

Grafton Boards Meet to Discuss Override

BY PATTY ROY

With budget season in full swing, the Grafton Select Board held a joint meeting with the Finance and School Committees on March 19, along with town administrator Evan Brassard and superintendent James Cummings to discuss override options to level fund the town's schools.

The town is facing an \$800,000 increase in health insurance, Brassard said, calling it "an anomaly" well outside a projected increase of \$200,000. The problem is that municipal power is greatly reduced and revenues have not kept pace with the increases, he said.

Total revenue and expenses for the upcoming Fiscal Year 2026 that begins on July 1, 2025 is \$85,706,904. The budget for public schools (excluding Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical) is \$47,275, 223. About \$45 million is planned to come from the regular operating budget with \$1.2 million from Stabilization revolving accounts.

Cummings and Brassard explained the plan as reducing the school "ask" by \$809,000 which they said was not ideal, but that there is no perfect solution.

Brassard would be instructed to create a solid waste (trash) Enterprise Fund to be used beginning in Fiscal Year 2027. He also recommended the Stabilization Fund be tapped for \$600,000 which is allowed by the state. That sum could be replenished with \$600,000 from Free Cash. "We need to change our funding strategy in some way," Brassard said, "whether that's an override or some other mechanism."

Town boards should be meeting quarterly to spend more time on five year forecasting models,

so there will be no more surprises. As matters sit now, the budget deficit ranges from \$1.4 million for Fiscal Year 27 to \$5.4 million for Fiscal Year 30, he said. Cummings suggested the reduction in school spending could be rebuilt by using out-of-district tuitions.

"Our medically fragile program at the high school will bring in \$200,000," he said, from just four students he is confident will enroll. It could be possible to make changes in spending to the tune of \$162,000 with the loss of some positions though there would be openings that affected employees would have certification and could be placed in.

"None of [the changes] are ideal, but in terms of the day to day experience of students, we will remain whole and stable," Cummings said.

A five year plan to fund a \$9 million override that would level fund schools would cost about \$1339 to the average single family home owner yearly real estate tax bill. Reducing the override amount to \$5 million would add about \$745 to the tax bill for the average single family home.

School Committee chair Amy Marr said concerns about cuts to federal school funding are coming up.

"That's another challenge we're going to have and if it doesn't happen in this fiscal year, it's going to happen soon," she said, adding that the state doesn't know how they are going to address it.

The committees will meet again on March 20 to continue budget planning. The annual town meeting is 7 p.m. on May 12 in the Grafton High School Auditorium. The last day for in-person registration to vote at the town meeting is May 2.

Pansy Sale on Millbury Common

The Millbury Women's Club are continuing their annual tradition of supporting an important message in the fight against pancreatic cancer with their annual Pansy Sale on the Common on April 4 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., weather permitting. If inclement weather is predicted the pansy sale will be at the VFW Charles F. Minney Post at 16 South Main Street, Millbury from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. All proceeds will benefit the Pancreatic Cancer Alliance (PCA) which is a local organization, leading the way in Central Massachusetts to patients diagnosed with this devastating illness and families affected by pancreatic cancer. Pancreatic cancer is the fourth leading cause of cancer deaths with a median survival of six months. The lethal nature of pancreatic cancer stems from its propensity



to rapidly disseminate to the lymphatic system and distant organs. The PCA is a volunteer organization that operates under the UMass Memorial Foundation's 501 (c) 3. All proceeds donated 100 percent to help research, patient support, awareness and education.

The MWC has supported the PCA organization for over 18 years and has raised approximately \$20,000 to help support this organization. It is recommended to preorder and to contact MaryLou Mulhane at 508 -865-9831 or email at mmlulhane1@gmail.

Grafton's Business Scene – March 2025

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

Spring has finally arrived. The days are growing longer. The birds are singing in the trees. And many people are looking forward to springtime holidays.

The season is also being reflected at several local businesses. Some are returning for the season. Others are helping people prepare for the season and its holidays.

Off the Common Antiques will welcome shoppers to join them in celebrating spring at its free open house event, which will be held at its store Friday, April 4 through Sunday, April 6 from 10:30 a.m. - 6 p.m. on Friday and Saturday and 10:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday. There will be refreshments, a free gift with every purchase and outdoor and spring-themed décor to browse and shop. At the multi-artisan, multi-vendor shop, shop-

pers can find antiques, handmade items and reclaimed furniture to brighten their homes.

A nearby business that's also helping people prepare for holiday and spring celebrations is the Grafton Country Store. The gift shop located on the Grafton Common has a vast array of beautiful Easter and spring décor and gifts. It also has chocolate bunnies and a variety of adorable and whimsical items to fill Easter baskets.

Treasures is another option for people who are looking for a bargain. The North Grafton upscale thrift shop that sells clothing, furniture, gifts and housewares has an array of lovely springtime décor. And its proceeds benefit the Whitinsville Christian School.

A Grafton business that will be returning, just in time for the warmer weather, is the Grafton Flea Market. The indoor and out-



door flea market features hundreds of vendors and a casual restaurant. Its return will happen Sunday, April 6, and it will remain open every Sunday through December from 6 a.m. until 4 p.m.

GRAFTON

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The Blackstone River Coalition, a grassroots group dedicated to revitalizing the river as a fishable and swimmable resource for the region, will host a summit to announce the results of its 2024 water quality monitoring season. The 20th "report card" for the river will summarize data collected by 85 dedicated volunteers sampling at 75 sites throughout the watershed from Worcester to Pawtucket from April through November. The event will be held at the Blackstone River Valley Heri-

tage Center in Worcester on Saturday, March 29 from 9 a. m. to 1 p.m. The Center is an interpretive, recreational and cultural amenity and regional gateway, co-managed by the nonprofit Blackstone Heritage Corridor and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation.

The Blackstone River Coalition has worked for 25 years to restore and protect the water quality and wildlife habitat of the nearly 50-mile historic river valley stretching from Worcester to Providence.

During the summit, the Coalition will also recognize volunteers for their service to the mission, and several speakers will present about ongoing projects.

The keynote speaker will be William Sobczak, Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies, College of the Holy Cross. Water Quality data will be presented about 10:30 a.m.

The Blackstone River Valley Heritage Center is located at 3 Paul Clancy Way (next to Route 146) in Worcester.

Sutton Public Library

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Baby Storytime: Tuesdays, 10:30 - 11 a.m. For babies and caregivers to meet friends, read books and sing

songs. No registration required.

Wednesday Storytime: every week at 10:30 - 11 a.m. No registration required. Thursday Storytime: every week at 10:30 - 11 a.m. No registration required. Cribbage Club: Mondays, 1 - 2 p.m. Beginners or

experienced players welcome! No registration required.

Adult Craft: Wildflower Bombs: Thursday, March 27, 6:30 - 7:45 p.m. Craft for adults, make a wildflower bomb with a mix of clay, seeds and compost. Registration required.

Blackstone Heritage Corridor Hikes

The Blackstone Heritage Corridor's spring hiking series has begun. The hikes will be led by volunteer Trail Ambassadors. The series is designed for all levels of hikers to experience the history and natural beauty of the birthplace of the American Industrial Revolution. The seasoned Trail Ambassadors will guide participants through many of the 100 trails in

the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor. All walks in the series begin at 10 a.m. and are subject to weather. Visit www.nps.gov/blrv for weather-related information and cancellations and Blackstone Heritage Corridor.org for details on where to meet. The spring series is as follows: Sunday, March 30 - Cumberland Monas-

tery, Cumberland, RI; Saturday, April 5 - Waters Farm, Sutton, MA Saturday; April 12 - Camp Shepard, Smithfield, RI; Saturday, April 19 - Castle Hill Farm, Whitinsville, MA; Saturday, May 3 - Mendon Town Forest, Mendon, MA To learn more about the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, visit BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org.

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Millbury Senior Center

The Millbury Senior Center offers the following services for seniors:

SHINE clinic, by phone any-time; podiatry clinic, third Friday of each month; Memory Café, fourth Tuesday of each month. Call for appointments at these clinics, 508-865-9154.

Drop-in activities include: Monday, light exercise, Mahjong, Zumba; Tuesday, blood pressure clinic 9 a.m., Tai Chi, Cribbage; Wednesday, craft class, line dancing, social bingo; Thursday, yoga,

coloring class, Pitch; Friday, shopping, light exercise. Lunch is offered every day. For more information about Senior Center activities, visit <https://www.millburyma.gov/senior-center/pages/classes-clinics>.

National Grid Customer Service event: March 31, 12 - 4 pm. National Grid rep to help with enrolling in the discount rate program, budget billing, arrears management and forgiveness program, payment arrangements. No appointment needed.

Flea Market and Craft Fair

The Millbury First Congregational Church on 148 West Main Street in Millbury is sponsoring a Flea Market and Craft Fair on Saturday, May 10 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Anyone wishing to reserve table space, please call Jeri Stead 508-865-5371.

The \$25 inside area consists of a large supper table plus a card table.

Inside tables can be organized the night before. An outside reservation is \$15, and those chancing the weather need to provide their own table.

"The Kitchen" will be selling refreshments and at lunch time, hot dogs will be served. There will also be a Bakery Table, and a Church Flea Market Table.

GRAFTON

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In North Grafton, a seasonal business will re-open its windows on April 1. The return of Swirls & Scoops, the ice cream and frozen yogurt shop, is anticipated by people of all ages and many local families.

Other businesses with Grafton locations, Koopman Lumber & Hardware and UniBank, are two of the sponsors of another much-anticipated annual event. On Saturday, April 12 from 10 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the Whittin Community Center in Whittinsville, Beginning Bridges CFCE and Blackstone Valley Children's Place will hold Kids Fair. With the theme "Passport to Healthy Communities," the free event gives families with young children the chance to explore community resources in a fun atmosphere. There will be free healthy snacks, informational booths, giveaways, a bike raffle, an Easter egg hunt and more.

Finally, the Grafton Food Bank, another nonprofit that provides vital services to our community,

is holding its annual donations appeal. For years, there has been an increased need by local families. Pepperoni Express donated 33 percent of its March 19 sales to the cause. And student families and staff of the Grafton Children's Daycare & Preschool Center held a successful food drive to help stock the food bank's shelves. Donations to the food bank, which provides food, resource referrals and emergency help with utilities to Grafton residents in need of a helping hand, can be sent to the food bank at PO Box 324, Grafton, MA 01519. Donations can also be made through its GoFundMe campaign, <https://www.gofundme.com/f/2025-grafton-food-bank-annual-appeal>.

As the days continue to grow longer and all the hallmarks of spring return, hopefully, we can all take moments to savor the unique joys of the season. And thankfully, our local businesses and organizations can help us to do so. Happy spring!

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

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BVT Students Earn 82 SkillsUSA Medals at District V Competition

31 Gold, 28 Silver, 23 Bronze, and 8 Sweeps

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) students put the systems voc-tech mission on full display. During the first of three SkillsUSA competitions, students test their vocational-technical competency by competing with other trained career and technical education students from six vocational high schools. On March 12th, 220 BVT students competed in the annual SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Competition with outstanding outcomes.

The competition allows students to demonstrate their vocational-technical education, skills, and knowledge with SkillsUSA employment and trade tests. Successfully demonstrating their expertise in their career technical area of study, employability skills, and safety. Student competitors from BVT proudly claimed 31 gold, 28 silver, and 23 bronze medals, and swept eight categories.

Sixty-six students will advance from districts to compete amongst the most talented voca-

tional-technical students in the Commonwealth at the SkillsUSA Massachusetts State competition held at BVT in late April. The two qualifying State Officer Candidates, Emily Kee and Maria Clara De Oliveira, will move forward joined by 44 leadership competitors and 20 student delegates who will represent BVT. The complete list of medalists is available at www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa.

\$129,000 in opioid recovery funding for Blackstone Valley

State Sen. Ryan Fattman and State Rep. Mike Soter are proud to announce that the Blackstone Valley Opioid Task Force, based in Uxbridge, will receive \$129,300 in funds from the Mosaic Opioid Recovery Partnership. The funds for this program come from settlements paid by drug companies to Massachusetts. The grant will be used to hire a local clinician, case manager, peer mentors, and a van driver

to provide clinical services and transportation. The grant will support services in Sutton, Uxbridge, Douglas, Millville, Blackstone, Northbridge, Mendon, Upton, and Bellingham.

"I'm glad that Uxbridge and the Blackstone Valley is receiving this critical funding from the Mosaic Opioid Recovery Partnership," said Senator Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton). "This funding will go toward drug prevention, family support, recovery care and more for families in Uxbridge and across the Blackstone Valley. The unfortunate reality is that too many families in our district have suffered from addiction. I'm hopeful that this grant will help those in our community who are

on their path to recovery."

"We are proud to see Uxbridge and the region receive this crucial funding through the Mosaic Opioid Recovery Partnership," said Representative Mike Soter (R-Bellingham). "This grant will play a vital role in strengthening local efforts to combat the opioid crisis by supporting initiatives focused on prevention, recovery, and family care. By addressing the multi-faceted challenges of addiction, this funding will help provide the necessary resources for individuals and families impacted by the crisis. It's an important step forward in creating a healthier, more resilient community."

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Watch out for tax scams



Tim Furbush, CFA

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It's tax season again — which also means, unfortunately, that it's time for the annual array of scams aimed at taxpayers. Fortunately, by being alert, you can protect yourself from these attempts to defraud you.

Your first line of defense is to recognize the warning signs of potential tax scams. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) cites these common red flags:

- **Promises of big payments** — If you've filed taxes for many years, either by yourself or with the help of a tax professional, you probably have

a pretty good idea of whether you're getting a refund, and how much it will be. But scammers, often using social media, may promise huge refunds by essentially encouraging you to claim tax credits to which you're not entitled and then charging large, upfront fees or a fee based on your refund amount.

- **Suspicious websites** — Watch out for strange-sounding or misspelled web links — these can take you to harmful sites, rather than the official site of the IRS (IRS.gov).
- **Solicitations from charity imposters** — The many natural disasters we've experienced in recent years has brought out great support from people wanting to help friends, neighbors and even total strangers. However, these catastrophes have also encouraged scammers who solicit contributions to bogus charitable groups. To determine whether an organization is a qualified charity that can receive tax-deductible contributions, visit the Tax Exempt Organization Search

tool on IRS.gov.

- **Threats or demands** — IRS impersonators may threaten you with large fines, or even arrest, if you don't make immediate payments of what they claim you owe.

You can protect yourself from many tax-related scams by knowing how the IRS will or won't communicate with you. Typically, the IRS will initiate contact with you through regular mail delivered by the U.S. Postal Service. You can verify the legitimacy of any letter by visiting your secure IRS online account, under the "Notices and Letters" section.

Other ways the IRS will contact you:

- **Email** — Only with your permission, with a few exceptions, such as criminal investigations
- **Text** — Only with your permission
- **Phone** — Only to discuss your case, verify information or set up a meeting
- **Fax** — Only to verify or request employment information

- **In-person visit** — Rarely done, and typically only following a letter

The IRS will not:

- Contact you or take payment on social media.
- Accept gift cards or prepaid debit cards as payment.
- Threaten to call law enforcement or immigration officials.
- Take your citizenship status, driver's license or business license.
- Leave pre-recorded voicemails (robocalls).
- Mail tax debt resolution advertisements.

If you have doubts about any offers or communications, whether supposedly from the IRS or not, you may want to contact a trusted, qualified tax professional.

Also, be on guard for your elderly family members, as senior citizens are frequent targets of scammers. If you talk to these family members regularly, see if you can find out about any unusual offers or solicitations they may have received.

Finally, if you believe you are

a victim of monetary or identity theft, you can report these issues using the IRS website at IdentityTheft.gov. You can also refer to IRS Publication 5027 — 1 Identity Theft Information for Taxpayers.

Tax scams and identity theft are serious threats — so do whatever you can to defend yourself.

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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Family-run Affordable Junk Removal takes the stress out of cleanups

By CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

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

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

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

Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible, properly disposes of non-recyclables and resells many items at the Schadlers' secondhand



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store, Resellables. "We opened that store in Bellingham because we hated to see things thrown away," Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

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

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lift-

**Business
spotlight**

ing, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place in Holliston, The Corner Market."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and



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

do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Holliston in particular, Schadler says they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the area. "In addition to our junk removal business, Holliston residents have been so important to The Corner Market, especially during the pandemic," Schadler says. "We have really appreciated their support." The Schadlers have also sponsored and hosted monthly fundraisers for several sports teams and organizations in Holliston.

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

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

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Millbury Fourth Committee Plans Shaping Up

The Millbury Fourth Committee presented their plans to the Select Board in late February, stepping up the excitement about the return of this favorite town

celebration. The committee was formed in November 2023 and is now a 501(3)C non-profit, led by David Delaney and Gail Cosky. The committee aims to "provide the

Town of Millbury with a community-focused, family-orientated annual Independence Day parade and celebration without any cost being incurred by the Town of Millbury."

The committee has been soliciting grants and ideas for events. The event will be held Sunday, June 15, 2025 at 1 p.m., starting at the high school, 12 Martin Street, continuing along North Main Street to Grove Street and Waters Street, then on to Elm Street and following to Windle Field. The route length is about 1.4 miles.

Residents are invited to enter the

float contest and be part of the fun. Judges will evaluate floats for original and creative design elements, visual appeal regarding colors, decorations and arrangements, and theme interpretation.

This year's theme is "A Community Celebrates." First, second and third place trophies will be awarded. Visit <https://millbury-fourth.org/> for more information.

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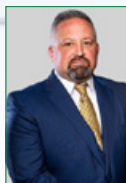
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- Leave the money in his/her former employer's plan, if permitted;
- Roll over the assets to his/her new employer's plan, if one is available and rollovers are permitted.
- Roll over to an IRA.
- Cash out the account value.

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Almost Queen: A Tribute to Queen Returns to Indian Ranch

Almost Queen: A tribute to QUEEN will return to Indian Ranch in Webster, MA on Saturday, July 26, 2025 as part of the summer concert series. Tickets are on sale now at www.indianranch.com. A limited number of Low Dough Early Bird General Admission tickets will be available for just \$20 through March 28th, while supplies last.

They don't just pay tribute to the legendary band, Almost Queen transports you back in time to experience the magic and essence of Queen themselves. This deliberate four-piece band is "guaranteed to blow your mind" with iconic four-part harmonies and expertly executed musical interludes. Almost Queen's impressive tribute to Queen is nothing short of breathtaking. The band's authenticity shines through in their impeccable attention to detail and genuine costumes, while their live energy and precision will leave music fans of all ages with an unforgettable concert experience.

Almost Queen's concerts are a true testament to the band's love for Queen's music. Fans often travel long distances just to experi-

ence Almost Queen's carefully curated setlist featuring Queen's best-loved songs, like "Somebody to Love," "Don't Stop Me Now," "Fat Bottomed Girls," and "Radio Ga Ga." Almost Queen occasionally plays some lesser-known album tracks, such as "Flash," "Spread Your Wings," "Love of My Life," as well as other hidden gems. And of course, no Queen tribute concert would be complete without classics like "Bohemian Rhapsody," "We Will Rock You," and "We Are the Champions!" It's no wonder fans keep coming back for more, attending again and again to experience the music of Queen in a manner that only Almost Queen delivers.

Indian Ranch offers music lovers a chance to see some of the greatest country, classic rock and pop bands steps from Lake Chargog-gagogmanchaggaggoggaungamaugg. 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 paddler and Indian

Ranch Campground. Tickets are on sale now for Tesla on June 1st, Get The Led Out on June 6th, Let's Sing Taylor on June 22nd, Little River Band on July 6th, The Pike GrungeFest on July 13th, The Pike HairFest on July 19th, Rumours: The Ultimate Fleetwood Mac Tribute Show on July 20th, Yachtley Crew on July 24th, Jake Owen and Uncle Kracker on July 27th, The Concert: A Tribute to ABBA on August 3rd, Tyler Hubbard on August 17th, and Face 2 Face - A Tribute to Elton John & Billy Joel on August 31st. More shows will be announced soon.

Tickets for Almost Queen: A tribute to QUEEN are on sale now. Gates open at 11:30 AM and showtime is 1:00 PM. Tickets are available online 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, MA outside of Worcester and less than an hour's drive from Boston, Providence, Hartford and Springfield. For more information, visit www.indianranch.com.

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Sutton Earth Day Cleanup

The annual Earth Day cleanup will be held Saturday, April 5. Cleanup supplies are available on the Common from 9 - 11 a.m. or residents can conduct cleanup on their own whenever they please. Dumpsters will be available at the Fire Department in Manchaug on Route 122, outside Al's Rubbish

as well as on the Common. The dumpsters have been donated by Al's Rubbish and will be available all weekend. Town groups including the Sutton Garden Club, the Environmental Club, the Manchaug Pond Foundation and the Boy Scouts have volunteered their help. The annual event has been

successful over its three years and residents collected more than four tons of trash in that time.

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Healthier Baking in the Blackstone Valley

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

Does the beginning of spring inspire you to think about the latter half of the season – when the flowers are in full bloom, the sun shines brighter, and the feeling of renewal is palpable? That's what usually happens to me. In March, I prefer to look ahead to May and June, which additionally house several joyful celebrations, including of course, Mother's Day and Father's Day.

As I considered creating a somewhat fancier recipe for this month's

column, my mind eventually wandered to one of the people who I love the most in this world, my mom, and one of her favorite desserts when she was here. So, that's why the dessert featured is the countrified version of strawberry shortcake. It's made with simple ingredients and is an honest, joyful, trustworthy dessert that's filled with love – just like my mom.

One of the reasons that this dessert is healthier than most is because it contains almost no added sugar. And having a sweet treat that's made with very little

sugar, which causes inflammation responsible for many diseases and ailments, is reason in itself to celebrate. It's also made with simple ingredients.

The main ingredient is worth celebrating as well. Heart-healthy, brain-healthy strawberries offer several benefits. They're rich in fiber, which aids digestion and promotes heart health and brain health through a healthy gut. They're also rich in vitamin C and are sources of calcium, potassium, folate, manganese, magnesium and iron.

Strawberries also contain an abundance of polyphenols, anthocyanins and flavonoids. These antioxidants and antioxidant compounds fight free radicals and reduce inflammation, reducing the risk of cancer (and possibly shrinking it), dementia and other diseases and conditions. And because strawberries are a low-glycemic fruit, they're ideal for people who need to control their glucose levels.



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STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

Biscuit Ingredients:

- 2 cups of Flour
- 1 tbsp. of Sugar
- 1 tbsp. of Baking Powder
- 7 tbsp. of Salted Butter (room temperature)
- 1 cup of Milk
- 1 tsp. of Vanilla Extract

Topping Ingredients:

- Rinsed, sliced and hulled fresh strawberries (around ½-1 cup per serving)

Directions:

Pre-heat the oven to 425 degrees. Combine flour, baking powder and sugar in a bowl. Cut the butter into the mixture until the butter has become pea-sized crumbles. Make a hole in the center, and pour in the wet ingredients. Using a fork, combine all of the ingredients, stirring quickly. Once the dough follows the fork around the bowl, drop large spoonfuls of it onto a baking sheet.

Bake the biscuits for around 25 minutes and let cool for 10-15 minutes. Serve warm with the strawberries and whipped cream, and enjoy!

If you're hoping to make a simple dessert that's delicious, timeless and filled with pure goodness, you may want to try making this strawberry shortcake. It may even remind you of your own mom and the sunnier side of spring. Happy (healthier) baking!

Sutton Garden Club April Meeting

The Sutton Garden Club meeting on April 20 at A.L. Dudley-Gendron Post 414, 156 Boston Post Road, Sutton, will look at "Creating Pollinator Habitat Anywhere". Master Gardener Denise Guerin will present this program.

Doors open at 6:45 p.m. and the program starts at 7 p.m. The program will review some pollinator basics: what exactly are pollinators, why they are so important, and why do we hear so much about them. We will explore

what pollinators need and look for when choosing where to rest, eat, or lay their eggs, i.e., "Habitat." Our presenter will talk about the importance of habitat, what it is, and how to create and maintain some inviting habitat for pollinators just about anywhere at all! Ms. Guerin will illustrate successful pollinator habitats created in different places, including suburban gardens, decks, small urban yards and patios.

Sutton Garden Club welcomes new members throughout the year. Annual membership remains at \$20 individual/\$30 family. Membership forms are available on our website, <http://www.suttongardenclub.typepad.com> and at our meetings.

First time "check it out" visits are free; subsequent visits will be charged \$5. For more information: email: smcck2014@gmail.com; phone: (508)865-2210; <http://www.suttongardenclub.typepad.com/>; or <https://www.facebook.com/Sutton-GardenClub/>.

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bankHometown Parent Wins 2025 USA TODAY Top Workplaces Award

Hometown Financial Group, the parent company of bankESB, bankHometown, North Shore Bank, Abington Bank and Hometown Mortgage, announced today it has earned the 2025 USA TODAY Top Workplaces award for the third time in four years.

Top Workplaces USA celebrates organizations with 150 or more employees that are dedicated to building an exceptional people-first culture. Winners are chosen based solely on employee feedback gathered through an anonymous, third-party employee engagement survey, issued by Energage, a leading provider of technology-based employee engagement tools. More than 42,000

organizations across the country were invited to participate in the Top Workplaces USA survey. Results are calculated by comparing the survey's research-based statements, including 15 Culture Drivers that are proven to predict high performance against industry benchmarks.

"We're honored to have received this trio of national awards as an employer of choice. But we're even more grateful to our employees because it's their positive feedback that earned us the honor," said bankHometown President and CEO Robert J. Morton. "Our dedicated, talented, and passionate employees continually unlocking potential for our customers, our communities,

and one another. And they've embraced our culture where "Respect everyone," "Foster positive energy," and "Laugh often. Have fun!" are three of our most treasured core values. They believe we're doing something right."

"Earning a Top Workplaces award is a badge of honor for companies, especially because it comes authentically from their employees," said Eric Rubino, Energage CEO. "That's something to be proud of. In today's market, leaders must ensure they're allowing employees to have a voice and be heard. That's paramount. Top Workplaces do this, and it pays dividends."

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Grass Roots Coffeehouse Show

The Grass Roots Coffeehouse welcomes back "SloGrass" for our next concert on Saturday, March 29.

"SloGrass" features Mark Davis on guitar, Fran McConville on mandolin, David DiBiasio on banjo, resophonic guitar, and nylon string guitar and Bob Dick on bass. The music they play is a reflection of their own interests. From bluegrass to jazz, folk to blues - all wrapped up into a style that can only be called "SloGrass". Tight three-part harmonies and intricate instrumental arrangements are hallmarks of the SloGrass sound.

The Grass Roots Coffeehouse is located at the Rockdale Congregational Church, 42 Fowler Road, Northbridge. Admission to the concert is \$15. Hot foods, beverages and desserts are available prior to the concert and during intermission. Doors open at 6:30 p.m., concert begins at 7:30 p.m. and usually wraps up by 9:30 p.m.. Proceeds support the artists and the church. The Coffeehouse is run entirely by volunteers. For more info visit <http://www.rockdalechurchonline.org> or call Bob at 617-429-0347.

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HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

You've landed an interview, now to prepare

BY THERESA KNAPP

Congratulations, the company has noticed your résumé and they've scheduled an interview with you. Now what?

Now you prepare. Getting a job is difficult and time-consuming. The more prepared you can be, the more confident you can be, and the more successful you can be.

For the employer, the purpose of the job interview is to assess the candidate's skills, their motivation, and to see if they are a good fit with the company's culture and mission.

For the candidate, the interview can help assess if the job description is accurate, if you're comfortable with the "feel" of the company and its representatives, etc.

Preparation is key

- Read the job description thoroughly, research unfamiliar terms and acronyms
- Research the company through its website, blog, and LinkedIn page
- Search for company reviews on sites like GlassDoor, Indeed, Jobcase, etc.
- Search for the company in the news, is there anything about the culture, stock, etc., you should (or should not) discuss during the interview? A quick Google search could reveal important information
- Be familiar with the office location (even if it's a virtual position or interview)
- Have your elevator pitch ready



First impressions count

According to the American Psychological Association, first impressions can have a real impact on your professional success. Ways to strengthen your chances of making a good first impression include:

1. **Know your audience:** Know who you're interviewing with so you can speak to them directly
2. **Exude confidence:** Speak slowly and calmly, make eye contact
3. **Field questions gracefully:** Don't get defensive, you don't know an answer, it's okay to say so
4. **Prepare and practice:** You cannot overprepare
5. **Be a good listener:** Pay attention, make eye contact, nod, don't interrupt or finish their sentences

Source: www.apa.org/gradpsych/2012/11/first-impressions

Your "elevator pitch" should be "u-nique"

An elevator pitch is your introduction. The pitch should be 30 to 60 seconds long and should address your professional history, accomplishments of which you're most proud of, and relevant career goals which tie in with the job for that you're applying.

The pitch should end with a fun fact about yourself, something that can help you stand out from the other candidates. It should be positive and not too personal.

Many employers receive hundreds of applications for each job. It will help your chances if you have a memorable interview. What makes you "u-nique"? Employers often ask each candidate the same list of questions so they can make accurate comparisons, and they often hear similar answers from each applicant. By sharing something unique about you – that you can directly relate to the job responsibilities – your chances of standing out can increase. Do you speak several languages? Do you have a unique hobby? Did you audition for American Idol? Were you at the 2004 Red Sox World Series Game?

Five questions to ask yourself as you prepare

According to the job search engine Indeed.com [bit.ly/Indeed5questions], five questions

to ask yourself before a job interview include:

- What past accomplishments are you most proud of?
- What three things do you want to get better at this year?
- What skills do you have that you've noticed differentiate you from your peers?
- What would your past or present colleagues say is the best thing about working with you?
- Where do you want to be in three or five years?

Take some time to think about your answers. An interview is the time to shine, to identify areas in which you are proud, and to share those accomplishments. Let the employer know what skills and energy you'll bring to their company.

If you're wondering how to highlight your strengths in an interview, Indeed [bit.ly/IndeedPersonalStrengths] says focus on quality not quantity, back up your strengths with examples, and provide original answers to routine questions – you want to provide the answers they're looking for while standing out from the competition.

10 common job interview questions and how to answer them

According to the *Harvard Business Review* [bit.ly/HBR10CommonInterviewQuestions], the following questions are often asked during a job interview:

- Could you tell me about yourself and briefly describe your background?
- How did you hear about the position?
- What kind of work environment do you prefer?
- How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?
- Do you prefer working independently or on a team?
- How do you keep yourself organized when balancing multiple projects?
- What did you do in the last year to improve your knowledge?
- What are your salary expectations?
- Are you applying for other jobs?
- Can you explain a time gap on your résumé?

Be prepared to respond to these questions with the answer and, when appropriate, why that is the answer.

For helpful detailed responses,

INTERVIEW PREP

continued on page 11



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HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

Digital footprints, yours and theirs

BY THERESA KNAPP

According to Business News Daily, “It’s no longer that a great resume and a solid interview dictate whether you get a job offer. Your personal social media profiles can potentially seriously affect your professional life.”

Business News Daily suggests the following tips for passing social media screenings:

1. Don’t erase your profile: This can imply you have something to hide and does not guarantee the profile

is completely deleted (but do remove inappropriate content)

2. Use social media to your benefit: Use your socials to promote content that shows your knowledge, professionalism, achievements, etc.
3. Google yourself to see what others will see when they do the same
4. Consider making your profile private: It is legal for employers to check public social media accounts, and be wary of hiring managers

requesting information beyond what’s available online (this is similar to employers asking inappropriate questions during interviews and should raise a red flag)

Source: www.businessnewsdaily.com/2377-social-media-hiring.html

There are ways to make social media work to your advantage during the interview process, including updating your social media profiles with up-to-date information, this includes Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Tik-

Tok, X – anywhere you have an active account; and like/follow companies that interest you and companies where you are interviewing.

LinkedIn.com offers the following tips to improve your LinkedIn profile:

1. Choose the right profile picture
2. Add a background photo
3. Make your headline more than just a job title
4. Record and display your name pronunciation
5. Grow your network

6. List your relevant skills
7. Request recommendations
8. Showcase your passion for learning
9. Add comments

Follow relevant influencers in your industry

Source: bit.ly/LinkedInProfileTips2024

This article includes original content and information from Business News Daily and LinkedIn.

INTERVIEW PREP

continued from page 10

visit bit.ly/HBR10CommonInterviewQuestions.

“What is your greatest weakness?”

Another often-asked and often-dreaded interview question is, “What is your greatest weakness?” The purpose of this question is to see if you’re honest, self-aware, and open to self-improvement; it gauges your emotional intelligence.

According to themuse.com [bit.ly/MuseGreatestWeakness], there is a simple formula to answer this question:

- Clearly describe your weakness [ex. Delegating]

- Give a short example of a time your weakness affected your work [ex. The meeting started late because I did all the prep work myself, I should have delegated.]
- Talk about what you’ve done to improve your weakness. [ex. I now look to my team or coworkers to ask for assistance at the beginning of a project.]

When answering the question, be sure to answer concisely and focus on the solution, not the weakness. And always leave the answer on a positive note.

“Do you have any questions for us?”

At the end of most interviews is one last question: “Do you have

any questions for us?” Your answer should always be “yes” even if the employer has answered every question you had. It is important you ask at least one question, preferably 1-3 questions as time allows. Suggestions include:

- How would you define success in this role?
- How is success measured in this role?
- What is the most challenging aspect of this role or this team?
- What do you like about working here?
- How many other members are in this department?
- How would you define company culture?
- What opportunities do you offer for professional development?
- Questions related to information on their website, blog, or social media
- What are the next steps in the hiring process? [this

should not be your only question]

It’s always best to ask some of these questions during the interview but be sure to save one or two questions for the end.

For the “70 best questions to ask in an interview,” visit bit.ly/Indeed51QuestionsToAsk.

This article includes original content and information from *Indeed.com*, *themuse.com*, *Harvard Business Review*, and *PositivePsychology.com*

“What’s your greatest weakness?” possible responses

When a potential employer asks this question, and they usually do, the following topics can be good answers as long as the ‘weakness’ is not directly related to the job you’re seeking. For example, if you’re applying to be a salesperson, you would not say your weakness is cold calling; and

if you’re applying to be an auditor, you would not say your weakness is math.

Other possible responses relate to:

- Public speaking
- Delegation
- Time management
- Writing
- Organization
- Attention to small details
- Cold calling
- Confidence
- Decision-making
- Explaining complex or technical topics
- Feedback, giving or receiving
- Grammar
- Math
- Patience
- Self-esteem
- Understanding when and how to say no

A full list can be found at bit.ly/MuseGreatestWeakness

What is emotional intelligence?

Questions like “What is your greatest weakness” test your emotional intelligence, to see how you would behave, engage, and react in certain situations. Other questions used to gauge emotional intelligence, and could easily be asked during an interview, include:

1. How do you de-stress after a bad day at work?
2. What’s something you’ve achieved that you’re most proud of and why?
3. Who are some of your top role models, why do they inspire you?
4. How do you celebrate success?
5. How do you respond when a co-worker challenges you?
6. Have you ever had to change your behavior, either at work or home, if so, why did you have to change, and how did you change?
7. How do you recover from failure?
8. When have you felt demotivated, and what did you do to overcome this?
9. How would some of your closest friends describe you?
10. What kind of behavior makes you angry/annoyed?

Source: positivepsychology.com/emotional-intelligence-interview-questions/



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HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

Résumés, cover letters, and references

By THERESA KNAPP

Résumés and cover letters are important because they help job seekers convey their qualifications, experiences, and skills to potential employers. Your resume and cover letter should be tailored to each specific job and should mention several of the qualifications listed in a job description.

Many companies use an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) so it is important to use as many keywords from the job description as

possible as this will increase your chances to make it past the initial filter.

Résumés

Résumés provide a first impression to the employer and should put your best foot forward. The ideal resume is one page long, but two pages is common.

The layout should include your name, email address (be sure it is a professional email address), and phone number at the top of the page, your home address is

not necessary. The next section can be a Professional Summary or Objective (optional), then Experience (in reverse chronological order) in paragraph or bulleted list form. Follow this with Education, and end with an optional Achievements or Skills section.

Do not include a Reference section on your resume. According to indeed.com, resume tips to help you land an interview include:

- Look for keywords in the job posting and include those on your resume
- Review resume examples for your industry
- Résumés should be simple and brief
- Include concrete achievements and metrics when possible
- Include only relevant information
- Use a professional font, 12 points, black font (unless your industry prefers color and creativity)
- Margins should be one inch (expand to 1.15 or 1.25 inches if you don't have a lot to fill the document)
- Call attention to important achievements within a job description or in a separate "Achievements" or "Skills" section at the bottom of the resume
- Proofread, proofread, proofread
- Make multiple versions of your resume

Source: www.indeed.com/career-advice/Résumés-cover-letters/10-resume-writing-tips

Coursera [www.coursera.org] suggests using action words such as *generated, reviewed, crafted, analyzed, developed, compiled, arranged, secured, collaborated, documented,*

presented, administered, refined, produced, accomplished, increased, grew, improved, managed, delivered, transformed, fulfilled, engaged, negotiated, etc.

For 150 resume action words, visit www.coursera.org/articles/resume-action-words. According to Forbes.com, the top skills to put on your resume in 2025, if applicable, are:

- Data analysis and project management
- AI and machine learning
- Software engineering and IT infrastructure
- Critical and strategic thinking
- Problem-solving
- Adaptability and agility
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication skills

Source: www.forbes.com/sites/rachelwells/2025/01/10/top-skills-to-put-on-your-resume-in-2025/

Cover letters

If a job description says a cover letter is not required, you don't have to submit one. If it says a cover letter is optional, it's in your best interest to submit one.

A cover letter is a short letter that accompanies your resume and illustrates how your experience would directly relate to the specific position to which you're applying.

According to the Columbia University Center for Career Education, the goal of a cover letter is to highlight your qualifications, showcase your motivation, and reflect your voice and written communication skills. To write an effective cover letter, you should review the job description and research the company and its values and mission. The Co-

lumbia website says, "As you craft your cover letter, use examples that demonstrate your relevant skills, knowledge, and interests."

The standard format includes a heading that matches your resume (centered), the address of the company (against left margin), then a salutation (if no name is given use "Hiring Manager or the title mentioned in the job description). The first paragraph is the introduction where you say what job you're applying for and why; and the second paragraph (this could be two paragraphs, if need be) can highlight one or two skills or experiences and how they are relevant to the job for which you are applying. The last paragraph is a conclusion where you recap what you would bring to the organization and your interest in the position, and thank them for their consideration.

Source: <https://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/resources/how-and-why-write-great-cover-letter>

References

References are typically not requested until a job offer is pending, though some companies may request them up front.

Be sure to alert the people you are using as references so they are not surprised when they receive an email or phone call related to your application.

Carefully consider who in your current job you can use as a reference that will not compromise your current work situation.

When choosing your references, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) says you should find colleagues you can trust, pay attention to titles, be prepared (always keep an updated list of references, keep them updated with current information), follow up after they provide a reference with a thank you note and tell them if you got the job. And finally, never misrepresent your references or yourself.

Source: www.aauw.org/resources/career/boost-your-career/providing-references/

This article includes original content and information from the American Association of University Women, [coursera.org](http://www.coursera.org), forbes.com, indeed.com, and Columbia University.

Spring Yoga Workshop
Sunday, March 16 • 4pm
Members \$30 Non-Members \$35
Learn a bit about Spring Equinox and plant seeds of intention for the coming year with thoughtful journal prompts. We will get the energy flowing with a spring focused yoga class for all levels and end with a guided meditation.

Vision Board Workshop
Friday, March 21 • 6pm and Sunday, March 23rd • 1pm
Members \$35 Non-Members \$40
Spring into the season of rebirth by planting seeds for the new year! Let our vision board workshop inspire and motivate you to become the best version of yourself. With a lasting visual to take home and keep an eye on your goal, you are sure to make successful strides in becoming a better you!

Yoga Nidra Workshop
Friday, April 4 • 7pm
Members \$20 Non-Members \$25
Improve your sleep quality, and remove stress and anxiety with guided meditation. This workshop will induce deep relaxation and restore your body and mind, setting you up for a night of restful sleep!

Sound Bath
Saturday, April 12 • Time TBD
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Friday, April 18 • 6pm
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HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

Job search and technology, what you need to know about AI

By VICTORIA RAYEL
CAREER COUNSELOR AND
LIFE COACH

If you're thinking about starting the new year with a new job, it's important to be clear about your job targets, ideal industry,

applicants and expedite the process.

To stand apart in this market, you need to know what to expect when it comes to technology in the job search. Three tips to ensure you don't get lost in the application 'black hole' include

application materials match the job for which you're going. You can use tools like Jobscan and free AI Chatbot's (ex. ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini) to help make sure you match the skills and experiences the job requires.

For example, upload your ré-

sumé. Put this list in a grid"

Consider "Apply for me" Tools

Sites like Ladders and LazyApply apply to jobs on your behalf for a fee. You will fill out a series of questions, select the jobs that are interesting, then the tools will submit your application. Job searching can be a tedious task, and technology can help you save time in applying. Now you can spend more time on important things like interview preparation, upskilling, and the next tip.

Networking

Roughly 15% of positions are filled through online applications, so it is suggested job seekers spend at least 50% of their job search time on reconnecting with their existing networks and building

WHAT IS "ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE"

According to NASA, citing the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019, "Artificial intelligence refers to computer systems that can perform complex tasks normally done by human-reasoning, decision making, creating, etc."

www.nasa.gov/what-is-artificial-intelligence

new relationships. If online applications are not helping you get interviews, start having conversations. Coffee chats, phone calls, networking events, LinkedIn Group discussions, Discord, Facebook and any community groups you're involved in can be an amazing resource to connect to people.

Finally, don't let AI intimidate you. It's time to embrace the new normal and leverage technology to help you succeed.



location, pay, and have a résumé. With an increasing number of applicants due to a changing business environment, geo-political landscape and overall economic changes, recruiters use tools like AI to help them quickly find top

using artificial intelligence (AI), helpful automatic tools, and networking.

Use AI to Beat AI

When applying for a position, it's important to make sure your

sumé and the job description into ChatGPT, then try these prompts:

Type "Select three accomplishments from my résumé that match this job best" or

Type "Create a list of key skills this job is looking for and

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Their Eyes Light Up!

See how Toshiba Grant funding enhances skill development at BVT

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) has received a \$3,390 STEM grant from the Toshiba America Foundation. The school has used the supplemental

funds to purchase an oscilloscope training board and ten oscilloscopes for its Engineering & Robotics program. The equipment is necessary to enhance students' understanding of circuit board

functions and teach them how to adjust waveforms to produce desired outcomes.

Recently, sophomore students in teacher Timothy Oliveira's digital electronics course used the grant-acquired equipment in a fun and engaging assignment. Using the instructor training board, Mr. Oliveira demonstrated how students should use an oscilloscope, a diagnostic instrument, to draw a graph of an electrical signal and create a circuit board to illuminate the eyes of a stuffed animal to complete the critter project successfully.

"Learning how to use the equipment properly was important to me," said Charlotte Lewis of



Uxbridge, a sophomore in the Engineering & Robotics program at BVT. "I enjoyed creating a circuit board and adjusting waveforms to produce a pulsing light in the eyes of the plush tiger. I'm confident that the skills learned through this project will continue to help me in the future."

"Understanding how to use an oscilloscope is crucial for troubleshooting, designing, and maintaining electronic circuits. Our students need oscilloscope skills to prepare for and pass certification examinations that assist with employment," explained Oliveira. "With an increasing demand for skilled technicians, preparing our students with in-demand skills to meet employer needs and expectations increases their employability."

"As a grant recipient, we are proud to provide our students and teachers with the tools and equipment they need without impacting our tax-payers," said BVT's Superintendent-Director, Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick. "Increased access to

modern industry equipment paired with inquiry-based approaches to our curriculum makes learning here interesting and fun while preparing our students for success in STEM-related careers. It is exciting to see the moment they grasp the subject matter, and their eyes light up!"

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

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School serves the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. Located in the heart of the Blackstone Valley, BVT creates a positive learning community that prepares students for personal and professional success in an internationally competitive society through a fusion of rigorous vocational, technical, and academic skills. For more information about the school, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us.



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GFB Annual Appeal

March, 2025

The Grafton Food Bank (GFB) Board of Directors announces the March Annual Appeal/Fund Drive to support its mission to offer food relief to our Grafton neighbors in need. The Grafton Food Bank is an independent, 100% volunteer run, non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, dependent on the generosity and goodwill of community-minded individuals, businesses and local organizations.

The Grafton Food Bank continues to see an increase in the number of families that need support each month. We are currently serving 255 families. Food insecurity is greater than ever! With the continued rising food costs, the Grafton Food Bank needs your help to continue to accommodate the growing number of families we serve.

The GFB remains committed to making certain all Grafton residents in need have access to our services. We continue to rely on our nine community partnerships to reduce the amount of overall spending while keeping up with the increased demand for assistance. Our community partners include: Community Harvest Project, Dignity Matters, Hope & Comfort, Pawsitive Pantry, The Bread Guy, Goretti's Supermarket, Stop & Shop, Wegmans, and Worcester County Food Bank.

We are grateful for the ongoing support from the town, its businesses, its residents, all those who have donated food and held food drives, as well as our community partnerships which allows us to assist families in Grafton. As we contend with supply cost increases, your generosity and compassion enables us to continue to meet the expanded need within our community.

The Grafton Food Bank Board of Directors kindly requests your support of our mission through a monetary donation to Grafton Food Bank/Friends of Grafton, Inc. Your philanthropy will make a difference in our community by allowing us to carry on with our vital work. Donations will be gratefully accepted through a GoFundMe Charity page at: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/2025-grafton-food-bank-annual-appeal>, our website at: www.graftonfoodbank.org/donate or via mail (Grafton Food Bank ~ P.O. Box 324 ~ Grafton, MA 01519). Over 97% of your donation will go directly to those who need it most.

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Rendezvous with Rachel Revere

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In "Rendezvous with Rachel Revere"™, History at Play Founder and Artistic Director Judith Kalaora is Rachel Revere— wife to Paul Revere and Founding Mother of an American Republic.

Learn Rachel's story at the Sutton Historical Society on April 17 at 6:30 pm, Blaxton Hall, 9 Main Street, Manchaug Village, Sutton. "Rendezvous with Rachel Revere"™ is approximately 60 minutes, including a real-time Q&A with audience members and an educational lecture. Suitable for all ages. This one-time-only event is generously sponsored by Sutton Historical Society, Inc., with a grant from the Sutton Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

This event is free to all members and the general public. "Rendezvous with Rachel

Revere"™ ushers viewers back to May 2, 1775. Rachel Revere has heard from her beloved husband Paul only once since his legendary midnight ride on the 18th of April. Still isolated from one another due to the Siege of Boston, Rachel des-

perately creates a plan which shall safely take her children: six step-children from Paul's first marriage and a newborn baby of their own, from the reach of the British Regular Army besieging Boston. In this production, the audience assists

Rachel, as she carefully considers the dangers and demands of their escape. Find out if Rachel is successful in her perilous mission to unite her family, amidst the wake of an American Revolution.



ensemble that chronicle the lives of legendary figures who changed society.

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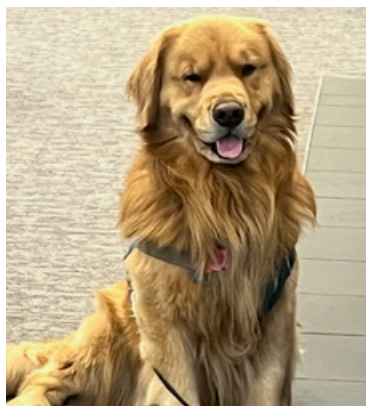
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LIVING WITH LUKE

amyleclaire@hotmail.com

More Than Words

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

Professional writers are encouraged to “find their voices” when they write. Doing so is a process that develops gradually and takes time and self-reflection. We grow to write what’s in us to write, and to tell a story with structure, tone, cadence, and knowledge of language. Dogs, too, must find their voices. They can’t write notes or text their owners. “Out searching for a new stick. Would you mind grabbing me a new shin bone at the store today?”

How do dogs survive? How do they communicate their needs?

“HELP! HELP! HELP!” Luke learned to communicate early on, at seven weeks old to be exact. “I need to get out right now!” His 3 a.m. barking frenzy reflected a primal need to survive. New people. New bed. New rules. He wasn’t having it. Where were his warm brothers and sisters and puppy scented towels? His voice was high pitched and surprisingly loud. My husband and I felt like new parents trying to help our infant learn to sleep through the night. “We have



to go get him, Jim,” I pleaded. “He sounds terrified. He’s trying to tell us something.”

I trotted down the stairs, my own heart beating like a nervous kitten’s. “I’m sorry, Luke. Mummy’s right here.” I shuffled to the crate door, nearly tripping over my slippers to reach him. I smelled my puppy before I saw him. Little Luke had pooped all over himself. “Ohhhhhh. Gosh. Luke!! You poor thing.” I placed my hands beneath his armpits, lifted him up, and headed for the sink. He hung limp and apologetic. “I had an accident. I used my puppy voice, but you ignored me. I screamed. I howled. I was trying so hard to tell you something. You ignored me.”

Every mother is guilty of some-

thing. This incident, a reminder of my most unheroic moment as a Dog Mom, has scarred me. Luke was trying to tell me something, but I didn’t listen. Fear not, readers. While Luke aged, I grew wiser. I learned to listen more closely to what my dog was trying to say.

I just want to play.

Luke initiates play with a peculiar voice. Sharp and relentless, the voice reflects that of a barking seal. His playful voice has grated on the nerves of parents at the dog park.

“My dog doesn’t like being barked at this way.” A Dog Mom expressed her disappointment to me one time. “He’s just not used to that behavior.” Meanwhile, an oblivious Luke carried on. “Let’s play! Let’s play! Let’s play! C’mon! You chase me, then I’ll chase you!” The introverted hound turned his head away. My exuberant pup was learning an important lesson. The world doesn’t revolve around him. We discussed the matter during the ride home. “Dogs don’t like when you bark in their faces, Luke.” I spoke to his reflection in the rearview mirror. He popped his big head out of the sunroof travel crate and thought about it. “If dogs don’t like barking, then maybe they shouldn’t be in a dog park.”

I’m very uncomfortable with you.

Luke’s ferocious bark is the one I’m most appreciative of, especially when it happens at night. He uses a deep, magnificent roar to protect his home from predators. One



night while he was in the backyard for a final check, I heard the distinct roar.

“Who’s that, Luke?” I hoisted open the upstairs window and watched him roar in the direction of our driveway. Apparently, someone or something was lurking in a shadowy corner of our home. “Woo. Woo. Woo. Woo.” He crouched down; broad shoulders bulging, hair raised. I imagined a wolf with yellow eyes and red gums showing his teeth at my dog. “Go Away! Go Away! Go Away!” The bark was extraordinary. Even I felt intimidated.

“Luke, get over here!” Jim was less enchanted. Luke turned his head to the voice of his intolerable leader and dashed back inside. “Good boy, Luke.” I needed to praise my dog for using his voice to protect us. I rubbed his ears. He sat proudly, chin lifted. “Thank you for telling Mummy about that bad guy! He licked my hand. “Someone’s got to do the dirty work around here.”

The next morning, we realized that my son had left the light on in his car, casting the unusual effect that a person was seated there. Car burglaries are common. I imagined a scarfed thief scheming—right there in our driveway! Our dogs’ eyes and ears remain open to potential danger. Luke was doing his job.

I’m seriously afraid!

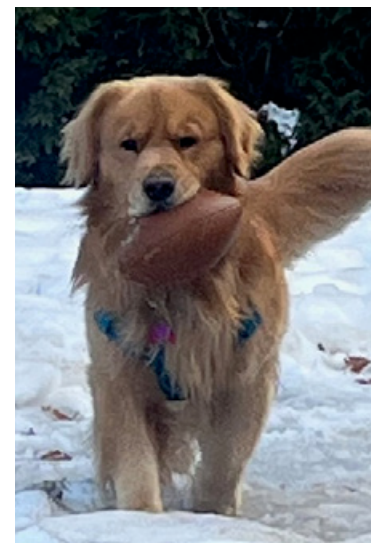
If only the villain of Luke’s nighttime watches could see him at the groomer’s doorstep. “I. Just. Want. To. Be. With. You.” Luke doesn’t shake at the groomers. He quakes. He tells me how he feels with a full body

vibration that breaks my heart. He digs his paws into the floor so that I must drag him (sliding) from the doorway entrance. “It’s okay, Luke. You’re going to look so handsome!” I once followed him to the groomer’s table and held his paw while he had his nails trimmed. He shook atop the table like the victim of a Frankenstein science project (who also happens to be afraid of heights). I read his mind. “Cages, latches and locks. Sad faces. Noisy dogs, razor blades and scissors. This place is off.”

He nearly knocks me over to jump back into his travel crate in the parking lot and sits like a star pupil while I pull out. “I told you I’d be right back, Luke. You do look handsome,” I say to his reflection in the rearview mirror. He gazes out the back window. The groomer’s shop sign fades in the distance. “Next time I’m about to be chopped up and sold for pedigree beef, I’ll keep my looks in mind.”

Time to eat.

I’m afraid that Luke has learned to use his intelligence as a weapon. Of course, he knows exactly when dinnertime happens and lets me



know by resting conveniently beside his bowl an hour before. “Just in case you happened to forget, Mom. This is where my bowl is located.” He’s developed a second habit to further my understanding. He’ll stand over his bowl, typically after I’ve rewarded him for coming back when called inside, and stare into it like a gambling addict fixed on a number. “Show me the money. My recall is outstanding.” I toss him a few kibbles. “Good boy, Luke.” I relish the jingle of

LUKE

continued on page 17

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REAL ESTATE

Is it time to put your house back on the market?

If you took your house off the market in late 2024, you're not the only one. Nearly 73,000 homes were pulled from the market in December 2024 alone – that's more than any other December going



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

all the way back to 2017. Whether it was because offers weren't coming in, the timing around the holidays felt overwhelming or they wanted to see if the market would improve in the new year, a lot of other homeowners decided to press pause, too. But now, with spring fast approaching, it's time to reassess. The market is already picking up, and waiting any longer to jump back in may only mean you'd face more competition from other sellers down the road.

Why Now Could Be the Right Time

Selma Hepp, Chief Economist at CoreLogic, explains that some of those sellers may have pulled their

listings late last year with the goal of trying again this spring: Another reason for a step back could be that sellers wanted to wait and see how spring home buying season goes, and if mortgage rates fall which would bring more home buyers and competition back in the market. That's because spring is when buyer demand is typically at its highest point for the year. More people start their home search once the weather warms up. They're eager to close on a home so they can move in during the summer. So, it's a great window for sellers. It means more buyers. And while mortgage rates haven't fallen dramatically, they have come down some in recent weeks. Early signs already show buyers are becoming more active as a result. Since January, demand has picked up – and that should continue as spring draws even closer.

What to Do Differently This Time?

Start by checking the status of your listing agreement. Because even if you pulled your listing, you may still be under contract. And until your listing expires, your agent or brokerage is your best resource on what else you could try to get it sold. If you aren't sure of the status of your listing, whether active,

expired, or withdrawn, take a look at your listing agreement and talk to your real estate agent. If your contract is still active, now's the perfect time to reconnect with your agent to explore strategies to get your home sold this time around. If your contract has expired and you're considering other options, reach out to The Marzeotti Group or another trusted real estate professional who can help you figure out where to go from here. Either way, take some time to reflect on your last experience. What held you back from getting it sold before? And what can you do to improve your chances this time around? Be sure to include your agent in this thought process. They'll give you an objective point of view and some advice based on what may have gone wrong last time. For example:

***Your Pricing Strategy:** Did buyers overlook your house because it was priced too high? Your real estate agent can help you analyze the latest sales in your area to make sure you're hitting the right number. Believe it or not, you could actually be leaving money on the table by not pricing competitively. When it's priced appropriately for the market, your opportunities for multiple offers and buyer competition increase.

***Your Marketing Approach:** Was your home staged to look its best? Did you use a skilled photographer for your listing photos? Small tweaks can make a big difference in how buyers see your house. Something as simple as taking new photos now that it's spring can help your house show better than it did in the winter listing.

***Offering Concessions:** Were you willing to offer incentives to buyers? As the supply of homes for sale grows, more sellers are entertaining the idea of concessions or incentives to get the deal done. If you weren't open to those conversations, that

may have been a factor, too.

***Showings and Flexibility:** Did you have limits on when buyers could see the home? If your house is accessible and available, you'll likely get more offers. Bottom Line, if your house didn't sell last year, spring may be your second chance. With buyer activity rising, it's the perfect time to talk to an agent about coming back into the market with a fresh strategy. What do you want to do differently this time around? Give us a call today to go over your options and make a plan.

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LUKE

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good behavior. My dog could have roamed anywhere, but he ran back to me for a few dry kibbles. Has Luke learned to capitalize on the reward system?

"I could have run from our home to greet that cute Collie, but I stayed right here on the step." He rushes to the foot of his dish and waits for me to pay up. He inhales the kibbles, freezes for a moment,

then looks up at me. "A dog's restraint in the space of another dog is one of the hardest learning tasks, Mom. Just a few more and we'll call it a day." Perhaps Luke, indeed, has become a capitalist.

I love you.

My dog wiggles with a happy squeal, grabs his lamb and brings it to me when I arrive home. "I just want to let you know how happy I am to see you, to spend time with you and just be together. He watches me take a rare seat on

the couch. "I'm so happy you are sitting down, Mom. You work so hard to help others. I see you. I feel you. I want to be with you." He climbs up and collapses beside me. His head falls easily onto my lap.

"I love you, Momma." Sometimes a dog says what words cannot.

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Gillette Castle

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

A top a hill called the Seventh Sister, the last of a group of knolls known as the Seven Sisters, sits a medieval-style, twenty-four-room castle in East Haddam, Connecticut overlooking the Connecticut River. This stone edifice was owned and designed by William Hooker Gillette, famous for his stage role as Sherlock Holmes. In fact, his performances as the master detective numbered 1,300, the third-highest number of stage performances of a role in history.

Gillette was born on July 24, 1853, son of former United

States senator Francis Gillette and Elizabeth Daggett Hooker Gillette, descendant of Thomas Hooker, founder of Hartford. Even as a child, he was very inventive and outgoing in his pursuits of the stage. These traits would follow him into adulthood. During his lifetime, he wrote two novels and thirteen plays. He also produced and directed various plays starring none other than himself. His love of special effects led him to invent many stage tricks and lighting techniques. His last performance was at the Bushnell Theatre in 1936. Gillette died a year later on April 29, 1937. He is buried in the Hooker family cemetery in Farm-



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ington next to his wife.

His castle is a stone legacy born of an inventive and brilliant mind. Gillette designed the whole structure, right down to the slightest detail. The basic building took five years to construct. By 1919, the man who made Holmes famous was finally home. Through the years, he made enhancements upon his castle to suit his tastes. He also had a three-mile-long railroad that circled his property. Evidence of the railway still exists in the form of tunnels and the station, as the tracks were later torn up for hiking trails. Do not be dismayed, however, for one can still ride the famous span, as Lake Compounce Amusement Park later purchased portions of the railway to shuttle visitors around the pond located on the property.

Gillette died a widower with no children. His estate had no heirs, but in his will he ruled out the chance of his possessions going to unsavory prospects by adding the sentence that the property would never fall into the hands of some "blithering sap-head who

has no conception of where he is or with what surrounded." In 1943, the State of Connecticut acquired the land and turned it into a park for all to enjoy, complete with camping, hiking, picnicking and, of course, tours of the castle. But is the medieval-style fortress haunted? The stone edifice imparts upon the gazer of the image a most confident feeling that Mr. Gillette could possibly still reside within.

Some have even claimed to see the ghostly image of the famous actor, smoking his calabash pipe, while touring the structure. Others claim to see the spirit of his gardener roaming the grounds, still tending to the massive landscaped flora. Many have felt sudden cold spots within the walls of the castle, but as it is made of stone, that could be entirely natural. There are reports of hikers and campers seeing the ghostly figure of someone moving about the castle holding a smoking pipe during the winter and spring hours when it is otherwise closed and locked tight. Perhaps it may be William Gillette in search of an audience to once again entertain after a long winter of solitude in the locked-up mansion. Or perhaps just the site of the edifice evokes the imagination, thus creating vivid scenes from the past within the mind's eye. Haunted or not, Gillette Castle State Park offers beautiful vistas of the Connecticut River and surrounding landscape, scenic hiking trails and a host of other outdoor activities. Bring a lunch, take a tour and relish in the architect of the castle. The famous actor just might treat you to a small performance while you are there.

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SPORTS

8th Grade Varsity Player Now Team Captain

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Following in her older brother Jaden's footsteps, Jillian Roach was signed up to play Millbury t-ball by her parents at a young age and before long, a new-found

The following year she got her chance to try out for the Millbury varsity softball team and although very nervous she found herself actually making the varsity squad. "As an eighth grader trying out for the varsity team I was very nervous, especially since we didn't

expecting much, if I were assigned to JV I'd be ok with that."

Roach wasn't sent down to the junior varsity squad but instead found her name on the varsity roster. She was surprised, but very happy with her performance; her mother on the other hand was overly ecstatic and posted all over Facebook that her daughter had made the Millbury softball varsity team as an eighth grader.

Playing on a team with a couple of seniors and a lot of juniors, Roach didn't find herself playing a lot that first season for the Woolies; she would occasionally get into games as a pinch runner.

"Sitting on the bench that year I was really bummed out," she said. It was tough, but I sat, watched and learned things that would help me to get better."

As a freshman she found her way onto the diamond a handful of times, but it wasn't until the following year that she started to see more action.

"My sophomore year was definitely the turning point in my career. I was getting better and faster. I was mimicking the older girls on the team that I looked up to," Roach recalled. "I was watching them - the ways that they made plays in the field and I started getting better. I also worked with the starting pitcher that year to get my arm stronger to make the throw across the field."

Roach found that not only was she getting better in so many aspects of the game, but she was also gaining a lot of confidence in her ability to play on the varsity level. When the season came to a close she would seek out as many clinics as she could while paying club softball with the Wachusett Stars, now the Bay State Bombers, out of the Central Worcester area.

In addition to summer ball,

the Bombers also play in the fall and although she would love to continue playing softball in September and October, Roach is busy with the Millbury volleyball team. While she does get to play sporadically, she doesn't get to participate fully. Following the high school volleyball season, she has two months off before her club team gets back to training and in

February they embark on some dome tournaments in Maine.

"Playing club [softball] definitely helps my game," she said. "The pitching is much tougher and most of the girls are avid softball players who play year-round so it helps me to get better with my game."



Woolies' softball captain Jillian Roach

love was formed. Roach seemed to move up the chain very quickly showing that she had the talent to play the game and she was enjoying playing with the other girls as well as getting involved with the town.

Originally finding herself at first base, she eventually got to move to the other corner on the field and has pretty much been there since.

"I love playing third base, it's a corner position where the balls are hit at you hard," she said. "You need a quick backhand and a strong arm to play the position and I believe that I possess both."

Being in a junior/senior high school in Millbury she was able to try out for the team at a younger age. Unfortunately, Covid hit in her first year of eligibility (seventh grade) and she, along with everyone else was forced to sit on the sidelines instead of participating in any kind of sport activity that year.

have any softball the year earlier," she said. "Looking to compete for a spot on the varsity team with older girls was very scary. I wasn't really

SPORTS

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All Around Motor Head

Q. I read your advice columns each week and listen to your podcasts fairly often. You confuse me a bit. One time I am convinced you are a dedicated petrol-head then you are talking about electric cars and even electric bikes. So, what gives?

A. You found me out I enjoy, gas engines, electric motors, cars with insane horsepower and performance and cars that get 50 miles per gallon. We live in what I call the golden age of automobiles. We have a choice of gas cars, diesels, electrics, and hybrids and that, in my mind, is fantastic. Yes, even motorcycles, scooters and electric bikes interest me. So I guess you can say if it has wheels, I am interested.

Q. I have a 2015 Volkswagen Tiguan that randomly cuts off while driving around in town, but it starts back up immediately. It does not shut off while traveling on the highway. What is wrong?

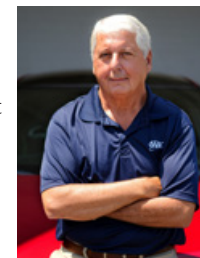
A. At this point it is impossible to say it is one particular problem. The most likely culprit is a problem with the fuel system. A good technician will perform a visual inspection looking at major systems as well as possible damaged wiring. The next step would be to scan all the modules in the car to look for possible pending codes. Then check for a fuel issue while underway. Depending on how intermittent the stalling is, time may be the best diagnostic tool. Trying to diagnose a car that is operating normally, can lead to guessing and expensive parts swapping.

Q. I have been repairing my own cars for years and have always tried to use factory parts rather than aftermarket. I always felt that the quality was better. I recently replaced a part in my daughter's Ford Fusion, and it was new in the box and did not work. Aftermarket parts have always worried me, now original parts seem almost as bad. What is going on?

A. I recently helped a neighbor with a repair on his Toyota and the factory parts were a perfect fit and worked as designed. Another neighbor was puzzled because he replaced the temperature sensor on his car was a factory part and the car would not start easily when the car was hot. A quick scan showed that when the engine was hot the sensor was reading 35 degrees. We replaced it with an aftermarket sensor and all was good. When I buy aftermarket parts, especially electronics, I try to buy from the original equipment supplier. I have found the quality is good and the prices are cheaper than the actual factory parts.

Q. My 2014 Ram, 1500 SLT is a quad cab with the 5.7L Hemi, 8-sp. A/T and has 134,000 miles on it. There is a message "fuel sensor fail" on dash. There are no readable codes when checking with a scanner. The full tank show "E" and goes back/forth to "F", back to "E". The dash shows "low fuel warning" while on "E". Can I ignore it due to the cost of repair and the age of the truck? The truck is handy, but at 11 years old I do not want to put \$1000 into it. I thought I would monitor gas amount via the "Trip A", "Trip B" on dash menu. If not replaced, will the engine be harmed?

A. The only possible harm that I can think of is if you are constantly driving low on fuel, which can overheat the fuel pump. The fuel gauge sensor on most Chrysler vehicles is part of the fuel pump module. To fix the issue you would replace the entire module. The cost of the part is about \$600, and it will take a couple of hours of labor to replace it. The other possibility is a broken wire or rust causing a poor connection. Although my experience is the issue you described is typical of a faulty pump module.



BY JOHN PAUL

Q. I have a Toyota Camry that is about five years old and has 52,000 miles on it. I asked my mechanic to flush the transmission, and he said it was not a good idea. He said I am better off draining and refilling. What are your thoughts on this?

A. Flushing a transmission and replacing all of the fluid can sometimes cause issues. The other problem I see with transmission flushing is the shops that do it, do not always use the factory fluid. As strange as it sounds the slightly contaminated fluid actually aids in how the car will shift. So replacing some of the fluid during a drain and refill leaves some of the worn clutch material that is suspended on the old oil and can actually prolong the life on the transmission,



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SPORTS

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Last year the then junior, batting in the third or fourth spot for Millbury, batted .473 with 35 hits (22 singles, 5 doubles, 4 triples and 4 homeruns) while knocking in 22 RBI and scoring 26 runs. She had an on base percentage of .524, stole 8 bases and produced an .839 fielding percentage.

"Jillian is a power hitter that sees time at third base and in the outfield for us," Millbury coach Kim Cadrin said. "She is an amazing student athlete with phenomenal grades and is a member of the National Honor Society; she is well-rounded and not just a talented softball player."

As she gets ready to take the field for her senior campaign Roach will once again find herself named as one of the team's captains. Last spring as a junior she was first awarded the honor and is looking to take the captainship to the next level this year.

"Becoming a captain was really important to me. I know that it is a title usually given to seniors but I put myself out there last year telling the coach I was ready to be a leader," she said. "I had been playing varsity softball for three years prior and entering my fourth with the team so I felt that I was ready to help take this team further."

This spring Roach is hoping to support the team in any way that she can including making a run

through the tournament. Playing in the Division 4 State Tournament Millbury has made it as far as the Round of 16 over the last three seasons and Roach would love to help the Woolies get past that round this year.

Following graduation from Millbury Roach is looking to commit to Roger Williams University in Bristol, Rhode Island to continue her softball career. She has been in contact with the Hawks Coach and although the program's needs change on a yearly basis she feels that she should have an opportunity to get onto the field for RWU.

"I checked out the roster and they will have three seniors graduating from the infield after this year," Roach said. "I believe that I can make the team and help them. It's a Division 3 school, but a high level of competition."

Although her collegiate career will not begin for almost another year, she is fully dialed in to helping Millbury put together a successful campaign; one that entails advancing beyond the Round of 16 in the Division 4 State Tournament and maybe even a State Championship.



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

FRIDAY, MARCH 28 AND SATURDAY, MARCH 29

• ValleyCAST, the arts and culture arm of Open Sky Community Services, is hosting

their One Act Play Festival on the Mumford on March 28 and 29 at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30 p.m.) in the Singh Performance Center, 60 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. The festival features a diverse lineup of compelling one-act plays, showcasing the creativity and talent of local performers, directors and playwrights. Audiences can expect drama, comedy and thought-provoking storytelling all packed into a series of short, engaging performances. Tickets will be available at the door for \$5 per per-

son and \$15 per family. Tickets purchased on Friday provide entry to both nights. At the conclusion of the festival, three prizes will be awarded in recognition of the best original act, best ensemble, and best-in-show. For more information visit: www.openskycs.org/valleycast or contact Mary Laliberte at: mary.laliberte@openskycs.org or call 508-234-6232.

one in his house. At 2 p.m. Willard House and Clock Museum, 11 Willard Street, North Grafton.

THURSDAY, APRIL 17

• "Rendezvous with Rachel Revere" presented by History at Play, LLC at Blaxton Hall, 9 Main Street, Sutton at 6:30 p.m. Presented by the Sutton Historical Society. The play will highlight the decisions and concerns of Rachel Revere, wife of Paul Revere in the days after his famous ride to warn of the arrival of the British.

SUNDAY, APRIL 27

• New England Country Music Club Dances at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin Street, Uxbridge. Live band "Borrowed Time" at the New England Country Music Club Dance, Progressive Club, 18 Whitin Street, North Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m., music 1-5 p.m. \$11 for non-members. Doors open at 12:15 p.m. Music plays 1-5 p.m. Snacks may be brought in, cash bar for beverages.

THURSDAY, MAY 15

• Historical Portrayals by Lady J presents "Farm Girl on the Front Lines: Deborah Sampson's Secret" highlighting the story of this Patriot who disguised herself as a male to serve her young country. At 1 p.m. in the Sutton Senior Center, 9 Hough Road, Sutton. Presented by the Sutton Historical Society.

SATURDAY, MAY 17

• Join the 10th Annual Family Fun Fishing Day at Riverbend Farm, 27 Oak Street, Uxbridge from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Fishing goes until 1 p.m. with awards at 1:20 p.m. There will be activities for the whole family and food and ice cream will be available for purchase from Joey D's Wingz 'n Thingz and Sweet Wise Ice Cream Truck. All ages and abilities welcome. Fishing poles, bait and instruction will be available when you pre-register. Participants are also welcome to bring your home. Pre-registration opens April 14 at thebrwa.org/familyfishing2025. The event is free, but pre-registration is required. Contact Joanne Holahan with any questions at 508-278-5200. The rain date is May 18.

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, MARCH 29

• 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Family Fest and Home Show at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, 65 Pleasant Street, Upton. Bring the whole family along for an exciting day out! We've got a fantastic array of activities lined up that everyone, young and old, will enjoy. For the kids, there's a variety of fun activities to keep them entertained. Meanwhile, adults can explore the offerings from 100 plus vendors, featuring a wide selection of products and services for your homes and businesses. Don't forget to join in on the fun by voting for your favorite Mac & Cheese! Admission is free, just bring some canned goods for the local food pantries!

FRIDAY, APRIL 4

• The Holy Spirit Episcopal Church hosts a monthly Community Breakfast on the First Friday of each month from 8-9 a.m. A full breakfast will be served for a donation of \$5.00. Location of the event is Holy Spirit Episcopal Church located at 3 Pleasant St, Sutton.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5

• Simon Willard's Birthday Party from 12-3 p.m. Willard House and Clock Museum, 11 Willard Street, North Grafton.
• Free Easter Egg Hunt at Rockdale Congregational Church, 42 Fowler Road, Northbridge. On Saturday April 5, 1-3 p.m. Rain date is April 6 from 1-3 p.m. Find a Golden Egg and win one of four Easter Baskets.

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

• Live band "Rhode Island Rednecks" at the New England Country Music Club Dance, Progressive Club, 18 Whitin Street, North Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15 p.m., music 1-5 p.m. \$11 for non-members. Doors open at 12:15 p.m. Music plays 1-5 p.m. Snacks may be brought in, cash bar for beverages.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12

• Former science teacher David Hagberg will offer a talk on tower clocks and why he has

SAMUEL SLATER'S

Easter Brunch

SUNDAY, APRIL 20 | 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Email specialevents@samuelslaters.com
or call 508-943-1639 to reserve your spot!

~ CHECK OUT THE MENU ~

Breakfast Pastries | Pancakes | French Toasts | Scrambled Eggs | Home Fries | Bacon Sausage | Corned Beef Hash | Avocado Toast Bar | Fresh Fruits | Caprese Erittata
Mac & Cheese | Four Cheese Lasagna | Shrimp Cocktail | Baked Cod | Chicken Parmesan
Vegetable Antipasti | Roasted Potatoes | Rice Pilaf | Roasted Asparagus
Garlicky Green Beans | Caesar Salad | Garden Salad | Carving Station (Ham & Roast Beef)
Dessert (Chef's Assorted Selection) | Kids Chicken Fingers and Mac & Cheese

Adults: \$38 | Children (under 12): \$19

Tax & Gratuity not included

(changes or cancellations inside of 72 hours are non-refundable)

 MARCH 28	 APRIL 5
 APRIL 11	 APRIL 12
 APRIL 19	 APRIL 25
 APRIL 26	 MAY 10

TRAILER TRASH | MAY 16 • AQUANETT | MAY 23
PAPER IN FIRE:
JOHN MELLENCAMP ANTHOLOGY | MAY 24
KSF: A TRIBUTE TO KANSAS, STYX AND FOREIGNER | MAY 31

HAPPY HOUR

1/2 PRICE APPS:
WEDNESDAYS & THURSDAYS (4PM-6PM)
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WEDNESDAYS 5:00-8:00 PM

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7-9 PM!

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Sunday: 11:30-close

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EVERY SATURDAY

12:30 - 4pm - 6 tables

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EVERY FRIDAY

Karaoke

7:30PM-11PM

Tiny Tim's at the Tuttle

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Phone: (508) 832-2701
For Hall Reservations: (508)-721-5142
or email TinyTimsCatering@gmail.com

Live Bands

Every Friday 7-10

March 28 -
Fender Road

\$10 cover charge for bands unless receipt of same day liquor and/or food purchase from the Tuttle.

Featuring... **K&M**

ENTERTAINMENT

Karaoke every Saturday

from 8-11:00 pm

Prayer

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

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

Watershed Group Needs Volunteers

The Blackstone River Coalition (BRC) needs volunteers to assist with its 22nd year of water quality monitoring of 28 sites in the Mid-Reach section of the watershed. Enjoy being out along waterways? Volunteer as a regular site monitor assigned to a particular site or serve as a "floater" to cover sites on an "as needed" basis. Fieldwork not your thing? Come volunteer in the water-testing lab which operates out of the Tri-River Family Health Center in Uxbridge.

The BRC trains community scientists to participate in the Coalition's watershed-wide water quality monitoring program. The goal of this long-running program is to gather information about the current status of, and long-term changes in, the health of the Blackstone River watershed. This information helps local policy makers, state officials, and concerned community members make the Blackstone River cleaner for people and wildlife.

Over 90 volunteers work with the BRC to sample 75 sites throughout the watershed from Worcester to Pawtucket. Sites are sampled on the second Saturday of each month from April through November. Field monitors and floaters are trained in a 1 hr. session to test for dissolved oxygen at the site, record physical and aesthetic parameters, and collect a water sample that they drop off at the lab between 9 a.m. and noon on the Saturday of testing. Lab volunteers, who help test these samples for nutrients, conductivity, and turbidity, do not need to commit to helping each month and can be trained the first time they assist.

There are two additional sampling teams in the program. The Headwaters Team samples waterways from Worcester to Grafton and runs its lab out of Mass Audubon's Broad Meadow Brook



Wildlife Sanctuary in Worcester, MA. The Rhode Island Team samples waterways from Woonsocket to Pawtucket and runs its lab out of Sycamore Landing in Lincoln, RI. The Rhode Island Team and the Headwaters Team are also looking for volunteers.

To volunteer as a field monitor, floater, or lab assistant, please contact Heather Parry, Coordinator, BRC Volunteer WQM Program at 508-579-9188 or heatherparry.wqm@gmail.com.

Millbury School District Awarded \$50K Grant

Millbury is among the 29 school districts that will share in a \$1 million in Innovation Career Pathway. Millbury will receive \$50K. The funding enables districts to plan and implement pathway programs that provide students with coursework and experiences in high-demand STEM industries before they graduate high school, including in health

care, technology, manufacturing, life sciences, and environmental sustainability. Governor Maura Healey and Education Secretary Patrick Tutwiler made the announcement February 27 at Athol High School. As part of the Executive Office of Education's "Reimagining High School" initiative, students participate in internships, college-level courses, and hands-

on learning experiences that align with their career interests through Innovation Career Pathways

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Easter Brunch

Sunday, April 20th 10:00AM to 4:00PM

Easter Breakfast & Dinner
Complete Package

(Buffet, Tax, Tip, Parking)

Adults \$55

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Emily Murray
508.278.5110

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WCC's Egg Hunt
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Ages 5 & Under

11:00am & 11:45am starts in Whitin Park*

PRIZE
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Week
of Camp

Ages 6-8

11:00am Egg Hunt starts in Whitin Park*

PRIZE
1 FREE
Youth
Membership

Ages 9-12

11:45am Egg Hunt starts in Whitin Park*

* If the weather is inclement the egg hunt for all ages will be cancelled, however all children will receive a goodie bag & may enter a raffle drawing to win the prizes. Drawing will be at 12:00pm.

Thank You To Our Sponsors



60 Main St. Whitinsville, Ma 01588
www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com

For more info contact
Ginny Alicea, BVCP Director, 508.234.8184 ext 105