

Looking at Leadership in Law Enforcement

BY JOHN FLATTERY

It has been a little more than three years since Lt. Michael Gifford was first introduced to the Leaders Helping Leaders Network (LHLN), a professional development organization focused on law enforcement leadership.

While Gifford is moving on to a position in Canton, Massachusetts, the Leadership

knowledge he gained will not be lost when he joins his new department as Deputy Chief of Police. Instead it will be institutionalized through leadership courses.

Lt. Gifford had been serving the citizens of Oxford for more than ten years when he attended the "Intentional Leadership" course led by LHLN founder Dean Crisp, a former police chief and current bestselling author.

The training not only changed the way he thought about leadership, it also changed the way Gifford viewed his responsibility to those he was leading. According to Gifford, "The course challenges participants to think critically about providing direction to those we lead, which motivated me to address what I perceived as a lack of direction for those seeking advancement in rank and specialty assignments" Thus began a year's long process capped off with the Oxford Police Department's Formal Career Growth and



Development Plan, a structured, written, department-wide initiative that gives every officer, at any rank, a clear pathway toward their professional goals and establishes rank-specific career development framework that anyone, at any level, can use to take charge of their future.

Police departments across the country have training budgets that are fairly limited and when officers

complete leadership and other specialized training courses, that knowledge often stays with the individual officer who often lacks any process to share their knowledge with subordinates. With retirement rates increasing over the last several years departments are losing veteran officers at an alarming rate and when those dedicated public servants leave, their years of knowledge often leave with them.

That's no longer the case in Oxford. The Career Growth and Development Plan allows any officer to request training. When making the request, officers are required to supply documentation explaining what the training is and how it will benefit the individual's career growth as well as the entire Oxford Police Department. The process requiring training participants to provide a summary of what they learned and how that information is shared is in the process of being implemented.

Now it's just a few years since his first encounter with LHLN and Gifford was back for more. On April 7 and 8 he, along with Corporals Mercier and Shadis of the OPD, joined more than 250 members of law enforcement in Framingham for another "Intentional Leadership" presentation and residents can look forward to seeing what type of innovative changes take place as a result of this training.

Auburn Prepares for Annual Town Meeting

Proclamations Issued to Police and Firefighter

BY JANET STOICA

jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

At their last March meeting the Auburn Select Board held discussions with the Department of Public Works who were requesting authorization to apply for grant funding for Leesville Pond under the Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Grant and Funds Program. The program is administered by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and provides grants that support the completion of designs and permit applications to repair or remove dams, etc. The scope of the grant application will be for funds to complete preliminary investigations, field investigation, and final design and permitting for rehabilitation of Leesville Pond Dam. The scope of the rehabilitation was identified in the most recent structural inspection of the dam performed in October 2025. In 2018 Auburn received \$188,800 under this same grant program for construction of repairs around Leesville Pond Dam. This grant application builds off of that work by investigating and addressing issues that pose a longer-term risk. The request of approximately \$250,000 in this grant application would fund all design and permitting of the project. A match of

10% is required. It is anticipated that match funds will come from in-kind services such as review of design and permitting support. All Select Board members voted to authorize the DPW to apply for the grant funding.

Proclamations and recognitions were also given to members of the Auburn Police Department and the Auburn Fire Rescue Department for their responses as part of the Central Mass Law Enforcement Council (CEMLEC) in assisting the Spencer Police Department with an active and dangerous situation involving an armed suspect who had inflicted serious injury and engaged in gunfire with responding officers. Several Auburn public safety officials were deemed to have gone above and beyond the call of duty during a live shooter incident in Spencer. Deputy Chief Kenneth Charlton served as CEMLEC SWAT Team Commander, providing leadership, coordination, and command presence during a rapidly evolving and high-risk operation. Officer Randy Hawley responded as a member of the CEMLEC SWAT team to assist in the containment of an armed and dangerous suspect believed to be barricaded within

AUBURN

continued on page 2

At Oxford's Senior Center Age is Just a Number and Friendships Abound

BY JANET STOICA

jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

The Senior Center here in Oxford is a true beehive of activity as its visitors are as active as ever and enjoy many dynamic interests. There's so much action going on that you'll have to get out of the way for the hustle and motion with their eclectic mix of things to do from entertainment to sing-a-longs to seminars and the

many ages and activity types are as varied as the sand pebbles on the beach. Laura Wilson, Senior Center Director, is at the heart of the action along with Kristen Zamis, Assistant Senior Center Director, and Cindy Nagle, Outreach Coordinator, who will assist with Medicare sign-ups, Social Security questions, SNAP and MassHealth applications.

Twice weekly there are home-cooked luncheons put together by

their most capable chef, Deb Bayer, with assistance from her sous chef and husband, Dave Bayer. Wilson and her staff stand at the ready when extra help is required along with many wonderful volunteers who are greatly appreciated. "Because of our in-house prepared hot lunch meals, we draw in many people from area towns," said Wilson, "we'll also add an after-lunch activity that everyone enjoys making it a very enjoyable day for

our diners."

Chef Bayer has worked in the health care and food service area for over 40 years including as Food Service Director at Countryside Health Care in Milford and Holy Trinity & Rehab Center of Worcester. She came out of retirement in September 2020 and now prepares her wonderful lunches for those

OXFORD

continued on page 3

✂

TAKE
10%
OFF

YOUR NEXT SERVICE VISIT
OF \$50 OR MORE.
Must present coupon at write-up.
Valid until 4.30.2026

HARBRO
AUTO SALES SERVICE
WHITINSVILLE | WEBSTER
(508) 499-3510
harbroauto.com/service

PSRRT STD
ECSWSS
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 142
SPRINGFIELD, MA

Postal
Customer
Local

TheYankeeXpress

Scan this QR CODE
to visit our Website



Scan this QR CODE
to visit our Facebook Page

TheYankeeXpress



GET NOTICED!
 Contact Kate at 508-304-3019 or by email at katecarr@localtownpages.com to advertise today!

MASTER PLUMBER LIC. NO. 9216 MASTER SHEET METAL LIC. NO. 115

Valley Plumbing & Heating, Inc.

PLUMBING • HEATING • GAS FITTING
 BIG OR SMALL, WE DO IT ALL! SENIOR DISCOUNT

RICHARD J. WUNSCHEL
 (508) 234-3649

10% DISCOUNT SENIORS VETERANS HANDICAP

30 LACKEY DAM ROAD, SUTTON, MA 01590-2714

\$50 off ANY JOB (one per household)

WANTED TO BUY
Antiques and Old Stuff

- Bottles • Crocks • Jugs • Costume Jewelry • Pottery • Toys
- Pewter • Glassware • Sterling Silver • Coins • Gold
- Silver Plated Items • Watches • Typewriters • Sewing Machines
- Tools • Radios • Clocks • Lanterns • Lamps • Kitchenware
- Cookware • Knives • Hunting • Fishing • Military • Masonic
- Fire Dept. • Advertising Signs & Much More

CALL DONALD ROY 860-874-8396

HEARING AIDS
 We help you bring your hearing back to life

Jim & Ralph - CT Licensed and Board Certified Hearing Instruments Specialists

Call today to schedule your Hearing Evaluation and FREE Better Hearing Test Drive.

amplisound

HEARING CARE CENTERS
 800-835-2001 • PUTNAM, CT

Let us check your Medicare supplement for hearing aid coverage. We are a provider for most major insurance companies.

VISA MasterCard **www.amplisound.com** f

QUALITY BUILDING MATERIALS
 FOR ALL YOUR NEW CONSTRUCTION AND REMODELING NEEDS

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE • FREE DELIVERY • ESTIMATING
 Lumber & Plywood • Windows • Doors • Millwork • Roofing • Insulation • Decking • Rail Systems • Siding • Hardwood • Fasteners • and Much More!

C S LUMBER CO., INC. *Family Owned And Operated Since 1952*

124 Main St., Millbury
 cslumberco.com • 508-865-4822
 Mon.-Fri. 7:30am-3pm • Sat. 7:30am-noon

VISIT US FOR YOUR NEXT PROJECT!
 HOMEOWNERS WELCOME!

Healey Driscoll Administration Awards \$247,000 for Adult Students Heading to College and Workforce Skills

Funding supports 200 entry-level adult students earning college degrees

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced today it awarded \$247,000 in Bridges to College grants to five community colleges and a health care staffing agency to help nearly 200 adult learners strengthen their academic skills and successfully transition into higher education and career training programs.

The Bridges to College Program supports community colleges and organizations that prioritize helping adult, low-income and entry level workers overcome obstacles that may prevent them from completing their degree and launching in-

demand careers.

“Every Massachusetts resident deserves the opportunity to continue their education and build a better future for themselves and their families,” said Governor Maura Healey. “These Bridges to College grants are making it easier for adult learners in the state to get back into the classroom and earn a degree by helping remove barriers, strengthen pathways to college, and create opportunities for Massachusetts residents looking for economic and career growth.”

“Adult learners often face unique challenges when return-

ing to school,” said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. “Bridges to College supports community partnerships that provide the academic preparation, advising and encouragement students need to take the next step with confidence.”

Quinsigamond Community College (QCC): \$38,208

QCC will register and enroll low-income and entry-level adult workers into the Bridges to College summer program, including outreach, academic preparation, support services and career readiness.

Auburn's Annual Town Meeting

The Annual Town Meeting will be on May 5 at 6 p.m. in the Auburn High School Auditorium, 99 Auburn Street.

Articles to be voted on will

include: Operating and Capital Budgets for FY 27, replacement of the roof at the Historical Museum and acceptance of Nancy Drive as a Public Way.

Please call 508-832-7720 with any questions or come see us in person at 102 Central Street.

AUBURN

continued from page 1

the structure. Officer Matthew Laskes' technical skills deployed and operated a tactical robot within the building while also attempting to communicate and de-escalate the situation involving the armed suspect. Officer Brandyn Geldart responded as a member

of the CEMLEC drone unit and provided specialized support and aerial resource skills during the operation. Firefighter/Paramedic Scott Davis rendered advanced medical care in the hostile environment while under active threat.

Select Board members accepted and approved the Edward J. Burn Memorial Justice Assistance Grant in the amount of \$18,250 to purchase six license plate recognition

cameras and also approved a grant for a municipal speed feedback signage program through Mass DOT for three pole mounted speed signs and one speed trailer.

Additionally, the Board voted on recommendations for the May 5, 2026 Annual Town Meeting Warrant including recommending approvals for authorizing sale of tax title foreclosure properties, establishment or renewal of revolving funds for town and school programs, appropriating Chapter 90 funds, if available, for repair and maintenance of town roads, appropriating \$314,000 for the purchase of a new generator at Auburn High School, requiring building permits before land disturbance activities and triple fees for violations, and accepting Nancy Drive as a public street. The Annual Town Meeting will be on May 5 at 6 p.m. in the Auburn High School Auditorium, 99 Auburn Street. Additional topics of discussion will include Operating and Capital Budgets for fiscal year 2027. For a complete list of Town Warrant articles, please visit the town website and/or attend the town meeting.

OXFORD

continued from page 1

who visit the Oxford Senior Center. Some of their diners' favorite meals include baked fish with crumb topping served with mashed potatoes or rice pilaf, vegetable, rolls, and desserts like blonde brownies, par-faits, or ice cream sundaes. Meals are served on Tuesdays and Fridays with a price of \$5 for dining in and \$6 for take-out. Meal reservations are required no later than 48 hours before the day of serving.

Entertainment includes music duos or trios who invite sing-alongs or simply music enjoyment, magicians, chair volleyball that uses beach balls (a crowd favorite), and chair yoga as well as a strength and balance class.

"We really do enjoy so much activity here," said Director Wilson, "and our visitors can choose whatever they'd like to participate in. They can observe or participate, it's always fun for everyone and, best of all, it's companionship and friendship. That's what we all need, the human touch."

Other activities offered include live flower arranging (next class is in August), seminars that include preventing scams and frauds, deeds and probate, housing authority questions and answers, Registry of Motor Vehicle assistance with handicapped placards and photo IDs, judicial outreach (a Worcester Superior Court judge was in attendance who explained his daily responsibilities), police events, Cookies & Conversation with Ken Sellers, interim Fire Chief, who explained the importance of home escape routes, fall risks, home safety assessments, and the fire department's installation of home fire/smoke detectors. The center also has a men's group who meet monthly to chat while enjoying light refreshments. A needlework group also gets together to make hats, gloves, blankets, and lap throws to donate to the local neonatal care units for newborns as well as to donate their handiwork to veteran shelters.

"Enjoying our participants here is very gratifying," Wilson stated, "being an Oxford resident, many of our visitors knew my parents and I may have attended



the local schools with their kids. I can't believe I've been here for six years, it seems like time has really flown. I really enjoy helping our seniors and offering them the best we can."

For those who enjoy traveling, there are four bus trips lined up beginning in June. The June trip will be to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston with lunch at Margaritaville in Faneuil Hall Marketplace. July will bring a Maine Bread & Jam Tour with lobster (or chicken) bake in York, Maine along with a visit to When Pigs Fly Bakery and Stonewall Kitchen.

September's bus trip should be a good one and includes a 2-1/2 hour Mount Washington luncheon cruise on Lake Winnepesaukee and a stop at Moulton Farm for fresh produce. Their last bus bash is a festive Cookies & Carols cruise on Boston's

Charles River complete with holiday music and cookies with lunch at The Cheesecake Factory along with self-directed shopping at Cambridgeside Place.

"Bus trips are always a big hit,"

says Wilson, "there's no driving required! We just leave all the driving to New Hampshire's Royal Tours. We try to space the trips so that people can budget their funds. Trip costs are between \$139-\$149 and the price includes transportation, lunch, and gratuities. When the number 54 is reached, our trips are sold out."

The Oxford Senior Center also offers local Oxford rides with their own town van that also accommodates wheel chairs and those with walkers. Suggested donation is \$1.75/one-way. Oxford elderly residents can also

enjoy out-of-town rides to doctor and hospital appointments with the Worcester Regional Transit Authority vans without charge (currently).

For more information, please visit the town website: www.oxfordma.us and navigate to Departments and then Senior Center where you will find their newsletter. Newsletters can also be mailed to seniors upon request. Oxford Senior Center, 323 Main Street, Oxford MA 01540. 508-987-6000. Hours: 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

**Major League
Roast Beef
and wings**

503 Washington St.
Auburn, MA
508-832-4300
508-832-2990
Open Mon.-Sat. 10am-9pm

• Subs • Wraps • Wings • Salads
• Burgers • Kid's Menu
• Seafood • Whole Lot More

**SPRING BASEBALL
WINGS SPECIAL!!**

<p><< CLIP & SAVE! >></p> <p>\$5 OFF</p> <p>Suicide Squeeze</p> <p>(Good thru the World Series)</p>	<p><< CLIP & SAVE! >></p> <p>\$7 OFF</p> <p>Yankee Hater</p> <p>(Good thru the World Series)</p>	<p><< CLIP & SAVE! >></p> <p>\$10 OFF</p> <p>Wild Pitch</p> <p>(Good thru the World Series)</p>	<p><< CLIP & SAVE! >></p> <p>\$15 OFF</p> <p>The Closer</p> <p>(Good thru the World Series)</p>
---	--	---	---

Economy Canvas & Awning Co.

Pool Cover Repairs
Over 34 years of service in the community

**Retractable & Stationary Awnings
Boat & Truck Covers and Related Products**

- Full Awning Service - Installation, Removal & Cleaning
- Manufacture & Repair All Canvas Products

115 Hamilton St., Southbridge, MA
508-765-5921

www.EconomyCanvasAndAwning.com

connections

PHYSICAL THERAPY

NOW OPEN!

CALL TO SCHEDULE YOUR APPOINTMENT NOW!

**40 Douglas St.
Uxbridge, MA 01569**

Connections Physical Therapy is a family, locally owned and operated company with 19 clinics throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island! Connections PT is committed to providing the highest quality of care for our patients in a one-on-one setting. We are thrilled to be joining the Uxbridge community this August. Call us now to set up an appointment!

Services:

**Orthopedic Physical Therapy
Post-Surgical Rehabilitation
Neck and Back Pain Relief
Manual Therapy • Sports Injury Treatment
Vestibular Rehabilitation And More!**

Contact Us:

**508-501-5008
508-501-5009**

Uxbridge@ConnectionsPT.com
Connectionspt.com

New England Stone Walls

BY THOMAS J. MCLAUGHLIN

No matter where you go in the New England woods, you're bound to come across the iconic 19th century stone wall. They can be seen everywhere, including on the Midstate Trail.

It's commonly believed that the early New England farmers made these walls as they uncovered frost heaving rocks while plowing their fields each spring, which surely happened. But as to why and when the walls were built, it depends on the wall and who you ask.

Robert Thorson, a landscape geologist at the University of Connecticut, the founder of The Stone Wall Initiative, and the author of Stone by Stone, shares this view, "The walls are simply a disposal pile." But Tom Wessels, an ecologist and the author of Reading the Forest Landscape, says that the earliest New England farmers fenced in their livestock with wooden split rail fences, which was much easier than lugging heavy stones up a hill to build a wall. Wessels believes

that farmers would throw the rocks in a rock dump rather than putting time and effort into constructing an extensive network of walls.

Nearly a quarter of a million miles of stone walls were constructed throughout our region according to Thorson. Wessels calculates that central New England alone has 125,000 miles of stone walls, a length that could wrap around the equator five times or extend more than halfway to the moon. Wessels believes that most of these walls were built in thirty years and that if these walls were in the Mediterranean, rather than New England, they would be the eighth wonder of the world.

Some walls are older than others, depending on when the area was first settled. Walls were built between 1750 and 1850, when New England farms were in their heyday. But according to Wessels, most of the stone walls you see today in Central New England were built between 1810 and 1840, during a period known as "Sheep Fever."

New England was about to experience the most profound change to the landscape since the Ice Age. It was an event that would see more than 80 percent of our forests cut down, hillsides eroded to bare rock, and natural habitats wiped out.

It was a shift from the small

farm to larger commercial farming. Between 1810 and 1820 the number of textile mills in the region processing Merino wool multiplied threefold.

It all began after France and Spain invaded Portugal in 1807, then Napoleon and his French army invaded Spain in 1808, toppling Spain's King Ferdinand VII.

A Bostonian financier, William Jarvis, was appointed by Thomas Jefferson to be the U.S. Consul to Portugal. During the chaos of Napoleon's conquest of Spain, Jarvis seized the opportunity to obtain the previously restricted and much sought after Merino breed of sheep, known for its fine, soft wool. He imported 4,000 of them back to his farm in Weathersfield, Vermont.

Those 4,000 sheep eventually surpassed a million and a half in the next two decades. The boycott of British goods during the War of 1812 was an additional boon to New England's farmers. Wessels believes that it was during this thirty-year period that most of New England's stone walls were built to pen the Merino sheep.

But by 1840, as prices plummeted, new markets opened, and land became available for farming in the west; New England's sheep farms were being abandoned, and by 1900 more than half of the cleared land was reforested once again.



Today, these picturesque walls that once meandered through fields and pastures can be found throughout our forests.

The Yankee Xpress

Published on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month. Direct mailed to nearly 65,000 homes and businesses each month and available on news stands in the region.

2nd Friday: The YankeeXpress South: Charlton, Dudley, Webster

2nd Friday: Blackstone Valley South: Douglas, Northbridge & Uxbridge

4th Friday: The YankeeXpress North: Auburn, Oxford

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

Contact us:

Patty Roy, Editor:

proy@theyankeeexpress.com

Submit business news and community events to news@theyankeeexpress.com

To request advertising info, please email

ads@theyankeeexpress.com

Jen Schofield, Publisher: The Yankee Xpress,

Blackstone Valley Xpress, Local Town Pages,

Milford and Upton Mendon Free Press;

jenschofield@yankeeshopper.net

Bill Cronan, Blackstone Xpress North and

South (Douglas, Uxbridge, Northbridge;

Millbury, Grafton, Sutton);

bcronan@theyankeeexpress.com

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/©2026

9 Industrial Road, Milford MA 01757

508-943-8784 • theyankeeexpress.com

Lake Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg

Souvenirs
Sweatshirts & Tees
Postcards
Hats • Jackets
Tervis Tumblers
Etched Glassware

"Images of America, Webster" book

508-943-4900 • 154 Thompson Rd., Webster, MA

shop online at www.websterlakegifts.com

FAIRVIEW WOODWORKS

Custom Woodworking
Built-Ins • Furniture • Shelving

(508) 864-5555 | Locally Owned & Operated
www.fairview-wood-works.com

SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones

AESOP, I ORDERED A NEW GAMING CHAIR LIKE A WEEK AGO AND I STILL HAVEN'T GOTTEN IT YET!

NOW I FIND OUT THAT IT'S ON BACKORDER...INDEFINITELY! WHAT AM I GONNA DO? I CAN'T PLAY MY GAMES 'CUZ I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO SIT ON!

I WOULDN'T STAND FOR IT.

© 2026 by Tim Jones www.sourgrapescomic.com

Preventing Foodborne Illnesses

BY JANET STOICA
jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com

As a former member of my hometown's Board of Health, I have reviewed and seen reports regarding many local food establishments and their methods of handling food for consumers, their customers. Most eateries, restaurants, diners, and summer food stands employ safe handling

ford's Public Health Director, reported on an online service provided by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Department. This tool allows any Massachusetts' resident to report suspected foodborne illness to the Mass. Dept. of Public Health (DPH). After your online form is submitted, it is reviewed by the DPH and shared with your local Board of Health who will conduct

Contacting the DPH is critical if there is a large group of consumers involved. They may be reached at 627- 983-6712, however, for quick local action during regular business hours, please contact your local Board of Health (BOH) or Police Station. In Oxford, the BOH phone number is 508- 987-6045, extension 5. They are located at the Town Hall, 325 Main Street, 2nd floor, Oxford. Hours: Mon/Tues/Thurs 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.; Wed. 9 a.m. – 7 p.m.; and Friday 9 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Police Dept. 508- 987-0156.

In Auburn, phone 508- 832-7703, Town Hall, 104 Central Street, Auburn. Hours: Mon. 8 a.m. – 7 p.m.; Tues – Thurs. 8 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Friday 8 a.m. – 1 p.m. Police Dept. 508- 832-7777.



rules and regulations but others have chosen shortcuts whether by choice or lack of employee training.

If you or anyone you know has experienced stomach upset, headache, nausea, or worse after consuming food at a local eating establishment, it is imperative that you do not hesitate to report your bout of illness to your local Board of Health in order for action to be taken and for a health inspector to be sent to that dining location to check on their safe food handling methods. You should never/ever hesitate to call your local Board of Health. These highly-qualified food inspectors are there for you and to protect others from unsafe food handling methods. If there are questionable practices being ignored or food safety regulations not being followed, it is in everyone's best health interests to have this addressed by your local authority.

Recently, Ivan Kwagala, Ox-

a site visit to check food safety and handling procedures. Reports are reviewed with any other submissions to identify possible patterns such as multiple individuals becoming ill after consuming the same food or eating at the same establishment according to Mr. Kwagala.

It is essential to provide the most accurate and explicit information when reporting any suspected foodborne illness such as considering all foods consumed in the past 72 hours (3 days) before symptoms occurred, reviewing your credit card receipts to establish your dining location, even photos you may have taken or calendar notations. Speaking with other members of the group you dined with is extremely important, noting the time and date of symptom onset and what those symptoms were. Providing your name and phone number to the DPH is also essential for follow-up purposes.

Fred D. Giovaninni
HANDYMAN SERVICE

ALL TYPES OF REPAIRS • IN & OUT
NO JOB IS TOO SMALL

- FREE ESTIMATES
- GENERAL CARPENTRY
- DRY WALL REPAIR
- RENOVATIONS

- ITEMS ASSEMBLED
- INTERIOR PAINTING
- ETCETERA....

MA# 155844 INSURED
CALL (508) 904-9728 DUDLEY, MA





430 Main St., Oxford, MA

We repair all makes and models of Garage Doors and Electric Openers

- Commercial and Residential -

Sales • Service • Installation

800-605-9030 508-987-8600

www.countrysidedoors.com email: countrysidedoors@aol.com



Renew your home's appeal with a new garage door.

Many new styles and colors to choose from.

Visit our display by appointment



Local and Life-Changing.



**CLASSES START SOON!
REGISTRATION BEGINS APRIL 13.**

- ✓ 100+ affordable programs, degrees, and certificate options
- ✓ Many MA residents can attend FREE with MassEducate & MassReconnect

- ✓ Small class sizes for personal attention and support
- ✓ Transferable credits—seamless pathways to your next big move

Summer 1: May 26 – July 1
Summer 2: July 7 – August 12
Fall: September 9 – December 22

QCC.edu | 508.853.2300





- 24 Hour Emergency Service
- Automatic Delivery
- Fuel Assistance Accepted
- Burner Service

- Licensed in House Technicians (NO subcontracting)
- Oil Tank Installations (Free Estimates)

We do NOT add biofuel to our product

DELIVERY AREAS

MASSACHUSETTS: Auburn, Brimfield, Charlton, Cherry Valley, Dudley, Fiskdale, Holland, Leicester, North Oxford, Millbury, Oxford, Spencer, Southbridge, Sturbridge, Sutton & Webster.

Monday-Friday 7:30am-5pm Saturday 9:30am-2pm

5¢ OFF

PER GALLON OF OIL

OF 175 GALLONS OR MORE

Must present coupon. Offer cannot be combined.

OFFICE LOCATION: 34 NEWMAN AVE., SOUTHBRIDGE

Oxford Middle School Quarter 2 Honor Roll

HIGH HONORS

Grade 8 - Sadie Crouch, Lily Dolbec, Zachary Dubsy, Ella Gasasira, Liam Harrity, Brooklyn Mangano, Maxwell Palaia, Henrique Paniagua, Mateo Quintero, Megan Riley

Grade 7 - Clayton Almstrom, Saige Angell, Jack Belmore, Hazel Burlingame, Briella Caracciolo, Sadie Coghlan, Amber Conway, Hadley Coraccio, Brynn Czernicki-Nasis, Olivia Daoust, Cora Desche-neau, Kendall Donnelly, Joshua George, Trevor Gould, Margaret Griffin, Kellen Harrison, Jackson Harvey, Vanessa Johnson, Isabella LaMountain, Joseph Menke, Ava Montalvo, Caroline Montalvo, Sofia Moura, Stella Pantano, Jenna Shenette, Mya Skeates, Chad Sli-woski, Mia St. Peter, Sadie Stewart, Raeann Teal, Marissa Worden, Makenzie Zwang

Grade 6 - Audrey Almstrom, Tianna Delacruz, Eli Dexter, Mckenna Evans, Jaelyn Halley, Liam Huambachano, Mia Mazzella, Jack Richard, Bradley Seeley, Harper Skowron, Slate Skowron, Logan Thomas

HONORS

Grade 8 - Bethany Abrahamson, Larissa Amorim, Gemma Balboni, Isabella Bishop, Princess Bonagwa, Olivia Boulette, Ryan Burke, Abigail Burke, Isaac Deechaleune, Julia Do Nascimento, Shea Dunlavey, Jillian Gustafson, Willow Keller, Alana LaFrance, Lucas Laurie, Matthew Martel-lotta, Alana McFarland, Sophia Meneguzzo, Alexander Napolitano, Ashton O'Malley, Dylan Pow-ers, Jr., Hunter Rodriguez, Rachel Rodriguez-Pacheco, Heather Stebbins, Lilliana Tervo, Jordyn Torteson, Harrison Voas

Grade 7 - Darrel Amon, Diego Aponte, Kaylee Augustynski, Col-in Baldwin, Hayden Bates, Narta Berisha, Miraanda Bieger, Tyler Bouley, Bradley Bush, Lucas Bush, Kyle Case, Grant Corriveau, Kaiden Corriveau, Anthony Degaetano, Caleb Dubsy, Grady Eason, Timothy Forand, Jazziel Gonzalez, Trevor Gould, Ethan Gustafson, Vanessa Judge, Castiel Kaiser, Travis Kogbe, Brooke Mastromatteo, Baileigh Mazerolle, Zoe Morello, Landon Morris, Aria O'Neil, Tianna Parker, Tessa

Peloso, Victoria Rivera, Eric Sloan, Sarah Stebbins, Briley Todd, Bradley Toedt, Liam Valipour, Aislyn White, Lilliana Woods

Grade 6 - Tyleeah Adorno, Dakota Allen-Nunes, Ayla Anshah, Bridget Bejune, Sebastian Benoit, Leeann Carlson, Katrina Chuong, Ava Churchill, Rylee Cordova, Jaxon Cortis, Janek Czapnik, Ella Davis, Evelyn Decoster, Juan Escobar, Alexzander Far-rar, Natalia Ferrante, Nahashon Gachuna, Maevae Genatossio, Edward Graham III, Bennett Hard-ing, Lukas Kasprzycki, Zaidyn Kublis, Savannah Langlois, Seth Maki, Harlei McConnell, Gregory Meneguzzo, Tayshi Nguyen, Tai Nguyen-Le, Annelise Palaia, Colby Palin, Fernando Paniagua, James Paul, Margret Paul, Maura Persall, Emilia Raimondi, Carlos Ramirez, Lorenzo Riccardi, Sophia Riccardi, Hannah Riley, Avery Robillard, Ayla Schonberg, Aiden Socia, Kylie Stidsen, Thomas Stone, Seamus Sweeney, Charlese Williams



Oxford Middle School recognizes students each month who exemplify our Be The 3 goals of Respect, Responsibility, and Safety as well as showing that attendance matters, displaying citizenship, and showing growth in a variety of ways. OMS celebrates Zachary Dubsy, Hannah Riley, Gavyn Lucier, and Maci Turner as our March Students of the Month. Photo submitted

Al's

RUBBISH & CONTAINER

556 Central Turnpike, Sutton, MA 01590
 Phone: (508) 865-4193
 Website: www.alsrubbish.com
 E-Mail: alsrubbish@gmail.com

BLACKSTONE VALLEY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
- 2026 -
Proud Member

DUMPSTER RENTAL SPECIAL!

Sutton, Millbury 15 yard dumpster For 2 tons	\$450
Grafton, Auburn, Oxford, Webster, Whitinsville and Northbridge	
15 yard dumpster For 2 tons	\$475
All Other Towns	\$525

Additional charges for tvs/monitors, mattresses & box springs

Serving the Blackstone Valley
and the Surrounding Towns in Worcester County

Al's Rubbish Provides

- Dumpster Rental Services 7 Days
- All Rentals Include Drop Off and Pick Up
- No Service or Fuel Charges
- Estate Clean Outs
- Furniture and Appliance Removal
- We Recycle

508-865-4193 • WWW.ALSRUBBISH.COM

Support
Local Small
Business

FREE DROP OFF AND PICK UP!

Etiquette Express: Making Everyday Interactions Better

Etiquette & Leadership Coach helping people show up with confidence, kindness, and credibility.

BY LEE-ANN BARKHOUSE

The small moments still matter.

As we welcome spring here in the Blackstone Valley, there's a natural sense of renewal all around us. The days are a little brighter, neighbors are out walking again, and we begin to reconnect in ways that winter often puts on pause.

It's a gentle reminder that we also have an opportunity to reset how we show up for one another.

In today's world, we are more connected than ever -and yet, in many ways, more distracted. We move quickly. We respond in short messages. We check our phones in between conversations. None of it is intentional, and yet it can leave others feeling unseen or unheard.

Etiquette today isn't about knowing every rule. It's about awareness. It's about how we

show up in the small, everyday moments.

Holding the door. Looking up when someone is speaking. Taking a moment before responding. Following through when we say we will. These are simple things, but they carry meaning. They signal respect. They let others know they matter.

Maya Angelou once said that people may forget what you said or what you did, but they will never forget how you made them feel. That feels especially relevant right now.

Here in our community - whether at the market, a local event, or simply passing someone on the sidewalk - we have opportunities every day to make a positive impression. Not in a grand way, but in a genuine one.

We don't need to be perfect. We just need to be present.

Because how we show up in the smallest moments is what people

remember most.

This spring let's keep it simple. A kind word. A little patience. A thoughtful pause. Small reminders that, together, make our community feel just a little more connected.

Q. Is it rude to check your phone during a conversation?

A. It can be perceived that way. Even a quick glance can signal that your attention is elsewhere. When possible, give the person in front of you your full attention. It's one of the simplest ways to show respect.

Q. What if I'm busy and can't respond to messages right away?

A. That's completely understandable. A brief acknowledgment, "I received this and will follow up" goes a long way. It shows consideration and keeps communication clear.

Q. How can I be more present in everyday interactions?

A. Start small. Make eye contact. Listen without interrupting. Pause before responding. Presence doesn't require extra time, it simply requires intention.

ETIQUETTE TIP OF THE MONTH

Pause before you respond. A brief pause, whether in conversation, email, or text, allows you to respond with intention rather than reaction. It's a simple habit that brings clarity, respect, and

thoughtfulness into every interaction.

See you next month, and may we all spring forward with confidence, kindness, and grace.

- 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 U (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.

Summit Campus and QCC Announce 3-Week Summer College Readiness Program

Summit Campus and Quinsigamond Community College's Student Accessibility Services today announced the *Summer College Prep Program*, a new collaborative summer program designed to help rising high school juniors and seniors develop self-advocacy, strengthen academic skills and prepare for meaningful post-secondary options.

The three-week summer self-exploration and college readiness program will provide diverse learners with an immersive college experience on QCC's campus that includes writing workshops and personal development sessions. The program also offers an

optional dormitory living experience at Summit Campus, called Summit Summer Launch.

"I have always believed that students with learning differences need an experience to show them what they may not be able to envision on their own. This program can impact a student's vision of their future immeasurably and create a pathway to higher education that may not have seemed possible," said Nikki Koppel, director of Summit Campus. "This partnership creates a supportive environment where students can grow academically and personally while gaining real insight into college life."

"Quinsigamond Community College is proud to partner with Summit Campus to support students in our community as they prepare for their educational futures," said Kristen Proctor, director of Student Accessibility Services & Assistive Technology. "This program reflects our commitment to expanding access to college readiness opportunities and helping students see themselves as future college scholars."

All accepted students will attend sessions on study strategies, time management, college expectations, self-care and stress management. The program will also offer a variety of social events and excursions.

WORCESTER COUNTY LAWNMOWER

ALWAYS THE BEST SERVICE



Lawnmower & Tractor Service
Tune-Ups & Repairs
Snowblower & Generator Repairs
Pickup & Delivery

508-987-2775
 492 Main St., Oxford, MA 01540

WWW.WORCESTERCOUNTYLAWNMOWER.COM



THOMPSON

Landscaping & Construction

- DRAINAGE • POOL FILL-INS • LAWN CARE
- LAND CLEARING • FULL LAWN INSTALLS • MULCH
- EXCAVATION • STONE & GRAVEL DRIVEWAYS
- PATIOS • RETAINING WALLS • WALKWAYS

Millbury, MA • 508-523-7790

Ebthompson36@gmail.com • Free Estimates • Fully Insured

Worcester Area's Largest and Oldest Window & Siding Dealer

30 Auburn St.,
Auburn, MA 01501
508-832-5981



Honest Sales,
Superior
Workmanship
and Service.



Vinyl Siding • Seamless Gutters • Doors
Replacement Windows • Roofing

FREE ESTIMATES • FULLY INSURED

Capitol Siding Company has been in business for over 75 years with over 23,000 satisfied customers. Our customers can expect consistent product quality and skillful performance from our sales staff and trained professional installers. We deliver service and value.





Offer Lifetime warranty on our siding, window and roofing products.

Check us out on the web: www.capitolsiding.com

SPORTS

Unfinished Business

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTSWRITER

Last spring Mike Brousseau took his coaching talents from Douglas and moved over to Auburn, a storied program the coach couldn't say 'no' to. Under the new coach, the Rockets went an impressive 17-2 during the regular season capturing the SWCL Championship as well as being awarded the six seed in the Division 3 State Tournament. Although securing a top seed Auburn was upset in the first round 8-5 by Tewksbury, the 27 seed.

"It was our worst game of the season. We had two bad innings giving up 8 runs, something that we hadn't done all year and before you knew it, we were done," Brousseau said. "It was a stunning loss and a job unfinished."

With that loss still fresh in their minds the Auburn team is coming into this season with one thought – get back into the State Tournament and make a deep run at the Division 3 Title that eluded them last season.

"The interesting thing is this year's team is just as talented as

last year's," the coach said. "These kids have some big wins in the Little League world and can really compete."

Brousseau doesn't believe in captains, instead he goes with senior leaders. To become a senior leader the coach has respective candidates write a 150-word essay on what makes a good leader as well as talking about the leaders they had during their tenure.

The coaching staff elected four senior leaders to this year's team – Bryce Everson, Owen Morrow, Liam Doyle and Pat Saucier. Brousseau noted that a lot of things make up the composition of a team, but communication leads to atmosphere which sets the tone. It is not just the things they do on the field but off as well such as bringing the equipment to the field and help bringing the young athletes into the fold.

The four senior leaders all bring something different to the table that will help the Rockets not only win, but get back into the post-season. Everson has been elevated from the number two pitcher into the role of the team's ace; Morrow is the 'father' of the team, Doyle



Auburn High School 2026 Baseball Team. Photo submitted

will patrol the outfield while also seeing some time on the mound and Saucier, the team's second baseman, is of small stature but a complete ball of fire according to his coach.

Senior Jayden Ortiz, heading to Division 2 Franklin Pierce in New

Hampshire next year, is a power hitter who should be one of the team's top hitters this season. As the Auburn quarterback on the football team, he seriously hurt his leg during the tournament last year and had to undergo surgery where doctors inserted two plates and four pins. As the baseball season is getting underway, he is ready and able (fully cleared) to take to the diamond. The team is excited about his return and is expecting great things from him.

In addition to Ortiz bashing the ball at the plate, Brousseau is looking for a group of athletes to come to his aid at the plate. First baseman Matt Friedland is a quiet individual but one that is a smart choice to hit in the cleanup spot for the Rockets. He has the lowest strikeout rate on the team and as a left-handed batter he can spray the ball all over the field.

Sophomore Chase Reyes, a 6'4" 200 lb. athlete will bat in the five slot and play third base. His very first varsity hit was a 400-foot homerun. Reyes power is something that didn't come as a surprise as the third baseman had showed his power during batting practice. Owen Leavey, another sophomore, is a tremendous athlete that can play just about anywhere that is needed. He is currently playing centerfield where he will use his speed. Brousseau believes Leavey has a lot of potential and power but is working on making the opposing pitcher work the pitch count in his favor.

On the mound Everson will be looked upon as the team's ace, while Brousseau will have several others looking to have the opportunity to pitch for Auburn this spring. Junior Cam Patraitis, who

has worked extremely hard during the off-season with his pitching as well as his hitting, currently looks to have the inside track at taking the ball as the team's number two hurler. After Patraitis, Doyle and Luke Martin are also vying for pitching time. Reyes will take the ball as either the team's set-up man or closer.

There will be some big shoes to fill in behind the plate this season and last year's back-up, Dom Freitas, will look to do just that this spring season. Thus far the senior has been up to the task and looking good. Sophomore Julian Ortiz will suit up as the back-up catcher.

With the MIAA moving teams around within the new leagues Auburn will now face off against the teams in the CMACA, which brings a brutally tough league schedule to its participants. Auburn also decided to stack their non-league schedule with talented teams.

"We could potentially go 10-10 this year and come away with a higher power ranking seeding than last year," Brousseau said. "You want to be playing those top-notch teams to have you prepared for the tournament."

Auburn's goal is simple and not overly aggressive – go out and do your work, compete hard and make the state tournament. Along the way Brousseau asks his players to continue to prepare and sharpen their skills as they get closer to the tournament. Having a tremendous group of college-type coaches on his staff is a blessing and should be an immense help to the athletes and what they are able to accomplish this year.

SUMMER GUIDE!

Think Summer! Warm weather. Beaches.
Golfing. Hiking. Outdoor dining. Are you looking forward to it as much as we are?
Then Promote your Business and Events with our Annual Summer Guide - jam-packed with things to do this summer. Just add warm weather!



NOW INCLUDING
Holden, Paxton
& Rutland!

REACH MORE THAN 77,000 HOMES & BUSINESSES

this June with our **Annual Summer Guide!**

DIRECT MAILED TO:

- Auburn • Charlton • Douglas • Dudley
- Grafton • Holden • Millbury • Northbridge
- Oxford • Paxton • Rutland • Sutton
- Uxbridge • Webster

RESERVATION DEADLINE is MAY 6th!

Contact

Kate Carr at
508-304-3019

or by email at

katecarr@localtownpages.com

TO BOOK YOUR SPACE TODAY!

Auburn will hold its town-wide clean-up day from 7:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. on Saturday, May 2. Join the town and the Chamber of Commerce for a massive litter clean-up. Town residents are encouraged to collect unsightly and potentially harmful waste for proper disposal. Help beautify the town on this rewarding day. Registered volunteers will receive a t-shirt, safety and cleanup gear, a reusable bag, snacks and a boxed lunch.

FREELANCE WRITERS NEEDED!

Do you have a talent for engaging writing that informs and inspires? We are looking for a local interested in telling stories important to the area. If so, Our Town Publishing wants you to join our team of dedicated journalists. If interested, please submit writing samples to proy@yankeeshopper.net

Come visit our gardens and shop our nursery on these days,
Please respect the fact that we are only open to the public on these days.



The Hosta Farm of Mendon Open to the Public Days 2026

will be open on the following
Saturdays from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM:

--- May 16th --- May 23rd --- June 6th ---
--- June 13th --- June 27th --- July 11th ---
--- August 15th --- Sept 12th ---

52 Bates St - Mendon, MA
hosta_farm@yahoo.com
508-634-1914



June 27th will be a great time to check out the Waterlilies.

August 15th the Fragrant Hosta should be flowering!
Not all Hosta are Fragrant
This is the best time to smell test the ones that are!

Stay Connected

Postcards and ads are only once a year

~~~~~

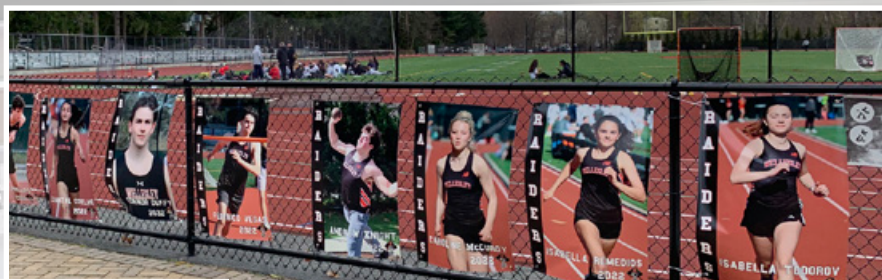
For up to date information you can:  
Find us on Facebook & Instagram

Join our email List by Email us at [hosta\\_farm@yahoo.com](mailto:hosta_farm@yahoo.com)  
Check out our website - [www.thehostafarmofmendon.com](http://www.thehostafarmofmendon.com)



## From CONCEPT to COMPLETION, we bring your vision to life.

- Graphic Design
- Sports Banners
- Brochures
- Postcards
- Direct Mail Solutions
- Every Door Direct Mail
- Books
- Lawn Signs
- Calendars
- Posters
- Swag
- and so much more!



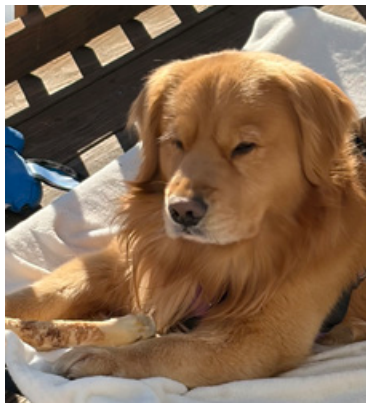
**ANDREW CARINI**  
Print and Mail Specialist  
How can I help you?  
508-254-2241

**Our Town PUBLISHING**

Home of [localtownpages.com](http://localtownpages.com)



[ourtownpublishing.com](http://ourtownpublishing.com)



LIVING WITH LUKE

amyleclaire@hotmail.com

# Luke Does His Job

BY AMY PALUMBO-LECLAIRE

I don't like to leave Luke alone for more than three hours, let alone for almost a week. But vacations are a part of life. I needed some Florida sunshine. I'd like to say Luke understood - that he was happy for me, supportive even. But I'm a terrible liar.

The truth is, Luke did not understand.

Why would anyone walk out on a loved one?

"My Mom doesn't love me anymore." He sniffed the evidence - the overstuffed bag that meant Mom's annual mission to avoid checking-in luggage. Then he turned and escaped to his bed, curling into a tight ball until his tail covered his mouth.

"I love you, Luke! Mummy's going for a ride. I'll be back in a few days. You're going to stay with Daddy." I cupped his bear cub face in my hands and kissed his nose.

The whisker above his right eye lifted when I spoke his language: Stay with Daddy. He considered the phrase, one with multiple meanings—fun walks, snuggle time, shared silence during workdays, frisbee, and yard work. Daddy is a good person.

The problem was -  
He sighed long.  
Daddy isn't Mommy.

My early morning flight didn't help sanctify our lukewarm separation. I followed the airplane alphabet to a row of seats that resembled a toddler's booster chair and popped open the overhead bin. No room for another bag. Worse, even my small one barely fit beneath the seat.

A watchful flight attendant noticed. "Please be sure your bag is tucked fully underneath the seat," she said.

Easier said than done. My belted

midsection - seatbelt light on - couldn't bend enough to manage the bag. Under her eye, I wrestled with a stubborn metal bar until, finally, I shoved it into place. The stares of my cabin neighbors - an elderly couple far more organized than I was - beat down on me like a noon day sun.

"Hi there," I tried. "I'm Amy."

The wife adjusted her mask to blow her nose into a wad of tissues, then folded it neatly for reuse. Her husband gazed out the window. I



he trembles at the hum of a nail buffer at the groomers. His back legs shake, his eyes widen - every unfamiliar sensation a small betrayal. There is no version of this world where I could place him in a crate beneath a plane and call it care.

I've been told there's an easy workaround. "Just get him a service vest—you can bring him anywhere."

But I'm a terrible liar.  
Luke isn't a service dog.

And yet -  
"You have the best dog!" says the delivery driver, pausing for a game of frisbee.

"Can they pet him?" asks a tired mother, grateful for a moment's stillness while her children reach for his soft ears.

"Can I give him a command?" a teenager asks, lingering a little longer than necessary.

"Do you want to talk about it?" he seems to say without words, again and again, to the people who need it most.

Luke does not perform tasks on command. He doesn't wear a vest or carry credentials.

But he serves.

In presence. In patience. In the steady offering of himself.

A few rows ahead, the flight attendant demonstrates the oxygen mask - how to secure it over your face, how to help others once you've helped yourself. Her gestures are practiced, efficient, necessary.

She is doing her job.

By the time I return home, the trip has blurred into sun and salt and easy conversation. The door opens. My bag drops. His name leaves my mouth before I see him. "Luke!"

The sound comes first - his nails striking the floor in a rapid, uneven rhythm - then his whole body, wiggling, folding, spilling toward me. He whimpers, yelps, sings something that resembles a trumpet played just slightly out of tune.

I sink to the floor, and he crowds into me, insistent, certain. The bags are forgotten, reduced to objects to sniff, proof that I left and - more importantly - returned.

His joy is immediate. Physical. Unfiltered.

There is no hesitation in it. No withholding.

Only presence.

Luke doesn't question where I've been. He doesn't measure time in days or distance in miles. He knows only this: I am here.

And he is exactly where he needs to be.

Doing his job.

Write to Amy - amyleclaire@hotmail.com

Visit Luke on IG livingwithluke-valentino

**Webster Lake VETERINARY HOSPITAL**

Book Now  
508-943-7297

**NOW OFFERING HOUSE CALLS**

Webster Lake Veterinary Hospital delivers high-quality veterinary care with a warm, family-like touch. As a privately owned, well-established small animal hospital, we focus on preventative medicine, client education, and personalized treatment plans for every stage of your pet's life.

Mention this ad and new clients will receive \$10 off

**SERVICES:**

- ✓ Wellness Care and Immunizations
- ✓ Dental Care
- ✓ Surgery
- ✓ Radiology / Ultrasound
- ✓ Hospice & Euthanasia

leaned back and closed my eyes.

Luke filled my thoughts.

"Hey Mom! Sit next to me! What's in that bag? Did you bring any frisbees? No problem - I'll give you my paw in case you're nervous about flying. Anxiety? Who am I to talk? I can't even handle the vibration of my groomer's nail buffer."

His imagined voice was bright, reassuring.

Which was ironic, considering

Licensed & Insured Free Estimates

**LYNCH FENCE CO.**

- Serving RI & MA Since 2001 -

401-356-4699 - LYNCHFENCECO.COM

REAL ESTATE

# The Best Week To List Your House Is Just Around the Corner

While the Spring season consistently offers up some of the best conditions for home sellers, there's one window where the stars really seem to align year after year and it's coming up fast. Based on an analysis of



BY MARK MARZEOTTI

historical trends, the ideal week to put your house on the market this year is April 12-18. Here's why this window stands out as being particularly

seller-friendly:

Buyers are more active. According to the research coming out of Realtor.com, homes listed during this week typically get about 16.7 percent more views than in a normal week and in a market where buyers have options, getting that extra attention can set the tone for your entire sale.

Sales happen faster. The added demand from buyers sets you up for a faster process. While homes have been taking longer to sell lately, homes up for sale this week were on the market for 17 percent less time than usual and that's a difference you'll be able to feel.

A better price for your house. Since the number of homes for sale has grown, it's normal for buyers to ask for credits, repairs, and price

adjustments today. But, during this early Spring window, about 18.9 percent fewer homes do a price cut. That gives you a better chance of getting your full asking price.

More profit in your pocket. According to the study, well-prepped homes listed this week can command a price that's about \$5,300 more than the average week and \$26,000 more than homes at the start of the year. What seller doesn't want more eyes on their house, getting an offer in hand sooner (rather than later), and their best shot at selling for top dollar?

What you need to do to get ready? If you're already thinking about selling and you want to take advantage of this sweet spot, your next step is shockingly simple. Just talk to a member of The Marzeotti

Group or your trusted real estate professional. Our expertise on your area is going to be key over the next few weeks because these trends are going to vary by state, city, and even neighborhood. We will use that insider knowledge to help you figure out what you need to do now to get your house ready. Including: What you'll want to spruce up before listing, how to prioritize any repairs (and contractors that can help), quick wins that'll have a big impact.

What buyers care most about today: For some sellers, that's a few easy fixes they can knock out in the next couple of weeks. A fresh coat of paint, some new mulch, or some light Spring cleaning. For others, it's worth taking another month or so to make some minor updates

before listing and that's okay. Because while this mid-April window may give sellers an advantage, it's not your only opportunity to sell. Other experts say a great time to list is in May too and that means the golden window for sellers isn't closing after this one week.

Getting your house on the market in mid-April may give you an extra edge, but the bigger opportunity is the Spring season as a whole. The real question is: Do you know what you need to do before you can list, because it's officially go-time for any seller planning a Spring move. If you want your house to hit the market this week (or even this season), talk to a member of The Marzeotti Group today to about what it'll take to get it ready.

## Boating Safety Course May 16

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Tri-State Flotilla, Massachusetts will be instructing two upcoming boating safety classes that meet current state mandated educational requirements.

The BOAT AMERICA COURSE is offered in a one-day 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. Successful completion of the 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, will now requires 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 new 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:

Webster Fire Department Classroom, 55 Thompson Road, Webster 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

The registration deadline is May 10. Contact our Public Education

Officer Phil Kubat for registration or additional information: email phil.uscgaux@verizon.net or call 508 -478-3778.

To locate the BA meeting certification requirements, and other USCG Auxiliary courses offered go to: [https://www.cgaux.org/boating-ed/class\\_finder/index.php](https://www.cgaux.org/boating-ed/class_finder/index.php)



Looking to advertise in your Real Estate section?  
Contact Kate at 508-304-3019 or by email at katecarr@localtownpages.com to advertise TODAY!

**LAMACCHIA REALTY**  
**Maribeth Marzeotti**  
REALTOR®, GRI, SRES  
Marzeotti Group  
MBMarzeotti@LamacchiaRealty.com  
(508) 864-8163  
www.MarzeottiGroup.net  
945 W. Boylston Street  
Worcester, MA 01606

**Templeman TREE SERVICE, INC.**  
Serving the Community since 1980  
**WE PLANT TREES & SHRUBS!**  
Expert Hand Climbing Crews  
Removals • Pruning  
Stump Grinding • Cabling  
**FAST FREE ESTIMATES**  
Fully Insured • Workman's Comp  
**CONTACT US TODAY!**  
508-366-7693 • sales@templemantree.com  
MAA & TCIA Member

THE CAR DOCTOR

jpaul@aanortheast.com

# Cutting an Electronic Key Fob

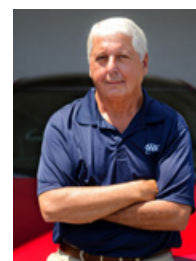
**Q.** I am purchasing a 2014 BMW GT xDrive, and it comes with just one key fob. I have read that Home Depot sells a DIY kit for matching a key fob to my vehicle. The Home Depot key machine can physically cut the key, but I need it linked to my car electronically as well. Any suggestions on the best and most economical method of accom-

plishing this?  
**A.** I have seen the Home Depot self-serve key machines but have never personally used one. I also see online that they sell key fobs for some domestic and popular import vehicles. It has been my experience that BMW and Mercedes key fobs require specific programming tools and security access. These tools

and the required codes typically come from the dealer. However, an automotive locksmith or independent repair shop that belongs to the NASTF Vehicle Security Professional Registry may also be capable of performing this work. Access to the registry is what allows qualified professionals to obtain the security codes needed for programming, along with the appropriate scan

tool. My suggestion would be to start with a locksmith: purchase the fob, have the hidden mechanical key cut, and then have it programmed. Readers have told me independent locksmiths have saved them several hundred dollars compared to dealer pricing. Readers, before purchasing any used car, be sure to check that it comes with more than one key.

do this service sooner?  
**A.** The short answer is yes, you should change the timing belt. Your shop is correct that this engine is an interference engine. If the timing belt were to fail, the pistons and valves would collide and could cause major engine damage. Volvo's service information specifies timing belt replacement at 120,000 miles or 10 years, whichever comes first. If this were my car and I planned to keep it, I would replace the timing belt and associated components now rather than risk failure based on age alone.



BY JOHN PAUL

**Q.** I have a 2017 Toyota Highlander with 60,000 miles on it. The check engine light is on and the display says "check all-wheel-drive system." I noticed the gas cap, after removing it and reinstalling it, clicks once to complete tightening. Then a few minutes later it still has one more click in it to tighten, as if it is walking back. Could this be the issue causing both warnings?

**A.** On this model Toyota, and many vehicles like it, virtually any problem that turns on the check engine light will also disable the all-wheel-drive system as a safety precaution and trigger a warning message. At this point the best options are to either replace the gas cap with an OEM cap or, better yet, scan the car for diagnostic trouble codes to see if there is a leak in the evaporative emissions system. The stored codes will help guide you in the right direction. They could certainly point to a gas cap issue, or to something else entirely.

**Q.** I own a 2013 Volvo S60 with 101,000 miles. I recently took the car to my mechanic for routine service. Everything is fine, but he mentioned that at 120,000 miles Volvo recommends changing the timing belt, belt tensioner, and related parts. He stated that the engine is a direct-interference engine and would be ruined if the timing belt failed. He said that time is as much a concern as mileage because of belt age. I was planning to wait until 120,000 miles, which could be another three or four years. I have owned the car for 10 years and plan to keep it. Would it be prudent to

**Q.** What are your thoughts on Harbor Freight hand tools? My nephew, who works on my car, has started working at a local repair shop and I want to help him build his tool collection.

**A.** Harbor Freight sells a wide range of hand tools with varying levels of quality. When I started in the trade, Snap-On and MAC tool trucks came to the shop weekly, and it was very easy to overspend. I also worked near a Sears store, and in many cases the Craftsman line of hand tools met my needs, and I still have many of them today. More recently, I needed triple-square drivers for Volkswagen repairs and purchased a set at Harbor Freight, which worked just fine. I am somewhat particular about torque accuracy and purchased their digital torque adapter, which effectively turns any ratchet or breaker bar into a torque wrench. I found it to be quite accurate and very compact. Bottom line, in my opinion, the Pittsburgh line is better suited for DIY use, while Doyle and Icon

CAR DOCTOR  
 continued on page 13



Rob's Automotive

(508) 943-0009  
 138 West Main St.  
 Dudley, MA

EVERYTHING FROM  
 DAILY DRIVERS  
 TO CLASSICS

**HOT ROD SERVICES:**  
 Wiring, Plumbing, Tune Ups  
 Brake & Suspension Upgrades  
 Aftermarket A/C Installations  
 Disc Brake Conversions

**GENERAL MAINTENANCE:**  
 Oil Changes, Brakes, Suspension  
 Alignments, 4 Wheel Drive, Tires

robsautomotiveshop.com  
 repair@robsautomotiveshop.com

# BUY HERE PAY HERE

Payments as low as \$60 per week

Come Pick Out Your Car!

Bad Credit • No Credit  
 No Problem

WE FINANCE EVERYONE!

Come Check Out Our Prices!

## FARRAR AUTO BODY, INC.

204 Main Street • Oxford, MA  
 508-987-0022








COMPLETE AUTO GLASS  
 SPECIALISTS

- Chip & Crack Repair
- Windshield Replacement
- FREE Mobile Service



MOBILE AUTO GLASS SPECIALIST

Insurance Company Preferred Shop.

- Certified technicians to your location
- Foreign & domestic auto, truck, bus, motor home, windows & sunroofs
- Construction equipment, heavy duty vehicles
- Fabrication of flat glass
- Vehicles equipped with convertible or vinyl roof

- In-shop service • Free mobile service
- Saturday service
- Free pick-up and delivery within a 10 mile radius
- Quality workmanship guaranteed
- Customer safety and satisfaction is our first priority
- Servicing customers for over 25 years

201 W. Main Street, Dudley, MA 01571  
 800-479-7697 • 508-949-1327

Monday-Friday 8am to 5pm • Saturday 8am to 12pm

Visit Us at roysautoglass.net

## M&M Auto Body

Ron Moscoffian  
 Appr. #9537



Scott Milner  
 R.S. #3926

7 Industrial Park West,  
 Building 2  
 Oxford, MA 01540  
508-987-7070

"Guaranteed Fast Service, No Matter How Long It Takes"

TIPS ON FINANCIAL PLANNING

dennis.antonopoulos@edwardjones.com

# Which Retirement Plan is Right for Your Business?

If you're a local business owner, a workplace retirement plan can be a powerful tool – helping you manage taxes, strengthen employee retention and build personal financial security.

Many in your situation, however, assume retirement plans are complicated or only suitable for large companies. The reality is quite different. Today's retirement plan options encompass businesses of every size, from solo entrepreneurs to companies with dozens of employees.

The key is understanding which plans work best for different kinds of businesses:

**Self-employed individuals or businesses without employees. Three commonly used retirement plans:**

- Simplified employee pension (SEP) plans are relatively straightforward, low-maintenance, lower-cost and flexible on how much you contribute each year.
- Owner-only 401(k) plans are ideal if you're willing to accept additional cost and complexity in exchange for benefits like higher

contribution limits and borrowing options.

- Owner-only defined benefit plans work best for owners with high, steady income who want to maximize their retirement contributions and guaranteed retirement income. These plans come with required annual funding and greater administrative complexity.

**Businesses with employees can also consider an SEP plan, although it only allows for employer contributions. Other plan options include:**

- The SIMPLE IRA (savings incentive match plan for employees) can work well for companies with 100 or fewer employees seeking a low-maintenance option. Employer contributions are required, and it has lower contribution limits compared to other plan types.
- Traditional 401(k) plans offer maximum flexibility by allowing both employee salary deferrals and employer contributions that can be adjusted based on business performance. These plans have added costs and administrative responsibilities.
- Safe harbor 401(k) plans are ideal if you want to maximize your own retirement contributions without complex testing requirements and you're willing to make required employer contributions.
- A cash balance plan is often paired with another plan type,

such as a 401(k), to allow greater retirement savings. It works well when you have a smaller company with high-earning employees and consistent cash flow, and you're comfortable making required contributions.

Each plan type involves different eligibility requirements, establishment deadlines, contribution limits, complexity and costs. In determining a workplace retirement plan that's right for your business, you'll want to consider your number of employees, desired contribution levels, comfort with required employer contributions and willingness to handle administrative responsibilities. And, of course, the goals for your business and your own retirement are important criteria.

Fortunately, you don't have to navigate this decision alone. A financial advisor can help you evaluate the trade-offs among different plan types and select the option that best fits your situation. They can explain how various plans work and guide you through the setup process.

Starting a workplace retirement plan is an investment in your future, your business and your employees. With professional guidance, you can find a plan that helps everyone build financial security while positioning your business for

continued success.

*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. Edward Jones, Member SIPC*



BY DENNIS ANTONOPOULOS

Edward Jones®

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC



Retirement solutions for you and your employees. Let's talk about your options.



**Dennis Antonopoulos**  
Financial Advisor  
5 Albert St  
Auburn, MA 01501  
508-832-5385

EJB-19325-A-E-DA-4 AECSPAD 27670337

**CAR DOCTOR**

*continued from page 12*

tools can, in some cases, approach tool-truck quality at a much more affordable price.

**Q.** I have a 2022 Chevy Camaro, which I find both fun and stylish. During its last service visit for a check engine light, the technician found a misfire. He said there was coolant in the spark plug tube, not inside the cylinder itself, causing the misfire. He cleaned it up and the car is running fine. He pressure-tested the cooling system and did not find

any leaks. What is going on?

**A.** On some GM engines, the cylinder heads can be porous due to manufacturing defects. These porous areas can allow coolant to seep into the spark plug tubes. Unfortunately, the spark plug tubes are cast and permanently sealed into the cylinder head and are not serviceable. In these cases, the only proper repair is replacement of the affected cylinder head.

TOPOGRAPH



## Affordable Housing Opportunity

1 Ridge Rd., Auburn, MA 01501

*Brand New Construction of one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments featuring modern appliances, washer and dryer in unit, and walk-in closets.*



**Program description:**

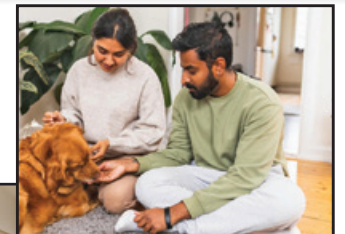
- Resident income for affordable units are restricted to 80% of the area median income.
- Non-Smoking community

| # of Units | # of bedrooms | Rent*  | Maximum Income Limit (% AMI) | Minimum Income Requirement** |
|------------|---------------|--------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 31         | 1 BR          | \$1613 | 80%                          | \$48,000                     |
| 43         | 2 BR          | \$1734 | 80%                          | \$51,600                     |
| 8          | 3 BR          | \$1852 | 80%                          | \$55,400                     |

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

**Eligibility Requirements:**

- Must meet all income and background eligibility requirements under the Tenant Selection Plan approved by EOHL.



*Maximum Income per Household Size (2025 limits, provided by Worcester MA, HUD Metro Area)*

| 1 person | 2 people | 3 people | 4 people | 5 people  | 6 people  |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|-----------|-----------|
| \$69,850 | \$79,800 | \$89,800 | \$99,750 | \$107,750 | \$115,750 |

If interested, please contact our office at **774-220-6334** or at

topograph@wingatecompanies.com



**U-KNIGHTED**  
AUTO & TRUCK REPAIR

*We are the "Give me a BRAKE... I'm EXHAUSTED Repair Shop"*

45 East Hartford Ave., Uxbridge  
**508-526-3169**

**FREE Brake Inspection with every Oil Change**

**Custom Exhaust & Brake Experts**

•Engines •Transmissions •Tires •Oil Changes

• Brakes • Converters • Welding & Fabrication Services

Same day service on most repairs



**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](mailto:news@theyankeeexpress.com).

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25**

• The museum of the Millbury Historical Society in the Asa Waters Mansion will be open from 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. Some of the museum's holdings are: 100 years of Aftermath year books; photos of churches, schools, downtown and sports. Also, scrapbooks, research books, and the histories of Millbury and Sutton going back to colonial times. President Taft photo memorabilia, military uniforms, guns and flags.

**SATURDAY, MAY 2**

• Friends of the Auburn Library Annual Book Sale from 10 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at the Auburn Public Library, 369 Southbridge Street, Auburn. Cash, check, credit card or PayPal. All proceeds of the book sale will be used to fund and enhance services, expand programs and purchase other extraordinary items not included in the municipal budget.  
• Northbridge Fire Dept Annual Spaghetti Supper from 4-8 p.m. Join us for dine-in or takeout featuring spaghetti with homemade meatballs, salad, bread and dessert.

All proceeds support our annual fireworks display.

• On Saturday, May 2nd at 2 p.m. Book-lovers' Gourmet, located at 72 East Main Street in Webster, is hosting a free public local history talk and book signing event with Jeff Stefanik, author of the newly released "Beside Blue Waters: A History of Webster Lake." Jeff Stefanik is a Webster native and has been a land surveyor working throughout the region for nearly fifty years. He has used his interest in history and his professional background to write the history of Webster Lake from the coming of the Europeans in 1600 to the present day. To RSVP, please call 508-949-6232 or email [deb@bookloversgourmet.com](mailto:deb@bookloversgourmet.com).

**THURSDAY, MAY 7**

• Valley Chapel invites the community to join in a special time of prayer on from 6-7 p.m. in the church café, as part of the National Day of Prayer. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the National Day of Prayer, an annual observance held on the first Thursday of May, when people across the United States are encouraged to come together in prayer for the nation. Established by Congress in 1952, this day has become a meaningful tradition, uniting individuals, families, churches, and communities in seeking God's guidance, wisdom, and blessing. The National Day of Prayer has deep roots in American history, dating back to 1775, when the Continental Congress first called for a day of prayer as the nation sought direction and unity. Today, it continues to serve as a reminder of the importance of turning to God in times of both challenge and gratitude. Valley Chapel's gathering will be a simple and meaningful time set aside to seek God together, lift up our nation, and glorify

Him. All are welcome to attend—whether coming individually, with family, or as part of a group. This local observance is part of a nationwide movement, with prayer events taking place from coast to coast, bringing people from all backgrounds together in a spirit of humility, hope, and faith. We warmly invite anyone who would like to join us in prayer as we seek God for renewal, guidance, and blessing for our community and our country.

**SATURDAY, MAY 16**

• The 11th Annual Family Fun Fishing Day at River Ben Farm, 287 Oak Street, Uxbridge will be held from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. with a rain date on Sunday. Fishing will take place until 1 p.m. with awards at 1:30 p.m. There will be activities for the whole family with food and ice cream available for purchase. All ages and ability levels are welcome. Fishing poles, bail and instruction will be available with pre-registration and participants are welcome to bring their own. Pre-registration will open on April 15 at [opensky.org/fishingday2026](http://opensky.org/fishingday2026). This is a free event, but pre-registration is hosted by Open Sky Community Services and Blackstone River Watershed Association.  
• Calling all Gardeners, Growers & Farmers to the 5th Annual Dudley Grows Together Plant Hop The Dudley Agricultural Advisory Commission is excited to announce the 5th Annual Dudley Grows Together Plant Hop, taking place on Saturday, May 16, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM — rain or shine. The Plant Hop is a community event that gives local Dudley farmers and gardeners the opportunity to sell vegetable and flower seedlings directly from their homes or growing locations throughout Dudley. A map of participating locations will be created and distributed by the Commission so

visitors from Dudley and surrounding communities can easily travel from stop to stop to shop for locally grown plants. New this year, the Agricultural Advisory Commission seeks Dudley residents who are interested in participating as plant sellers. Gardeners are welcome to sell vegetable or flower seedlings and plants (please note cannabis and hemp plants are not permitted). Residents who would like to participate should sign up by emailing [ameradaholsteins@charter.net](mailto:ameradaholsteins@charter.net) or [Llorkiewicz@dudleyma.gov](mailto:Llorkiewicz@dudleyma.gov) so their location can be included on the official event map. The deadline to sign up as a seller is Monday, April 20, 2026.  
• Saint Peter's Parish in Northbridge is having an Italian Chicken Dinner on Saturday, May 16th starting at 5:30 pm in the parish hall. Bring you family and friends for a wonderful meal and meet some new friends. Tickets are \$17 per dinner and include salad and dessert. To go meals will be available for pick up at 5:00pm. All orders must be purchased in advance by Tuesday, May 12th. Please call 508-234-2156 or email the parish office: [parishoffice@stpeterrockdale.org](mailto:parishoffice@stpeterrockdale.org) for tickets.

**THURSDAY, MAY 21**

• The Metacomet Land Trust will hold its annual meeting on Thursday, May 21, 2026 starting at 6:30 pm with a business meeting and the presentation of Community Spirit awards at the Sutton High School auditorium at 383 Boston Road in Sutton. This will be followed at 7 pm by our guest speaker, Stefanie Covino. Covino is the Executive Director of the Blackstone Watershed Collaborative and she will discuss the importance of our land and water nexus. She will describe how the work of the Collaborative and Metacomet Land Trust is critical to the overall health of the communities where Metacomet works including Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Franklin, Hopedale, Mendon, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, Uxbridge and Wrentham in south Central Massachusetts. We will also play a quick

round of watershed trivia! Please join us as we all strive to know our watershed better. For more information, go to [Metacomet-LandTrust.org](http://Metacomet-LandTrust.org).  
• The Douglas Open Space Committee invites Douglas landowners to attend an informational session on how to protect their fields and forests. The event will be held on Thursday, May 21 at 6 pm at the Douglas Municipal Center at 29 Depot Street in the Resource Room. A MassWoods land preservation webinar will be shown and Lisa Moczymski, President of the area's regional Metacomet Land Trust, will provide additional information and answer questions. Excellent permanent protection is available to landowners and can offer property tax reduction or elimination, be tailored to specific needs such as including a building envelope for future generations and offer peace of mind for estate planning. Permanent protection also has great public benefits including watershed protection, habitat preservation for flora and fauna and permanent protection for our farmland through agricultural preservation restrictions. Come find out more! For more information email [openspace@douglas-ma.gov](mailto:openspace@douglas-ma.gov).

**SATURDAY, MAY 23**

• FREE Kids Clothing Giveaway + Family Fun Day! 2nd Annual Event! Looking for kids' clothing and a fun day out for the family? Come join us—you won't want to miss it! Valley Chapel is hosting a FREE Kids Clothing Giveaway on Saturday, May 23 from 11:00 AM–2:00 PM at our Youth Center (130 Douglas Rd, Uxbridge).

**TUESDAY, JUNE 2**

• BVT Band & Choir host concert at 7:30 p.m. in the Competition Center at BVT, 5 Pleasant Street, Upton. The music program at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) Conducted by Dr. Colton Cox, students will showcase their

**HAPPENINGS!**  
*continued on page 15*

**SAMUEL SLATER'S RESTAURANT**

**LAKESIDE DINING**  
200 GORE ROAD, WEBSTER, MA  
[WWW.SAMUELSLATERS.COM](http://WWW.SAMUELSLATERS.COM)

**UPCOMING EVENTS AT SAMUEL SLATER'S HALL**

**THE PEACHEATERS:**  
AN ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND EXPERIENCE • APRIL 25  
WHISKEY BOULEVARD • MAY 1

**ABRAXAS: SANTANA TRIBUTE BAND • MAY 16**

**FIDDLE FIRE:**  
A CHARLIE DANIELS TRIBUTE BAND • MAY 22

**PAPER IN FIRE:**  
JOHN MELLENCAMP ANTHOLOGY • MAY 23

**AQUANETT • MAY 24**

**COMEDY NIGHT WITH KEVIN FLYNN & GUESTS • MAY 30**

WEEKLY SPECIALS

PRIME RIB WEDNESDAY

12oz Prime Rib + Two Sides for \$25 Starting at 4PM

HAPPY HOUR

Every Wednesday & Thursday 4PM to 6PM

AL DENTE THURSDAY PASTA NIGHT

3 Courses for \$25 or Pasta Alla Ruota for \$30 • 4PM to 9PM

SUNDAY BRUNCH

10AM to 3PM

For reservations, event tickets, and more information, visit [www.samuelslaters.com](http://www.samuelslaters.com).  
RESTAURANT HOURS: Wed-Fri, 4PM-9PM | Sat, 12PM-9PM | Sun, 10AM-3PM

It's Happening in

THE last green valley™

Now is the Time to Experience Nature

Over 100 choices beckon you outside in the fresh air! Blossom with friends & family on guided walks, hikes, pedals, paddles, runs, events and more.

www.thelastgreenvalley.org

TALES FROM BEYOND

tomdagostino.com

# The Legend Of Laura Sherman

BY THOMAS D'AGOSTINO

New England is full of incredible legends and stories that add to the magic of the region. There is one certain legend that resides near the Tri-State border of Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island.

At the crossroads of Wakefield and Croff in Burrillville, Rhode Island, one will find the remains of a small burial lot. If it were not for the sign that marks it as Rhode Island Historical Cemetery #1, visitors may never know it is actually the Sherman family burial lot.

Raised up from the road by a stone wall, the unmarked plot holds the remains of five members of the Sherman family and what looks like the remains of a cellar hole where perhaps their cabin once graced, or the last remnants of a family mausoleum. Buried in this lot are Caroline Sherman, born 1837- death unknown, Clark Sherman, born 1831- death unknown, Ellen Sherman, birth and death dates unknown, Laura Marsh Sherman, born September 24, 1803- died 1870, and Squire Crandell Sherman, born July 1828 and died April 21, 1879.

The only trace of gravestones is the base of Laura Sherman's monument. The others have nothing

left but mounds rising from the earth to show of their being buried there. Legends states the rest of the stones were stolen to perform some sort of rituals. More than likely, they were field stone markers long sunken into the earth or stones that were carried away for some other re-purposing. This would seem easy to do as the lot is located in an isolated area along the woods of Buck Hill.

The lack of death dates on record would indicate that the Clark family buried their own and never bothered to record exact dates of death with the town. Some claim that Caroline and Ellen may have been the wives of Clark Sherman, but it is the grave of Laura Sherman, the oldest of them all, that is of interest in this narrative. Laura may have been the matriarch of the family, who even in death, still watches over her loved ones.

It has been passed down from generation to generation that Laura haunts the lot. If you visit on a full moon and dance around her grave thirteen times, she will appear and answer your questions. It is a local legend that has been attempted many times. Some have fled in fear as Laura Sherman materialized out of a wisp of smoke, keeping her part of the bargain for their toil, while others swore the whole story

is nothing more than an urban legend created by the local boy scout camp at Buck Hill.

There are other stories of people who swore Laura Sherman watches over the graveyard. Many of the Burrillville residents say that they have been startled, or even frightened by what they believe is the ghost of Laura standing at the edge of the plot looking at the road as they drove by. When they would look back, the ghost would be gone.

One account relates to a small group of high school students who decided to call forth the spirit of Laura. One of the girls circled the grave thirteen times while the small throng waited anxiously for the ghost to appear. After a while, they felt deceived by the spirit and left the lot. While driving away, the people in the other car noticed an old woman sitting in the back seat of the car driven by the girl who tried to summon Laura from her eternal rest.

If you decide to visit the cemetery, it is advised to do so for historical purposes only and be thoughtful and courteous to both the living and the dead. The neighboring houses keep watch for vandalism or unruly behavior.

## HAPPENINGS!

continued from page 14

musical talents in a dynamic performance. The ensembles will perform a diverse selection of music spanning genres from folk and classical to pop and movie soundtracks and incorporate singing in multiple languages. This program is funded in part by grants from the Grafton, Northbridge and Upton Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency. Students, families and community members are invited to attend the free performance, which is open to the public.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 20

• Dudley's Town-wide Yard Sale! What

better time for a yard sale than the end of spring-cleaning season? Office: 508-949-8030 Mobile: 508-847-2206 The Dudley Recreation Commission has set its annual town-wide yard sale for 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 20, with a rain date of June 27. Residents are invited to set up and sell at their home or at the Dudley Town Hall where free 10x10-foot spaces are available in the parking lot on a first-come, first served basis. A site map, prepared by the Recreation Commission, will guide bargain hunters to the sale locations. Participants are encouraged to register for free by June 6 to be included in a map. The maps will be available for a \$3 donation at the Dudley Town Hall from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. To register, email recreation@dudleyma.gov with your name, address, phone and description of the items for sale, or stop by the Recreation Office at Town hall.

### SATURDAY, JULY 18

• Northbridge Annual Fireworks Show. (Rain date July 19) Gates open at 5 p.m. Celebrate our nation's 250<sup>th</sup> birthday with an evening of music, activities, food and a spectacular fireworks display at Northbridge Middle School in Whitinsville.

MILLBURY REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY PRESENTS THE 9<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL FUNDRAISER **MILLBURY FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL & CRAFT FAIR** MILLBURY HIGH SCHOOL, 12 MARTIN STREET MILLBURY MAY 17, 2026 • 11AM TO 5PM

**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!**

LIVE ENTERTAINMENT STREET FOOD

Come meet owner/driver Brian Tagg #9 Winner of Thompson Speedway track championship 2015

Admission \$5.00 - Under 12 FREE

School Board Policy: Only Service Dogs on Property

Email: millburyfoodtruckfestival@gmail.com

Facebook: Millbury Food Truck Festival

**PLUMBING REPAIRS**

**Charlton Mechanical**

28 Years Experience (508) 864-1037

**American Legion**  
Chester P. Tuttle Post 279  
88 Bancroft St., Auburn, MA 01501

Find us on facebook.

**THURSDAY IS....**  
By Wise Guy Trivia **TRIVIA NIGHT** 7-9 PM!

**Every Friday**  
*Karaoke* 7:30pm-11pm

*Live Bands Every Friday 7-10*

April 10 - The Ed Sullivans \$10 cover charge for all bands  
April 17 - Uncle Dean Band  
April 24 - Fender Road

**ALL Are Welcome!**  
Membership Not Required!  
Monday - Saturday: 11:00-1:00 • Sunday: 11:30-close

Car shows will start back on June 9th

**Tiny Tim's at the Tuttle**  
Open for Breakfast & Lunch 7 days a week  
Sun. & Mon. 7am-2pm, Tues. to Thurs. 7am-8pm, Fri. & Sat. 7am-9pm  
Phone: (508) 832-2701  
For Hall Reservations: (508)-721-5142 or email TinyTimsCatering@gmail.com

Featuring... **K & M** ENTERTAINMENT Karaoke every Saturday 8-11:00 pm

# FOR ALL YOUR FUEL NEEDS

## NEW BOILER INSTALLS

- Crown Boilers
- Williamson Furnaces
- Oil Tank Installs



ALL NEW INSTALLS COME WITH A 3 YEAR PARTS AND LABOR WARRANTY, AS WELL AS THE MANUFACTURERS WARRANTY.



**We do NOT Sell Biofuel!**

Which will help prevent system breakdowns.

**Central air conditioning and ductless mini splits**

### HELP WANTED -

Class B CDL driver with air brake, tanker and hazmat endorsements. Must have DOT Medical Card.



A Full Service Oil Company  
24-Hour Emergency Service

WWW.LMTOIL.COM • WE DO ONLINE ORDERING

# Are you ROAD TRIP READY?

## SPRING SPECIALS!

### BRAKES

Two Wheels: \$50 OFF

All Four Wheels: \$100 OFF

Includes installation of brake pads and rotors. Most cars.

See shop for complete details. Must present ad before your service. EXP 4/30/2026

### OIL CHANGE

Regular: \$39.99

Synthetic: \$59.99

Includes up to 5 quarts of oil. Most cars.

WE'RE MORE THAN TRANSMISSIONS ...

- Brakes
- Batteries
- Axels
- Differential
- Starters
- Front End
- Shocks
- Struts
- Tie Rods
- Oil Changes
- Radiators

and more!



Schedule your appointment today



**GLOBE**  
TRANSMISSIONS  
AND AUTO REPAIR

508-764-9400

405 E. MAIN ST. (RTE 131)  
SOUTHBRIDGE, MA

GLOBETRANSMISSIONMA.COM

# Spring SALE!

DON'T BUY UNTIL YOU SEE US!

**GIANT TOY DEPT!**



**HUGE KITCHEN PACKAGE & LAUNDRY REBATES**

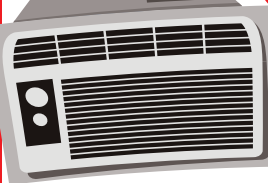
## MATTRESS SALE!



**TWIN: \$199**  
(REGULARLY \$299)

**FULL: \$269**  
(REGULARLY \$499)

**QUEEN: \$299**  
(REGULARLY \$599)



PRE-SEASON **A/C SAVINGS!**

- 32" HD Smart TV.....\$99.99  
Regularly \$149.99
- 43" Smart TV.....\$199.99  
Regularly \$249.99
- 50" HDTV Television...\$229.99  
Regularly \$269.99
- 55" 4K HDTV Television ...\$249.99  
Regularly \$349.99
- 65" HDTV Television...\$329.99  
Regularly \$599.99
- 75" HDTV.....\$499.99  
Regularly \$699.99

## PRE-SEASON BIKE SALE!

1000's IN STOCK!

E-BIKES IN STOCK!

WE REPAIR BIKES!



SPRING BIKE TUNE-UP: \$49.99!

#1 RATED PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD: **APPLIANCE DEALER**  
5 YEARS IN A ROW!

21 CU. FT. FREEZER  
Reg. \$999.99  
**\$799.99**

DELUXE AIR FRY GAS RANGE  
Reg. \$699.99  
**\$749.99**

FRIGIDAIRE DISHWASHER  
Reg. \$399.99  
**\$299.99**

WHIRLPOOL 21 CU. FT. TOP MOUNT REFRIGERATOR  
Reg. \$899.99  
**\$699.99**

G.E. 27 CU. FT. FRENCH DOOR REFRIGERATOR  
Reg. \$1999.99  
**\$1399.99**

5 CU. FT. CHEST FREEZER  
**\$189.99**

AMANA WASHER OR DRYER  
Reg. \$599.99  
**\$489.99**

FRIGIDAIRE 18 CU. FT. REFRIGERATOR  
Reg. \$699.99  
**\$599.99**

FAMOUS MAKER OVER THE STOVE MICROWAVE  
Reg. \$249.99  
**\$229.99**

LG #3400 WASHER & DRYER  
Front Load, Reg. \$1599.99  
**\$1399.99**

MAYTAG DELUXE WASHER OR DRYER  
Reg. \$699.99  
**\$549.99**

WHIRLPOOL SIDE BY SIDE  
Reg. \$1499.99  
**\$1199.99**

**WE INSTALL TELEVISIONS, MICROWAVES & DISHWASHERS!**

**INSTANT FINANCING UP TO \$10,000!**

# WHITCO

140 MAIN STREET,  
SPENCER, MA  
508.885.9343  
SEE WHITCOALES.COM  
**FOR 100's OF DEALS!**



Store Hours: Mon. thru Fri: 10am-8:30pm • Sat: 9am-8pm • Sun: 12 Noon-7pm