



Oxford's Route 20 Construction Temporary Lane Closures

BY JANET STOICA
jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

Route 20's safety and reconstruction project progresses. The four-year project, which is expected to finish in late 2026, has already passed the half-way mark and includes middle road curbed medians, sidewalks, wider and smoother lane negotiations, better visual fields, bridge replacements over Oxford's French River and Charlton's Little River, and stormwater drain improvements.

According to the MassDOT website, about 26,000 vehicles travel along the 3.2 mile stretch daily and temporary overnight

lane closures began on Sunday, July 27, and are expected to last through most of August. The lane closures will begin at 7 p.m. and last through 5 a.m. the following day. This lane closure will shift traffic on Route 20 eastbound and westbound from the center of the roadway to the outside lanes of the roundabout. Traffic will need to slow their speeds while approaching the work zone to travel through the construction area.

MassDOT has issued work zone speed limits to reduce the posted speed limit on Route 20 within the project work zone, between Route 12 and Richardson Corner Road, until further notice. The

posted speed limits will be further reduced during active work hours for the safety of the roadway users and workers.

Speed limits are reduced in the following areas:

- Richardson Corner to Route 56: the speed limit has been reduced from 50 mph to 45 mph. During active work hours, the speed limit will be further reduced to 40 mph.

- Route 56 to Thayer Pond Drive: The speed limit has been reduced from 40 mph to 35

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Auburn Appoints New Police Chief, Town Receives Mass Save Grant Funding

BY JANET STOICA
jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

Effective July 15, Town Manager Dori Vecchio has appointed R. Scott Mills as Auburn's new Police Chief. The Chief has been with the Auburn police since 1997 and, while working in the patrol division, became a member of the CEMLEC SWAT team, a regional tactical unit providing specialized law enforcement services to over 45 participating towns in Central Mass. In this time period he also became a detective.

After being promoted to Sergeant, he supervised patrol shifts, oversaw Communications Dispatchers as well as the Property & Evidence Room, assumed responsibilities for firearms licensing and became involved in grant writing. In 2013, Chief Mills returned to the detective unit and investigated the murder of Officer Ronald Tarentino, Jr. while also serving as the detective division's supervisor until 2022 when Chief Lemon promoted him to the rank of Provisional Lieutenant, and soon after, a further promotion to

Deputy Police Chief. Chief Mills stated, "We are going to invest in officer safety and wellness through innovative programs and realistic, high-



New Auburn Police Chief R. Scott Mills being sworn in by Assistant Town Clerk Wendy Bloomquist

quality training. We will continue our commitment to overall public safety through proactive traffic enforcement initiatives, enhancing our strong relationships with the

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The Oxford Police Officers thank all of the players and donators for annual OPD golf tourney on August 15. Officer Robbie 'Pic' Picard and his wife Michelle worked all year to prep for this event that was very successful and raised money for the police benevolent fund that gives back to the community through scholarships and community events. The tournament was held at Pine Ridge Country Club in North Oxford. Courtesy of OPD Facebook

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ROUTE 20
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mph. During active work hours, the speed limit will be further reduced to 30 mph.

- Thayer Pond Drive to Route 12: The speed limit has been reduced from 45 mph to 40 mph. During active work hours, the speed limit will be further reduced to 35 mph.

Dynamic message signs will be posted to show the reduced speed limit during active work hours and advance warning signs are

used onsite to notify the traveling public of the reduced speed limits.

MassDOT has also issued a restriction prohibiting vehicles carrying wide loads over 8 feet, 6 inches (8'6") from traveling through the Route 20 Reconstruction Project work zone, between Route 12 and Richardson Corner Road. The travel restriction is in place 24 hours per day, seven days per week until further notice. All vehicles carrying wide loads should avoid the work zone, seek alternate routes, and contact mass.gov/commercial-truck-permits

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wheel.
5-7 p.m. Dungeons and Dragons session (last Wednesday of every month) in the Teen Room for ages 10 and up. Beginner friendly.

The library will be closed on Saturday, August 30 and Monday, September 1.

Thursday, Aug 28 2- 4 p.m. Movie Matinee

Wheeler Wednesday August 27 All Day

Thursdays in Sept. 1 p.m. knitting, crocheting and embroidery Friday, Sept. 5 Senior book group 12:45 p.m.

Last day to spin the wheel and say goodbye to all things summer in our prize boxes. Take one more chance by stopping by the Teen Librarian's office to spin the prize

Visit the website for up to date September listings of events.

Health Care and Your Retirement Seminar

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 - Long-term medical care expenses
 - Strategies for addressing out-of-pocket expenses

Speakers: Dennis Antonopoulos (Financial Advisor for Edward Jones) & Lynne Mussulli (Medicare Specialist)

Date: Thursday – September 18, 2025

Time: 5:45pm Registration - 6:00pm Seminar begins

Location: Brookdale Eddy Pond West, 669 Washington Street, Auburn, MA 01501

To Register: Please call Karen Rieser at 508-832-5385 or email Karen.rieser@edwardjones.com by Sept. 17. Bring along a guest for this no cost informational seminar.

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4th Friday: The YankeeXpress North: Auburn, Oxford

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Contact us:

Patty Roy, Editor: proy@theyankeeexpress.com

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Kate Carr, The Yankee Xpress North and South (Auburn, Charlton, Dudley, Oxford, and Webster); katecarr@localtownpages.com

Susanne Odell Farber, Upton, Mendon, Hopedale: sue@sodellconsult.com

Laura Gleim, Billing & Sales: lgleim@theyankeeexpress.com

Kimberly Vasseur, Production Manager

Sally Patterson, Graphic Artist

Contributing Writers and Columnists: Tom D'Agostino, Christine Galeone,

Amy Palumbo-LeClaire, Mark Marzeotti, John Paul, Janet Stoica, Christopher Tremblay

The YankeeXpress/@2025

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Auburn Senior Center

4 Goddard Drive, Auburn
 Mon. and Fri. 8 a.m. – 3 p.m.
 Tues., Wed., Thu. 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.
 508-832-7799

ONGOING ACTIVITIES:

The Blood Pressure Clinic is the first Monday of each month from 10:30 – 11:30 a.m. Provided by the Care Central VNA and Hospice Inc. No charge. First come, first served.

Mondays – Senior Sweat, 10 a.m. \$3 with Dr. Clermont. Adult coloring, 10:30 a.m. Enjoy this relaxing hobby; Yoga for Mindfulness, 11 a.m. \$2. Canasta at 12:45 p.m. \$2
 Tuesdays – Gentle Flow Yoga,

11 a.m. \$3; Let's Move Together, 1 p.m., \$3

Tuesdays and Thursdays – Chair Dance with Forty Arroyo, 10 a.m. \$3.

Mondays and Wednesdays – Walking Club, both days at 9 a.m. at Lemansky Field, 400 Oxford Street, Knit & Stitch, Monday 10 a.m.; Wednesday 9:30 a.m.

Wednesdays and Fridays – Strength and Balance, 10 a.m. \$3
 Wednesdays - Tech Clinic (be sure to check calendar) 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.; Pitch at

1 p.m.; Cribbage at 6 p.m.

Thursdays – Bingo at 12:45 p.m.; iPad Club at 1 p.m.

Fridays – Meditation, 11 a.m. ; Quilting, 12 p.m. ;Bridge 12:45 p.m.; Dominos at 12:45 p.m.; Pitch 6:30 p.m.

Instruction:

The Auburn Senior Center and the WRTA offer a transit service for the residents of Auburn who are age 60 and over and for people with disabilities of all ages. This is a shared ride service that will pick you up at your home. The van may make stops to pick up/drop off other passengers while you are on the way to your

destination. Call the WRTA to set up an account and schedule service at 508-752-8283.

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schools and young people and we will continue to meet the standards of investigative excellence as we work to prevent and solve crimes.”

Recently, the town has announced that it will be receiving funding for the inaugural Mass Save Municipal Energy Manager Grant program from the Sponsors of Mass Save® to hire an energy manager who will lead efforts to reduce the municipality's energy use and carbon emissions in municipal buildings. As part of a concerted effort to become more energy efficient, the energy manager will help the town utilize Mass Save programs and incentives for energy efficiency and building decarbonization projects in municipal buildings, with a focus

on K-12 schools.

“I would like to extend our sincere thanks to Mass Save for the generous grant that is helping to fund our new Energy Manager position. With the ever-increasing cost of energy, it is essential that we work together to reduce consumption where possible.” said Vecchio, town manager. “This new position will collaborate with both town residents and municipal departments to identify and implement energy-saving opportunities that will benefit our entire community.”

Auburn is one of 63 municipalities to receive this type of grant funding for its schools. The Mass Save® collaborative includes Berkshire Gas, Cape Light Compact, Eversource, Liberty, National Grid, and Unitil.

Safe Boating Certificate & Paddlecraft Course Offered at Bay Path in Charlton

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Tri-State Flotilla, Massachusetts will be instructing two upcoming boating safety classes. THE PADDLER'S GUIDE TO SAFETY, a class for novice paddlers covering basics like: equipment required and advisable for kayaks, canoes, paddleboards, etc.; also, safety concerns, situational awareness, and practice skills. Scheduled for Thursday September 18, 2025 from 6 till 8 PM.

THE BOAT AMERICA COURSE that meets current and future state mandated educational requirements is offered in a two-night format developed to provide the skills and confidence needed to explore the coast and inland waters by boat. Basic knowledge and skills are needed to have safe and enjoyable boating experiences. This course is perfect for families that have just purchased any type of boat or are planning to in the future, and for the boater keeping up with changes to boating regulations and laws. Basic marlinespike seamanship (knots etc.) will also be included. Scheduled for Tuesday October 7 and Thursday October 9, from 5:30 to 9 PM. Successful completion of the BA course will certify any minor, from 12 to 16 years of age, to operate a powerboat, including a Personal Water Craft / Jet Ski (for 16 & 17-year-old operators), on all

Massachusetts waters; in conjunction with the Mass. Environmental Police. Approved by National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) it will also cover the requirements to operate a vessel in most other states & many countries where boating safety education is mandatory including RI and CT.

The Hanson-Milone Boater Safety Act, signed into Mass. Law January 8, will now require ALL Mass. motorboat operators to complete an approved Safe Boating Certificate course before April 1, 2026 for anyone born after 1/1/1998, and by April 1, 2028 for boaters born before 1/1/1998. Enforcement of the new law will begin on September 1, 2026. This course meets the future Mass. requirement. Most boating insurance companies offer a discount on premiums for successful completion of this course. Participants 16 years old and under must be accompanied, in person, by a registered parent/guardian. SPACE IS LIMITED so register soon:

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THE BOAT AMERICA COURSE...Oct. 7 & 9, 2025 from 5:30 till 9 PM

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By calling Sheri Dreitlein (508) 248-5971 or email sdreitlein@baypath.net

You can also contact our Public Education Officer Phil Kubat for registration or additional information: email phil.uscgaux@verizon.net or call (508) 478-3778.

To locate these and other USCG Auxiliary courses go to: https://www.cgaux.org/boatinged/class_finder/index.php

The Coast Guard Auxiliary is the uniformed civilian component of the U.S. Coast Guard and supports the Coast Guard in nearly all mission areas. The Auxiliary was created by Congress in 1939. For more information, please visit www.cgaux.org



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Cellphones and Watching Out for the Other Driver

BY JANET STOICA
jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

Sometimes it seems like a bad dream. You're driving along a highway, like Route 290, and suddenly here comes a lane-changer who does not ever use a blinker (or as those of us in Massachusetts say: blinkah). They cut you off and charge over two other lanes of traffic to get to the Mass. Pike exit. And how about those trailer trucks as they belch their thick black diesel

exhaust smoke when they're driving in front of you. Their exhaust pipes leave greasy black diesel drops flying onto your windshield (and your car for that matter). Of course, when you try to use windshield-washer fluid along with your windshield wipers to get that thick black goo off your windshield it now becomes one big greasy obstruction. It's so wonderful I could just smile all day about it. Not!

Okay, let's name some more crazy drivers. You know the ones.

Those drivers who many people jokingly say have gotten their driver's licenses at the bargain store. Never mind that they have no concept of blinkah usage, how to use their sideview mirrors,

behind those big rigs, thank you. There are always nightmares, however. Like the young drivers who wait at a stop sign to make a left turn when the sign in front of them clearly states "No Left

using their lovely techniques. The age group does vary but the majority of these drivers are in their 20's and 30's. Even though Massachusetts has a Hands-Free cellphone law, evidently some cellphone users think this law does not pertain to them. Of course not! That law is for other people, not them, right?

According to Massachusetts' law, drivers 18 and older can only touch their phones to activate the hands-free mode and must have the device properly mounted. Handheld use is prohibited, including for texting, emailing, using apps, watching videos, or using the internet. Drivers under 18 are completely banned from using any electronic devices while driving, including hands-free.

Here's a more detailed breakdown for drivers 18 and over:

- Hands-free only: You can only use your phone in hands-free mode.
- Mounting: Devices must be properly mounted on the windshield, dashboard, or center console.
- Activation: You can only touch your phone to activate the hands-free mode.
- Prohibited uses: Texting, emailing, using apps, watching videos, or accessing the internet are not allowed, even with hands-free mode.

Vehicle passengers, however, can have a blast using their cells for whatever reason they choose, no worries for you. So, if you want to use your cellphone when driving, go ahead, just make sure you're buckled up and in one of the passenger seats!



or even to pay attention to their yellow flashing sensors on those sideview mirrors telling them that there actually IS a vehicle, as in yours, on their flank.

Most trailer-truck drivers are pretty decent folk. They don't drive too fast, they don't have black goo hawking onto your windshield when you drive behind them, and they always use their blinkahs. Sometimes they even quick-flash their tail lights at you as a "Thank You" for letting them into the lane in front of you. They'll even put their flashers on if they see a traffic slow down ahead since they're sitting high enough to see any traffic congestion before you and your lowly car ever will. That's a great slow-down behavior for all of us

Turn." You toot your horn to let them know that they should be paying attention to that sign but they just look at each other and laugh as they sip their energy drinks.

But the absolute worst of all has to be the cellphone user who is totally oblivious to Everything around them and I do mean Everything. They will drive with their cellphone held right above their steering wheel, merrily tapping text messages while their arms "hold" the steering wheel or, if they are aware of possible police presence, they will hold their phone to the right of the steering wheel just below the steering wheel height and ... they are driving along in heavy traffic. I've seen many collisions of all types

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What Did You Say Was in Your Water?

BY JANET STOICA
jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

Water. It's so taken for granted. It's so important for our survival. It's so full of.....

Webster has recently put out its annual Water Quality Report and here's some interesting facts for you to review. Education is the key to knowledge and this one's for anyone out there who's interested in what they're drinking every day. Many thanks go out to our Water/Sewer Superintendent, Tom Cutler, and to the entire staff of the Water/Sewer Department for keeping our water as safe as possible. All of the following information can be found online at the town's Water Department site.

Where does your Webster water come from? The town receives its water from seven gravel-packed groundwater wells. Five of those wells are located at Pump Station 1 on Memorial Beach Drive; the water from these is blended with that from the well at Pump Station 2 and sent to the treatment plant on Memorial Beach Drive. The treatment plant consists of a state-of-the-art green sand water filtration system that removes iron and manganese from the raw water of Pump Stations 1 and 2. Pump Station 3 is located on Bigelow Road. Each station is equipped with a sodium hypochlorite feed system for disinfection and potassium hydroxide for pH and corrosion control. Once the water is treated at each station, it goes directly to the distribution system, which consists of 75 miles of water main, one booster station, and two water storage tanks. The Park Road elevated tank has a capacity of 1 million gallons, and the underground Rawson Road tank has a capacity of 1.65 million gallons. Together, these facilities provide an average of 1.53 million gallons of water per day to 4,993 customer service connections. The department completed water main replacement on North Main Street and started the water meter replacement program along with per- and polyfluoroalkyl substance (PFAS) treatment construction at the Bigelow well site. They also continued leak repairs and annual routine maintenance on gate valves, fire hydrants, and water meters.

Thanks in part to aggressive marketing, the bottled water industry has successfully convinced us all that water purchased in bottles is a healthier alternative to tap water. However, according to a four-year study conducted by the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), bottled water is not necessarily cleaner or safer than most tap water. In fact, about 40 percent of bottled water is actually just tap



water, according to government estimates. The Food & Drug Administration (FDA) is responsible for regulating bottled water, but these rules allow for less rigorous testing and purity standards than those required by the U.S. EPA for community tap water. For instance, the high mineral content of some bottled waters makes them unsuitable for babies and young children. Further, the FDA completely exempts bottled water that's packaged and sold within the same state, which accounts for about 70 percent of all bottled water sold in the United States. People spend 10,000 times more per gallon for bottled water than they typically do for tap water. If you get your recommended eight glasses a day from bottled water, you could spend up to \$1,400 annually. The same amount of tap water would cost about 49 cents. Even if you installed a filter device on your tap, your annual expenditure would be far less than what you'd pay for bottled water.

It's getting foggy out there..... FOG (fats, oils, and grease). You may not be aware of it, but every time you pour fat, oil, or grease (FOG) down your sink (e.g., bacon grease), you are contributing to

a costly problem in the sewer collection system. FOG coats the inner walls of the plumbing in your house as well as the walls of underground piping throughout the community. Over time, these greasy materials build up and form blockages in pipes, which can lead to wastewater backing up into parks, yards, streets, and storm drains. These backups allow FOG to contaminate local waters, including drinking water. Exposure to untreated wastewater is a public health hazard. FOG discharged into septic systems and drain fields can also cause malfunctions, resulting in more frequent tank pump-outs and other expenses. Communities spend billions of dollars every year to unplug or replace grease-blocked pipes, repair pump stations, and clean up costly and illegal wastewater spills. Here are some tips that you and your family can follow to help maintain a well-run system now and in the future: NEVER pour FOG down the house or storm drains. Never dispose of food scraps by flushing them. Never use the toilet as a wastebasket. ALWAYS scrape and collect FOG into a waste container such as an empty coffee can, and dispose of it with your garbage. Always place food scraps in waste containers or garbage bags for disposal with solid wastes. Always place a wastebasket in each bathroom for solid wastes like disposable diapers, creams and lotions, and personal hygiene products including non-biodegradable wipes.

Think Before You Flush! Flushing unused or expired medicines can be harmful to your drinking water. Properly disposing of unused or expired medication helps protect you and the environment. Keep medications out of our waterways by disposing responsibly. To find a convenient drop-off location near you, please visit bit.ly/3leRyXy.

Lead can cause serious health effects in people of all ages, especially

pregnant people, infants (both formula-fed and breastfed), and young children. Lead in drinking water is primarily from materials and parts used in service lines and home plumbing. Webster Water Department is responsible for providing high-quality drinking water and removing lead pipes but cannot control the variety of materials used in the plumbing in your home. Because lead levels may vary over time, lead exposure is possible even when your tap sampling results do not detect lead at one point in time. You can help protect yourself and your family by identifying and removing lead materials within your home plumbing and taking steps to reduce your family's risk. Using a filter certified by an American National Standards Institute-accredited certifier to reduce lead is effective in reducing lead exposures. Follow the instructions provided with the filter to ensure it is used properly. Use only cold water for drinking, cooking, and making baby

formula. Boiling does not remove lead from water. Before using tap water for drinking, cooking, or making baby formula, flush your pipes for several minutes. You can do this by running your tap, taking a shower, or doing laundry or a load of dishes. If you have a lead or galvanized service line requiring replacement, you may need to flush your pipes for a longer period. If you are concerned about lead and wish to have your water tested, contact the Webster Water Department. Information on lead in drinking water, testing methods, and steps you can take to minimize exposure is available at epa.gov/safewater/lead. To address lead in drinking water, public water systems were required to develop and maintain an inventory of service line materials by October 16, 2024. Developing an inventory and identifying the location of lead service lines (LSL) is the first step for beginning LSL replacement and protecting public health. The lead service inventory may be accessed

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BY LEE-ANN BARKHOUSE

It's Late Summer—Let's Not Lose Our Manners

August brings that easygoing energy of late summer – flip-flops, cookouts, long weekends, and that general sense that we can all loosen up a bit. And we should! But while the dress code might be more casual and calendars a little lighter, even this transitional season isn't a hall pass to ditch basic kindness and courtesy. In fact, with so many shared spaces — beaches, parks, sidewalks, and yes, front lawns — it's the perfect time to dial up the respect and be more intentional with how we show up.

THIS MONTH'S HOT-TOPIC QUESTIONS:

Q. I witnessed someone yelling at a store employee. It made me so uncomfortable – should I have said something?

A. Sadly, this happens more than it should. If you feel safe, a simple “You’re doing a great job” or a kind word to the employee after the fact can go a long way. If the situation feels heated or unsafe, let a manager know. Rudeness isn't strength – it's just bad behavior. And a little support from a bystander can really help someone get through a tough moment.

Q. I waited over 30 minutes for a table, and then longer for food. Is it rude to complain?

A. You can advocate for yourself without being unkind. A calm, respectful question to the host or manager is absolutely fair. Just remember: most waitstaff aren't causing the delays. They're doing their best, often understaffed. Kindness counts – especially when tensions are high.

Q. Is it okay to wear flip-flops to work?

A. Depends on your office culture, but generally, save the beachwear for the beach. Even if your office is casual, you still want to look like you're there to do business. Open-toed is fine – shower shoes, not so much.

Q. I've seen a lot of people FaceTiming in public without headphones lately.

Is this okay now?

A. Just because we can doesn't mean we should. If you're having a full-on video chat in a café, store, or airport gate – use headphones or step aside. The rest of us don't need to be part of your conversation.

AND FINALLY, THE ETIQUETTE TIP OF THE MONTH:

A Kind Word to Dog Owners:
We love your pups, truly – but let's not let “relaxed summer mode” mean relaxing the rules. Please don't let your dog relieve themselves on neighbors' lawns or flower beds. Even if you're picking up after them, it's still someone's effort, money, and pride you're walking over. Aim for public grassy areas and respect that landscaping takes work. It's a small act of

courtesy that means a lot.

See you next month—stay cool, stay kind.
—Lee-Ann

Have a situation you'd like help with? Write in or email (info@investinuma.com) and your question may be featured in a future column. Let's build a kinder, more respectful world, one interaction at a time.

Lee-Ann Barkhouse is a certified etiquette and leadership coach who helps people show up with confidence, kindness, and credibility. At Invest in You (www.investinuma.com), she shares practical tools to make everyday moments more thoughtful and meaningful—whether at work, at home, or right here in the community.

Bay Path Voke Awarded \$1.3 Million Grant to Expand Adult Workforce Training

Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School has been awarded a Career Technical Initiative (CTI) Round 10 grant totaling \$1,337,077.24, a workforce development initiative supported by the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet.

This highly competitive grant will allow Bay Path to deliver no-cost, credentialed training and job placement services to unemployed and underemployed adults across Worcester County. Training will be provided in Automotive Collision Repair, Automotive Repair Technology,

Building Maintenance, Culinary Arts, Diesel Technology, Electrical, HVAC, Manufacturing, and Welding—fields critical to the Commonwealth's economic growth.

“We're incredibly grateful to the Healey-Driscoll Administration and the Workforce Skills Cabinet for this CTI grant,” said Superintendent-Director Kyle Brenner. “This funding allows Bay Path to significantly expand our adult training programs, directly addressing the critical demand for skilled tradespeople in our region. We're proud to empower individuals with the skills they need to thrive, while helping

build a stronger, more resilient workforce across Massachusetts.”

The Career Technical Initiative is designed to meet persistent workforce shortages in the trades and manufacturing sectors by leveraging the state's vocational school infrastructure. Bay Path will continue its close collaboration with MassHire Career Centers and regional Workforce Boards to provide high-quality training leading to industry-recognized credentials and direct employment pathways.

Eligible participants must be 18 years or older and either unemployed or underemployed—defined as earning less than \$56,100

annually (or \$27 per hour). Most recent high school graduates qualify as underemployed and are encouraged to apply.

Bay Path is building on a record of success. Through previous CTI Rounds 7 and 9, the school trained over 70 adult learners in trades such as Culinary Arts, HVAC, Manufacturing, and Automotive Collision Repair—many of whom are now working in their chosen industries.

Pamela Truenow, CTI Auto Collision class of 2025 and now employed at Long Subaru said, “As a graduate of the CTI Program, I am excited for the new group of students that will be able to take advantage of the hands-on vocational training. This program will provide them the skills and tools needed to acquire jobs and improve their

lives. I am working in the auto collision field and am planning on more education to better my current position and enhance my career. The support that Bay Path and MassHire provided throughout the program and after with job assistance was key!”

Bay Path's CTI employer partners include: Masonic Health System/The Overlook, ckSmith Superior, C&C Temp Control, Inc., Kinefac Corporation, Upper Blackstone Clean Water, Dexter, MassDOT, Sheet Metal Workers Local #63, BAPS, The Arc, Primetals, HVAC/R Service Contractors, Table 3 Restaurant Group, Fuller Collision Center, Long Subaru, Harr Motor Group, UMass, and Flexcon.

Interested participants can learn more or apply by visiting masshirecentralcc.com/baypathcti/h

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Saturday (Aug. 23) Last day to claim Summer Reading drawing tickets and prizes.

Monday (Aug. 25 only) Drawing for Summer Reading. Winners contacted by email. Lego Club at 4 p.m. Friends Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Tuesdays Baby-Toddler Storytime ages 0-3 at 10 a.m.; Preschool Storytime (canceled on Aug.26) 3:30 p.m.; Knitting Group 5-7 p.m.

Wednesday Baby Toddler Storytime ages 0-3 at 10 a.m.; Alphabits ages 3-6 at 11 a.m.; Literacy Bingo ages 4-8 with prizes at 4 p.m.

Thursday, Aug 28 from 2-3 p.m. Virtual Author Talks: "How to Thrive in a World of Constant Chaos" with Dr. Tasha Eurich. She is an organizational psychologist, researcher, and New York Times bestselling author on a mission to help people and organizations thrive in an ever-changing world. Register now to be a part of the conversation!

Teen Crafting grades 5-12 at 6 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 3 Virtual Author Talks: "On Writing Darkly, Charming Villainous Love" with Hannah Nicole Maehrer. Author of New York

Times best selling "The Accomplice to the Villain" series. 7-8 p.m.

Thursday, Sept 4 Dungeons & Dragons (8-12 grade) at 3 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 6 "Reflecting Upon Life through Poetry, Quotes and Photos." A book presentation by author David Vasquez, founder of WINS for Life. Registration opens Aug. 23.

Monday, Sept 8 Monthly Book Club at 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 9 Kids Crafternoon for ages 4+

Wed baby-toddler time story ages 0-3 10 a.m

Alphabits ages 3-6 11 a.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 10 Virtual Author Talks: "Argue Less and Talk More" with communication expert Jefferson Fisher, 2-3 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept. 10 Teen Volunteers grades 7-12. For those interested in volunteering at the library at 2:30 p.m.

Teen Crafternoon, grades 5-12 at 3:30 p.m. Hang out, listen to music and make some art!

Children's book club grades 2 and 3 at 5 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 15 Preschool Storytime ages 3-6 at 1:30 p.m. Free play, stories, bubbles and a craft.

Lego club 4 p.m. time to free-build

Children's Book Club grades 4 and 5 at 5 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept 16 Baby-Toddler Storytime ages 0-3 years at 10 a.m. 15-20 minutes of free play, followed by songs, a short story and bubbles

Kids Crafternoon 3:30 p.m.

Knitting Group 5 p.m. No registration.

Wednesday, Sept. 17 Baby-Toddler Storytime , ages 0-3 at 10 a.m.

Alphabits, ages 3-6 years at 11 a.m.

Virtual Author Talks: "Our Failed Attempts to Make English EeZier to Spell" with author Gabe Henry. 2-3 p.m. Register.

Teen Volunteers 2:30 p.m.

Teen Crafternoon, grades 5-12 at 3:30 p.m.

Adult Crafting Program: paper flower decoration. For ages 18+ Register.

Thursday, Sept. 19 Dungeons & Dragons grades 8-12 at 3 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 22 Library Friends Meeting at 5:30 p.m.

Tuesday, Sept. 23 Baby-Toddler Storytime, 0-3 years at 10 a.m.

Knitting group 5 p.m.

Wednesday, Sept 24

Baby-Toddler Storytime, 0-3 years at 10 a.m.

Alphabits ages 3-6 11 a.m.

Teen Volunteers 2:30 p.m.

Teen Crafternoon 3:30 p.m.

Thursday, Sept. 25 - 6:30pm "She Can Do It: 'Reel' Women and Mid-Century Mysteries." join mystery authors Janet Raye Stevens and Sharon Healy-Yang for an engaging multimedia event revealing some intriguing inspirations for creating a mystery set circa WWII. Using film clips, anecdotes, and excerpts from their books, Janet and Sharon talk about 1940s women in real as well as "reel" life and how these smart, stylish, and wise-cracking gals in books and film inspire their own 1940s-set mysteries. If you love movies, mysteries, and lots of banter, don't miss it!

Oxford Senior Center

323 Main Street
508-987-6000

Email: seniorcenter@oxfordma.us

Mondays – Cribbage 10 a.m.

Tuesdays – Strength & Balance 9:15 a.m.; Needle Workers 10:15 a.m.

Wednesdays – Chair Yoga 9:15 a.m.; Needle Workers 10:15 a.m.; Chair Volleyball 1 p.m.

Thursdays – Dominoes 10 a.m.; Beginner Tap Dance 12:30 p.m. (No experience, no taps needed).

Fridays – Walking Club (weather permitting) 9 a.m.; Cribbage 10 a.m. The Senior Book Club meets Sept. 5 at 12:45 p.m. We are reading "Vera Wong's Unsolicited Advice for Murderers" by Jesse Sutanto.

The cost to use the senior center van is \$1.75 each way (\$3.50 round trip). Exceptions are free rides to any town building (Senior Center, Community Center, Town Hall, Library and Oxford Schools.

SENIOR SERVICES

Outreach Coordinator Cindy Nagle is available to offer free confidential information and referral services on aging related issues. She can help with a variety of paperwork, including SNAP, Fuel Assistance and Mass Health applications.

The Tri-Valley Inc. Options Counselor will be at the Senior Center on the third Tuesday of the month by appointment from 12:30 – 2:30 p.m. She can help with a wide range of options and resources available for you, your family and/or caregiver.

SHINE PROGRAM

The SHINE Counselor, Kaye, is available for one on one appointments on the third Wednesday of the month with free health insurance information and counseling.

Call the senior center at 508-987-6000 to make appointments.

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SPORTS

Oxford Boys Soccer

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Being somewhat of a small school the Oxford boys soccer team had been struggling with numbers - losing athletes to area vocational and private schools - and with that came rough seasons. Recently the team seems to have righted the ship as the Pirates have been able to capture three of the last four Southern Worcester Country League (SWCL) Championships.

While Oxford has been on the cheerful side of the win column, things could change with league

revamps and that may disrupt the Pirates success. Oxford went 11-6-1 last fall qualifying for the Division 4 State Tournament where they took out Bellingham 1-0 in the first round, but then ran into Cohasset, the number one seed, and eventual State Champion.

Success in the SWCL is about to shift as the Central Mass. leagues are all being switched around - Oxford will be moving into the Central Massachusetts Athletic Conference (CMAC) this fall with teams like Quaboag, Burncoat, Monty Tech and Abbey Kelley.

"Everything is going to be all new," said Oxford coach Paul



Frykberg. "A new league and new schools that we are not familiar with at all."

The Pirates graduated five seniors who were part of the original team that created successful changes within the program. They were talented soccer players who stuck it out during the rough times and made the program what it is today.

Last fall, Oxford fielded 24 athletes about half of whom were freshman, giving Frykberg group of athletes that pushed and motivated one another to be better. And while that team was star driven with a number of top players this year's squad is going to be totally different.

"We are returning 16 or 17 players from last year's team and it is going to be nice having players who understand the system, while bringing experience to the field," Frykberg said.

One of the leaders this fall will be senior keeper Sam Paradise,

who has been playing with the squad since the eighth grade. The now-senior took over the goalie role fully as a sophomore and hasn't looked back since. According to the coach, he is a solid keeper who has not only grown physically, but defensively as well.

In front of Paradise, Frykberg will field a solid defensive group led by sophomores Charlie Paul and Kaiden Labay. Both athletes started last year playing outside back as freshmen. Although their talent will once again be on the back line, Frykberg is unsure of what he will have in terms of athletes back there this year until after the tryouts so he may be forced to move things around.

Another sophomore will be center mid / attack and playmaker Wyatt McQuillan. Last season, the freshman was very poised and patient with the ball.

"Wyatt is a very skilled player that brings a laid-back approach to the game, but is very confident

in his passes," the Pirate Coach said. "He'll be our set-up guy but it will be interesting to see where we actually getting our goal scoring from this year."

Nate Davis had 27 goals for Oxford last fall. Chase Paul and Huck McQuillan will patrol the midfield and look to help out with the offense.

Frykberg believes that he has set the tone with the young underclassmen over the last few years. They will enter the new season with an understanding of what the team needs to do to become successful and get to the next level. However, playing in the CMAC will bring a whole new outlook on what it takes to cross that threshold.

"It will be interesting and I am really not sure what is going to happen this year," the Oxford coach said. "I do know that we are coming into the season looking to win the league and get ourselves back into the tournament."

Over the years, the Pirates have been able to qualify for the Division 4 State Tournament; unfortunately they have not been able to make it past the second round and that will be part of their outlook for the upcoming season.

"It will be a lofty goal, but it will give us something to push for," Frykberg said. "This team will have the potential of accomplishing that goal, it all depends on how our regular season goes in the new league."

Although playing in a new league, Oxford just has to play its game while keeping its opponents close and with the power rankings should once again be able to punch themselves a ticket to the post-season.

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TALES FROM BEYOND

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Russell Library's Literary Ghosts

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

In 1873, Frances Russell established Middletown, Connecticut's Russell Library in memory of her husband, Samuel. Mrs. Russell purchased an Episcopal Church on the corner of Broad and Court Streets, spending \$39,000 to remodel the building which opened on April 5, 1876. Although the church was converted into a library, weddings continued to take place in the public meeting room. The very first wedding took place in 1896, and the groom was the son of the janitor, Wallace Pease.

An old bank next door became the children's library and in 1983, both buildings were connected. Much of the architecture from the original church can still be seen throughout the building. All the renovations and additions seem to have awakened several spirits that now reside permanently in the complex. In fact, one paranormal group labeled it as the most haunted library in Connecticut.

Director of Public Services, Mary Dattilo, claims there is nothing scary about the ghosts,

they just like to interact with the public from time to time. The sound of whistling is heard in the basement that was part of the old church. The staff have also heard keys jangling even though none of them had a set on their person at the time. A paranormal group recorded a video of one of the drawers in the CD rack opening by itself. When asked if any of the spirits could make their presence known, the drawer opened in response. The ghost of a woman in dark clothing is seen wandering around the children's room. The staff have caught glimpses of her as she moves about the shelves of books. They concluded that she may have been one of the early library directors.

The tower at the back of the building was part of the church. Voices are heard in the tower even though it has been closed off for safety reasons. In the main reading room of the library, paranormal investigators asked if there were any of the Russell family present. A voice replied, "I am." One of the team members stated that she needed the spirit to say their name. The reply was "and

you are?"

Mary has had her own experiences as well. One night she was walking from the main lobby to the children's department. As she came close to the main desk, she saw a librarian sitting there rapidly shuffling her fingers through an old card catalog drawer. She passed by a partition that separates the hallway from the desk and then realized that the library no longer had card catalog drawers, as all the book information was now on computer. She quickly looked around the partition and the desk was void of both the ghost and the ancient card catalog.

She has also heard her name called when she is the only person in the room. One time, she heard her name called very clearly while everyone else was at a meeting in another building. Someone once dropped their hand on her shoulder, when she spun around to see who it was, no one was there. A witness who saw the incident said they saw the hair move off her shoulder as if someone was moving it before laying their hand on her. Mary was not frightened by the experience, but rather chalked

it up to one of the many ongoing paranormal incidents that transpire at the library. One of the more recent events she experienced was during a "Secrets of Russell Library" event.

"I was one of the performers and I was in the Hubbard Room. The audience had just left and I was alone in the room waiting for the next group to come in and I heard one lone person clapping, even though the room was completely empty other than myself."

Every October there is an event called "Secrets of Russell Library" where actors are placed in every section of the library representing someone from the past. They

tell the character's story and then share some ghost stories that have been documented at the library. This is followed by a tour of the more private places that no one is usually allowed in. These are also places where paranormal activity has been documented.

There are most likely many more stories that patrons could tell. It seems the ghosts of the Russell Library are not afraid to let themselves be heard or seen. The history of the building is quite fascinating in itself. Having a few lingering spirits only adds to the charm of the place.

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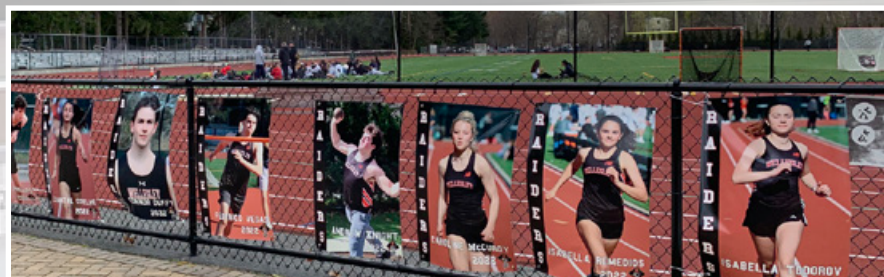
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Luke Fears Thunder

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

My heart goes out to Luke. At the same time, I need my sleep. Thunderstorms have become a situation this summer. “Rain is part of life, Luke.” I feign interest in my book. I want to validate my pup without coddling him; I’ve learned that an anxious parent causes an anxious dog. So, I’m doing my best to ignore the elephants in the room this summer. A rumble echoes in the distance—a challenge—before the BOOM smashes like a bowling ball through pins. The two of us pause. Luke lowers his head and grumbles, violated. “Wow. It’s raining cats and dogs now,” I say, hoping to speak Luke’s language.

I can tell that he’s suspicious. He sniffs the edge of the French doors. Rain pounds against the glass. He backs off. The home he has come to know, and love feels off center. He paces the floor and pants. “Something is screwy around here. Am I adopted? Is this my home?” Lightning brightens the room with an eerie flash, sending Luke straight to the edge of the couch. “This is officially bizarre.” “Come see Daddy.” Jim coaxes our uncourageous pup to climb on up. Though I’m supposed to assume a level of tough love, I find myself falling short. The storm has a creepy aura indeed. He lifts his front paws upon the couch and Daddy pulls the rest of him up. He adjusts himself with unnecessary drama, jostling and turning as though there’s no room for him. Then Man and Best Friend snuggle as though sharing a spooky sleep-over. “Tell me when it’s over.” Luke presses his big head into Daddy’s

chest. Daddy squeezes him like a stuffed animal. The situation has become hyperbolic. I exit the scene. “I think we need to help Luke better adapt to rainstorms,” I say, returning with a cup of tea. Luke squares his head to me from the center of a rumpled blanket. “We’re having a sleep-over, Momma.” Hours pass. The storm dies down. We all head to bed, never expecting the encore that was to come.

A pop of thunder rattles me while my eyes find the clock. 2:15 AM. I rub my forehead. A crazy dream fades to the back of my mind. I sort through subconscious and conscious realities. Luke must be so frightened downstairs. How are dogs supposed to understand what it means when a noise deeper than a gunshot resounds in your



Tell me when it's over ...

own home? He’s all alone down there. Maybe I’ll peek on him without him knowing I’m snooping on him. I toss a tee-shirt over my head and turn the bedroom knob slowly, a teenager post-curfew. Then I creep down the stairs. A creak betrays me. Damn! Still, I don’t hear a peep. Luke must be sleeping. I reach the stair railing and crane my neck to see Luke lying on his side like a lion in Daddy’s office. Whew! “Where have you been?” He snaps to his feet and tap dances along the floor. “Someone is trying to shoot us again.” He paces as though performing the word PANIC in a game of charades. “Luke.” I sit on the second to the last step and rub my forehead.

I was in a deep sleep, awakened ruthlessly by thunder, only to be weighed down further by my own worry for my dog. The house feels oddly quiet, and it seems wrong to be downstairs. Luke smiles wildly, a natural effect of being anxious. The gate sits between us, a barrier that has allowed me to sleep soundly upstairs, while Luke chooses one of four rooms to fall asleep in. The system seems fair. Still, a concession emerges like a genie from a bottle. “Please, please, please can I sleep upstairs for one night—” His bear cub face stills. His nose is as moist and black as soft leather. How can I say no? I unhitch the latch and grant him his wish. Luke races to the top of the stairs. “I owe you!” He romps across the upstairs carpet as though I’ve just taken him to Paradise Island. “THIS PART OF THE HOUSE IS SOOOOO FUN!! A hallway! More rooms! A whole bedroom!” Luke wiggles and wags and sniffs around my bedroom mess. “A sock! An end table!” My response is less colorful. Quietly, I climb back into bed and



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REAL ESTATE

Selling and Buying at the Same Time? Here's What You Need to Know

If you're a homeowner planning to move, you're probably wondering what the process is going to look like and what you should tackle first. Is it better to start by finding your next home?



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

Or should you sell your current house before you go out looking? Ultimately, what's right for you depends on a lot of factors and that's where The Marzeotti Group or other real estate professionals experience can really help make your next step clear. We know your local market, the latest trends, and what's working for other homeowners right now. And they'll be able to make a recommendation based on their expertise and your needs. But here's a little bit of a sneak peek. In many cases today, getting your current home on the market first can put you in a better spot. Here's why that order tends to work best (and how an agent can help).

The advantages of selling first

1. You'll unlock your home equity. Selling your current home before you try to buy your next one allows you to access the equity you've built up and based on home price appreciation over the past few years, that's no small number. Research shows that the average homeowner is sitting on \$302K in equity today. Also once you sell, you can use that equity to pay for the down payment on your next house (and maybe even more). You could even have enough to buy your next house in cash. That's a big deal, and it could make your next move a whole lot easier on your wallet.

2. You won't be juggling two mortgages. Trying to buy before you sell means you could wind up holding two mortgages, even if just for a few months. That can get expensive, fast – especially if there are unexpected repairs or delays. Selling first removes that stress and helps you move forward without the financial strain. It's best to sell your old home before buying a new one to avoid unnecessary risks and possible headaches.

3. You'll be in a stronger position when you make an offer. Sellers love a clean, simple offer. If you've already sold your house, you don't need to make your offer contingent on that sale and that can help you stand out. Your

agent can position your offer to be as strong as possible, so you have the best shot at getting the home you want. This can be a big advantage in competitive markets where sellers prefer buyers with fewer strings attached.

You may need a place to stay (temporarily)

However, like with anything in life, there are tradeoffs. As you weigh your options, consider this potential drawback, too. Once your house sells, you may need a short-term rental or to stay with family until you can move into your next home. Your agent can help you negotiate things like a post-closing occupancy (renting the home from the buyer for a set period) or flexible closing dates to help smooth out that transition as much as possible.

In summary, for many cases, selling first doesn't just give you clarity, it gives you options. It helps you buy with more confidence, more financial power, and less pressure. If you're ready to make a move but not sure where to begin, call a member of The Marzeotti Group or a local agent. We'll walk you through your equity, your timing, and your local market so you can decide what's right for you.

LUKE

continued from page 10

give the top sheet an affirmative tug over my mouth. "Good night, Luke." He senses the tone of my statement. "I get it. The upstairs is fun, but it's still bedtime." He curls up on the floor, grateful. My story should end here, and happily.

"Thunk, thunk, jingle. Jingle,



jingle, thunk."

Living with Luke comes with a twist. I'm stripped from another dream. The clock reads an absurd 4:13 am. I calculate how many more hours until I'll be shuffling across a stage to teach a rigorous Zumba class. The math is not promising. Meanwhile, Luke shakes his head so that his collar bling jingles. "No offense, but these four walls are starting to feel confining." Just in case I didn't pick up on the (unsubtle) jangling clue, he uses his back paws to scratch his head, causing a rap melody against the door.

"Bomp-ditty, bomp, bomp, bomp." The storm is officially over. I'd prefer the sound of thunder at this point. "Really, Luke?" I stumble, half-naked, to the doorway, let him out, and shuffle back down the stairs. He cuts me off like a child in a hasty lunch line and arrives back at the gate at the bottom of the stairs. "I think it's locked." Luke is correct. I unlock the gate and set him free to the downstairs, where I watch him curl up to the shape of a doughnut on his bed, and sigh. "It would be a miracle if a dog could

get any sleep around here."

The irony is not lost on me but, then again, Living with Luke is rarely dull.

Write to Amy at amyleclaire@hotmail.com

Follow Luke on IG @ [livingwithlukevalentino](https://www.instagram.com/livingwithlukevalentino)

THE CAR DOCTOR

jpaul@aanortheast.com

Annual Check-up Recommended for a 2013 RAM Truck

Q. I am looking for some guidance. I am the original owner of a 2013 RAM hemi-powered truck. It has just over 100,000 thousand miles. What is the recommended or required service that should be done and what should I expect to pay for it? The only maintenance that has been done is brakes, tires, and oil changes.

A. There are two ways to look at this, keep doing what you are doing and have a good repair shop give the truck a thorough once-over yearly and repair what is found. Or

you can be proactive. If you take the proactive route here is what I would do. Start with a flush the coolant, replace the transmission fluid, change the spark plugs (16 of them) and ignition wires, normal oil change, replace the brake fluid, check brakes, replace the front and rear differential fluids, check steering and suspension parts (repair as needed). I would consider changing the drive belt and at least give the cooling hoses a good look and replace the thermostat. Regarding price, it can vary widely depending on where you go and the parts markup and labor rate. Itemizing some of

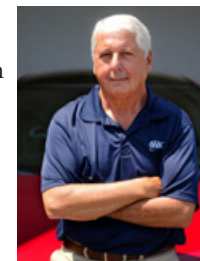
these repairs listed you are looking at \$1200-\$1500 at \$165 per hour labor.

Q. I have an especially important question for you. I own a 1994 Toyota Previa with 175,000 miles. About six years ago the engine was rebuilt once. All was going well, until recently now, it seems I need another replacement engine. The problem is nothing seems to be available. I absolutely love my Previa. It's a unique car, beautiful inside and out. I hate the idea of junking it for scrap metal. I was hoping you might have some advice for me. Do you know of anyone or any website I might contact for assistance? The engine I have still runs, but the fluid leaks out quickly and the engine heats up. A month ago, I spent \$1,500 at a dealership to have the water pump, hoses and gaskets replaced. They said they could tear down the engine to see what else it needs, but it might cost upwards of \$3,000, and parts might not be available. I hate to

junk a beautiful car. What should I do? Just throw it away, it breaks my heart.

A. I always liked those vans, although not a fan of working on them. Most of the repairs require removing the engine with a special Toyota service tool. With a lack of available used or rebuilt engines, the only option may be rebuilding the engine you have. But that will not be cheap. You could spend \$10,000 since it is about 30 hours labor to rebuild the engine plus parts. I would also join a Previa Facebook group and look for suggestions. I did find used and rebuilt engines online with prices from \$2000-\$8000. Due to the "mid-engine design, it will take about two days to install a replacement engine and swap over parts. The 2.4-liter engine is fairly common and used in many Toyota vehicles, it is this odd design and location of the engine that becomes the challenge.

not poison, which are designed to keep mice away. I have not tried them yet, but the reviews look promising.



BY JOHN PAUL

Q. I host a cars and coffee every Wednesday morning, how can I get on your radio program/podcast to promote my event?

A. Simple enough just send me an email with the details and I will promote it. We can also make arrangements to have you call in and talk about your cars and your event. Readers if you want to be on the Car Doctor radio program, just email me: jpaul@aanortheast.com.

Q. My 2021 Cadillac XT-6 has a frequent "shudder" during low-speed acceleration. I have had it with the dealer for first a software update followed by a full flush of the fluid, and neither has solved the issue. The car is still under factory warranty, but they said it could be the torque converter which is a major job that will require leaving the car for an extended period. Do you have any thoughts? Even though it is under warranty, I am still uneasy about this, and I have become fearful that the problem will persist.

A. The most common issue is the transmission torque converter which will require replacement. To replace the transmission torque convertor is a good-sized job and will take about two full days to get it done according to the repair manual. The fluid flush and software updates are the first steps in the process. Once the torque converter is replaced, I would expect the transmission to be fully repaired.

Q. I was reading your advice on car storage. I have two classic cars. In addition to everything you said, I would also recommend inflating the tires a bit higher. For rodent issues, I highly recommend dryer sheets, placed around the coil and distributor. Place dryer sheets in trunk on floor mats, I also place one on top of each tire. I also plug in a mini electronic high-pitched unit as a cover all bases to keep out rodents. To test all of this I placed mouse bait in several hidden places and never had one disturbed by mice, and I live in the woods.

A. All good suggestions, on newer cars I also remove the plastic engine covers (when in storage) which also seem to be a good home for homeless rodents. It has been reported that rodents do nearly 400 million dollars in damage to cars annually. Recently Earthkind sent me some products that are

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TIPS ON FINANCIAL PLANNING

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Let a financial advisor help plan for life's curveballs

No matter what stage of your life you're in — caring for children, working toward retirement or planning your legacy — unforeseen events like a job loss, a major illness or even a stock market drop could derail what



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

you're working so hard to achieve financially.

With your future at stake, you may want to get guidance from a financial professional who can develop a personalized financial strategy to help you navigate life's curveballs.

Here are specific ways a financial advisor can help.

- **Create a customized long-term strategy.** This is the first step to weather unforeseen events. You may have several long-term investing goals — your retirement, your child's education or perhaps a

dream vacation. A financial advisor can help you build a strategy specific to your goals and risk tolerance. This will include prioritizing those goals, building a path toward each and pivoting your strategy as markets shift and needs change.

- **Set realistic expectations.** Successful investing requires discipline and patience — most individual investors make their money over time, not overnight. Start by setting realistic timelines to reach each of your goals. And don't be surprised if you need to make trade-offs, like working an extra year to help fund your retirement dream home. It's realistic to expect you'll hit some bumps in the road. Perhaps the markets will drop and the value of your portfolio may follow. (It's also realistic to expect they will rebound, as they have historically. Of course, past performance of the markets is no guarantee of what will happen in the future.) A financial advisor can help you keep your emotions in check no matter what comes your way and stay focused on the long term, knowing you have a customized strategy in

place.

- **Diversify your investments.** The foundation for your portfolio is your asset allocation, or how you divide your assets among stocks, bonds, cash and other investments. Different investments behave differently in various market conditions, so maintaining a good mix can help better weather market fluctuations than putting "all your eggs in one basket." Finding the right diversification mix, and keeping it balanced despite what the market does, can get complicated, but it's almost second nature for a good financial advisor. All investments do carry risk, and asset allocation doesn't ensure a profit or protect against loss in a declining market.

- **Keep a long-term outlook.** It's easy to become distracted by the latest headline, expert prediction or market swing. However, if these events don't change your long-term outlook, there probably isn't a reason to make changes to your strategy. In fact, these declines often present good opportunities if you're a long-term investor, so use

them to your advantage — your financial advisor can show you how.

- **Keep your emergency savings well-funded.** This is your "rainy day" fund, and an unexpected event may constitute a rainy day. For most people, maintaining three to six months of total expenses in emergency savings is appropriate. The specific amount depends on factors like your risk of unexpected expenses or temporary loss of income, and how much you value being confident that you can weather financial emergencies. A financial advisor can help you determine what your emergency savings should look like.

Unexpected events are part of life. You can't predict them, but you can prepare for them. No matter what is going on around you, having a professional by your side can help set you up to navigate them confidently.

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Please contact Dennis Antonopoulos, your local Edward Jones Advisor at 5 Albert Street, Auburn, MA 01501 Tel: 508-832-5385 or dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com.

Open House at Pakachoag Center

Pakachoag Center will hold an Open House on September 17 from 5:30 –

launch a monthly Coffee House and other community programming to be announced.

others. We also provide space for social service groups including Ascentria Care Alliance, MSPCC, Rise Above and EPIC Service Warriors to meet and/or offer programs.


Attend the Open House and explore all the programs we have on offer. Meet some of the many people who will present at our upcoming Community Café/Come, Sip, Learn on the first Tuesday of the month from 10-11:30 a.m., Oct. 7 through June. Visit pakachoagcenter.org



7 p.m., 203 Pakachoag Street, Auburn. Beginning in October, the Center offers a monthly Community Cafe and will also


In the meantime we continue to host classes that include yoga, cake decorating, First Aid/CPR and dance among

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Have questions about withdrawing funds, converting your account or generating income?

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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.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 23 AND SUNDAY, AUGUST 24

• The Friends of the Grafton Public Library will be holding a Used Book Sale on Saturday, August 23 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and on Sunday August 24 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Browse a selection of gently used books, games, puzzles, DVDs and more. ATTENTION TEACHERS! We are offering you 50% off ALL books so you can stock up on everything your classroom needs for this school year. Please bring your school ID. We are also again offering a bag sale on Sunday - fill a bag for \$5 Prices range from \$0.50 - \$2.00/book. Special pricing for collections. Cash, credit card, or check.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 28

• Blackstone Valley Libraries Cribbage Tournament from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at

Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common. Come represent your local library at this Cribbage Tournament. Test your cribbage skills against the other towns' teams, and see if your team can bring home the trophy. Don't miss out on an evening of strategy, laughter, and great company. Please bring your own cribbage board and cards, as we only have a limited number of sets available. Contact Grafton Public Library to register at grafftonlibrary.org

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31

• Charlton Old Home Day Festivities open at 11 a.m. with music by "Holdin Back; The 60's" including tunes from the Beatles, Box Tops, Creedence Clearwater Revival and more. See feature story for full list of events.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 4

• Local author, Joel Bohy, who wrote "Bullet Strikes from the First Days of the American Revolution" will share his knowledge of the fight for America's freedom at 7 p.m. in the first Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, Sutton. Courtesy of the Sutton Historical Society.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

• The Knights of Columbus #1562 of St. Mary's Parish presents the 2025 Annual Car Show & Community Event from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Uxbridge High School, 300 Quaker Highway, Uxbridge. Registration of cars begins at 8:30 a.m. The 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 such as Camp Sunshine, Our Lady of the Valley Scholarship and Abby's House. All makes and models of cars are welcome, whether classic or muscle cars, motorcycles trucks or military vehicles. Trophies (popular vote) 1 p.m.; Dash plaques (first 200); Food trucks, door prizes, raffles, 50/50 drawing, DJ, local emergency vehicles, Kids Fun Zone, face painting, balloons, caricatures and more. Admission is free, but donations are appreciated. Vehicle entry fees, \$10 or donation.

• Grafton Collectibles Fair September 6 2025 from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Coins, comics, records, toys, sports and fantasy cards, sports memorabilia at Grafton Middle School, 22 Providence Road, Grafton.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

• The New England Country Music Club will hold a dance on Sept. 7 with live classic country music by "Al Carter" and on Sept. 21 with "South County Line" at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:15, music 1-5. Snacks may be brought in, cash bar for beverages.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14

• The Grafton Land Trust is hosting a "Good Dog Run" at the Lions Club property on Brigham Hill Road, Grafton. It will be a fun run for dogs and owners. Keep an eye on social media (Facebook and Instagram) for more information. If you would like to

receive an email about the event, contact admin@grafftonlandtrust.org

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

• Capen Hill Nature Sanctuary Fall Festival 10 a.m. – 3 p.m. Enjoy a day filled with local artisan, resellers, music, and delicious food at our annual festival celebrating local talent and community spirit. Family activities, bouncy house, pumpkin painting and visits from the Sanctuary's animals. 56 Capen Road, Charlton. Rain date: September 21.

• Open Sky Community Services is pleased to announce that it will host the 11th Annual Valley Bag Toss on Saturday, September 20, 2025, at the historic Alternatives' Whitin Mill in Whitinsville, Massachusetts. This inclusive cornhole tournament serves as both a community celebration and an important fundraiser in support of Open Sky's health and wellness programs, which benefit nearly 8,000 individuals throughout Central Massachusetts.

The tournament will take place from 12:00 to 5:00 p.m. at 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville, MA, and is open to participants of all abilities, age 14 and older. Pre-registration is required, as space is limited and the event is expected to sell out. Individuals and teams interested in participating may register online at www.openskycs.org/valleybagtoss.

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

• 19th Annual Uxbridge Senior Center Golf Outing at the Whitinsville Golf Club. Nine

holes, 12 p.m. shotgun start. Teams of four. \$100 fee per golfer includes cart and buffet dinner. Dinner only \$30. Tee Sponsor \$100. Send checks to Uxbridge Elderly Connection, Inc., c/o Russ Rosborough, P.O. Box 215, Uxbridge, MA 01569.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 18 AND SUNDAY OCTOBER 19

• Waters Farm Days – see article coming in September 26 issue of Blackstone Valley Xpress

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19

• Fall Festival in Nelson Park, North Grafton, 6 Prentice Street from 11 a.m. – 2 p.m. There will be music, inflatables, food trucks, and local businesses joining in on the fun! FREE!! Music, food, games and more! Decorate a pumpkin and build a scarecrow while supplies last. Presented by Coral Care & Country Bank.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22

• Friendly Trick or Treat from 3 – 4 p.m. at Grafton Municipal Center, 30 Providence Road, Grafton. Hosted by Grafton Rec and sponsored by the Town. The event is designed for ages 5 and under, though all are welcome. Come visit Town Hall and trick or treat at town offices and tables set up by local businesses. Dress up in your costume and collect goodies in a safely lit and non-scary environment. Start at the Senior

HAPPENINGS!

continued on page 15

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BEAUTIFUL LOSERS TRIBUTE TO BOB SEGER
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AMERICAN BADASS KID ROCK TRIBUTE
SEPTEMBER 6 • 12PM

Tickets are also available by phone: 1-800-514-ETIX (3849). All events are rain or shine. No refunds. For ticketing and group sales, contact tickets@indianranch.com or call 508.943.3871. For information on private events, banquets and renting the Indian Princess Paddlewheel Boat, contact banquets@samuelslaters.com. Indian Ranch is less than an hour's drive from Boston, Providence, Hartford and Springfield. Indian Ranch is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster, MA.

Annual Pike Rokfest Coming Saturday, Sept. 6, 2025 at Indian Ranch

The Pike RokFest returns to Indian Ranch in Webster, MA on Saturday, September 6, 2025 as part of the White Claw Summer Concert Series. The day-long festival features tributes to your favorite rock acts. This year's lineup includes 4NRS Journey with Keith Carmichael (Tribute to Foreigner and Journey), Speedwagon (The REO Experience), Beautiful Losers (Tribute to Bob Seger), Crystal Ship (Tribute to The Doors), and American Badass (Kid Rock Tribute).

4NRS Journey with Keith Carmichael is a unique top national touring act paying tribute to Foreigner and Journey. They connect fans through music, memories, and shared experiences. Join them in honoring these bands' incredible performances and the spirit of classic rock.

Speedwagon: The REO Experience isn't just another tribute band—it's an electrifying musical force that captures the soul, energy, and sound of REO Speedwagon's legendary live performances. Made up of five seasoned professionals, each musician brings decades of experience and unmatched passion to the stage, leaving audiences in awe and craving more.

The Beautiful Losers was put together by Last Laugh vocalist, Devin Cordeiro. "I have always wanted to put together the most authentic Seger show but never had the time. Well I made time for it and as I planned for it all, top on the list was joining together the best musicians that the New England music scene had to offer." Vocally, musically, sonically and dynamically this band is as good as it gets. With an endless crop of hits to pick from they will no doubt be the BEST Bob Seger tribute band.

Step back in time to the vibrant Sunset Strip in the swinging

1960s with Crystal Ship, the ultimate and definitive tribute to The Doors. Immerse yourself in the music, magic, and intensity of a live Doors concert as this highly acclaimed act takes you on a journey that will transport you straight into the heart of the iconic era. Crystal Ship is dedicated to preserving the legacy of Jim Morrison and The Doors, and they do it with unparalleled authenticity.

American Badass has been exciting Kid Rock fans across New England in clubs, theaters, and many long-running outdoor summer festivals and special biker events. Playing crowd favorites like "Bawitdaba," "Cowboy," and "All Summer Long," American Badass captures all of the elements that go into a sweat-soaked evening with "The Bad Boy from Detroit."

Indian Ranch offers music lovers a chance to see some of the greatest country, classic rock and pop bands steps from Lake Chagogaggogmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg. Nestled between pine trees, the amphitheater offers the ability to see the stage from anywhere in the audience. More than a concert venue, Indian Ranch opened Samuel Slater's Restaurant and is also home to the Indian Princess paddlewheeler and Indian Ranch Campground.

Gates open at 11:00 AM; Show starts at 12:00 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.

HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 14

Center Gym tent to collect your bag and a map. Face painting available!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25

• The Historic Sutton Center Walking Tour begins at 5 p.m. on Sutton Town Common, 4 Uxbridge Road. Re-enactors will guide visitors to multiple stops around the Common sharing the town's history and some stories befitting the Halloween season

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

• Then Grafton Land Trust will hold its annual dinner meeting at 6 p.m. at the Highfields Golf Club in Grafton. This year's speaker will be Dr. Stephen Mrozowski, the founding director of the Andrew Fiske Memorial Center for Archeological Research at University of Massachusetts Boston.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

• Charlotte Wilson will share fascinating facts about Sutton's citizenry during Revolutionary days at 7 p.m. in the first Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road, Sutton. Courtesy of the Sutton Historical Society.

bankHometown to Consolidate Webster Offices

Robert J. Morton, president and CEO of bankHometown, announced plans to consolidate the bank's two Webster offices into its 4 Gore Road location.

Effective October 29, the bank will close its office at 218R Main Street, Webster, and consolidate all customer accounts into the Gore Road location, about 1.5 miles away.

Citing the increased use of online, mobile, and digital banking channels and the bank's desire to reinvest in continuous enhancement of its overall customer experience, Morton stated in a letter to Main Street customers that employees of both offices would

work together to combine the two branches into one and that no jobs would be eliminated because of the consolidation effort. Further, he said customers do not need to take any action to switch from the Main Street to Gore Road office and can begin visiting the Gore Road location—or any bankHometown branch that is most convenient—right away.

Morton also reiterated that the consolidation would not impact the bank's longstanding and continuing commitment to the Webster community. Over the past five years, the bank has donated nearly \$200,000 to nearly

30 Webster-based community programs, events, and charitable organizations, and its dedicated employees continue to lend a hand in the banking community through volunteer initiatives.

"Rest assured that our commitment to Webster is as strong as ever," said Morton. "We appreciate the opportunity to continue serving our customers' financial needs from our Gore Road location and will continue to look for ways to give back to the community and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who live and work in Webster."

Oxford Shredding Day

Oxford will hold its town shredding day on Sept. 20, 9 – 11 a.m. at the DPW administrative office, 450 Main Street. For Oxford residents only. Safely dispose of unwanted documents. First come, first served or until the truck is full. Do not include

any food items or food containers including plates, cans, cups, bottles, drinks, etc. Also, no packaging or wrapping materials such as copy paper, wrapping paper, etc. Do not include glass, metal, solid wood products, solid plastics, polystyrene or Styrofoam. No toner cartridges,

wet waster, liquids, wet paper towels or tissues, three-ring binders or cardboard. There is a limit of 10 printer paper size boxes per resident. For more information, call the DPW at 508-987-6006.

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- LAKE TOUR - AUGUST 31
- MUSIC CRUISE WITH TYLER FAUXBEL - SEPTEMBER 5
- LAKE TOUR - SEPTEMBER 6
- MARGARITAVILLE CRUISE - SEPTEMBER 19
- 100 FM THE PIKE BOOS CRUISE HOSTED BY CHUCK PERKS - OCTOBER 11

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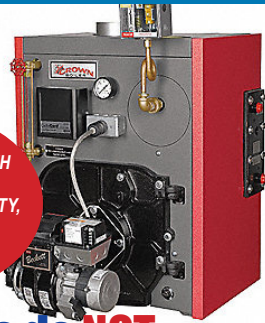
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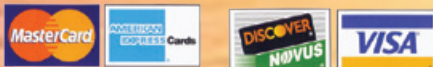
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