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Beat continues on Church Street for Mary Hatfield, business tenants



Misty Clark (FURiends Gourmet Pet Treats), Katie Sansoucy (Crescent Studio Photography) and Danielle Desrosiers (The Green Plate) are pictured in front of their stores on Church St. in Whitinsville. Mary Hatfield, who owns the properties, is sitting, in the foreground.

By Rod Lee

About midway along Church St. in downtown Whitinsville, in the 100 block, sit three storefronts that were added to property Mary Hatfield's family already owned directly behind them "sometime in the 1930s or 40s," she recalls.

With the departure of The Welcoming Lantern, a popular Americana-themed gift shop that occupied the middle storefront—165 Church St.—and then the one to its left as well (when Patrick Moran expanded his premises), there loomed the possibility that new tenants for those two spaces wouldn't be found.

Not to worry; in short order, Katie Sansoucy set up Crescent Studio Photography at 165 Church St. and Misty Clark opened FURiends Gourmet Pet Treats next door at No. 163. They became neighbors of Danielle Desrosiers' The Green Plate, a thriving healthy alternative restaurant, which calls 167 Church St. home.

Three women-owned businesses, operating side by side.

"I am more than grateful" that the empty storefronts were filled so quickly, Ms. Hatfield said.

Her family, starting with her grandparents, Garabed and Mary

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The Yellow Tulip Project – first in-person event at Open Sky marks spring and promise of hope

By Magda Dakin

Live music and happy masked people welcomed attendees to the first live event with actual people in more than a year at the Dennis H. Rice Community Plaza at Whitin Mill in Whitinsville on the first Saturday in May.

The tulips in the garden out in front of the building, a true sign that spring is here, along with all the hopes and plans for the seasons ahead, are a perfect symbol of hope for The Yellow Tulip Project, which recently marked its 5th anniversary.

The brainchild of Julia Hansen, then a high school sophomore, along with her mother, Suzanne Fox, the two

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Yellow Tulips in honor of the Yellow Tulip Project, planted at the Whitin Mill Building.

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MARY HATFIELD

Continued from page 1

Bedrosian, has enjoyed a continuous presence on Church St. "since 1929," she said.

When Garabed Bedrosian died, the Bedrosian home, at 161 Church St., went to his wife Mary, and then to Mary Hatfield's mom, Grace Hatfield, and now to Mary.

"I'm in the home my grandfather owned. I own 161-167, three apartments and three stores," Ms. Hatfield said. "I was living in South Carolina. This is all new to me. I never thought when I moved here four years ago this is something I would consider."

She has a good example to follow in her mom, the late Grace M. (Bedrosian) Hatfield, a world traveler, cook, longtime member of the Village Congregational Church—and a model landlord.

Grace Hatfield died in 2018.

There are already indica-



An original photo of her grandparents' home at 161 Church St., which Mary Hatfield now owns. Her family has had a presence on Church St. since 1929.

tions that Mary Hatfield is picking up where Grace Hatfield left off.

"She's fantastic," Ms. Sansoucy and Ms. Clark said on the afternoon of April 30.

"Mary and my dad went to high school together," Ms. Sansoucy said. "When we met, she asked 'are you John's kid?' I had initially looked at the smaller side. When Mary called to say I could have this spot I was beyond thrilled. She's great, if I have any question about the building. She gave me a digital thermostat and she has just let me explode in here."

Ms. Sansoucy isn't alone in a determination to make the most of her location.

On a street that has experienced its share of "misses" retailing-wise in recent years, The Green Plate, for instance, is a notable exception. This gives Ms. Sansoucy and Ms. Clark reason to believe they too can realize success.

At her address for three and a half years, Ms. Desrosiers has grown the operation step by step. Her menu keeps expanding. The latest

addition is pizza (caprese, pepperoni, veggie delight and meat madness). "The only additional product I needed was the pizza crust," she said.

Gluten-free, grab n' go, build-a-bowl, signature bowls, catering, four-week meal plans, takeout (it's ninety percent of The Green Plate's business "and always has been") and dine-in: Ms. Desrosiers keeps pushing in new directions with food that has "appeal and flavor for everyone," she said.

The Green Plate is open Monday-Saturday.

A photography enthusiast from her teens, Ms. Sansoucy has utilized "a couple of prop items" Mr. Moran left her to retool the space for her own purposes.

"I offer a little bit of everything," she said. "Boudoir, newborn, children, high school seniors for their yearbook photos, logos, T-shirts, videography, motion graphics, pet portraits."

Crescent Studio Photography is a first for Ms. Sansoucy. "I always wanted a studio of my own," she said. "I was doing this part-time

as a side gig. I recently lost my full-time job as a graphic designer. Last September, October, November I was booked out on top of trying to flip this space. This was supposed to be full-time next year and next year turned into this year.

"The day before I took this space I was having dinner with my sister at The Green Plate."

Like Ms. Sansoucy, who started Crescent Studio Photography just before the pandemic hit full force, Ms. Clark took a chance by launching FURiends Gourmet Pet Treats soon after COVID-19 arrived—in the face of the threat to sales it posed. The business's name plays on her affection for the TV show "Friends."

She had previously been working from home for National Grid.

"This location is perfect," she said.

The owner with her husband Matt Clark of two dogs and two cats, Ms. Clark offers "top-quality high-end boutique products" utilizing, as Ms. Desrosiers does, "the

Continued on next page



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Katie Sansoucy completely revamped a storefront previously occupied by The Welcoming Lantern to create a home for Crescent Studio Photography, at 165 Church St.

Continued

best ingredients. She makes everything in-house, rolling out and cutting the cookies herself, no preservatives, no additives,” and soon at FURiends there will be ice cream.

“I’ve always baked at home,” she said. Pets literally “pull their owners across the street” to get to her store, she said.

She also sells cat treats and toys.

She admits to having made a snap decision in starting FURiends.

“I told my mom ‘I think I did a thing today,’” she said, smiling. “It took a while for that to sink in.”

Mary Hatfield is glad to have her as a tenant, Ms. Clark said. “She didn’t want another hair or nail salon.”

Ms. Hatfield’s objective is to make sure that The Green Plate, Crescent Studio Photography and FURiends Gourmet Pet Treats get all the help they need from her.

Mr. Moran often commented about what a good landlord Grace Hatfield was. Mary Hatfield is aware of the relationship they had.

“We loved Patrick,” Ms. Hatfield said. “There was no written lease, just a handshake.”

Contact Rod Lee at rodlee.1963@gmail.com or 774-232-2999.



Misty Clark found what she calls “the perfect space” for her FURiends Gourmet Pet Treats business at 163 Church St.

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YELLOW TULIP PROJECT

Continued from page 1

created the project as a way to deal with Julia's depression and the loss of her two best friends. Using her firsthand experience, Julia realized many teens feel lost, alone and judged as they are making their way through depression, insecurity and loss.

Showing her peers that there is light at the end of the tunnel, or a promise of hope in a yellow tulip, has been the driving force for the teen's efforts. As a result, many chapters of The Yellow

low Tulip Project have been started all over the country in high schools and colleges. During Mental Health Week in October, groups gather to plant yellow tulips to bloom in May during Mental Health Awareness Month.

In collaboration with The Yellow Tulip Project, ValleyCAST hosted the first Hope Day Celebration on May 1 to begin Mental Health Awareness Month. The tulip garden located on the grounds at Alternative's Whitin Mill was in full bloom on the beautiful sunny Saturday morning.

ValleyCAST is part of Alternatives/Open Sky's out-

reach program to the community, which includes many public events as well as the Free Summer Concert Series. "Busting the stigma surrounding mental health fits in perfectly with our mission of fostering an inclusive and engaged community, one that accepts all people with and without disabilities, including mental illness. The I Am More exhibit we have scheduled for the fall—another collaboration with YTP—aims to erase the stigma that surrounds mental illness by expanding our perception and challenging preconceived notions about what mental

illness 'looks like'," said ValleyCAST Community Outreach Director Cristi Collari.

Attendees at The Yellow Tulip event heard Executive Director Suzanne Fox tell the story of her daughter's depression and the loss of her two best friends during her sophomore year in high school and how that spearheaded her daughter Julia's desire to help fellow teenagers reach out and know they are not alone, they can get help. Julia's focus is also on eliminating the stigma that is often associated with a diagnosis of mental illness. The name of the project honors her friends' favorite color and favorite flower.

The Yellow Tulip Project has gathered "an amazing group of young people who jumped in to help," said Ms. Fox. Proactive school programs, ambassador programs in schools, Ted Talks, blogs, podcasts, Spotify, a Photographic 'I Am More' project are some of the ways "these young people are causing a ripple effect in their community."

Music for the event was provided by The Promise is Hope, a uniquely talented duo, Ash and Eric L'Esperance, spouses and bandmates who shared their own experiences with depression. Held on the Dennis H. Rice Community Plaza, the event also featured



Eric and Ash l'Esperance performing as The Promise of Hope at the Yellow Tulip event.

young people with personal stories and a mindfulness meditation lead by WCC Director of Outreach Monique Boucher-Adams.

ValleyCAST Director, Cristi Collari thanked all the people responsible for making the event a success and invited the community to attend the summer 2021 ValleyCAST Free Summer Series, including Blackstone Valley Bluegrass, The

Promise is Hope, Knock on Wood, Chuck & Mud and the Hole in the Dam Band, Super Chief Trio, Far from Eden, Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra's Summer Winds, Le'Mixx Band, Michelle Canning Band, and Changes in Latitudes Band.

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Fur Love Comfort Cats eager to bring peace and purrs once more

By Christine Galeone

Earlier this year, Kate Cote, the owner of Fur Love Comfort Cats, brought one of her comfort cats to visit a client. During the pet therapy appointment, the young light-weight Calico nestled against the man's chest. When it was time for the cat to go home, however, she wouldn't budge. The little cat refused to willingly leave the man. It wasn't long before both the client and Cote realized what was happening, and both were brought to tears. The cat instinctively knew how much he needed her.

Since most of the work that Cote does is for people

living in long-term care facilities, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on her small Douglas-based business. But knowing what a positive difference her cats make in people's lives, she's determined to keep the business going.

Not surprisingly, Fur Love Comfort Cats, whose slogan is "Bringing peace and purrs," is truly a labor of love for Cote. She credits God for helping her – by blessing her with cherished feline companionship – to recover from the trauma of childhood abuse. With personal understanding of the

profound effect that cats can have on people, she started her unique business more than 20 years ago. She and her cats have brought comfort to the homeless, people with cognitive disabilities, children and others since then. She believes that, among other things, comfort cats can support people by helping them deal with trauma, lowering their blood pressure and stress and anxiety levels, and improving sensory recognition in people recovering from a stroke.

On the Fur Love Comfort Cats website, www.furlove-comfortcats.com, Cote explains that she doesn't consider her cats to be trained. "They aren't trained; they are raised to become traveling cats, if you will," Cote notes on the site. "Because of my own experiences, I am able to instill confidence in the kitties, so they aren't afraid in any circumstance. I want them to enjoy what we do too!"

Before the pandemic, the cats enjoyed the work so much on their structured, consistent one-on-one visits that Cote said the long-term care facility clients considered her and her cats to be their friends. "And sadly, most of our friends have passed now – not due to COVID," Cote said. "It makes me very sad that we didn't get to say our last goodbyes. However, we were able to do a few visits here and there over the last year."

Thankfully, Cote has many Fur Love Comfort Cat success stories to keep her motivated in these challenging times. "We've had three people regain the ability to speak coherently; one woman hadn't

spoken to anyone in eight years," Cote shared, noting that others look forward to their visits so much that they begin to grasp the days of the week. "We also do visits with people who usually ban visitors. Who wouldn't want a visit from a big friendly cat?"

Like that little cat that wouldn't budge from the client's chest, Cote knows that she and her comfort cats are needed. She's looking forward to the day when the long-term care facilities can welcome them once more. Cote said, "Our friends call us regularly to ask when we're coming back, and we hope to be back to work soon."



Kate Cote, the owner of Fur Love Comfort Cats, with one of her therapy cats.



A therapy cat for Fur Love Comfort Cats

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Grafton's COVID memorial impressive and powerful

By Janet Stoica

As of this writing, there are 17,617 American flags fluttering in the breeze on Keith Hill Road in Grafton. Each flag a small but heartfelt dedication to every Massachusetts resident's life lost to the COVID-19 pandemic.

It is a strong and moving tribute to the many who have succumbed to this dreadful virus and passed from our families' lives. The sheer number of these residents gone from this world is equivalent to an entire town being removed from existence when one compares each town's population: Auburn 16,188; Charlton 13,697; Dudley 11,802; Douglas 8,471; Grafton 17,765; Millbury 13,866; Oxford 13,911; Sutton 8,963; and Webster 17,027.

Michael Labbe and his daughter felt that this type of tribute would be a fitting and appropriate honor to their fellow residents who passed away. "My youngest daughter, Melissa, came up with the idea," said Mike. "We couldn't do anything hands-on to help with COVID. We couldn't volunteer at hospitals or clinics or other places like that because of health regulations. My family has always been involved in public service. Paying it forward while you can is very important to us."

Every soul who was lost to this pandemic in Massachusetts is represented here. Mike continues, "When we were in complete lockdown, we watched the news from

Europe and then in our own country showing the thousands of people dying without relatives at their side to comfort them. Fathers, mothers, sons, daughters. All these people dying alone. Their last vision was of someone in a hospital gown and facemask. Our purest and deepest sympathy went out to them. They were all so alone before their passing."

As residents have received their vaccines, the astounding numbers of those who have died has decreased but not stopped and Mr. Labbe and his family have not stopped adding more flags to honor each of them.

He and his family don't seek notoriety, he said. "The

display is to serve the community. Every flag represents a human soul and there are hundreds of stories from each and every visitor who stops by this memorial. There may be 10-50 cars daily stopping by here to honor those represented here. The visitors have taken pictures and told me amazing stories about their family members who have died from COVID. It's someone's grandmother, grandfather, uncle, aunt, son, or daughter. It's truly humbling."

Observers to the display are encouraged to get the word out to others. There may be a sense of closure for some. Your heart and soul cannot help but be impressed deeply by this patriotic and moving display.

"We have to teach our youth about the need for caring about others," Mr. Labbe affirmed. "If two people are touched by the symbolism of this, it will have been worth it. Pay it forward, you never know when you might need comfort yourself."

Contact Janet: jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com



172 Keith Hill Rd., South Grafton.

SENIOR NEWS LINE

Lessons learned from buying online

By Matilda Charles

So many things have changed in how we live our lives in the time of COVID. It's been a year since it all began in earnest and, despite the vaccines, nothing has really gone back to normal. Even small tasks have a layer of "more difficult" on them ... such as buying a new handheld vacuum cleaner.

My little handheld vac began dying after just a short time. I tried to baby it along, but now even with a full overnight charge, it only runs for 42 seconds before it quits

again and wants another long charge.

Used to be I'd go off to a local store, examine several possibilities and buy one. This time I went online, where thousands of selections awaited me, as well as hundreds of reviews for each item. I changed the list to lowest price first. I changed the list to most popular. I searched for only the manufacturer of my current handheld vac. It didn't help.

Here are some things I learned along the way. If you're faced with making a purchase online and are hit with too many choices, call your local stores and ask what they recommend. Then look up the item online. If an item description (such as for a big fry pan) says it weighs 5.2 pounds, take your current fry pan into the bathroom and weigh it on your scale for comparison. If you want new shirts and the sizing chart online is iffy, order more of what you already have, but in different colors.

The end result of this saga is that I purchased the same brand and model as my current vacuum. If nothing else, I know it will last approximately 2.5 years, which is right after the warranty expires. But at least I'll know what to expect while it works.

Lessons for all of us

I have a new friend. When she bangs on my door, on a daily basis now, it's clear that she wants to come in and visit. So, being a good neighbor, I open the door and in she trots. She

now knows where the kitchen is and that I've laid in a supply of her favorite foods. She heads there, leading the way, talking a mile a minute. Stuffed after she eats, she'll sprawl on the couch and have a long nap, safe from the world.

My new friend is a cat – a grey tabby, age 4, with a tiny bell on her red collar.

This cat, whose name I'm told is Missy, is an orphan, at least right now. Her owner, a neighbor, is in the hospital and the prognosis is grim. The woman was found a few weeks ago when another neighbor noticed that Missy was still sitting on the porch in the middle of the afternoon, apparently unfed and upset. The neighbor investigated and found Missy's owner on the floor. An ambulance was called.

Let this be a lesson to all of us. If we have pets and we live alone, we need a backup plan for the animals' care.

Someone needs to know we have pets, know what they eat and where the food is kept. If it's an older animal and medicine is required, somebody needs to know how to give it, and when. This someone needs to know the name of the vet.

The second lesson is about us: Somebody needs to be aware enough of our daily routines that if something is wrong, they'll know to investigate: the blinds still closed, the paper still at the door ... or the cat still sitting unfed on the porch. (c) 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.

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Living well and looking good

Homemade ‘foot box’ relieves night cramps

By Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a very healthy 74-year-old male. I am not on any medications and enjoy normal blood pressure and great stats from my regular bloodwork. I weigh 140 pounds and have been exer-

cising every day faithfully for decades.

A couple of years ago, I started getting cramps in both legs throughout the night. My toes would curl down and my entire leg would get stiff; the

pain was horrible. I had a terrible time “walking it off,” and very often when I finally got it to pass, as soon as I got back in bed the whole thing would start all over again. Sometimes I would go a few nights

without having a problem, but there was always the fear that I would have another episode. I read online advice to get the weight of the sheet and covers off the feet. I took a strong cardboard box and sleep with my feet in the open end of the box. The first time I got in bed with this rigged up, it felt very strange not having anything on my bare feet, but eventually I got used to it. The remarkable news is that I have not had a single episode since fabricating the box over six months ago. – G.K.

ANSWER: I appreciate your writing in. I have had many patients use a box during sleep for acute gout, where even a sheet on top of the affected toe can be exquisitely painful, but I had not heard this used for nocturnal leg cramps. Some patients have noticed that the symptoms do seem to be started or exacerbated by the weight of blankets.

Before resorting to that, I recommend regular exercise, even a few minutes of riding a stationary bicycle before bed can

help. Couple that with regular stretching of the calf and hamstring muscles and adequate hydration. Although many readers ask about it, I do not recommend quinine for most people, and it’s quite rare for the cause to be disturbances of sodium, potassium, calcium or other electrolytes. B complex vitamins and magnesium are helpful in some people, but I restrict iron to people with proven iron deficiency.

If all else fails, prescription medications such as verapamil may be helpful.

Bladder tumors

DEAR DR. ROACH: I’m getting low grade tumors in my bladder. I just had my second operation after the Bacillus Calmette-Guerin treatment didn’t work. I read that tumors can’t grow in an alkaline environment. Should I eat vegetables, like broccoli and sprouts? Also, would vitamin E and selenium be helpful? – R.G.

ANSWER: It is true that having an acid urine pH is a risk factor for bladder cancer. Many fruits and vegetables make urine pH more alkaline, whereas meat and dairy make the urine more acid. Smoking also makes the urine more acid.

Eating more fruits and vegetables (and abstaining from smoking) will help reduce recurrence of bladder cancer, though I’m not sure it’s through urine acidity. Please don’t stop your doctor’s recommendations, though, as diet alone is not adequate therapy for bladder cancer.

A 2012 study found no benefit in selenium and vitamin E on prevention of bladder cancer. It’s unlikely to be significantly effective in treatment.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu. (c) 2021 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights

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Pro tips for the avid runner

By Dr. Sean T Lordan

1. Hydrate- The importance of hydration is paramount when performing at peak capacity during any endurance sport, especially running. Considering that your body is 65% water, any shift toward dehydration will be deleterious to your health. My suggestion is to drink at least 32 oz. of water if you plan on running for more than 30 minutes at a time, especially on a hot summer day. Fruit is also a great source of water and simple carbohydrates that acts as a healthy 'pre' or 'post' run snack.

2. Stretch these muscles- calves, hamstrings, piriformis. Yes, and in that order too. I always advise my clients who run to perform these three static stretches daily even if they are not in pain. These muscles are part of a tissue system on the back of your body we call the "posterior fascial sling." Put into layman's terms these are the structures that control propulsion of gait, especially acceleration. If you have ever suffered a hamstring strain you know how difficult they can be to recover from. Do these stretches today and give yourself a competitive advantage knowing you will be able to train with improved longevity.

3. Cross Train- It is imperative for any level of runner, from novice to advanced, to cross train. What does it mean to "cross train?" Cross training involves working different body parts and muscle groups not commonly recruited during running. I suggest performing a 30 minute total body HIIT (High Intensity Interval Training) workout 3-4 times per

week. These workouts should target the whole body, not just the lower extremity. A good HIIT workout will include core training, conditioning, lateral strengthening and heavy lifting that will work your anaerobic muscle fibers. Anaerobic fibers are important for strengthening and help provide your muscles resilience against injury and overtraining.

4. Do this to avoid Shin Splints, or worse- If you experience pain in your foot, ankle, shins, knees, hips or low back (yes pretty much anywhere in your lower extremity), reach out to a local doctor of PT. Especially if you have redness, burning or swelling in your shins, as this can be a sign of compartment syndrome which is possible with severe overtraining and an emergency room level situation. It is important to know the difference between compartment syndrome and shin splints, though. Shin splints are micro stress fractures and micro tears along the Tibia (on either side) that can be treated with ice, proper manual therapy, and stretches and exercise. Compartment syndrome is characterized by severe pain and swelling in a particular compartment of the lower leg, with swelling effectively shutting off its blood supply. You need to call 911 if this is happening or immediately go to an ER. Shin splints are typically overuse injuries with pain at the beginning of running and usually after. Shin splints are typically due to a combination of overtraining, improper footwear, your body's morphology (bow legs or flat feet), and is

treated with good effect with Physical Therapy. If you are unsure call your local doctor of PT and they will guide you in the right direction.

5. Consider Orthotics- Foot inserts are expensive and controversial, so let's chat about them. There are two main types of orthotics that I prescribe to patients. One is rigid, providing the foot with structure and controlling its motion during the gait cycle. The other version of a professional foot insert is accommodative, or supportive. The supportive inserts have a softer core and are more for those with arthritic feet who need both support and shock absorption. The best client who will benefit from orthotics is one who has a new onset of posterior tibialis tendonitis (pain on the inside of the lower leg), or plantar fasciitis. These two conditions are usually due to a flexible forefoot, which responds well to a controlling orthotic device. They don't come cheap though so do your homework and find a professional who knows what they are doing.

6. Get a yearly gait assessment by a doctor of PT- The most important assessment any runner can get is a yearly gait assessment. Why yearly, you might ask? Well your body changes with the demands of everyday life. At some points in your life you may be more sedentary than others (think of COVID and working from home.) When you are not as active your body utilizes its muscles differently and it can affect your gait. Weight gain or loss can also affect your gait pattern. How about a nag-

ging hip or low back injury? Injuries will commonly throw off your gait for an extended period of time. Luckily, using their magic, a PT can often diagnose what is out of alignment and fix it quickly and easily with some simply manual techniques and exercises to get you back in shape. The PT will also refer you for orthotics should you benefit from those as well.

7. Go anti-gravity- If you have severe arthritis, are overweight, or suffer from chronic pain but

love to run, what better option than running with less impact? In the very least it is worth a try, right? At Concierge PT in Sutton, we have an AlterG Via treadmill which not only will unweight up to 80% of your bodyweight, but can also perform a thorough gait analysis demonstrating your weight shifting patterns and strength deficits. If you love to run but haven't had the chance due to pain, all hope is not lost! Call and ask about our AlterG treadmill.



Dr. Sean T Lordan

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Restaurant review

Mykonos Café & Bakery is a dream come true

A & D Pizzeria and Pub kicks it up a notch and renovates

By Janet Stoica

A short trip to Millbury could be your most rewarding 2021 adventure since we've all started to wander out of our homes lately.

The first stop might be the recently opened Mykonos Café & Bakery on Elm Street, possibly the most spectacular bakery in the area.

This unique, relaxing place takes you into its arms with the heavenly aromas of freshly

baked croissants, rolls, and muffins and scores of American, Greek, and Italian pastries, that make it difficult to pick just one. Of course, you cannot and will not pick just one...please, have two, or even take some of these delectable confections home to your family and friends.

Also look for the spanakopita (spinach pie), the baklava, spinach and feta calzones, cheese pies, koulouria

(sesame and honey sweets), kataifi (walnuts served in a finely stranded pastry), saragli (rolled baklava with spices and nuts), sizeable cinnamon rolls, fruit macaroons, cannolis, cheese pies, cheesecake rounds, eclairs, and Danish, altogether the wonderful display of an artful bakery at its finest.

Bagel varieties are plentiful from plain to sesame to French toast with or without butter or cream cheese varieties.

For breakfast, try the avocado toast, which is made with fresh-sliced avocado, one or two eggs on your choice of bread (my choice was a flaky croissant), and, if you like, bacon or sausage. The bread is lightly drizzled with olive oil and sprinkled with hot pepper flakes, just enough to give it a kick. You are in flavor town heaven, make no mistake about it.

For lunch, try one of the several daily soups, perhaps

their signature Greek lemon soup.

Mykonos Café & Bakery presents a neat, clean, and charming environment for their customers to enjoy. Sure, take your laptop or iPad here to work, play, or read and settle into one of the high-back chairs by the large front windows, the comfy upholstered chairs, or a centered table.

I haven't seen a bake shop like this since the days of Lederman's and Widoff's on Water Street in Worcester, which brings me to Chris Andrianopoulos, owner of A & D Pizzeria and Pub, located across the street from Mykonos Café & Bakery and husband of Mykonos' owner, Sonja Andrianopoulos.

It seems that Chris, who was born and brought up in Worcester, used to visit the Water Street bakeries when he was a kid. As a tribute to



Chris and Sonja Andrianopoulos

his vivid recollections of those aromatic and delightful emporiums, Chris now bakes wonderfully soft and light bulgie rolls on the weekends for his wife's bakery. He also includes rolls, breads, bagels, spinach pies, and stuffed grape leaves while in his baking zone.

But the full-time bakers here are the rock stars of Mykonos Bakery: Sonja's parents, Natasha and George Andrea. They operated their own bakery in Greece before emigrating to the USA. This energetic duo has combined their exceptional tal-

Continued on next page



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Sonja Andrianopoulos is a financial bank adviser who works full-time at a Boston banking institution. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree in math and computer science and an MBA from Clark University. She is currently working on her PhD in finance.

Sonja and Chris met at a dance held by St. Spyridon Church in Worcester. Married since 2004, they have two children in high school.

All along she's had a vision: "This bakery has been my goal for the last 10 years. I grew up in my parents' bakery in Greece and it is a pleasure to have my dream realized."

"This used to be a drinking establishment," Chris said. "When the former owner wanted to sell, I knew this would be a good opportunity for Sonja. When we purchased the property last year, we completely renovated the building, putting in floor-to-ceiling windows at the building front, skylights, walls, painting, tile work, and fixtures."

Mykonos has been open since January 23. "We're still looking at our menu offerings and operations," says Sonja. "Soon we hope to have a grand opening but not until we feel it's right. We're letting our customers decide what their favorites are, and we will focus on those choices."

Catering for corporate functions and parties is on the menu too.

And the name? Daughter Sophia picked the bakery name as it is one of the Greek islands they all hope to visit in the near future. Their son, George, once had the task of peeling a 50 lb. sack of onions. George's lesson in hard labor left an impression on him.

"This bakery is an option for our children's future," explained Sonja. "I wanted to bring something from my homeland here. This is a passion for me and my parents and, frankly, I want to teach my children work ethics and want them to see what manual labor is like." Chris further stated, "We don't want them to take everything for granted. We want them to know where they came from. Teaching them life lessons is so important."

Chris also described how A & D Pizzeria and Pub was recently renovated. "We updated and redecorated our restaurant and bar area. We'll have a new pub-style menu, but the bar area is not open yet. We're waiting for the COVID situation to stabilize and hope to re-open soon. We finished putting the final touches on the bar area a few weeks ago and will continue to make a few more updates, including hiring more staff. We also have a very nice function room that can accommodate 75 patrons. Our ideas came from many sources, including visits to Boston's North End

and Federal Hill restaurants."

The new bar is u-shaped, includes a seamless granite countertop, along with mahogany wood flairs, and unique pendant cylinder lighting over the bar seating area. The pizzeria's restaurant is bright, orderly, and well-lit with several booths available for diners. Its menu is filled with appetizing selections, including cocktails, soups and salads, calzones, gourmet pizzas, specialty subs and clubs, burgers and wraps, beef and chicken, pasta and seafood, desserts, plus a kids menu. "We still serve up our prime rib special on weekends," says Chris, "and weather-permitting, our outside patio is very popular."

The couple has given back to the town too by sponsoring local baseball and basketball teams, and delivered complimentary pizza and subs to the local police, fire, and emergency personnel. They are generous to many worth causes in town and the surrounding area.

Mykonos Café & Bakery, 49 Elm Street, Millbury; phone: (508) 917-8127. Hours: 7 a.m. – 7 p.m. Mon-Sat; Sunday 7 a.m. – 3 p.m. www.mykonosbakery.com FB: Mykonos Café & Bakery.

A & D Pizzeria and Pub, 60 Elm Street, Millbury. Phone: (508) 865-9013. Hours: 10 a.m. – 9 p.m. daily. www.adpizza-pub.com FB: A & D Pizza and Pub.

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Chris Andrianopoulos at the newly refurbished pub bar.

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Library notes: Book and plant sale at Douglas Public Library

Memorial Day Weekend Book and Plant Sale

The Friends of the Simon Fairfield Public Library are organizing a book and plant sale for Saturday, May 29, from 9 a.m. to noon. Rain date is Sunday, May 30.

This will be the first in-person book sale since Oktoberfest 2019, so the number of books that need new homes is significant, and not a single one of the books, DVDs or au-

dio in this sale has been featured in any previous sale or auction.

Prefer plants? Need a pot? Headed by Kristin Stevens, the Friends are collecting seedlings to sell alongside the books. If you would like to contribute, there is a giant collection of pots behind the Library into which you can deposit your extra bulbs or separated perennials. You can take a pot, put a plant in

it, label it, and leave it outside the Library any time in the week before May 29. For questions or help with plants, please email douglasplants@gmail.com.

The Friends call it a sale, but you get to take what you can and donate whatever you want. Especially when it comes to the books: please take as much as you can. They all have to go. Library Director Justin Snook says, "I'm not carrying them back in."

This will be an outdoor event spread out around the Library in order to encourage proper social distancing. Masks will be required. There will be nitrile gloves and hand sanitizer available. Bags will be provided, and we ask that everyone browse with their eyes and not their hands. If it is interesting enough to touch, it is interesting enough to take home and rescue from imminent recycling.

Friends of the Library to sponsor home delivery in Douglas

The Friends of the Library traditionally help the Library in two major areas: programming and outreach. There really have not been many bills to pay in terms of programming in recent months, but outreach has been more critical than ever. The library website, the newsletter, the Zoom account, Wowbrary, and many more of library's windows to the world are funded by the Friends.

Home delivery is yet another form of outreach—one that puts a lot of miles on library staffer Gail's truck as she delivers books all over Douglas. The Friends have graciously committed to paying that mileage moving forward. That means the library will not have to take that money out of its operational budget, which means more books. Thanks, Friends.

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Finding Home

The COVID-19 Pandemic has changed a bunch of things for our business. Fortunately, our family has found a way to make the changes have a positive impact on our business, our family, and our staff.

We welcome another positive impact to our farm: Diana Whittier is promoted (officially, finally) to Farm Store Manager. Diana recently graduated from Becker College with her Bachelor of Science Degree in Exercise Science and Pre-Physical Therapy.

We've been readying for Diana to join the team full time for many months now. Last March, Diana's part-time job at a local physical therapy office was put on hold due to the pandemic. When Whittier Farms decided to have our non-family members stay home out of an abundance of caution, Diana joined her parents Wayne and Mary, and sister Samantha in the farm store. If you called in an order last spring, you most likely spoke with Diana; she offered you comfort and helped you work your way around the farm store right from your kitchen. Over the last few months, Diana has worked at the farm store while completing her studies at Becker and competing in her final collegiate soccer season. While at the farm, she prioritized getting to know your families, our products, and bringing out the best in our farm store. It was these new found connections with you and your families as well as a renewed appreciation for her surroundings at the farm and the responsibility to the animals and land that showed Diana her future could actually be right here at Whittier Farms. Diana hopes her role as store manager allows her to build upon the already good customer service at Whittier Farms. She is looking forward to showing current and new staff members how important and impactful excellent customer service can be and doesn't want anyone to have a bad experience at the farm. Diana is also going to balance her passions by working part-time with personal training clients through a local gym.

Whittier Farms



Summer yard sales

The Helping Hand summer yard sales schedule has been announced. The time of each sale is 8 am to noon. The dates include June 5 and June 19, July 10 and July 24, August 7 and August 21, and September 11. The yard sales are held at Dodge Chapel, 81 Hammond Hill Road, Charlton. To donate call Deb 508-987-0708, Annette 508-347-7596, or Judy 508-248-5580.



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Assistance animals webinar

The Central Massachusetts Disaster Animal Response Team is hosting a live webinar via Zoom on May 19, 6:30 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. on the subject of assistance animals. Attendees will be able to distinguish between the different types of assistant animals: emotional support, therapy, working, and service animals and the levels of public access afforded to each type. Presenters will review the specialized training required for service dogs, working dogs, and therapy animals and why registration or certification is important for the animal and handler. The presenters will review how the public, businesses, and emergency service agencies may respond to individuals accompanied by an assistance animal. The program includes consideration of the current COVID-19 climate. Continuing Education Credits for Animal Control Officers have been approved. Please go to <https://contacc/3dwwNda> for more information and to sign up.

Seeking volunteers

CMDART is seeking volunteer board applicants. Several volunteer roles are needed including an co-chairman, events coordinator, a clerk, social media manager, fund-raising, and a logistics coordinator to help manage response equipment. Individuals with skills in some form of business management or non-profit management are desirable. For more information and a volunteer job description of all positions, contact membership@cmdart.org or president@cmdart.org or call 508-803-1989. For more information about CMDART go to www.cmdart.org.



Officer Len Gosselin, resident of Uxbridge and K-9 Police for Bellingham is a featured presenter in a webinar on assistance animals. Len will talk about working dogs.

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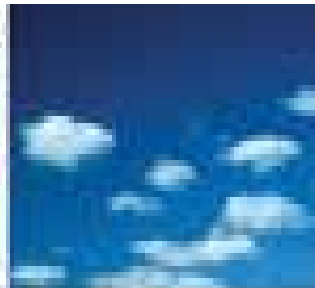
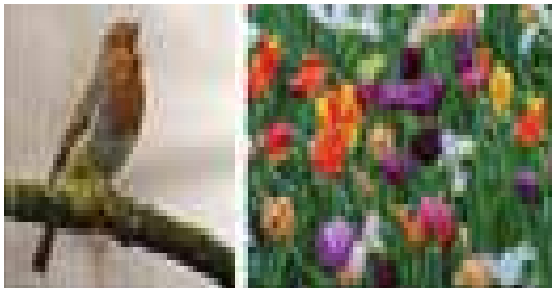


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BENEFITS**
Why you should
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- 1 EDUCATION AND TRAINING**
As a Chamber member you can attend classes, seminars, and webinars to help you start, grow, and manage your business. These opportunities help you learn or improve upon skills that are essential for professional development.
- 2 BUSINESS SERVICES**
Whether you are just starting out, looking to grow, or want to expand your resources and connections, we can help you with marketing, public relations advice, notary, financing, certificates of origin, use of office incubator space, a full service conference room and smaller meeting rooms.
- 3 LEGISLATIVE ADVOCATE**
We will advocate in your behalf of local, state, and government issues that may affect your business. Our job is to help make your concerns heard to those who can help and who matters.
- 4 EXCLUSIVE CONNECTION**
As a Chamber member, you will make connections with members and consultants from various professions through increased visibility on the Chamber's website and member's directory. In addition, you may be featured in the Chamber's newsletter.
- 5 CREDIBILITY**
You increase the positive perception among consumers and business owners when you're identified as a member of the Chamber of Commerce. You will be recognized as a viable player in your industry and community and increase your company's visibility.
- 6 INDUSTRY ROUNDTABLES**
You get opportunities to meet and participate in CEO and industry-specific roundtable discussions to share ideas, challenges, best practices and measure results. In addition you learn how to develop critical and strategic thinking.
- 7 ADVERTISING**
Joining the Chamber provides opportunities to appear on our broadcast shows which air 3 times weekly. You have the option of utilizing 10 free, 30-second ads on WCFN, use our newsletter free, and distribute your collateral at our events.
- 8 NETWORKING**
As a member, you will discover dozens of opportunities to meet people, expand your referral and client bases, and connect with business leaders. You can volunteer to work on programs and committees. Our virtual introduction process is also a part of networking via e-mail.
- 9 CHAMBER EVENTS AND PROGRAMS**
Attend innovative and informative events while meeting other members and potential clients. You may choose to host an event that spotlights your company. Another benefit is that the BVCC is the largest affiliate of the Worcester Chamber of Commerce and offers access to that market.
- 10 BUSINESS COUNSELING**
You will be able to participate in free, one-on-one consultations with industry specific consultants who provide guidance and knowledge. Consultants and professionals from various organizations, including government, hold office hours regularly at BVCC.



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BVCC ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Monday, May 10

Pleasant Valley Country Club

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95 Armsby Rd., Sutton

Living with Lincoln

I'm only human



By Amy Palumbo-LeClaire

My house is not the same. I sit out on the deck to write, to remember him. The birds chirp and call to each other beneath a pale blue sky. They sing songs of spring and life and new beginnings. A neighborhood dog barks from a few houses away. Something is missing. I sit awkwardly and wait for Lincoln to lift his nose to the flutter of life around us. Satisfied, he'll collapse by my side to do what he always does in April—wait for the bunnies to appear. But he's not

here and, instead, I'm left with all that's left, his memory. My heart aches. Simple joys have been my winning lottery ticket for the past ten years while living with Lincoln. Now it's time to go on living without him. How did this happen?

His presence, like shreds of petal swirling through the air, are close enough to touch. His passing is a fresh wound. I want to grab our time together, clutch it in my hand and bring it back to life like a genie from a bottle. I want my dog back.

Alas, I've gone dark. I'm supposed to honor Lincoln's spirit and focus only on the good parts (he and I are optimists) but I'm human. I know we've been blessed. I know he had a good life! "I just miss you so much," I whisper, and in my mind's eye, he faces me with his "professor-

serious" expression. Then he breaks into that easy, boxy smile. "I'm with you. I'm okay. But go ahead and tell your story, Mom."

Lincoln defied an ultrasound report that he only had one to three months to live back in October, 2020. Pardon the male dog expression, but he chose to grab life by the balls and live each day as though it's his last. All winter long he played outside like a child on a snow day. He played Bury & Find with his ball, lapped up cups and cups of farm-fresh goat's milk, and hiked along trails in Sturbridge. He took his final swim at Wells State Park during an exceptionally warm Saturday in late March. He sniffed the shoreline, felt the water with a knowing paw,

and waded in. His best friend, Bruno, watched him swim with the indulgence of a dog whose full name, Lincoln Veto, means lake and love. "Look at him go!"

Winter drew to a close and along came a mild spring. The days became warmer and longer while Lincoln's panting grew more pronounced. We discussed summer plans for keeping him cool and healthy. We would get him a kid's pool for the yard, make up an "apartment" for him in the cool finished basement, and continue to cook his favorite beef stews, salmon, and steak dishes. We arranged another vet appointment to discuss more possibilities. We had plans for Lincoln. He knew how much we loved him and he loved us right back with zero complaint about

his health. The decline in his breathing (more panting, more hacking, more discomfort) seemed overshadowed by his thirst to go on living. He still climbed the stairs to greet us with his human smile, grabbed our socks, wiggled with joy when we came home, and played fetch in the yard. Then something happened a few weeks after

Easter Sunday.

We couldn't allow Lincoln to play ball anymore. Mild breathing issues worsened. Small sessions of play led to heavy panting and, more recently, wheezing. That's when we knew. He wouldn't choose to stop on his own. Taking away a game of ball felt like murder. But we had to do what was best for Lincoln.



My dog



Lincoln's last car ride, following an April snow storm



Family love.



Largest male of the litter.



Bruno adores his cousin, Lincoln



Lincoln goes camping



Early car ride days with Mom



Happiness is a ball



Saying good-bye.



Soccer days



Relaxing after my last walk

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A neighborhood walk fore-shadowed all of this. The truth passed through me like a lump of cold ice cream midway through the walk, one that began as it usually does, with off-the-leash time followed by my favorite routine: Lincoln lost track of time while distracted by his favorite grassy smells. Meanwhile, I walked ahead of him for, say, fifty feet before he realized that we had been separated. He lifted his head and froze to the sight of me. Then, as though we'd been apart for an eternity, he raced back to me, full-speed, to reunite and sat at my heels, smiling wildly. We are the greatest team ever!

I've since read The Rainbow Bridge poem, a replica of this experience to help explain to dog owners what it's like to cross over to heaven and reunite with our dogs "to never be separated again." I felt like I had experienced heaven on earth every time we walked the neighborhood.

His final sprint led to the final stretch of our walk. I leashed him back up and, understandably, his pace softened to a leisurely stroll. We stopped at the corner of Cedar Hill Road and McClellan. "You want to turn around and go home, Lincoln?" He sat, thought about it, and tugged me forward. "Let's go." We strolled past the field where the apple orchard used to be. He paused as he always does, recalling days past, when he'd nose through rows and rows of thick field and fallen apples. We kept going. But something was different. The truth hit me. This would be our last walk.

A driver appeared behind us suddenly, shaking his head in frustration, obviously in a hurry. I tugged Lincoln to the side of the road so that the driver had more space to pass. The irony that we'd come full circle to my first column written (Why I Like Dogs More than Humans) settled cruelly in my chest.

I wiped tears from my cheeks. My thoughts ad-

ressed a driver now gone. "You don't understand. This is Lincoln. He sprung from the ground like a dolphin to catch a fly ball only weeks ago. He's just not himself. This is the dog in the paper. He's just feeling—"

Tears blurred my thoughts. I pressed on. "You coming?" Lincoln glanced back to check on me. "Don't worry about him. He's human. This walk is so much fun! Let's just be happy!"

I unleashed him for a second time at the edge of our neighborhood. He visited Sonoma, a friendly yellow lab, then found an old faded tennis ball in the Campbell's yard, one I didn't have the heart to throw back. A squirrel erected itself from a patch of woods, and stared up at us. Lincoln froze. A familiar outdoor friend! Ball in mouth, he launched forward for a quick, yet tired chase. "Good boy, Lincoln!" He trampled back to me, thoroughly proud of himself. "Still got it."

More days passed. I fought with my intuition. Maybe it's not the end? Maybe there's something I'm just not seeing. His love for life, his will to go on, was so strong. I reached out to dear Golden friends and invited them over for a visit. Please. Just tell me he's going to be fine. Talk me out of what's happening. You know more.

The skies produced a rare snowstorm on Friday, April 16, a mirror to the day he was born on December 26, 2010. He laid vulnerable in the foyer upstairs; paws outstretched amid heavy breathing. He needed help. Panic pressed against my forehead while I made phone calls. Everyone was busy, booked, overwhelmed. Everyone except his former veterinarian, Dr. Golden of Sutton Animal Hospital. She was available at 12:30. Finally. A bright light.

My husband got the car started. Lincoln grabbed his

ball, waited for me to grab my pocketbook and tap danced to the prospect of going for a ride. His eyes were bright with enthusiasm. We're going for a ride! He could hardly wait.

Due to COVID restrictions, the office staff banned us from attending the preliminary exam. "Please," I begged. "His condition is critical. He will get stressed and won't be able to breathe." My over-the-phone request was declined.

He was led on a short leash from our backseat. My husband and I held on. We could barely breathe ourselves. Within minutes, Lincoln arrived back at the car, gasping for air. He collapsed in a slush puddle, panting and smiling like a wolf, paws forward. "He's far too distressed to come in," the vet tech said. I swallowed the bitter taste of "I knew that" and opened the back door for Lincoln to jump back in. Home. He pasted his eyes to mine and struggled to calm down. But he was relieved. That much I was sure of. We're together again. Raw, blustery wind and rain rushed into the car. Dr. Golden appeared at the passenger window within minutes. She told us what to expect.

I sit in the backseat beside Lincoln. He's calmed down nicely. He lifts a big, strong paw for me to hold. Our eyes lock. I cannot find words. Fresh tears rain and rain down my face. My dog, my dog. Why this? Lincoln licks away a steady stream of tears. "I'm okay, Mom. I'm so happy we're together. This is the right thing."

"I'm not ready, Lincoln. Please. Please, hold on." My pain is excruciating, irrational.

"Thank you for loving me always. Thank you for understanding me and taking me for rides and pouring me goat's milk. I'm okay, Mom. You are the best. I feel so

relieved to be with you right now." He rests his head on my lap and calms down to a peaceful awareness. The dark of our plight recedes back like a wave at the shoreline, breaking then unfolding to an intense beauty. I pet his soft head while he rests comfortably on my lap. "Lincoln can come too," I speak his language. I repeat the phrase over and over again. He listens, raises a sleepy eye. "Lincoln can come too. Where do you want to go next? You are a good boy." All that's wrong crumbles around us like a falling tower while the two of us, kindred spirits, rest in final moments of peace and I'm blessed a thousand times by my dog's unconditional love. Lincoln goes to sleep.

Lincoln never asked for much, only to be together. Like me, he was always up for adventure. I'm so honored and proud to have given him exactly what he needed, over and over again. I'll go on Living with Lincoln in my heart and writing about him in honor of so many who loved him and saw their own dogs through a story told in the voice of a true Dog Person. He was the first pick of the litter, the largest male and last surviving pup, son of Sox and Tinkles of Twin Beau D Kennel. I imagine him crossing over to miles and miles of glistening lake and baseball fields of rich greens and golds. I imagine that someday he'll freeze to the sight of me, only this time he'll find me seated on the ground, arms wide open. He'll race towards me until we meet again. Then I'll fold my arms around him, collapse and, this time, he'll lick away tears of joy.

Stay tuned for Lincoln's upcoming book, a compilation of columns (first published here!) that have made you laugh, cry, and nod your head knowingly. Please write to me at amyleclair@hotm.com.



LINCOLN VETO LECLAIRE
December 26, 2010 – April 16, 2021
"Live Life to the Fullest.
Love Openly. Grab a Ball."

For Amy

When tomorrow starts without me

When tomorrow starts without me,
and I'm not there to see;
The sun will rise and find your eyes
All filled with tears for me.
I know how much you love me,
As much as I love you,
And each time that you think of me,
I know you'll miss me too.
But when tomorrow starts without me,
Please try to understand,
That an angel came and called my name
And petted me with her hand.
I thought about our lives together;
I know you must be sad,
I thought of all the love we shared,
And all the fun we had.
So when tomorrow starts without me,
Don't think we're far apart.
For every time you think of me,
I'm right there in your heart.

-Author unknown

All our love Amy,
from the staff at The Yankee Xpress
and The Blackstone Valley Xpress.
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BVT Practical Nursing Class of 2021 Pinning Ceremony

UPTON – Becoming a nurse takes dedication and hard work to obtain the knowledge, skill, and compassion to care for patients. The Practical Nursing (Post-Secondary) program at Blackstone Valley

Regional Vocational Technical High School provides its non-traditional adult student with life-changing training to succeed as a practical nurse in a progressively complex health care field.

Northbridge High Honor Roll

NORTHBRIDGE - Northbridge High School has announced the honor roll for the third quarter of 2020-2021.

Highest Honors:

Grade 12: Kristina Brenn, Colin Brody, Asa Flannery, Katelyn Lombardo, Angela Lovering, Brennan Mahoney, Kiera McMahon, Alexandra Padula, Jared Wielsma, Michael Wilkes

Grade 11: Caitlyn Mahoney, Dev Patel, Tyler Richards, Aidan Roy, Colin Tognazzi

Grade 10: Abby Barnatt, Mary Goodrow, Coulton Manning, Adam Minor, Caroline O'Brien, Kathryn O'Brien, Caitlin Porcelli, Keira Touhey, Jenny Wagenhoffer, Graham Williams

Grade 09: Sarah Cowen, Madelynne Driscoll, Mia Pellegrino

High Honors:

Grade 12: Afia Aning, Ally Boucher, Vincent Duca, Callie Ellis, Patrick Gahan, Wendy Gordor, Olivia LeBrasseur, Hannah Lomonaco, Justine Michaud, Yira Navarro Rodriguez, Emma Paulhus

Grade 11: Angelique Akeley, Sara Bedigian, Samantha Billmyer, Tyler Bliss, Sydney Boudreau, Adam Chen, Lauren Ferreira, Charles Garrigan, John Gifford, Claire Green, Hayleigh Hoffman, Ruby Holtz, Kayla Kamishlian, Mallorie Mercer, Christopher Rivelli, Jessica Ross, Christopher Smith, Celia Walker, Lindzy Winslow

Grade 10: Cameron Athanas, Karlee Battista, Brynn Burt, Meghan Cumiskey, Connor DeCiero, Hannah Drenzo, Elizabeth Duca, Ian Gahan, Madeleine Lannon, Jenna Malone, Colin Marino, Kayla Munson, Owen Orlandino, David Rousseau, Nina Szymanowski, Nathan Williams

Grade 09: Madelyn Andresen, Elizabeth Andrews, Ryan Bedigian, Evan Carrachino, Rebecca Cleary, Olivia Frabotta, Ainsley Hogan, Callie Jee, Hannah King, Kayda King, Charlotte Leppamaki, Joseph Mazzarelli, Charleigh Mitchell, Zachary O'Meara, Marcus Reilly, Natalie Zborowski

Grade 12: Emma Barnatt, Jonathan Cray, Kevin Doherty, Charlotte French, Mikayla Gallerani, Emma Ganley, Destiny Ingersoll, Brooke Jackson, Jill Labrie, Emma LaChapelle, Olivia Lavallee, Ariel Marko, Morgan Mawn, Julia Mezynski, Trevor Moorey, Allison Ronan, Patrick Rosenlund, Avery Senosk, Kayley Tivnan, Domenic Trombino, Katharine Tubbs

Grade 11: Makenzie Alicea, Anderson Barnicoat-Sansone, James Bartlett, Valery Bravo, John Buckley, David Castellon Palma, Molly Consigli, Haley Cormier, Jared Dermoshegian, Kyla Dominguez De Los Santos, Emma Donahue, Collin Falconer, Abigail Fraser, Daniel Fung-A-Fat, Olivia Guest, Maeve Kelly, Isaac Maynard, Alexander Quaranta, Elizabeth Quimby, Yarelis Ronda Rivera, Rory Schofer, Zoe Taylor, Brent Turgeon, Timothy Visbeek, Matthew Wildman

Grade 10: Ian Claudio, Molly Conroy, Breana Ferguson, Kiana Hardy, Lillian Naylor, James Oatis, Liam Pinoos, Caramia Pozzi, Jacqueline Roe, Melissa Sabourin, Parker Scott, Kayleigh Silva, Emily Wheeler

Grade 09: Timmothy Adams Jr, Macie Allen, Samantha Alvarez, Logan Ballou, Drew Beaudoin, Haily Billmyer, Kiara Bodreau, Samantha Brody, Gary Bunis, Nicholas D'Alfonso, Charles Dupuis, Adam Ellis, Xavier Falke, Dakota Grazulis, Timothy Guiliani, Tyrese Holder-Hinds, Lucas Hovsepian, Kayla Hubbard, Dominic Keddy, Jake LaChapelle, William Leonard, Emily Letendre, Molly Mawn, Kaydence Melanson, James Potter, Dylan Rouille, Rachel Sawyer, Anthony Tomasetti, Jack Wallace

The Practical Nursing Class of 2021 recently earned their nursing certificates, awarded at a pinning ceremony on February 8th. For the 19 graduates, it marked the culmination of one and a half years and over 1,090 hours of instruction balanced with work and family obligations.

"The pinning ceremony is more than a nursing tradition," explained Practical Nursing Coordinator Joann L. Monks, MBA, MSc, RN-BC, RMA. "It symbolizes our students' commitment, hard work, and dedication to complete the coursework and clinical hours required to earn a practical nursing certificate to become a Licensed Practical Nurse."

Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick was proud to sign his name on the certificates. He said, "Given the depth and difficulty of this program, this group of students demonstrated the talent, knowledge, and compassion that has become a hallmark of our graduates. Well-trained, they are a valuable resource for the residents, hospitals, and health care providers of the Blackstone Valley."

With pandemic restrictions in place, Class President Abigail Angell of Grafton shared her thoughts in an inspired open letter to this gifted class of extraordinary women. She said, "You're amazing people who will do great things with your abilities. I wish you nothing but success in your future endeavors."

She also thanked the instructors, "The exceptional faculty challenged us and taught values that go beyond textbooks and PowerPoints. Thank you for holding us to the highest standards of excellence and pushing us to reach our full potential."

The Class of 2021 graduates, having earned their practical nursing certificates, are eligible to test for the National Council Licensure Examination-Practical Nurses (NCLEX-PN). The Practical Nursing program is currently accepting applications for August 2021 enrollment. For more information, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/practicalnursing.

The Class of 2021 members listed alphabetically by their hometowns:

Bellingham - Lauren Jacobs
Douglas - Courtney Britt and Michaela Lamy
Dudley - Heather Buduo
Franklin - Molly Malloy
Grafton - Abigail Angell, Class President
Hopedale - Anastarcia Carlino
Leicester - Brenda O'Neill
Mendon - Susan Giargiari
Marlborough - Auburn Howard
Millbury - Dior Lukos
Millville - Beth Paige
Northbridge - Kathryn Deschene, Tiffany Salo-LeBlanc
Randolph - Roberta Silva
Westborough - Wendy Consoli
Worcester - Djinara Grier, Rosemond Dampety, and Marva Whyte



Douglas
Courtney Britt



Douglas
Michaela Lamy



Northbridge
Kathryn Deschene



Northbridge
Tiffany Salo-LeBlanc



Millbury
Dior Lukos



Grafton
Abigail Angell
Class President

Whitin Community Center celebrates selection as beneficiary of Hannaford Community Bag Program

WHITINSVILLE- The Whitin Community Center (WCC), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization committed to enhancing the health and well-being of individuals and families and to building a strong community in the Blackstone Valley, has been selected as a benefiting non-profit of the Hannaford Helps Community Bag Program fundraiser for the month of May by Hannaford in Uxbridge.

The Whitin Community Center will receive a \$1 donation every time a \$2.50 reusable Hannaford Bag is sold in May at the Hannaford store located at: 158 N. Main St. Uxbridge.

For more information on the Hannaford Helps Community Bag Program, visit <https://hannaford.bags4mycause.com>.

Please grab your Hannaford Reusable Bag throughout the month of May to directly benefit the Whitin Community Center's Summer Camp Whitin Scholarships!

The Whitin Community Center offers social, recreational, educational, and outreach programs that bring community members of all ages and backgrounds together. The Whitin Community Center is the Blackstone Valley's most complete family and recreation center with two swimming pools, a gym, fitness center, early learning programs, summer camps and a seven and a half acre park. For more information call 508.234.8184 or visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com.

Center offers social, recreational, educational, and outreach programs that bring community members of all ages and backgrounds together. The Whitin Community Center is the Blackstone Valley's most complete family and recreation center with two swimming pools, a gym, fitness center, early learning programs, summer camps and a seven and a half acre park. For more information call 508.234.8184 or visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com.



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Memorial Day

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Melissa Etheridge set to return to Indian Ranch September 6

WEBSTER - Indian Ranch announced Melissa Etheridge will perform as part of the Mike's Hard Lemonade Summer Concert Series in Webster on Monday, September 6.

Known for her confessional lyrics and raspy, smoky vocals, Melissa Etheridge has remained one of America's favorite female singer-songwriters for more than two decades. Etheridge stormed onto the American rock scene in 1988 with the release of her critically acclaimed self-titled debut album, which led to an appearance on the 1989 Grammy Awards show. For several years, her popularity grew around such memorable originals as "Bring Me Some Water," "No Souvenirs" and "Ain't It Heavy," for which she won a Grammy® in 1992. Etheridge hit her commercial and artistic stride with her fourth album, Yes I Am (1993),

which featured the massive hits, "I'm the Only One" and "Come to My Window," a searing song of longing that brought Etheridge her second Grammy® Award for Best Female Rock Performance. In 1995, Etheridge issued her highest charting album, Your Little Secret, which was distinguished by the hit single, "I Want to Come Over."

Celebrating its 75th anniversary this year, Indian Ranch offers music lovers a chance to see some of the greatest country, classic rock and pop bands steps from Lake Chagogaggoggmangaugga-goggchaubunagungamaugg. Nestled between pine trees, the amphitheater offers the ability to see the stage from anywhere in the audience. More than a concert venue, Indian Ranch recently opened Samuel Slater's Restaurant and is also home to the Indian

Princess paddlewheeler and Indian Ranch Campground.

Tickets on sale are Chris Janson on July 10, Get The Led Out on July 24, Ziggy Marley on July 25, Marty Stuart on July 31, Jamey Johnson August 1, Justin Moore August 7, Grand Funk Railroad on August 8, ABBA The Concert on August 13, Tower of Power on August 15, Yacht Rock Revue on August 21, Foreigner on August 26, Josh Turner on August 28, The Ultimate Celebration of Queen Starring Marc Martel on September 4, Local Countryfest on September 11, The Mavericks on September 12, Los Lobos on September 18, George Thorogood & The Destroyers on September 19, the Pike Hair Fest on September 25, Kip Moore on September 26, and 38 Special on October 9. More shows will be announced soon.

All shows in the 2021 Summer Concert Series will follow state and local guidelines in place at the time of the event regarding capacities, social distancing, and other safety measures. Indian Ranch continues to monitor the changing guidelines and will provide continuous updates regarding these policies for each event.

Gates for Melissa Etheridge open at 11:30 a.m. showtime is 1:00 p.m. Tickets are available online at www.indianranch.com, by calling 1-800-514-ETIX (3849) or at the Indian Ranch Box Office. The Indian Ranch Box Office is currently open Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. All events are rain or shine. No refunds. Indian Ranch is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster.



Willard House & Clock Museum hosts Plein Air painters gathering

GRAFTON - Expanding its program, The Willard House and Clock Museum will open its grounds to plein air (outdoor) painters and landscape artists on Saturday, May 15, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

"The first plein air event was such a success, we've decided to hold another one this month," says Program Coordinator, Beverly Snow. "This is a free and informal event. Even though the museum isn't open yet, the house and barn; situated on five rolling acres, offers a wide variety of subject matter for artists and plenty of space to

spread out." Participants are reminded to bring their own supplies.

To expand the day's appeal, Massachusetts College of Art and Design Painting and Art History grad, Olivia Casello, will be conducting a plein air demo during the day.

The museum will also post the artists' work created that day on its Facebook, Twitter and Instagram pages. Participants can send images of their masterpieces to beverly@willardhouse.org.

Located at 11 Willard Street in North Grafton, the Willard House and Clock Museum

exhibits more than 80 Willard clocks in the birthplace and original workshop of the Willard clockmakers, along with family portraits, furnishings and other family heirlooms. Works by all three generations of Willard clockmakers, including famed clockmakers Simon Willard Jr. and Benjamin Franklin Willard, are also displayed. The Museum tour includes the original Willard House, built in 1740, the clock-making workshop, in addition to the galleries. Visit the Willard House and Clock Museum website at www.willardhouse.org.

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Cruising scene 2021

Paul Newman's Hole In The Wall Gang Camp Car Show 2021 season launch

By Jim Weicherding

Paul Newman's Hole In The Wall Gang Camp Car Show 2021 season launch was a great success. To write that this car show had a big turnout would be an understatement.

This new cruisin' season car show, hosted by the Tri-State Cruisers, was unbelievably busy from 1 p.m. until sunset. The weather was absolutely gorgeous with bright sunny skies and warm temperatures for this Saturday car show and cruise night. It was very windy but that didn't seem to bother any of the nearly five hundred show vehicle owners and almost one thousand spectators attending the event. The show

was filled to capacity with classic cars and trucks. So many show vehicles arrived that the parking volunteers had to direct drivers over to the adjacent parking lot on the opposite side of Pizza 101, on Route 101, in Pomfret, Connecticut. The owner of Pizza 101 fired up the outdoor grills and sold every single hamburger and hot dog he had available.

I have been a part of the Tri-State Cruisers Car Club car shows and cruise nights since they first began in Connecticut twenty-seven years ago.

Dick Salvas and his dedicated crew have been helping to

raise funds for many charities including The Hole In The Wall Gang Camp for very sick kids to give them a place to play and enjoy themselves while forgetting about their medical conditions for at least a little while. Their facilities were devastated by fires last winter and they really could use our help and support to rebuild their facilities for kids to enjoy again.

The Tri-State Cruisers were able to raise \$1,000 with their very first car show of the season and that's a trend we would all love to see happen until the end of September. This single event turnout was the largest vehicle display in the history of Tri-State Cruisers car shows. Donations are welcome at the entrance of every one of their car shows this year and the 50/50 helps out also, so please try your luck and support the cause. If you would like to donate online please visit their website and make that happen: www.holeinthewallgang.org. Thank you for your support, it's appreciated.



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BVT Student Council earns national recognition

UPTON – The Blackstone Valley Tech Student Council has been recognized as a 2021 National Gold Council of Excellence by the National Student Council for an exemplary record of leadership, service, and activities that improve their school and serve the community. This national recognition marks the third year in a row that the council has earned this distinction.

The council had to meet various criteria to earn this award - crafting a written constitution, conducting regular meetings, and adopting a democratic election process, as well as demonstrate successful sponsorship and participation in leadership development and activities. As a consecutive recipient of the gold

level of excellence, the council consistently displays the highest leadership standards that reflect its well-rounded program.

"It is an honor for our council to receive this recognition," said Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick. "We are proud of our Student Council and advisors Danielle Cann and Megan Potenti, who help empower our council members to serve their school and community on their journey to outstanding student leadership."

"Our students continue to amaze me," said Danielle Cann. "I love advising this club. I am lucky to work with an incredible group of students who consistently come together with creative ideas and work together

to accomplish their goals. They often surpass expectations and successfully create an atmosphere that unifies our school."

"Our students work hard to create exciting and meaningful events for their classmates and community," said Megan Potenti. "With distance learning, they adapted their efforts working in new ways to keep the community connected and achieving this recognition three years in a row. I am very proud of our students."

"Earning the 2021 National Gold Council of Excellence Award requires a team effort, and we have an incredible team," said Isabella Caccavelli, Student Council President. "Student Council is a rewarding school activity. We take a great

sense of pride in our service projects and fundraising efforts. We organize a turkey run to provide Thanksgiving dinners and coordinate the holiday drive to purchase Christmas presents. Seeing our efforts direct impacting the families in our school community is an incredibly moving experience."

2020 - 2021 Student Council Executive Board members

• Isabella Caccavelli, President; a senior in Health Services from Uxbridge

• Emma Conkey, Vice President; a junior in HVAC&R from Grafton
• Jack Kinsella, Secretary; a senior in Dental Assisting from Milford
• Hunter Claffin, Treasurer; a sophomore in HVAC&R from Douglas
• Aysia Parent, Historian; a senior in Multimedia Communications from Douglas
• Victoria Lemieux, Events Coordinator; a senior in Health Services from Blackstone
• Jace Rosado, Publicity Coordinator; a junior in HVAC&R from Uxbridge
• Elizabeth Howell, Awards Coordinator; a senior in Health Services from Upton

• Leah Cook, Evaluation Coordinator; a junior in Engineering & Robotics from Blackstone
• Jada Jane Chapman, Senior Representative; a senior in Automotive Technology from Blackstone
• Samantha Stephens, Junior Representative; a junior in Culinary Arts from Mendon
• Bradley Lyon, Sophomore Representative; a sophomore in Drafting & Design Technology from Upton
• Haley Fitzgerald-Moore, CDMASC Liaison/President; a senior in Multimedia Communications from Blackstone

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Whitinsville Social Library opens its doors

On Monday May 10 Whitinsville Social Library will open its doors to the public for limited walk-in service. Hours for walk-in service are Monday - Thursday 10 a.m.-7 p.m., Friday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Saturday 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Masks are required to gain entry. If you cannot wear a mask please make use of parking lot pick up. Hand

sanitizer is available. Please limit your time in the building to a maximum of 30 minutes. No tables or seating are available. Patrons will not have access to the ground floor. We are not offering indoor in-person programs at this time but outdoor programs are coming soon. Enter and exit the building using the Library's front entrance on Church Street. The back entrance and elevator is available to those who require it.

The Library encourages you to download and sign into MeeScan, a free self-check out app, before you arrive. MeeScan allows you to check out Library items with no staff contact and no lines. This app is available for iPhone and Android smartphones. Consider placing items on hold or looking up their availability in the online catalog at <http://whitinsville.cwmars.org> before arriving.

One public computer is available by appointment only. To schedule an appointment for computer browsing please call 508-234-2151 during business hours or go to www.tinyurl.com/EventsAtWSL. Computer usage is limited to 30 minutes a day. Use of the copy machine is on a first come first serve basis. Black and white printing is 20 cents a sheet. Please have exact change.

No more than two families or seven people in the Children's Room. No children under nine years of age are allowed to enter the building without a parent or guardian present.

Parking lot pick up is available any time during business hours. Call 508-234-2151 at least 15 minutes ahead of your arrival and your items will be checked out to you in a brown paper bag inside the Library's back door. Once patrons have access to the building, staff will no longer be calling to schedule appointments for parking lot pick up.

All returns are quarantined for at least 24 hours before checked in and removed from your account. The blue book drop is located in the library's back parking lot and is open 24/7. All late returns are fine free through Labor Day 2021. Items for children do not have late fines.

The Library is not accepting book donations. The next Friends of the Whitinsville

Social Library meeting is on Tuesday, May 25, at 6:30. If you would like to learn more about volunteer and fundraising opportunities email the Friends at friendswsl2019@gmail.com. Thank you all for your patience and kindness this past year. We look forward to seeing you soon.

*Rebecca Sasseville
Library Director*

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It is May 2, 1775, and Rachel Walker Revere has only heard from her beloved husband Paul once since his legendary midnight ride on the 18th of April. Still isolated from one another due to the siege of Boston, Rachel desperately creates a plan to safely take her children: six step-children from Paul's first marriage and a newborn baby of their own, from the reach of the British Regular Army in Boston. In this program you will help Rachel, as she carefully considers the dangers and demands of each plan. Find out if Rachel is successful in her perilous mission to unite her family, amidst the wake of an American Revolution.

Northbridge Senior Center

Plummer Place, home of the Northbridge Senior Center reopened the week of May 10. You may book one-on-one appointments with staff Monday through Thursday from 9:200 pm and Fridays 9-12 pm. The bus schedule will continue to be open for in town rides.

Unfortunately, the lunch program will remain on hold until further notice and there will be no congregating in the building for now.

There will be limited classes offered at Plummer Place including painting, book club, photography class, writing workshop, and pokeno. The billiard room will be open, but you must sign up to use it, no league at this time. A new exercise/life training class will be offered which starts on May 18, from 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. meeting two times a week for six weeks. In this new class you will focus on overall wellness through journal prompts for goal setting and then participate in a fitness program to improve balance, coordination and strength. All other exercise classes can be accessed through Zoom, call Kelly for the link or view new exercise programs on channel 194 at 9:00 am Monday through Friday. Please call to sign up for all classes as we are limited to the amount of people in each class. The Center will continue to add programs in the upcoming weeks.

There are also three outdoor concerts being held at Plummer Place in May and June. Check out the latest newsletter for details on all the programs being offered. You are also welcome to use our new patio for lunch or just meeting friends. We now have two picnic tables with umbrellas on the patio, feel free to call us to reserve a time. Can't wait to see you all once again.

Michelle Methe

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Focus on non-profits

EARTH, Ltd. educates and inspires to aid animals and the environment

By Christine Galeone

Did you know that there are five species of rhinoceros in the world? Did you know that three of those species are critically endangered due to illegal hunting done through international crime syndicates? Many people aren't aware of these kinds of threats to wildlife. Betsey Brewer, the founder and executive director of EARTH, Limited said, "Wildlife crime is one of the worst problems on the planet."

Thankfully, Brewer and her extremely dedicated team of educators, staff and volunteers at the conservation education nonprofit are working to combat the problem. But that's just part of what the

nonprofit does. Through its fun, educational programs, it's helping children and adults to better understand and appreciate the great and small creatures that share this world with us. And by doing so, it motivates people to try to protect and preserve those creatures and the environment.

Based at Southwick's Zoo in Mendon, the nonprofit provides "zoo visitors and the community with high quality educational programming." In addition to presentations at the zoo's EARTH Discovery Center and Bird Show Arena, the programs include spring and summer day camps for kids in grades K-9, rhino encounters with

the zoo's two endangered white rhinos, sloth encounters, the Junior Zookeeping Program for kids ages 6-16 and the ZooMobile Outreach Program. It also partners with and supports various environmental and conservation initiatives throughout the world – including the Trumpeter Swan Restoration Project that strives to restore the trumpeter swan to its natural Iowa habitat and Project Rhino, which fights poaching and enables rhino conservation.

Although the nonprofit has managed to keep raising awareness and support for conservation efforts, the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted EARTH, Ltd. "It's been very difficult," Brewer said. She noted that maintaining funding for a small nonprofit has been challenging during the pandemic, and the EARTH Discovery Center had to be closed last year. But the center will reopen in a limited capacity this year. She added, "I have some amazing educators. They redesigned everything in the center. I'm excited for people to see that."

During the pandemic, the nonprofit has also done significantly less in-person ZooMobile programs for

schools, libraries and other organizations. Instead, it created live and pre-recorded virtual ZooMobile programs that include animals that would normally travel with the EARTH, Ltd. educators. "It's starting to pick up momentum, now," Brewer, who's also a Board member of the Zoological Association of America, said of the virtual programs that might continue after the pandemic. "We're moving forward, so it's a good thing."

And while the nonprofit moves forward, the kids it has educated are moving forward in their desire to help animals and the environment. Brewer said that seeing their passion to protect animals grow over the years is very rewarding. "I can't tell you how many kids I've seen grow up," Brewer said. "I've had kids say that it changed their lives."

When asked how people can help EARTH, Ltd. during the pandemic, Brewer said that one way is by becoming an EARTH, Ltd. member or by making a monetary donation. But she also hopes that people will share what they've learned about rhinos and other endangered/threatened species, so that more people will support the conservationists working in the field to protect the animals. "They're the unsung heroes," she shared. "No doubt about that."

More information about the nonprofit is available on the EARTH, Ltd. website, www.earthltd.org.

If you would like to suggest a Blackstone Valley nonprofit or initiative for this series, please contact Christine at cmgaleone15@gmail.com.



Betsey Brewer, Executive Director of EARTH, Ltd. visits an endangered white rhino at Southwick's Zoo.



An Endangered White Rhino at Southwick's Zoo. (Courtesy of EARTH, Ltd. website)



Trumpeter Swan Cygnets at Southwick's Zoo. (Courtesy of EARTH, Ltd. website)



EARTH, Ltd. educator Diana Waterman gives a presentation featuring a macaw.

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

MFB names mortgage loan specialist

MILFORD - Milford Federal Bank appoints Alycia McCallum to the position of Mortgage Loan Specialist.

McCallum, a native of Hopedale, is active in the Corridor 9/495 Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Milford Area Chamber of Commerce, where she received the Extra Step Award for outstanding initiative.

She brings 22 years of experience in the residential mortgage industry and will be responsible for mortgage sales in the Metro West area. She can be reached at the bank's 246 Main Street, Milford office



Alycia McCallum

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Tales from beyond

Nineveh Falls

By Thomas D'Agostino

The Hamonassets were a peaceful tribe that lived along the shores between the Agi- ciomock River and the Connecticut River in Killingworth, Connecticut. Their Sachem

was known as Sebaquanch, "the man that weeps." Uncas, the famous Mohegan sachem, married his daughter, thus inheriting the Hammonasset land. He then sold a generous parcel of real estate to George Fenwick ESQ. of Saybrook. On November 26, 1669, Uncas sold the rest of the land to the residents of Killingworth. The remains of an Indian village are located about a half of a mile north of Route 80 near the junction of Roast Meat Hill Road and Wolf Meadow Road. The village consists of several

rock shelters where Indian artifacts have been found. A place called Nineveh Falls sits not too far from the village within the Killingworth Land Conservation Trust near Lake Hammonasset.

The falls have a haunting legend concerning an Indian maiden whose betrothed was a warrior who went to battle with a promise of marrying her upon his return. Sometime after his departure, false news arrived of his death during battle. Heartbroken and distraught over the loss of her beloved, she went to the falls and threw herself into the rapids. The brave returned to find that his lover was dead and in an attempt to join her, jumped into the same rapids as she.

Now, when the full moon casts a blanket of light upon the land, witnesses can see two ghostly figures walking along the edge of the falls, hand-in-hand in eternal wedlock.

There is another forlorn tale of a beautiful young woman who fell in love with a local farm boy. The young farmer was the sole provider and caretaker for the farm as well as being in charge of looking after his aging mother. According to legend, the young man did not care for the girl and resisted her affections towards him. This caused the jilted lover to throw herself from the cliff into the rapids below.



The place has become known as Lover's Leap.

Another legend associated with the area involves one of the early settlers most feared entities: witches. Yes, even Killingworth has a history of those who were in league with the devil. These old hags were said to frequent the Nineveh and Chatfield Hollow areas, brewing their concoctions and casting spells on unsuspecting undertakers passing by the wicked realm where they held consort with the most evil one. A few of these hags were Goody Wee and her daughter Betty Wee who traveled back and forth from Killingworth to North Madison, casting their spells on people for goods and profit.

In a 19th century book called "The History of Middlesex County," neighbors claimed that the Wee witches had the power to curdle their finest cream so it could not be

churned into butter. It is written that no farmer could pass by these two hideous creatures without a cessation of goods from their carts. If they refused, the carts would mysteriously topple and all of their cargo would be lost.

Ghosts also lurk in the woods around the falls. Who they actually are is probably forever lost to antiquity, but they have been blamed for many abominable occurrences that have taken place in the area over the centuries. One such tragedy took place at the end of the 19th century when a woman was approaching the falls in her horse drawn chaise. Something supernatural suddenly spooked the steed and he started bucking before breaking into a sprint at a Godspeed pace down the hill towards the bridge. The woman tried in vain to pull the reigns and halt the horse as he dashed straight through the wooden railing and off the bridge sending the surrey and all into the river below. Needless to say, the woman and the horse did not survive the "ghostly" encounter.

Thomas D'Agostino and his wife Arlene Nicholson are seasoned paranormal investigators, authors, and co-organizers of Paranormal United Research Society. You can find out more about them by visiting www.tomdagostino.com.

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Q & A with The Car Doctor

John Paul is AAA Northeast's Car Doctor. He has over 40 years' experience in the automotive business and is an ASE certified master technician. He will answer reader's questions each week. You can find the Car Doctor podcast at www.johnfpaul.podbean.com or other popular podcast sites. Email your car questions to jpaul@aaanortheast.com. Follow John on Twitter @johnfpaul and friend him on Facebook mrjohnfpaul.



Q. I purchased a 2020 Honda CR-V in February of 2020. I have just over 2,000 miles on the odometer. Should I consider having the oil and oil filter replaced? I would normally be traveling more, but with the pandemic, my trips have all been short.

A. Honda, like many newer vehicles today, uses a computer to remind owners when to perform maintenance. These calculations are based on a variety of items such as time, mileage, and temperature. Even with this computer calculation, Honda and some other vehicle manufacturers recommends changing engine oil at least once per year. If this was my CR-V I would change the oil, it is money well spent.

Q. I'm looking to replace my sedan with a small SUV. My car is a 2009 Nissan Maxima sport model which is a beautiful car and only has 63,000 miles on it. I'm thinking a smaller SUV would be easier to get in and out of as I age. My thoughts are to replace my car now because I don't think vehicle prices are coming down. My real question is: any thoughts on selling my car privately? Or do I just trade it and take the hit. I really don't want strangers coming over. I do think I answered my own question.

A. Certainly, you will get less for your car as a trade-in than selling it privately. There are some things to keep in mind. Your trade-in will be applied to the purchase

price which will reduce sales tax costs. In addition to meeting strangers at your home, you also need to accept that people will make appointments and never show up. Also, in this day and age, there is fraud to worry about. I have heard of people taking counterfeit bank checks, only to have no car and a worthless check.

Q. I look forward to your column every week, I hope it never ends. I need your advice on an upgrade I am contemplating for my 1977 Plymouth Fury. It was born with a 318 engine (I did some performance upgrades, nothing radical). It has a 727 three-speed transmission, an 8.25-inch differential with 3.55 gear ratio. The car also has headers, dual exhaust, and a four-barrel carburetor to complete the package. What I am thinking about is to upgrade to a four-speed automatic transmission. There are two options I am aware of. One is to replace my three-speed 727 with a four-speed 727. The other option is to add a Gear Vendors under/overdrive transmission. I, of course, would have it done by a professional. I would like to reduce the engine speed by about 20 percent on the highway. Whatever I do, my primary goal is to do it right and not cut any corners. What would you advise?

A. My first thought was to go with a Chrysler A-518. It is based on the 727-transmission (perhaps one of the best transmissions made) and is a close match to the original. You will need to cut the driveshaft and modify the transmission mount, linkage and since this transmission is about three inches longer than the 727, using this transmission should drop the engine speed at least six hundred RPM and improve fuel economy. I spoke with AAA Approved Shop owner Junior Damato who has a reputation for building performance cars. His suggestion was the Gear Vendor under/overdrive unit. Junior felt the overall installation is simpler. This will essentially turn your three-speed automatic into a six-speed transmission. He recently put a Gear Vendor unit in a 700-horsepower car and it easily handled the power. Both options are pricey and will require some modifications, but both will also get the results you want.

Q. I have a seven-year-old Subaru Outback. It has one AM and two FM settings on the radio. One day I pushed the AM button like I do every Saturday and I did not get any AM stations, including the one that I listen to you

on in the morning. Because of this I haven't been able to listen to your radio program for at least a year. The FM stations are perfect and working properly, what is wrong and how can I rectify it?

A. If the radio is staticky then the problem is with the antenna or antenna booster. If there is no sound at all then the radio has failed internally. If this is the case, then you can either take the radio out and have it repaired or replace it with a new radio that has features such as Bluetooth, Android Auto or Apple CarPlay. By the way, my radio program moved to Northshore 104.9 FM about a year ago.

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The 15 nursing assistant students, seniors in the Health Services program at BVT, who assisted at the vaccination clinic: Emery Amtmann, Northbridge; Melanie Bisbee, Northbridge; Jessica Brown, Douglas; Isabella Caccavelli, Uxbridge; *Owen Cunningham, Sutton; Abby Kelly, Hopedale; Camryn Krusz, Bellingham; Victoria Lemieux, Blackstone; Kaitlyn Manzi, Milford; Kristin Ouellette, Uxbridge; Hannah Parath, Millbury; Khushi Patel, Uxbridge; Nicole Rannikko, Millbury; Lauren Testa, Mendon; and Abigail Weagle, Millbury stand with their Health Services Instructors Amy Ferrandino-Bedard, Georgette LeMay, and Justine Naper. *Student not photographed

BVT's Certified Nursing Assistants help at Uxbridge Vaccine Clinic

UPTON – Translating classroom knowledge into real-world experiences is an essential step for high school students. For 15 seniors in the Health Services program at Blackstone Valley Tech, an opportunity to assist at a regional collaborative vaccination clinic held at the former McCloskey Middle School, 62 Capron Street Uxbridge, on March 31, fulfilled a need beyond a valuable life experience.

“Our nursing assistant students are eager to assist their community in the fight against COVID-19,” said Justine Naper, MSN, RN, Health Services Instructor, and Team Leader at BVT. “With most of our seniors already vaccinated, we were interested in working at a clinic. When I heard about the vaccination clinics starting in Uxbridge, I reached out to the clinic coordinator, expressing our interest and offering assistance.”

“The vaccine rollout is still relatively new, and the undertaking is enormous. Being a part of a project of this magnitude has required a lot of planning,” said Shane Keville-Wagner, the Clinic Coordinator of the Uxbridge site. “We have been coordinating what everybody can bring to the table. Having BVT Health Services staff and their group of certified nursing assistants volunteer to help is fantastic. It is exciting to collaborate with our regional vocational technical high school and others to increase community involvement and volunteerism.”

BVT Health Services Instructor Amy Ferrandino-Bedard worked closely with this group of seniors to prepare for this clinic, reviewing coursework connected to their curriculum. She said, “They learned how to store, prepare, and draw up the vaccine into syringes, reviewing various vaccination administration techniques. Reviewed the screening questions required, the monitoring period, and why it is needed. It was truly a culmination of all they have learned.”

“It was a wonderful opportunity to attend the clinic and observe Melissa Blodgett, Captain/Paramedic of the Uxbridge Fire Department skillfully demonstrate various techniques,” said Jessica Brown of Douglas, a senior in Health Services at BVT. “I

had previously watched instructional videos about how the Pfizer vaccine is mixed before being administered, but seeing Captain Blodgett, a BVT alum, mix the two parts of the vaccine right in front of me was a fascinating and compelling experience. My vocational-technical education is paving the way for me to help others and give back to the community too.”

“This clinic is a fine example of how our vocational-technical students use their career training to help their community,” said Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick. “While the pandemic has presented many unique challenges, we are proud of our students and staff who are embracing new learning opportunities to help our neighboring towns.”



Health Services seniors Jessica Brown of Douglas, Hannah Parath of Millbury, and Kaitlyn Manzi of Milford observe Melissa Blodgett, Captain/Paramedic-Uxbridge Fire Department, draw the vaccine up into a syringe.

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Uxbridge Senior Center news

UXBRIDGE - The Uxbridge Senior Center, 36 South Main St., has listed its calendar for May. **Director's message**

The month of May represents "Older Americans Month" (aka: OAM). The theme for this year's event is "Communities of Strength."

Older adults have built resilience and strength over their lives through successes, failures, joys, and difficulties. Their stories and contributions help to support and inspire others. This OAM, we will celebrate the strength of older adults and the Aging Network, with special emphasis on the power of connection and engagement in building strong communities.

There are many things we all can do to nurture ourselves, reinforce our strength, and continue to thrive. Connecting with others is one of the most important—it plays a vital role in our health and well-being, and in that of our communities. From finding joy in small things and sharing our stories, to looking at the big picture and giving to others, join us in promoting the ways we are connected and strong.

Here, at the Uxbridge Senior Center, we try to focus our activities and events on improving our seniors lives. Please consider joining in on a virtual exercise class, or join in on our walking club, come for a nutritious curbside lunch pick-up, or socialize with your peers at our outdoor craft activity program, or participate in our Pen Pal program. The Center provides our seniors the opportunity to make a difference in our community by sharing their talents, wisdom and time. Check our monthly Activity Calendar and join in to make our Center stronger through your experience, knowledge, and willingness to share with others. We are blessed to have your presence, your love, and your unmatched perspective. You deserve and we owe you nothing less.

The Spring Town Meeting is scheduled for Saturday, May 15, at 2 p.m. at McCloskey School located at 62 Capron Street. Please plan on attending to participate in this important civic event.

Our Walking Club is back. Sally resumed the Walking Club on Wednesday, May 5, and every Wednesday morning at 10 a.m. Sally will also be holding additional outdoor activities including the Knitting Group on Thursdays and a new program with BINGO on Friday, May 14. Masks and social distancing will be required. Check out the Activities Calendar for more info. Please call the senior center to RSVP. *Lisa Bernard, Director*

Virtual programs will be aired on local cable channel 192 Tuesday - Thursdays, 9:30 am and 5:30 pm also 10:00 am and 6:00 pm (times may vary). You can also check out our Facebook page and YouTube channel.

MCOA Walk Massachusetts Challenge - Lace up your sneakers - Walk the Mass Challenge is Back. Program runs from May 1 - Sept. 30. This year

features more prizes and will be incorporated with Sally's Walking Club Every Wednesday at 10 am. Meeting at the Blackstone Valley Greenway on Adams St., South Uxbridge. 10 lucky people will win a \$50 Visa gift card, 25 people a \$25 Amazon gift card, and 50 people a \$10 Dunkin' gift card. The first 500 people who participate will receive a handy reflective wrist band and sports pack, perfect for carrying your water bottle, keys and phone. To sign up, go to www.mcoaonline.com/walkma or call 508-278-8622.

Friday, May 14, 1:00 pm - outdoor bingo. This will be held in our parking lot (weather permitting) and prizes will be awarded. Must call 508-278-8622 to sign up as space is limited. Social distancing & masks are required.

Saturday, May 15, 2:00 pm - Uxbridge Spring Annual Town meeting will be at the McCloskey School.

Friday, May 21, 12:00 pm - baked fish curbside pickup sponsored by ERA Key Realty Charitable Trust Fund. RSVP is required. Please Call 508-278-

8622 to reserve your meal.

Friday, May 28 and Monday, May 31, the Senior Center will be closed in observance of Memorial Day. We will re-open on Tuesday, June 1.

Uxbridge Senior Center On The Move - Videos will be posted every Monday at 10:00 am. Get ready to join Sally and Gail on virtual trips in and around Uxbridge.

Hannaford grocery shopping every Tuesday. Pick up begins at 8:30 am. Please sign up in advance by calling us at 508-278-8622 to reserve your seat on the van. Masks are required and seating is limited.

Every Tuesday - Virtual Chair exercises with Sally posted on the Uxbridge Senior Center Facebook page and YouTube after 2:30 pm.

1st and 3rd Wednesdays - May 19, 10:00 am - bank and pharmacy rides. Please call at least 24 hours in advance if you need a ride. Masks must be worn as well.

2nd and 4th Wednesday, May 26, 9:30 am - shopping trip to Walmart. There will only be 4 people allowed on the van per visit. Call ahead to sign up.

Masks must be worn.

2nd and 4th Thursdays May 27, 9:30 am, Shaws/Ocean State shopping rides. Please call at least 24 hours in advance if you need a ride. Masks must be worn and limited to 4 people on the van.

Welcome back knitters. Knitters can meet every Thursday, 1:30 pm in the senior center parking lot. Masks and social distancing required (weather permitting). Please bring your own chair and water bottle. You must RSVP 508-278-8622.

Every Thursday - virtual crafts with Sally posted on the Uxbridge Senior Center Facebook page and YouTube after 2:30 pm.

Every 1st and 3rd Friday, 1:00 pm - Live Facebook Pic-

tonary with Sally & Gail! Tune in to the Uxbridge Senior Center Facebook page. Prize given to first place participant.

Medical Transportation is accepting appointments. Call 508-278-8622 to schedule your rides.

The Uxbridge Senior Center Donation Funds are used to pay for services, programs, and activities for Uxbridge older adults and are not considered part of the Town's operating budget for the Center. Anyone wishing to donate may do so by making checks payable to the "Uxbridge Senior Center." Donations may also be made in honor of, in memory of, or in appreciation of. Contributions are greatly appreciated. Our seniors thank you.



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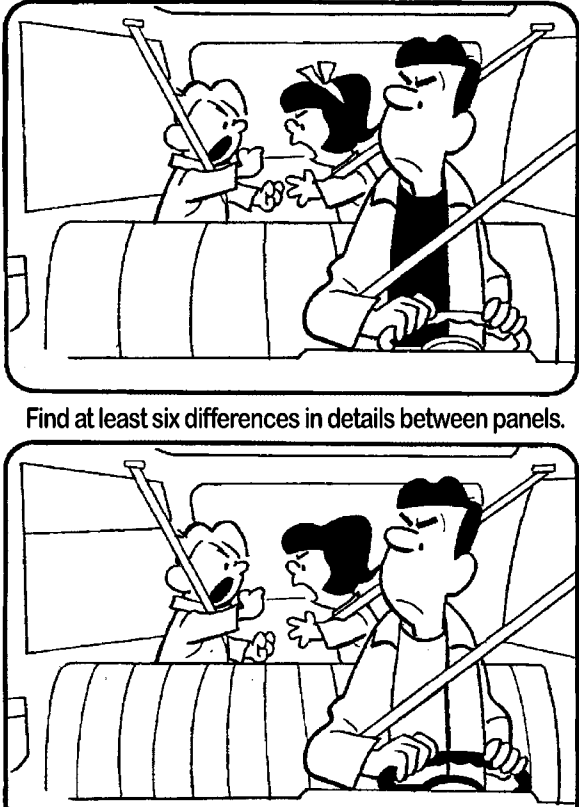


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BVT second trimester Commendation List, recognizing academic achievements

UPTON – Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick has released the following Commendation List for the second trimester of the 2020–2021 academic school year at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School.

To be named to the Commendation List, students must meet rigorous standards that include maintaining a grade point average of 88 percent or above in each technical, related, and academic course for the trimester. Students are listed by grade level, hometown, and alphabetically by

their last name. To view the entire Commendation List for the second trimester, please visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/2tcommendationlist.

SENIORS (Class of 2021)
Douglas - Giannah Downen, Health Services; Kayla Drew, Culinary Arts; Ryleigh Flansburg, Dental Assisting; Krista Helstrom, Multimedia Communications; Madison Mathieu, Electrical; and Luke Morrison, Electronics & Engineering Technology.

Northbridge - Kevin Downing, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Meghan Griggs, Engineering & Robotics; Grant

Houatchanthara, Information Technology; Victoria Lopez, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration; Kaitlyn McPherson, Cosmetology; Donna Ross, Health Services; Kevin Sawyer, Automotive Collision Repair & Refinishing; Matthew Trenholm, Engineering & Robotics; Evelyn Williams, Painting & Design Technology.

Uxbridge - Nicholas Boisvert, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Thomas Breaux, Information Technology; Jacob Constable, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Molly Curley, Health Services;

Madison Gannon, Engineering & Robotics; Casey Goyette, Engineering & Robotics; Khushi Patel, Health Services; and Caroline Sanford, Engineering & Robotics.

JUNIORS (Class of 2022)
Douglas Sophia Aquilino, Health Services; Zoey Beahn, Construction Technology; Joshua Chrul, Automotive Collision Repair & Refinishing; Gabrielle Gallant, Construction Technology; Alexis Levesque, Dental Assisting; Joshua McCullen, Electrical; Sophia Payson, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Lindsey Provost, Health Services; Alyssa Schilling, Cosmetology; Tatiana Tyra, Construction Technology; and Bryan Wheeler, Engineering & Robotics.

Northbridge - Katelyn Barrows, Culinary Arts; Kai DePaula, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Kaia Dziekiewicz, Dental Assisting; Carmen Gray, Engineering & Robotics; Cullen Jacene, Engineering & Robotics; Ansha Khan, Culinary Arts; Olivia Lange, Dental Assisting; Brendan McIntyre, Construction Technology; Nicolas Petone, Drafting & Design Technology; and Bianca Silveira, Painting & Design Technology.

Uxbridge - Amber Ells, Painting & Design Technology; Nolan Holt, Culinary Arts; Riley Holt, Engineering & Robotics; Abigail Lane, Engineering &

Robotics; Aisha Lutwama, Culinary Arts; Robert Mellen, Engineering & Robotics; Abril Sanchez, Multimedia Communications; Ines Taipina, Business & Entrepreneurship; Emily Warner, Culinary Arts; and Lia Zajas, Multimedia Communications.

SOPHOMORES (Class of 2023)
Douglas - Katelin Carlson, Health Services; Brooke Lukasevich, Health Services; Murphy Potter, Painting & Design Technology; Brett Staples, Electronics & Engineering Technology; and Julia White, Cosmetology.

Northbridge - Vanessa Calles, Drafting & Design Technology; Riley Driver, Electrical; Sam Grilli, Drafting & Design Technology; and Emily Wildfeuer, Drafting & Design Technology. Uxbridge - Isabel Cahill, Multimedia Communications; Maxwell Guyton, Engineering & Robotics; Autumn Herrick, Electrical; Jack Moscatelli, Cosmetology; and Jayda Paxton, Painting & Design Technology.

FRESHMEN (Class of 2024)
Douglas - Laney Beahn, Engineering & Robotics; Cameron Burdick, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration; Mary Chrul, Health Services; Jack Dooner, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Matthew Phelps, Plumbing; Kendra Rowe, Cosmetology; Sorchia Twohig-Mann, Health Services; Maia Tyra, Electronics & Engineering Technolo-

gy; Chloe Vescio, Engineering & Robotics; and Logan Visser, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration.

Northbridge - Riley Austin, Painting & Design Technology; Giovanni Biagioni, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Hailley Feehan, Painting & Design Technology; Logan Feehan, Painting & Design Technology; Landry Fitzgerald, Plumbing; Yaliz Jimenez, Health Services; Izamar Laboy Villegas, Information Technology; Trysta Lamarche, Dental Assisting; Emily Legge, Health Services; Kayla Leppamaki, Engineering & Robotics; Lily Marshall, Dental Assisting; Ella Rogozenski, Engineering & Robotics; Bridget Roy, Culinary Arts; Mikaela Sadik, Multimedia Communications; Sophia Schuster, Health Services; Adriana Tillison, Engineering & Robotics; and Emma Vaughan, Culinary Arts.

Uxbridge - Yara Alomar, Health Services; Noah Cahill, Engineering & Robotics; Caitlyn DeLuca, Cosmetology; Avery Herrick, Multimedia Communications; Makaylah Holzman, Engineering & Robotics; Trevor Horgan, Electronics & Engineering Technology; Sean Knox, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Jillian Luton, Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning & Refrigeration; Grace Mathieu, Engineering & Robotics; Olivia Stefanick, Electrical; and Joshua Thompson, Multimedia Communications.

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Mark Marzeotti

Not only does the house you're selling have a fresh coat of paint you changed out the light fixtures in the bathroom and upgraded the stove. But is it enough to impress the home appraiser who's come to assess your house's value? There are quite a few factors that go into a home appraisal.

What does a home appraiser look for?

A home appraiser's role is to determine a home's value by investigating the property's location, square footage, condition, number of rooms and any renovations or additions. They'll also look at recent sales of similar homes in the neighborhood.

So, what are some of the key external factors they'll consider? Like many parts of a home appraisal, much of this is beyond your control:

- The location. Everything from the quality of the school district to the proximity to employment opportunities gets factored in here. An appraiser will also consider things like entertainment (is there a movie theater or restaurants nearby?) as well as likelihood of any impact from a natural disaster (say, if it's in a flood zone).

- Land use. If you look at the neighborhood, is it suburban, rural or urban? What percentage of the land is used for homes vs. businesses? Are there a lot of wide open spaces (parks, etc.) or is it very dense?

- The size of your lot. Do you have space to expand? A backyard? Room to grow? This can affect your appraisal amount.

- Access to public utilities. Everything from water to sewage—a home appraiser will want to know if hookups are available.

- Parking. This applies to the quality of the driveway (is it paved? dirt? something else?) to the size of your garage (or lack of one, if that's the case).

- The year your property was built. The age of your property is something a home appraiser considers, but his or her assessment can be affected by maintenance.

- The roof and foundation type. Newer homes typically utilize newer materials. Same applies to your home's siding, windows and doors (anything that's more energy-efficient will give your home an automatic uptick in value).

What hurts a home appraisal? 6 common factors to consider

- Square footage. Also, the number of bedrooms and bathrooms.
- Basement and attic features. Do you have a finished basement and attic? Can it be turned into a playroom? Or is it more of a crawl space?
- Recent renovations. They'll particularly look at kitchens and bathrooms.

While the buyer's bank typically chooses the home appraiser, it's worth noting that the person they select is someone who has to be certified in your state, which means they have to adhere to the Appraisal Foundation's Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice. Your REALTOR can guide you on this. A good way to think of a home appraiser is to consider them a neutral party. Their number one goal is to confirm that the price of the home is fair to everyone—the buyer, the seller and the bank.

The appraisal happens after an offer is made, but before that deal has closed. And if the home appraisal comes in and the price is off the mark? If the appraised value is higher than the offer, then there's typically no issue in terms of the loan, but if the appraisal is lower, this can be tricky since the lender will only loan money up to the appraised amount. The impact for the seller is that the buyer could pull their offer. This is where your REALTOR can help you with the additional negotiation to keep this deal on track.

Home appraisal factors you can control

There are quite a few factors that you have the power to change ahead of an assessment by a home appraiser. Yes, things like your home's location or recent sales in the neighborhood play a part, but you can control any renovations you've done or will do to your home. For instance, if you've built an addition like another bedroom or turned a dingy basement into a gorgeous rec room, this should raise your home's value.

Make sure you hold onto any records of renovations you've done and keep in mind that what you paid for these renovations

may not boost your home's value dollar for dollar.

Other factors you can control:

1. A leaky roof. One of the worst things you can do is delay on necessary maintenance. It's that leaky roof or the deck repair you've neglected for years—over time they'll become much more costly or extensive problems.

2. Dated finishes or appliances. Things like worn-out countertops or bathroom tiles that need to be re-grouted all have an impact on the final assessment of your home before a sale. So take the time, and put in the money to fix these things before putting your home on the market.

Just be mindful that you don't over-improve (go too fancy or too niche with your design choices on hardware or bathtubs, etc.) since you want a look that will appeal to the maximum number of buyers. (One man's walk-in wine cellar is another man's giant headache.)

3. Obvious repairs.

Let's say you had someone in to assess that roof repair and you're on it—your REALTOR will make it clear to your home appraiser that this will be done by the time of the sale, so that they don't take that amount off the final value of the home.

Make sure to also honestly consider any renovations or changes you've made for the worse—particularly any amenities you've removed. For instance, if you've torn down a wall to prioritize an open floor plan, but eliminated a bedroom in the process or removed a jacuzzi from the backyard, this could detract from your home's appraised value. Think long and hard before you remove any features from your home.

OK, so how about the things you can't control? Most of this comes down to your home's location:

1. The value of nearby listings. Like we said, it's not just the internal factors of your home that make a difference—a lot is tied to how your home measures up against other listings in your area. (In the real estate world, this is

referred to an assessment of comparable sales.)

In this sense, an appraiser will consider your house's square footage and number of stories in comparison to similar models. This applies to amenities, too. Let's say your home has a two-car garage. What are other homes with these types of features selling for nearby?

A good appraiser will consider multiple properties and be wary of outliers. (Say, that bargain listing right across the street from the highway off-ramp.)

2. Market conditions.

This is about supply and demand. If your home is in an area with decreasing prices or vacancies and foreclosures, this could negatively affect your home's value. But if sales are on the rise and the future trajectory of your area looks positive (growing employment ops, for example), this all affects the price.

That said, if you're fielding multiple offers on your property, your REALTOR will let your appraiser know. (That could be a testament to not just value and future value, but also improving market conditions.)

3. A busy street.

If your home is off a freeway or near a bustling shopping district with loads of outdoor restaurants, that can lower the final appraisal. Bottom Line: Consult your agent—and a home inspector—ahead of time. A REALTOR is trained to foresee potential problem areas. Have a conversation with them about any anxieties you have, but also do a walk-through to talk through the obvious changes you can make ahead of a home appraisal—all to ensure you get the top dollar you deserve.

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