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South Edition: Douglas, Northbridge, Uxbridge

## **Anyone for Pickleball?**

t the upcoming annual town meeting Uxbridge residents will have the opportunity to give the go-ahead to an exciting recreational opportunity: the construction of six new pickle-

The meeting will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, May 14 at Valley Chapel, 14 Hunter Road.

A dedicated group of local pickleball enthusiasts has developed a proposal to build the new courts. Speaking for the ad hoc committee, Douglas Stark noted that the popularity of pickleball is exploding. Its appeal is in its simplicity, affordability and health benefits. The sport also attracts players of all ages and abilities. The sport also offers a sense of community and opportunities for social interaction, a nice benefit in a town where adult recreational activities are

"The people in our town are traveling to about six or seven other place in other towns to play pickleball," said Stark. And the growing popularity of the sports means that Uxbridge residents are getting shut out of some of the courts that are farther afield.

Since the ad hoc committee that included Lisa Bernard of the Uxbridge Senior Center, they de-



Uxbridge Pickleball Committee members, from left: Douglas Stark, Orlando Corona, Lisa Bernard, Gail Epstein, Chris Prohel, Leon Droby. Missing from photo David Tapscott.

cided to formalize the process and organize their efforts.

"We've all been hitting up the town manager Steve Sette repeatedly, not knowing the others were too," he said. "He was a little overwhelmed with the calls."

Once the committee organized, they met with Sette and he was very enthusiastic about it. Besides Stark and Bernard, committee members include Orlando Corona, Lisa Bernard, Gail Epstein, Chris

Prohel, Leon Droby and David Tapscott.

They also met with the Recreation Committee and got approval for \$170,000 from the Capital Planning Committee. Both the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee have voted favorably on the warrant article seeking the funding, which now

## **PICKLEBALL**

## **New Community Health Worker Position Provides** Invaluable Support

he Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health was created as a collaborative effort among local Boards of Health in eight nearby communities, including Douglas, Northbridge, Uxbridge, Blackstone, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville and Upton. The many lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic only strengthened the bonds among these towns leading to the realization that more support was needed to effectively address the socioeconomic complexities of the most vulnerable populations.

The town of Northbridge, in collaboration with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, received the State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) Grant from the Office of Local and Regional Health which allowed for the long-awaited Community Health Worker position to be created. The Community Health Worker

position is meant to be a crucial role within these eight communities, with a focus on increasing access to mental health resources; coordinating community-based initiatives that are age-friendly; providing targeted resources for healthy aging; and, acting as a liaison for research and support.

"As the position evolves, this list will likely expand, especially given that the needs of each town truly differ," says the new Community Health Worker, Jenna Gouin. In addition, the Community Health Worker position will work closely with local police and fire departments, as well as Senior Centers. "The key to success here will certainly be ongoing collaboration and open communication. I am excited to work alongside these remarkable individuals and to make a difference in these communities."

Gouin has over ten years of experience in health and social services and has a wealth of experience in navigating complex situations that these vulnerable populations face daily. She received her undergraduate degree from Worcester State University and her dual Master's degrees from Nichols College. Gouin also has strong ties to several of these communities, which really show her level of investment and dedication. "We are beyond thrilled to have her and are so excited she is finally here. She has already hit the ground running," says Jeanne Gniadek, Northbridge Board of Health Administrator.

In addition to the Community Health Worker position, Northbridge also hired two Regional Health Inspectors with the funding from the SAPHE grant. These individuals will be supporting the local Health Agents with routine health inspections of food establishments, public schools, and other entities to ensure compliance with state and local health regulations.

If you need Jenna's assistance, she can be reached by calling 508-825-6862 or emailing jgouin@northbridgemass.org









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#### **PICKLEBALL**

continued from page 1

only needs a 'yes' vote from town meeting voters to get the project underway.

The pickleball committee hasn't recommended a particular spot for new courts or whether old tennis courts will be repurposed.

"We've been trying to stay away

from that because there are issues no matter where you put a pickleball court, particularly with sound," Stark said.

When the hard pickleball racquet connect with the game's ball (looks like a wiffle ball except hard), it makes a distinctive, loud popping sound that many people find annoying. So, building a pickleball facility on an existing tennis court may require the installation

of sound barriers, especially if near homes or schools.

Also, access for construction vehicles at existing tennis courts could be a little dicey, Stark said.

'We've got three locations that are really possible, but we're trying not to make that decision for the town. We just want the voters' blessing and you guys work out where you want to put it," he said, suggesting places like behind the McCloskey School or the area known as the 100 Acre Lot or by Pout Pond.

"We don't want this to become an issue at the town meeting. We're not at that point yet; we just want voter approval to pursue it," Stark

The funding they're looking for is not very much compared to what some towns are spending. He estimated that Northborough spent about \$350,000 for their pickleball facility and Linwood put in two basketball courts and two pickleball courts for \$750,000, but the pickleball players are willing to raise funds.

They are pursuing every grant they can and looking for pledges from corporate and business sponsors, said Stark.

"We're working on doing two or three pickleball fundraiser tournaments" he said.

"We're really hoping to raise significant money to help with it, but our main goal is to get people who want to play pickleball in town to go to that meeting and vote in favor of it."

Residents who wish to learn more or contribute to the fundraising initiative can contact the committee via email at uxbridgepickleball@gmail.com, visit their Facebook page at "Uxbridge Pickleball," or check out their website at www.uxbridgepickleball.net.



## And They're Off!

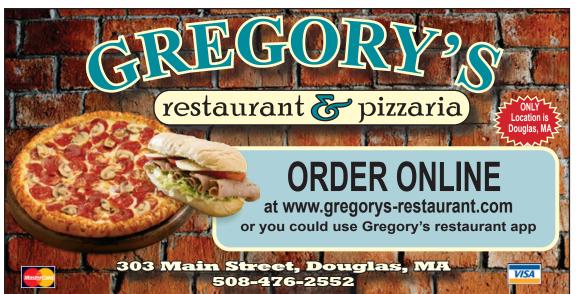
lummer Place/Home of the Northbridge Senior Center celebrated its own version of the Kentucky Derby with a phenomenal afternoon full of Derby-





themed bingo games, horse racing trivia, an ornate hat contest, mock mint juleps, and a horse race that will be remembered forever! A very special thank you to all who came out to enjoy the festivities and to the volunteer team who contributed to making this event a success, and a first-ever event

for Plummer Place. A wonderful time was had by all. The Kentucky Derby Party was sponsored by the Friends of Northbridge Elders, Inc. (FINE), the non-profit, fundraising arm of the Northbridge Senior Center. For more information on Plummer Place or FINE, please call (508) 234-2002.





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Published on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. Direct mailed to nearly 65,000 homes and businesses each month and available on news stands in the region.

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4th Friday: The YankeeXpress North: Auburn, Oxford

4th Friday: Blackstone Valley North: Grafton, Millbury & Sutton

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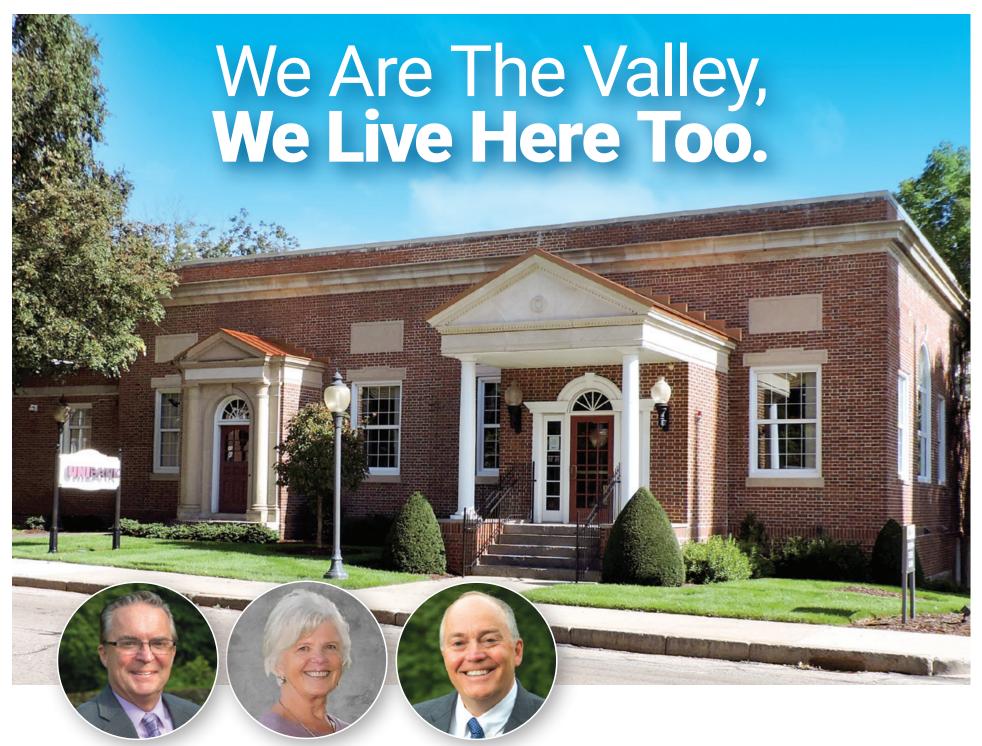
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Blackstone Valley Xpress/@2024

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Christopher Foley, President of UniBank. Decades of residency in The Valley.

Sandy Lemire, 37 years at UniBank in various roles.

Michael Welch, CEO of UniBank. Resides in Uxbridge.



Wendy Brown, VP, Retail at UniBank. Board Member of Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce.



Michael Sulham, Uxbridge Branch Manager. President of the Uxbridge



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## **Uxbridge Branch**

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## Simon Fairfield Library

**Mondays**: 10 a.m. Spring Storytime age, to 18 mos. to 2 years; 1 p.m. Spring Storytime, ages 3 – 5; 3 p.m. Spring Storytime, ages 4-7.

Tuesdays: May 7 - 11:30 a.m. Music and Movement; May 14 - 6:30 p.m. Intrepid Readers. The book is "Vacationland: True Stories from Painful Beaches" by John Hodgman; May 21 - 11:30 a.m. Music and Movement; 4 p.m. Young Readers' Club; May 21 -6:30 p.m. SciFi Book Club "Planetfall" by Emma Newman; May 28 - 4 - 5 p.m The Book Bunch "The Jolley-Rogers and the Ghostley Galleon" by Jonny Duddle

**Wednesdays:** May 15, 22, 29 – 10 a.m. Spring Storytime, ages 2-4

**Thursdays:** May 16 – 4 p.m. Book Wizards "Wild Ride" by Keith Calabrese; 5:45 p.m. Reading to Gabby; May 23 6:45 – 8"45 p.m. Fiber Art Friends

The Library is closed on Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day

## **Douglas Adult Social Center**

331 Main St, Douglas 508-476-2283

Free Veterans Breakfast on the second Tuesday of the month at 9 a.m. . The next one is May 14. Come meet with old and new friends for a delicious hot breakfast

The Senior Center is coloring a large canvas welcome sign for our wall. Help us out. Drop in and color at your own pace.

The new weekly dart group started in March. Wednesdays at 10 a.m. Don't forget! The Senior Center

Don't forget! The Senior Center has lots of medical equipment to loan out. Call the center at 508-476-2283 if you need anything.

Sunshine Club meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 2 p.m.

#### Transportation

ELDERBUS SERVICE SCHED-ULE S.C.M. Elder bus, under contract to the Worcester Regional Transit Authority, provides transportation services to senior and disabled clients for twentyone communities within central Massachusetts. Please call Elder bus directly at (1-800 -321-0243) to make all reservations. Reservations must be made 48 business hours ahead of time. OUT OF TOWN MEDICAL: Wednesday, Thursday and Friday Service hours 10:00 am to 12:00 pm or 12:00 pm to 2:00

DOUGLAS SERVICE IN TOWN Monday—Friday service hours Medical 8:30 am-3:30 pm Work 8:30 am -3:30 om General Business 8:30 am to 3:15 pm OUT OF TOWN GROCERY SHOPPING: Tuesday Customer choice drop off pick up. Walmart— Whitinsville 11:00 am to 12:30 pm.

Please call 48 hours ahead of time to schedule your ride.

#### Ongoing events:

Mondays: Pickleball 8 a.m. – 12 p.m.; Painting 9:45 – 11:45 a.m.; Balance and Strength class 12 p.m.; Mat yoga, 2 p.m.

Tuesdays: Walking 9 – 10 a.m.; Cribbage 9:30 a.m.; Zumba 9;30 a.m. , Bingo and Lunch 11:30 a.m. (lunch is \$4). Technology class 1 p.m.

Wednesdays: Pickleball 8 a.m. - 12 p.m.; Balance and Strength 10 a.m.; Darts 10 a.m.; Mahjong 1 p.m.

Thursdays: Walking 9 - 10 a.m.; Chair yoga 9:30 a.m.; Pitch 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.; Hand and Foot card game 12:30 a.m.

Fridays: Balance and Strength – 10 a.m.

Puzzle Corner is available anytime during the day.

All of the daily events and activities are free, except for lunch. If you cannot afford lunch, please see a staff member for assistance.

## Simon Fairfield Library Memorial Day Sale

The Friends of the Library are planning a big Memorial Day Weekend sale on May 25th from 9 am to noon. Usually, it is a book and plant sale. This year, it is a book, plant, puzzle, and fall auction leftover sale. I'm making them clean out the basement, so there's plenty of loot to be taken! As always, the buyer sets the price—take what you want, and donate what you can!

If you have plants or seedlings to donate to the sale, please leave them behind the Library on May 23 or 24 in labeled pots. If you need some pots, there is a big ole bin of them behind the Library. Take some or leave some—they are there for your convenience.

We don't want to be carrying anything off to recycling, so please come and procure some stuff!

## Make Your Workout a Dance Party

he Uxbridge Senior Center is proud to present a live eight -week session of Zumba Gold classes for Seniors. Zumba is a fitness program that fuses entertainment and culture into an exhilarating dance party workout. This is an eight-week specialized program designed for seniors.

The program will begin Thursday, June 6 from 1:30-2:30 p.m. at the Uxbridge Senior Center Satellite Site which is located at the McCloskey School at 62 Capron Street. The class will run for one hour, one day a week, on Thursdays, for an eight-week time frame, at the cost of a \$25 donation. The instructor, Amy Smith, is a licensed Zumba Gold instructor. Checks may be payable to the Uxbridge Senior Center.

The benefits of Zumba include improved balance, range of motion and coordination. Additional benefits include increase blood flow to the brain enhancing attention and concentration skills, as well as burning calories and meeting new friends! The class would be open to all in the community including those outside the Town of Uxbridge.

Interested individuals should call or stop by the Uxbridge Senior Center at 508-278-8622 for more information and receive their application and waiver forms prior to the start of the program. The Center is located at 36 South Main Street in Uxbridge and is open Monday thru Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.



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## How is your retirement income taxed?



**Mark Freeman** 

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Once you're retired, you will likely need to draw on several types of income for your living expenses. You'll need to know where these funds are coming from and how much you can count on, but you should also be aware of how this money is taxed — because this knowledge can help you plan and budget for your retirement years.

Here's the basic tax information on some key sources of retirement income:

- Social Security Many people don't realize they may have to pay taxes on their Social Security benefits. Whether your benefits will be taxed depends on how much other taxable income you receive from various sources, such as self-employment, stock dividends and interest payments. You'll want to check with your tax advisor to determine whether your income reaches the threshold where your Social Security benefits will be taxed. The lower your total taxable income, the lower the taxes will be on your benefits. The Social Security Administration will not automatically take out taxes from your monthly checks — to have taxes withheld, you will need to fill out Form W-4V (Voluntary Withholding Request). Again, your tax advisor can help you determine the percentage of your benefits you should withhold.
- Retirement accounts During your working years, you

may have contributed to two basic retirement accounts: an IRA and a 401(k) or similar plan (such as a 457(b) plan for state and local government employees or a 403(b) plan for educators and employees of some nonprofits). If you invested in a "traditional" IRA or 401(k) or similar plan, your contributions may have been partially or completely deductible and your earnings grew on a tax-deferred basis. But when you start taking withdrawals from your traditional IRA or 401(k), the money is considered taxable at your normal income tax rate. However, if you chose the "Roth" option (when available), your contributions were not deductible, but your earnings and withdrawals are tax-free, provided you meet certain conditions.

• *Annuities* – Many investors use annuities to supplement their retirement income. An annuity is essentially a contract between you and an insurance company in which the insurer pays you an income stream for a given number of years, or for life, in exchange for the premiums you paid. You typically purchase a "qualified" annuity with pretax dollars, possibly within a traditional IRA or 401(k), so your premiums may be deductible, and your earnings can grow tax deferred. Once you start taking payouts, the entire amount - your contributions and earnings — are taxable at your individual tax rate. On the other hand, you purchase "non-qualified" annuities with after-tax dollars, so your premiums aren't deductible, but just like qualified annuities, your earnings grow on a tax-deferred basis. When you take payments, you won't pay taxes on the principal amounts you invested but the earnings will be taxed as ordinary income.

We've looked at some general rules governing different sources of income, but you should consult your tax professional

about your specific situation. Ultimately, factors such as your goals, lifestyle and time horizon should drive the decisions you make for your retirement income. Nonetheless, you may want to look for ways to control the taxes that result from your various income pools. And the more you know about how your income is taxed, the fewer unpleasant surprises you may experience.

If you would like to discuss your personal situation with a financial advisor contact:

Mark Freeman Edward Jones Financial Advisor 77 West Main Street, Hopkinton, MA 508-293-4017 Mark.Freeman@edwardjones.com

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## **Plummer Place Events**

20 Highland St., Whitinsville 508-234-2002 Business Hours Mon-Thurs: 8:30am-4:00pm Friday: 8:30am-1:00pm

All programs and events, unless otherwise noted, require signing up in our main office to secure a spot. Light refreshments will likely be served at all events unless it is a lunch and learn program or a special event with a themed luncheon. If you have signed up for a program or have purchased a ticket for a special event and are unable to attend, please call and let us know, so that we may offer your spot to someone else on the wait-

ing list for our programs. If it is a ticketed event, please return the ticket to the front office.

#### PIZZA LUNCHEON

Friends of Northbridge Elders (FINE) Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 16 12 – 1:30 p.m. Plummer Place, 20 Highland

Street, Whitinsville .Call 508-234-2002 to register. Advance registration required.

## "KNOCK ON WOOD" FOLK-ROCK DUO CONCERT FEATURING

**HOWIE NEWMAN** 

Monday, May 20 at 1p.m. Howie is joined by one of three top fiddlers in the area. The duo performs classic rock covers and funny original songs. A lively show with great musicianship, vocal harmonies and a little humor here and there. Don't miss this fun afternoon! This performance is supported in part by a grant from the Northbridge Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

## ART HISTORY PROGRAM ON THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

Wednesday, May 22 at 1p.m. From the 1920's to the 1960's, the Saturday Evening Post was one of the most widely circulated and influential magazines for the American middle class. We will learn about the history of the magazine, look at some of the charming cover illustrations, and create our own unique cover page.

## CAMERON SUTPHIN ACOUSTIC CONCERT

Friday, May 24 at 10 a.m. Solo performer from the popular New Leaves Duo will be back to entertain us with a collection of original material and classic country and folk cover songs. Popular covers include Bob Dylan, Leonard Cohen, John Denver, and Neil Diamond. Cameron Sutphin is an Americana singer/guitar player, and in 2017 as a solo act, he released his debut Nashville recorded CD, "Heartbreak Town." He play songs from his upcoming album, "Part of Me."

#### PLUMMER PLACE PLUCKERS PATRI-OTIC CONCERT

Wednesday, May 29 at 2 p.m. Join Raianne Richards and the Plummer Place Pluckers for a sing-a-long ukulele concert of your favorite patriotic songs. Lyrics will be provided. They will do the strumming; you bring your voices!

SIX PILLARS OF BRAIN HEALTH PRE-

## SENTED BY AARP

Thursday, May 30 at 1:30-2:30 p.m.

It's never too late to take charge of your brain health. In this session, you will learn about the six pillars of a brain-healthy lifestyle, share your brain-boosting activities, and be inspired by others. This session is a good overview for anyone interested in improving their brain health and will provide you with actionable steps you can take along with resources to learn

## MARK MANDEVILLE & RAIANNE RICHARDS FOLK CONCERT

Wednesday, June 5 at 1 p.m.

Come and experience fresh and refined folk music for modern times with these two singersongwriters from Massachusetts. Anybody who craves authentic, mindful acoustic music will not want to miss out on experiencing this duo. This performance is also supported in part by a grant from the Northbridge Cultural Council.

#### THE PLUMMER PLACE GIFT SHOP

We are now accepting donations on Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment only between the hours of 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. All items need to be new or gently used and clean. Please sign up at the front desk to schedule a donation. All Gift Shop sales dollars go to FINE which directly supports Plummer Place. Shop our store during regular business hours.

Come find unique items in this quaint little shop. Jewelry, purses, dishes, children's toys and games, and household items all for sale at our store. Find the perfect item for you or buy for a gift, stop by and see what's new.

#### **QUILT RAFFLE**

FINE is pleased to be offering a handmade Amish Bargello kingsized quilt for raffle.

Purchased this past fall at the Hometowne Auction in New Holland, PA, it is a beauty with very impressive workmanship.

Raffle tickets are \$10 each and available at Plummer Place or from a FINE board member. Drawing date is Friday, May 24, 2024. The quilt is currently on display at the Plummer Place Gift Shop.

### "PICNIC IN THE PARK"

FINE will have a booth at the Whitin Community Center event on Saturday, June 8 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. This is a fun family event, featuring food trucks, live entertainment, dunk tank, and so much more.

## "TAKE A HIKE" PLUMMER PLACE WALKING CLUB

Tuesdays, May 7 & 21; June 4 & 18

Meet at the location at 10 a.m. Locations will be announced/ weather permitting.

Call Jeanne for more information.

Join us for this great way to get out into nature, enjoy new sites and meet new people.

#### TAP DANCE FOR YOUR HEALTH

Are you aware that we offer Tap Dancing Classes at Plummer Place?

Every Wednesday at 2:30 you can hear the rhythmic sound of the metal taps in our exercise room.

### **PLUMMER PLACE**

continued on page 7

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## Galliford's Gives Back teams up with Southwick's Zoo for charity event

alliford's Gives Back, in collaboration with Southwick's Zoo, is honored to announce an evening of support and solidarity for Cameron Montoya, a young warrior bravely fighting leukemia AML. The event, scheduled for May 19, from 5 to 9 p.m., aims to rally the community to raise funds for the Montoya Morrell Family.

Cameron Montoya's journey with leukemia AML has moved the hearts of many in the community, sparking an incredible outpour of love and generosity. Galliford's Gives Back and The Savanna Grille are joining forces to channel this support to provide assistance to Cameron and his family during this challenging time.

Attendees can anticipate an unforgettable evening featuring live music by Nashville recording artist Timmy Brown who is graciously volunteering his talents for the evening. Additionally, guests will

have the opportunity to participate in raffles generously donated by a variety of local businesses and organizations, including Southwick's Zoo, The Worcester Red Sox, Dunkin Donuts, New England Steak and Seafood, and many more, with all proceeds benefitting the Montoya Morell Family.

A \$10 cash cover charge will directly benefit the Montoya Morrell Family, enabling attendees to demonstrate their support while enjoying the festivities. All proceeds from the evening including the cover charge will benefit Cameron in his battle against leukemia AML.

Galliford's Restaurant and Tavern extends its gratitude to all the businesses and individuals who have generously donated raffle prizes and supported this event. Their contributions will provide essential assistance to the Montoya Morrell Family as they navigate



Cameron's medical journey. Information on the event: https://www.facebook.com/ events/3848077388846404

## Center to make an appointment

The month of May will be a time of transition for our lunch program. As you will note by our calendar, there are no lunches scheduled for May or June. We are taking a break for the month of May to re-establish our program, and will begin again sometime in June. Stay tuned for details, we will post our new program in the local papers and around Plummer Place

### **WEEKLY EVENTS**

with Katelynn.

Friday, May 10; Stretch & Strength:9 a.m. Monday, May 13; Pitch: 9 a.m., Chair Ex: 9 a.m., Tai Chi: 11 a.m., Cribbage: 12 p.m. Mahjong: 1 p.m., Aqua @ WCC: 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, May 14; Shuffleboard: 9 a.m. Painting: 10 a.m., VA Rep: 10:30 a.m. Muscle Mix: 11 a.m., BP Clinic: 11 a.m.-12 p.m., Pokeno: 12:30 p.m., Bridge: 12:30

Wednesday, May 15; Low Imp: 10 a.m. Strummers: 10 a.m., Ukulele: 2 p.m. Tap: 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 16; Meditation: 9:30 a.m.

Chair Yoga:11:15 a.m., Mahjong: 12:30 p.m. Friday, May 17; Stretch & Strength: 9 a.m. Monday, May 20; Pitch: 9 a.m., Chair Ex: 9 a.m., Scrabble: 10 a.m., Tai Chi: 11 a.m. Cribbage: 12:30 p.m., Mahjong: 1 p.m. Aqua @ WCC: 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 21; Shuffleboard: 9 a.m. Painting: 10 a.m., Hike: 10 a.m. Muscle Mix: 11 a.m., Pokeno: 12:30 p.m. Bridge: 12:30 p.m., Tri-Valley: 1 p.m. Wednesday, May 22; Low Imp: 10 a.m. Strummers: 10 a.m., Book Club: 10:30 a.m. Ukulele: 2 p.m., Tap: 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 23; Meditation: 9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga: 11:15 a.m., Mahjong: 12:30 p.m. Friday, May 24; Stretch & Strength: 9 a.m. Monday, May 27 CLOSED

Tuesday, May 28; Shuffleboard: 9 a.m. Painting: 10 a.m., Muscle Mix: 11 p.m. Pokeno: 12:30 p.m., Bridge: 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, May 29; Tech Café: 9 a.m. Low Imp: 10 a.m., Strummers: 10 a.m. Ukulele: 2 p.m., Tap: 2:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 30; Meditation: 9:30 a.m. Chair Yoga:11:15 a.m., Mahjong: 12:30 p.m. Friday, May 31; Stretch & Strength: 9 a.m.

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### **PLUMMER PLACE**

continued from page 6

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#### **WRITING YOUR WAY**

Tuesdays, May 21 and June 4 & 18

2:30-3:45 p.m. \$5.00/class Local author and Northbridge resident, Lori Gannon will be your instructor in this creative writing course. This is the place to help you create your best work! Call Michelle to sign up. This is a continuing year-long class.

#### **TECH CAFÉ**

Wednesdays, May 29 & June 26, 9 – 10 a.m.

Technology help is here! Our Tech Café will take place on the last Wednesday of the month. It will be located in our main dining room in a "drop in format" and will be one on one with Susan Letscher, one of our volunteers. Please bring your questions and your device to your session. Susan will do her best to fix your tech problems. Any questions, reach out to Amy.

#### TRI-VALLEY

Katelynn Wackell, Care Manager at Tri-Valley, will be at Plummer Place the third Tuesday of every month from 1-2:00pm. Katelynn will provide public benefit resources and options. This includes assistance with applications for SNAP, CHAMP, MRC, RAFT and MassHealth. She can also help with housing including subsidized housing applications, tenancy preservation, rental assistance, and congregate housing. Call the



## One Stop Travel Planning with TNT

BY PATTY ROY

hether you yearn for fun in the sun, the cultured capitols of Europe or discovering a hidden gem off the beaten paths, TNT Cruise Planners is the agency to consult.

TNT (which could stand for its franchisees Tom Hansen 'n Ted Goulet, but doesn't) is the largest home-based travel agency in the world for 18 years running, according to Ted. They are celebrating 10 years in business this year and during that time have lived through the heady days of the cruise ship vacation boom and weathered the travel shut-down we all remember as Covid.

And they've emerged with a full range of vacations for many

destinations and price points. Family vacations, birthday celebrations, bachelor/bachelorette parties and group adventure, Tom and Ted have something for you.

"With a name like Cruise Planners, we do a lot of cruises, but the majority of travel for our clients is land," Ted said. "So, of course, we will show you the ocean boats, river and small boats for cruises, but we have a lot of other trips we book."

What has changed from their early days is that many vacations are now multi-generational.

"It's the grandparents, kids and grandkids – we're doing a family trip. We're all going to Italy; we're all going to France. We're all going on a safari. We're all doing this magnificent cruise," he said.

That works for big friends groups vacations, too, he said. "You've got seven or eight couples who want to rent an island? This is what you pay."

The increase in small group travel is a difference from 10 years ago, Ted and Tim said. They are currently working with a Worcester Regional Chamber of Commerce group visiting Ireland later this fall.

Group trips can be very reasonably priced, he said. A booking agent can help you wade through the details of booking package vacations – are excursions included, do you have to take a bus for two hours to get to Rome, is there a wine-tasting included?

River cruises may detour depending on whether the water levels run low or high and TNT

Cruise Planners can help you with that. They are totally familiar with all the variations of planning. Planned travel can easily move you from one boat to another if river conditions make it so your boat cannot safely travel under a bridge.

That's what a travel planner does for you – can your schedule accommodate changes? Are you looking for a big Cadillac and is this tour squishing you into a Volkswagen?

These days, Alaska is a very popular destination. And TNT may have space on popular lines that cruise the Caribbean when they appear to be sold out,

"Every month with various travel parts, whether it's land or sea or rivers, we always have some sort of exclusive and special offer that's going on," Ted said.

This might be a percentage off or a free night on land. There might be a value added kind of deal," he said. These could be round-trip transfers or an extra night.

Most people are used to doing things online, but the cruise guys will do Zoom meeting or meet up locally with their clients.

"We like to get to know our

clients," said Tim. He and Tom agreed that the biggest regret that they've met among clients "we didn't vacation as much

as I wanted," he said.

There are "bucket list" travelers as well. Nobody ever said they wish they had spent more time in the office, they agreed.

"They're traveling retirees and they're taking the trips they've always wanted." he said.

People who haven't traveled a lot before can best be assisted by TNT.

"People are more conscientious about the environment. They don't mind receiving things electronically – they're more used to it now."

TNT will still provide their clients with documents "in hand" because "what if my phone dies?" Ted suggested.

For a family vacation, the dream of a lifetime or long-awaited couple or group sojourn, call tntguys. travel.com

"Coming out of the pandemic changed a lot of people's values and mindsets. I think our priorities may have changed."







## **BVCC Offers Free Master Classes** for Women

BY PATTY ROY

he Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce is invested in the success of women, notably through its Women's Success Network and is committed to helping women achieve success through

(when you're performing well but feel undeserving about your success) called "Who Do You Think You Aren't? Dismantling Imposter Syndrome."

Hahn is the head of DGC (Dirty Girls Consulting) and says her business came into being because



creating support and inspiration for their personal and professional lives. In conjunction with the International Women's Organization (IWO) theme for 2024, "Inspire Inclusion," the BVCC is creating a virtual event via Zoom that is open to the public.

To access the Zoom presentation, visit https://blackstonevalley. org/ and follow the WSN Masterclass tile to use the QR codes.

A class running on Wednesday, May 15 at 9 a.m. via Zoom, Natalie Hahn will lead a presentation addressing imposter syndrome



she wanted to help women find "their purpose and their joy in life."

Communication, both at home and work has an enormous effect on our lives, she says. Because clarity in our sense of purpose and the way we choose to fill our days IS what fills our lives.

Stand in Your Power – 3 Tools to Define Your Success & Inspire Inclusion" with Michelle Lemoi becomes available via Zoom on Tuesday, June 18 from 9-10:30 a.m.

Lemoi spent more than two decades in the construction industry and offers life coaching to those

who want to make a difference in their own lives first, and the lives of others. She is now pursuing a more caring path to help those "willing to dream big and design a life that focuses on women making themselves their number one priority."

"Inspire Inclusion" has been launched by the IWO as a way to celebrate diversity and empowerment throughout the year and throughout society. It encourages everyone to recognize the unique perspectives and contributions of women from all walks of life, including those from marginalized communities. It calls for action to break down barriers, challenge stereotypes, and create environments where all women are valued and respected.

The event is a master class series endorsing this concept; the classes will provide assessments, profiles, lectures and take-away informa-

One of the key pillars of "Inspire Inclusion" is the promotion of diversity in leadership and decision-making positions. Women, especially those belonging to underrepresented groups, continue to face barriers when seeking leadership roles. By championing inclusion, organizations and communities can harness the full potential of diverse perspectives, leading to better decision-making and innovation.







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## Spring Cleaning is Greener with Affordable Junk Removal

here are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Maybe walking through your basement has gotten difficult or there is no more room in the attic? Perhaps you are planning to move, and you need to declutter before your open house?

Figuring out who to call can be challenging. If you contact one of the big haulers, they route you to a phone center where they've never even heard of your town, plus their pricing seems vague and full of extra

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fees. No wonder you've let the stuff pile up—it's too much of a hassle to get rid of it!

Or you can call Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business with deep community roots take care of everything.

Jay Schadler started his business in 2005. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew,

SENIORS

**HANDICAP** 

but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with eight trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate cleanouts. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting.

Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled above-ground pools, hauled away ancient hot tubs, taken down old fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll come for a single item, or they'll clean out an entire house. And they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

Not everything ends up in a landfill—not if Jay can help it. He first tries to either recycle or donate items. Only after he tries to repurpose items do they end up at the transfer station.

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard dumpster for a week and chucking up to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates that tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

If you don't want to be bothered



with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway special where they'll take away a truckload of your unwanted things if you pile it up. Or if you don't want to lift a finger, then you can point at the items, and the team will fill up their truck and haul away your unwanted things. However you do it, you're left with more space and more peace of mind.

Jay and his team beat the big waste haulers on both price and customer service. When you call Affordable Junk Removal, you aren't connected to an anonymous call center. Your phone call goes right to Jay.

And speaking of pricing, Jay is upfront about it. His website shows the truck sizes and prices, so you can save time knowing your costs before you call for an appointment. There aren't any hidden costs or surprise fees with Affordable Junk Removal.

Affordable Junk Removal is fully licensed and fully insured, and they'll treat your property with care and respect.

They also have a thriving commercial business, working with

## Business sp⊗tlight

contractors and roofers to clear away debris and keep the job site clean. They can even handle commercial and residential emergencies with same-day service.

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

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

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## **Douglas Town Election**

The Douglas annual town elections will be held on Tuesday, May 14 at the Municipal Center Gymnasium, 29 Depot Street, Douglas. The polls will be open from 8 a.m. – 8 p.m.

Voters should cast their vote for: One Moderator for three years One Town Clerk for three years Two Selectmen for three years One Selectmen for one year (to fill a vacancy) One Assessor for three years Two School Committee members for three years

One Agent Moses Wallis Devise for one year

One Trustee Public Library for

three years

One Cemetery Commissioner for three years

One Water/Sewer Commissioner for three years

One Recreation Commissioner for three years

One Planning Board member for five years

One Planning Board member

for one year (to fill a vacancy)
One House Authority member
for five years



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## **BVT Announces Second Trimester Commendation List**

Acknowledging Academic and Vocational Achievement

lackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) has released the Superintendent-Director's Commendation List for the second trimester of the 2023–2024 school vear. Students must meet rigorous standards to be named to the Commendation List, such as maintaining a grade point average of 88 percent or above in each technical, related, and academic course for the trimester. To view the complete list, visit www.valleytech.k12. ma.us/2tcommendationlist.

The following students, grouped by grade level and hometown, were named to the second trimester Commendation List:

#### **SENIORS (CLASS OF 2024) DOUGLAS**

Laney Beahn, Engineering & Robotics; Mary Chrul, Health Services; Jack Dooner, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Ethan Messier, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; and Matthew Phelps, Plumbing.

#### NORTHBRIDGE

Giovanni Biagioni, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Amelia Corazon, Multimedia Communications; Hailey Feehan, Painting & Design Technology; Logan Feehan, Painting & Design Technology; Ella Rogozenski, Engineering & Robotics; Brandon Spiller, Electronics & Engineering Technology; and Emma Vaughan, Culinary Arts.

#### **UXBRIDGE**

Kali Bly, Cosmetology; Savannah Brodeur, Cosmetology; Avery Herrick, Multimedia Communications; Trevor Horgan, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Jillian Lu-Grace Mathieu, tton, HVAC&R; Engineering & Robotics; Marissa Osimo, Health Services; and Olivia Stefanick, Electrical.

#### **JUNIORS (CLASS OF 2025) DOUGLAS**

Dale Boudreau, Electrical; Haley Chamberlain, Cosmetology; Kaylie Ciccone, Health Services; Matthew Dean, Painting & Design Technology; Colin Lavoie, Multimedia Communications; Braydin Levesque, HVAC&R; Om Patel, Engineering & Robotics; and Samantha Pinto, Health Services.

#### **NORTHBRIDGE**

Ava Bates, Cosmetology; Sosie DerKosrofian, Health Services: Zabel DerKosrofian, Information Technology; Abigail Dineen, Dental Assisting; James Gifford, HVAC&R; Mara Keane, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Dylan Leeds, Engineering & Robotics;

Haley Marston, Dental Assisting; Markas Petone, Health Services; Isabella Reed, Biotechnology; Delaney Sanford, Culinary Arts; Scarlet Sergel, Dental Assisting; Alexa Seward, Engineering & Robotics; and Samuel Stringer, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication. UXBRIDGE

Brendan Knox, Cosmetology; and Stephanie Zaitoun, Engineering & Robotics.

#### **SOPHOMORES (CLASS OF 2026) DOUGLAS**

Maddison Dos Santos, HVAC&R; Leopaul Gamelin, HVAC&R; Reagan Guthenberg, Cosmetology; Caitlin Kelly, Health Services; and Sophie Rivard, Engineering & Robotics.

#### **NORTHBRIDGE**

Esther Alves, Engineering & Robotics; Isabelle Balon, Biotechnology; Landon Gibson, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Emersen Polymeros, Construction Technology; Jacob Poole, Information Technology; and Adalynn Wooster, Cosmetology.

#### UXBRIDGE

Gabrielle Gannon, Engineering & Robotics; Brooke Gniadek, Cosmetology; Veronica Jordan,

> **HONOR ROLL** continued on page 13

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## **Light Cardio for Seniors**

he Uxbridge Senior Center is proud to present a live eight-week session of Low Impact Exercise classes for Seniors. This is a fitness program that will include light cardio with full body toning. This is an 8 week specialized program designed for seniors.

The program will begin Thursday, June 6 from 2:45-3:45p.m. at the Uxbridge Senior Center Satellite Site which

is located at the McCloskey School at 62 Capron Street. The class will run for one hour, one day a week, on Thursdays, for an eight-week time frame, at the cost of a \$25donation. The instructor, Pamela Landi, is a certified personal trainer. Checks may be payable to the Uxbridge Senior Center.

The benefits of exercise include improved balance, range of motion and coordination. Additional benefits include increase blood flow to the brain enhancing attention and concentration skills, as well as burning calories and meeting new friends! These workouts

are safe and can be done at any fitness level

There will be an option of doing these exercises seated or standing. The class would be open to all in the community including those outside the Town of Uxbridge.

Interested individuals should call or stop by the Uxbridge Senior Center at 508-278-8622 for more information and receive their application and waiver forms prior to the start of the program. The Center is located at 36 South Main Street in Uxbridge and is open Monday thru Friday from 8 a.m. - 4p.m.

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#### **HONOR ROLL**

continued from page 11

Health Services; Colt Masters, Plumbing; Khari Torku, HVAC&R; and Parker Waugh, Electronics & Engineering Technology.

#### **FRESHMEN (CLASS OF 2027) DOUGLAS**

Leah Boudreau, Plumbing; Devin Drumheller, Engineering & Robotics; Maya Graveson, Engineering & Robotics; Kaden Howard, Engineering & Robotics; Natalie Johnson, Health Services; Nolan McGee, HVAC&R; and William Nason, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication.

#### NORTHBRIDGE

Liliana Carpenter, Culinary Arts; Kathleen Crosby, Painting & Design Technology; Alexia Daou, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Katelyn DeLuca, Engineering & Robotics; Trevor Dupont-Sullivan, HVAC&R; Bruin Guilbert, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Kellen Keane, Construction Technology; Chloe Koopman, Painting & Design Technology; Olivia Medina, Painting & Design Technology; Nicolette Paradis, Multimedia Communications: Ava Robinson, Culinary Arts; Meah Ryan, Health Services; Jayden Seward, Multimedia Communications; Cassandra

Sullivan, Health Services; and Ellery Wooster, Painting & Design Technology.

#### UXBRIDGE

Nicholas Arruda, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Ava Bazinet, Multimedia Communications; Ava Fenner, Cosmetology; Noelle Gilmore, Plumbing; Rory Goyette, Culinary Arts; Charlotte Lewis, Engineering & Robotics; Dominic Mastroianni, Information Technology; Chase O'Connell, Plumbing; Zackary Pelletier, Painting & Design Technology; and Phoenix Zereski, Biotechnology.

About Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High

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, Blackstone Valley Tech 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. www.valleytech.k12.ma.us

## SOUTHWICK'S ZOO PHOTO CONTEST



In 2025, Southwick's Zoo will be celebrating 60 years of family fun! Share a photo of your favorite memories at Southwick's Zoo for a chance to win a family four-pack of general admission passes for the 2024 season and make some new memories!

Winners will be announced in our **Summer Guide - Coming in June!** 

May 17!





By entering this contest, you are providing consent for Southwick's Zoo and Our Town Publishing (the publishers of The Yankee Xpress/Blackstone Valley Xpress, Free Press and the newspapers of Local Town Pages) to use your photo(s) for print, digital and social media purposes, and allowing Southwick's Zoo and Our Town Publishing to contact you via email for this promotion or upcoming promotions. Only one winner per household. Cannot be an employee or family member of Southwick's Zoo or Our Town Publishing to win.

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BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

dog's expression is one of my favorite dog qualities. That they love unconditionally, forgive easily, and offer us undivided attention goes without saying. But the unique way in which a dog expresses himself, and thereby communicates, defines a dog's personality. Have you ever noticed how Dog People brag with fellow Dog People about their pets? 'That's Buster. He's having his first ice cream cone." Proud owners scroll through cell phone pictures and tell stories. "That's my Summer with my granddaughter. İsn't she beautiful?" Dog stories unravel out of pure appreciation and love for a dog's unique personality. Luke's expressions, admittedly, have made me gush.

## LIVING WITH LUKE

amyleclaire@hotmail.com

## A Two-Year-Old Luke Learns to Communicate

#### SENSITIVE LUKE

Though bittersweet (this one breaks my heart) I adore the way Luke has learned to beg from a safe distance, so that he's not a bother



to us. I've owned numerous dogs. All have drooled shamelessly at my heels. Luke is different. Luke will watch my family congregate and sit down for a meal, then move to another room to wait for us to finish. I can't help but pop up from the table to visit him during such times. "Luke, you are such a good boy. Mummy is so proud of you." He lifts his head seriously, as though to say, "I'm fine. Go on and finish. I only eat twice a day, while you shovel down six small meals, but go ahead, I'll wait my turn."

Nothing quite compares to Luke's snuggling expression while resting on the couch with us. Nestled in the crook of my husband's arm, or on my son's chest, he rests with the ease of a dog loved. After losing Lincoln, we struggled to envision snuggling with another. After all, Lincoln was the king. The thought of hugging another Golden didn't seem fair to my partner-in-crime, a dog who



rested his sweet head on my lap in the backseat of a black Infinity after refusing to leave my side to go into the vet's room (despite Covid restrictions) on his last day. Dogs know. Every so often, Luke nods to the ceiling for no reason. What's up there, Luke? I can't help but wonder if he senses Lincoln looking down on him as though to say, "Take care of my people, little Luke." One dog doesn't cancel out the love for the next. Rather, dog love is doubled.

Luke entered our home only two years ago. It's hard to imagine life without him now. We've collected more dog hairs, messes, and mishaps, but our lives are full. The opportunity to snuggle with a live FAO Schwarz teddy supersedes an immaculate home. Add the freshly groomed scent of his aloe shampoo (when he doesn't rub it off in the yard), and we're officially healed! We trade off perfection for the injection of a dog's unconditional support and love. Luke, notably, is the first dog allowed up on our couch. What were we thinking back then?

#### **FEROCIOUS LUKE**

This expression, fiercely juxtaposed with that of the teddy bear, takes me by surprise. Especially when, yet again, Luke throws a tantrum over the rush of hose water. Most of my dogs have loved

water play. Nothing new here. Yet none have attacked the hose with a temper like Luke's. The dog is certifiably crazy when he sees the rush of hose water. I've had to be strategic while outside in the



garden. I've tried to water flowers in peace, changing the nozzle setting to that of a soft, sprinkling shower. Harmony. I wave the hose innocently over a few plants, but I'm not subtle enough. Detective Luke senses what's happening. He rushes at me, a dog in a bullfight costume, and bucks the wavering direction of the hose. He springs up and darts at the stream as though protecting the entire planet from rushing water. He shakes water droplets off his mane and hacks like a crazy dog. "Bring it on, Hose!" The scene is absurd. The image of a Dog Trainer dressed in a monogrammed blue jacket flashes through my mind. "Leave it, Luke!" He disobeys. 'Don't screw with me, Nozzle!" I lose my patience and use the hose as a gun to spray his face. "Luke, please!" The aggression inflates his male ego. He throws his big head into the rush of water and air-bites the bubbles. A drive-by sighting just may have both of us committed, I resort to a sorry defense. "Go ahead." I let Luke win. The hose rests lifelessly on the grass. I watch its power melt like the wicked witch reduced to a hat alone. Luke hovers over the bubbler and takes a drink.

INTELLIGENT LUKE

conversation.

on my mind."

on the steps?"

Luke is a thinker. His thoughtful expressions, and the careful way in which he tilts his head and

stares up at me to communicate

his needs, touches my heart. How

remarkable! —that Dog and Hu-

man can have an entire non-verbal

"Hi Momma. I have something

"Hi Luke. Do you want to Go Sit

"That's exactly what I was think-

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continued on page 15



**LUKE** 

## **REAL ESTATE**

## What you really need to know about home prices

lmost one four in four people still think home prices are going to come down. If you're one of the people worried about that, here's what you need to know. A lot of that fear is probably coming from what you're hearing in the



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

getting the full picture. You may only be getting bit of it to get your atten-

tion. Housing market headlines

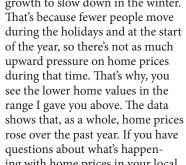
not be

sensational, ending with exclamation points or predicting impending doom for the industry. The sensationalizing of headlines and content, has been an issue since the dawn of the internet, and housing news is not immune to it

From January 2023 to January 2024, there have been 11 months that home values have increased .2 percent to .9 percent. In two of the 13-month look, we had slight reductions at an average of -0.1 percent! This is what the media focuses on. They publish a graph of red for the declines and green for the increases. It depends on what you are drawn to. Home values rose the majority of the year, that is the story! Since negative news sells, drawing attention to these slight dips happens often. But that loses sight of the bigger picture.

Here's what this data really says. There are a lot more increases and decreases. And even for the two decreases, they're so slight, they're practically flat. If you look at the year as a whole, home prices still rose overall.

It's perfectly normal in the housing market for home price growth to slow down in the winter. That's because fewer people move of the year, so there's not as much upward pressure on home prices during that time. That's why, you see the lower home values in the range I gave you above. The data rose over the past year. If you have questions about what's happening with home prices in your local area, contact The Marzeotti Group or with a trusted real estate profes-



dull. Stay tuned for the next story!

withlukevalentino.

Find Luke on Instagram @living-

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#### **LUKE** continued from page 14

"Do you want me to Bring your Bone, Luke?"

"Are you serious?" His expression stills again.

"Do you want Mummy to Go Get it?" (I trade-off enabling a Luke that's no longer a baby, for the joy of meeting his dog needs).

"Look, Luke! Mummy brought your bone!" I emphasize my sup-

Teddy Bear Luke stares up at me. He wants something more.

"Do you want some peanut butter on the bone, Luke?'

"Momma- you are so smart! That's exactly what I had in mind,

#### **WATCH-DOG LUKE**

Whether it's to protect my family, police the hood, or keep the bunnies in line, Luke's watchdog abilities are extraordinary. I've learned to listen to my dog's watchful expressions, along with their bark-tones throughout the years. Dogs sense what we cannot. Granted, Luke can be overly sensitive. I once opened the front door to respond to Luke's bark. A van pulled up to the front of my neighbor's lot across the street. "Luke, that's just the Repair Main. It's okay." He looked up at me, then back at the van, to voice a final opinion. "I don't buy it. Where's the logo?"

Luke notices details. He'll watch children get off the bus and

break into a two-year-old smile. "I've known those girls my whole life. Gosh, they're getting so big." Nothing quite compares to Luke's expression when watching his big brother, my son, arrive home from work. "Oh my gosh. He's parking. He's going to get out the car, I can feel it. He's been gone this whole day, but now he's back again and I cannot wait to tell him how much I've missed him! His mouth opens and closes to Ben's movements. His tail wags, He edges closer to the car and bows to a downward dog position. "I am the luckiest dog ever."

#### **PATIENT LUKE**

Luke's patient expression reminds me of how much he needs me. He'll rest his big head over his paws and sulk until I'm ready to take him for a walk. "I wonder if I'll get my walk in today." Luke receives two to three walks per day, yet consistently feels sorry for himself. "I'm a big dog with bigger needs than a cat, but I'll be fine. You get to explore four different gyms, drive fast along highways, and meet dozens of humans per day. Me? I'm a dog. I stare at the same four sights every day. But take your time. I'll

Nothing makes me happier than pulling Luke out of his funk. "Luke- are you ready to go for a walk???" I emphasize the phrase so that its sinks happily into his big head. Then I grab his harness, and he dashes off to his bed to play hard-to-get. "I don't want to wear a jacket." Another dramatic episode unfolds. Living with Luke is never

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## Indian Ranch Adds Second Show with Get The Led Out

ue to popular demand, a second Get The Led Out show has been added at Indian Ranch in Webster, MA on Friday, August 23, 2024. Limited tickets are left for the first show on June 15th. Tickets go on-sale this Saturday, April 20th at 10:00 AM at www.in-

dianranch.com. A limited number of Low Dough Early Bird General Admission tickets will be available for just \$30 through April 26th, while supplies last.

From the bombastic and epic, to the folky and mystical, Get The Led Out (GTLO) have captured the

essence of the recorded music of Led Zeppelin and brought it to the concert stage.

The Philadelphia-based group consists of six veteran musicians intent on delivering Led Zeppelin live, like you've never heard before. Utilizing the multi-instrumentalists at their disposal, GTLO re-create the songs in all their depth and glory with the studio overdubs that Zeppelin themselves never performed. When you hear three guitars on the album...GTLO delivers three guitarists on stage. No wigs or fake English accents, GTLO brings what the audience wants...a high energy Zeppelin concert with an honest, heart-thumping intensity.

Dubbed by the media as "The American Led Zeppelin," Get The Led Out offers a strong focus on the early years. They also touch on the deeper cuts that were seldom, if ever heard in concert. GTLO also include a special "acoustic set" with Zep favorites such as "Tangerine" and "Hey Hey What Can I Do."

GTLO has amassed a strong national touring history, having performed at major club and PAC venues across the country. GTLO's approach to their performance of this hallowed catalog is not unlike a classical performance. "Led



Zeppelin are sort of the classical composers of the rock era," says lead vocalist Paul Sinclair. "I believe 100 years from now they will be looked at as the Bach or Beethoven. of our time. As cliché as it sounds, their music is timeless.'

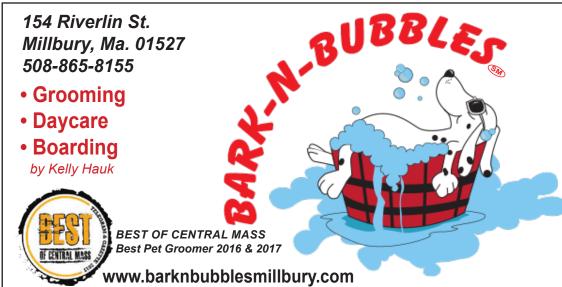
A GTLO concert mimics the "light and shade" that are the embodiment of "The Mighty Zep." Whether it's the passion and fury with which they deliver the blues-soaked, groove-driven rock anthems, it's their attention to detail and nuance that makes a Get The Led Out performance a truly aweinspiring event!

Indian Ranch offers music lovers a chance to see some of the greatest country, classic rock and pop bands steps from Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg. Nestled between pine trees, the amphitheater offers the ability to see the stage from anywhere in the audience. More than a concert venue, Indian Ranch opened Samuel Slater's Restaurant and is also home to the Indian Princess paddlewheeler and Indian Ranch Campground. Tickets are on sale now for Jo Dee Messina on June 1st, VOYAGE - CELEBRATING THE MUSIC ON JOURNEY on June 9th, Get The Led Out on June 15th, The Mavericks on June 22nd, Scotty McCreery on June 23rd,

Three Dog Night on June 29th, Elle King on June 30th, Justin Hayward and Christopher Cross on July 7th, Aaron Lewis on July 14th (July 13th show is sold out), The Pike Hairfest on July 20th, RUMOURS: The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Tribute Show on July 21st, and Yächtley Crëw on July 25th, Almost Queen: A Tribute to QUEEN on July 27th, The Concert: A Tribute to ABBA on August 2nd, Badfish: A Tribute to Sublime on August 3rd, Grace Potter on August 4th, Face 2 Face: A Tribute to Elton John & Billy Joel on August 9th, Ripe on August 10th, The Beach Boys on August 11th, and Tyler Hubbard on August 18th, Little Feat on August 24th, and Brett Young on September 7th. More shows will be announced soon.

Tickets for Get The Led Out on Friday, August 23, 2024 went onsale Saturday, April 20. A limited number of Low Dough Early Bird GA tickets will be available for just \$30, April 20th-April 26th. Gates open at 5:00 PM, showtime is 7:00 PM. Tickets are available at www. indianranch.com, by calling 1-800-514-ETIX (3849) or at the Indian Ranch Box Office. All events are rain or shine. No refunds. Indian Ranch is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster. For more information, visit www.indianranch.com.







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## **TALES FROM BEYOND**

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## **Betty Moody's Cave**

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

ing Philip's War in New England was the most brutal conflict, per capita, ever fought on American soil. Whole villages were attacked and burned on both sides without regard of life or limb. Even after the treaties of 1676 and 1678, raids and attacks continued. Later, the French joined the Natives in an attempt to once more rid the land of the English. This was part of Queen Anne's War and lasted into the first part of the 18th century.

Hostilities between settlers and Indigenous peoples were not confined to the mainland of New England. The many islands that were populated by the English also became targets of aggression by raiding parties. Among them were the Isles of Shoals, about six to ten miles off the coasts of New Hampshire and Maine. There are nine small islands in total, five of them belonging to Maine and four to New Hampshire. Before being discovered by John Smith in 1614, some of the islands were

used as seasonal fishing camps by the Natives. By the 1620s, the larger islands were being sparsely settled by Europeans. Star Island, Smuttynose and Appledore became home to fishermen and their families. Permanent settlements were in place by the time King Philip's War broke out but saw little to no threat—that is, until Queen Anne's War. In 1689, a band of Native warriors attacked Star Island, presumably in hopes of reclaiming their fishing camp. During the raid, a woman named Betty Moody escaped with her two children to a cave located on the southeastern edge of the island. While holed up in the cavern, the children began to cry out of fear. Betty tried to cover their mouths so they would not be heard. Unfortunately, she covered their mouths so hard that she suffocated them. Some say she did it to spare her own life, while others believe she was so afraid herself that she was not aware of how tightly she was gripping their mouths until it was too late.

Whatever version you deem

valid does not take away from the fact that she appears to be eternally sorrowful for her deed, as screams and wails can be heard from the cave where she mourns her fateful act. The crying is suddenly heard in the wind permeating the rocky outcropping just before a terrible storm grips the islands. Many say it is the ghosts of the children finally crying out. Either way, when the phantom wailing is heard and the winds pick up around the island, it is best to hunker down and listen for the echoes of the crying children or Betty to pass.

Star Island holds three day and week long conferences during the warmer months and is also open for day visits and tours. One can stay one night as well without attending a conference. The choice is yours. There are more stories and legends that abound on the island which is the second largest of the Isles of Shoals and arguably, the most



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## Blinded by the Light

I have a 2011 Nissan Frontier. I noticed recently that • the engine fan is running constantly. It used to kick on

when needed for cooling and air conditioning purposes. As I'm pretty sure that they are all electric now, where is the switch or

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sensor located? I would assume that when it becomes defective, it would go to default mode and just stay on as opposed to dangerously not running at all.

The fan in your Nissan and similar to many other • vehicles has multiple speeds. The computer controls the fan speed based on information from the temperature sensor. Unlike some other vehicles that use a separate temperature sensor for the fan and one for the computer, Nissan only lists one sensor. The sensor, relays (there are two), wiring or fan itself could be the problem. A technician with a scan tool will be able to read the temperature data as well as command the fan to turn on and off. This will help verify which components are working.

I am tired of being blinded by headlights. I • have been driving for 50 years and these new cars have headlights that are just too bright. What can be done about this, they should be illegal.

It is interesting that most of the complaints I get about bright headlights are from the people who can benefit most from being able to see better at night. At 60 years of age, we need three times as much light to see as when we were 20. I have evaluated thousands of vehicles in the past 40 years and there are certainly good and bad headlight designs. In addition to glare, as humans are eyes are drawn to the brighter light, so when we see a brighter headlight, we tend to stare at it. Just like needing more light to see as we age, we also need more time to adjust to the glare. Back prior to 1980 or so most cars had standard incandescent headlights,

then cars switched to halogen lamps, and people complained. The issue was solved quickly, since halogen headlights were relatively inexpensive, and many drivers upgraded to halogens. Then brighter Zenon or HID lights started showing up, these were a very expensive option in luxury cars. Now HID lights are being replaced with LED lights and that is where part of the problem is. Many drivers buy aftermarket LED replacement bulbs, these bulbs can be very bright and are not legal for on road use-but people buy them. Recently the 40-year-old headlight rules were updated by DOT/ NHTSA to allow European style headlights. One design is the Matrix light, I have seen/tested these in an Audi. There are 13 bulbs on each side of the car and no traditional high/low beam. These lights provide incredible light but shut down bulb/light segments as other vehicle approach. This design provides sufficient light to the edge of the road and doesn't blind oncoming drivers.

I recently saw a Tesla powered Toyota RAV4 for • sale, the car was older, but it said it had a Tesla drivetrain. When did that happen?

I suspect what you may have seen was an RAV4 • with a very early Tesla battery (made by Panasonic). I remember seeing these at one of the big auto-shows around 2010 and at the time most people just thought EVs were a fade and Tesla was going to be nothing more than a quick mention in the automotive history books.

What things do I need to check or go through to get • my car ready for sum-

mer? After staying home for three years due to Covid-19 it is time to go explore our country. It will be my wife and I and our



BY IOHN PAUL

small dog and our 2018 Honda CR-V. The car seems in good shape and only has 40,000 miles on it.

2018 still makes your Honda sound new, but • it is six years old, and a little maintenance and repairs may be necessary. With 40,000 miles on the car, it could need new tires (a great investment for a long road trip) and the brakes could be nearing the end of their useful life. Change the engine oil, air and cabin filters, check the battery (if original just replace it). Check all of the belts, hoses, coolant level and condition. If the brakes need replacement, also replace the brake fluid. If you are driving with a roof top carrier and also driving mountain roads, change the transmission fluid before your trip and use only Honda fluid. Enjoy your trip and send photos.

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



## **Uxbridge Superintendent Earns High Grades**

t the recent Uxbridge School Committee meeting on April 30, Superintendent Dr. Michael Baldassarre was commended for his outstanding leadership and dedication to the Uxbridge Public Schools. The School Committee presented a summary of Dr. Baldassarre's annual performance review, highlighting significant achievements and the impactful changes under his guidance.

#### **KEY ACHIEVEMENTS INCLUDE:**

Strengthening Team Dynamics: Dr. Baldassarre has stabilized the district by filling critical administrative roles and creating a collaborative and high-performing team environment.

**Enhancing Educational Outcomes:** Improving student achievement, as evidenced by gains in the district's new use of iReady assessments

Successful Negotiations: The completion of fair contract negotiations with all employee unions, fostering a spirit of cooperation and recognition within the district.

Securing Financial Growth: Dr. Baldassarre has demonstrated effective financial stewardship with the approval of the FY2025 budget, which includes a historical increase of more than 10%.

**Expanding Opportunities** Through Grants: The acquisition of nearly \$600,000 in Federal 21st Century Grant funding enriches Uxbridge's educational programs.

School Committee Chair Barry Desruisseaux praised Dr. Baldassarre, stating, "Dr. Baldassarre has demonstrated exceptional leadership in guiding our district through major academic, social-emotional and financial challenges. Under the work of the Superintendent and his newly established team, we have seen significant improvements in academic achievement, financial management and community engagement."

Reflecting the confidence in his continued leadership, the Uxbridge School Committee has recently voted to extend Dr. Baldassarre's contract through 2027. This extension will make him the longestserving superintendent in the district over the past decade.

Dr. Baldassarre shared his thoughts on the future: "This positive evaluation reaffirms our direction and encourages our team to continue striving for excellence. Together, we view Uxbridge Public Schools as a burgeoning entity, promising even greater achievements ahead."

The school choice program has already seen a significant uptick in interest, with ten new applications from families outside the district, indicating growing trust and preference for Uxbridge Schools.

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## Prayer

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

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



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## State Representative Soter Announces Over \$29,000 in Funding for Uxbridge High School's Internship Program

Soter (R-Bellingham) is pleased to announce that Uxbridge High School has been selected to receive additional state funding from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to establish paid internships for high school seniors interested in becoming teachers and educators.

The announcement, made by

oyees are covered under Workers' Comp Ins.

the DESE commissioner Russell Johnston on April 30th, unlocks a total of \$1,504,866 in grant funding to be distributed to schools in 34 municipalities across the state.

Uxbridge High School is receiving \$29,250 to be used to pay high school seniors for what would otherwise be unpaid internships in the field of education. Seniors at Uxbridge High School are already given the opportunity to

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find internships at local businesses and town services with the everexpanding Uxbridge High School Internship Program. This funding will expand this program, specifically for students interested in pursuing careers as teachers after graduation.

The DESE offers this program to ensure the future success of elementary and secondary education schools in Massachusetts. With this program, students will gain valuable experience in a careerreadiness programs that offers a hands-on opportunity to work with elementary students in a classroom setting, learn instructional methods from mentor instructors, and engage in educator preparation curriculum.

"I am extremely grateful to learn that the Town of Uxbridge has been chosen to receive this funding," commented Rep. Soter. "The work done by Principal Michael Rubin and Superintendent Michael Baldassarre in building the existing internship program has been instrumental for preparing young adults in our district for successful careers beyond high school. With this funding, students who are interested in becoming teachers will be financially supported as they gain necessary experience in the field."

Rep. Soter further emphasized the importance of funding internship programs for high school students and ensuring easy access to essential careers paths such as elementary and secondary school teachers



## Youth Police Academy Accepting Applications

bridge & Uxbridge Youth Police Academy is officially open accepting applications!

Eligible applicants must be from the 5th, 6th, 7th or 8th grade as of September 2024. Applications can be found at the Northbridge

and Uxbridge Police Departments and will soon be available online. There will be two academies. The first will be July 15-19 held at the Uxbridge High School. The second academy will be held August 5-9 at Northbridge High School. Students from either town are eligible for either academy.



Students will learn about the various aspects of law enforcements including: criminal investigations, crime scene processing, CPR overview, K-9 activities, criminal law and procedure, accident reconstruction, report writing and more.

A typical academy day consists of physical training, morning snack, morning classroom sessopm. lunch, afternoon classroom session, clean-up, and dismissal.

The academy is limited to 25 students. In an effort to open the academy to new students, if yhou

participated in a previous academy, your application will be reviewed only after new applicants are accepted. Any remaining slots will be filled on a first come, first served basis. The deadline foe applying is Saturday, June 30. Applications can be picked up at Northbridge or Uxbridge Police Departments. Northbridge Middle School or Withan Intermediate School.

For more information, contact Officer Thomas DeJordy at 508-234-6211 or email tdejordy@nps. or or Officer Daniel Deveau at 508-275-7755or email ddeveau@uxbridge.k12.ma.us







## Juston McKinney To Headline Comedy Night At Slater's

Thursday, May 23rd with Special Guests Al Park and Kathy Gilmour

omedy returns to Samuel Slater's Restaurant in Webster, MA on Thursday, May 23, 2024. The show will feature Juston McKinney plus special guests Al Park and Kathy Gilmour for a night of laughs. Doors open at 6:30 PM;



show starts at 7:30 PM. Tickets are on-sale now at www.samuelslaters. com. With multiple appearances on The Tonight Show, two Comedy Central specials, and two Amazon Prime specials, including his latest, Parentally Challenged, it's

no wonder the New York Times called Juston McKinney, "Destined for stardom."Juston was born in Portsmouth, NH where he grew up until the 6th grade. That's when his aunt and dad, wanting to get away from the hustle and bustle of city life, packed up the family of eight and moved north to Kittery, ME. After attending the—very prestigious-Southern Maine Community College, he spent 7 years as a York County Deputy Sheriff, patrolling the woods. In the late 1990's, he traded in his badge for a microphone and went from York County to New York City to pursue a career in comedy. He quickly became a regular at Comic Strip Live, Stand-Up New York, Dangerfield's, Gotham Comedy Club, and Caroline's on Broadway. Juston would go on to sign sitcom development deals with Warner Brothers, CBS, IFC and Comedy Central.He has appeared on numerous Comedy Central shows including his halfhour Comedy Central Presents special and his own one-hour special. He has appeared several times on the Tonight Show with Jay Leno and Conan O'Brien as well as a Showtime Comedy Special with Rob Gronkowski. He has appeared

twice at Denis Leary's, Comics Come Home at the TD Garden.

Al Park has quickly emerged as a rising talent on the national comedy scene. He won both the Boston Comedy Festival and Cleveland Comedy Festival competitions and was a finalist in the prestigious Seattle International Comedy Competition. In 2019, he was invited to perform at the National Comedy Center in Jamestown, NY. Named Boston's Best Comedian by Improper Bostonian magazine,

Park mixes sharp observation and cultural satire with plenty of selfdeprecation for a unique, authentic comic voice. His standup can be heard on Audible.com, and he made his television debut on FOX TV's Laughs.

Kathy Gilmour recently moved back to Massachusetts after living in Key West for 20 years or so. She's been doing Stand Up Comedy now for about 5 years and was a resident comedian at Comedy Key West and headlined around Key West and

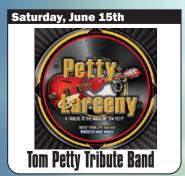
performed at the Orlando Improv. She was picked to perform at the Flamingo, Brickell, Portland Comedy Festival, and the NY Underground Comedy Festivals.

Tickets for Comedy Night at Slater's with Juston McKinney & Guests on Thursday, May 23, 2024 are on-sale now at samuelslaters. com Samuel Slater's Restaurant is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster, MA outside of Worcester and less than an hour's drive from Boston. Providence, Hartford and Springfield.





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Donna Oncay – Transportation Coordinator

Omer Boucher – Van Driver Sally Selvidge – Activities Coordinator

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#### DIRECTOR NEWS FOR MAY 2024 NEWSLETTER

The Uxbridge Elderly Connection will be holding their Annual Meeting on Wednesday, May 8th at 5pm at the Senior Center. We will be reviewing the Annual Report and the election of Board of Directors members. Any member of UEC interested in running for the Board should contact Director Lisa Bernard or Donna Oncay at the senior center. The Uxbridge Elderly Connection is

the fundraising arm of the senior center and provides financial funding for some of the senior center's activities and programs. Please join us!

The Spring Town Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 14th at 7pm at Valley Chapel located at 14 Hunter Road in Uxbridge. Please plan on attending to participate in this important civic event.

Every May, the Administration for Community Living leads the nation's observance of Older Americans Month (OAM). The 2024 theme is Powered by Connection, which recognizes the profound impact that meaningful relationships and social connections have on our health and well-being. We will explore the vital role that connectedness plays in supporting independence and aging in place by combatting isolation, loneliness, and other issues.

## JOIN US IN PROMOTING THE BENEFITS OF CONNECTING WITH OTHERS.

Here are some ways you can participate:

- Promote resources that help older adults engage, like attending the senior center hot lunch program or taking part in activity social groups, and volunteer opportunities.
- Connect with local services, call the senior center to book your Wednesday shuttle transportation, that can help you overcome obstacles to going out for lunch or go shopping with your friends to achieve and maintain meaningful relationships.
- Share facts about the mental, physical, and emotional health benefits of social connection by attending the senior center exercise programs to contribute to your overall well-being.

## INTRODUCING OUR NEW WALK AND TALK EXERCISE GROUP!

Join Doreen Cedrone, our Wellness Coordinator, in walking local trails in Uxbridge. Walking with a group can help you meet new people, build friendships, and provide a sense of community. Being active is the secret to staying healthy, and walking is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to get moving. The group will meet every Tuesday at 2pm starting on May 14th. The location for the month of May will be the Blackstone Valley Greenway located on Adams Street

in South Uxbridge (near Mc-Donald's). Participants will meet Doreen at the walking site, the location may change each month. The program is weather permitting and there is no charge. Don't forget to wear comfortable shoes and bring a water bottle. Participants are required to complete an enrollment and waiver form. Please call the senior center for more info and to receive your forms.

Best wishes for a Happy Mother's Day and restful Memorial Day to all!

Thank you, Lisa Bernard, Director

#### THURSDAYS, MAY 23RD & 30TH

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm – Zumba Classes Continue! New 8-week session will start up on June 6th.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 10TH

12:00 pm - Annual Mother's Day Celebration! Please join us to celebrate all moms and those who love and care for each other. We will have Bob Moon as our entertainer for this event! The meal is being sponsored by the Uxbridge Elderly Connection Inc. Space is limited and there is a waitlist.

#### MONDAY, MAY 13TH

8:00~am-4:00~pm - MARTAP Staff Training – No lunch will be served today.

### TUESDAY, MAY 14TH

1:00 pm – Uxbridge Library Book Club. They will be discussing "The Nightingale" by Kristin Hannah. You are welcome to join us for lunch on this day, just be sure to call ahead to "book" yours! Next month is on Tuesday, June 11th and their book will be "One Italian Summer" by Rebecca Serle.

#### TUESDAY, MAY 14TH

1:00 pm – Benefit Enrollment Specialist – Tri-Valley, Inc. Call the senior center to book an appointment with Katelynn Wackell. Next date will be June 11th.

#### **TUESDAY, MAY 14TH**

7:00 pm - Spring Annual Town Meeting at Valley Chapel, 14 Hunter Drive. Please plan on attending and participate in this important civic event.

#### **MONDAY, MAY 20TH**

1:30 pm – "Ask the Attorney" with Attorney Ralph Tepper by appointment only. Please Call 508-278-8622 to schedule your appointment.







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#### **TUESDAY, MAY 21ST**

9:00 am - 12:00 pm - SHINE Appointments - Pat Nectow, our SHINE Counselor, is back to help you with your health insurance questions. Please call 508-278-8622 to schedule.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 24TH & MONDAY, MAY 27TH

The Senior Center will be closed in observance of Memorial Day. We will re-open on Tuesday, May 28th.

#### **TUESDAY, MAY 28TH**

11:00 am - 12:00 pm - Ask the Nurse Free Blood Pressure Clinic with Nancy Favulli, Salmon Health VNA. RSVP to participate and to join us for lunch.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 31ST

11:30 am - 12:30 pm - "PopUp Library". Books will be on display to check out, library card sign-ups, book hold pick-ups, etc. This program is being offered by the Uxbridge Free Public Library.

#### FRIDAY, MAY 31ST

12 noon - May Birthday Cake Celebration. Come Celebrate all the birthdays that are in April!

#### **WEEKLY EVENTS**

Card Game played during lunch on Mondays.

Hannaford grocery shopping every Tuesday. Pick up begins at 8:30 AM. Please sign up in advance by calling us at 508-278-8622 to reserve your seat on the

Knitting Club every Tuesday @ 1:30 pm – Come join the creative fun!

Walk & Talk Exercise Group every Tuesday @ 2:00pm - This

starts on May 14th. Join Doreen Cedrone, our Wellness Coordinator, in walking local trails in Uxbridge. Walking with a group can help you meet new people, build friendships, and provide a sense of community. Being active is the secret to staying healthy, and walking is one of the easiest and least expensive ways to get moving. The location for the month of May will be the Blackstone Valley Greenway located on Adams Street in South Uxbridge (near McDonald's). Participants will meet Doreen at the walking site, the location may change each month. The program is weather permitting and there is no charge. Don't forget to wear comfortable shoes and bring a water bottle. Participants are required to complete an enrollment and waiver form. Please call the senior center for more info and to receive your

Every Wednesday - 9 am -3 pm – The Uxbridge Senior Center Transportation Program Community Shuttle. This shuttle is for seniors and individuals with disabilities to destinations such as post office, pet care appointments, hair salon or barber, bank, pharmacy & shopping anywhere in the Uxbridge/Northbridge area. Note: this replaces the weekly bank/pharmacy and Shaw's Ocean State rides. Call 508-278-8622 for more information and to book your ride. Requests require a 48-hour notice.

Wednesdays - "Canasta" Hand, Knee & Foot Card Game - 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm.

Every Thursday - Play Scrabble! – 1:00 pm – Come by for an afternoon playing Scrabble. Boards are supplied by the senior center. Let us know if you'd like to join us for lunch! No Game on May 30th.

Medical Transportation is accepting appointments. Call 508-278-8622 to schedule your rides.

The senior center is in need of the following donations: Lysol wipes, newly packaged napkins, paper towels, tissues, toilet paper, ground regular & decaf coffee. We thank you for your support!

Feel free to contact us at 508-278-8622 or visit us on our web page at Uxbridge-ma.gov/coa or like us on our FB page or by googling Uxbridge Senior Center and our new YouTube Channel or even dropping by.





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### **SPORTS**

## New Coach for Uxbridge Softball

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY, STAFF SPORTS WRITER

etween 1998 and 2002 Meghan Creighton was a key performer in the circle for the Uxbridge softball team. A four-year varsity athlete in three sports (field hockey, basketball, and softball) Creighton was named a three-time MVP for Coach Joe McCourt's softball team. She holds the school record for career strikeouts with 725, including 224 during her junior campaign compiling a 61-19 record for the Spartans.

As a pitcher she also holds the record for 19 wins during her senior year adding another 207 strikeouts as the team went 23-1; has hurled 4 perfect games; and had 12 shutouts in one season with 26 on her career (second best in Uxbridge history). At the plate she is fourth all time with 113 hits and ended her career with a .3754 batting average. Creigton was also a 4-time SWCL All-Star.

Following high school career, she went on to Babson College where she continued pitching at a high level. As a four-year starter for Babson she earned second team All American status, was presented the New England Women's and Men's Athletic Conference (NEWMAC) pitcher of the year, NEWMAC Athlete of the Year and League MVP during her senior season. Creighton also resides in the Hall



Meghan Creighton, Uxbridge High School Hall of Famer, and new softball coach anticipates a good season with her experienced team. Submitted Photo

of Fame for both Uxbridge and Babson.

With a ton of accolades for softball playing, Creighton now will try to translate her success on the field to the Uxbridge softball

team as she takes over the position as Spartans Varsity Head Coach. Having coached youth softball, she was more than open to applying for the Uxbridge coaching position when it came available.

"As soon as my senior season at Babson came to an end, I knew that I wanted to coach," Creighton said. "I had been coaching youth softball and when the opportunity came up, I jumped at the chance."

Last spring the Spartans went 17-3 during the regular season, grabbing an eight seed in the Division 4 Tournament. Once in the post-season Uxbridge rattled off impressive wins against Lunenberg (10-3) and Lynnfield (9-1), before losing to the number one seed and eventual State Champion Joseph Case. Although the Spartans fell in the quarter finals, Creighton is excited about the fact that Uxbridge has no seniors on this year's squad and is young, but talented.

"This is one of the most talented group of girls that have worked with," the first-year coach said. "With that, I have put a lot of

that these girls have and the ability they all have to contribute to this team."

Having set the bar high, Creighton is looking forward to this group to do big things and is expecting them to make the State Championship Final. While she is anticipating a very productive season, if things don't work out, the entire team should be back next spring with yet another year under their belts

Juniors Bailey Dzivasen (second base and pitcher) and Olivi Pirrotta (catcher) will once again be holding the prestigious captain positions. According to Creighton, she had asked the team to nominate girls and she was going to choose from there, but when she noticed the decisions by their peers were unanimous she went with the team's opinion.

Sophomore Erin O'Day will take the ball for the majority of the time throughout the season as Uxbridge marches toward the tournament.

"In my opinion, especially having been a pitcher, she is probably the strongest in the division and the state," the coach said. "She has been working on her craft for a long time and is very dominant. She is a pitching coach at Planet Fastpitch in Uxbridge and is as passionate as they come when she steps on the field."

The team's third pitcher, Katherin Pratt will be utilized throughout the season along with Dzivasen, but it will be O'Day who gets the start. Offensively, Pratt is a force at the plate batting in the clean-up spot for the Spartans. In addition to Pratt's bat, Uxbridge will also be able to rely on sophomore Lola Grube, the team's short-stop who can also hit with power. Yet another powerful hitter will come courtesy of first baseman Keira Paul.

'The majority of our lineup can hit the ball with power and over the fence," Creighton said. "While the girls at the bottom of the lineup are not to be forgotten, when the

## **SOFTBALL**





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## bankHometown Donates \$10,000 to NewVue Communities Fitchburg Arts Community Housing Development Project

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ankHometown recently donated \$10,000 to Fitchburgbased NewVue Communities' innovative housing development project. New Vue is dedicated to creating strong and healthy neighborhoods by helping families, small businesses, and communities with homeownership, housing development, community organizing, and small business technical assistance. While they provide services to the 22 towns in their footprint, they have identified Fitchburg as their primary focus. Their work is at the center of many redevelopment efforts in Fitchburg, and they hope to further enhance their presence by offering a multitude of programs and services to families and businesses in the city.

"NewVue has a history of delivering opportunities to help people realize their dreams of homeownership, business ownership, and financial independence," said bank-Hometown President and CEO Robert J. Morton. "We're proud to strengthen the foundation of our communities with this partnership and help so many realize their full potential."

According to Marc Dohan, executive director at NewVue, this housing development project focuses on the construction of the Fitchburg Arts Community which began in June 2023 and is the culmination of 10 years of work to get to this point. This community will provide 68 mixed-income, artist preference apartments in three former historic municipal buildings. NewVue is converting the former BF Brown Middle School (62 Academy Street), the former City Stables, and the former High School Annex (82 Academy Street) into apartments and artist amenities. The project is located across the street from and in partnership with the Fitchburg Art Museum. Dohan says this project is more than just innovative affordable housing that allows families to find a place to call home, but is an opportunity to nurture and sustain a creative community in Fitchburg, providing residents with professional development and program-

"bankHometown has a strong and important presence in the community," said Dohan. "We are grateful for their generosity as they support the final and most exciting stage of the Fitchburg Arts Community."

About bankHometown: Founded in 1889, bankHometown is headquartered in Oxford, Massachusetts. We have \$1.4 billion in assets and offer a complete deposit and lending products and services through 16 branches located throughout Central Massachusetts and northeast Connecticut. We're proud to fulfill our community banking mission providing individualized financial support, a suite of comprehensive products and services, and smart banking technology—all to ensure our customers can unlock their potential and build a successful Through our sponsorship and

charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, bankHometown and the Hometown Bank Community Foundation support non-profit organizations and causes throughout Worcester and Windham Counties. In 2023 alone, The Giving Tree donated nearly \$400,000 and over the last decade has donated more than \$2.7 million, bankHometown was proud to be named a 2023 Cor-

porate Citizenship Award winner by Boston Business Journal. For more information, visit bankhometown.com.





#### **SOFTBALL**

continued from page 24

top is not doing much, these girls have continued to come through for us."

Other athletes to grace the varsity squad and help the team make a run to the post-season are Emma Peloquin, who is quick in the outfield; Ella Belanger, the team's back-up catcher and Ella Baine, another fast individual in the field who can also produce some timely

Eighth grader Ava Rosborough will patrol centerfield for the Spartans and should have an impact on the varsity squad; she also possess great small ball skills. Rounding out the team is sophomore Dylan Demers, a junior varsity athlete last year that was called up near the end of the season.

"Dylan has been developing her skills outside of her comfort zone and was able to get her first varsity hit against Bartlett and you could see the confidence building after that," Creighton said. "During tryouts she really stood out and with all her hard work and hustle I can see major potential in her."

As the girls continue to work

hard at the goal at hand, Crieghton implies that when they are able to scale that mountain it would be because of their talent.

"Uxbridge has never had a State Champion in softball and it would be a great accomplishment if we can do that this year," the coach said. "And although it would be very exciting for the school, it would have vey little to do with me. It would be the talent of the girls on the field that will eventually get them there."



# Happenings!

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

#### **SATURDAY, MAY 11**

• Rough Seas, Safe Harbor: Wings of Song Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish Church 16 East Main Street, Webster, 7:30 p.m.

Admission to concerts is free, with a freewill offering collected at intermission.

"Rough Seas, Safe Harbor" will take audiences on a huge sea voyage, much of it aboard a whaling ship that might have left New Bedford, Mass. in, say, the 1850s, and sailed practically around the world, separating crew members from their families for as long as four years.

These concerts are sponsored in part by the Monson and Sturbridge Cultural Councils, local agencies supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. Wings of Song is grateful for this support—and

for the continued support of their many faithful audience regulars, supplemented by first-timers whom we're always glad to seel

Anyone needing more information is encouraged to email Music Director Cooke at nymcooke@gmail.com or Wings of Song President Carol Curtin at carolcurtin77@ amail.com.

#### **SATURDAY, MAY 18**

• 4:00pm Bethel Lutheran Church/Grace Ministries of Auburn will be performing music concert "Peace & Praise" as they continue to celebrate their Centennial Anniversary. The program will include present as well as many past organists/music directors, choir members & musicians including

hymns/anthems/contemporary music by choir embers, bell choir and children's performances. A reception will follow. All are welcome to either attend or participate in this festive, free-will offering event. For more information contact Adam Hanks at arhanks42385@hotmail.com.

• Save the date! Sutton Garden Club is pleased to announce that our Annual Plant Sale will be held on Sutton Common on Saturday, May 18th, 10am - 12Noon. SGC members will be dividing and potting up a variety of perennial plants from our gardens in preparation for the sale. Proceeds from the Plant Sale fund our community efforts, including our Scholarship Fund, plantings and maintenance at the Bandstand and Manchaug Square during the summer, decorations and wreaths for the Bandstand and Commons at Christmastime and also helps fund our Gardening programs during the year. Updates regarding the Plant Sale, including any in case of severe weather, will be posted on our Facebook page, https:// facebook.com/SuttonGardenClub

#### **SUNDAY, MAY 19**

• The Blackstone Valley Community Chorus will present their concert, American Rhythms & Roots, on Sunday, May 19th, 2024 at 3:00pm. The concert will take place at Valley Chapel at 14 Hunter Road in Uxbridge. American Rhythms & Roots includes a blend of American folk music and jazz standards and celebrates American songwriters from George and Ira Gershwin to John Denver. Admission is free, though donations are accepted and appreciated! The Blackstone Valley Community Chorus is composed of singers from towns throughout Central Massachusetts. Singing under the direction of Diane Pollard of Douglas, the BVCC has been committed to bringing varied musical performance opportunities to the Blackstone Valley for almost twenty years. Visit the BVCC on Facebook or at www.bvcchorus.com for more information.

#### **HAPPENINGS!**

continued on page 27

The New England Country Music Club will hold the following dances with live classic country bands at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge, MA: Sunday, May 19, "Al Carter & The Nashville Boys"; Sunday, June 9, "Rustic Country"; Sunday, June 23, "Angela West & Showdown"; Doors open at 12:15, live music 1-5pm. Snacks may be brought in,  $cash\ bar\ for\ beverages.\ facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub$ 

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Koopman Lumber and Paint Store of Uxbridge celebrated their one year anniversary on April 23 with a ribbon cutting by the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce. Guests also enjoyed refreshments, promotional items and giveaways. Koopman also has locations in Grafton, Whitinsville, Milford, Indian Orchard and Sharon. Submitted photo

#### **HAPPENINGS!**

continued from page 26

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 1**

• Saint Peter's Parish in Northbridge will be holding a Yard Sale on Saturday, June 1st, 7:30am to 3:00pm in the parish hall. If you are moving, spring cleaning or just have too much clutter, bring us your gently used items for our yard sale. You may drop-off your donations every Saturday from 10:00-1:00pm April through May, starting on Saturday, April 6th at the parish garage. We are accepting kitchen items, home goods, toys, sporting goods, books, small furniture items, clothing for donation and much more. Please see our website for a complete list of what we are accepting. You may also call or email the parish office, if you have any questions: 508-234-2156 or email: parishoffice@stpeterockdale.org.

### **SATURDAY, JUNE 8**

• Please join us for our Annual Community Yard And Plant Sale! As we've done in the past, we will rent spaces and tables, plus we'll do all the advertising and remember, our prime location can't be beat! Spaces Are \$25 For Non-Members. Tables Are Available To Rent For \$5 Each. Last year our

Community Yard Sale and Plant Sale was so successful that we had to implement a wait list! We anticipate the same level of interest again this year, so don't delay in reserving your spot. We are very excited at the thought of gathering, again, with our church family and our neighbors on the church's front lawn. Call the church office, 508-832-2845, to reserve your spot! All are welcome! First Congregational Church of Auburn, 128 Central Street, Auburn. • Annual Church and Community Yard Sale Soorp Asdvadzadzin Armenian Church, 315 Church Street in Whitinsville holds its Annual Church and Community Yard Sale on the front lawn facing Church Street on Saturday, June 8th from 8:00am to 2:00pm. Vendor space is available for a donation of \$15 per spot so if you were contemplating your own yard sale but don't have the space you can't been the green lawn, tree shade and great traffic exposure along Church Street. Since this is an outdoor event, please provide you own tables, tarps and canopies if desired. Admission to the buying public is free with plenty of parking along both sides of Church Street or behind the church. For details and reservations. please email Jeff at katama@gmail.com.

#### **SATURDAY, JUNE 29**

• The Sutton 4th Committee will be sponsoring their third July 4th event on June 29th. The parade kicks off at 10am from the Sutton town common and ends at the Sutton School grounds with food trucks, live entertainment and games. Visit www. the sutton fourth.org for more information.

#### **HIKES WITH BLACKSTONE VALLEY HERITAGE CORRIDER HIKES**

The following is a list of hikes in Massachusetts being led by volunteer Trail Ambassador Phil. Phil's hikes begin at 10 a.m. Saturday, May 18: Wallis Pond Loop Hike, Douglas

Saturday, June 15: Douglas State Forest Hike, Douglas





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