



Old-fashioned Treat Straight from the Farm

BY PATTY ROY

Ah, autumn! The season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, as poet John Keats wrote in 1819. He was referring specifically to apples and now, a little more than 200 years later, the fruit is still prized.

His poem did not continue on to praise apple crisp, though it certainly would have if he had gotten a chance to taste the delicious pastry created at Waters Farm in Sutton, 53 Waters Road.

The apple crisp stand is one of the most visited spots at the Annual Fall Farm Days held at Waters Farm on Oct. 18 and 19. But that's getting a little ahead of ourselves. The work creating the apple crisp gets going on Saturday, Sept. 6, headed up by volunteer Norma Bedrosian and her team of helpers (and that can be you).

The tasty tradition winds back to the orchards planted by the farm house's original builder, Revolutionary War veteran Stephen Waters and his son John. The orchard was located on a slope heading down to Manchaug Pond. With additional orchards in Rhode Island and Connecticut,



Grafton's Business Scene – August 2025

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

Abraham Lincoln once said, "I will prepare. And some day, my chance will come." His quote encapsulates timeless advice that still applies today.

It's not only true for political, business and academic success. It's equally true when it comes to the arts, sports, hobbies, etc. In Grafton, there are several opportunities for people to both hone their skills and to let them shine

in the public arena.

On Monday October 6, Engine Company No. 2 of Grafton, Inc. – a nonprofit run by firefighters from Grafton Fire Department Station Two in North Grafton – will hold its 19th annual Grafton Fire Station Two Golf Tournament at Highfields Golf & Country Club. The event will

GRAFTON

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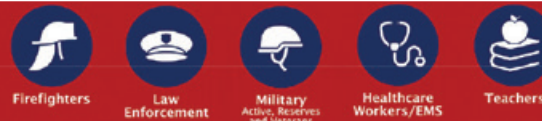
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Buyer - 376 May St. Worcester - healthcare reward \$3,795
Buyer - 1604 Oakwood St. Ext. Holden - healthcare reward \$2,201.25
Listing - 63 Blueberry Hill St. Springfield - healthcare reward - \$2,031.40
Buyer - 60 Plantation Rd. Oxford - healthcare reward \$1,904.40

Diane Casey-Luong recently received the Outstanding Service award from Homes for Heroes. Only 3 are given out in the nation.

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the Waters family had more than 1000 trees.

One particular apple variety was noted for its ability to hold up well after being stored or shipped for long distances. This was the famous "Sutton Beauty" that Walter Waters, great-great grandson of Stephen wrote in his diary that the fruit was grafted from an old tree in the Connecticut Orchard.

It was a firm, medium size apple and could be safely shipped as far away as England. Apples that weren't shipped were turned into

WATERS FARM

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Blood Pressure Clinic: Thursdays at 11 a.m. Breathing & Healing Chair Yoga: Tuesdays at 9 a.m. and Fridays at 10 a.m. - Free for Grafton Seniors thanks to FOGE
Cardio Barre Exercise: Thursdays at 12 p.m. Congressperson Office Hours: Vary Council on Aging: Meets 2nd Thursday of every month at 1 p.m. unless otherwise posted Day Trips/ Extended Trips: Vary- see newsletter/ brochure rack for details

Dull Men's Club: 2nd and 4th Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.
Duplicate Bridge: Thursdays at 9 a.m.
Fall Prevention Exercise: Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. - free for Grafton Seniors
Fuel Assistance: See Lisa Kelley for appointment
Hooked on Books Club: First Wed. of the month- 10:30 a.m.
Jog Your Noggin: Spirited conversation with Lisa one Wednesday a month at 10:30 a.m.
Line Dancing: Every Friday at 1p.m.. \$3/ person Lunch: Monday-Friday at 11:45 a.m.- suggested

\$3.00 donation. Please call 2 days prior for reservation
Mahjong (Chinese Form): Mondays at 9:30 a.m. Medical Equipment Loan Closet: walkers, wheelchairs, shower chairs, etc.- just ask! Nutrition Class: an interesting discussion with Senior Exercise instructor, Wendy Reid.
Oldies Singalong: a fun sing-along of the classics. One Friday a month.
Outreach: Assessing needs and linking resources .Call for appointment with Lisa.
Out to Lunch: Monthly outing to area restaurant.

Painting Independently: Fridays 10 a.m.
Pinochle: Thursdays 1:15 p.m.
Pitch: Mon. and Tues. at 1p.m.
Rummikub: Wed. at 1 p.m.
Senior Bootcamp: A more intense workout that combines cardio & strength training. Thursdays at 9:30 a.m.
Senior Exercise Class: Tuesdays rdsays at 10:30 a.m. Free for Grafton Seniors thanks to FOGE
Social Knitting: Mondays at 10:30 a.m.
SNAP (Supplemental Food Assistance Progra.m.): See Lisa Kelley for appointment.

Tap Dancing: Every Wednesday at 2 p.m.; \$5 pp.
Tax Work Off Program: call Shannon for more info.
Tone and Stretch Exercise: Mondays at 9:30 a.m.
Transportation: call the office for info.
Watercoloring Class: Fridays at 1 p.m.
Wii-TV Game Exercise: available in the TV room almost any time! Writer's Group: Meets 2nd and 4th Friday at 1 p.m. Zumba: Wednesdays at 8:45 a.m.- FOGE sponsored.

GRAFTON

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raise money to help the GFD with training and equipment needs. Proceeds will also go towards a scholarship for a Grafton High School student. When it's available, more information can be found on the nonprofit's Facebook page.

A wonderful opportunity for fine artists will arrive, once again, in September. The 2026 Small Stones Festival of the Arts will be calling for entries for its annual show and competition. Submissions of fine art and photography will be accepted beginning Sept. 15. For more information, visit the festival's website: Smallstones-festival.org

People who want to end summer by signing themselves or

their kids up for a fall class or sport could visit the Grafton Recreation website. The department is now registering students for its fall and winter sessions. Registration information can be found on the Grafton Recreation website, graffton-ma.gov/215/Recreation-Department, in the Fall/Winter 2025-2026 brochure. It offers programs such as soccer, basketball, STEM classes and outdoor adventure. There are also programs on babysitting and kids' safety while being home alone.

All levels of Irish dance classes for children and teens can be found at Murphy Academy of Irish Dance, murphyacademy.com. After learning certain dance skills and techniques, students have opportunities to perform at local events, including the Worcester Saint Patrick's Day Parade. They also have chances

to compete at festivals known as feisanna.

Koopman Lumber, the hardware and paint store which has a North Grafton location, as well as several others and was founded 86 years ago, in August, by Pete Koopman, has job opportunities for those with retail skills. As of the time this column was written, its North Grafton location is seeking a floor manager and retail associates for its store.

The sixteenth President of the United States gave excellent advice. And whether people are skilled in sports, hobbies or the arts, the opportunities to heed that advice are boundless!

Contact Christine with your business news items at: cmgale-one15@gmail.com

BLACKSTONE VALLEY Xpress

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

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Roofs and Repairs for School Buildings to be Presented at Nov. Town Meeting

BY PATTY ROY

At an August 6 joint meeting of the select board, school committee and finance committee, plans and estimates on roof work at town school buildings were presented.

Millbury Memorial Jr./Sr. High School, Elmwood Elementary School and the Dorothy Manor School building, which is rented out to a private company, were included in the presentation.

The projects present some challenges, according to engineers from owner's project manager Terva Corp., and designer Habeeb and Associates. It addresses the needs of 118,000 square feet of roof at the high school, 64,000 square feet of roof at Elmwood School and 5000 square feet of roof at the Dorothy Manor building.

The 24 year old high school roof is in poor to failing conditions in most places. regularly suffers from leaks while Elmwood School has them periodically. Terva Corp.'s report said the roof on the Dorothy

Manor School is past its useful life.

Rooftop mechanical systems such as HVAC will also need to be replaced. Additionally, solar panels were also discussed.

The Terva Corp. report said that



full roof replacements were inevitable and estimated the cost at \$8.2 million for the jr./sr. high school, with replacement of the HVAC system at \$4.8 million. Solar panels would add \$351,000 to the cost for each of the schools and carry about 15 percent of the energy load. \$730,000 could replace HVAC with heat pumps.

Water damage and health and safety concerns are driving the need for a .roof replacement for

Elmwood School. A recent leak in the library damaged books, water has damaged classroom furniture and floor tiles, ceiling tiles have needed replacement and there are health and safety issues due to poor ventilation and too much humidity in the building that houses pre-school to second grade students.

The replacement is estimated at \$4.2 million. HVAC replacement there would cost approximately \$1.8 million with \$763, 000 to install heat pumps. Solar panels would also cost \$351,000.

The Dorothy Manor building could be repaired for \$136,000, the report said.

The projects will be placed before town meeting voters at the November fall town meeting.

The presentation can be viewed on the Millbury Public Schools website at millburyma.gov/school-department

The August 6 presentation can be viewed on the Millbury Public Schools website at https://www.millburyschools.org/160555_3.

produce 165 pans of home-made apple crisp to be dished up warm Farm Days visitors.

If you would like to be part of this tradition, apple crisp making day happens from 8 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Sept. 6 at the First Congregational Church in Sutton Center. Visit www.watersfarm.org to sign up or for more information.

Another volunteer opportunity awaits on Saturday, Sept. 13, Oct. 4 and Oct 11 when helpers are needed for Volunteer Work Day

from 8 a.m. – 12 p.m. Join a group of dedicated volunteers that work on grounds maintenance, small carpentry project, building clean-up and general farm work.

Also be sure to head to the Farm for a Tractor Pull from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 14. Tractor drivers register at 9 a.m. and the pull starts at 10 a.m. It ends when the last tractor pulling the heaviest load crossed the finish line. Free for spectators.

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WATERS FARM

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apple butter, apple brandy and cider, Walter wrote. The mill on the farm property pressed the Waters family's own cider as well as those of neighboring farmers.

Last year, 40 volunteers worked a combined total of 150 hours peeling and prepping 23 bushels of apples (using a three-apple blend) from Sholan Farms, Leominster, to

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You're Invited to Join the Millbury Citizens Academy

Join your neighbors as part of the Town's Citizens Academy, a 10-week, up-close view of local government. Participants will take a deep dive into all aspects of their town government through a variety of classes and interactive activities. Participants will explore the following departments: Town

Government overview, Finance & Treasurer/Collector, Assessor Boards & Commissions, Town Clerk and Elections, Planning and Conservation, Library, Senior Center, Police, Fire, Department of Public Works (DPW), Inspectional Services (Building), and Public Health Department.

SCHEDULE FOR 2025

Weekly sessions on Thursday evenings at various locations around the Town of Millbury from 6 – 8 p.m. Graduation occurs in the final week at a Select Board meeting. The final two meetings are on a Tuesday – Nov. 4 at the Town Meeting and graduation at the Nov. 18 Board of Selectmen's Meeting.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

During these sessions, participants interact firsthand with department heads and other town staff to learn about the day to day operations, challenges, and goals of each department. They will have the opportunity to ask questions of each department. These classes are designed to give participants a behind-the-scenes look at local government and develop informed

and civically-minded residents and future community leaders.

REGISTER FOR THE 2025 CITIZENS ACADEMY

Find and complete the application from the town website or use the QR code on the town's Facebook page (Aug. 12 entry). Complete and return the application by 4 p.m. on Wednesday, August 27 via email or at the Town Clerk's office at 127 Elm Street. Registration will be on a first come, first serve basis. The first fifteen (15) applicants who meet the eligibility guidelines* will be accepted.

*Eligibility Guidelines:

Applicants must be a current resident of Millbury, 16 years of age (by 9/4/2025) or older; Preference may be given to registered voters.

If you have questions about Citizens Academy please contact the



Town of Millbury
Fall 2025 Session

scan the QR code to learn more or visit

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Willard House and Clock Museum Star Gazing Party

August 1 NASA/JPL Solar System Ambassador presentation on the moon Europa, the Europa Clipper spacecraft and the stargazing party with professional grade telescopes loaned by the Aldrich Astronomical Society: About 160 people showed up for the event held with help from the Grafton Public Library and Webster First Federal Credit Union.

Here, a future space traveler peers through a powerful telescope while holding what appears to be an old-school ViewMaster.

From Willard House and Clock Museum Facebook



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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 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.

Contact Tim for assistance with your personal finances.

Tim Furbush, CFA
Edward Jones Financial Advisor
Westborough, MA 01581
508-595-4260
Tim.Furbush@edwardjones.com

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Moore Files Bill to Prohibit Artificial Turf Fields Containing PFAS Chemicals

On July 21, the state Senate Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight voted to advance an Act prohibiting state and municipal contracts for the purchase and installation of artificial turf fields, introduced by State Sen. Michael Moore (D-Millbury). The bill, which was reported favorably the same week as its hearing, would



Millbury High School's turf field was installed in 2020 by nationally known company Brock USA.

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stop any state agency, municipality, or organization using public funds from purchasing or installing artificial turf containing "intentionally-added PFAS," toxic chemicals known to cause cancer, birth defects, and other serious health conditions.

While the bill bans the use of public funds on the purchase and installation of artificial turf fields containing intentionally-added PFAS, it allows schools, cities, and towns who have already purchased and installed turf fields to continue to use them until the end of their useful life. Fields would then have to be replaced with compliant turf or with standard grass.

PFAS, or Polyfluoroalkyl

substances, is a class designation that includes nearly 10,000 chemicals used to make everyday items fireproof, waterproof, or non-stick. Even at low levels, the toxicity of PFAS chemicals can be devastating, increasing the risk of cancer, immunosuppression, birth defects, colitis, and other diseases. Compounding these dangers is the persistent nature of PFAS chemicals, known as "forever chemicals" for their resistance to breaking down in the environment.

"Artificial turf has long been attractive as a lower-maintenance and safer alternative to grass fields for sports and recreation, but recent studies have shown that many of the most popular types of

plastic turf contain carcinogenic PFAS chemicals. When these toxic chemicals leach into the ground over time, they contaminate water sources, poison our ecosystems, and harm the bodies of the people who unknowingly play on these fields," said Moore. "This bill recognizes government's role in protecting public health by stopping your tax dollars from being used to purchase and install artificial turf that we know pose a threat to our communities' well-being. I'm thrilled that the Committee has voted to advance my bill, and I look forward to continuing this important conversation as we progress through the legislative process."

In a study earlier this year, the California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment concluded that there was no difference in exposure to certain chemicals, metals, or air emissions among players on crumb rubber filled synthetic turf than a traditional grass field. While this study provided good evidence that recycled rubber for turf fields are fine for public health, it did find the presence of PFAS in the blades of the synthetic grass.

Turf fields are mainly used for youth or school recreational activities, such as organized sports, community events, fitness classes, collegiate sports, and more. Yet, many who utilize these fields to better their health or gather with their community are unaware of the dangers presented in the artificial turf blades of grass.

This bill is the latest in a series of PFAS-related legislation championed by Senator Michael Moore.

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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.

Nominate a Local Good Neighbor of the Year

The Massachusetts Coalition to Build Community & End Loneliness Event Coordinator, Juliette-Marie

Somerset, and the Asa Waters Mansion will host a Good Neighbor Day event on Sunday, September 28, 2025. Nominations are being accepted for Good Neighbor of the Year. The winner will be announced and presented at the Community Dinner on September 28th. See the attached event flyer for more details.

You can find nomination cards at the Town Hall or in the lobby areas of the Millbury National Bank and Fidelity Bank (or see at-



tachment). Nominations are being accepted until Friday, September 19, 2025.

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Healthier Baking in the Blackstone Valley

BY CHRISTINE GALEONE

Did you notice? The sound of the ice cream truck's rendition of "Tis the Gift to be Simple" as it rolls into the neighborhood is being replaced by the sound of school lunches being packed. And just like picnic baskets, school lunches aren't complete without snacks.

While fruit is the ideal snack, an additional sweet treat is usually appreciated. But store-bought cookies and pastries are almost always loaded with sugar and unhealthy ingredients. What's needed is an



easy to make healthy treat. Fortunately, these oatmeal chocolate chip cookie bars are an excellent option.

With only a half of a cup of sugar as well as the half of the cup of chocolate chips in a whole batch, these bars have significantly less sugar than most store-bought and homemade bars. But their healthy ingredients also make them a stellar snack.

The oats are whole grains that can provide energy. They also contain fiber, which is good for digestive health. They're a heart-healthy ingredient – which contains vitamins, minerals and antioxidants – that can lower cholesterol as well. And the dark chocolate chips and cinnamon also provide antioxidants, which can reduce free radicals damage.

OATMEAL CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIE BARS

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups of old-fashioned or quick oats
- ½ cup of dark chocolate chips
- ¾ cup of flour
- ¼ cup of brown sugar
- ¼ cup of granulated sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp. of baking soda
- ¼ tsp. of salt (omit if using salted butter)
- 1 tsp. of cinnamon
- 1 tsp. of vanilla extract
- ½ cup (1 stick) of unsalted butter (slightly softened)*

Directions:

- In a large mixing bowl, mix together the dry ingredients (except the oats and chocolate chips).
- In a separate large mixing bowl, cream the butter, brown sugar and sugar together. Add the eggs and vanilla to the butter mixture, and mix well.
- Gradually combine the mixed dry ingredients with the mixed wet ingredients.
- Fold in the oats and chocolate chips.
- Spread the dough evenly in an 8X8" pan.
- Bake at 350 degrees for around 25 minutes.
- Remove from the oven and let cool before cutting into bars.

Makes about 16 cookie bars
*If cholesterol is an issue, you can use a plant-based butter like olive oil butter.

Even though these bars could help kids to stop lamenting the seasonal end of those ice cream truck visits, they're not just for kids. Adults need healthy and delicious treats just as much. Happy (healthier) baking!



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Take a Hike!

Looking for an inspiring way to enjoy the crisp autumn air and colorful foliage? Lace up your hiking boots and hit the trails with the Blackstone Heritage Corridor's Fall Hiking Series, led by dedicated volunteer Trail Ambassadors. Kicking off on Saturday, September 13, this free series invites hikers of all levels to explore scenic paths and historic landscapes across the Blackstone River Valley.

Covering 25 communities across Massachusetts and Rhode Island, the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor is rich in natural beauty and industrial history. Trail Ambassadors—seasoned volunteers with a passion for the outdoors and local heritage—will lead guided hikes on trails showcasing the region's vibrant fall colors and fascinating past.

Two experienced Ambassadors will spearhead the series: Phil Johanson will guide hikes through the Massachusetts portion of the Corridor, while Ernie Germani will lead treks through Rhode Island. Together, they'll highlight just a few of the 100+ trails available in this unique and storied region.

FALL HIKING SERIES SCHEDULE:

Saturday, September 13 – Cormier Woods, Uxbridge, MA



The spring hike at Waters Farm in Sutton, had a very large turnout of interested hikers at this living history museum. A return visit is planned for Saturday, September 27.

Saturday, September 27 – Waters Farm, Sutton, MA

Sunday, September 28 – Turner Reservoir, East Providence, RI

Saturday, October 11 – Wallis Pond Foliage Hike, Douglas, MA

Saturday, October 25 – Peppercorn Hill, Upton, MA

Sunday, October 26 – Moshassuck River Preserve, Lincoln, RI

Saturday, November 8 – Hopedale Parklands, Hopedale, MA

Saturday, November 22 – Douglas State Forest – Grand Trunk Line, Douglas, MA

Friday, November 28 – Wolf Hill, Smithfield, RI

Saturday, December 6 – Shaw Farm, Sutton, MA

Saturday, December 20 – Gummere Woods, Grafton, MA

Whether you're a seasoned trekker or a casual stroller, the Fall Hiking Series offers a perfect opportunity to get outside, meet fellow nature lovers, and discover hidden gems throughout the Corridor.

Hike details and RSVP information can be found at BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org/events.

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SPORTS

Grafton Field Hockey

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Having no feeder program in the town of Grafton the high school field hockey team has suffered over the years. Last fall the Gators found themselves just above .500 with a 9-7-2 record, which although got them into the Division 2 State Tournament, found the team losing in the first round 3-0 to Longmeadow.

Grafton varsity coach Melissa Aiksnoras wanted to change all that. Entering her fifth season with Grafton she was looking to

get some type of feeder program developed and while the town was all for it – no one stepped up to take the reigns and get the program kicked off.

“There was interest. It was non-negotiable for me having a nine-year-old daughter, who along with her friends all wanted to play field hockey,” the coach said. “I wanted to give the girls another option outside of soccer.”

This fall with the blessing of Athletic Director Ashley Paulsen, Grafton will not only begin a youth field hockey program, but they will also field a middle school team for the very first

time. According to Aiksnoras, 65 girls have currently signed up for the youth program which allows them to field four teams this fall. The interest also bodes very well for the future of Grafton field hockey even if only a portion of the girls continue to take part in the sport.

“The outcome was much more than I expected,” Aiksnoras said. “I guess it shows there is a lot of interest with giving the sport a try.”

The start of the program is coming at a good time as Grafton will be transitioning from the Southern Worcester County League (SWCL) to the Mid Wach A, a new league looking at making things more balanced within Central Massachusetts high school sports. If Grafton is to grow their program they need to provide the girls the ability to experience the sport and grow with it.

As the new high school season begins to get underway Grafton will only find themselves with two seniors on its rosters. Both girls are relatively new to the



sport but have shown they can be not only great teammates but are willing to work hard to improve their craft. At this point of their careers, Aiksnoras is not sure what the seniors will be able to accomplish this fall but has no concerns about sending them onto the field.

Being sent into a new league with a lot of new teams on their slate, how Grafton does will all come down to who rises up to make the team better. One individual the coach is confident will bring her A game will be sophomore forward Addie McGrath, one of the team’s three captains named by her teammates.

McGrath is a three-sport athlete (field hockey, basketball and lacrosse); she was named a rising star in all three sports last year as a freshman. Playing for Aiksnoras last year she was the team’s second leading scorer.

“Addie is a strong, all-around athlete and I will be very surprised if she’s not among the leaders in scoring again this year,” Aiksnoras said. “She has set big goals for herself, is very determined and hard on herself. If she makes a mistake, we know we don’t have to talk to her she’ll fix the problem on her own; she is a once in a lifetime athlete and leader.”

The coach went on to say that if McGrath were ever sick or having a bad day you would never know it; she doesn’t bring problems to the field, she stays consistent.

In addition to McGrath, juniors Lauren Piel (midfield) and Yuki Wong (defense) were also named by their peers to captain the team this fall. Both girls have been playing since their freshman campaign and both bring the confidence of being a captain. Having been together for a long time, the duo works well together on the field.

Over the years Piel has made the most progress and is the hardest working individual that Aiksnoras has ever had the pleasure of coaching. The coach went on to say that Piel is much smarter than she thinks she is when it comes to playing field hockey.

While the Gators are only beginning their feeder program, hopefully for the betterment of the team in the future, their goal is still the same as it is every year: make the State Tournament while earning the highest ranking possible.

“The ultimate goal is the State Tournament, but as a coach I am looking for them to improve on their game, while learning the fundamentals,” the Grafton Coach said. “I don’t expect perfection from them; I am just looking for them to prepare for the next year and success for the future.”

Playing in the Mid Wach A, Grafton will find themselves playing a totally different type of season than what they’ve been used to in the past. They’ll have 10 games against Mid Wach opponents and another eight games against non-league teams like Auburn, Oxford, Shepherd Hill, BVT and Hudson to name a few.

Aiksnoras believes that you have to play the top-notch teams if you want to be one yourself.

“Playing easy teams does not make you a better team. It might get you more wins but doesn’t help you in the long run,” she said. “We might not win them all, but playing higher ranked teams helps in the power rankings and I’d rather be involved in a close game that we lose than a blowout win.”

Grafton will take to the field on Monday, September 8 to open the season at home against Wachusett.

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

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We're Still Here—Just in a Different Spot (for now!) The Senior Center will be temporarily closed while important building improvements take place, including roof insulation, new furnaces, and ceiling tile replacements. While our schedule and location may be different for a little while, please know, we are still here for you and available to help in any way we can. We understand this is a change, but it's only temporary. Once the work is done, we'll return to our regular space, better equipped to serve you for years to come. As soon as we have a confirmed return date, we

promise to celebrate with a Welcome Back Party! We can't wait to welcome everyone back to our improved space and celebrate together. Thank you for your patience and flexibility.

Elder Services of Worcester Area 508-756-1545. Provides a variety of services regulated by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs. Many costs are paid for by the state through the Executive Office of Elder Affairs; income level determines whether the services are cost-free, partially subsidized or at full cost. If you are in need of Meals on Wheels services during the Senior Center's temporary closure, please contact Elder Services of Worcester directly. They will be happy to assist you in setting up meal delivery during this time.

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Outreach Services During Senior Center Closure. Even while the Senior Center building is temporarily closed for renovations, Outreach Coordinator Julie will remain available to assist you. She continues to offer all regular outreach services, including home visits, to ensure your needs are met during this time. Julie will be available to schedule appointments if you need to meet with her. Our Memory Café will continue to meet off-site The Mill Church, 45 River St. at 11a.m. on Tuesday, August 26.

Celebrating Innovation: Grants Awarded to Blackstone Valley Schools

Across the Blackstone Valley, classrooms are preparing to transform learning thanks to \$15,485 in school grants awarded by the Blackstone Valley Education Foundation (BVEF) for the 2025–2026 school year. From early childhood to high school, these grants will help educators bring real-world skills, creative exploration, and future-focused experiences directly to their students.

Among the 14 grants awarded was Virtual Pathways, a new VR Simulation experience that will be embedded in Blackstone Valley Tech's nursing assistant training program. The project will allow students to build critical clinical and communication skills in an immersive healthcare setting.

Blackstone Valley Tech also will support a group of students attending the 2026 STEM Education Outdoor Class-

room Day at Six Flags, making the trip more accessible and reinforcing STEM pathways through immersive, out-of-school learning.

Northbridge Public Schools will host a two-part Mass Audubon program, Audubon Comes to PreK, bringing environmental education directly to preschoolers through interactive, in-school learning experiences.

Looking Ahead

These grants reflect the strength and creativity of our Valley's educators, who continue to design meaningful, relevant experiences that prepare students for life beyond the classroom. As these projects launch in the 2025–2026 school year, we look forward to sharing their stories and celebrating their impact.

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LIVING WITH LUKE

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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 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



Tell me when it's over ...

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 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 rigor-

ous 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

LUKE

continued on page 13

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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? 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



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

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 transi-

tion 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.


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 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



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LUKE
continued from page 12

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 amyleclair@hotmail.com

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

Yard Sale at Old Millbury Fire Dept.

A yard sale of surplus items from the old Millbury Fire HQ building at 126 Elm Street, Millbury on **Saturday, September 13 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.** Some of the items include office furniture, pool table, couches, and more. All are welcome!

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The Millbury Woolies baseball team was back in Polar Park on August 5. This time, the state Division 4 Champions were being honored before the Millbury Town Takeover game. The fifth-seeded Woolies clinched the championship in Polar Park on June 14, defeating second-seeded Lynnfield 3-2.
 Photo courtesy of WooSox/Ashley Green

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BVT's School Lunch and Breakfast Programs Policy

Families Encouraged to Check Eligibility Chart & Submit Application

The Blackstone Valley Vocational Regional School District (BVT) is pleased to continue offering its students one free breakfast and lunch at school, thanks to permanent funding from the USDA and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. While meals are provided at no cost, families are still encouraged to complete the Free and Reduced Price Meal Application on the school website. Doing so helps expand other educational and nutrition initiatives across the district and sustain funding for the program in future years.

You do not need to complete an application to receive free meal benefits if you receive a letter stating that your child is eligible for free meals via the direct certification process. Families who qualify for free or reduced price meals may also

become eligible for Sun Bucks, a new program launching in 2026 that offers grocery assistance during the summer when school is out. Families may also qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which offers monthly financial assistance for grocery expenses. If you're not currently receiving SNAP but think you may be eligible, contact Project Bread's Food Source Hotline at 1-800-645-8333 or apply online at DTA Connect.

To see if children from your household are eligible for free or reduced price meal services, please visit the school website where you can view the federal eligibility income chart, find answers to frequently asked questions, and complete an online application at www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/freereducedmealsfaq.

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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 awoken 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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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

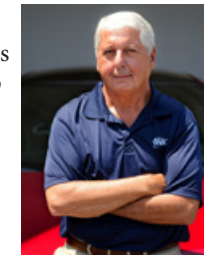
prices from \$2000-\$8000. Due to the "mid-engine design, it will take about two days to install a replacement engine and swap over parts. The 2.4-liter engine is fairly common and used in many Toyota vehicles, it is this odd design and location of the engine that becomes the challenge.

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

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.



BY JOHN PAUL

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 converter 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.

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Nominees Sought for Champions of the Blackstone Awards

Blackstone Heritage Corridor (BHC), a nonprofit providing strong leadership to preserve, promote, and celebrate the Black-

stone Valley's historic, natural, and recreational resources, is seeking nominations for its 2025 Champions of the Blackstone Awards. Awards include the John H. Chafee Leadership Award, Blackstone Heritage Corridor Student of the Year Award, Suzanne Buchanan Volunteer of the Year Award, and the Blackstone Heritage Corridor Partner of the Year Award.



Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

Created by the Blackstone Heritage Corridor, the John H. Chafee Leadership Award honors the late senator's legacy and recognizes individuals who have worked on projects that promote cultural heritage, environmental conservation, economic development, and the quality of life in the Blackstone River Valley. Past years' recipients have included community and business leaders, preservation heroes, and environmental advocates whose achievements resulted in the public's benefit. These heroes have demonstrated the Valley's long tradition of leadership and inspiration.

The Blackstone Heritage Corridor Student of the Year Award

recognizes an outstanding student or group of students (Elementary, Middle, and High School age) who have worked on projects that

promote cultural heritage and/or environmental conservation in the Blackstone River Valley. The project does not have to be affiliated directly with a school; homeschool students/groups, extra-curricular groups, and scouts/troops are eligible. The Suzanne Buchanan Volunteer of the Year Award was created in 2021 to honor a Blackstone Heritage Corridor Volunteer who embodies the welcoming spirit and unbridled enthusiasm that Suzanne, the former Volunteer Coordinator of BHC, demonstrated. The award also recognizes extraordinary volunteer hours recorded and/or recruitment of volunteers and supporters of the heritage resources in this region.

The Blackstone Heritage Corridor Partner of the Year Award recognizes an outstanding partner organization that has worked on projects that promote cultural heritage, environmental conservation, and the quality of life in the Blackstone River Valley.

Find the nomination forms at BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org/

champions-of-the-blackstone. Nominations must be received by October 15, 2025. The awards ceremony will be held Wednesday, December 3, at the Alternative's Whittin Mill in Whitinsville, Massachusetts.

To learn more about Blackstone Heritage Corridor, visit BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org.

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Prayer



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

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



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 graftonlibrary.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@graftonlandtrust.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.

HAPPENINGS!
continued on page 19

Grafton FLEA MARKET

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The Grafton Flea Market is an indoor/outdoor market with hundreds of dealers and has been in operation for over 50 years. Conveniently located at **296 Upton St., Rte. 140 on the Upton-Grafton Town Line**

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Lake Tours and Specialty Cruises

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LAKE TOUR - AUGUST 23
LAKE TOUR - AUGUST 24
LAKE TOUR - AUGUST 30
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

FOR FULL CRUISE SCHEDULE AND TICKETS VISIT WWW.INDIANRANCH.COM/CRUISES
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FACE 2 FACE

AUGUST 31 • 7PM

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BEAUTIFUL LOSERS TRIBUTE TO BOB SEGER

CRYSTAL SHIP TRIBUTE TO THE DOORS

AMERICAN BADASS KID ROCK TRIBUTE

SEPTEMBER 6 • 12PM

Flea Market and Craft Fair

The Millbury First Congregational Church, 148 West Main Street, Millbury will hold a Flea Market and Craft Fair on Saturday, September 27, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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

The \$25 inside area consists of a large supper table plus a card table. Inside tables can be organized the night before.

An outside reservation is \$15, and those chancing the weather need to provide their own table.

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

HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 18

• 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 lighted and non-scary environment. Start at the Senior 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.

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OCTOBER 11



NOVEMBER 29

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Sat, September 28th

<p>Start Whitin Community Center 60 Main Street Whitinsville, MA 01588</p> <p>Finish Wallum Lake, Douglas State Park 107 Wallum Lake Road Douglas, MA 01516</p>	<p>Street Run (4.8 miles) Trail Run (5.7 miles) Bike Path Run (4.8 miles) Mountain Bike (7.8 miles) Street Bike (1- 14.2, 1- 20.8 miles) Paddle (1- 4.8 river, 1- 3.5 lake)</p> <p>COURSE TOTAL ~66 miles</p> <p><small>NOTE: Course & mileage subject to change</small></p>
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