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CROSTOWN ADS AND BUSINESS NEWS

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## The scents and tastes of fall in Grafton

By Christine Galeone

The season of golden foliage, tranquil pumpkin patches and overstuffed backpacks has arrived. And its soothing, spicy aromas and tastes can be found throughout New England.

In Grafton, you can already find plenty of those cozy scents and tastes. And many businesses in town have also experienced a taste of excitement recently.

In North Grafton, **Houlden Farm** – which was recently nominated for the “Telegram & Gazette 2021 Best of Central Mass” award for Best Produce – has been helping people enjoy the season. In addition to mums, cider and an abundance of seasonal produce, the family-owned farm already has a wide array of pumpkins. And in

addition to having a farm-to-table food truck, petting zoo and its Sunflower Shanty beer garden, it’s now booking private events.

Other Grafton businesses were also nominated for the “Telegram & Gazette 2021 Best of Central Mass” awards. The restaurants include **Bushel N’ Peck** for Best Sandwich Shop and **Cancun’s** for Best Mexican Restaurant and Margarita. The shops include **Off the Common Antiques** for Best Antique Shop, **Koopman Lumber and Hardware** for Best Local Hardware Store and **Quite Fetching Barkery and Pet Boutique** for Best Pet Services. **Highfields Golf & Country Club** was nominated for Best Golf Course, and **Premier Sport Tae-**

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Pumpkins at Houlden Farm in North Grafton. (Courtesy of Houlden Farm Facebook Page)

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## Mickey’s: a nifty car wash and a haunted adventure

By Rod Lee

Open since April, the new Mickey’s Car Wash & Detail Shop in the Pleasant Valley Crossing plaza in Sutton is everything Tammy A. Bourakis and her son Kyle Nigosian thought it could be before construction on the building began last July.

Customers of Mickey’s are just as pleased with the result.

“Someone told me yesterday they wouldn’t go anywhere else,” Kyle Nigosian said on the morning of September 13, as Customer Service/Car Wash Attendant Vahé Gurdjian prepped automobiles for their “glide” through the state-of-the-art 110’ tunnel.

Mickey’s features four different car-wash options:

- The Bubble Bath for \$10, which consists of a foam bath, soft-touch wash and turbo dry.
- The Wheel Wash for \$15: The Bubble Bath plus Wheel Brite, Polish and Poly Sealant.

-The Deep Clean for \$19: The Wheel Wash plus Under Carriage Wash, Triple Foam and Rust Inhibitor.

-Mickey’s Very Best for \$24: The Deep Clean plus Polish (Synthetic Not Wax) and Ceramic Coat.

Add-ons are five dollars each.

The Wheel Wash, The Deep Clean and Mickey’s Very Best are available as “monthly unlimited wash” packages at \$35, \$45 and \$55, respectively.

Mickey’s is a good example of how far the car-wash business has come in recent years, technologically. It provides the southern Blackstone Valley with a long-needed easily-accessed car wash and detail shop at 16 Galaxy Pass, at the intersection of Rt. 146 and Boston Road. Customers can pay by credit card at

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Tammy Bourakis and her son Kyle Nigosian are proud partners in the new Mickey’s Car Wash & Detail Shop.



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## GRAFTON Continued

**kwondo** was nominated for Best Martial Arts Studio. **Dance It Up and Murphy Academy of Irish Dance** were both nominated for Best Dance Studio. And **Fitzy's Car and Pet Wash** was nominated for Best Car Wash, while **Roy's Auto Glass** was nominated for Best Glass and Mirror Company.

**Touchstone Community School** also has some exciting news. The school recently expanded its Early Childhood education program. It now

accepts children as young as two years and nine months old for its new classes, which utilize the emergent curriculum teaching philosophy that builds on children's interests.

Over in South Grafton, **Highfields Golf & Country Club** has turned its attention to the tastes of autumn. The country club's **John Henry Tavern**, which has a patio where people can view fall foliage, recently released its new fall menu. In addition to other hearty fall favorites such as chicken parmesan, chili and clam chowder, it

now has a "Build Your Own Mac & Cheese" option for customers who would like to add various sauces, vegetables and meats/seafood to the classic seasonal meal.

Elsewhere in South Grafton, **Crossroads Nutrition** has also welcomed fall. The shop, which sells protein shakes, refresher teas and protein snacks, recently infused its offerings with the flavors of the season. On various days this month, its specials have included chocolate chip pumpkin shakes, caramel pumpkin cheese-

cake shakes, pumpkin Oreo cheesecake shakes and fall refreshers.

Autumn flavors, scents and sights will be at the **Congregational Church of Grafton's 42nd Annual Harvest Fair and Apple Pie Social**. The free event will be held on Sunday Sept. 26 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on the church grounds, located at 30 Grafton Common. The event will include live music, a yard sale and raffles. And the apple pies, apple crisp, chili and corn chowder that the fair is known for

will be available to buy. The funds raised through the sales will help support the charities and missions that the church supports.

Another fun fall fundraiser supports the missions and ministries of **Saint James Parish**. The church, located in South Grafton, will hold its second annual Harvest Calendar Raffle. The raffle will offer prizes every day in November. The prizes include cash, restaurant and store gift cards, theme gift baskets and more. Raffle

tickets are being sold to everyone at the church's website, [stjamesgraffton.com](http://stjamesgraffton.com), under Online Giving - Calendar Raffle Fundraiser. Tickets are \$10 each or six tickets for \$50 and are being sold through Oct. 25.

There are so many ways to experience the coziness and simple joys of autumn. Grafton businesses and organizations make it even easier.

Contact Christine with your business news items at [cmgaleone15@gmail.com](mailto:cmgaleone15@gmail.com).

## QCC offers free healthcare training

WORCESTER —Quinsigamond Community College's Center for Workforce Development and Continuing Education (CWDCE) is once again offering a free Medical Administrative Assistant program and a Nurse Assistant/ Home Health Aide program, in late fall 2021 and early spring 2022. Each program takes approximately two months to complete.

"These free workforce training programs are one of the ways QCC is making an investment in the community our students live and work," said Kathleen Manning, dean of The Center for Workforce Development and Continuing Education.

The free Medical Administrative Assistants program prepares students to work as Medical Administrative Assistants in healthcare facilities such as hospitals and health systems, physicians' offices, clinics, long-term care facilities, surgery centers, ambulatory surgery centers, rehabilitation centers, and other types of healthcare areas. After successfully completing this course, students are eligible to sit for the National Health Career Association's Certified Medical Administrative Assistant (CMAA). The program includes free tuition, textbook and Medical Office Simulation software; Microsoft Office training; Contract Tracing and Infection Control training; and the CMAA Exam fee.

The free Nurse Assistant/ Home Health Aide program is a dual certificate that will open many doors for students, whether they choose to work in a healthcare facility or home setting. Students will learn about basic patient care, medical terminology, nutrition, patient care procedures, communication skills, basic anatomy, and safety. Basic nursing skills are taught through classroom lectures, nursing labs and clinical practice in a long-term care facility. The program includes free tuition, textbook, scrubs, and the certification-testing fee.

For more information, or to request an application, email Jo Sundin [jsundin@qcc.mass.edu](mailto:jsundin@qcc.mass.edu) or call 508-751-7921.

For more information about QCC, contact Josh Martin, Director of Institutional Communications at 508.854.7513 or [jmartin@qcc.mass.edu](mailto:jmartin@qcc.mass.edu)

## MICKEY'S Continued

convenient drive-through kiosks.

While the office, detail shop, retail shop and pet wash are not yet open to the general public, the rest of the operation is fully functional and already generating daily traffic.

When it is up and running, the detailing component will feature two detailing bays, one of which can accommodate two cars at the same time.

A recurring monthly membership comes with free use of the vacuums. Yes, Mickey's has vacuums that work, unlike those vacuums at some run-of-the-mill car washes that cost four quarters or more and either don't turn on at all lack suction.

Ms. Bourakis and Kyle Nigosian are understandably proud of the pains they have taken to give patrons of Mickey's a satisfactory experience.

"We have two sets of wheel blasters," Mr. Nigosian said. "We prep the cars

real heavy, every wheel individually with a power washer back and front." The system is kind "to sports cars and vehicles with wide tires," he noted.

"The biggest advantage is this track system," Mr. Gurdjian said, of the "magic belt" that moves vehicles through the wash carefully and efficiently.

As partners, Ms. Bourakis and her son spent considerable time conceptualizing Mickey's and that has carried over to how they will manage the enterprise going forward. An example of this is a first-ever "Mickey's Haunted Car Wash Adventure" that will run for two weeks, starting October 15 through Halloween. "Guests stay in their vehicles the entire time and are guided through a path where they



Vahé Gurdjian preps a vehicle for its ride through Mickey's 110-foot wash tunnel.

will encounter Halloween characters that will try to scare them," the partners said. The event is family-oriented, exciting and suspenseful without "horror or terror" and will feature props, lighting and special effects, "especially in the

tunnel car wash itself." Light sticks, candy, hot chocolate and popcorn will be offered.

Market 32 in the plaza and other retailers are participating in the event.

"We are promoting it on 100.1 FM The Pike, in newspapers, on social media and with flyers," Ms. Bourakis points out.

The cost is \$30 per car "and you get the \$24 car wash with that," Ms. Bourakis said.

"We bought tons of awesome stuff" for the haunted adventure, she said.

As the newest tenant in Galaxy Development's Pleasant Valley Crossing, Mickey's Car Wash & Detail Shop—and the family dog Mickey—have found a home.

Contact Rod Lee at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.



The handsome Mickey's building, encompassing 4500 square feet, features a state-of-the-art car wash, detail shop, retail area, pet wash, and vacuums.

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## Andrew Milne new director of local Chorus

At a recent meeting of the Westborough Community Chorus, Chorus President Lesley Drohan announced the appointment of Andrew Milne as the new music director.

Mr. Milne is a Westborough native and former WCC music scholarship recipient. He graduated from the Hartt School of Music at the University of Hartford, where he earned a Master's degree in Music Education and Choral Directing. He is currently teaching music in the Harvard Public Schools.

He assumed his position with the Chorus immediately and began preparing the group for a holiday show to be performed at the Gibbons

Middle School the first weekend in December. Like all past WCC shows, it will be an engaging performance, including musical favorites, costumed singers and colorful sets.

2021 is the WCC's 50th-anniversary year. The Chorus was founded by Faith Newark and several of her friends as a community chorus welcoming singers who enjoy performing popular music. Over the years the Chorus has grown to eighty members, including singers from not only Westborough but also many surrounding towns. Following Ms. Newark, the Chorus was directed for two decades by Deb Temple and most recently by Kelly Hodge.

Barring any further spread of COVID-19, the Chorus was scheduled to begin its fall rehearsals on September 13 at the Westborough Senior Center with all members masked. Subsequent rehearsals are to be held Monday evenings at 7:30 and some Wednesdays into the fall.

Westborough Community Chorus welcomes all adult community members age eighteen or who are high school graduates to join. No auditions are required, only the ability and desire to sing in a committed, friendly community chorus.

For more information about the WCC, go to [www.westboroughchorus.com](http://www.westboroughchorus.com).

## Douglas Oktoberfest is back

October 2, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Douglas Oktoberfest Committee will once again be closing down Main St. Douglas and hosting one of the largest events in the Blackstone Valley. This year will not only celebrate the return of Oktoberfest, but the 275th birthday of Douglas as well.

The committee will be bringing back favorites such as the Weiner Dog and small dog race, train rides, bouncy rides, car show, and more. The Beer Garden will once again feature ultra-local Purgatory Brewing with limited edition craft beers.

Among the new features for Oktoberfest this year will be the tricycle races held in the front lot of the Webster First Credit Union. The tricycle racers will have to weave their way through tight turns to beat the clock and their friends. An ice cream truck and even an authentic soda jerk stand will ensure another incredible event for all ages.

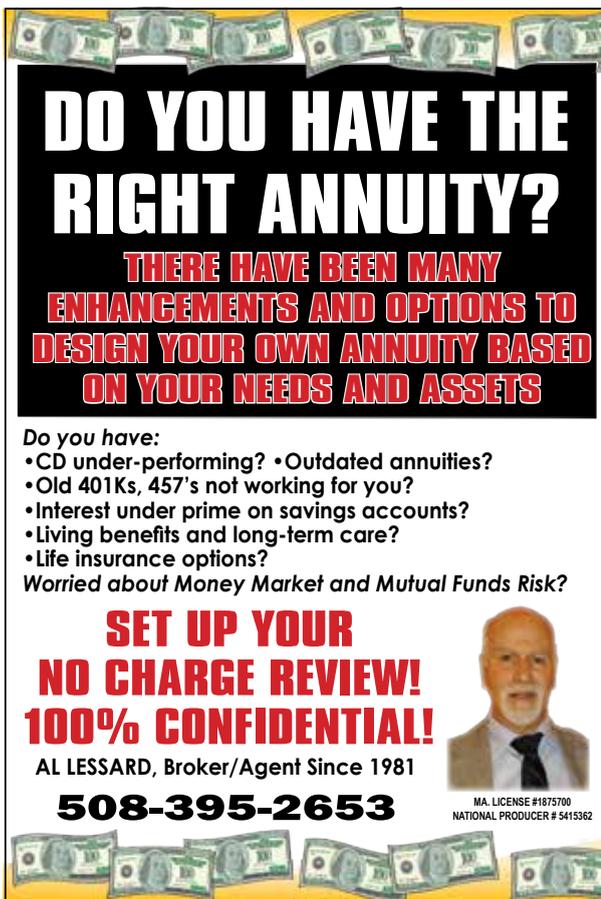
The committee's also excited to bring back the Rib Cook-Off. In collaboration with the Olive Branch Lodge, Douglas Oktoberfest will be hosting a rib cook-off competition with a grand prize of \$500 going to best in show. This is going to be an old school smokefest to see who will have bragging rights for the best ribs in the Valley.

The event is going to wrap up with a celebration of Douglas' 275th birthday, complete with a custom artisan cake from Millbury-based Cake Shop Café. And don't miss a special dance celebration performed by the talented team from Dance Sensations.

Vendors and Rib-Off con-

testants can sign up using the forms on the website: [www.douglasoktoberfest.com](http://www.douglasoktoberfest.com)

Interested volunteers and entertainment can contact them through their Facebook page [www.facebook.com/douglasoktoberfest](http://www.facebook.com/douglasoktoberfest) or by email at [douglas\\_oktoberfest@yahoo.com](mailto:douglas_oktoberfest@yahoo.com).



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## Healthier baking in the Blackstone Valley

### Choices for reducing sugar in a recipe

By Christine Galeone

Fall and winter are ideal seasons for baking – a hobby I've enjoyed since my mom and grandmother shared their love of the art/craft with me before I was able to read or ride a bike. But while the aroma of chocolate chip cookies or brownies on a crisp autumn day is inviting, most of us want to be healthier. And baking and getting healthier don't always mix well together.

But baking treats that are at least a bit healthier is possible. So, for the fall and winter, this column will offer recipes that fall into that category. And the baked goods created from them taste just as good as the ones made

with heaps of sugar, over-processed ingredients and artificial colors.

Apple crisp is probably one of the healthiest desserts you can bake. It's brimming with heart-healthy ingredients, including apples, oats and walnuts. Cinnamon and nutmeg both have antioxidant properties. And apples are believed to also be beneficial for lung health. Additionally, having less added sugar makes this a dessert that can easily double as breakfast.

Although not every type of apple is a good choice for reduced-sugar baking, there are several sweeter varieties that are perfect.

Rachel Houlden, who manages the office at Houlden Farm – which was nominated for the "Telegram & Gazette 2021 Best of Central Mass" award for Best Produce – knows of a couple that people might like to try. Along with other varieties and a wonderful selection of fresh produce, they're available to purchase from the family-owned farm located at 95 Wesson Road in North Grafton.

"It's hard to recommend one apple variety to satisfy the palate of all, however, when making a pie with the hopes to have less added sugar, a Honeycrisp apple would be a great contender," Houlden advised. "It's sweet, yet also tart, and its crisp flesh makes for a delicious dessert with apple slices that haven't complete-

ly cooked down to mush. Another great apple option that my grandmother-in-law, Ruth Houlden, has taught me over the last decade is a Macoun apple. It is quite universal and can be enjoyed alone as a snack, and again like the Honeycrisp, its crisp yet tender flesh does not break down when cooked."

Houlden also offered a tip on how to add a delightful twist to any apple crisp recipe. "When I bake apple crisp, my favorite way is to use an array of apple varieties," she revealed. "I find that each bite is a little different than the last and really adds a lot of depth to this simple fall dessert."

#### Apple Crisp

##### Ingredients:

- 4 Medium to Large Apples
- 3/4 Cup of Rolled Oats
- 1/2 Cup Chopped Walnuts
- 1/4 Cup of Brown Sugar
- 2 Tbsp. Flour



Apple crisp.

- 1 tsp. Cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. Nutmeg
- 1/4 Cup Butter

##### Directions:

- Pre-heat the oven to 350 degrees.
- In a bowl, mix together everything except the apples and the butter.
- Cut the butter into the crisp mixture, so that it's like crumbs.
- Wash, peel, core and slice

the apples, and spread them on the bottom of a 9X9" baking pan/dish.

- Distribute the crisp mixture evenly over the apples, and bake at 350 degrees for 35-40 minutes. Let it cool a little, but serve it warm. Makes about 8 servings.

With apples in season, there's no better time to try baking this crisp. Happy (healthier) baking!

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### Willard House & Clock Museum celebrates fall with a free September Plein Air event



N. GRAFTON - The Willard House grounds provides artists with a beautiful and evolving landscape. September brings remarkable color to the museum grounds and with that, it is hosting another plein air gathering as part of its series. The event is free and open to the public.

Willard House and Clock Museum will open its grounds to plein air (outdoor) painters and landscape artists on Saturday, September 25, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The gathering will be sponsored by a long-established supporter of local artists, the Post Road Art Center of Marlborough.

"More plein air painters are discovering Willard House," says program coordinator Beverly Snow. "Participants has seen the museum's property change from green and lush in the

spring and summer and now golden in autumn."

spring and summer and now golden in autumn."

Randi Isaacson, owner of the Post Road Art Center and named-sponsor for the 2021 series says, "Painting en plein air allows artists to catch the emotion and sensory dimensions of their surroundings at a specific moment in time and Willard House offers much in painting subject matter."

Participants are reminded to bring their own supplies.

Future WHCM plein air gatherings will be held on October 23 and November 13, all from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The museum located at 11 Willard St., N. Grafton, 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@willard-house.org.

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## Blackstone Heritage Corridor seeks nominations for John H. Chafee Heritage awards

WHITINSVILLE - The John H. Chafee Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BHC) seeks nominations for the John H. Chafee Heritage Awards. The Chafee Awards honor individuals or groups who have worked on projects, programs, and organizations that promote cultural heritage, environmental conservation, and/or the quality of life in the Blackstone River Valley. Award winners will be honored early this winter.

BHC established the award to honor the late Senator John H. Chafee and recognizes citizens and organizations whose work in the Blackstone Valley embodies Chafee's vision and ideas. Recipients have included community leaders, preservation heroes, business partners, environmental advocates, and students whose achievements resulted in public benefit.



Senator John H. Chafee

To submit a nomination, send a one-page letter citing their accomplishments. In addition, please indicate if the candidate is a student, for whom there is a separate category. Nominations must be received by October 15 and can be mailed to Chafee Awards, Blackstone Heritage Corridor, 670 Linwood Avenue, Whitinsville, MA, 01588, or emailed to Devon Kurtz at [dkurtz@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org](mailto:dkurtz@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org).

## Samuel Slater EXPERIENCE

### Help us tell the story as a Slater Experience Guide

Slater Experience Guides are volunteer hosts of the Samuel Slater Experience (SSE) who support and enhance visitors' experiences throughout their tour of the museum.

As knowledgeable emissaries, they greet visitors, assist with self-guided tours, supply transitional and anecdotal information for each exhibit, explain the digital technology and techniques used, and answer specific questions about the Samuel Slater story, the founding of Webster, and the history of the Samuel Slater Experience.

#### Requirements

Slater Experience Guides are expected to share an interest and enthusiasm for the history of the American Industrial Revolution and the town of Webster.

They should have good people skills and the ability to actively interact with children, school groups, and adults in public speaking settings.

Volunteer Experience Guides are asked to make a one-year commitment and be available for at least two 3-hour shifts per

month during SSE's hours of operation, including at least two weekend days each quarter.

SSE will provide periodic training sessions covering all aspects of the museum, the technology, and the building. Slater Experience Guides must be able to attend Slater Experience Guide Orientation and Training and are expected to review additional material as periodically provided or approved by SSE in order to stay up to date on any changes, additions or deletions, and to broaden their knowledge of our mission.

#### Benefits

Experience guides will receive a family pass for free entry to the museum during their tenure as volunteers. They will receive a 20% discount in the gift shop, a 20% discount on event rentals, and invitations to special events.

For an application form, contact Reanna Kuzdzal at 508-461-2955 or email [rkuzdzal@samuel Slater Experience.org](mailto:rkuzdzal@samuel Slater Experience.org).

Applicants will be asked to come in for an in-person interview.

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## Unsure about being an Experience Guide? Come to our Info Session to learn more!

**When:**  
Thursday, October 7  
10am-12pm

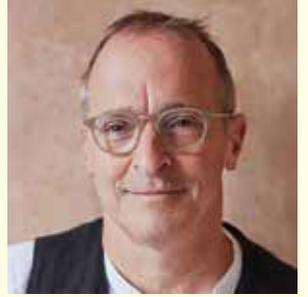
**Where:**  
Samuel Slater Experience  
31 Ray St, Webster

**Additional Questions:**  
[rkuzdzal@samuel Slater Experience.org](mailto:rkuzdzal@samuel Slater Experience.org)  
or call 508-461-2955.



## David Sedaris returns to The Hanover Theatre this fall

WORCESTER - Best-selling author and humorist David Sedaris returns to The Hanover Theatre and Conservatory for the Performing Arts main stage this September 27 at 7:30 p.m. for An Evening with David Sedaris, generously sponsored by FLEXcon. Tickets are on sale now.



**David Sedaris**

Sedaris returns to the road following the release of his most deeply personal and darkly hilarious collection, "Calypso," where Sedaris sets his formidable powers of observation toward middle age and mortality. His powers of observation have never been sharper, and his ability to shock readers into laughter unparalleled. Much of the comedy here is born out of that dizzying moment when your own body betrays you and you realize that the story of your life is made up more past than future. Sedaris's humor is autobiographical and self-deprecating and often concerns his family life, his middle-class upbringing, his Greek heritage, homosexuality, jobs, education, obsessive behaviors and his life in France and England.

Tickets to An Evening with David Sedaris are \$48, \$53 and \$58, depending on seat location. Discounts are available for members and groups of 10 or more. Tickets are available online at [TheHanoverTheatre.org](http://TheHanoverTheatre.org), by phone at 877.571.SHOW (7469) or at The Hanover Theatre box office located at 2 Southbridge Street in downtown Worcester.



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## Upcoming Events

For registration information and a full list of our upcoming events, please visit [www.blackstonevalley.org](http://www.blackstonevalley.org)

### Annual Meeting and Awards Ceremony



**November 17, 2021**  
*Pleasant Valley Country Club*  
**from 8 AM to 10 AM**  
*\*registration opens on October 1st*

**Keynote Speaker:**  
**Governor Charlie Baker**

**Seeking nominations for our awards!**

Please visit [www.blackstonevalley.org](http://www.blackstonevalley.org) for award information. Email [loneil@blackstonevalley.org](mailto:loneil@blackstonevalley.org) to submit your nominations!

Sponsorship opportunities available. Please contact Liz O'Neil at [loneil@blackstonevalley.org](mailto:loneil@blackstonevalley.org)

### BUSINESS AFTER HOURS WITH



Join the BVCC for a few strings of cosmic bowling!

Win a raffle for tickets to a Sparetime Recreation comedy show!

Light fare and cash bar!

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**THURSDAY, OCT 14TH**  
4:30 PM - 6:30 PM

Members: 10\$  
Non-Member: 20\$

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Sparetime Recreation

Focus on non profits

# Whitinsville Retirement Society strives to maintain a warm family environment throughout pandemic

By Christine Galeone

Since 1975, the Whitinsville Retirement Society, a non-profit, has offered quality affordable housing to people 62 and older. But it provides much more than housing. Jeannine Crawford, the non-profit's director, reflected, "While we are considered independent living with no medical staff, it's really that together we're a warm family home rather than an institution."

Maintaining that warm environment during the COVID-19 pandemic hasn't been easy. But the WRS has been striving to do just that.

At the Whitinsville Retirement Home, residents live in private rooms in the 1840 John C. Whitin Mansion. Although it's not an assisted living facility, the people who live there are provided with communal meals, laundry services and housekeeping services. They can also participate in activities such as daily exercise, bingo, group walks, gardening, quilting and working puzzles.

"This September, we had our annual outdoor pic-

nic for residents, family and guests complete with great food, live music, fun and games," Scott M. Schneider, a member of the WRS Board, said. "Later this year, we'll have special activities for Thanksgiving and Christmas."

To rise above the challenges of the pandemic, Crawford said that the WRS focused on three priorities - adhering to CDC, State and WRS Board regulations/recommendations, ensuring staff members comply with those regulations while maintaining normalcy, and giving consideration to the emotional and mental well-being of staff members and residents.

"Their devotion and commitment to our residents, along with our residents themselves, are what continue to make this low-income elderly housing model such a success," Crawford said about the staff's dedication. She later added, "Every effort was made to maintain the status quo during the pandemic. Having companionship and friendships, going through the pandemic,

kept loneliness and isolation to a minimum."

Crawford said that she finds joy in both the simple ways the WRS helps residents and in the complex ways. "Knowing we make a difference in people's lives every day is extremely gratifying," she said, adding that listening to people and knowing that she might be in their shoes someday is vital. She later noted, "The joy comes from knowing we took the time and made an effort to know our residents and care about them!"

And the community can also make a difference in the residents' lives. Crawford said that in addition to making donations, people can help by spreading the word about the Whitinsville Retirement Home, by working there, and by volunteering their skills.

"Music is very much appreciated; we try to have a musical act twice a month so volunteering a performance could be another way," Crawford said.

"To participate in the simple pleasures of being togeth-



er, sharing food, listening, laughing, and keeping this beautiful home for all who come to live here is such an honor and a privilege," Crawford shared. "It's a gem and an example of how to maintain as much independence as possible as we age. You have to see it to believe it."

More information about the nonprofit is available on the Whitinsville Retirement Society website, whitinsvilleretirement.com.

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# Al's Rubbish delivers customer service first

By Janet Stoica

Sutton-based Al's Rubbish & Container company practices proactive customer service year-round, a goal that became even more important during the last 18 months with

the coronavirus pandemic.

The folks at Al's Rubbish never want customers calling to ask why their trash was not picked up, their broken barrel not replaced, or waiting to re-

spond to a request.

To prove their commitment to customer service, employees answer the phones from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. If owner Al Gerard doesn't answer your call, then his office manager, Marnie Newton, is right on the line. Their trucks are GPS-and-camera-equipped so they can see what their drivers see back at the office and are proud of their drivers and how customer-responsive they are. Most especially during the COVID situation, their drivers were aware of all health considerations. Loyalty and service seem to be very strong attributes of Mr. Gerard, his son Colby and his entire staff.



Al Gerard with son Colby and office manager, Marnie Newton.



Some of Al's truck fleet

Al Gerard began his career as an employee of Friendly's Ice Cream Corp. working his way up to District Manager. He and his wife Janet also enjoy antiquing in their spare time. An interest in antiques actually led to an interest in trucking. He began his rubbish pickup business 30 years ago in Oxford and after continued growth moved to larger facilities in Sutton where his business is now located. Soon Al's son Colby will take over the business having learned the industry practices from his dad as well as from his time spent in business classes while in college. Their office manager Marnie Newton has been with the company for over 10 years and has watched the business grow to a 15-truck fleet with more than 300 dumpsters available for customer needs. "Last year was a very busy year for us," said Marnie, "during COVID we were deemed an essential service and, as many people worked from home, they also began many home improvement projects requiring dumpster usage. It's been very active for our waste removal container business and we couldn't be prouder of our truck crews for doing their jobs very well and doing a great service for all of our customers."

Although Al's Rubbish does offer weekly rubbish pickup for many surrounding towns

from Auburn to Westborough, the largest sector of their organization has been dumpster delivery and pickup. They will deliver their waste containers to just about all of Worcester County. The company also does estate clean outs, general home clean outs, and bulk waste disposal. "Whatever you want cleaned out and cleared out, we'll do it," says Ms. Newton. "From small jobs to large, we're here for you. We can take your old furniture either from inside your home or from your front curb. Just call us for a quote on what you need disposed from TV sets and computer monitors to mattresses and tires."

That's not to say that Al's drivers haven't experienced a stowaway or two or three in their travels. On one occasion a truck driver removed and hauled a dumpster to its new location only to find a family of three raccoons in residence. In accordance with Mass. Wildlife Law, however, he was obligated to return the dumpster to its previous location to return the critters to their original home environment. Needless to say, the furry wildlife were very happy to be back home.

On another occasion the

town of Millville needed a new trash hauler for their residents due to budget cuts. Al's Rubbish to the rescue. Not only did Al's take over the rubbish pickup for most town residents within three weeks but they also were able to establish an orderly accounting for all residents.

Al Gerard's company is also heavily involved with the local Sutton Chain of Lights festivities during the December holiday season. There are five trolleys transporting happy revelers throughout town on the first Saturday of December, viewing arts, crafts, and other community-oriented activities. Al customarily opens his truck garage up for the trolleys and also participates in many giveaways.

"Customer service is what we do," said owner Mr. Gerard. "We provide customer satisfaction and that's a job well done. We'll answer our customer's phone calls even at night, who else does that? Good or bad, we are here. Our customers are our business."

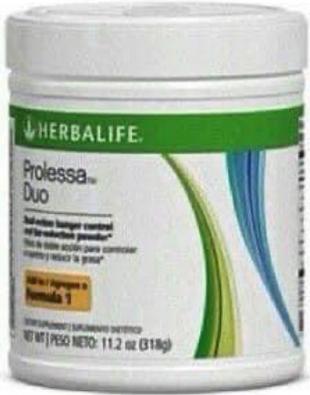
Al's Rubbish & Container Service, 77 Providence Road, Sutton. (508) 865-4193. www.alsrubbish.com

Contact Janet: [jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com](mailto:jstoica@TheYankeeXpress.com)



Stowaway raccoons that were returned to their habitat

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## Twice Blessed Thrift Shop

HOPEDALE - Sacred Heart Church "Twice Blessed" Thrift Shop October specials include fall items, clothing and shoes, fall decor and Halloween costumes. Store hours: Saturday, October 2, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. (first Saturday each month, except when there is a holiday). Our thoughts and prayers are with all who are directly impacted by COVID-19. Catholic Community of Sacred Heart Church, 187 Hopedale Street, Hopedale, Phone (508) 473-1900 or visit our website; [sacredheartopedale.org](http://sacredheartopedale.org). Like us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/twiceblessedthriftshophopedale/](http://www.facebook.com/twiceblessedthriftshophopedale/)

## Scholarship available

The Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild is pleased to announce that they will again be awarding a \$1,000 scholarship to a graduating senior who is pursuing a course of study in the field of visual arts, design, or textiles. Applications for the scholarship are available in the Guidance Office of their high school or available to download at [www.thimblepleasures.org](http://www.thimblepleasures.org). The deadline to apply is May 1, 2022.

## Sutton Lions continue their work

The Sutton Lions Club Foundation held its annual Sutton Golf Classic on August 2 at Pleasant Valley Country Club in Sutton.

The event was a great success. The generosity of our sponsors and golfers allows the Sutton Lions Foundation to continue to give back to the needs of our community.

Thanks to our signature Sapphire sponsor, Webster First Credit Union, as well as our major Platinum sponsors: Linder's Inc, UniBank, Bank Hometown, Esler Corporation, Skip's Outdoor Accents, Pioneer Appraisals, Lundgren Honda and Market 32 contributed, hosting hole in one contests. There were many other sponsors for gold, silver, and friends of Sutton.

The Lions distribute the donations raised in events throughout the local community with fuel assistance, hardship assistance, scholarship funds and food pantry contributions. We also provide donations to the Massachusetts Eye and Ear

Research Foundation, Clara Barton Foundation, Diabetes and Eye Research and Lions Clubs International Foundations.

This year we are continuing to grow and move forward transitioning our leadership from Diane Greenlaw, our first woman president, to Kyle Bergeson our youngest president. We are revitalizing the Lions in Sutton with the new 501 (c) 3 foundation to allow us to build and give back to our community for

many years to come.

Our club gives members an opportunity to advance worthy causes, serve with friends, and be leaders in the fundraising community. We welcome new members and meet September through June, the first and third Wednesdays of the month at the Dudley Gendron on Boston Road. Please visit us at [www.suttonlions.com](http://www.suttonlions.com)

We thank our community for all of your support.

*Pamela Montemagno*

## Uxbridge Bird Watching Group

The Uxbridge Senior Center is proud to sponsor a bird watching group for interested individuals in the community. This birding trip will meet at 9 a.m. on Friday, October 1, at the Uxbridge Community Gardens located on Sutton Street in Uxbridge.

The group's leader is Strickland Wheelock, an avid bird watcher for many years. Strickland has led birding trips for the Mass Audubon Society to most all states in the country where he enjoyed viewing approximately 740 species. Having been born and brought-up in Uxbridge, he would love to share his passion with residents viewing some of the varied species found in the Uxbridge area.

Interested individuals should call the senior center to register at 508-278-8622. Folks will meet Strickland at the Uxbridge Community Gardens at 9 a.m. on Friday, October 1. Bring your binoculars, a bottle of water and wear comfortable shoes to enjoy the nature.

**— SUMMER CONCERT SERIES —**

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2021

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SCARAB THE JOURNEY EXPERIENCE  
JOURNELY TRIBUTE BAND  
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SHOT OF POISON POISON TRIBUTE BAND

**SEPTEMBER 25 • 12PM**



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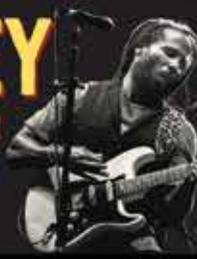
**SEPTEMBER 26 • 1PM**



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WITH SPECIAL GUEST **BOOTS OF CREATION**



**SEPTEMBER 30 • 7PM**



WITH SPECIAL GUEST **JOE MACEY**

**OCTOBER 9 • 1PM**



## CHRIS JANSON

WITH SPECIAL GUEST **MARTIN KELLY**

**OCTOBER 10 • 1PM**

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LAKE TOUR  
SEPTEMBER 26 • 10:00AM

LAKE TOUR  
SEPTEMBER 30 • 4:00PM

LAKE TOUR  
OCTOBER 9 • 10:00AM

LAKE TOUR  
OCTOBER 10 • 10:00AM

LAKE TOUR  
OCTOBER 17 • 10:00AM

THE PIKE 100.1 HALLOWEEN "BOOS" CRUISE  
OCTOBER 23 • 6:00PM

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT [WWW.INDIANRANCH.COM](http://WWW.INDIANRANCH.COM)**

The Indian Ranch Box Office is open Thursday through Monday, 10AM - 4PM. Tickets are also available by phone: 1-800-514-ETIX (3849). All events are rain or shine. No refunds. For ticketing and group sales, contact [tickets@indianranch.com](mailto:tickets@indianranch.com) or call 508.943.3871. For event booking, contact [banquets@samuelslaters.com](mailto:banquets@samuelslaters.com). Indian Ranch is less than an hour's drive from Boston, Providence, Hartford and Springfield. Indian Ranch is located at 200 Gore Road in Webster, MA.

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# Harvest Fair

Saturday, October 2nd

10am - 3pm

**Bake Sale & Pie Stand**

**Basket Raffles**

**Face Painting • Free Ice Cream**

**Food Truck • Thrift Store Tag Sale**

**Boutique Dresses!**

**Mother of the Bride & Formal Wear (New this year)**

**Dozens of Specialty Vendors!!**



200 Greenwood St., Worcester

# HALLOWEEN HAPPENINGS IN SUTTON CENTER



Jack-o-lantern photo by April Eaton Brown.

The Sutton Historical Society and The Sutton Fourth Committee are partnering to bring the community a Halloween event on the Common.

The Sutton Fourth Committee will be hosting a jack-o-lantern display and contest on the Sutton Town Common from Friday, October 29, through Sunday, October 31. For a fee of \$5 per entered pumpkin and registration at [go.rallyup.com/sutton-pumpkins2021](http://go.rallyup.com/sutton-pumpkins2021), participants can reserve a spot for their carved pumpkin. All pumpkins must be dropped off on the Sutton Town Common on October 29 between 6 p.m. and 8 p.m. The Sutton Fourth Committee will provide LED lights for the pumpkins, no

## Craft Sale

UXBRIDGE - The Uxbridge Congregational Church Prayer Shawl Group will sponsor a Craft Table and Food Sale on its property on Court Street in Uxbridge on October 2. The sale will start at 9 a.m. The craft table will feature men's, women's and children's hats and mittens. If you're looking for a baby gift, the table will feature beautiful hand knit sweater sets. Other items will include Christmas tree skirts, dinner napkins and other miscellaneous items.

The bake table will be selling homemade pies, breads, cakes, cookies etc. including some gluten free items.

Calling all Crafters. A yard sale will also be held on the grounds featuring many craft items including fabric, embroidery hoops, knitting and crochet hooks and needles, craft kits and many trim items. There will also be assorted dishes and glassware, small items of furniture and many old picture frames. All items reasonably priced.

candles required. Pumpkins will be displayed on the Sutton Town Common for two days leading up to Halloween.

The Sutton Fourth Committee will choose the top three pumpkins with awards for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place. All proceeds go directly to The Sutton Fourth to help fund our next Fourth of July Celebration. Questions regarding this event can be submitted at the aforementioned website.

Let's light up Sutton Center with an amazing nighttime display of creatively carved jack-o-lanterns.

To compliment this festive display, the Sutton Historical Society will be hosting a Sutton Town Cemetery nighttime tour on Saturday, October 30, from 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. Members of the Sutton Historical Society have been diligently cleaning, restoring, and repairing grave markers in this historic cemetery, located at 4 Uxbridge Road, since 2019. This initial cemetery restoration project blossomed into a partnership with the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, has included several local Eagle Scout projects, and has expanded to include other cemeteries in town. During this process, several previously unrecognized veterans have been discovered, a crypt was rebuilt, and much history has been discovered. The Society members are eager to share the stories of the famous and not-so famous individuals interred in this historic cemetery. This event is open to Society members as well as the general public of all ages. Questions can be directed to [sutton1704@gmail.com](mailto:sutton1704@gmail.com)

Mark your calendars for Saturday, October 30, from 6 pm - 8 pm, to join your neighbors for a small-town Halloween event which may include a few surprises.



## Millbury Senior Center

MILLBURY - The Millbury Council On Aging, 1 River St. has listed the schedule of events.

*Senior work-off program* for eligible seniors, 60 or older who are residents of Millbury receive up to \$1,500 per year that can be used to pay real estate property tax. In return for voluntary service at a town department. For more information or to pick up an application please call the center at 508-865-9154.

*Light exercise classes* Mondays and Fridays 9:30 - 10:15 a.m.

*Tai Chi is back* Tuesdays 9:30 - 10:30 a.m.. (class is \$3)

*Will bowling* Mondays at 12:30 p.m.

*Mahjong* Mondays at 12:45 p.m.

*Blood pressure clinic* every Tuesday from 9 - 10 a.m.

*Walking Club* Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m. We will be walking around the garden. This will be followed by coffee in the garden.

*Social Bingo* Wednesdays at 1 p.m. Bring your pennies.

*Dull Men's Club* Thursdays at 10 - 11 a.m.

No reservations required for any of our activities. If you would like Lunch ahead of time a 48 hour reservation is required call the center at 508-865-9154.

Lunches are served Monday through Friday 12 P.M. at the Senior Center. The menu is available on the town website, [www.townofmillbury.org](http://www.townofmillbury.org) or our Millbury Senior Center Facebook page. A 48 hour reservation is required.

*Millbury Senior Center Transportation*

Transportation is provided for Millbury senior residents Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. We travel one town out in each direction including Sutton, Grafton, Auburn and Worcester. A 48 hour notice is required for scheduling rides (business days). For more information or to schedule transportation call the center at 508-865-9154.

*Memory Café*, please join us Tuesday, September 28, 2 - 3:30 p.m. A Memory Café is a monthly gathering for people with memory loss/challenges and their care partners. It is a time to socialize, make new friends, and have a good time. Fourth Tuesday of each month, refreshments will be served. We are also looking for volunteers to assist with this program. Our outreach worker, Julie Fitzgerald, is happy to answer any questions, call to RSVP 508-865-9154.

*Millbury Friendly Visitor Program* - Our Friendly Visitor Program is now being provided by telephone. Volunteers call clients to check in with them, chat and hear a friendly voice. For more information on coordinating a friendly visitor call the center at 508-865-9154.

*Snap applications* (Food Stamps) - Our appointments are on Tuesdays & Thursdays 10 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Call for an appointment and required documentation 508-865-9154. "This project has been funded at least in part with federal funds from USDA.

# The Killdeer Island Club is hosting a Computer, Electronics & Metal Removal & Recycling Day

Monitors, televisions, misc., electronics, computer parts & all appliances (those containing Freon as well) any metal, lawn mowers (oil and gas removed) gas grills, car batteries, car parts, etc.



**Saturday, October 2, 2021**



9:00am to 3:00pm

Bring your items to 191 Killdeer Island Rd., Webster, MA  
Killdeer Island Road is behind The Lodge Restaurant on Rt. 16

A fee will be charged for each disposal of the following items:

Keyboards .....	Free
Toaster Oven, Exercise Bikes, Speakers .....	\$5.00 each
Lawn Furniture - 4 Chairs, Table (no glass).....	\$10.00
Car Batteries .....	\$5.00 each
Computers, Printers, Scanners, Fax Machines, Stereos and Microwaves .....	\$10.00 each
Electric Space Heaters .....	\$10.00 each
Monitors.....	\$20.00 each
Dishwashers, Stoves, Washers, Dryers, and HW Heaters .....	\$15.00 each
Refrigerators, Freezers and Air Conditioners.....	\$25.00 each
Plastic TVs Under 27" .....	\$25.00 each
Plastic TVs Over 27".....	\$30.00 each
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## Senator Moore Appointed to the Task Force on Sexual Misconduct Campus Climate Surveys

BOSTON - Senator Michael Moore (D-Millbury) is pleased to announce that today he was appointed to the Commonwealth's Task Force on Sexual Misconduct Campus Climate Surveys. He was sworn in this afternoon by the Governor's Office of Boards and Commissions. The task force will be Co-Chaired by the Department of Higher Education (DHE) and the Department of Public Health (DPH).

"Ensuring the safety of students on college campuses throughout the Commonwealth has always been one

of my main priorities," said Senator Moore. "I am both proud and honored to be appointed to this task force and I remain committed to these efforts as we look to make Massachusetts a nationwide leader in responding to and preventing sexual misconduct at higher education institutions."

The task force is composed of 27 individuals who will be responsible for developing model questions that will be used in mandated sexual misconduct climate surveys. These surveys will need to be conducted every

four years at public and private colleges and universities in Massachusetts.

The task force itself has been formed as a result of Senator Moore's legislation, An Act relative to sexual violence on higher education campuses, which was signed into law this past January as Chapter 337 of the Acts of 2020. This is a nation leading piece of legislation that creates the proper framework for higher education campuses to identify, prevent and respond to incidents of sexual misconduct.



# Small Stones Festival of the Arts

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Juried exhibition of 144 works of art • Artist and Juror Talks



Plus... Tom Saupe on Collecting Art on a Limited Budget • Nicholas Basbanes and Barbara Basbanes Richter on their recently-published books • Clafin Hill presents Mirror Images - Art and Music through the Periods • Dr. Daniel Mahoney on Orwell: Truth, Tyranny and Human Nature • and a special performance of Spoon River Anthology\* by Radio Active Theater



\*Spoon River Anthology by Charles Aldman. Conceived from Edgar Lee Masters' Spoon River Anthology. "Spoon River Anthology" is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

Events held at Apple Tree Arts • Grafton Public Library  
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[www.SmallStonesFestival.org](http://www.SmallStonesFestival.org)



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## Community Harvest Project hosts 15th annual Harvest Home Fall Festival and 5K November 7

GRAFTON - Community Harvest Project (CHP) will be holding its 15th annual Harvest Home Fall Festival AND 5K on Sunday, November 7. This year's festival will feature in-person and online aspects including a 5K fun run, an online auction, good food and drink, kids activities, a scare-

crow contest, pumpkin trebuchets, apple cannons, and a live stream of the 1 pm Patriots game - fun for the whole community. The online auction will feature a mix of items and services from local businesses and community members. The auction will open Sunday, October 31, and will close on Sunday, November 7. The festival will celebrate another year of successful volunteer farming for hunger relief and put the farm to rest for the winter. Registration for the 5K and links to the auction can be found on the CHP facebook page and website. Admission for the festival is \$10 per adult; kids under 5 are free. All proceeds from this event will support Community Harvest Project's mission to engage and educate volunteers to grow fruits and vegetables for hunger relief.



Visit community-harvest.org for more information. Please contact MaryHope Gardner at MaryHope@community-harvest.org with questions.

## First Congregational Church of Uxbridge correction

We had planned on resuming services in person in September but after check-

ing the COVID guidelines decided to continue to worship via Zoom for the present and will reassess in October. We are disappointed but for the safety of our church family decided this was the best option for present time. We would love to have you join us in the meantime via Zoom at 10 a.m. on Sunday mornings with Rev. Frank McKenzie.

If you would like an invitation to our link, please call 508-473-6118 or email: Uxbridgeucc@outlook.com.

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## Small Stones Festival of the Arts announces Art Call

Artists and photographers are welcome to submit their original works of art to the fourth annual Small Stones Festival of the Arts, a juried fine art painting and photography exhibit. The Festival returns October 15 to the Great Hall, 1 Grafton Common, Grafton, for a live ceremony announcing the winning artists.

An artist in each category will win cash awards of \$500 for first place, \$250 for second

place and \$100 for third place. Artwork accepted into the exhibit will be included in the hardbound exhibit catalog.

Apple Tree Arts, the Worcester County Camera Club, the Blackstone Valley Art Association and the Shakespeare Club of Grafton – four regional art organizations have collaborated to create the exhibit accompanied with music, literary and art-related programs. The Festival runs Oct. 15-24 with free exhibit hours on weekends and weekday evenings of Oct. 20, 21 and 22.

The Festival art call is open for submissions of artwork. Photography and all forms of two-dimensional artwork are welcomed, with a maximum of three entries per artist. The art call will remain open until 500 entries are received. Visit <https://smallstonesfestival.org/> to submit artwork.

Three prestigious jurors for each category will select 144 works to appear in the exhibit and catalog. Fine art category jurors include renowned artist Carol Arnold, a member of the Putney group of painters; Charlotte Wharton, a highly accomplished portrait, plein-air and genre artist and Susan Swinand, a prominent painter with a preference for water media. Photography category jurors are David DeMelim,



Storm over 175 by Chris Bilodeau.



Ghost Rider by Al Weems



Evergreen by Jennifer Behymer



Visitors at a previous Small Stones Festival of Arts.

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**Paws corner**

# Help! my cats have started fighting

By Sam Mazzotta

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My two cats, Mitsy and Bitsy, got along well for nearly five years. Bitsy is 11 years old, about six years older than Mitsy. In the past couple of months, they squall and squabble with each other every time they're in the same room. What is going on, and how do I stop it? – Cara C.  
 DEAR CARA: Take both of your cats to the veterinarian as soon as an appointment is available. Because the behavior just recently started after years of tranquility, a health issue could be at the root of their fighting.

Senior cats are especially likely to develop conditions that cause them to be cranky or more territorial than usual. Pain from arthritis or other conditions can be a big factor in making Bitsy irritable, tired and just not in the mood to hang out with Mitsy. Likewise, Mitsy could be developing a medical condition; it's best to rule out physical problems in both cats.

Once their health has been assessed and treatment, if necessary, started, then the hard work of reconciling the two can begin. Keep the cats separated at first – on oppo-

site sides of the house, if possible, in closed rooms. Each day, reintroduce them by placing a small plate of food in front of each door and letting them out. If they calmly eat, then the next day, move both plates closer. Observe the cats as they eat; if they begin to growl or tense up, put both back into their rooms before they escalate – fighting is very traumatic for them. Shift the bowls back a bit and try again.

**Brewer's yeast and pet allergies**

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I read an article that says brewer's yeast is safe for cats and dogs. I disagree. I found several more articles online that say pets can be allergic to brewer's yeast. What do you say about that? – Carla L.

DEAR CARLA: Pet owners should always research and evaluate the risks of any supplement for their pets. Brewer's yeast is a mainstay for owners trying to find a natural flea control treatment, and others swear that its blend of B vitamins makes their pets healthier.

It has been found that brewer's yeast created for humans often contains ingredients like garlic and onions that are downright toxic to pets. Owners should purchase only brewer's yeast formulated for dogs or cats, as PetMD notes

(www.petmd.com/dog/nutrition/brewers-yeast-dogs-understanding-benefits-and-risks).

Here are some other tips for picking the right brewer's yeast:

- Give only the amount recommended for your pet's size.

- Brewer's yeast that has been "de-bittered" lacks chromium, a mineral that helps regulate blood sugar in humans but hasn't been studied in dogs.

- Read the label carefully: Some brewer's yeast for pets contains garlic, which can be toxic, especially for smaller pets.

- Consider a brewer's yeast that includes omega-3 oils for added benefits.

- This supplement can add up to 80 calories to your pet's meal. It can also cause excess gas.

Some pets really are allergic to the yeast itself, though. Avoid giving brewer's yeast to dogs with known yeast allergy, who have digestive illnesses like colitis, or who are immunocompromised. Always monitor your pet for new behaviors or symptoms after giving them any new supplement.

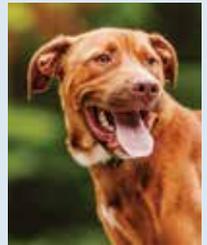
Send your questions, tips or comments to ask@pawscorner.com. (c) 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.

# Meet our available orphans. Don't shop...ADOPT

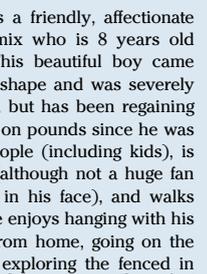


We have several dogs up for adoption at this time with more scheduled to come in. They range in age from 5 months to 6 years. If you are not looking to adopt at this time, please share these beauties with friends and family to help find their forever homes. Visit our website dogorphans.com to see more photos of each.

Meet Rudolph. Rudolph is an 8-month-old terrier mix from Florida. Rudolph was taken off the streets down there. No one ever came for him. Rudolph is a goofy, active, kind of class clown sort of character. Rudolph's got lots of young puppy-like energy. He will need an active home and maybe a friend to play with to burn off his energy. Rudolph would do best in a home with kids 10 and up do to his energy level.



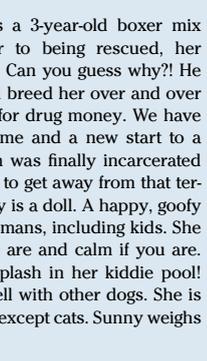
Meet Griffin! Griffin is a friendly, affectionate Lab/Great Pyrenees mix who is 8 years old and weighs 71 lbs. This beautiful boy came into Rescue in rough shape and was severely underweight at 46 lbs, but has been regaining his health and putting on pounds since he was taken in. He loves people (including kids), is fine with other dogs (although not a huge fan of young, crazy dogs in his face), and walks fairly well on leash. He enjoys hanging with his people if they work from home, going on the occasional walk, and exploring the fenced in backyard. He is a sweet, gentle, easy keeper and is pretty much perfect in every way! Can you give this happy, playful, deserving senior a loving home? He will be a wonderful, devoted & grateful companion! Griffin is housebroken, crate trained, neutered, fully vaccinated & microchipped.



Meet Biggie. biggie is a four-year-old Husky mix from Florida. This big handsome beefcake was abandoned down there. Biggie is a little bit of a shy guy but the most gentle giant ever. Down in Florida, due to over crowding, kennels are doubled up. Biggie's Roommate was a 20lb feisty little mix. Biggie enjoyed spending his time with the other dog. Biggie needs a little bit of a confidence boost. All he needs is a loving family to never let him go again. Biggie would do well in a home with kids 7 and up as he is a large boy.



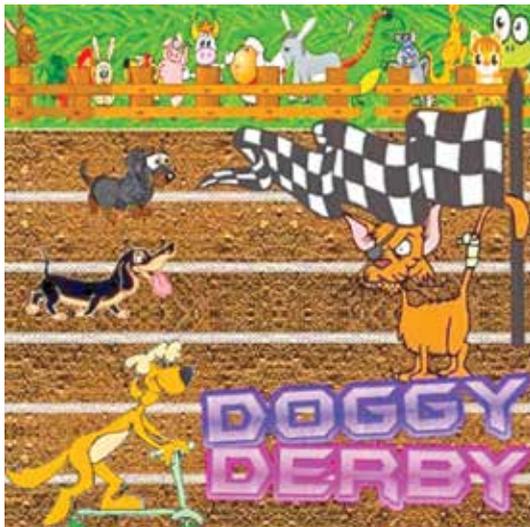
Meet Sunny! She is a 3-year-old boxer mix from Georgia. Prior to being rescued, her name was "money." Can you guess why?! Her former owner would breed her over and over and sell her babies for drug money. We have given her a new name and a new start to a better life. Her mom was finally incarcerated and sunny was able to get away from that terrible life style. Sunny is a doll. A happy, goofy girl who loves all humans, including kids. She will be hyper if you are and calm if you are. She does loves to splash in her kiddie pool! Sunny gets along well with other dogs. She is great with everyone except cats. Sunny weighs 46lbs



Meet Benjamin! Benjamin is a 1 year old shepherd mix from South Carolina. Benjamin was taken in as a stray and no one ever came to claim him as their family pup. Benjamin is a goof ball who loves to run and play with his canine friends! Benjamin does great with kids but we prefer no toddlers as Benjamin is still just a pup himself and may accidentally knock them over. Benjamin weighs 47lbs



## Join the fun at the Doggy Derby



A Doggie Derby sponsored by Douglas Animal Hospital to Benefit Dog Orphans Humane Society will be held Saturday, October 2, during the Douglas Octoberfest in Douglas. All proceeds will benefit Dog Orphans.

First race begins at 12:00 p.m. with the final race at 2:30 p.m. Registration fee is \$15.00.

There are four classes: Mixed Breed or Purebred; Canines weighing 2-10 lbs.; Canines weighing 11-20 lbs.; Canines weighing 21-40 lbs.; Seniors age 8 and up weighing 2-20 lbs.

Winners of each class will receive a gift from Dog Orphans.

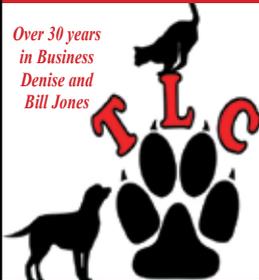
Grand prize winner will receive a \$100 cash prize donated by Douglas Animal Hospital.

No walk-ins will be accepted.

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Living ON with Lincoln

# Two in the Queue

By Amy LeClaire

Lincoln brought our family so much joy. Nothing will compare to his smile, his expression, and the easy way in which we understood each other. It has been said that dogs are a lot of work. Partial truth. Dogs, indeed, are a lot of work, but with just the right dose of adventure. Sometimes it's hard to know the difference between work and play. Here, Lincoln blurred the lines. He made work feel like play. He even found a way to have fun on rainy days, his least favorite. Well, with my help that is.

"Want to play Hide and Seek, Lincoln?"

Nothing is more depressing than seeing a happy (energetic) dog defeated by a grey day. Just as he'd pull me out of funks, so did I, him. I'd hold up one of his Kong balls and rotate it in my hand like a planet. "Mummy will hide the ball and Lincoln will go GET it." His spirit lifted to the mere review of game rules. He propped his head up and stared at the turning ball. Could this really be happening? An indoor game of ball? He snapped from the nook beneath the counter. "I'm in." "Sit." He sat on command. "Lincoln - Staaaayy. Wait until I tell you." I stretched out the word stay to emphasize its importance to the game, and also, because learning to stay was more difficult for him. He loved that ball so much, and needed to rescue it. "You have to wait until I tell you." He couldn't resist the occasional head start. "Wait until I tell you." I'd lead him right back to the same spot.

Then, like a burglar with a ball, I tiptoed to the front of the house to choose a hiding spot: in the big mouth of Daddy's shoe, beneath the cor-

ner of his dog bed upstairs, or beneath one of numerous accent tables. Occasionally I'd provide a game challenge, hiding the ball downstairs yet emulating the sound of footsteps by drumming the bottom step with my palms. "Sounds like she went upstairs." Seated on the edge of his seat, Lincoln waited for the go-ahead. I needed to move quickly. He needed to rescue his beloved ball. I could sense his impatience.

"Go get it!" Like a bloodhound wearing a Golden Retriever costume, Lincoln weaved his way through all of the hot spots, nose to ground. Meanwhile, I encouraged him. "You have to go get it!" He would look down at me from the foyer at the top of the stairs. "I know. I'm trying to find my ball!" Then came the moment of truth, the profound "AHA" when he'd grab that ball, slosh it around his mouth, and retreat beneath the dining room table to be alone. "You're not getting away from me again."

He'd chew on the ball for a while before coming back to me. "Lincoln - do you want go get it?" Dogs, like humans, learn from repetition. A second game felt as refreshing as the first. As if both of our moods hadn't been lifted enough (I do believe dogs are natural anti-depressants) the

game offered an added caveat. I showed him my iPhone recording of him playing so that he could watch himself on video! "Go get it!" He'd listen to my voice repeat the whole game, tilting his head curiously, reliving the moment. "Is that me looking for my ball?" Sometimes the tapping would make him uncomfortable and jittery, as though spooked. He'd dash to my husband's office. "Mom's phone is possessed again, Daddy."

Dogs innocently remind us of life's subtle, humorous, and joyous moments. Their lives are far too short, yet the happiness accrued within their life is so very potent. How does one quantify or place a value on a dog's positive influence on our lives? I've considered the math and come to a conclusion. Dogs provide so much joy. When considering getting another, why not make it a double?

The pain of losing Lincoln is not directly proportional to the joy spent with him. Joy spilled over our days, saturating them as would a napkin, red punch. The joy of owning a dog is exponential. Two puppies, like two cocktails, are happier than one.

Such was my rationale when, after struggling to (first) find an experienced and caring Golden Retriever

breeder and (next) be accepted onto their list; two doors opened up, one following my husband's research, the other, mine. Both breeders accepted my family as a happy home for their upcoming puppies. How could we say no? Now we've got two in the queue and we couldn't be happier!

In honor of Lincoln, during the winter of next year (Jan/Feb 2022), we will take home Puppy #1. Fast-forward four to five months later, and puppy #2 shall follow. So - we have two in the queue! Are we spending too much money? Most definitely. Are we adding on too much work? Possibly. Will there be too much joy in the house?

Not a chance. Stay tuned for more on Living On with Lincoln.

To my faithful readers - just as the joy of having a dog is immeasurable, so is the gratitude I have for all of you who have written me in the past five months, following Lincoln's passing. I have saved every word, every card, every e-mail, every thought, and every gift. You are all in my heart. Together, as Dog People, we will always be connected.

Write to me [amyleclaire@hotmail.com](mailto:amyleclaire@hotmail.com)



Up for adventure, only weeks before his passing.



Lincoln enjoys happy times with friends.



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Living well and looking good

# Surgery is valid option for severe sleep apnea

By Keith Roach, M.D.

DEAR DR. ROACH: My son, who is 30 years old, was recently diagnosed with severe obstructive sleep apnea and currently uses a CPAP machine. He says does not want to use this for the rest of his life, therefore, he has researched surgery to correct his OSA. Recently he consulted with a sleep expert, and now has surgery scheduled with that doctor.

My son will have a septoplasty and a palate expansion before a more radical surgery in a year called MMA. My son feels that these surgeries will give him the longest lasting cure for his OSA. I am very concerned about all of these surgeries. I value your objective opinion and hope you can give me some reassurance that these surgeries are worth the pain. - G.M.

ANSWER: Although CPAP

(continuous positive airway pressure, which works by using air to keep the airway open) is the usual treatment for obstructive sleep apnea, surgery is another effective way to treat OSA. Surgery is most appropriate for those who wish a surgical solution (some people can't stand the CPAP machine), those who have a surgically correctable problem (see below), and those who are good candidates for surgery; younger age makes surgery seem more reasonable to me.

The specific surgery chosen depends on an individual's unique anatomy. Surgery on the uvula (yes, the dangling thing at the back of the throat), soft palate and pharynx is the most common sur-

gery, but maxillomandibular advancement surgery (MMA) has been shown to be successful in several well-known medical centers in the U.S., such as Mayo Clinic and Stanford. Success rates are high, and some studies have shown surgical cure of obstructive sleep apnea in over half of those who undergo the procedure.

Not knowing your son and not being a surgeon, I can't give an objective opinion for him in particular, but I can say that in appropriate patients, surgical treatment of OSA is reasonable.

**BP meds**

DEAR DR. ROACH: Is there any good way to find the correct blood pressure medicine that doesn't suck the life pep out of you, give you

a headache, make you short of breath when walking or grapple with all of those side effects at once? Who should manage that program, your regular doctor or your cardiologist? Is there another specialist with the right insight and expertise? - E.M.

ANSWER: Choosing the best blood pressure medicine for a person with high blood pressure starts with knowing as much as possible about the person's heart and blood vessels, and their other medical conditions. A person with blockages in the arteries should be on a beta blocker and ACE inhibitor most of the time. A person with diabetes should be on an ACE inhibitor or angiotensin receptor blocker. An older person with isolated high systolic pressure may get most benefit from a diuretic. However, it may still take some trial and

error to find the best choice. Most people are able to find a blood pressure regimen that has very few side effects.

Most generalists have expertise in blood-pressure medications, and are likely to know all your conditions. Cardiologists have more expertise in cardiovascular disease, and I refer to high blood pressure experts when I have

difficulty getting someone's blood pressure under control.

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](mailto:ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu). (c) 2021 North America Synd., Inc. All Rights Reserved

To your good health



## Gigantic yard sale

N. OXFORD - St. Ann's Church, 652 Main St., North Oxford will hold a gigantic yard sale indoor and outdoor on Saturday, October 2, from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Sunday, October 3, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Featured will be a mega flea market, large jewelry tables, many raffle baskets and items, including several quilt raffles.

## Yard Sale, Craft & Bake Sale

UXBRIDGE - The Prayer Shawl group of the Uxbridge Congregational Church will conduct a Craft and Bake Sale on October 2, from 9 - 2 p.m. in the church parking lot. It will be a good time to begin your holiday shopping with many beautiful items as well as homemade jellies, jams, gluten free baked good and pies.

A yard sale will also take place on the same day in the parking lot for those who enjoy browsing household items. More information on the yard sale will be available soon.

## Stratford Village Yard Sales

MILLBURY - Many yard sales at the new Stratford Village Condos, off Burbank Street in Millbury. Sat., October 2 - Rain date Sun., October 3. 9 am to 1 pm. "We packed it, we moved it, and now we don't need it!"

## VFW Post flea market

UPTON - The Upton VFW Post 5594 will hold its flea market on October 9 at Post headquarters, 15 Milford St., (Rt. 140) in Upton, weather permitting. Hours are 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Vendors and crafty people are more than welcome. Good sized spaces are \$10 each or \$15 if a banquet sized table is needed. No reservations are needed, although Post member David Kennedy can provide more information by calling him at 508-529-3314 or via the Upton VFW Facebook page.

As always, Dunkin' coffee and donuts will be available in the morning, then hot dogs, chips and cold drinks for lunch.

## St. Roch's Church Yard Sale

OXFORD - St. Roch's Church, 334 Main St., Oxford, will hold a yard sale on Saturday, October 2 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

List your yard sale here.

Send info to: [news@theyankeexpress.com](mailto:news@theyankeexpress.com)

## Prayer



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

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

## The Harvest Fair and Apple Pie Social is happening

The 42nd annual Harvest Fair and Apple Pie Social, hosted by the Congregational Church of Grafton, will be held on Sunday, September 26, from 11 a.m. - 3 p.m. on the church grounds, at 30 Grafton Common. Admission is free to this family-friendly event, and it is rain or shine.

This year, the fair will offer its famous homemade apple pies and crisps (fresh and frozen), a huge yard sale, lots of amazing raffle baskets, hot dogs, chili and corn chowder, plus live musical performances, including the always popular Kelly Clark Jazz Quartet, Alizone with Alison Balfour and Scott Marshall, plus new this year is IMZ, a new musical group based in Grafton that plays their own modern takes on timeless tunes. Band members are Ian Choi on vocals and keys, Matt Torres on drums, and Zoe Mumford on guitar.

First organized in 1980, this annual event is a great way to bring together members of the community in fellowship and is a fundraiser for the many missions and charities that the Church supports. Come one, come all!

For more information, visit [www.uccgrafton.org](http://www.uccgrafton.org), email [graftonuccnews@gmail.com](mailto:graftonuccnews@gmail.com), or call 508-839-4513.

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Tales from beyond

# Mrs. Johnson's Harp

By Thomas D'Agostino

Along Route 32A in Peter-sham, one will pass Gate 40 near the Quabbin Reservoir. This gate is the entrance that leads to Dana Common, part of one of the several towns that became extinct when the reservoir was created to supply water to the eastern part of the state.

If one follows the old road for about one mile, traces of the ghost town begin to emerge. After a little over one-half mile more, Dana Common comes into view with a plaque commemorating the former residents and families who once lived and worked there.

Around the common, foundations of a church, hotel, store and homes still fight the vestiges of time and nature. Behind the church foundation is a field that once contained the town's deceased but when the reservoir project began, the dead were exhumed and relocated with their stones to the Quabbin Park Cemetery in Ware.

The field may now lay silent but the remains of the buildings still have stories to tell of the life and death of this once bucolic little hamlet.

There is one foundation in particular where ethereal music seems to still echo in the breeze that gently wisps across the common. This particular cellar hole was once the home of Mrs. Marion Johnson. Mrs. Johnson was known for baking cookies for the children of the common. On beautiful summer days, she would sit on her

porch with her harp, playing the most majestic music. The sound brought neighbors to the common to listen to her porcheside concerts.

By 1930, the town was slated to be part of the Metropolitan District Water Supply Commission project to bring more water to Boston for its growing needs. Although the town was doomed for extinction, Mrs. Johnson, along with others, remained until the last days of 1938, playing her beloved harp for her neighbors. The guests at the hotel would set themselves on the front porch with a cool glass of lemonade while relishing in the angelic sounds that filled the area. Patrons of the local store would halt their shopping to take in a moment and absorb the music that drifted through the afternoon breeze.

Every so often, Mrs. Johnson would take a break from her concerts to serve lemonade and cookies to the youth who gathered in the grass across the street to hear her music. So were the days of Dana Common.

Now, the only sounds left are the local wildlife that live among the overgrowth brush where homes and yards once graced. Occasional hikers take in the scenery where the trees and bramble cover much of what was once a typical little New England village.

Then there is the strange sound of music. The ghostly sound of harp strings being plucked begin to permeate the air around the little vil-



lage green. Where it originates is a mystery to those who hear it, as no inhabited home is anywhere within miles of the common. It may remain curious to many, but there are those who know who is responsible for the phantom performance. Those who were there when Mrs. Johnson gave her daily serenades to the neighbors

on the harp that filled the air then as it does to this day before trickling off into the void.

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](http://www.tomdagostino.com).



**Dining With The Dead 1031**  
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Dining With The Dead 1031 is holding another dinner/investigation event of the **Publick House** in Sturbridge, on September 29, from 6-9:30 pm. Go to [www.diningwiththedead1031.com](http://www.diningwiththedead1031.com) for more info.

Thomas D'Agostino and Arlene Nicholson have researched and investigated the paranormal for over 39 years with well over 1400 cases to their credit. They are the authors of sixteen acclaimed books on ghosts, haunts, and legends of New England.



The husband and wife team has been hosting paranormal investigation dinners for fifteen years at restaurants, hotels, and inns throughout New England. Each event allows you to be the investigator, using equipment alongside us in search of the spirits that roam within the walls of the establishment.

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## Manchaug Pond fall cleanup

SUTTON/DOUGLAS - The Manchaug Pond Foundation will be holding their Fall Clean-Up of scenic Manchaug Pond on Saturday, October 23. Volunteers are invited to join members and friends of the Manchaug Pond Foundation in cleaning up Manchaug Pond and its watershed. Volunteers with boats are also welcome to help us clean up coves.



The effort is scheduled to take place Saturday, October 23, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon with volunteers meeting at the state public access boat ramp on Torrey Road in Sutton. Volunteers will hit the pavement with garbage bags in hand to clean the roadsides, shoreline, and boat ramp - all areas within the Manchaug Pond watershed. Good company, beautiful scenery, safety vests, rubber gloves, and garbage bags will be provided. We ask that everyone follow state regulations for social distancing. Rain date will be Sunday, October 24, and the rain date notice will be posted on the Manchaug Pond Foundation's

Facebook page and website.

The Manchaug Pond Foundation's educational events look to improve the water

quality of the picturesque 380 acre community lake, which lies within Douglas and Sutton, through the education of the many users and watershed residents. Educational information on residential Low Impact Development (LID) techniques such as landscaping with buffer zones and rain gardens to limit runoff of fertilizer nutrients are available on the Foundation's website. Educational materials have been made possible by the MPF's previous two water quality grants awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. For more information visit [manchaugpond.org](http://manchaugpond.org).

## Senator Moore's Cybersecurity legislation is favorably reported out of committee

BOSTON - Senator Michael Moore (D-Millbury) has announced that his bill S.2088, an Act establishing a cybersecurity control and review commission, has been favorably reported out of the Joint Committee on State Administration and Regulatory Oversight.

"I think that given the severity of some of the cyberattacks we have witnessed throughout the rest of the country, we can count ourselves lucky in the Commonwealth," said Senator Moore. "However, we are by no means immune to attacks that could threaten our technological and physical infrastructure or endanger

the wellbeing and safety of our residents. This bill is a necessary step in improving our cybersecurity systems, and I thank Senator Pacheco and the other committee members for reporting this bill out favorably."

"Cybersecurity is a critical priority for protecting the integrity of our public and private sector servers and the private information of internet users throughout the Commonwealth," said Senator Marc R. Pacheco (D-Taunton), Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on State Administration & Regulatory Oversight. "The type of information that cyberattacks inherently target is

simply too sensitive to leave unguarded. I am pleased that the Joint Committee on State Administration & Regulatory Oversight had the opportunity to advance this important legislation sponsored by Senator Moore that will identify threats and implement fundamental safeguards against cybercrime."

This legislation comes at a critical time as the Commonwealth has been subject to several cyberattacks over the previous weeks and months. Earlier this spring, no one in the state was able to complete their vehicle inspection process due to a malware attack on the vendor who tracks these inspections. Just over a month ago the Massachusetts Steamship Authority suffered a ransomware attack that put a halt to the booking process for those trying to commute to and from Nantucket and Martha's Vineyard. Additionally, according to FBI data, residents in Massachusetts lost approximately \$100 million to cybercrimes in 2020. This legislation is also important giving the ever-growing threat of cyberattacks from foreign actors, such as those from Russia or China, who have already succeeded in

stealing personal and sensitive pieces of data from various U.S. based companies and government agencies.

The bill would establish an expert commission to recommend cybersecurity standards for public agencies and private companies that contract with the Commonwealth. These standards would be based on best practices set forth by the National Institute of Standards and Technology Cybersecurity Framework. The commission would also work with private businesses that have a demonstrated track record of adhering to strong cybersecurity standards.

Having now been favorably reported out of committee, the bill will appear before the legislature for a first reading. The progress of the bill can be followed along here: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/192/S2088>

## Sutton Historical Society October events

The Sutton Historical Society will hold its annual meeting on Tuesday, October 5, at 7 p.m. in the First Congregational Church, 307 Boston Road. Election of officers to a 2-year term will take place at this meeting. Members interested in being nominated for an officer position, including president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary, can contact [sutton1704@gmail.com](mailto:sutton1704@gmail.com) for more information. Current officers can be found at [suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org/officers-and-board-of-directors](http://suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org/officers-and-board-of-directors). Members are encouraged to attend this important meeting.

The 2021 bottle can drive will run from Saturday, September 25 to Saturday, October 2. Returnable bottles, separated between soda and beer, can be dropped off anytime between these dates in the trailer parked at the M. M. Sherman Blacksmith Shop, 6 Singletary Avenue. Questions can be directed to [sutton1704@gmail.com](mailto:sutton1704@gmail.com).

The Society has partnered with the Sutton Fourth Committee to bring a special Halloween event to the Sutton Town Common on Saturday, October 30, from 6-8 pm. The Society will be hosting Town Center Cemetery tours at the 4 Uxbridge Road cemetery. The Sutton Fourth Committee will be hosting a jack-o-lantern contest on the Common. Visit [go.rallyup.com/suttonpumpkins2021](http://go.rallyup.com/suttonpumpkins2021) for more information on the jack-o-lantern contest. Plan to stop by the Common for these fun community events.

The Sutton Historical Society is a 501(c)3 organization. All events are open to members and the general public. They welcome new members, and are always seeking volunteers to assist with the many ongoing projects and programs. Information about the organization and membership forms can be found at [suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org](http://suttonhistoricalsocietyinc.org).



• If you need to pick up small shards of glass, use a cotton ball that's been moistened, or a slice of white bread (insides only) wadded up.

• Glass and chrome will shine if you clean them with newspaper. You can mist the paper with water first, but not too much. Rub ... and the shine comes right out, plus no streaks or lint!

• When you are frying up ground beef, add a table-

spoon or two of water. It will help the excess grease to pull away from the meat, making it easier to drain off.

• Use club soda on a damp rag to wipe down your stainless-steel sink. It will help bring back the shine.

• Fresh versus frozen in the seafood aisle: Unless you're at the docks, most seafood in the grocer's fresh fish case is thawed from frozen. Always ask. It's much cheaper to buy frozen and thaw it yourself.

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803. (c) 2021 King Features Synd., Inc.

## Third annual car show rallies at Valley Chapel



Folks of all ages love those autos at Uxbridge Lions Car Show.

Uxbridge Lions are looking forward to welcoming antique autos, muscle cars, foreign cars, truck and motorcycles to its third annual car show on Saturday, October 2, at Valley Chapel, 14 Hunter Road in Uxbridge. The event will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. with awards slated for 1 p.m. The fun will include a DJ, food, a carica-

turist, Sweet Wise Ice Cream Truck, judging and awarding of prizes. Registration for autos in competition is \$10. Admission for spectators is free. Rain date is October 9. Businesses or individuals may help the important work of the Lions Club by purchasing a sponsorship. The Sponsorship Levels are: Bronze \$25, Silver \$50,

Gold \$100, Platinum \$200. Checks may be made payable to Uxbridge Lions Club, P.O. Box 455, North Uxbridge, MA 01538. Sponsors will be recognized at the event through print and announcements. For additional information contact Mike Kaplan at 508-473-1161 or email [mike@kaplanslaw.com](mailto:mike@kaplanslaw.com).

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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.johnpaul.podbean.com](http://www.johnpaul.podbean.com) or other popular podcast sites. Email your car questions to [jpaul@aanortheast.com](mailto:jpaul@aanortheast.com). Follow John on Twitter @johnfpaul and friend him on facebook mrjohnfpaul



**Q.** I drive a 2011 Chevrolet Impala and have the oil changed whenever a notice appears on the dashboard to change it. This happens between 3800 and 3900 miles. The oil was changed on 4/15/20. Since then, I have driven 3600 miles. Now it is almost 18 months and there is no notice that oil needs changing. Is this normal? I am a senior citizen, and I am concerned. I drive less than 5000 miles a year.

**A.** Oil changes are still important and depending on the vehicle and how it is driven, oil can be changed in as little as 3500 miles or three months to 10,000 or one year. The maintenance reminders are great, but it still is important to change engine oil. Personally, I would not go longer than one year in between oil changes with any vehicle.

**Q.** I had a power steering line leak on my Volkswagen and replaced the line and added fluid. The car seems fine, but the power steering is a little noisy. When I replaced the fluid I used power steering fluid, not the very expensive Volkswagen power steering fluid, was that a mistake?

**A.** Volkswagen, like many manufacturers, require specialized fluid. Depending on the year of your Volkswagen, the fluid was either a synthetic blend or fully synthetic. Conventional fluid may work, but the viscosity is different, which may be causing the power steering noise and could also cause stiffer steering in cold weather. I would drain the fluid and add the correct Volkswagen specific fluid.

**Q.** Is there an easy way to determine gear ratios for differentials. I'm looking for a very specific ratio differential for my car and when I go shopping at junk yards, they all look the same. My car has a tag on

the differential, but when I go looking, most are missing. I am looking for a 3.50 ratio posi-traction rear end.

**A.** I don't know how easy this will be in a salvage yard, but it is certainly possible if you are careful. Mark the driveshaft or yoke on the differential with chalk and mark a tire with chalk. As you turn the tire count the driveshaft revolutions. If, in one rotation of the tire, the driveshaft turns three and a half turns, you have found your 3.50 ratio differential.

**Q.** I have an older Honda Scooter that I rode all summer to my job and it suddenly stopped running. After pushing it home, it did fire up for a second or two and then wouldn't start. Any ideas?

**A.** These scooters are pretty simple and like all engines require fuel, ignition, compression and proper timing. Start with: is there spark? Remove the spark plug and hold it up against the engine and crank over the engine, if there is spark at the electrode you have ruled out an ignition problem. Next is fuel. Check the carburetor drain. If you open the drain and no fuel comes out, you have found the issue. These small scooters don't use a traditional fuel filter. There is a small screen at the bottom of the fuel tank. Drain and remove the tank and clean the vacuum petcock assembly. If the tank is rusted, you could have it cleaned or for a few hundred dollars replace the entire tank and fuel petcock.

**Q.** I have a 15-year-old Jeep Cherokee and more often than not the heater fan doesn't work. Sometimes if I hit a bump, it will come on. Any thoughts?

**A.** Over age these fans can bind up. This can be from bearing failure and debris such as leaves and twigs that make their way to the heater box. I have seen several of these fans that, when removed, the wires are melted due to over-heating. Inspect the fan and wiring. If there are any signs of overheating replace the fan.

**Q.** I heard you on your radio program (I listen on the podcast) talking with Biff, your producer, and he asked if you would ever buy a very expensive car (over \$200,000) and you said no. Your reason was even if you could afford it, that type of expense wouldn't match your New England sensibilities – you mentioned you drive a Hyundai. Putting your sensibilities aside, what very expensive cars have you driven that are amazing?

**A.** Thanks for listening to the radio program. The Rolls Royce Ghost (starting price \$325,000) is about as good as it gets – soft controlled ride, stunning performance and a beautiful interior with matching wood and leather throughout. For sports cars the McLaren GT (base price \$225,000) was blazingly fast but had a slightly more comfortable ride than other supercars I have driven. Not quite as expensive as the Mercedes Benz GLE AMG coupe, it is pretty amazing with its handcrafted 600 horsepower engine and stunning interior and a bargain starting price of \$115,000.



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## Events at the Blackstone River Canal

September and October events at Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, 287 Oak St., Uxbridge. All programs are free and open to the public. Bring water, wear sunscreen/bug spray, dress in layers, and wear good footwear. An adult must accompany children. Inclement weather cancels outdoor programs. For more information call 508-278-7604 or visit: <https://www.mass.gov/locations/harold-parker-state-forest>

**Kidleidoscope** - Friday, September 24, October 1, October 8, October 15, October 22, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Meet on the behind River Bend Farm Visitor Center for a nature themed story time, followed by a short nature walk and a craft activity. Meets rain or shine, during inclement weather program will move inside the Visitor Center. Appropriate for children aged 3-6.

**Sunset Hike to Lookout Rock** - Friday, September 24, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. Join us for a hike to watch the sunset over the Blackstone River Valley. This 3 mile round trip moderate hike along King Philips Trail will break at a scenic lookout. This forest trail has roots and rocks along the path. Flashlights or headlamps and

insect repellent recommended. Meet at 366 East Hartford Avenue, Uxbridge - Rice City Pond Parking Lot. Appropriate for ages 8 and up.

**Reading New England's Forests** - Saturday, September 25, October 30, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Join us as we learn about the historic stone walls and man-made features that make up our local forests as we hike along the Blackstone Canal to Goat Hill Lock. We talk about why these stone features are found across Massachusetts and the importance of preserving them to tell stories of a bygone New England. Approximately 2.5 miles on an uneven path. Appropriate for ages 8 and up.

**Upton State Forest Foliage Hike** - Friday, October 22, 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. Join us to explore the forest as it changes colors for the season on this 4 mile hike through Upton State Forest. We will be hiking past the scenic Whistling Cave and up the steep Grouse Trail. Program will meet at the CCC Headquarters building. This hike ranges from easy to difficult. Portions of the trail are hilly and steep. This forest trail has roots and rocks along the path. Appropriate for ages 10 and up.



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# Small Stones Festival of Arts presents free programs Oct. 15-24



GRAFTON - The public is welcome to enjoy an array of free literary and music programs, an art collection presentation and juror and artist talks during the 2021 Small Stones Festival of the Arts, the fourth annual juried fine art and photography exhibit.

Five regional arts organizations - Apple Tree Arts, the Worcester County Camera Club, the Blackstone Valley Art Association, the Shakespeare Club of Grafton and the Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra have collaborated to create the Festival and accompanying events.

The Festival opens Oct. 15 with a ceremony and reception announcing the winning artists at the exhibition at the Great Hall, One Grafton Common, Grafton. The extended exhibit and festival events run Oct. 15-24.

This year's music offering "Mirror Images - Art and Music through The Periods" hosted by Paul Surapine, founding executive/artistic director of the Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra and a distinguished faculty member of Apple Tree

Arts, will be held Oct. 23, 7:00 p.m. at the Congregational Church of Grafton, 25 Grafton Common, Grafton.

Tom Saupe, a long-time art collector with over 300 pieces in his collection, will discuss the ins and outs of collecting art in his lecture "Eclectic Eye: Collecting Art on a Limited Budget" Oct. 20, 6:00 p.m. at the Great Hall.

The Shakespeare Club of Grafton has organized several literary programs including a radio play, author-led book discussions and a talk by an educator illuminating the totalitarian effect of the corruption and manipulation of language using George Orwell's books.

Members of the Club and volunteer actors of Radio Active Theatre will perform several excerpts from "Spoon River Anthology," conceived and adapted by Charles Aidman based on poems by Edgar Lee Masters. The drama will be performed Oct. 16, 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. at the Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, Grafton.

Set in the cemetery of the fictional town of Spoon River in Central Illinois, deceased citizens tell the honest, often brutal stories of their lives in a free verse poem style closely resembling an epitaph. Published in 1915, the bestselling anthology is a classic American twentieth century book.

Radio Active Theatre (RAT)

produces radio and live programs under the aegis of Audio Journal's executive director Mary Frandsen and Catherine Thornton, a long-time member of both organizations. Audio Journal, a member of the Massachusetts Audio Information Network, serves those who are blind, visually impaired or print challenged. Catherine Thornton of the Club has directed the performance.

Critically acclaimed author Nicholas A. Basbanes and his daughter Barbara Basbanes Richter, accomplished educator and journalist will discuss their recently published books at a book discussion held Oct. 22, 7:00 p.m. at the Grafton Public Library.

Kirkus Reviews has called Mr. Basbanes book, "A Cross of Snow: A life of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow," a revelatory explanation of Longfellow's life and how he became a dominant force in American letters." Mr. Basbanes, an author of 10 nonfiction works and a former journalist and book editor, writes and lectures about authors, books and book culture. Ellis Henican of Newsday, said, "No living person has thought more about the extraordinary power of books than Nicholas Basbanes."

Ms. Richter's highly readable English translation of "Mademoiselle de Malepeire" by Fanny Reybaud (1802-1870) published by Bancroft



Nicholas Basbanes



Barbara Basbanes Richter



Dr. Daniel Mahoney

Press will bring recognition again to this almost forgotten French writer who was a best seller author for nearly 30 years and left an enchanting body of work. The bestselling novel published in 1854 set in France, a few decades after the revolution, tells the story of the mysterious, wealthy Ms. Malepeire, a beautiful, courageous woman ahead of her time, who renounced everything in the pursuit of freedom and happiness.

Daniel Mahoney, esteemed Assumption University political science professor's talk, "A Boot Stamping on a Human Face— Forever": Orwell on Truth, Tyranny and Human Nature" will be presented Oct. 23, 3:00 p.m. at the Grafton Public Library. Dr. Mahoney's discussion will focus mainly on the novel "1984" to help deepen people's understanding of what the author was trying to communicate about the true nature of human beings and the ongoing threats to the integrity of the human soul.

He wants the audience to discover what Orwell meant in a broader approach directed at the meaning of truth and the essence of human nature.

The lecture will bring a sustained focus to Orwell's pivotal work so attendees may arrive at their own conclusion about the current political climate and use Orwell's work as a guide to their own reflection.

Dr. Mahoney said, "The most terrible kind of politics believes human nature can be manipulated or simply transformed, that there is no enduring human soul, so human beings may be reengineered at will. In this understanding there is no objective distinction between truth and falsehood, right and wrong. In this understanding of things, there's a tendency to reinvent the past or almost erase it."

He wants us also to reflect, following Orwell, on how dangerous it is when we attempt to change the meaning of language and the structure of reality. "Orwell remains our teach-

er in no small part because his thought is finally unclassifiable. He was a democratic socialist who despised Communism as murderous and mendacious, an anti-colonialist and an unapologetic British patriot, an agnostic or atheist who defended a traditional or commonsensical view of right and wrong," he added.

The mission of Small Stones Festival of the Arts is to elevate the practice and appreciation of fine art and photography in the region. The Festival's fiscal sponsor is Grafton Arts, Inc., 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization.

The Festival appreciates the support of the Mass Cultural Council, as well as Cultural Councils of the towns of Grafton, Millbury, Northbridge, Shrewsbury, Sutton and Westborough; The Town House Tavern; Artscope and Yesod Foundation, Inc. For more information, visit <https://www.smallstonesfestival.org> or contact Ken Crater at [ken@grafftonarts.org](mailto:ken@grafftonarts.org)

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**Mark Marzeotti**

These numbers could make or break your mortgage loan approval.

When you apply for a mortgage loan, lenders want to make sure that you are a good credit risk. That means they like to know that you will pay back your loan on time without any problems during the repayment period.

There are a number of things lenders look at when they try to decide whether you're going to be a responsible borrower or not. But three key numbers are especially important, and they can make or break your loan application:

- Credit score
- Front-end debt-to-income (DTI) ratio
- Back-end DTI ratio

Here's why they matter.

**1. Credit score**

**Lions Shredapalooza recycles paper and electronics**

Everyone loves a "palooza" so the Uxbridge Lions are cashing in on the craze. Saturday, November 6, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, the Lions will hold their second recycling shred event of the year at the VFW parking lot on Route 16 and Cross Road



Uxbridge Lions volunteers assist unloading autos at semi-annual shred event.

**Thinking of Buying a Home? The three most important numbers mortgage lenders look at**

Your credit score is a three-digit number that sheds light on your entire borrowing history.

There are actually several different scores, including a FICO Score and VantageScore. But all credit scoring formulas use the same basic approach. They take into account:

- How much of your available credit you've used
- Your payment history
- Whether creditors have ever had to take legal action against you
- The types of borrowing you've done
- How much new credit you've applied for recently

After considering all of these criteria, you're assigned a score by one of the three major credit bureaus. This score typically ranges between 300 and 850. Scores below 660 (approximately) are considered to be poor or fair, while scores above 740 are considered to be very good or exceptional.

By looking at your credit score, lenders get quick insight into how you've dealt with debt in the past and how you're dealing with it now. While it's possible to qualify for some types of mortgage loans with low

credit, it can be more difficult, and you'll have fewer choices of lenders.

**2. Front-end DTI ratio**

Lenders also look at another important number when deciding whether you can afford the mortgage you want: your debt-to-income ratio (DTI).

Your debt-to-income ratio measures your debt relative to your income, but there are actually two different DTI ratios that matter.

Your front-end ratio is the first. It refers to the amount of your gross monthly income that will go towards housing costs if you qualify for the new mortgage. Housing costs include your mortgage payment, as well as taxes and homeowners insurance.

For example, if your gross income is \$5,000 and you want to buy a home that would come with total monthly costs of \$1,800, then your front-end DTI would equal \$1,800 divided by \$5,000 or .36. That's a 36% front-end DTI ratio.

In this case, you might have a hard time finding a mortgage lender, because most prefer your front-end ratio to be below 28%.

**3. Back-end DTI ratio**

Your back-end ratio is also a method of assessing the amount of financial obligations you'd have relative to your income if you were approved for a mortgage. But this doesn't just take housing costs into account - all of your other debts are also factored in.

To add to the above example, if you had monthly payments of \$1,800 for a house, \$200 for a car loan, and \$25 for a credit card, then your back-end DTI would equal the total of all those monthly payments divided by your gross income of \$5,000.

Since \$2,025 divided by \$5,000 is .405, your back-end ratio would be 40.5%. Most lenders want your back-end ratio to be below 36%. So again you might face challenges borrowing.

Of course, "most" isn't all, and there are some lenders that allow you to borrow with a higher debt-to-income ratio as well as with a low credit score. But you need to consider both the loan terms and whether your decision really makes sense before you move forward.

Committing too much of your

income to housing costs could put you in a financial bind, especially if you're in a lot of debt already. So, if your DTIs are above these recommended thresholds, you may want to wait to buy a home until you've paid down some of what you owe. Likewise, if your credit score isn't where you'd like it to be, then waiting a while to try to increase it could potentially pay off in the form of a lower rate and cheaper borrowing costs.

If you're considering buying a home, it's important to understand what these numbers are and why they matter so much.

That way, you can better judge the likelihood of getting approved for a loan before you decide whether you're ready to buy a house.

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**Qualifications and Skills:** Knowledge of Mack, Cummins, GMC, Chevrolet trucks. Knowledge of troubleshooting/diagnostic tools. Experience as a heavy duty truck mechanic. Ability to work safely in a shop environment. Mechanical skills should include, but are not limited to, mechanical, electrical, pneumatic and hydraulic troubleshooting and repair of trucks and equipment.

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