the other is a learning assistant."



Steve Mantegani guided the Bellingham High boys' volleyball team to a 16-4 record last spring.

Mantegani and his wife Meredith have three children — Justin, 23; Maddie, 22; and Zach, 17. Maddie played for her father before graduating from Fitchburg State and Zach earned Tri Valley League all-star honors as a junior last spring.

"Coaching your children isn't always smooth but the good thing is they know what I expect," Mantegani said. "The challenge is to treat them like any other player. As three-sport athletes both Maddie and Zach had a strong-minded approach and they displayed mental toughness."

Mantegani's boys program has been to the tourney twice in what amounts to 3½ years. The key to winning early on, Mantegani believes, is dedication, commitment, mental toughness and technique. "Talent plays a big role but that's the by-product of the four things I just listed," he emphasized.

Mantegani's top thrill as a coach was leading both the boys and girls squads to the playoffs. "The girls went 17 years without a tourney berth until we ended that streak in 2017," he recalled.

The best match in his career was the boys' first encounter in the program's history. "In 2019, we opened against Medfield and lost, 3-1," Mantegani said. "But, we won a set and that was the first time in program history we took a set."

After a successful career in volleyball and wrestling at Milford High, Mantegani enrolled

at Southern Cal, played club volleyball and majored in exercise and sports sciences. He later earned a master degree in physical therapy at the University of Delaware.

A native of Marlboro, he's coached club volleyball and also was an assistant coach for two years at Bucknell University in Pennsylvania and he also served as an assistant at Holy Cross for

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Bellingham Business Association Golf and Events

The Bellingham Business Association's Annual Golf Tournament, to benefit its scholarship & selected charities fund, will be held Monday, September 11t at the New England Country Club, 180 Paine St. starting at 2:30 p.m. The entry fee of \$85 includes green fees, a golf cart, dinner and prizes, with the proceeds supporting scholarships for local students and local charities. Multiple sponsorship opportunities are available, including Gold, Silver, & Bronze level sponsorships (see below).

Applications and checks should be mailed to the Bellingham Business Association (BBA), PO Box 77, Bellingham, MA 02019. For more information, please call Sue Ranieri at (508) 380-1643 or email Sue Grady at Contact@BellinghamBusinessAssociation.org.

BBA Golf Tournament Sponsorship Opportunities

Gold Sponsor --\$1000.00

- complimentary foursome for golf tournament, including dinner
- company logo featured prominently on promotional materials
- prominent company banner placement opportunity for 2 event site locations
- full page ad in the Golf Program
- recognition and speaking opportunity from the podium
- prominent recognition in post marketing efforts -e.g., press release, newsletter, etc.
- website recognition for 3 months following golf tournament

Golfer #1 Captain

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Phone #

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- banner placement for two event site locations
- half page advertisement in the golf program
- recognition from the podium at dinner

- recognition in post marketing efforts-e.g., press release, newsletter, etc.
- website recognition for 2 months following tournament

Bronze Sponsor --\$300.00

- company logo featured on all promotional materials
- banner placement opportunity for one event site location

- 1/3 page advertisement in the golf program
- recognition from the podium at dinner
- recognition in post marketing efforts-e.g., press release

Hole Sponsor --\$75.00

- company sign placement on a hole on the course (with other hole sponsors)
- recognition as a group from the podium

- company listed in the golf program at the tournament
- recognition in post marketing efforts-e.g., press release

Donations, such as gift cards, retail items & promotional gifts are being solicited for our famous "raffle" and for the goodie bags provided to participants. Cash contributions are also accepted and the BBA will use the money to purchase prizes for both the event and the raffle.

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Bellingham Business Association

Dear Supporters or the Bellingham Business Association

The Bellingham Business Association is an organization of business professionals who are focused on expanding their business opportunities while expanding their relationships with, and exposure to, other local business owners. In addition, our members are involved in many community and civic activities, helping to make Bellingham a town we can all be proud of.

The BBA is proud to sponsor many activities and programs such as 2-\$1500 scholarships to two graduating seniors and an annual "Unsung Hero Award" given to a dedicated individual who provides outstanding service and commitment to the community. We also make financial contributions to many worthwhile causes and events such as the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, Bellingham Friends of Music, Operation Graduation/ Bellingham High School's All Night Graduation Party, the Bellingham Library, the Senior Center and the local YMCA.

One of our most successful fundraisers is our annual golf tournament, with the proceeds going to our scholarship fund. This year it will be held on Monday, September 11th at the New England Country Club on Paine Street in Bellingham with tee off promptly at 3:00pm. It will be a Florida Scramble Format (Best Ball) for 9 holes, followed by dinner, awards and a raffle. The cost is \$85.00 per golfer. Any non-golfers welcome to join us for

dinner at 6:30pm, after the tournament at a cost of \$30.00. We hope you are able to attend this fun-filled event.

We realize however, that some of you are unable to attend our meetings and activities because of work and family commitments, therefore we are asking for your support in another way.

We are looking for tee box and green sponsors for our tournament and gift certificates for services, meals, etc. or items that we can use for our raffle, which is one of the largest around.

Multiple sponsorship opportunities are available and we have attached the information for Gold, Silver and Bronze sponsorships in addition to the traditional Hole sponsorship of \$75 that we have had in the past. Business names will appear on an individual sign at one of the holes for the entire tournament. It will also be publicized in the program given to each golfer, along with the list of all contributors. This is a great opportunity for you to get exposure for your business as well as supporting a very worthwhile cause.

We are enclosing a sponsorship and golfer's registration form for your convenience. If you would like to be a sponsor, and/or are interested in playing in the tournament, please fill out the enclosed forms and mail them back with your check to the Bellingham Business Association, P.O. Box 77, Bellingham, MA, 02019.

You can either create your own team or we will be putting



BBA
Bellingham Business Association
PO Box 77 • Bellingham, MA 02019

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BELLINGHAM BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
 P.O. BOX 77
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Thank You!!

Sue Grady
 BBA Secretary/Treasurer

teams together for individual registrants. Please respond ASAP so that you will be guaranteed a spot as we have sold out very quickly in the past.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Sue Ranieri (508) 380-1643 or email Sue Grady at contact@bellingham-businessassociation.org

Thank you for your continued support and we hope to see you on September 11th

SUE RANIERI AND SUE GRADY

Being Good Stewards to the End

Saturday, August 12th, 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

You are invited to this free workshop to learn about health, financial, legal and funeral planning. Speakers will be Daniela Masters, of Aging Well Advocates, Jay M. Elias, Esq. General Counsel for DYER-LAKE Fu-

neral Home, and others. RSVP to (508) 695-5471 or [Priest@GraceChurchNA.org](mailto: Priest@GraceChurchNA.org)

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Save the Date: September 30th Franklin Harvest Festival

The 20th Annual Harvest Festival is set for Sat., Sept. 30, with a rain date of Sun. Oct. 1, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. Look forward to many booths and attractions filling downtown on Main Street, Dean Avenue, West Central Street, Depot Street, and the parking area behind Rockland Bank.

Organized by Franklin Downtown Partnership, more than 160 vendor booths will display their specialties. There will also be music, food, kids' activities, balloons, special items from local merchants, artwork and crafts.

"The Harvest Festival is Franklin Downtown Partnership's invitation to people to gather as a community, have fun, and shop local right here in town," said Scott Martin, President of the Franklin Downtown Partnership and Harvest Festival Chair.

"The mix of activities and entertainment we have make this community event special for all ages. It showcases the wonderful shopping and dining opportunities in downtown Franklin," Martin added.

Registration opens August 15th. The last day to register for booth space is Sept. 15, but organizers expect to sell out sooner. Booths are assigned on a first-come first-serve basis. View the registration link on www.franklindowntownpartnership.org.

The Partnership welcomes business owners to become Harvest Festival sponsors. Please email the FDP office at downtown.franklin@yahoo.com to learn about sponsorship opportunities.

This year's Festival sponsors include:

Platinum sponsors - Dean Bank, RI Motorsports,

Gold sponsors - Notturmo Plumbing, Heating & Air Conditioning Inc, PhysicianOne Urgent Care,

Bronze sponsors - LeafFilter Gutter Protection, Friends- The Enclave of Franklin

The Franklin Downtown Partnership is a non-profit 501©3 organization made up of more than 350 business owners, residents, and community leaders working to revitalize downtown Franklin. Residents can join the Downtown Partnership for only \$25. The Partnership manages events like the Strawberry Stroll and the Harvest Festival, and initiatives such as beautification, streetscape design, greenspace, alley murals, and sculpture projects. For more information go to www.franklindowntownpartnership.org, or follow the FDP on Facebook.

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Coming Up at Bellforge Arts Center

The following events are free, but registration is encouraged. Visit <https://bellforge.org>.

Summer Sounds

Summer Sounds is the perfect mid-week get-away right in our own backyard. Join us after work until dusk for a free evening of food trucks, beer garden vibes, lawn games, and live music performances from rising homegrown bands and artists. All ages, Wednesdays, all summer.

- Thursday, August 3, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- Thursday, August 10, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- Thursday, August 24, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.
- Thursday, August 31, 5 p.m. - 8 p.m.

To Get to Bellforge Arts Center:

Take Rt. 27 to Hospital Road. Make a left on Hospital Road, then a left on Service Drive.

If using Google Maps or Waze: Use 1 Service Drive, Medfield in your GPS

If using Apple Maps: Use 45 Hospital Road, Medfield in your GPS

You will turn in to the hospital grounds when you see the school buses. Drive up the hill, where you will find several available parking lots on your left. Bellforge is on the right (walk between the brick buildings) with events located outside on the grounds of the former Chapel.

For more information, visit bellforge.org/events.

New Members Welcome to Charles River Chorale Open Rehearsals in September

The Charles River Chorale will begin rehearsals for its Fall 2023 season and is actively recruiting new members who are seeking a new community and musical opportunity.

The non-audition chorale group will begin open rehearsals on Tuesday, September 19, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ, 142 Exchange St., Millis. Two additional open rehearsals will take place on September 26th and October 3rd to allow interested new members an opportunity to explore the chorale opportunity.

Under the leadership of director Ashley Nelson-Oneschuk, the Charles River Chorale is entering its 40th year as a non-profit 501(c)3 chorale. Nelson-Oneschuk, a music professional in her 8th year with the Charles River Chorale, is also the choral director for Medway High School. Her goal for the chorale is "focused on cultivating a joyful community first, with excellent



musical experiences as the vessel to achieve this."

Charles River Chorale members hail from many area communities, and they range in age from teenagers to octogenarians. The group typically holds winter and spring concerts, with the Winter 2023 concert planned for Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 2 p.m. at Medway High School. The theme of the Winter 2023 concert is *Joy to the World, Celebrations from around the Globe*. This program will feature music cel-

ebrating cultures and seasonal events across the globe, including Chinese New Year, Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah, Diwali and more!

The Charles River Chorale rehearses on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ in Millis. Membership dues for the non-profit organization support operating costs. There are no dues for high school students, and scholarships based on need are available. There is also a separate children's choir for children in Grades 2 through 6.

For more information about the organization and the upcoming open rehearsals, visit <https://www.charlesriverchorale.com>. Those who are interested in joining the chorale for the start of the season on September 17th are asked to complete a short sign-up document via the attached QR code. Sponsorships and advertising opportunities are also available.

Calendar

August 2

Mendon Town Beach - Concerts on the Grass (brass) 6:30 p.m.

August 3

Bellforge Arts Center - Summer Sounds 5 p.m.

August 9

Mendon Town Beach - Concerts on the Grass (rock) 6:30 p.m.
The Ernest A. Taft Historical Museum - Open to Visitors 9 a.m.

August 10

Senior Center - Kate Donovan, the owner of Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens, presentation on "canning our garden goodies" 1 p.m.;
Bellforge Arts Center - Summer Sounds 5 p.m.

August 12

Senior Center - Cookout on the Center 5:30 p.m.
Grace Episcopal Church - End of Life Workshop 9 a.m.
Municipal Center Parking Lot - Townwide Shred Event 9 a.m.

August 16

Mendon Town Beach - Concerts on the Grass (contemporary pop) 6:30 p.m.

August 24

Bellforge Arts Center - Summer Sounds 5 p.m.

August 28

First Congregational Church - Exsultet! Auditions 7:30 p.m.

August 30

Library - after school programs resume

August 31

Bellforge Arts Center - Summer Sounds 5 p.m.

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MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau Provides Updates on Region's Tourism, Welcomes Business and Civic Leaders to Annual Meeting

The MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau held its Annual Meeting on June 20, featuring two key-note speakers, including Massachusetts State Senate President Karen E. Spilka, and Dr. Nancy S. Niemi, president, Framingham State University.

Erin Lynch, executive director, MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau, said the event was an opportunity for business, civic and community leaders to hear how the organization is responding to post-pandemic changes in the tourism industry, and share the organization's plans to increase tourism-generated revenue for MetroWest.

In addition to the keynote speakers, Michael Herbert, town manager, Town of Ashland, and Massachusetts Office of Travel & Tourism Director of International Public Relations Maria Speridakos addressed the audience, as well as State Representatives Jack Lewis, James Arena-DeRosa and Priscila Sousa.

"Every person here has a hand in creating the welcoming and inclusive region we enjoy today," said Lynch, "Our diverse cultural, recreational and educational opportunities make us an ideal destination for both local and international visitors, which presents an incredible opportunity for MetroWest."

Stacey David, deputy director, MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau, shared updates on the organization's marketing efforts, which include a two-pronged approach. Business travelers are being targeted through the corporate meeting and convention planner market, while itineraries highlighting regional attractions will target the consumer market segment. Such efforts are supported by social media campaigns, in the new Guide to MetroWest print publication, national and international advertising campaigns, the fostering of relationships with national and international tour operators and meeting planners, and the hiring of a public relations firm to share news and information with the media.

"We are thrilled with the impact our new campaigns are already making, with social media engagement up 30 percent, and more than a 380 percent increase in website traffic since June 2022," said David. "We are pleased with the momentum and

efforts of the past year and the rise of tourism in MetroWest."

The Visitors Bureau's Economic Development Director Jim Giammarinaro spoke about plans for MetroWest to become the second region in the Commonwealth identified as a Tourism Destination Marketing District (TDMD). The TDMD would collect a special assessment of up to two percent from hotels and motels, with proceeds from the special assessment pooled into a fund for the district to expand economic growth within the tourism and hospitality industry for that district.

"Funds can be used for community programs, marketing and capital projects that will attract visitors to MetroWest," said Giammarinaro. "The TDMD would generate a significant revenue stream for the region, and I hope we are able to continue the process and engage with our hotels to make this initiative a reality."

In addition to the guest speakers and updates, the 2024 slate of

officers and board members was also announced. Steve Levinsky, chair, Natick Center Cultural District, will continue to serve as chair. Vice Chair is Chelsie Vokes, associate attorney, Bowditch & Dewey LLP; Towma Rastad, co-director, MetroWest Chamber of Commerce appointed Treasurer, and Lindsey Jaworek, business outreach manager, Marlborough Economic Development Corp., appointed Clerk. Board members include Lou Carrier, president, Distinctive Hospitality Group; Peter Chisholm, director of community relations, Framingham State University; Dr. John Palabiyik, coordinator, Hospitality and Tourism Management Program, Framingham State University; Jason Palitsch, executive director, The 495/MetroWest Partnership; and Kim Sternick, general manager, Warren Conference Center and Inn.

The event was funded with the support of Framingham State University.

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BVT Named a 2022-23 PLTW Distinguished High School

The nationally recognized nonprofit organization Project Lead the Way (PLTW) has named Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) a 2022-23 PLTW Distinguished School. It is the sixth consecutive year that the school has earned this national recognition.

“It is an impressive honor to be recognized for our continuous commitment to empowering student access, engagement, and achievement in our PLTW programs,” said Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick. “I am immensely proud of our students and staff who always aspire to achieve in all aspects of the curriculum. This credential is a testament to the quality of cross-curricular instruction and those willing to do the work.”

BVT is one of 262 high schools to receive this honor for providing broad access to transformative learning experiences for its students through the PLTW Computer Science, Biomedical Science, and Engineering pathways. PLTW is a nonprofit organization that serves millions of PreK-12 students and teachers in over 12,200 schools nationally.

To be eligible for this designation, the school had to meet

the following criteria: offer at least three PLTW courses; of those who participated in PLTW, at least 33% took two or more PLTW courses during their high school tenure; and at least 95% of students completed the PLTW End-of-Course assessments; have strategies and procedures in place to support reasonably proportional representation regarding race, ethnicity, poverty, and gender.

The school offers a total of ten PLTW courses; five courses from the Engineering Pathway, three courses from the Computer Science Pathway and two courses from the Biomedical Science Pathway.

The PLTW Engineering courses empower high school students to step into the role of an engineer and adopt a problem-solving mindset. Students engage in collaborative, real-life activities like working with a client to design a home, program electronic devices or robotic arms, and explore algae as a biofuel source.

The PLTW Computer Science interdisciplinary courses engage students in compelling, real-world computer science challenges. As students work together to design solutions, they learn more than just how to code, developing computa-

tional thinking and communication skills for success in an increasingly technology-based economy.

PLTW Biomedical Science introduces high school students to medicine and human body systems and the vast array of biomedical science careers. Students take on the same real-world challenges as biomedical science professionals throughout the program, preparing them for careers in medical and health-related fields.

BVT is proud to be part of a community of PreK-12 schools, colleges, universities, and corporate and philanthropic partners across the country united around a passion for providing students with inspiring, engaging, and empowering learning opportunities through its PLTW course offerings.

About Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT):

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School serves the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon,

Milford, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. Located in the heart of the Blackstone Valley, BVT creates a positive learning community that prepares

students for personal and professional success in an internationally competitive society through a fusion of rigorous vocational, technical, and academic skills.

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