



Feedworks Earth Odor Complaints Continue

The Grafton Select Board addressed discussions that began this summer over odor complaints from the Feedback Earth, Inc. food waste processing plant at

109 Creeper Hill Road. The facility processes food waste into animal feed. Previously, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental

Protection (MassDEP) had assessed

COMPLAINTS
continued on page 2



Grafton's Business Scene

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

This time of the year can be difficult for people who like to break free from their routines and meet or re-connect with other members of their community. The summer events are in the past. The holidays are in the future.

Thankfully, in Grafton, there are several ways to continue to engage with other members of the community. And people can do so while breaking free from their routines and having fun.

On Saturday Nov. 2 from 9 a.m.

to 3 p.m. at Saint James church building in South Grafton, Our Lady of Hope Parish will hold its annual Harvest Fair. There will be free activities and games for kids, raffles, door prizes, a silent auction and a white elephant table. Additionally, there will be crafts, themed baskets, baked goods and other food available to purchase. Funds raised by the event support the church and its many ministries, including those that support the poor, homeless families, the hungry and local veterans.

Seasonal fun and a chance to support another good cause – fighting food insecurity, which has risen dramatically in recent years – can also be found in North Grafton. The annual Community Harvest Project Harvest Home Festival & 5K will be held at CHP on Sunday, Nov. 3 from 11 a.m. until 3 p.m. For more information and admission costs, please visit the nonprofit's website, www.community-harvest.org. Among other things, festivities will include kids' activities, live music, apple cannons, hayrides, a dog adoption event, a 5K run and an online auc-

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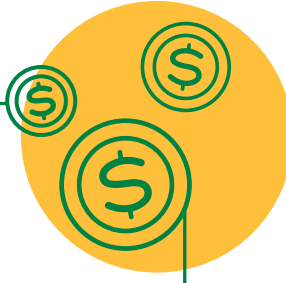
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GRAFTON
continued on page 3

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COMPLAINTS

continued from page 1

a \$6,000 penalty against Feedback Earth, Inc. following state permit violations at its food waste conversion operation on Creeper Hill Road in Grafton. The violations, which occurred from May through November 2023, center on multiple off-site odor events and improper food waste management practices. The company has been fined since 2022 and paid a cumulative total of \$25,250 for previous permit violations.

Two public meetings with the Feedback Earth CEO, Alison Greenlee, failed to completely address the odor complaints, although the numbers received have fallen lately, Town Manager Evan Brassard told the board at their

Sept. 10 meeting.

Brassard said he has been in contact with both state Rep. David Muradian (R-9th Worcester) and MassDEP. Some measures have been taken by Feedback Earth may be responsible, but there is not a long-term solution in place so far, as complaints continue to filter in.

The town will continue to work together with the company and the agency to come up with a longer term solution, he said.

"It has been a little interesting that I've been getting information from Feedback and also getting conflicting information from DEP," Brassard said.

Mass DEP doesn't agree with what Feedback Earth is saying and the town is continuing to monitor the situation, he said.

Subjectively, the decrease in calls could be for a couple of reasons,

said Brassard, adding that either the smell is less or people are tired of reporting and not getting any action.

"It's probably some combination of the two," he said. "Either the smell is less or people are tired of reporting and they haven't gotten any action yet. It's probably some combination of the two," he said.

With Assistant Town Administrator Will Blake, Brassard checked out Creeper Hill Road on Sept. 10 and could definitely pick up a "sourish" smell that he said reminded him of odors related to bread or something similar.

Town officials have daily conversations with MassDEP and continue to monitor all reports, Brassard said.

Sometimes a complaint is lodged, but not substantiated by a second "sniffer" or has changed di-

rections from where it was initially sensed around the facility.

"I just wanted to put it out there for residents that DEP has a very pragmatic approach and not just, 'we said it's fine, so now it's fine,'" Brassard said. "That's not at all what's happening and they seem to be digging in quite deep."

Board chair Ann Marie Foley said apparently, operations have switched over to night hours, so residents might not be aware of odors. The outside temperature might also impact the smell, she said.

Select Board member Andy Jefferson was concerned that since operations are taking place at night a second sniffer is not on hand to verify odors diffusing in the air.

Despite that, residents should continue to call the odor hotline and record complaints regardless of the hour, he said. Feedback Earth needs to be better in their communications with the town on when they're considering changes in operation times or ingredients, Jefferson said.

The week of September 10, Feedback Earth has expanded its hours into small daytime operation trials of their system's effectiveness, Brassard said. The town and MassDEP gets weekly reports from Feedback, he said.

Board member Mathew Often said the cooking at night solution is too short term. "That's not solving the problem" he said. "The funk is still there."

A year with few complaints means we've solved the problem,

Often said. A short term solution is not a good reflection of Feedback Earth's long term operational model, he said.

According to Brassard, the town does not have jurisdiction over air quality, but relies on the state for its regulations. The state Attorney General's office said there is a provision in the law that allows the town to create odor regulations, but they are subject to Mass DEP approval.

By the September 17 meeting of the Select Board, not much had changed, except for a complaint from a resident who was not able to make contact on the hotline number.

The board also learned that employees of Feedback Earth had been calling residents on their private cell phone numbers or showing up at their houses.

Brassard said he spoke with the Police Department and learned they can do nothing legally unless they assist a resident with a 'no trespass' order or if they get a call that the trespasser refuses to leave.

Jefferson said he felt strongly that showing up at residences or direct contact was inappropriate.

The town will issue a notice to Feedback Earth that access to addresses or phone numbers via complaint forms does not mean they can make use of them, Brassard said.

At second Select Board meeting on Oct. 2, residents restated that the odors continued and the complaint line was not working.



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GRAFTON

continued from page 1

tion and raffle.

In North Grafton, Houlden Farm – which, at this time of the year, is known for its wide and wonderful variety of pumpkins and gourds – will be holding a Tractor Treat event on Saturday Oct. 26 at 1 p.m. Kids are encouraged to dress up in Halloween costumes for this free family event.

Grafton Recreation will hold a similar event at the Town Municipal Center. On Wednesday Oct. 30 from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., it will hold the Town's Friendly Trick or Treat. It's a non-scary event designed for children five and younger, who are

also encouraged to wear costumes.

In South Grafton, The Saddle Shed offers a great selection of items that people can use to enjoy fall equestrian activities and events. The shop, which just celebrated its 55th anniversary this month, sells horse equipment, accessories, gifts and tack and has winter wear for horses and their riders of all ages.

When attending any community event, everyone should be able to hear the people around them. October is National Audiology Awareness Month, and Dr. Mary Ellen Rancourt, who runs Hear Joy Audiology and Twin Rivers Hearing Health, has been posting some helpful information about free seminars and hearing protection on

her practice's Facebook page.

In Grafton, this fall, there are still opportunities to engage with the community for people of varied

interests. Some are relaxing. Some are dynamic. But all of them bring people together.

Contact Christine with your

business news items at cmgale-one15@gmail.com.

Sutton Historical Society Presentation

On Thursday, November 7 at 2:30 pm in the Sutton Senior Center, 19 Hough

National Register of Historic Places, and has a preservation restriction agreement with the Society for

Road, Sutton Historical Society members, Peter Michelson and Ross Weaver, will share their knowledge of locating bounds from historic deeds and records and overlaying those points onto current maps. This process allows current landowners to visualize how their properties fit into the historic character of Sutton.



The Freegrace Marble Farm will be used to demonstrate this process. Located at the intersection of Sibley and Burbank Roads, this historic property is listed on the

the Preservation of New England Antiquities. This property was one of the first 30 parcels deeded when Sutton was settled.

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Celebrating a Prolific Career

BVT superintendent intends to retire at the end of the school year

Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, a highly esteemed and nationally recognized leader in vocational-technical education, has been a cornerstone of the Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District since 1994, serving as the superintendent-director. His remarkable career, which includes significant advancements and achievements, has left a proud and profound mark. He has announced his plans to retire at the end of the

2024-25 school year, marking the end of an era.

“Leading this incredible organization and serving our district’s families and students has been an honor,” Dr. Fitzpatrick said. “After more than three decades in a role I have profoundly enjoyed, it is bittersweet to share that this will be my final school year as superintendent-director. The decision to retire has been made collaboratively with our district school committee and

with forward-thinking and advanced planning with our leadership team for continued success.”

Dr. Fitzpatrick became BVT’s fourth superintendent on January 3, 1994. Previously, he was director of the Center for Vocational Technical Education at Fitchburg State College for four years, the director of statewide curriculum projects at Westfield State College and Southeastern Regional Vocational Technical School District for three years, statewide conference coordinator for vocational-technical leadership personnel at Fitchburg State College and Westfield State College for 13 years and assistant superintendent at Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical School District for 13 years.

During his tenure, voters approved bond issues, significant repair projects, a major expansion, and the opening of new vocational and adult programs. The school has received a Silver Award and was named Pacesetter Site for High Schools That Work program of the Southern Regional Education Board in 1997, 2007-2010, and

2010-2013. The school was also named a Commonwealth Compass School by the state in 2003, one of six schools in the country to receive the 2004 National School Change Award from Fordham University, and earned designation as a 2005 Vanguard Model School by Mass Insight Education.

Dr. Fitzpatrick is the only superintendent in Massachusetts to have served as the president of the Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), and the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools. Additionally, he served on the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) Executive and Governing Boards and as chairman of the New England School Development Council. Dr. Fitzpatrick was also named Massachusetts Superintendent of the Year 2011 by MASS and AASA.

At Blackstone Valley Tech, as educators prepare students to take what they have learned and find their true passion and purpose in



their professional careers, the district will celebrate Dr. Fitzpatrick’s prolific career, which exemplifies this sentiment with planned events throughout the school year. His last day as superintendent-director will be June 30, 2025. This timely notice allows the District School Committee to prepare for a smooth transition in its search for its next superintendent.

The 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.



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The Grafton Public Library hours are: Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. - 8 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.; Saturday, 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Regular events: Library Babies, open play: Mondays, 9:30 to 10 a.m. For babies, birth to walking, and their caregivers to socialize and

enjoy toys and puzzles. Drop-in. Tasting Tuesdays for teens and tweens to try some pre-packaged snacks. No registration required.
Wednesday Watch Parties: Every Wednesday at 2 p.m. Teens and tweens enjoy tv time with Shawn. No registration required.

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*Rent may be adjusted based on annual income limits provided by HUD.
**Minimum Income Requirement does not apply to households receiving housing assistance such as Section 8 or MRVP.

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- Must meet all income and background eligibility requirements under the Tenant Selection Plan approved by EOHL.
- Minimum 1 person per BR

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At different times, inflation may be high or low, but, except in those rare periods of deflation, it's always with us. During your working years, when you may receive boosts in your salary, you at least have the potential to keep up with inflation — but what happens when you retire? As a retiree, what can you do to cope with the rising cost of living?

Here are a few suggestions:

- **Keep some growth potential in your investment**

portfolio. During your retirement years, you may want to move your portfolio toward a somewhat more conservative approach by owning investments that offer significant protection of principal. However, these same investments offer little in the way of growth, which means they are susceptible to inflation. Consequently, you'll also need to own a reasonable amount in growth-oriented investments, such as stocks and stock-based securities. Of course, these investments will fluctuate in value as the financial markets move up and down, but by owning some more conservative investments, you can reduce the overall impact of market volatility on your portfolio.

- **Consider inflation-adjusted bonds.** You might want to consider Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities (TIPS), which are indexed to the Consumer Price Index, so the principal increases with

inflation (and decreases with deflation). Another inflation-adjusted Treasury security is the I bond, which differs from TIPS in that the principal doesn't change but the interest rate does, every six months, based on a combination of a fixed interest rate and the inflation rate. Like all investments, though, TIPS and I bonds have various features and risks of which you should be aware before investing.

- **Delay taking Social Security.** You can start collecting Social Security benefits at 62, but your monthly checks will be much bigger if you wait until your full retirement age, likely between 66 and 67. You would receive the maximum amount if you waited until 70 before collecting. Of course, if you need the money to help support your retirement, you may not be able to afford to wait, but if you can, your bigger checks can be a big

help against inflation.

- **Don't hold too much cash.** During your working years, it's a good idea to have an emergency fund containing several months' worth of living expenses in liquid, low-risk accounts. And when you're retired, you might want to have up to year's worth of expenses in such a fund. But be careful about holding too much cash, as it will lose purchasing power each year due to inflation. Instead, when keeping cash, seek the "Goldilocks" solution — not too little, not too much, but just the right amount.

- **Think about extending your employment.** If you like what you do, you might want to consider working a few years longer than you had originally intended. Not only will you be bringing in more income, but you could also continue to contribute to retirement accounts, includ-

ing your IRA and 401(k). Even if you don't want to continue working full time, you could do some part-time work or consulting. Any earned income you bring in can help in your fight against inflation. You can't control the cost of living, but by making some of the moves described above, you can help yourself mount a defense against the effects of inflation during your retirement years.

Contact Tim for assistance with your personal finances.

Tim Furbush, CFA
Edward Jones Financial Adviser
Westborough, MA 01581
508-854-1608
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Tuesday-Thursday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Friday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

NOVEMBER EVENTS

Mondays
4-5 p.m. Messy Hands!

Tuesdays
6-7 p.m. Epic Tales Teen Writing Group

Wednesdays
10:30 - 11:30 a.m. Story Time

Fridays, Nov. 15
10:15 - 11 a.m. Sensory Play
6-7 p.m. Dungeons and Dragons for Adults

Tuesday, Nov. 12
4-5 p.m. First Chapter Book Club

6-7 p.m. Tween and Teen Crochet
Wednesday, Nov. 13

10:30 - 11:30 a.m. Story Time

Thursday, Nov. 14
3-5 p.m. Teen Dungeons and Dragons

MONDAY, NOV. 18
4-5 p.m. Adult Book Club

Wednesday, Nov. 20
5-7:45 p.m. Painting Winter on Silk

Millbury Senior Center

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Appointment required - call (508) 865-9154

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12 p.m. Lunch
12:45 Mahjong Game

1 p.m. Zumba

Tuesdays:
9 - 10 a.m. Blood pressure clinic
9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Tai Chi

12 p.m. Lunch
1 p.m. Cribbage

Wednesdays:

9:30 a.m. Craft Class
10:30 a.m. Line Dancing

12: p.m. Lunch
1 p.m. Social Bingo

Thursdays:

9-10 a.m. Yoga
10-11:30 a.m. Coloring class

12 p.m. Lunch
12:30 p.m. Pitch

Fridays:

9:30 - 10:15 a.m. Light Exercise
11:30 a.m. Lunch

Grafton Senior Center

Free Medical Van Rides for October for residents over age sixty or with disabilities at any age Stay tuned for news about Thanksgiving at the Senior Center on Thursday, November 28 and the Christmas New York Style Trip on December 9.

Blood Pressure Clinic: Thursdays at 11:00 a.m. Breathing & Healing Chair Yoga: Tuesdays at 9 a.m. and Fridays at 10 a.m. Free for Grafton Seniors thanks to Friends of Grafton Elders

Cardio Barre Exercise: Thursdays at 12 p.m.

Congressperson Office Hours: Vary

Council on Aging: Meets second Thursday of every month at 1 p.m. unless otherwise posted

Crafts: Wednesdays at 9 a.m. when scheduled

Day Trips/ Extended Trips: Vary- see newsletter/ brochure rack for details

Dull Men's Club: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

Duplicate Bridge: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m.

Fall Prevention Exercise: Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:30 am- free for Grafton Seniors

Fuel Assistance: See Lisa Kelley for appointment

Hooked on Books Club: First Wednesday of the month- 10:30 a.m.

Jog Your Noggin: Spirited conversation with Lisa one Wednesday a month at 10:30 a.m.

Line Dancing: Every Friday at 1 p.m. \$3/ person

Lunch: Monday- Friday at 11:45 am- suggested \$2.50 donation. Please call 2 days prior for reservation Mahjong (Chinese Form): Mondays at 9:30 a.m.

Mat Yoga: Thursdays at 1 p.m.

Medical Equipment Loan Closet: walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs, etc.- just ask!

Nutrition Class: an interesting discussion with Senior Exercise instructor, Wendy Reid

Oldies Singalong: a fun sing-along of the classics. One Friday a month.

Outreach: Assessing needs and linking resources- Call for appointment with Lisa

Out to Lunch: Monthly outing to area restaurant

Painting Independently: Fridays 10 a.m.

Pinochle: Thursdays 9:30 a.m.

Pitch: Monday and Tuesday at 1 p.m.

Rummikub: Wednesdays at 1 p.m.

Senior Bootcamp: A more intense workout that combines cardio & strength training. Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.

Senior Exercise Class: Tuesdays and Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. Free for Grafton Seniors thanks to FOGE

SHINE: Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone. The first Friday of the month by appointment

Social Knitting: Mondays at 10 a.m.

SNAP (Supplemental Food Assistance Program): See Lisa Kelley for appointment

Tone and Stretch Exercise: Mondays at 9:30 a.m.

Transportation: Call the office for information.

Watercoloring Class: Fridays at 1 p.m.

Wii-TV Game Exercise: Available in the TV room almost any time!

Writer's Group: Meets 2nd and 4th Friday at 1 p.m.

Zumba Gold: Wednesdays at 8:45 a.m. FOGE sponsored

Be on the Lookout for This Pest

The Mass. Dept. of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) has recently confirmed an infestation of the invasive insect known as spotted lanternfly (SLF) in Millbury.

Spotted lanternfly is a pest that attacks tree-of-heaven, grapevines, maple trees, hops vines, and many other types of plants. This pest is known to impact grape and wine producers and other agricultural commodities. It can also interfere with outdoor recreation if infestations reach high levels, due to the swarming behavior of adult SLF in late summer and fall. That said, the insects themselves do not bite or sting - they are a nuisance because they gather in large numbers

STOP THE SPREAD OF SPOTTED LANTERNFLY



in areas where people are, and cover anything they are on with a sticky, sugary waste product known as honeydew.

We are encouraging residents and businesses to use the attached guides to learn more

about this pest and report any spotted lanternfly sightings to the following link: massnrc.org/pests/slf or call 617-626-1779.

Voting and Registration Information

In person registration to vote ends at 5 p.m. on October 26. Online registration will be open until 11:59 p.m. on October 26.

In order to vote by mail, your application for Early Voting must be received by 5 p.m. on Tuesday, October 29. A postmark is not sufficient to meet the deadline.

Tuesday, November 5 (Election Day) Polls will be open from 7 a.m. - 8 p.m.

If you're voting by mail, your ballot must be postmarked by November 5 in order to be counted.

Ballots delivered by hand or to a local election drop box, must be delivered by close of polls at 8 p.m. on November 5.

Domestic ballots must arrive by 5 p.m. on November 8 in order to count.

Overseas ballots must arrive by 5 p.m. on November 15 in order to be counted.

GRAFTON VOTING SCHEDULE FOR NOV. 5 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Early Voting in Grafton will take place in the Municipal Center Gym, 30 Providence Road through Friday, November 1 during the following hours:

Friday, October 25; 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Saturday, October 26; 9:00 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Monday, October 28; 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, October 29; 8:30 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Wednesday, October 30; 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, October 31; 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Friday, November 1; 8:30 a.m. - 1 p.m.

MILLBURY VOTING SCHEDULE FOR NOV. 5 PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Last day for in-person register to vote: October 26 at Town Hall, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Vote by mail application deadline: must be received at Town Clerk's office by 5 p.m. October 29

Vote by mail ballots must be received in the Town Clerk's office by November 5

Early voting, at the Town Hall, 127 Elm St.:

Saturday, October 26; 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Monday, October 28; 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Tuesday, October 29; 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Wednesday, October 30; 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

In person voting, November 5: All precincts vote at Millbury High School, 12 Martin St., in the gymnasium.

SUTTON

State Election, Tuesday, Nov. 7:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.

For all precincts, the last day to register to vote in person is October 26 at Town Hall 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

The vote by mail application deadline is October 29. Early in-person voting takes place to November 1.

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Old Sturbridge Village will transform into a realm of haunted history and spell-binding performances through October 27, the spooktacular Halloween event brings twelve nights of enchanting entertainment, thrilling new attractions and a lineup of distinguished performers.

Guests can expect a stunning array of live performances, featuring hand balancing, fire breathing, breathtaking aerial acrobatics, and Cyr wheel acts. New attractions this year include a labyrinth winding through the dark countryside, eerie carnival games, and haunting tales of historical tragedies.

In addition to the performances, attendees can engage with Halloween traditions through activities such as coffin-making demonstrations and reenactments of early American mourning rituals, including an authentic 1830s wake. Popular activities returning this year include "Clues and Candy" and spooky ghost stories around the bonfire, accompanied by a seasonal menu featuring themed food and drinks.

"Phantoms by Firelight" is an

unforgettable Halloween experience, allowing guests to explore the Village at their own pace by the flickering glow of firelight," said Rhys Simmons, Director of Inter-



pretation at Old Sturbridge Village. "We've crafted an immersive experience that weaves together mesmerizing performances and historical tales that bring the spirit of Halloween to life. We invite families and friends to join us this October for an experience like no other!"

Presented by ClockJack Productions in association with American Circus Theatre, 'Phantoms by

Firelight' showcases the talents of Cyrkus Vampyr, with performances from acclaimed artists including viral sensation Ashlee Montague from 'America's Got Talent,' Richard Hanke, Joel Herzfeld, Eleanor Parker, Joseph Kerr, Samantha Bergman, Brian Klimowski, and Andre Sguerra.

"A mysterious troupe of gravity-defying performers returns to Old Sturbridge Village this October, setting up their mysterious, death-defying acts in the most unexpected of places as the sun goes down," said P. J. Griffith, director of Cyrkus Vampyr.

The event will be open from 4:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on event nights. Tickets will be available at the door for \$40 Adult / \$20 Youth or can be purchased online in advance for \$36 Adult / \$18 Youth.

'Phantoms by Firelight' is made possible by Country Bank, a full-service financial institution in Massachusetts. For more details and to buy tickets, please visit www.osv.org/event/phantoms-by-firelight/.

Oh, My Gourd!

The Sutton Fourth Committee goes to the (fun) dark side with the town's Halloween festivities. Events are scheduled all over Sutton on Saturday, October 26 to celebrate Halloween.

Sutton Town Common Scarecrow and Pumpkin Festival and Tarot Card Reader (sponsored by The Sutton Fourth). Have your decorated pumpkins and scarecrows on display. Win cash prizes. Register at www.thesuttonfourth.org.

Rufus Putnam Museum is hosting cemetery tours and Halloween display. Sponsored by the Sutton Historical Society, 4 - 7 p.m.

Boo Bash at the Sutton Public



Library, 4-6 p.m. Sponsored by the library.

Food Vendors on the Sutton Town Common, 3-7 p.m. Participating businesses: Sutton Lions Club, Center Bakery, Mrs. B's.

Witches of Sutton Performance on the Common, 1 p.m.

Trunk or Treat (sponsored by the PTO) on the school grounds 5-7 p.m. Rain date is November 2.

Illuminated Tractor Parade, sponsored by the Sutton Agricultural Committee. Begins at 6 p.m. Cash prizes awarded. Register at www.thesuttonfourth.org

Fireworks Display (sponsored by Unified) 7:30 p.m. Rain date is November 2.

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BVCC Annual Awards Ceremony

The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce will hold its annual meeting and awards ceremony on Thursday, November 21 at Pleasant Valley Country Club, 95 Armsby Road, Sutton. Registration will take place at 7:15 a.m. and a buffet breakfast will also be served at that time.

The keynote speaker will be Doug Howgate, President of the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, an office he has held since 2023. Previously, was the executive vice president for the foundation for two years. He was Research Director between 2015 and 2018. Prior to his time at the foundation, Howgate held a number of prominent policy positions in Mas-



Doug Howgate, 2024 Keynote Speaker

sachusetts. Howgate will provide attendees an overview of the state's fiscal picture, its finances, the fiscal year 2025 budget and ongoing demographic trends for the region. A question and answer session will follow.

Also being honored will be those who have served the Blackstone Valley during the year. The program will begin at 8 a.m. and conclude at 9:45 a.m.

Members are \$65 and non-members, \$75. A table of eight costs \$450. RSVP by



November 13. To register, please scan the QR code or visit

blackstonevalley.org/event/46th-annual-meeting/

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www.suttonpubliclibrary.org

EVENTS

Mondays:

11-11:30 a.m. Music and Movement with Deb Hudgins. For ages 1-5 years with their caregivers.

1-2 p.m. Cribbage Club for beginners to expert.

Nov. 18 6-6:45 p.m. Virtual Film Discussion Group. This week, the film under discussion is "Pinball: the Man Who Saved the Game."

Tuesdays:

10:30 -11 a.m. Baby Storytime for babies and their caregivers

3-5:30 p.m. Dungeons and Dragons for ages 12-18. Twelve week program, finishing up on Nov. 19.

Nov. 26 - Visit with Glory, our non-judgmental canine reading

companion.

Nov. 12 6:30 - 7:45 p.m. Adult Craft - Pinecone Kissing Ball.

Wednesdays:

10:30 - 11 a.m. Storytime for children and their caregivers

Nov. 6 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. Cook-book Club

Nov. 13 4-5 p.m. Air-Dry Clay Pottery for ages 8 - 12. Two week class.

Nov. 20 2-3 p.m. Afternoon Book Club. Discussing "The Celebrants" by Steven Rowley.

Nov. 20 6:30-7:45 p.m. Knots and Thoughts: Fiber Club

Thursdays:

10:30 - 11 a.m. Storytime for children and their caregivers

Nov. 7 6-7 p.m. Enjoy a presentation by local author Val Kerin who wrote "Eats: A Shocking Secret History of Food and Eating."

Nov. 14 6-7:45 p.m. Writing

Group with local author Lisa Shea.

Nov. 21 3- 4 p.m. DIY Faerie Garden for ages 12- 18 years

Nov. 21 6-7:30 p.m. Evening Book Group will discuss "The Celebrants" by Stephen Rowley

Fridays:

12 - 5 p.m. Puzzle Swap! During the month of October, drop off a used puzzle at the front desk and get a ticket. On Nov. 8, trade in your tickets for new to you puzzles.

Saturday, Nov. 9

12-1 p.m. Voyager Princess Party. Themed games, dancing, craft and a story. For ages 5-10. Registration required.

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Healthier Baking in the Blackstone Valley

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

The serene fall foliage bursting with autumnal hues doesn't last long. And although the season technically lasts three months, in New England, the winter weather arrives long before the milder season ends. So, many people naturally try to enjoy and savor the season.

One way that some people have traditionally savored the season is through fall baking. But that's not limited to pumpkin pies and apple pies and crisps. Sugar cookies are

incredibly versatile. These maple cinnamon sugar cookies include a dash of whimsy, and they're bursting with fall flavors.

In addition to the fact that the vast majority of homemade cookies are healthier than store-bought ones, this recipe calls for only half as much sugar as many similar sugar cookie recipes. Like most cookie recipes, it contains eggs – which are filled with nutrients. And it contains cinnamon and maple syrup. In small amounts, both ingredients can be beneficial to the diets of most people.

Cinnamon has antioxidant properties, as well as antibiotic ones and anti-inflammatory ones. These traits give the spice the potential to help fight things such as tooth decay, bacterial infections, heart disease, diabetes, AIDs and cancer.

Even though it's best avoided by people with diabetes or problems with cavities in their teeth, maple syrup can be nutritious. It contains antioxidants, including quebecol, which is viewed as having anti-cancer properties against certain cancers – such as breast, cervical, ovarian and colon cancer. It also contains small amounts of calcium, potassium, zinc and other minerals. And it contains a large amount of manganese, which is essential for good bone health. Maple syrup may also help improve cholesterol, brain health, gut health and liver health. It may also enhance the effectiveness of antibiotics.

MAPLE CINNAMON SUGAR COOKIES

Ingredients:

- 3 ½ Cups of Flour
- 1 tsp. of Baking Powder



- 1 tsp. of Cinnamon
- 1 Cup of Granulated Sugar
- 1 Cup of Salted Butter
- 2 Eggs
- 4 tsp. of Pure Maple Syrup

Directions:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees. Combine flour, baking powder and cinnamon in a large bowl. Beat the sugar and butter together until pale and fluffy. Add eggs and maple syrup to the butter mixture, and mix until combined. In increments, add the flour mixture to the butter mixture.

Roll out dough until 1/4-inch thick, and use a maple leaf cookie cutter to cut out the cookies.

Place on a cookie sheet at least one inch apart, and sprinkle with cinnamon.

Bake for around 12-14 minutes until cookies begin to turn golden.

Let sit for a few minutes before moving to a cooling rack. Makes around two dozen cookies. Enjoy!

While fall and its splendors are fleeting, these maple cinnamon sugar cookies can be made any time you want to experience the warmth of autumn. Happy (healthier) baking!



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BVT Annual Admissions Open House Nov. 13

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School will hold an Open House for prospective students and their families on Wednesday, November 13, from 5:30 – 8 p.m. No registration is needed.

The evening is a chance to make a self-guided tour of the state of the art school located at 65 Pleasant Street, Upton. Each department will offer insight into the cur-






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Information sessions will run from 5 – 5:30 p.m. about the Special Education program in the cafeteria. The Spanish Immersion program will be hosted at the same time in the cafeteria annex and have information on how to enroll your child.

To learn more, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/admissionsopenhouse.

18th Annual Harvest Home Festival

Join Community Harvest Project from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. on Sunday, Nov. 3 at 37 Wheeler Road, North Grafton. They will be celebrating the end of another successful season providing more than 250,000 pounds of healthy produce for hunger relief. The annual Harvest Home Festival and 5K race and kids fun race, kids activities, bouncy house, online auction and raffle, food and drink,



live music, beer trailer, apple tastings, local vendors, pumpkin trebuchets, apple cannons, hayrides for all ages and more. Admission is \$10 (\$50 family cap). Kids under 5 are free. All 5K runners receive free admission to the festival. Cash, credit, debit or Venmo accepted. \$35 registration fee until Nov. 2 is \$35. Day of registration is \$40. Kids 18 and under \$15 pre-

registration, \$20 day of. The race starts and finishes at the CHP barn and includes some uneven terrain. Schedule of events: 10:15 a.m. – 5 K Registration and Check-in 11 a.m. – 5K begins and Festival opens 11:15 a.m. – Kids Fun Run 12 p.m. Live music featuring “The Big League Collective” 12:30 p.m. Pumpkin trebuchets, apple cannons and hay rides start. From 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Food and beverages available for purchase Beer trailer Lawn games

Bounce house, giant leaf pile, building blocks and more kids activities Apple tastings of multiple varieties Local vendors including Angel Hair Alpacas Dog adoption event with Safe with US Animal Rescue Online Auction and in-person raffle CHP Merchandise Tent with newly released items Guided hikes with Grafton Land Trust

Enrollment Now Open for Massachusetts Home Energy Assistance Program

The Massachusetts Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities today announced that the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) enrollment period for the 2024-2025 winter heating season will open on October 1. This critical program provides financial relief to eligible households to help them pay their winter heating bills, ensuring they can keep their homes safe and warm during the colder months.

HEAP is a free, statewide resource that assists eligible renters and homeowners by paying a portion of their winter heating bills directly to their heating companies. Starting Oct. 1, homeowners and renters can apply online or through local administering agencies across the state. The assistance period runs from Nov. 1, 2024, to

April 30, 2025. HEAP offers grants that do not need to be repaid; however, households must meet specific eligibility requirements to qualify.

“No resident should have to worry about heating their home during the winter,” said Secretary of Housing and Livable Communities Ed Augustus. “With high costs continuing to strain household finances, the Home Energy Assistance Program is more critical than ever. We urge anyone in need of heating assistance to explore their eligibility by applying online or visiting the nearest administering agency. Please share this valuable information with loved ones or neighbors who could benefit from this support during the colder months.”

Eligibility is determined by

several factors, including household size and the combined gross annual income of residents 18 and older. Qualifying households, including those with the cost of heat included in the rent, can receive assistance for all heating sources, including oil, electricity, natural gas, propane, kerosene, wood and coal. Households do not need to be on public assistance or have unpaid heating bills to qualify.

For more information on applying, visit: www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-home-heating-and-energy-assistance

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Luke on the Watch

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

We never bargained for a watch dog. We were happy to settle on the darker Golden nestled beside his brother. “That’s him. That’s Luke.” Sleepy drove his head further into the nook of a warm armpit. “Wake me when it’s over.” His breeder pulled him from brotherly love and handed him over. “Beautiful puppy.” I can still smell his odor—a faint trace of dog poop and puppy chow wafting between hands. “He looks like Mister, his father.” A regal pedigree flopped into my arms. He was, and still is, my calmest pup yet. Throughout his two years of life, Luke has studied the world with the curiosity of a professional Dog Watcher. There are Dog Walkers and there are Dog Watchers. Luke falls into the latter category and, incidentally, wears a few hats amid the job.

OFFICER LUKE

Officer Luke begins his shift with a survey of the front lawn, and a peek out at the street. “What’s happening on Wildflower Drive today?” I barely have time to open the door before he rushes onto the front steps to stiffen, puff his chest, and examine the scene. “Who goes there?” His position is both helpful and dramatic. Of course, we are touched to have our pup lead us to important information. The House Cleaners have arrived next door and they drive a suspicious white minivan. Less necessary have been the false alarms. “Woo-woo-woo-

woo-woo!”

“Luke!” I rip open the front door a second time. “What’s the matter?”

“There’s a twenty-foot giant bobbing like a drunkard up the road, that’s what!” Luke does not appreciate ghastly Halloween decorations, especially oversized blow-ups. “You don’t belong! Go away!” I’ve had to physically restrain him from front lawn blow-ups (unless the yard includes Santa, whom he adores). “Woo-woo-woo-woo.” He’ll crouch down gravely, suspiciously. “Freak of nature, that’s what you are. Woo.” I coax him forward. “Leave it, Luke.” Just when I think he’s forgotten, he’ll turn his head one last time before we take the corner, just to be safe. “Woo!”

NOSY LUKE

Nosy Luke, as one might expect, can’t seem to keep his nose out of other people’s business. One sunny day, we were working in the garden. “Woo-woo-woo-woo!” I dropped the hose. “What’s going on, Luke?” Apparently, Luke didn’t like what was going on. Arlene, a trusted neighbor whom Luke has known for years, stood at the sidewalk in front of her house up the road. She was having a conversation with another man, and it wasn’t her husband, John. “Luke, leave it. Arlene can talk with him.” His bark felt invasive. The woman’s choice to talk with another man was none of Luke’s business! “Woo-woo-woo-woo.” But Luke refused to accept Arlene’s new man. What was my dog trying to tell me? “I know phony when I smell it. Woo woo woo woo.”

FEARLESS LUKE

Motorcycle drivers, along with their motorcycles, have been difficult for Luke to process. They are kind of like a car, but not so

much. Something does not add up. “MOM!! THERE’S A MARTIAN IN OUR DRIVEWAY!!!” I feel his concern and, honestly, can’t blame him. The roar of the engine is scary. Not to mention the driver’s helmet and mask. Who’s behind that mess? “You are not welcome!!!! Woo-woo-woo-woo!” His bark is low and aggressive, perhaps the most threatening of all his barks. “Woo woo woo woo.” He goes on and on protecting until, finally, we learn that a friend of mine, Gretchen, is the driver behind the mask. She parks and removes her helmet. “Ohhh, Gretchen, it’s you!” His personality flips. He breaks into a playful smile and wiggles towards her. “I was just messin’ with you. Come on over! I’ll grab my frisbee!”

BUNNY WATCHING LUKE

I used to worry about the bunnies. Every spring we have them. Every year, as a dog owner, a new shenanigan awaits, and this year was no exception. Luke was fascinated by the quiet, harmonious nature of his backyard friends. “You appear so soft and gentle. I want to play with you! Hey, not so fast! Where’d you go?” His big head darted in and out of our bushy rhododendron, where he’d practice clever offensive moves to stay one step ahead of the bunnies. “The bunny is about to rush out of the opposite side now, I just know it.” He’d change directions, making fast 180 degree turns around the shrub before engaging in a terrific high-speed chase across the yard. He hasn’t caught a bunny yet, but



has learned every hiding spot and revels in poking his nose in and out of shrubs to find one. I once caught him gazing down at a bunny from the top of the deck stairs. His gaze no longer held the fixed, almost perplexed stare of early spring. Rather, his attention was casual and light-hearted. He smiled casually as though to say, “You are welcome to stay and munch on our weeds, Bunny. My name is Luke by the way. Want to play a quick game of Hide and Seek?”

I no longer worry about the bunnies.

BOSSY LUKE

Luke’s protection for us, his beloved family, is admirable. However, there are times when my pup’s attention to detail becomes hyperbolic. “Grrrrrrr. Woo.” What now? One cool September night, I

decided to open the French doors in our family room to let in some fresh air. Luke’s bark was more of a suspicious, even paranoid growl, the kind he uses when he senses that something may be “off” in the air. “Mmmmm...” That “something” happened to be the new and distinct sound of night peepers, a nostalgic September sound for New Englanders, yet one Luke didn’t care for. “Stop your chirping or I’ll give you something to chirp about.”

Whether my dog watches a neighbor, a Martian, a bunny, or a night peeper, I suppose he is doing what is in his nature to do—that is to keep those he loves safe with unrivaled loyalty. A dog truly is a girl’s best friend.

Follow Luke on IG – [livingwith-lukevalentino](#)

Write to Amy – [amyleclaire@hotmail.com](#)

I’ve learned something about Luke. I don’t believe he wants to catch them, so much as he does play with them. Chase and Keep Away have always been Luke’s favorite games. He loves to grab stuffed animals and dash around the house, spooked yet exhilarated by Chase. The bunnies offer a genuine, “real-life” experience of his favorite game.

His knowledge of bunny behaviors has changed the way he watches and interacts with them. The first sighting came with serious intrigue, as in, “I find it fascinating that, unlike a squirrel, you will sit still and munch clover all day long. Does it ever get old?” He’d sit twenty feet away from the bunny, stare for minutes equally as long, then lie down (paws parallel) to creep inch by inch ahead until – “YOWZA!”—the stalked bunny decides, “I probably should run now.” By the summer’s end, Luke

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REAL ESTATE

Don't Fall for These Real Estate Agent Myths

When it's time to buy or sell a home, one of the most important decisions you'll make is who you'll work with as your agent. That choice will have an impact on your entire experience and how smoothly it goes.

As you figure out who you'll partner with, it's important to know what to expect and what to look for. Unfortunately, there may be some myths holding you back from making the best decision possible. So, let's

take some time to address those, and make sure you have the information you need to find the right agent for you.

Myth #1: All real estate agents are the same. You might think all agents are the same – so it doesn't matter who you work with. But, in reality, agents have varying levels of experience, specialties, and market knowledge, which can have a big impact on your results. For example: you'll get much better service and advice from someone who is a true expert in their field. As an example, if you were planning to get your hair done for a special event, you'd want to visit a stylist who specifically has experience doing that type of work — you wouldn't make an appointment with someone who primarily does kids' hair. The same concept applies to finding a real estate agent. If you have a smaller budget, you probably don't want to work with an agent who exclusively sells multimillion-dollar properties. Take some time to talk with each agent you're considering. Ask about their experience level and what they specialize in. This will help you find the one that's the

best fit for your search.

Myth #2: You can save money by not using an agent. As a seller, you may think you can save money by not working with a pro. However, the expertise, negotiation skills, and market knowledge an agent provides generally saves you money and helps you avoid making costly mistakes. Without that guidance, you could find yourself doing something like overpricing your house. And that's a misstep that'll cost you when it sits on the market for far too long. When it comes to buying or selling your home, hiring a professional to guide you through the process can save you money and headaches. It pays to have someone on your side who's well-versed in the nuances of the market and can help ensure you get the best possible deal.

Myth #3: Agents will push you to spend more. You may also be worried an agent will push you to buy a more expensive house in order to increase their commission. But that's not how that should go. A good agent will respect your budget and work hard to find a home that truly fits your financial situation and needs. With their market know-how, they'll point you toward the best option for you, rather than try to pad their own pockets on your dime. Among other things, a good buyer's agent will find homes for sale. A buyer's agent will help you understand the type of home you can afford in the current market, find listed homes that match your needs and price range, and then help you narrow the options to the properties worth considering.

Myth #4: Market conditions are the same everywhere, so why do I need a pro? Maybe you believe housing market conditions are the same no matter where you are. But that couldn't be further from the truth. Real estate markets are highly localized, and conditions can vary widely from one area to another. This is why you can't pick just anyone you find online.

You should choose an agent who's an expert on your specific local market. Real estate is very localized, and you want someone who's extremely knowledgeable about the market in your specific area.

You'll know you've found the right person when they can explain the national trends and how your area stacks up too. That way you're guaranteed to get the full picture when you ask: "how's the market? Don't let myths keep you from the expert guidance you deserve. With market knowledge and top resources, a trusted local real estate agent isn't just helpful, they're invaluable. In what could

be one of the biggest financial decisions of your life, having the right pro by your side is a game changer. Connect with an agent

to make sure you get the best outcome possible.



BY MARK MARZEOTTI



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TALES FROM BEYOND

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The Guarded Tomb

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

Scituate, Rhode Island is full of legends and haunts that rival any other town in the Ocean State. This strange tale has been handed down for generations and has not lost any impact in its telling. The story concerns a man named Charles Mattison, who in his later life, guarded the tomb of the woman he was to marry.

The couple's nuptials were sadly broken when she suddenly took sick and died. Her body was placed in a tomb off Central Pike wearing the dress and ring that was to be her wedding clothes and band. Although deeply saddened by his loss, the young man soon fell in love with another local and wanted to propose to her, but could not afford another ring. In an act of desperation, Mattison decided to remove the ring from his first marital prospect. He stole

away one dark night to his former lover's tomb, pried open the door and attempted to reclaim the band.

Unfortunately, the finger was so swollen, he could not remove it. Determined in his endeavor, he cut off his sweetheart's finger. Fresh blood began to flow and the girl sat up with a stunned look on her face. She had not actually died but lay in a coma until Charles woke her up by lopping off her finger. Mattison was so frightened and astonished by what he saw, he ran from the scene and vanished without a trace. No one knew what became of him thereafter. The girl lived another several years and when she officially passed, she was placed in the same tomb.

The story was told and retold by older generations who would dare disbelievers to visit the tomb and see for themselves the hand with the missing finger. The tomb had

fallen in from the top by a bull that wandered onto its roof, causing it to collapse. Over time, the woman's body was exposed and decaying, yet they could still see the legendary hand. As further proof, they were then taken to an old lady's home and shown the preserved digit in a bottle of alcohol.

The tomb sat in disrepair until a now older Charles Mattison returned and vowed to repair and guard her tomb from further desecration. Living in a small shack nearby, Mattison, unkempt and unloved, brought flowers to the grave daily and in the winter, cleaned the snow that blew through the many holes and crevices of the crumbling mausoleum. That was not enough though, for he took it upon himself to scare away any intruders who dared to attempt entry into his beloved's final resting place.

He spent most of his time hiding in a clump of bushes repelling all who sought to see the grave's occupant. The timid and superstitious wasted no time in fleeing the scene upon hearing the ominous warning emanating from out of thin air. For the more hearty thrill seekers, he rigged a cord that ran from the back of the tomb through a small hole in the wall. The other end was attached to some bones and timbers. A small tug on the rope would send the clanking collection to life and never failed to present a scream and hasty retreat by the intruders.

Mattison remained in his makeshift dwelling, watching over his former lover's tomb in repentance for his deed many years before. Even after his death, he was said to still watch over the decaying structure that holds the remains of the girl. If you should be rambling along the Central Pike in Scituate and happen upon a relic of a tomb, be cautious for the ghost of Charles Mattison may still be lurking about watching and waiting.

Free Diabetes Lecture at UMass Memorial Health

November is National Diabetes Awareness Month

On Wednesday, November 20, UMass Memorial Health – Milford Regional Medical Center and Milford Regional Physician Group is sponsoring a free, in-person community lecture. "What's New in Diabetes," will discuss some of the newer products and trends to help individuals with Type 1 or Type 2 diabetes. Topics include newer medications, food trends, exercise options and newer monitoring devices that may help you meet your goals and make life easier. This discussion will be

led by Milford Regional Physician Group Diabetes Education's Amber Redden, RN, CDCES and Caron Grupposo, RN, CDCES, who specialize in diabetes care.

The lecture will begin at 6 p.m. Pre-registration is required. Visit milfordregional.org and view "Classes and Events" on the homepage and then select "Lectures." For questions, contact 508-422-2827 or msanford@milreg.org. An email will be sent to registrants with information on parking and lecture location 48 hours prior to the event.

Grafton Eligible for MBTA Housing Funds

Grafton is one of 33 eligible communities to apply for grants from the state MBTA Communities Catalyst Fund which will provide grants for housing and infrastructure projects to municipalities that have been certified as complying with the MBTA Communities Act. The grant program is funded at \$15 million over three years and will be administered by the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities. The goal is to promote housing growth in cities and towns that require additional resources to achieve this end. The grants can be used to support activities for housing creation, infrastructure projects associated with housing and the acquisition of property for housing.

Catalyst Fund is available for Fiscal Years 2025, 2026 and 2027 according to the Healey-Driscoll administration. Typically, the projects will be funded between \$250,000 and \$1 million.

The MBTA Communities act was signed into law in 2021 and requires 177 cities and towns to establish at least one district of reasonable size in which multi-family housing can be permitted as of right.

The compliance application deadline for Commuter Rail and Adjacent communities is Dec. 31, 2024.


Housing and Livable Communities Secretary Ed Augustus said more than 1600 units of housing are in the pipeline to be built in MBTA Community Zoning Districts. Several communities have surpassed the guidelines, he said.

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SPORTS

Grandfather Always Watching

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Like so many other younger children, Grafton's Owen Schnabel's parents signed him up for all kinds of sports trying to find his niche. Soccer soon

when things really took off for me," he said. "The biggest thing was that my grandfather passed away that year and he was always at my games and now he wasn't. I was really grieving when he died and soccer was something that made me happy so I began

him and it was a special bond they shared although he was no longer there.

Entering high school, he went into the soccer tryouts with an open mind.

"If I happened to make varsity it would be awesome and would challenge me to improve, but if I made JV it wouldn't be the end of the world. At least I'd get minutes and reps on the field," Schnabel said. "I made the varsity team, but only saw the field occasionally as I was much slower and smaller than most of the other players."

At times the young freshman was wondering if it would have been better to make the Junior Varsity team and often found himself discouraged, but his coach continued to remind him just to stay his course and he would get there.

Schnabel took his coach's advice to heart and challenged himself in practice. He began running more and hit the gym.

"Owen is one of the most coachable kids I've ever had, he picks things up quickly and does

whatever is asked of him," Grafton Soccer coach Dave Mitchell said. "As a four-year varsity player, in terms of his confidence, it's night and day. You could see that when he was a young player that he had the ability to be a great player and would provide an impact."

In addition to the sport clicking with him as a younger kid, he was also able to take part in it with all of his friends. Now as seniors, the large group of friends find themselves on the field together.

"During that first year, six of us made the varsity team and the other six were on JV. Now as seniors we are all together for one last year," he said. "This is something that we've been talking about since we were kids and now here we are, all together one last time."

Although Schnabel is glad that he is able to have this final season amongst all his childhood friends, he is also glad that the younger kids on the team have connected and have been an important part to this year's team.

One of those younger players happens to be his younger brother Gavin.

"Playing with all my friends has been special this year, but to get the chance to play with my brother in the midfield is even better," he said. "This is something that we'll be able to remember for as long as we live."

While Schnabel sees the entire team gelling and doing this together, Coach Mitchell noted that the now senior is having himself a dominant year controlling the middle of the field for the Gators.

"He's doing it all - scoring as well as passing - he's been completely dominant in all aspects of his game and everything that we do goes through him," the Grafton coach said. "He's a captain and a leader - the team feeds off that. He is also a better kid than soccer player, and he's a pretty great soccer player."

Mitchell continued to note that Schnabel has matured beyond



became that sport that intrigued the young Schnabel and at the age of eight he was playing for a club team and not long after that, he realize that he had the talent to continue with the sport.

"It was around sixth grade

playing more consistently and in doing so found that I was getting better."

Every time that he stepped onto the field to practice or take part in a game, Schnabel definitely felt his grandfather with

SPORTS

continued on page 17

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THE CAR DOCTOR

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Mechanic stumped by brake failure

Q. I have a 2011 Lincoln MKX with 126,000 miles. Back in July, I had a one-time occurrence where my brake pedal went to the floor with braking capability very much diminished. There was no issue with the brake fluid and my mechanic could not come up with a physical reason that caused this. This happened again last week, and he did a “deeper dive” and still couldn’t give me a reason. He had this same problem once before with a Ford Explorer. After changing the master-cylinder and one other part which I don’t remember, he told me he would not give his customer a guarantee that it would not happen again. Are you aware of anything about this or has Ford/Lincoln issued any bulletins about this problem? Also, with proper maintenance (I drive about 10K miles/year), what life expectancy can I expect from this vehicle?

A. The brake master-cylinder is the typical cause of a dropping or fading brake pedal. The system will typically present itself while waiting at a stop light with your foot lightly resting on the brake pedal. So as a pure guess it is a pretty good one. I found no technical service bulletins that addressed this specific problem. Regarding how long this car can last depends on how it is driven and maintained. With normal care it should be able to reach 200,000 miles with ease. Now of course there could be some expenses on the way. The transmissions in some of these models can be problematic. Also, as the car continues to age, it would not be unusual to have issues with the climate control system, power windows/locks and even the infotain-

ment system. Keep in mind that it is almost always cheaper to fix an old car than buy a new one.

Q. I am very diligent regarding oil changes, but I have a frequency question; I am the original owner of a 2005 Mercedes CLK 320, and the car presently has just under 70,000 miles. The car is used about five months a year, and probably gets driven around 2500 miles a year. I have been getting annual oil changes to date. My question is as follows; considering that the V6 engine requires eight quarts of synthetic oil, and considering that the car sits unused between mid-October and mid-May, would two years between charges make sense?

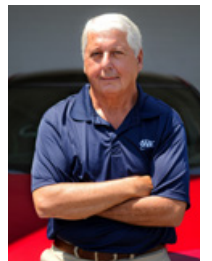
A. Mercedes has one of the most sophisticated oil monitoring systems of most any manufacturer. Although Mercedes does state that yearly service is recommended. We have a VW Beetle convertible that sits for six months, and I still service the engine each year. Could you go two years between oil changes? Probably. Would I? No.

Q. Do you have any suggestions for how to prevent mice from eating the wires of your car? My understanding is that many newer cars have soy-based wiring that mice love. Is there anything you can put inside the car to keep them out?

A. Soy is used in wiring and foam, but it is not a food product. Old wiring was petroleum based which may have been somewhat of a deterrent. That being said I have repaired many old cars whose wire was eaten by rodents. Some things you can try, Shake-A-Way (there are others) which is supposed to give off a predator scent. Peppermint oil in tea bag like packets is supposed to

work. Other people have told me they leave Irish Spring soap shaving in the car. If parked in a garage, block any entry holes and remove any food (pets or human). If parked outside, try to stay away from trash cans. There is also a heavy car cover from Cover Seal (www.getcoverseal.com). This is a heavy weighted cover that can keep out rodents.

Q. I purchased a new 2024 Subaru Crosstrek with cloth fabric seat covers. After about two months and 500 miles we now see premature wearing (fuzzing) of the driver’s seat bolster area. I did some online research and discovered this problem of wear going back as far as 2014. A TSB was even issued by Subaru (# 12-165-14) stating that the original fabric was defective, and a better-quality fabric was available for replacement. I brought the car to the dealer, and they ordered a replacement “part” which is covered under warranty. It is still on back order. I see online that this continues to be a problem with Crosstreks. My question is what about the rest of the fabric in my car’s interior? One writer on a recent forum said his seat fabric has been replaced three times. Have you heard anything about this issue and has Subaru finally solved the premature aging defect? What is my recourse if this continues when the car is out of warranty? My wife and I are both retired and have never worn any type of rough clothing that would cause fabric damage.



BY JOHN PAUL

CAR DOCTOR
continued on page 17

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SPORTS

continued from page 15

his years and his aggressive play on the field shows the rest of the team what is needed to be successful and they buy in and follow his lead.

Being named a captain to the team was one of his ultimate achievements.

"It was kind of emotional; over the years I had worked hard and I had looked up to the previous captains and now I bear that same responsibility," he said. "I've grown into the role, but it was my parents who pushed me in the right direction telling me that I needed to step up and be that person."

At the time of this writing Grafton was 8-0-2 and according to the coach, Schnabel had a lot to do with the team's success on the field. His ability to use both feet allow him to create and has allowed him to become a dominant force as a playmaker

and team leader.

However, Schnabel is not willing to take all the credit for the team's early success.

"Being 8-0-2 is not because of me, absolutely not. It's a total team effort where everyone

everyone and pride ourselves going out there and playing as a team."

Along with his teammates Schnabel is hoping that the Gators can make a deep run through the State Tournament this year.

Grafton has been eliminated in the first round the past two seasons and would really like to check that box off getting a win in the tournament. In order to do that the Gators are playing one day at a time and hope that mentality takes them further than they've been in the past.

Growing up, Schnabel never imagined playing soccer on the high school level with success, in fact his grandfather always saw him as a football captain. Although he didn't become a football player, his grandfather supported his decisions and continues to follow his game despite not being on earth

to do so by his side. I'm quite sure that his is beyond proud of what Schnabel has become on the soccer field.

contributes. Ben [Clements] has saved us so many times and Declan [Donagher] is scoring a ton of goals," he said. "We need



CAR DOCTOR

continued from page 16

A I have seen no technical service bulletins listed for 2023/24 Subaru seat wear. I did find a Reddit posting about premature cloth seat wear that spans several years. At this point all you can do is work with Subaru of America and have them replace

the seat. I did locate the TSB from 2014 and over the past 10 years, the seat material and even the supplier could have changed several times. It has been my experience that once the situation with a defective product is resolved with an improved product, there will be no extension of the warranty. Once the warranty time and mileage are met then that is the manufacturers' only obligation. Now if the replacement product is the same

as the original product, I have seen manufacturers step up and replace items outside of the warranty period. It also helps if the dealer is on your side to pursue the issue with the manufacturer. I recently road tested the 2024 Crosstrek with cloth seats. The car has been driven by many journalists and had about 9000 miles on it and showed no signs of seat wear. Based on that perhaps the issue has been resolved.

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- In order to be eligible for the disclosed Tier I and Tier II interest rate, Annual Percentage Yield (APY), and refund of domestic ATM Surcharges the following conditions must be met in a given statement cycle.
- A minimum of 8 posted and settled debit card purchase transactions during the statement cycle. Not all purchase transactions post or settle on the day they occur.
- Active enrollment in e-statements – you must sign into your online banking account at least once every 12 months to keep enrollment active.



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@theyankeeexpress.com.

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THROUGH OCT 31

The Pumpkin Patch at the First Congregational Church, 128 Central Street, Auburn will be open daily 10 a.m. 'til dusk September 21st through October 31st or until sold out. There will be gourds and pumpkins of all sizes and prices – one for every need; be it for your fall decor, carving, baking – you name it! The pumpkins are raised and harvested by the Navajos on their reservation in New Mexico. The money they receive helps their schools and other programs and a percentage of the sales helps our church as well. Thank you in advance for your support. If you have any questions, feel free to call the church office at 508-832-2845.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 25

Be a part of Webster's annual Main Street Trunk or Treat event from 4-6 p.m. For businesses along Main Street and South Main Street, flyers will be available in the coming weeks. Please display the flyers if you wish to participate. The flyer is the same as a porch light welcoming trick or treaters. Anyone interested in decorating a car trunk, pickup truck or trailer, please reach out to cmarchand@webster-ma.gov to be part of a spooky good time.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26

Scarecrows on the Common, Joslin Park, Town Common, 352 Main Street, Oxford, 11 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. You're invited to fill the town common with handcrafted scarecrows

for the whole town to enjoy. Open to individuals, businesses and families. Visit www.oxfordma.myrec.com to register. Schedule of events: scarecrow drop-off 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.; music with "DW and the Shakemakers" at 12 – 2:30 p.m.; Sutton Dancing Witches perform at 1 p.m. Scarecrow judging begins at 3 p.m. Children's Costume Parade 3 p.m. Kids' games, crafts, snacks, vendors and more. Awards for most creative, funniest and best town spirit scarecrows.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

Pakachoag: Where the River Bends Film Screening & Discussion: 2 – 4 p.m. When College of the Holy Cross was founded in 1843, it was built on land that had been home to Indigenous people for centuries. This film by Holy Cross faculty and staff, community leaders and students seeks to illuminate that history. After the film, stay for a discussion with Sarah Luria, Chair, Environmental Studies, Colin Novick, The Greater Worcester Land Trust, and Jo Elle Moody and Gordon Ward, Officers of the Quinsigamond Band of Nipmuc. Presented in partnership with the College of the Holy Cross and the Scholarship in Action program. This program is free and open to the public. Registration is not required. An adult must accompany children. Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center at Worcester Department of Conservation and Recreation - 3 Paul Clancy Way, Worcester. For the most up to date programming information, call (508) 373-7056.

MONDAY, OCTOBER 28

Halloween At The Museum: Come join the spooky people at the Auburn Historical Society and Museum, 41 South Street, Auburn, from 6:30p to 8:30p. You'll be able to meet some "characters" that will be telling you scary stories of Auburn's past, solve some vampire jokes, and partake in "Trick or Treat" bags. A tour of the museum, a glass of cider, and BOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!
The Oxford Free Public Library and the Oxford Conservation Commission have teamed up to host a Seed Saving Presentation from 6:30-7:30 p.m. at the Carbundle Beach House, 12 Carbundle Drive, Oxford. Learn from a Massachusetts Master Gardener the benefits of saving seeds and basic techniques. This topic is being presented in anticipation of the new Seed Library that will be introduced in Spring 2025. To get the Seed Library started, seed donations will be accepted at the Oxford Free Public Library beginning in November.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2

The Boys & Girls Club of Webster-Dudley will be having its 3rd annual Craft and Vendor Fair on Saturday, November 2nd from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at 55 Oxford Ave, Dudley.
Free Shred Day: bankHometown invites customers and members of the community to free Shred Day Millbury Public Library, 128 Elm St. 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (or until the truck is full) on the following dates and at the following locations. No appoint-

ment is necessary. A professional document destruction company will be on site in the bank's parking lot and can accept up to two boxes of documents per
St. Peter's Parish in Northbridge will be holding its Annual Holiday Fair on Saturday, November 2nd from 9:00am-3:00pm in the parish hall, 39 Church Avenue, Northbridge. Come out with your family and friends to enjoy the day! We will have all of your favorites: White Elephant Table, Baked Goods Table, Holiday Table, Craft Table with beautiful handmade quilts. There will also be tables filled with raffles (you never know what will be there!), a silent auction, scratch ticket raffle, quilt raffle and a gift basket raffle. Stay and enjoy a bite to eat with all of our favorite foods being served. For more information, please contact the parish office at 508-234-2156 or email: parishoffice@stpeterrockdale.org.
Our popular, annual Harvest Fair fundraiser to benefit the combined 3 Grafton Churches now known as Our Lady of Hope Parish will be held at St. James Church Hall, 89 Main Street, S. Grafton on Saturday, November 2nd, 2024 from 9AM - 3PM. There will be something for everyone. Come browse, buy, have breakfast or lunch, meet friends, and have fun!
A Poetry Book Signing & Open Mic with Alan Ira Gordon featuring "Pittsburgh and Other Poems", will take place at 2 p.m. at Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 East Main Street, Webster. To sign up for the Open Mic portion of the event, please call 508-949-6232

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HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 18

or email deb@bookloversgourmet.com. All of the poems in this book explore in poetic form various ideas of sense of place, whether physical locations, points in time or ideas of place that could only exist (for now, at least) within the creative realms of science fiction, fantasy and/or horror.

- The Douglas Historical Society is hosting a Spaghetti Supper with limited seating, so reservations are necessary. Seatings are at 4 p.m. or 5:30 p.m. The Society relies solely on the generosity of others to keep their doors open and is asking for donations of \$15 for adults and \$7 for children under 12 years. To go orders will be accepted. To make a reservation or place your to go order, call Ursula at 508-723-3484 or email enjenckes1833@gmail.com.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 3

- The Dudley Woman's Club most popular fundraiser is back! Pocketbook Bingo will be held Sunday, November 3 at the PACC, 37 Harris Street in Webster. Doors open at 1 p.m. with bingo starting at 2 p.m. Tickets are \$35pp for this fun afternoon of BINGO with the gals plus the chance to win 10 designer handbags! Lots of laughs, giveaways and raffles. The DWC's voluntary Giving Project for this event will be gently used pocketbooks and shoes for the Webster-Dudley Food Share. Tickets online at www.dudleywomensclub.org/pocketbookbingo
- The Uxbridge Polish American Club Social and Civil Club is hosting a Polka Party from 1 – 5 p.m. with Dennis Polisky & Maestro's Men. The Club is located at 217 Mendon Street, Uxbridge. Tickets are \$15 per person at the door or at the Polish Hall. For more

information, call 508-278-7583.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7

- Salute to Veterans Comedy Night. Come and meet the members of your Veterans Advisory Committee and enjoy a fun night with us. 6 p.m. at the Delisle-Goulet Post, 60 Worcester St., Grafton. Cash bar and light refreshments and food available.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9

- Charlton City United Methodist Church will once again host Dynamic Cards, Collectibles and Craft Show at 74 Stafford Street, Charlton from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Two full floors of Trading Cards, Collectibles and Crafts of all kinds! The show will be jam-packed with 60+ tables and feature lunch, baked goods, and other goodies for purchase. Add to your collection or begin a new one. In addition to a very large variety of vendors and crafters, we'll also have lunch and baked goods for sale. Partial proceeds help support many local community causes. You win with all the sellers, and the world wins when you come to support the show. Admission is FREE. There is plenty of parking and the building is handicap accessible. For further information, including vendor inquiries: Joe Dupont. joedupont@dynamiccardcollectors.com

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10

- Music at the Farm season seven fall concerts continue Nov. 10 at 2 PM. with artists in residence Yunwen Chen, cello and Xiyu Deng, piano. They will play Bach Suite No. 3 in C Major, Schubert "Arpeggione" Sonata and Brahms Cello Sonata No. 2 in F Major. These indoor concerts are at Grace Note Farm 969 Jackson Schoolhouse Rd. Pascoag, RI. Tickets are \$30, children \$15., call 401-567-0354 for reservation. Weather permitting, audience

members are welcome to enjoy visiting the farm animals and walk the farm trails prior to the concert. These concerts are sponsored by Grace Note Farm, Virginia Sindelar, Artistic Director and the Blackstone Valley Tourism Council. www.gracenotefarmweb.com

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 13

- The Auburn Select Board has voted to schedule the fall special town meeting for Wednesday November 13 at 6 p.m. at the Auburn High School Auditorium, with a backup date of Thursday, November 14 at 6 p.m.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16

- Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, 268 Main St, Oxford, MA will hold a Fall Festival on Saturday, November 16, 2024 from 9 AM to 2 PM. There will be a huge basket raffle, attic treasures and an incredible bake sale. Lunch will be available - a choice of chili or corn chowder. All are welcome!

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

- Auburn Historical Society & Museum's November meeting: C.E.R.T. in Your Community - This is the local coordinating structure that train volunteers to help emergency responders during disasters. Members of the Auburn Community Emergency Response Team will explain what the team has done and how you might become a member of the team. Auburn Sportsman's Club at 50 Elm Street at 6:30 p.m. For more information contact the Auburn Historical Society and Museum at auburnmuseum@verizon.net. All meetings are free and open to the public.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

- The United Presbyterian Church of Whitinsville invites everyone (kids and adults) to our annual Cookies and Carols event to be held

on Sunday, December 1, 2024 at 4 PM in the church's sanctuary (51 Cottage Street in Whitinsville). We will kick off the Advent Season with the singing of Advent and Christmas Carols led by a guest organ player (William Cudmore) and pianist (Eileen Straub). William Cudmore has played for the Woo Sox. Eileen Straub is the church's Minister of Music. We will have activities for the kids and the singing of seasonal songs. The event will be capped by the eating of cookies and the drinking of punch. All are invited! For more information, please call the church office at 508-234-8220.

Spend a day with your family and friends at the Town of Sutton's Annual Holiday Chain of Lights Event. Free trolleys and buses will transport visitors over rolling countryside to participating locations throughout historic Sutton. Farms, unique specialty stores, church fairs, and area businesses welcome the holidays with musical entertainment, children's activities, food, fun and Holiday characters. Route information, maps, location descriptions and brochures are available at www.suttonlights.com

THIRD WEDNESDAY OF EACH MONTH

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

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

- The 2024 Sutton Chain of Lights will Take Place this year from 10 am to 4 pm

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Presently, I'm in the Auburn Vietnam Veterans of America, Oxford Memorial Honor Guard, and Millbury's VFW, American Legion, and Veterans Council.

I was a military instructor/trainer, and full-time public-school teacher. In my last 5 years, I worked with high school students having learning challenges. **My daughter is a Doctor of Physical Therapy** in a local hospital.

Over the last **"30 YEARS"**, I was elected and served 5 times on Millbury's Planning Board. I also served on the Local Housing Partnership, Ponds and Lakes Commission, Master Plan Committees, Fair Housing Committee, EMF Study Committee (electromagnetic fields), Youth Commission, Water Study Committee, and CMRPC Planning Board delegate (Central Mass Regional Planning Commission).

I know how to create **PERMANENT AFFORDABLE HOUSING**.

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- Different Drivers' Licenses for Non-citizens
- No Voting for Non-citizens
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