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Rockin' & Rollin' at the Upton Senior Center A night to remember at the Senior Soirée



The Upton Senior Center hosted a Senior Soiree in May. Guests enjoyed music, dancing, food, and fashion. More photos on page 20. Courtesy photo

UPTON — Twist and shout! On the evening of March 28, the Upton Senior Center was transformed into a rockin' retro dance hall as nearly 75 local seniors, along with volunteers of all ages, came together for an unforgettable Senior Soirée. With

a vibrant 1950s "Happy Days" theme, the event brought the spirit of the decade to life through music, food, fashion—and lots of dancing!

DJ Ron Auger kept the dance floor packed, spinning nostalgic hits that had guests

moving for nearly three hours straight. Classic dances like the Stroll brought big smiles and even bigger moves from a crowd that proved age

SOIREE

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Leo and Peg Tetreault named 2025 Mendon Senior Citizens of the Year



Leo and Peg Tetreault have been named 2025 Mendon Senior Citizens of the Year. Courtesy photo

The Mendon Council on Aging is pleased to announce that this year, husband and wife Leo and Peg Tetreault have been chosen as Mendon Senior Citizens of the Year. They have both served Mendon for much of their lives.

Leo Tetreault Jr., a life-long resident of Mendon, was initially in a partnership with his father in the family business, Mendon's Lakeside Garage, while both serving as volunteer firemen. When a call came in, they closed the shop

and responded.

Public safety ultimately became Leo's chosen path as he worked at the Highway Department for 20 years (1982-2002) and served as a Firefighter for the town from 1968-2002, rising to the rank of Deputy Chief like his father before him.

Leo, an Air Force Veteran, served from 1964-1968 during the Vietnam War era. His service

TETREAULT

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Memorial School students meet Senior Pen Pals in heartwarming community visit

UPTON – On May 21, the students of Mrs. Jan Maglione’s third grade class at Memorial Elementary School in Upton took a special field trip to the Upton Community Center, where they met face-to-face with their senior pen pals for the very first time.

The visit marked the culmination of a new intergenerational Pen Pal Program launched this year in collaboration with the Upton Senior Center. The initiative paired 19 third grade students with 19 local seniors, encouraging monthly written correspondence that fosters connection, communication, and community.

The idea for the program was born during a conversation between Upton’s Social Services Coordinator, Katie San Clemente, and Mrs. Jan Maglione. Recognizing the potential benefits for both age groups, they set out to build a



Photo includes all senior and student pen pals, along with group facilitators, Katie San Clemente and Jan Maglione. NAMES OF STUDENT PEN PALS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Madison Solivan, Giulia Wagschal, Oliver Laprade, Brooklyn Luvisi, Quentin Carmichael, Maria Victoria Gomes, Joelle Franklin, Benjamin Caruso, Caroline Luippold, George Fitzpatrick, Juliette Carle, Demir Erdine, Paige Lachapelle, London Langlois, Rylee Hayward, Skylar Richard, Cameron Ferrell, Christopher Addoriso and Jack Polsell. NAMES OF SENIOR PEN PALS FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: Sandy Merusi, Myra Bigelow, Linda Sanders, Linda Rynhart, Gloria Nelson, Joy Mondeau, Mary Lee Welch, Althea Greene, Maureen Rogers, Meridith Singleton, Patty Lynn, Karen Glowacki, David Brooks, Jeannie Brooks, Steve Rakitin, Sue Perry, Cheryl Henderson and Lisa Broderick – Not Pictured: John Saulen. PROGRAM FACILITATORS: Katie San Clemente and Jan Maglione. Courtesy photo

bridge between generations—one letter at a time.

“One of the most rewarding pieces of this project was seeing the friendships that have formed across generations,”

said Mrs. Maglione. “Watching each student’s facial expressions as they received their letters each month was an inspiring and rewarding part of this experience”.

Students from Mrs. Maglione’s class shared that they “really liked learning all about what our seniors are doing” and also enjoyed “writing and receiving the letters

and learning so much more about them”.

Over the course of several

HEARTWARMING

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Nipmuc Regional High School juniors celebrate real-world learning at Annual Internship Showcase

Forty Nipmuc Regional High School juniors recently presented the results of their hands-on, real-world learning during the school's annual Junior Internship Showcase on Friday, June 13.

The event marked the culmination of Nipmuc's three-week Junior Internship Program, which ran from May 27 through June 12 and offered students immersive experiences across a range of industries.

Now in its second year, the program allows juniors to explore career fields of interest — including health care, animal science, marketing, education, engineering, biotechnology and more — through full-time internships with local businesses, schools, hospitals, nonprofits and community organizations.

Students completed their academic coursework for the year by May 23 and then transitioned into their internships, where they

applied classroom learning in professional environments while building key career skills.

"The internship helped increase my love and passion for psychology and counseling," said junior Gretchen Merrill.

"My biggest takeaway is that I have a genuine interest in occupational therapy and it would be worthwhile to pursue in the future," said junior Nora Bangma.

In addition to exploring career interests, students also gained valuable "durable skills" such as communication, independence, time management and adaptability.

One student advised future participants not to be afraid to try something new, as the experience could help them better understand what their future will be like.

The program is coordinated by Tara Bennett, Nipmuc's Career, Community and Innovations Coordinator, in col-



Nipmuc Regional High School recently held a Junior Internship Showcase to culminate the school's three-week Junior Internship Program. Photo Courtesy Mendon-Upton Regional School District

laboration with faculty and community partners across the Mendon-Upton region and beyond.

"The success of this program is a direct result of the strong partnerships we've built with local organizations and mentors who generously open their doors to our students," said Bennett. "We are grateful for their commitment to helping our students

grow, explore their passions and prepare for the future."

The district encourages individuals and organizations interested in becoming mentors or host sites for future interns to contact Bennett at tbennett@mursd.org.

"I am so incredibly proud of our students and the passion, professionalism and growth they demonstrated during the

Junior Internship Showcase," said Mendon-Upton Regional School District Superintendent Dr. Maureen Cohen. "I also have to recognize the outstanding work of Tara Bennett, who is helping our students gain invaluable experience that will serve them well beyond high school."

Submitted by Mendon-Upton Regional School District

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<p>IMPERIAL TOYOTA</p> <p><small>*SALE ENDS 07/31/2025. CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER PROMOTION OR DISCOUNTS. PRICES NOT VALID WITH PRIOR SALES. SOME RESTRICTIONS APPLY. PRICE INCLUDES ALL APPLICABLE REBATES AND INCENTIVES INCLUDING \$1,000 IMPERIAL TRADE ASSIST. SEE US FOR DETAILS. DELIVERY MUST BE TAKEN FROM DEALER STOCK. CUSTOMER'S FINAL PAYMENT MAY BE HIGHER OR LOWER DEPENDING ON FINAL TRANSACTION PRICE. ADVERTISED PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE TAX, TITLE, REGISTRATION AND \$595 DOCUMENTATION FEE. THE BUY FOR PRICE REQUIRES DEALERSHIP SOURCE FINANCING. 7 DAY OR 200 MILE RETURN EXCHANGE PROGRAM FOR YOUR TOTAL CONFIDENCE - IF YOU'RE NOT HAPPY WITH YOUR IMPERIAL CERTIFIED USED VEHICLE, BRING IT BACK WITHIN 7 DAYS OR 200 MILES AND WE WILL GIVE YOU A CREDIT OF YOUR FULL PURCHASE PRICE TOWARD THE PURCHASE OF ANOTHER IN STOCK VEHICLE. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS. PHOTOS ARE FOR ILLUSTRATION PURPOSES ONLY. CALL 1-508-488-2382 TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT TO TEST DRIVE.</small></p>		

Pomp, pageantry, pride BVT celebrates Class of 2025

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UPTON – The Blackstone Valley Tech Class of 2025 Commencement Ceremony was held at the DCU Center in Worcester on May 29. The evening ceremony celebrated the accomplishments of its graduates with all the pomp, pageantry, and pride they so richly deserve.

"Since their first day at our school, I encouraged this class to put in their best effort and work their hardest and to leave Valley Tech just a little bit better than they found it," said Principal Mr. Anthony E. Steele II in his opening remarks. "The Class of 2025 met that challenge. They have been outstanding stewards of their school, and after tonight, I have no doubt that they will honorably carry that torch as BVT alumni. Personally, the Class of 2025 will hold a special place in my heart as they are the last class I will see through as Principal before transitioning to my new role as Superintendent next year."

The ceremony included a salute to the flag and the playing of the national anthem. Next, Yvette Martin, Director of Student Services, delivered the benediction. Then, Haley and Abigail Bilodeau of Douglas delivered a musical performance.

The speakers eloquently articulated lessons and moments that shaped their high school experiences.

Jayden Quang of Millbury, Valedictorian, shared how minor improvements (one measly percent better than the day before) make all the difference.

Nathaniel Cook of Blackstone, Class President, expressed pride in being a 'Beaver' for life. To be a Beaver is to embody these attributes: adaptable,

clever, persistent, and capable of building your own success.

Kallie Allen of Hopedale, SkillsUSA National President, spoke of the gap between the skills employers need and the skills people have. She reminded her classmates that they are employable and job-ready, having demonstrated the skills necessary to close the talent gap.

Sosie DerKosrofian of Northbridge, Student Council President, reflected on the best memories, the not-so-good, cringeworthy moments, and how choosing a positive mindset can help you navigate challenges and learn from them.

Om Patel of Douglas, Salutatorian and Class Vice President, recalled the experiences, friendships, and growth within a supportive community. Resolutely, we step forward wiser, stronger, and ready to take on more than we ever thought we could when we started high school.

Assistant Principal Mr. Matthew Urquhart addressed the class and took a moment to acknowledge those who made this day possible. In closing, he reminded the Class of 2025 to treat others with kindness and respect and to be proud of what they have earned.

"On the cusp of what is yet to come, you have all the tools you need to succeed," said Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick. "With your training, dedication, and forward-looking mindset, we have every confidence that you will continue to build upon the skills you've acquired."

Three hundred and fifteen students concluded their dual high school education. They received



Jayden Quang of Millbury, Valedictorian, speaking during the graduation ceremony. Courtesy photo



BVT Class of 2025 Information Technology seniors in their caps and gowns (L to R) Joshua Gould of Millbury, Riley Gomes of Milford, Zabel DerKosrofian of Northbridge, and Samantha Carroll of Upton. Courtesy photo

a vocational certificate and a diploma, which certify mastery of competencies in their career-technical programs and a rigorous academic course of study.

Then, the Academic Curriculum Coordinator, Mr. Evans, called Dr. Matthew Connors, Vocational Director, to the stage to present the final diploma to Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick,

who will retire in June after 31 years of service. Mr. Evans said, "Since (January of) the 1993-94 school year, Dr. Connor's senior year at BVT, our superintendent-director has dedicated himself to the students, staff, and families of this district. Tonight,

BVT

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The Blackstone Valley Tech Class of 2025 at their Commencement Ceremony. Morin Studio photo

BVT

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it is our privilege to recognize his lifelong commitment and efforts with an honorary diploma and vocational certificate. Starting with Dr. Connor’s Class of 1994 and culminating with this Class of 2025, he has led thousands of students across the graduation stage, but tonight, he walks across with you.”

The joyful celebration concluded with a standing ovation for Dr. Fitzpatrick and thunder-

ous applause for the graduates. To view the ceremony, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/markingamilestone.

The Class of 2025 seniors are listed alphabetically by their last name, vocational-technical program, and grouped according to their hometown. Additionally, membership in the National Honor Society (NHS) and National Technical Honor Society (NTHS) is noted by either NHS, NTHS, or both (NHS/NTHS):

Mendon and Upton graduates include:
MENDON

- Aiden Bailer, HVAC/R**
- Kalynn Bellefontaine, Health Services (NHS/NTHS)**
- Sophia Blalock, Cosmetology (NHS/NTHS)**
- Leo Camilli, Jr., HVAC/R**
- Samuel Cray, Automotive Technology**
- Colby Duncan, HVAC/R**
- Benjamin Ellis, Electrical**
- Angel Garro, Construction Technology**
- Paige Hamburger, Cosmetology**
- Connor Hennessy, Automotive Collision Repair**
- Ryan Jacques, Advanced Manufacturing**
- Leila Leyvas, Health Services**

- Ian Maguire, Information Technology (NTHS)**
- Kyle Miller, Electrical**
- Jacob Pelc, Automotive Technology**
- Ryan Rezek, HVAC/R**
- Cameron Roy, Plumbing**
- Abigail Scharnagle, Health Services**
- UPTON**
- Richard Anketell, Construction Technology**
- Dominic Bonina, Advanced Manufacturing**
- Carlos-Eduardo Brito, Drafting & Design**
- Alexander Burgos, Construction Technology**
- Samantha Carroll, Information**

- Technology (NHS/NTHS)**
- Joseph Del Tufo, Electrical**
- Eric Dunham, Engineering**
- Kylie French, Painting & Design**
- Lauren Gronda, Dental Assisting**
- Jason Loschiavo, Electrical**
- Cassidy Lyon, Health Services (NHS/NTHS)**
- Harmony Meléndez-Torres, Biotechnology (NHS)**
- Jack Nealley, IV, HVAC/R**
- Ryan Poirier, Advanced Manufacturing**
- Jacob Selby, Plumbing**
- John Simas, Electronics**
- Arianna Solano, Cosmetology;**
- Paul Van Norman, Drafting & Design**



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Upton Town Library Calendar of Events

9 Milford Street, Upton • 508-529-6272 • UptonLibrary.org • HOURS: Tues., Wed. & Thurs. 9-8 • Mon., Fri. & Sat. 9-4 • Sun. CLOSED

By Matthew Bachtold, Library Director and Lee Ann Murphy, Children's Librarian
Summer Reading Program!

It's the Annual Summer Reading Program! This year's theme is Level Up at Your Library!, a theme encouraging a love of play and games. Register online or at the circulation desk, and be sure to visit the library to pick up your packet of materials. Keep reading all summer and join us for special events all summer long. The Summer Reading Program continues until Aug. 9. For all ages!

Summer Reading Bingo for Adults!

Summer reading isn't just for children! Participate by picking up a bingo sheet at the library desk. Get bingo and return your sheet to earn raffle tickets to compete for prizes!

4-H Babysitters' Course – July 21 & 22, 1 p.m.

Babysitting Course instructed by Massachusetts 4-H Foundation. Participants will learn the responsibilities of babysitting, as well as the skills needed to become good babysitters. The course will help develop confidence in handling situations that may occur when babysitting. Upon completion of this course,

youth will receive a Babysitters' ID card and a Certificate of Completion. Register once for the two-day series. Must attend both days. For ages 11 to 16. *Tuition fee of \$35 must be paid by check made out to Massachusetts 4-H Foundation on the day of the class.*

Friends of the Upton Town Library News:

Friends of the Library are pleased to announce two museum passes added to our collection: Plimoth Patuxet Museum available now and Old Sturbridge Village coming soon!

Now accepting donations of good condition books for the Friends booksale which supports the summer reading and museum pass programs!

Please join us at our next meeting, which will be held on Thursday, July 10, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the library. We will be planning for upcoming events and looking forward to ideas for our next projects. Please bring your ideas and enthusiasm. All are welcome!

Adult Events

Introduction to Hand Drums & Drum Circles with Dave Curry

Monday, July 14, 6 - 7:30 p.m.
Ages 10-Adult

Join Dave Curry as he introduces

you to a range of different types of drums from various traditional sources. He'll teach you the basic technique for getting a good sound from each of the drum types, and the common rhythms that are associated with those drums. No prior experience is necessary and instruments are provided, though you are welcome to bring a hand drum of your own if you have one. Register at uptonlibrary.org.

Drum Circle with Dave Curry - Saturday, Aug. 2, 7 - 9 p.m. Ages 8 - Adult

Join facilitator Dave Curry for an evening of freestyle drumming. Instruction and extra drums are provided, but you can also bring your own drums and percussion instruments. No prior experience is necessary, so the circle is suitable for beginners on up to experienced drummers. Registration is requested. Now a monthly program on the first Saturday of each month, sponsored by Friends of the Upton Library

Scent & Suds: Create Your Own Foam Soap

Thursday, July 24, 6 - 7:15 p.m.
Cost \$10 - Registration required.

Join us for a fun, hands-on workshop where you'll craft your own natural foam soap using essential

oils. Learn about their benefits and how to safely use them while creating a personalized blend.

It's a great opportunity to make something special for yourself, your family, or as a thoughtful gift! All materials are provided, and space is limited. Registration is required, and the program costs \$10, to be paid 1 week before the program. See the library website for details. This program is sponsored by the Friends of Upton Town Library.

Tabletop Game Night for Adults – Thursday, July 17, 5:15 - 7:30 p.m.

Join our tabletop game series for adults! The featured game in July will be Mysterium or Mysterium Park. Meets every third Thursday of the month from 5:15 - 7:30 p.m. Beginners and experienced players both welcome! Register at uptonlibrary.org.

Virtual Author Talk Series

View free online author talks, either live or recorded. Register and get more information at the library website, or at <https://library.org/uptontownlibrary>

Author Talk with **Pria Anand:** *On the Strangeness and Wonder of Our Brains* - Thursday, July 31 at 2 p.m.

Author Talk with **Casey McQuiston:** *Returning to Romance*

Through Food and Flirty Fun - Wednesday, Aug. 20 at 7 p.m.

Children's & Young Adult Events

Kids' Puzzle Swap – July 16, 3 p.m.

Join us for our first ever Kids' Puzzle Swap! Are you bored with the puzzles you have at home? Bring in a gently used children's puzzle, with no missing pieces, to participate in our puzzle swap (up to 100-200 pieces only, please). You will walk away with a new-to-you puzzle of your own!

Contact Mrs. Murphy at lmurphy@cwmmars.org if you have any puzzles to donate for this event.

Nature Hike – July 19, 10 a.m.

Join Children's Librarian Mrs. Murphy and Park Ranger Viola Bramel as they hike through the Upton State Forest! Viola will share her expertise on all things flora and fauna during this hour-long exploration. Please dress accordingly for the weather, bring a bottle of water, and wear sturdy shoes. Check our website for any cancellations. We will meet at the CCC Building (the big brown building). Address

UPTON LIBRARY

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ABMI-TV Concerts on the Grass 2025

BELLINGHAM TOWN COMMON

Wednesday July 2. 6pm – 8pm. Kids Night with Wayne Potash and Trevor the Games Man.
Sponsored by Bellingham Town Common Trustees

Wednesday July 9. 6pm – 7pm – Free pony rides. 6:30pm – 8:30pm Riverboat Stompers (Dixieland jazz).

Wednesday July 16. 6pm - 7pm Free pony rides., 6:30pm – 8:30pm Morse Code (rock and pop).

Wednesday July 23. 6pm – 7pm Free pony rides., 6:30pm – 8:30pm Back Pages (classic rock).

Sponsored by Middlesex Savings Bank

MENDON TOWN BEACH

Wednesday July 30. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm., 6:30pm – 8:30pm. Quintessential Brass (brass band).

Wednesday Aug 6. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm., 6:30pm – 8:30pm Vinyl Echo (power trio)

Wednesday Aug 13. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm., 6:30pm – 8:30pm Alexander's Jazztime Band (jazz standards)



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Southwick's Zoo announces birth of three cheetah cubs

Southwick's Zoo is thrilled to announce the birth of three cheetah cubs, a significant milestone for the zoo and its animal care team. Born in early May to Nya, a female cheetah from Southwick's Zoo and part of the Zoo Association of America's (ZAA) Animal Management Program (AMP), the cubs are healthy and thriving under expert care.

Shortly after giving birth, Nya experienced complications and rejected the cubs in her litter. Female Cheetahs are generally good mothers, even though only 5% of cheetah cubs reach adulthood in the wild. While rejecting cubs is not typical, it is not an uncommon behavior for first-time cheetah mothers. To ensure the cubs' survival and well-being, Southwick's experienced

animal care staff stepped in to raise them behind the scenes, providing round-the-clock feeding, monitoring, and support for their social development.

"These cubs are already showing off their energy and personality," said Betsey Brewer, Executive Vice President of Southwick's Zoo and Board Chair for ZAA. "They've kept our team on their toes, and it's been a joy to watch them grow and explore each day. The work our team has done to care for these cubs is nothing short of extraordinary."

Over the summer months, they will move into the cheetah habitat for public view, where guests can watch as they continue to develop.

Cheetahs are listed as Vulnerable by the International Union

for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), with fewer than 7,000 individuals remaining in the wild. Through its participation in the ZAA's AMP, which focuses on population management and species sustainability, Southwick's Zoo plays an important role in the conservation of this iconic species.

"These cubs represent more than just an exciting moment for the zoo," Brewer added. "They're part of a larger purpose—to help secure the future of a species that's facing real challenges in the wild. At the same time, they allow us to inspire the next generation of advocates."

Southwick's Zoo will continue to share updates on the cubs, including names, photos, and videos, on its social media platforms in the upcoming weeks.



Two of the three newborn cheetahs are pictured here. Courtesy photo

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UPTON LIBRARY

continued from page 6

for GPS: Upton State Forest, 205 Westboro Road, Upton.

Eyes on Owls – July 23, 6 p.m.

Join Marcia and Mark Wilson from Eyes On Owls as they present their live owl program, "Eyes on Owls!" They'll share a story and lots of information about these feathered friends, such as adaptations, habitats, and behaviors in the wild. We'll be joined by six live owls during the program as well! For ages 5+. Pre-registration required.

Card Games – July 25, 1 p.m.

Join us for a session of card games! Play an old favorite or learn something new. We'll supply the cards! For ages 8+. No registration required.

Science Heroes – July 31, 6 p.m.

Celebrate summer reading with stories and science! Join us as Science Heroes shares exciting storytelling with interactive science experiments and concepts. We will share ways that people use science in creating and solving games and puzzles, and what kinds of careers along that path a young "science hero" might explore. For ages 5+. Pre-registration required.

Movie Event – Aug. 2, 1 p.m.

Our monthly movie events will take place throughout the summer

in the Greatroom. Visit our Event Calendar online for movie titles, descriptions, and audience age suggestions. No registration required.

Monthly Library Events – Register now!

All programs and events require pre-registration at uptonlibrary.org or call 508-529-6272. Registrations open the month prior to events.

Baby Storytime – Fridays, 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Baby Storytime is for ages birth to 3 and is held on Fridays. This is a 20-30-minute lapsit program featuring stories, songs, and nursery rhymes. Pre-registration required.

Preschool Storytime – Thursdays, 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Preschool Storytime is for ages 3 to 5 and is held on Thursdays. This is a 45-minute program featuring stories, songs, rhymes, and a craft. Pre-registration required.

Sat. Storytime – July 12, 9:30 a.m.

Once a month we offer a 30-45-minute Saturday Storytime, blending Baby and Preschool storytimes featuring stories, songs, rhymes, and a craft. Can't join us for our weekday programs? This event is just for you! For ages 0-5. Pre-registration required.

Drop-In Storytime – July 14, 9:30 a.m.

Our Children's Department offers a Drop-In Storytime session, once a month. No registration required! This is a blend of our Baby

and Preschool Storytimes; however, no craft will be provided. We will feature stories, songs, rhymes, and fun! This will be held in the Greatroom and will be a larger group size. For ages 0 to 5.

Music & Movement – July 21 and Aug. 4, 9:30 a.m.

This program features Deb Hudgins and is an interactive program, perfect for children and their caregivers to enjoy together. Deb plays guitar and sings, and is sure to incorporate stories, dancing, fingerplays, games and more at each of her fun, themed performances. This program is partially funded through a grant with Beginning Bridges CFCE in Uxbridge. For ages 1 to 5. Pre-registration is required.

Storybook Art Club – July 15, 10 a.m.

This program meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Children will enjoy a picture book and create a craft inspired by the story. This month will feature books all about shells! Pre-registration required. For ages 3 to 5.

LEGO Club – July 16, July 30 and Aug. 6, 4 p.m.

This group meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 4 - 5 p.m. This group is led by Library Director, Matthew Bachtold. We provide the LEGOs while you have fun building and making new friends. This program is for ages 3

to 12. Pre-registration is required.

Crafternoon – July 24, 3 p.m.

This is a new drop-in program that will meet the 4th Thursday of each month. Children can make a simple craft using materials such as crayons, scissors, paint, and glue. This month, we will create our own video game character from recycled materials! For ages 3+. No registration required.

Teen Book Club – July 17, 6:30 p.m.

This club is especially for our middle grade patrons, ages 10 to 14. This group reads popular middle grade titles selected by our members. This month, we will be discussing the title *365 Days to Alaska* by Cathy Carr. We welcome new members all year round! Pre-registration required.

Kids' Book Club – Aug. 6, 4 p.m.

Our book club members explore popular juvenile chapter books on the first Wednesday of each month from 4 - 4:45 p.m. We will be discussing our own members' choices at this meeting. This group is for ages 7 to 10. We welcome new members all year round! Pre-registration required.

Chess Club – 1st Tuesday/Thursday each month, 2 - 5 p.m.

Learn to play chess or just play with new players. We will have a student from BVT to help teach those new to the game. For ages 8 to 16. No registration required.

Crafting Club – 2nd Tuesday/Thursday each month, 2 - 5 p.m.

Feeling crafty? Join us as we create new projects each month. Beading, crochet, painting – the possibilities are endless! For ages 8

to 16. No registration required.

Gaming Club – 3rd Tuesday/Thursday each month, 2 - 5 p.m.

We've got a PlayStation 5 and tons of board games and we'd love to have tweens and teens join us! New games each session! For ages 8 to 16. No registration required.

Magic the Gathering: Commander – 4th Tuesday each month, 4 - 6 p.m.

Join us for an introduction to the popular card game, Magic the Gathering - Commander format.

We will be joined by local patron, Josef Vargas, as he shares his knowledge with those wanting to learn and play! If you have a Commander deck, please bring it to play. For ages 8+. Please register.

Upton Reads Book Group

An eclectic mix of contemporary literary fiction with meetings on the second Tuesday afternoon and Thursday evening of each month in the Community Center classroom, with a Zoom remote option.

Tuesday, Aug. 12, 12:45 p.m., and Thursday, Aug. 14 at 6:45 p.m.: *The House of Eve* by Sadequa Johnson.

Fic or No Fic Book Group

An adult book group led by Librarian Micaela that alternates fiction and non-fiction selections. Meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:45 p.m.

July 30, 6:45 p.m.: *The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World* by Robin Wall Kimmerer.

For more information or assistance with any library services, call 508-529-6272 or email mbachtol@cwmar.org

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How to choose a successor for your business



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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Provided by Edward Jones

As a business owner, you've always got a lot to think about today — but what about tomorrow? Have you thought about whom you would like to see as your successor?

If you haven't, you're not alone. Of the business owners who have created a succession plan, about 70% have named a successor for their businesses and have taken measures to

train and prepare this successor, according to a survey by Morning Consult, NEXT 360 Partners and Edward Jones. But this means that nearly a third of business owners have not taken this action, leaving a big gap in their succession plans.

So, if you haven't yet named a successor, you may want to start thinking about it. It may be helpful to ask yourself these questions:

- **Should I look inside or outside?** You could find a successor who's already working for you, or you could find someone from the outside. On one hand, an internal successor would already know how you operate and what you value as you run your business. But on the other hand, an external successor could bring a new point of view and a different set of skills, both of which might prove beneficial. You'll need to weigh both choices carefully.

- **How prepared is a potential successor?** Whether you decide on an internal or external candidate, you'll want to be sure the person you choose is prepared to take over the business. Do they have management skills? Will they share your commitment to your business's success? Will they be able to build strong relationships with your customers or other employees? Are they enthusiastic about the work involved? You'll want to evaluate all these types of factors in making your selection.

- **Are there potential family squabbles?** If you would like a family member to become your successor, you may need to be careful about whom you choose and how you communicate your decision to the entire family. Even if it may make sense for one individual to take over the business, perhaps because they're already involved in it and they're

interested in taking it over, it doesn't mean hurt feelings won't develop among other family members, who may feel they are somehow being "cheated" out of what they view as their share of a valuable inheritance. So, if you are convinced that you're making the right choice, explain your reasoning to all family members and let them know that you're also exploring other, tangible ways for them to share in your family wealth, possibly by leaving them other financial assets through your estate plans.

- **How will my choice of a successor affect my finances?** Passing the business to an heir, selling it to an existing employee or selling it to an outside buyer can yield vastly different results for you in terms of your personal finances. You'll need to consider the possible business transfer arrangements, such as a buy-sell agreement, to deter-

mine which one is in your best interests. In doing so, you may want to work with your financial advisor or a consultant with experience in selling or transferring a business.

Choosing a successor is one of the most important decisions you'll make — so, take your time, evaluate your options and work to reach a decision that works well for everyone involved.

Contact Mark today to discuss this topic or any of your financial goals.

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

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Summer eye safety

Stay safe this 4th of July

By: Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.
Milford Franklin Eye Center

We all use sunscreen to protect our skin, but it's important not to forget your eyes. Summer means more time outdoors, and sunlight can be harmful to your eyes just as it is to your skin. Bright sunlight increases the risk of cataracts, macular degeneration, and even eye cancer. This risk is the same when using indoor tanning beds, so protecting your eyes from artificial UV light matters as much as shielding them from natural sunlight. If you're spending time at the beach or pool, be aware that sunlight reflecting off water and sand can cause photokeratitis, a painful condition sometimes called snow blindness.

Everyone, regardless of age or skin color, is vulnerable to UV damage, but children are especially at risk because their eyes absorb more UV rays. Peo-

ple with light-colored eyes may also be more susceptible to certain eye diseases linked to UV exposure, including eye cancer. Additionally, people with eye conditions like retinal dystrophy might be more sensitive to UV damage.

One of the most common eye problems linked to sun exposure is cataracts, which is a clouding of the eye's lens. The lens needs to be clear to focus light properly on the retina for good vision. Years of sun exposure are a major factor in cataract development, which is why cataract surgery is the most frequently performed surgery in the United States.

Despite the risks, many people don't realize how important it is to protect their eyes from UV rays. A survey by the American Academy of Ophthalmology found that only about half of those who wear sunglasses check whether they

block UV light. Fortunately, protecting your eyes is simple. Sunglasses should be labeled as providing 100% UV protection or UV400 to block both UV-A and UV-B rays. Choosing wraparound styles helps prevent UV rays from entering around the edges. Even if you wear contact lenses that block UV rays, you still need to wear sunglasses for full protection. Wearing a wide-brimmed hat along with your sunglasses adds extra defense from sunlight.

Children need special care too. It's best to keep them out of direct sunlight during midday when the sun's rays are strongest, and make sure they always wear sunglasses and hats when outside. Many people think clouds block UV rays, but this is not true; the sun's rays can pass through clouds, haze, and fog, causing damage at any time of the year—not just in summer. Be especially cautious when near water, snow, or at high altitudes, where sunlight is more intense because it reflects off these surfaces.

With these simple precautions, you and your family can enjoy the summer safely while

protecting your vision.

Fireworks: Enjoy the Celebration Safely

With Independence Day approaching, many people look forward to fireworks. While professional displays are generally safe, backyard fireworks can cause serious injuries. Most firework injuries happen between late June and late July. Each year about 16,000 people go to emergency rooms because of fireworks-related injuries, and there are roughly 18 deaths. The number of minor injuries that don't require ER visits is even higher.

Many people believe those lighting fireworks are at the highest risk, but it's the bystanders who are most often hurt. About 65% of firework-related emergency room visits are by people watching from the sidelines. Injuries most commonly affect hands, fingers, legs, head, face, ears, and arms. Small fireworks and sparklers, often considered safer and used near children, still cause many injuries.

Eye injuries from fireworks can be especially devastating. The eyes are very delicate, and sparks, flames, smoke, or flying debris from fireworks can cause permanent damage. Common eye injuries include scratches on the cornea, detached retinas, ruptured eyeballs, and burns. Any injury to the eye should be treated as a medical emergency. If you suffer an eye injury from fireworks, seek immediate care. To avoid risks, leave fireworks to the professionals and enjoy a safe celebration.

Advances in Cataract Surgery

If the sun caught up with you and you now have cataracts and need surgery, new technology can greatly improve your results. Bladeless laser cataract surgery is a major advancement that is FDA-approved and widely used by leading ophthalmologists. This method offers greater precision and safety compared to traditional surgery and often allows correction of astigmatism at the same time, resulting in better vision outcomes.



Center, we provide high-quality sunglasses with full UV protection at our optical service. For those needing cataract surgery, Dr. Roger Kaldawy was the first surgeon in the area, and among the first in Massachusetts, to offer bladeless laser-assisted cataract surgery. Dr. Dan Liu in our practice, offers the same services. We use premium lenses that correct vision at all distances, including near, far, and everything in between. Thanks to bladeless laser technology, even patients with astigmatism can now enjoy excellent results.

Our surgeries take place in a certified, accredited surgery center in Milford, where an anesthesiologist is always present to ensure your safety and comfort. This level of care is not typical for all practices; some perform surgery in-office without an anesthesiologist, which is not endorsed by professional societies or Medicare. If you have been offered office-based cataract surgery, call us for a second opinion.

With more than 24 years of experience and tens of thousands of procedures performed, we are proud to offer state-of-the-art medical and surgical eye care to our community. Your vision comes first with us.

Protect your eyes this summer by wearing proper sunglasses, using hats, avoiding direct sun during peak hours, and celebrating holidays safely. If it's time for cataract surgery, advanced options are available to restore your vision better than ever. At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we're here to help you see clearly for many summers to come.

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Taft Public Library Calendar of Events

29 North Avenue, Mendon • 508-473-3259 • TaftPublicLibrary.org • HOURS: Tues. & Wed. 10-7 • Thurs. 3-7 • Fri. 12-5 • Sat. 9-12 • Sun. & Mon. CLOSED

ADULT PROGRAMS JULY 2025

Upcoming Events:

To register for an event, click on the Library Event Calendar & Registration link at the top of the library's homepage (www.taftpubliclibrary.org).

Adult Handcrafting Group

Let's get crafty! Join us on Wednesday, July 16 at 2 p.m. downstairs in the library and get your craft on! Bring your own craft project, whatever it might be, to work on while you visit. Intended for adults. No registration is required. Crafts are NOT supplied.

Adult Book Club

Over the summer the Adult Book Club is reading *Demon Cop-perhead* by Barbara Kingsolver and *The Last Thing He Told Me* by Laura Dave. The discussion for both books will be upstairs in the library on Monday, Sept. 8 at 7 p.m. For additional information on upcoming book clubs contact the library at 508-473-3259

Awards Book Club

Hosted by Taft Library Assistant Jane Blackwood, the Awards Book Club meets on a quarterly basis to discuss fiction

award winners of the year. Jane selects from the books that took home the coveted Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the Booker Prize and more! Stop at the downstairs circulation desk to pick up the latest Awards book for discussion.

The next book in the Awards Book Club discussion series is *We Do Not Part* by Han Kang, the winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature for 2025. The discussion will be on Tuesday, Aug. 5 upstairs in the library at 7 p.m.

Cursive Writing Workshop

Library Assistant Monika Schmid will lead a workshop in cursive writing for grades 7 and up on Tuesday, July 22 at 6 p.m. Participants will begin with basic handwriting exercises and warm-ups followed by instruction on all the letters of the alphabet. The goal of the session is for each participant to have learned to pen a legible signature they can use on work, legal, and other documents going forward. Registration is required. Click on the Library & Event Calendar link at www.taftpubliclibrary.org to register.

The 25th Taft Public Library Great Cardboard

Boat Race

Calling all captains of cardboard! The 25th Taft Public Library Great Cardboard Boat Race launches in July! On Wednesday, July 23 join us at the Town Beach for a night at the races. Check-in and inspection of boats will be at 5:30 p.m. with races starting promptly at 6:30 p.m. Boats in six different categories will complete for recognition and glory on the waters of Lake Nipmuc. Interested in participating? Stop in at the library to pick up a copy of the boat race rules and regulations and a registration form. Online registration will begin soon at www.taftpubliclibrary.org. If you've never made a cardboard boat before and are looking for instructions, tips, and tricks, be sure to attend our cardboard boat-building workshop at the library on Thursday, July 17 at 6 p.m. hosted by James Thach and Greyson Michael. Registration required. And whether you're in a boat or cheering one

on, be sure to be looking your beachfront best by picking up an official 25th Taft Public Library Cardboard Boat Race t-shirt! The Friends of Taft Library are selling them as part of a fundraiser for \$20 apiece. All proceeds go toward future programming at the library. T-shirts come in two colors (light blue or grey) sizes SM - XXXL. The boat race is a few short weeks away! Don't miss out!

German Conversation Club

Are you looking for a place to practice what German you remember or to improve your German vocabulary? Conversations in German is no pressure, just fun! Lead by Library Assistant (and Mendon resident) Monika Schmid, the group typically meets the last Monday of each month. Registration is required. To register, visit our website! Please note: German Conversation Club is currently on hiatus, but will resume again in the fall. Contact the library at



508-473-3259 for further details.

Check out Mango Languages at Taft Library!

Visit the Taft Public Library website for access to the Mango Languages platform. If you have an interest in learning a language, Mango provides lessons in over 70 languages. Children can try their hand at language learning with Mango Little PIM, a platform designed

TAFT LIBRARY

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OBITUARY

Joan Spencer

Joan Spencer, 88, of Upton and formerly of Wayland, died peacefully on Tuesday, June 17, 2025 following a period of declining health.

She was the daughter of the late Albert H. Spencer and Bessie (Kingston) Spencer. She was the loving mother of Elizabeth "Liz" Spencer Cintolo and her husband Thomas "Scott" Cintolo of Upton. Devoted grandmother of Thomas A.S. Cintolo of Upton. Sister of Linda Spencer of Lexington and the late Betty Lou Johnson. Also survived by several nieces, nephews, grand-nieces and grand-nephews.

Joan spent her formative years in Wayland, attended the Cochituate Grammar School and graduated with the Wayland High School Class of 1955.

She had been a longtime resident of Cochituate and resided in Upton for many years to be closer to family. She was a member of the Community United Methodist Church when living in Cochituate and most recently a member of The United Parish of Upton.

She retired as an Executive Secretary from Raytheon in Marlborough after nearly 20 years of dedicated service.

Joan was devoted to her



family and will be remembered as always hosting the "Family Holidays". She enjoyed doing arts and crafts and was an accomplished painter in oil and acrylic paints. She was most happy when she was surrounded by those she loved and especially her beloved cat Lucy.

At Joan's request, all services will be private for family only.

In lieu of flowers, her family kindly suggests that gifts in her memory be sent to Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, P.O. Box 849168, Boston, MA 02284 (dana-farber.org/gift), as Joan beat cancer on six occasions during her life or to Baypath Humane Society of Hopkinton, 500 Legacy Farm N, Hopkinton, MA 01748.

Arrangements entrusted to the care of the John C. Bryant Funeral Home of Wayland. For condolences please visit www.johncbryantfuneralhome.com.

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of Guy B. Schultz

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Guy B. Schultz, a long time Upton resident, lovingly known as "Poppy," who passed away peacefully at home in Upton on June 25, 2025, surrounded by the love of his family. Born July 30, 1943, Guy lived a life rich in devotion, wisdom, and strength.

For 60 years, Guy shared an unwavering bond with his beloved wife, Kathleen (Roche) Schultz. Together, they embraced the joys of family, which included their sons Stephen and Christopher with wife Nicole, and daughter Heidi with husband Kenneth. Guy was a loving grandfather to Lexi and Erin, and cherished every moment spent with them.

Guy built a remarkable career as a plastics extrusion engineer at Pexco, where his innovations in medical products revolutionized the medical industry. His career showcased more than his technical skill, but also his dedication to improving the lives of others.

Guy found joy in the simple pleasures- tending to his meticulous gardens, flourishing with blueberries and vegetables, spending afternoons tinkering with his antique tractors, and his passion for cars. Guy's hobbies reflected his nurturing soul. His humility and wisdom left a deep imprint on everyone who knew him.

Guy leaves behind a legacy of love and dedication that will



always be remembered by his loving wife, children, grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews. He is predeceased by his father, Conway Schultz, his mother, Dana Schultz, and his beloved grandson, Conor Schultz. The profound sense of love and strength that Guy embodied will remain in the hearts of those who were fortunate enough to know him, forever reminding us to cherish each other as he cherished his family.

Calling hours will be held from 4 to 7 P.M. on Friday, July 11, in the Pickering & Son Westborough Funeral Home, 62 West Main Street, Westborough.

His funeral service at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Southborough, and burial at Lakeview Cemetery, Upton, will be held privately with his family.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be sent to the Michael Lisnow Respite, Hopkinton, MA via www.hopkintonrespite.networkforgood.com.

For his online tribute, please visit www.WestboroughFuneralHome.com

TETREAULT

continued from page 1

is honored on the plaque in the center of the town. Leo became a member of the Mendham Brothers of the Brush in 1967 while serving overseas.

Peg began working for the town in 1988 when she was elected as the Town Clerk. She stayed in this role for 12 years until 2000. She has also served as a Select Board member briefly due to resignations on the Board. Once Peg left the Clerk's office, she worked as Administrative Assistant (this position was changed to Town Administrator) in the Select Board's office until 2006 when she retired. Peg came out of retirement in 2013 and took the job as Assistant Town Clerk. She remained in this role until her second retirement in 2024.

In addition to her employment, Peg was a member of the Fire Department Ladies Auxiliary. She served as the Executive Director of the Mendon Housing Authority from 1985-2000. She served on the Town's Insurance Advisory Committee. She is currently Treasurer of the Swandale Cemetery Association.

Peg also spent time volunteering at the Mendon Senior Center working on their annual book sale. Peg still serves as a poll worker for town elections.

Leo and Peg have been married for 56 years. They raised their son and daughter in Mendon and have two grandchildren.

Please join us in congratulating Leo and Peg and plan to attend the annual Senior Citizen Day sponsored by the Mendon Lions Club. The event is a time to honor all senior citizens, and is scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 21, at 11:30 a.m. at the Unitarian Church of Mendon/Uxbridge, 13 Maple St., Mendon. Please call 508-478-6175 or stop by the Mendon Senior Center to register for this event.

The Mendon Council on Aging would like to thank everyone who submitted nominations for this year's Senior Citizen of the Year award. Since 1978, a deserving person (or persons) has been awarded the annual distinction. The chosen Mendon resident, aged sixty or older, generally exemplifies a spirit of public service and has made a positive difference in the community.

Upton Angler Survey

The Upton Lakes, Ponds, and Streams Committee is studying Pratt and Mill Pond and they need your help. If you fish in either pond, please take a few minutes

to complete the Angler Survey at <https://bit.ly/UptonAnglerSurvey2025>. Questions can be directed to lakesponds@uptonma.gov. Source: www.uptonma.gov



Ever wonder what a new kitchen would look like? Email me your measurements and "Want List." I will do one colored rendering and email back to you. Offer good til August 31, 2025

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Spring Cleaning is Greener with Affordable Junk Removal

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

Figuring out who to call can be challenging. If you contact one of the big haulers, they route you to a phone center where they've never even heard of your town, plus their pricing seems vague and full of extra fees. No wonder you've let the stuff pile up—it's too much of a hassle to get rid of it!

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

Jay Schadler started his business in 2005. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with eight trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate clean-

outs. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting.

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

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

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

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway special where they'll take away

Business spotlight

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

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

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

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

They also have a thriving commercial business, working with



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

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich,

and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

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

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Well-Wishes & Waves - Summer Projects have begun

The final morning of the school year brought sunshine and smiles. On June 17, Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) teachers, administrators, and support staff gathered outside to wish

students a happy summer. With cheerful waves, they watched the last school buses roll out. This fun moment signifies the start of summer at BVT.

At BVT, the Last Day Wave is an annual tradition that marks

the end of the school year as teachers and students embark on a well-deserved break. It signifies another successful school year has concluded, and a productive summer of addressing proposed projects has begun. While stu-

dents and teachers enjoy a brief respite, administrators, support staff, and the facilities team tackle numerous tasks, projects, and routine maintenance during the seven-week summer break.

"Our task list by design is ambitious," said BVT's Facilities Manager Robert Dolegiewicz. "We maximize every minute of our schedule to address our annual summer projects and routine preventive maintenance. Some of the projects include installing a foundation for a storage building, preparing the parking lot for paving, renovating classroom and office space, supplying HVAC connections and fire protection to the cafeteria freezer, installing exterior drainage and landscape around a new exterior cooler unit, finalize design plans and procure equipment for the Culinary Arts renovation, demolish the old discuss lunch pad and

landscape, install additional lighting in the HVAC shop, update (remove and replace) lighting in the Advanced Manufacturing pod, add service cameras to the Automotive Collision shop, add power to the plumbing shop, assist Technology Department with ninety-two Wi-Fi router installations, and remove trees and organic waste behind the MRS building.

The summer projects are advanced with the assistance of in-house talent and grant funding, which helps reduce costs while protecting and maintaining the facility. Blackstone Valley Tech will welcome the Class of 2029 freshmen and parents at the Freshmen Cookout on Wednesday, Aug. 13. Freshmen Orientation Days are Aug. 14 and 15. The first day of school for all of BVT is Aug. 18. Until then, have a fun summer!

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Well-wishes for a happy summer were shared as faculty and staff waved goodbye to their students as the last buses of the school year rolled out.



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Mendon Senior Center

Thai Cooking Demonstration

Monday, July 14 10:30 a.m.
Experience the vibrant flavors of Thailand in this special cooking demonstration led by Saowahpah "Tim" St. Onge, grandmother of Katie Moxam, Executive Assistant to the Mendon Select Board. Tim's passion for Thai cuisine will shine as she prepares traditional dishes including pork spring rolls and sticky rice. Attendees are welcome to participate in the preparation and enjoy delicious samples of each dish. This event is free, but space is limited. To reserve your spot, please call 508-478-6175 or visit the Mendon Senior Center.

New Players Welcome!

The Mendon Senior Center offers a variety of recreational activities including:

Cribbage – Wednesdays 9:45 a.m. The Cribbage group is always looking for new players. Stop in Wednesdays at 9:45 a.m. All levels welcome.

Corn Hole – Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 a.m. before lunch.

Hand, Knee and Foot card game – Tuesdays 1 p.m.

Mah-Jong – Wednesdays and Thursdays 1 p.m.

Brain Games – Thursdays 11:30 a.m.

Please check our schedule regarding days, times, and availability. Don't see your favorite game listed, please let us know what you'd like to see offered!

SHARING STRENGTH New Support Program

The Mendon Senior Center is pleased to announce the return of counselor Gail Bourassa, LMHC to the center to offer a supportive program Sharing Strength. The group will have a focused discussion twice monthly based on chosen topics. Scheduled dates for July are 7/24 and August 8/14 and 8/28 from 10 - 11 a.m. Please contact Janet Hubener if you are interested in attending this group.

Lunch Anyone?

This summer we are mixing it up a bit... We have several options when it comes to dining out. The Tuesday/Thursday Lunch Club at the senior center, a once a month Wednesday Dine-out in area restaurants and a once-a-month trip to the Mendon Town Beach with its snack shack; not to mention our COA Cookout!

Tri-Valley Lunch Club & Menu*

Come on in and beat the heat! For July and August we

will be offering one meal per week, alternating our Tuesday/Thursday Tri-Valley meal days. (see schedule below) Please make Reservations 48 hours in advance. Transportation is available. Call the Senior Center to schedule rides. Meals are subject to change. Meal cost: \$3 donation.

Tuesday, July 15

BBQ Chicken & Au Gratin Potatoes

Thursday, July 24

Chicken Veggie Stir-Fry

Tuesday, July 29

Beef Chili w/Brown Rice & Mixed Veggies

Tuesday, August 5

Chicken Fajitas w/Spanish Rice

Thursday, August 14

Hot Dog w/Baked Beans & Cole Slaw

Tuesday, August 19

Meatloaf w/Gravy & Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Thursday, August 28

Chicken Cacciatore & Gemmeli Pasta

*Meals are Subject to Change.

Dine-Out

This Friends of Mendon Elders sponsored program is open to all. Join us on the appointed Wednesday at either the Senior Center at 11:30 a.m. to carpool or at the restaurant at 12 p.m.

Please sign up with the Senior Center. The cost of lunch is your responsibility but the awesome company is free!

July 16 – Hopedale Country Club
August 13 – Garden Restaurant, Milford

Beach Picnic – Free van ride to the town beach at 11:30 a.m. with Senior Center staff. Bring a picnic lunch or order from the snack shack. Don't forget your sunscreen! Dates: Monday, July 21 and Monday, Aug. 18. Call the center at 508-478-6175 to register.

The COA Summer Cook-out/Eat-In Wednesday, July 23 12 p.m.

Join us at the Senior Center for a good old-fashioned cook-out prepared by the Mendon Council on Aging and volunteers. We'll have hamburgers, hot dogs, summer side dishes, and all the fixings! The cookout is free, sponsored by the COA, but seating is limited. Please call or sign up at the Senior Center, we'd love to see you!

Fill-in Lunch Servers Wanted

Volunteers are needed to help serve Tri-Valley lunch once or twice a month on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Center as well as helping out with special

meals. Responsibilities include preparing the dining room for lunch, serving the meal, and cleaning up. Hours are typically 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and you do not have to make a weekly commitment. If you would like to volunteer or learn more about the lunch program, please call Amy at 508-478-6175. Volunteer forms are available at the Senior Center.

Cardboard Boat Race

Come to the Town beach on Taft Ave. to cheer on the spirited Mendon seniors Wednesday, July 23. 6:30 p.m. (arrive early.) Their cardboard boat, carefully engineered, is co-sponsored by the Friends of Mendon Elders and Council on Aging and is sure to impress. This is great fun and a wonderful community event. Transportation may be available.

Movie Mondays

Come for a special viewing of movies on the BIG SCREEN at the Mendon Senior Center the last Monday of each month this summer at 1 p.m.

July 28 – Come celebrate the 50th anniversary of *Jaws* starring Roy Scheider, Richard Dreyfuss, and Robert Shaw.

MENDON SENIOR CTR

continued on page 19

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Pets of the Month: Meet Snickers and Spice

Snickers, a male tiger, and Spice, a female tortie, arrived at Milford Humane Society in late November when they were only a month old. They were found wandering a neighborhood with

their mom Sugar, and a Good Samaritan brought them in out of the cold.

This little family went into a foster home where they were well cared for and adored. Still,

Sugar had taught her young kittens to be fearful of people and they took that lesson to heart.

The foster family found ways to interact with Snickers and Spice that were less stressful. While

they don't like to be held, they do love to play with people. Fishing rod toys soon became their favorite playthings. They also enjoyed Cat TV, swatting at the fish swimming across screen.

At 8 months old, they are back at the shelter waiting for a patient family to come and take them to their forever home.

Without the comfort of a home setting, they are acting more cautious with people again. We believe they will blossom with time and a family to love them for who they are.

If you are interested in Snickers and Spice, please visit the Milford Humane Society at <https://www.milfordhumane.org/>

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BVT scholarship and award recipients include Mendon and Upton residents

The Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District is proud to announce its Class of 2025 Scholarship and Award Recipients.

As BVT's newest graduates advance their career training, they do so with the assistance of awards with an estimated tally exceeding nine million in renewable value, which is a springboard for success, allowing its recipients the financial freedom to implement their career plans across various pathways.

"When it comes to putting their career plans in action, some students purchase new tools, clothing, and equipment while others use financial aid to cover tuition at colleges or universities," said Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick. "The aid of scholarships and awards help our graduates move toward a bright future, whether directly out of high school or five years out, to contribute as well-trained, edu-

cated, and skilled members of the workforce."

The following is a list of the scholarships and awards earned by members of the Class of 2025, including immediate plans for career training. Students are categorized by town and listed alphabetically by their last name. Scholarship amounts reflect the first-year total. For more details, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/scholarshiprecipients.

MENDON

Kalynn Bellefontaine – UMass Dartmouth (*Nursing*) - \$4,000 Dean's Scholarship

Leila Leyvas – Worcester State University (*Nursing*) - \$20,000 State Scholarship

Ian Maguire – Assumption University (*Cybersecurity*) - \$1,000 Early Acceptance Grant - \$32,000 Presidential Scholarship

Kyle Miller – A.S. Jones & Co. - \$1,000 James Brochu Memorial Scholarship

Cameron Roy – Plumbing Apprentice - \$4,000 Nucor Scholarship

UPTON

Alexander Burgos – Massachusetts Maritime Academy, *Facilities Engineering* - \$1,000 Town of Upton Scholarship E.W. Risteen B. Welfare Trust Fund

Samantha Carroll – University of Massachusetts Amherst (*Informatics - Data Science*) - \$6,300 John & Abigail Adams Scholarship - \$200 Town of Upton-Gary Bates Scholarship Fund - \$1,000 Tri-County Regional Chamber Honor Scholar

Eric Dunham – Worcester Polytechnic Institute (*Aerospace Engineering*) - \$92,000 WPI Grant Scholarship

Kylie French – Rochester Institute of Technology (*Individualized Study*) - \$1,000 NTID Outreach Scholarship - \$12,500 NTID President's Scholarship

Lauren Gronda – University of Louisville (*Dental Hygiene*) - \$400 Broadway Youth Dance Theatre


Cassidy Lyon – Northeastern University (*Behavioral Neuroscience/Pre-Physician Assistant track*) - \$500 Mass CTE Vocational Technical Student Achieve-

ment Award - \$27,400 Northeastern University Grant

Harmony Meléndez-Torres – Bridgewater State (*Psychology*) - \$28,000 Academic Excellence Scholarship

Ryan Poirier – Worcester Polytechnic Institute (*Mechanical Engineering*) - \$2,180 John & Abigail Adams Scholarship - \$2,000 Gene Haas Foundation Machining Technology Scholarship

John Simas – Worcester Polytechnic Institute (*Interactive Media and Game Design*) - \$20,000 Merit Scholarship



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The Knights of Columbus Council 1562 of St. Mary's Parish is thrilled to announce the return of the Annual Car Show & Community Event on Sat., Sept. 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Uxbridge High School, 300 Quaker Highway, Uxbridge. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

This community event promises a day filled with classic and custom cars, family-friendly activities, local vendors, music, food, raffles, and more, all in support of local charitable initiatives.

Get Involved, support a worthy cause. Knights of Columbus Council #1562 has proudly

served Uxbridge and surrounding communities for generations, promoting faith, family, and service. Proceeds from the Car Show and Family Fun Day will support local charities, and Knights' programs that assist those in need.

Ways to participate:

• **Event sponsorships:** Gain exposure for your business or organization. Sponsorships include signage, online recognition, and booth space options.

• **Vendor tables:** Local artisans, businesses, and community groups are invited to reserve space to sell or promote their goods and services. Limited spaces available.

• **Donations welcome:** We gratefully accept raffle items, gift cards, services, or monetary donations to support our mission and event expenses.

• **Attend the event:** Join us for a fun-filled day! Mark your calendar for Sept. 6, 2025

Event highlights:

• Display of classic, muscle, and antique cars, trucks & motorcycles

• Family-friendly activities, games, and kids' entertainment

• Food trucks, refreshments, and local treats

• DJ music, raffles, and a 50/50 drawing

For more information, visit bit.ly/StMarysUxbridgeCarShow2025.

Call to Action, be a part of something bigger. Help us build a stronger community—one good deed at a time. To become a sponsor, reserve a vendor table, or contribute a donation, please contact Phil Cieply at 508-509-8870 or pcieply@msn.com, or Jeff Richard at 508-475-8950 or jlfad5@verizon.net.

Recent Home Sales

Date	Mendon	Amount
06/24/2025	15 Daniels Road	\$751,000
06/18/2025	84 Mowry Street	\$631,000
06/16/2025	87 Providence Street	\$560,000
06/13/2025	18 Thayer Road	\$1.06 mil
06/13/2025	19 Crestview Drive	\$760,000
06/11/2025	2 Powers Road	\$1.10 mil
06/10/2025	37 Vincent Road	\$881,692
06/06/2025	43 Cape Road	\$455,000
06/06/2025	15 Quissett Road	\$603,000
06/06/2025	13 Rawson Farm	\$976,157
05/28/2025	19 Neck Hill Road	\$705,000

Date	Upton	Amount
06/25/2025	16 Picadilly Street	\$416,000
06/24/2025	19 Prospect Street	\$805,000
06/20/2025	30 Prospect Street	\$849,000
06/20/2025	23 Warren Street	\$690,000
06/20/2025	4 Oak Drive	\$885,000
06/16/2025	9 Thayer Street	\$815,000
06/11/2025	26 Hartford Avenue North	\$411,000
06/10/2025	17 Henrys Path	\$750,000
06/09/2025	19 Glen Avenue	\$390,000
05/30/2025	139 Warren Street	\$725,000
05/30/2025	70 Grove Street	\$1.25 mil
05/29/2025	68 Glenview Street	\$1.17 mil
05/29/2025	252 Milford Street	\$750,000

Source: zillow.com / Compiled by Upton & Mendon Free Press



The 4-bed, 2.5-bath, 2,659-square-foot home at 9 Thayer Street in Upton recently sold for \$815,000. Photo source: Robyn & Sean Sold My House

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MENDON SENIOR CTR

continued from page 15

August 25 – be captivated by the star-studded *Knives Out Murder Mystery* filmed in Massachusetts – featuring Daniel Craig, Jamie Lee Curtis, Don Johnson, Christopher Plummer and many more! Please call or stop by the center to register for this FREE program. Popcorn will be provided. Feel free to bring a friend and your brown bag lunch before-hand if you wish!

The Senior Tea – Sunday, Aug 10, 2 - 4 p.m.

The Council on Aging and Friends of Mendon Elders will be co-hosting a special reception honoring Mendon residents aged 85 and older. Our afternoon tea will feature sandwiches, dessert and beverages along with beautiful piano music played by our own COA board member Earl Pearlman. Save the date, and please call the Senior Center if you have not received your invitation by mid-July.

Magic Show / Ice Cream Social –

The Mass Cultural Council presents “Dennis the Magician” at the Mendon Senior Center on Wednesday, Aug. 20, 1 - 2 p.m. Dennis has been performing magic with his wife Janet for over 50 years. His shows feature Magic, Comedy, Illusions, Live Animals and Audience Participation. Come be mesmerized! Following the entertaining program, make your own sundae with all the toppings you love. There is no fee for either event. The Mendon Cultural Council is funding the magic show and the Friends of Mendon Elders are generously sponsoring the ice cream social. Seating is limited for this event.

Eat Healthier on a Tight Budget - SNAP Benefits

Need help buying groceries? SNAP can help! The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly known as food stamps has the following eligibility guidelines: Household size 1/maximum gross monthly Income \$2608. Household size 2/maximum gross monthly income \$3525. If you need help applying for the SNAP benefit, contact Senior Center Outreach Coordinator Janet Hubener at 508-478-6175. Additionally, the Mendon Food Pantry is open the first Friday of

each month by appointment. Call Janet Hubener for more information.

Mendon Senior Center Pen Pal Program - “A Program that Warms My Heart”

Next fall, we plan to launch our Pen Pal program with fourth graders at Whitinsville Christian School where letter writing is part of their curriculum. One letter a month on your part is all it takes. We will do the rest. We ask you to reach out to senior relatives, neighbors and friends who might be interested in joining this endearing program. A sign-up sheet is available at the Senior Center. Feel free to call or text program coordinator Cheryl Lemon at 508-685-1419 with questions or for more information. Like past participants, meeting “your pal” at the end of the school year, will have you saying “this warms my heart.”

Senior Day Trip – LAST CALL!

A few spaces remain for the Charles Riverboat Cruise –Day Trip on Friday, Aug. 8, 2025

The cost is \$125 per person The Motorcoach Departs: 8:45 a.m. from the Mendon Senior Center and return at approximately: 5:15 p.m. You will see the historic sights of Boston and Cambridge on this 70-minute narrated cruise. After the cruise you will be treated to lunch at The Cheesecake Factory. Choose an entree from a fantastic menu and cheesecake for dessert, of course! After lunch take some time for shopping at the Cambridgeside Galleria Mall. For reservations, stop by the Senior Center or contact: Beverly Fior at 508-473-8382. Make checks payable to: Friends of Mendon Elders Mail to: 62 Providence Street, Mendon, MA 01756 Attn: Bev Fior. No Refunds after 7/8/25. Trip Operated by Bloom Tours.

BVT to comply with records regulations

Class of 2018: Destruction of student records is August 7

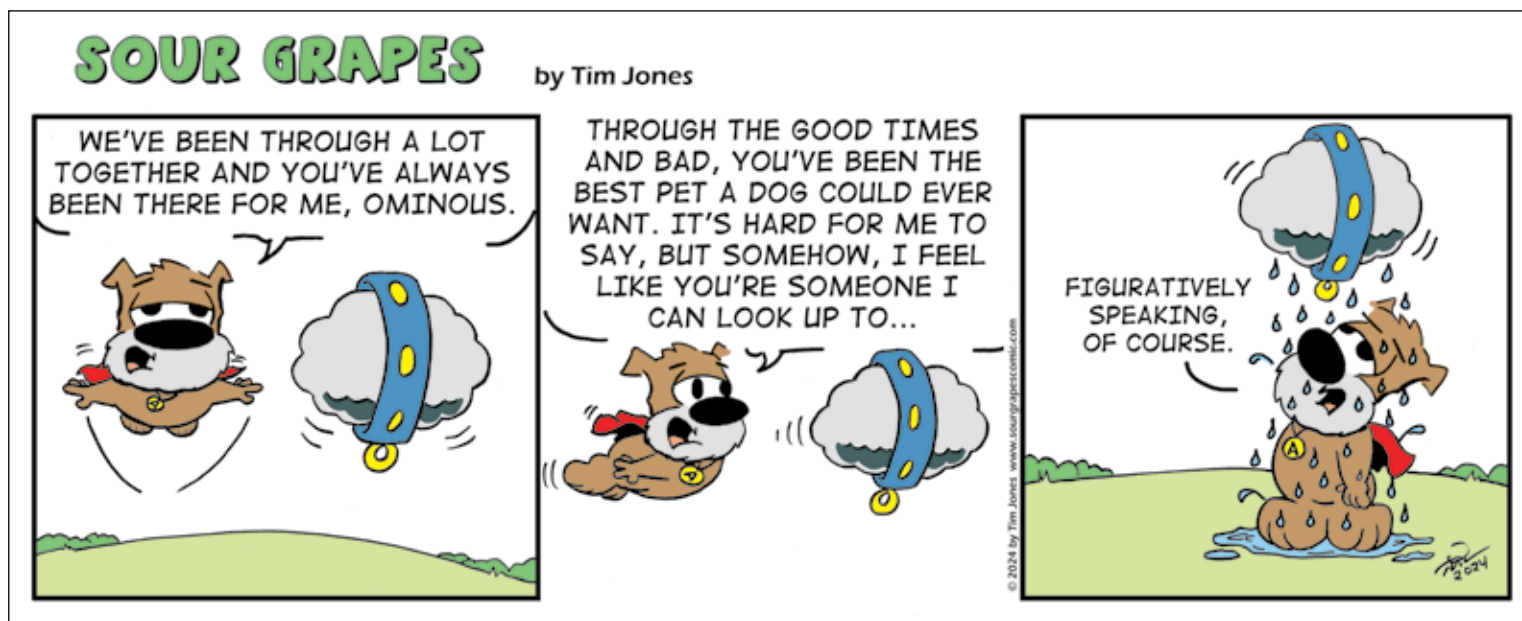
UPTON – Attention Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School Class of 2018. Per state and federal regulations, temporary student records, including special education files (IEP), 504 plans, and student health records, shall be destroyed seven years after the student leaves the school. For the Class of 2018, this date is August 7, 2025.

Members of the Class of 2018 may request their temporary student record (any information not contained in their transcript) before the August 7 shred date by written request. If you want to obtain your record, please send a writ-

ten request indicating the year of graduation and your name while in school to Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, Student Services Record Dept., 65 Pleasant Street, Upton, MA 01568.

Student transcripts (a record of grades) shall be destroyed 60 years after the student leaves the school. For the Class of 2018, that date is August 1, 2078. An alum from that class may request a transcript from their graduation date: May 2018 through August 1, 2078.

If you want to retain your records, learn how at: www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/studentrecords.



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SOIRÉE

continued from page 1

is just a number.

Attendees were decked out in poodle skirts, leather jackets, and saddle shoes, enjoying '50s-inspired appetizers, diner-style fare, and sweet treats that included old-school root beer floats and crowd-favorite cookies from the Bloomer Girls.

One guest shared, "I didn't think I would ever get the chance to dance like that again in my lifetime." Another added, "I've never seen anything like it here in town. This event did exactly what the building was designed for....it brought everyone together!"

This magical night wouldn't have been possible without the generous support of the Upton Men's Club, whose sponsorship helped bring the event to life. Special thanks also go to the dedicated Blackstone Valley Tech students and staff who gave their Friday evening to capture the fun and help make lasting memories.

A heartfelt shoutout goes to

the Upton Hoofbeats 4-H Club for their beautiful, handmade corsages that added a personal and elegant touch to the evening. And of course, deep appreciation is extended to the team of incredible volunteers—from event planners to kitchen helpers—whose hard work and enthusiasm made the night truly special.

With music, laughter, and community spirit in abundance, the 2025 Annual Senior Soirée was more than just a dance—it was a celebration of joy, connection, and timeless fun that will continue in years to come.



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TAFT LIBRARY

continued from page 11

just for them, and for those interested in learning American sign language we provide access to Mango ASL. Mango’s Intuitive Language Construction methodology helps build skills in vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, culture, comprehension, and retention. To see all of the Mango options the Taft Library offers scroll down the left-hand side of our webpage to the Databases section.

Friends of the Taft Public Library Meeting

The Friends of the Library meetings are typically held on the last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. downstairs in the Art Holmes Community Room, unless it falls on a holiday or during a school vacation. All are welcome (and encouraged) to attend! If you plan on attending, it’s always a good idea to call the library at 508-473-3259 or email the Friends at friendsoftaftlibrary@gmail.com to confirm the date and time of the meeting. The group will do its best to post any meeting changes on the Taft Library web site. Please note: The next Friends meeting will be in September.

CHILDREN PROGRAMS JULY 2025

Summer Reading – July 2025

Summer Reading is in full swing at the Taft Library! Hope

you can join us for some of our fun events!

For more information on how to register for prizes and events, please visit our website at www.taftpubliclibrary.org.

- July 14 – Lego Club 10:30 a.m.
- July 15 – Itty Bitty Storytime at 9:30 a.m., Story and Craft at 10:30 a.m., and Joe Buckley Mini Golf from 2 – 6 p.m.
- July 16 – Itty Bitty Storytime at 9 a.m., Storytime with Santa at Town Beach at 10:30 a.m., Egg Drop Challenge at 1 p.m., and Adult Handcrafting at 2 p.m.
- July 17 – Mr. Vinny’s Bubble Show at 10 a.m. and Read Around Town at Southwick’s Zoo at 1 p.m.
- July 21 – Itty Bitty Storytime at 9:30 a.m. and Story and Craft at 10:30 a.m.
- July 22 – Cursive Writing Workshop at 6 p.m.
- July 23 – Itty Bitty Storytime at 9 a.m., Poop Museum at 10:30 a.m., and 25th Cardboard Boat Race at Town Beach at 6 p.m.
- July 24 – Read Around Town at the Police Station at 10:30 a.m.
- July 28 – BaNannies at 10:30 a.m.
- July 29 – Itty Bitty Storytime at 9:30 a.m., Story and Craft at 10:30 a.m., Ed the Wizard Balloon Tying Workshop at 2:30 p.m.
- July 30 – Itty Bitty Storytime at 9 a.m. and Oreo Stacking at 10:30 a.m.
- July 31 – Read Around Town at JJ’s Ice Cream at 1 p.m.

HEARTWARMING

continued from page 2

months, letters flew back and forth – filled with stories, questions, drawings and lots of smiles. Both seniors and students eagerly awaited each new letter, sharing 7 letters with their pen pals while discussing hobbies, favorite books and foods, family traditions and much more.

Seniors participating in the program found it equally rewarding. Upton Senior, Linda Rynhart, shared that “the pen pal meet and greet was one of my favorite times all year! Every month was fun to anticipate the pen pal letters”. Several seniors noted that the opportunity to share stories, reflect on life experiences, and learn about the interests of younger generations brought joy and meaningful engagement into their lives.

Socialization has been shown to have powerful health benefits for seniors, including reduced stress and anxiety, improved cardiovascular health, a stronger immune system, and even increased longevity. For children, engaging with older adults can enhance empathy, improve communication skills, and help them feel more connected to their community.

“As facilitators of this program, it has been encouraging to see the students and seniors of Upton create a connection with one another, without having ever met face to face”, said San Clemente. “This program

has given Upton seniors an opportunity to engage with the younger generation and we hope that this is just the start of building a stronger community across all generations.”

Tania Paparazzo, Director of Elder and Social Services, added, “It has been truly heartwarming to witness the collaboration between Memorial School and the Upton Senior Center in bringing this meaningful program to life. The connections formed through the Pen Pal Program highlight the powerful impact of community partnerships. This initiative has laid the groundwork for more inclusive and innovative intergenerational programming that we plan to bring to our community in the near future.”

The Pen Pal Program has made a big impact on the Upton community, with the meet & greet being a highlight for all participants. Students and seniors alike were able to put faces to the names that have come to mean so much to them over the past few months. As for Katie San Clemente and Mrs. Jan Maglione, there are already plans in the works to make next year’s program even bigger and better.

For more information about the Pen Pal Program or other intergenerational initiatives, please contact Katie San Clemente at the Upton Community Center at 508-529-4558.

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SPORTS

Valley Tech Girls' Track rewrites record book

Beavers set multiple program marks during strong season



Grace Shields, Leah Maghalaes, Chelsea Swan (head coach), Pricille Blega, Abigail Bilodeau. Photo credit: Deann Iacovelli



TOP ROW: Mara Keane, Ella Drumheller, Abigail Bilodeau, Haley Bilodeau, Pricille Blega, Riley Hargrove, Nadia Shloul, Elisabeth Fitzpatrick-Kurtyka, Leah Maghalaes, Emily Blanding, Elizabeth Moroz, Olivia Guido. FRONT ROW: Leah Boudreau, Kumani Torku, Gabriella Pinto, Genevieve Kovolyan, Cassi Doyle, Grace Shields, Cecelia Dualu. Photo credit: Deann Iacovelli

By Chris Villani

The Blackstone Valley Tech girls' track and field team entered the 2025 season with lofty goals, including going undefeated and winning the Massachusetts Vocational Athletic Director's Association Championship meet.

The Beavers did check off the

latter of those two objectives, and set six new program records along the way during a stellar campaign.

"I am very proud of the athletes this season," said Head Coach Chelsea Swan. "My girls track team was hard-working, reliable, dependable, and consistent. Many of them were will-

ing to try new events and a few found success in them which is always a joy to see as a coach."

Senior Haley Bilodeau set a new school record in the javelin with a throw of more than 124 feet. Her sister Abigail Bilodeau

set school records of her own in the 200, 400, and as a member of the 4x100 relay team with Grace Shields, Pricille Blega, and Leah Magalhaes. Not to be outdone was Shields, who set her own school record in the 100-meter dash. Mara Keane rounded out the record breaking this spring with BVT's best-ever time in the 1600-meter event.

That group posted some strong results during the post-season meets at the end of the year. Abigail Bilodeau won the 100 at District E and the MVADA Championships. Keane won the 2-mile at the MVADA championships and ran both the 1-mile and 2-mile at the state meet. Magalhaes competed in the three events at states, the 100, 200, and the relay. Both Bilodeau's and Shields were Colonial Athletic League all-stars.

Even though the Beavers did not run the table this year, Swan said she was happy with the effort her athletes put forth.

"I did see so many girls outperform expectations I had individually and I think they outperformed the expectations that they had for themselves," she said. "I'm particularly proud of the respect I saw my athletes have for themselves and their abilities."

Leading the way for Valley Tech were its team captains Haley Bilodeau, Keane, Shields, and Blega along with senior distance runner Harmony Melendez-Torres and junior distance runner Genevieve Kovolyan. Swan said hers was an "exceptional" group of captains.

"I knew I could rely on them to do anything we needed, from convey any messages that we needed to get out to the team, lead students through dynamic warm-ups, lead the team through set up for meets, or encourage younger athletes to try new events," Swan said. "This group of captains also served as the standard for consistency and how hard work can pay off."

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SPORTS

Nipmuc Softball marches to the Final 4

Small but talented Warriors team posted 21-3 mark

By Chris Villani

Nipmuc Softball Head Coach Stephanie DeBaggis barely had time to think about her team's record, most of the time she was just focused on having enough players to field two teams.

Nipmuc only had 20 total players in the softball program this year for both varsity and junior varsity but managed 21 wins and a trip to the state's final four.

"The girls exceeded my expectations," DeBaggis said after the season. "They were amazing together and they just kept going. Their chemistry, their desire, it was awesome."

Due to the small roster size, it was not uncommon for Nipmuc to only have 10 players on the bench for a varsity game and nine, the bare minimum, for the JV team.

"We had to move some games because we didn't have enough players between the two," DeBaggis said.

The goals were still lofty for Nipmuc. DeBaggis hoped to win the Dual Valley Conference in its final year and beat Hopedale, a longtime rival. Nipmuc checked both of those goals off the list and only lost twice before the run came to an end against Dighton-Rehoboth in the state semifinal.

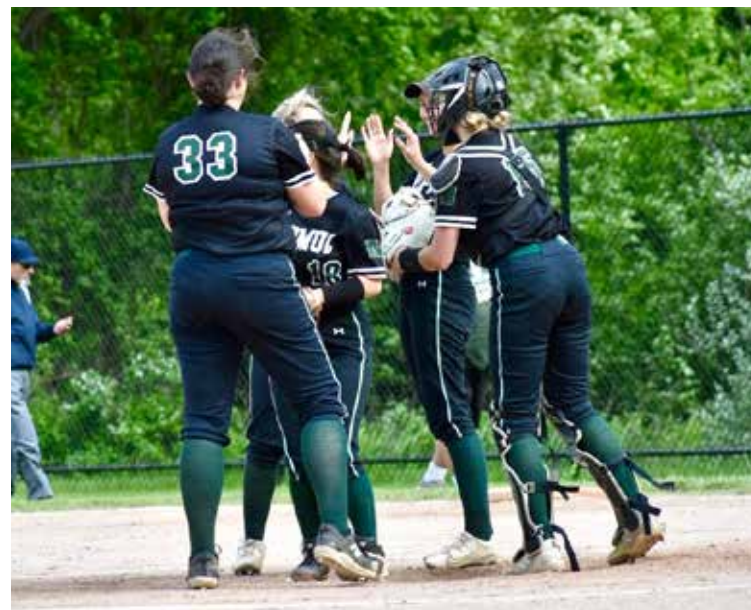
Seniors Keegan Kelley, Bridget Klupa, and Isabelle Nicholson were "rock steady" for Nipmuc all season, DeBaggis said, and invaluable to the team's success. But many of the key contributors were underclassmen. Six different batters hit home runs for the Warriors and the whole lineup was con-



Sierra Lopes (2) was one of Nipmuc's most athletic players this spring. Photo credit: Michelle Leitch



Keegan Kelley was a team captain and a mainstay for Nipmuc's 21-3, final four campaign. Photo credit: Michelle Leitch



Nipmuc gathers on the field during a game this season. Photo credit: Michelle Leitch

sistent, DeBaggis said.

In the pitching circle, freshman Charlotte Leitch won 13 games and Savannah Carr, a junior, won eight more. Junior Sierra Lopes played third base and added a fast, athletic presence to the Nipmuc lineup. The middle infield consisted of Nicholson along with junior Kira DeBaggis and sophomore Allie Burzdel. Sophomore Quinn Gemmel was a strong defensive player for Nipmuc and Maya Vercurysse was a standout centerfielder.

DeBaggis said that all 20 members of the program deserved recognition for the way they contributed to the team's success, including four players who joined the JV team despite only being in the 8th grade.

With so much coming back, Nipmuc could be in line for another strong season next spring.

"That is always the hope," DeBaggis said. "But not having expectations helped us this year and that will be something to battle."

And without the DVC, Nipmuc will face an even stronger schedule in 2026.

"Our record might not be as

good next year," DeBaggis said, "but I do think our experience going into the playoffs is going to be that much better."

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<p>2025 CHEVY TRAX LT AS LOW AS \$89/WK #47480CTP • 17" ALLOYS, TURBO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$28,565 \$24,977</p>	<p>2024 TOYOTA TUNDRA 4x4 AS LOW AS \$182/WK #TP5715 • SR5, ALLOYS, 3.4L V6 NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$58,405 \$50,977</p>	<p>2019 JEEP CHEROKEE 4x4 AS LOW AS \$72/WK #125-150A • LIMITED, ALLOYS, V6 NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,400 \$19,977</p>	<p>2022 HYUNDAI TUCSON SEL AS LOW AS \$90/WK #47329L • AWD, HEATED SEATS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$36,750 \$24,977</p>	<p>2022 TOYOTA COROLLA LE AS LOW AS \$78/WK #TP5790 • 30/38 MPG CITY/HWY NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$26,589 \$21,677</p>	<p>2024 HYUNDAI SANTA CRUZ AS LOW AS \$96/WK #TP5483 • SEL TRIM, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,265 \$26,977</p>
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<p>2023 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER AS LOW AS \$127/WK #TP4692 • LE TRIM, ALLOYS, CPO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$45,775 \$35,977</p>					

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