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March 2022

An Exciting Derby Race for Bellingham Scout Pack 118

By JENNIFER RUSSO

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) began the tradition of the Pinewood Derby in 1953, and ever since, children across the country take part in creating cars that they hope will be the fastest down the track. Each scout is given the same kit to work with, along with very clear requirements for materials, weight, and more. Even though they all start the same, the scouts are responsible for (with a little adult help) conceptualizing, carving, and sanding their cars, painting them, installing the wheels and axels, and including weights and other design elements to create what they think will be the winning build.

The result is a group of many uniquely made shapes and designs, each looking very different from the next. How fast the car is depends on weight distribution, aerodynamic shape, and position of



This year's top three Pinewood Derby winners: C.J. Schmaelzle, Landon Barrows and Ryder Barrows

the wheels.

Though last year's race was completely virtual due to pandemic caution, this year the loved event took place both in person and live streaming. The event was held at the Bellingham Town Hall and aired on Facebook. Each scout den's race was held at specific times. That den's scouts and their guardians were welcome

to watch their cars race and cheer themselves (and each other) on. The kids anxiously awaited the release of the cars down the track and, though they all had masks on, their smiles and excitement were apparent.

DERBY

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Bellingham Football Team Honored at Banquet

Elder Wins MVP Award For 3rd Time

By KEN HAMWEY,
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Bellingham High's football banquet at the Coachmen's Lodge on Feb. 6 honored last fall's team that overcame injuries and inexperience to qualify for a berth in the playoffs.

Coach Dan Haddad's 2021 squad finished with a 4-7 record but managed to keep the Blackhawks' playoff streak alive. A 35-21 loss to Medway was the program's third straight post-season appearance. Comprised mostly of sophomores and juniors, BHS was the only Tri Valley League Small Division team to defeat Dover-Sherborn, the eventual Small Division champion.

The graduation of 15 seniors from the Fall-2 squad also left the team without nine starters on offense and minus eight starters on defense.



Coach Dan Haddad, left, and Gavin Elder are all smiles after the quarterback won the team's MVP award for the third year in a row.
(Photo by LeighAnne Pendlebury)

"We were 3-2 after beating Dover-Sherborn," Haddad recalled. "We started out well but

BANQUET

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DERBY

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"The Pinewood Derby is an annual event that the scouts look forward to every year. It's a great opportunity for them to not only work on a fun project with their family to build their car, but also to cheer along with their fellow scouts at the races. We were very happy to have the races back to being in-person this year, which I know the scouts were excited about, especially through all the challenges of the last year," says Cubmaster Matt Schmaelzle.

The race is purely gravitational, with a steep track and three lanes. The cars drop down and then momentum moves them across the flat part of the track through to the finish line. Every car is raced down a different lane for each leg of the race, and then the winners are calculated for each den. Each den's winner then races against each other until there is one 1st place winner and runner-ups of 2nd and 3rd place called.



Tiger Cubs pose for the camera after their race (pictured L to R: Jackson Pluta, Aurora Breton, Jackson Tagliaferri, Jackson DaCunha, Lucas Bolio and Austin Donato)

Another fun side activity at the race, Scouts and their parents were encouraged to vote for various superlatives, such as: most colorful car, sportiest looking car, fastest looking car, and most unique shape, among others.

This year, there were 22 cars entered to race. The final top three winning honors went to:

- 1st – C.J. Schmaelzle**
2nd – Landon Barrows
3rd – Ryder Barrows

And individual den placements were as follows:

Lions/Tigers – Ryder Barrows won first place, Aurora Breton won second, and Jackson DaCunha won third.

Wolves/Bears – Ike Burns won first place, Joseph Tagliaferri



C.J. Schmaelzle gives the ok for the next race to begin (also pictured: Colin Barrows)

won second, and Joseph Jencks won third.

Webelos 1 – Landon Barrows won first place, Codey Pederson won second, and Braden Sherry won third.

Webelos 2 – C.J. Schmaelzle won first place, Colin Barrows won second, and A.J. Hagopian won third.

The pack leaders thanked everyone and closed with announcements that the Blue & Gold graduation ceremony

would be scheduled shortly, as well as a ceremony for those Cub Scouts "crossing the bridge" into the Boy Scout level. Additionally, there are many exciting activities being planned now that the weather is improving, such as summer camp, fishing trips, hiking excursions and more.

If you are interested in signing your child up for the Bellingham Scouts or to learn more about the program, please visit BeAScout.org

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BANQUET

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went on a roller-coaster ride — up and down the rest of the way. We lacked consistency because of our youth and inexperience.”

Haddad, however, was upbeat about his team’s future.

“The kids knew they were on a learning curve, but they still gave us great effort,” he said. “I’m optimistic about next season. I never feel sad going into a banquet. It’s a time when we celebrate our senior players and show appreciation to our younger kids.”

Eleven of Bellingham High’s varsity players were honored and both the freshman and jayvee teams had four players each cited for their efforts.

The most notable award-winner was senior quarterback Gavin Elder, a captain who captured the Offensive Player of the Year Award and his third straight MVP trophy. Elder is the only player in the program’s history to win the MVP award three times.

“Gavin had to assume running-back duties because three of our backs were injured and Blake Simpson, our best halfback on the unbeaten Fall-2 team, graduated,” Haddad noted. “As for the MVP award, it’s no doubt his greatest achievement. Gavin was called on to be a huge part of the offense, and he was will-

ing to do everything for the team. His toughness and his leadership on the field and in the classroom are admirable.”

Elder’s passing and running ability have earned him a scholarship to St. Anselm’s, a Division 2 college in Manchester, N.H.

“It’s awesome to be selected for the Offensive Player of the Year Award and to win the MVP Award for the third year,” Elder said. “I’m glad I was able to stay healthy and give my best effort. Much of the credit for winning both awards goes to our coaches and my teammates. We faced lots of adversity, losing players to injury and coming up short in some close games. I was blessed to be able to play in every game.” Elder added he was proud to be part of the leadership team and pleased to help the squad qualify for the playoffs.

Following are the other 10 varsity award-winners with comments from Haddad:

BHS Coaches Award (James Altomonte) — “Didn’t play much but he’s everything a coach wants in a player. He’s the first in the film room after a tough loss. A character guy who takes responsibility.”

Blackhawk Award (Sean Dutremble) — “He never stops working. Quiet competitor who always gets the job done. Sean and hard work are a great partnership.”

Unsung Hero Award (Donovan Turner) — “Has a high IQ, both in football and in academics. Another quiet player who’ll do anything to help the team.”

Most Improved Award (Jeff Caruso) — His intense work ethic makes him a solid guard and defensive end. He’s physically and mentally tough.”

Rookie of the Year (Liam Cunningham) — “An eighth-grader who played offensive tackle. He’s fearless, tough and never stops smiling. He truly has great passion for football.”

Defensive Lineman of the Year (Ethan Silva) — “A two-way starter at tackle, Ethan is physical. A great asset who’s versatile, able to play center, guard or tackle.”

Defensive Linebacker/Back of the Year (Connor Kelley) — “Connor reads plays well at linebacker and relies on pursuit. A ball-hawk, he’s strong and very energetic.”

Defensive Player of the Year (Sean Edwards) — “He’s Mr. Go because he’s in such great physical shape. Gives 100 percent.”

Offensive Lineman of the Year (Mark Imparato) — “A tremendous leader who never gets outworked. Stays after practice to sharpen his skills at guard. Has the respect of teammates and coaches.”

Offensive Back/Receiver of the Year (Calvin Polchlopek) — “He made the biggest turnaround and earned his playing time. A talented receiver with good hands who gave us a deep threat.”

Junior varsity awards were presented to Connor Bernard (Lineman of the Year); Brady Pelletier (Defensive Player of the Year); Gabriel Egan (Offensive Player of the Year); and Zach Berkeley (Team MVP). “This group played hard every game,” Haddad said. “They grew as a group, were fearless and they were physically and mentally tough.”

Freshman awards were given to Hunter Knox (Lineman of the Year); Wyatt Callery (Defensive Player of the Year); Brady Carroll (Offensive Player of the

Year); and Jack Davidson (Team MVP). “All four of these players have a work ethic that is second to none,” Haddad said.

Silva and Mike Spera will be repeat captains next season as seniors and they’ll be joined by Turner, who’ll be a junior captain.

Haddad had high praise for his staff of assistant coaches that include Chris Haddad (defensive coordinator); Danny Haddad (offensive coordinator); Pat McGovern (offensive, defense line); Derek Fernandes (quarterbacks, safeties); John Imparato (sub-varsity head coach); Jamie Dutremble (assistant sub-varsity coach); Dan Gavin (sub-varsity defensive coordinator, line coach); and Parker Silva (sub-varsity offensive line coach).

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A sláinte to Bellingham’s Irish Catholics

By Ashley Kazijian

With St. Patrick’s Day around the corner, many of us are getting ready to head to a nearby pub for a green colored beer or Guinness, or to the dinner table for a home-made boiled dinner of corned beef, cabbage, and potatoes. Regardless of ancestry, these cultural celebrations are widely practiced and enjoyed, especially in Boston. But, like many other holidays, St. Patrick’s Day is deeply rooted in religious significance. Held annually on March 17th, (the death date of Saint Patrick- the patron saint of Ireland), the holiday commemorates the arrival of Christianity in Ireland.

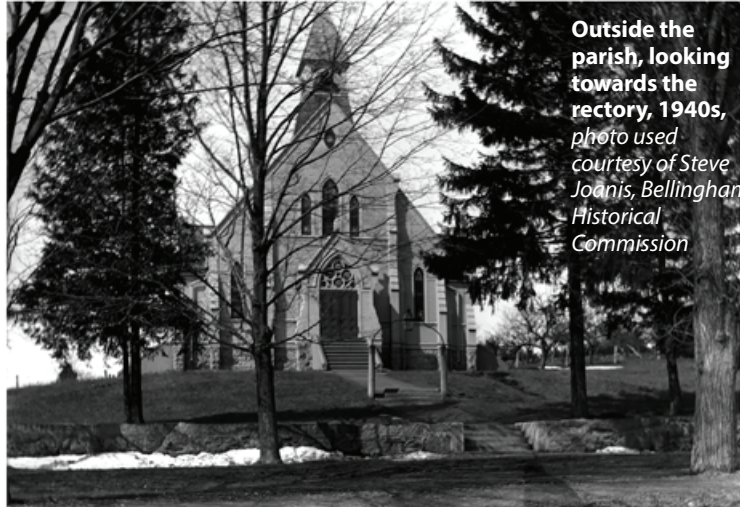
Hopping back across the pond to Massachusetts- home to many Irish folks; many being descendants of Irish immigrants who came over during the famine. The Irish saturated Massachusetts with their beloved culture and their commitment to faith. While most of us are familiar with the cultural aspect, you might be wondering how the Irish impacted the practice of Catholicism in our little town?



Saint Brendan’s Catholic Church, 1940s, photo used courtesy of Steve Joanis, Bellingham Historical Commission

Bellingham is home to two Catholic parishes: Saint Blaise Catholic Church and Saint Brendan Catholic Church. Steve Joanis, Vice Chair of the Bellingham Historical Commission, is a life-long Saint Brendan’s parishioner and local historian. His extensive research focuses on the history of Saint Brendan’s, but also highlights the slow acceptance of Catholicism in Massachusetts and the challenges faced by early local Catholics.

Catholicism was not widely accepted in Massachusetts until after the American Revolution, according to Joanis. According to his research, there were about 100 Catholics in Boston in 1778 and this number increased to over 7,000 by 1829. Throughout the 1800s, the number of Catholics in Boston continuously increased as did the diocese and number of Catholic Churches in response. The Irish famine (1848-49) led to an influx of Irish im-



Outside the parish, looking towards the rectory, 1940s, photo used courtesy of Steve Joanis, Bellingham Historical Commission

migrants in Massachusetts, with jobs and railroads bringing many new Irish Catholics to the Milford area. Because the famine resulted in so many Irish Catholics in the area, the number of Catholic parishioners largely increased, creating more of a need for places of worship. Since there was no parish in Bellingham until 1895, Catholics would travel to surrounding towns to practice their faith (this included traveling for weddings and baptisms). According to Joanis, the Bellingham Irish Catholics would gather and pray

for a parish of their own on a hill that later became the location for Saint Brendan’s Catholic Church. On September 8th, 1895, Bellingham was finally blessed with its very own Catholic parish. So, if you’re taking part in any cultural celebrations this St. Patrick’s Day, or if you’re a member of the local Catholic community, raise a green beer or Guinness to sláinte (“cheers” in Irish) the Irish immigrants that brought with them many things our community continues to enjoy and cherish.



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The financial industry, in particular investment management and financial planning, place limited emphasis on helping clients spend money.

There are reasons for this, advisors paid solely by % of Assets Under Management don't want assets taken out, as it results in them earning less. For financial planners, it's easier (and safer) with default emphasis on saving more for distant goals, as spending now during windows of opportunity makes analysis harder and recommendation outcomes realized.

To be fair, there are individuals who spend too much and need help saving for their priorities.

That said, my PSA for those adhering to a financial plan: **Book your travel now.**

If you think inflation in autos, housing and materials are bad, wait a few months to see the surge of pent-up demand flooding the static availability within the travel and hospitality industry.

Evidence is already showing in summer rentals, airfares, hotels, and earnings reports.

For example, Disney's October-December quarter reported \$7.2B in Parks & Experiences division, \$1B more than expected and double the prior-year quarter. And don't think The Mouse fails to understand its pricing power when demand surges.

Yes, the time has come for experience spending with family, friends, and loved ones.

What is Experience Spending?

A concept of having greater value for experiences versus things. Studies find people misjudge what purchases will make them happy, how happy they will feel, and how long that happiness lasts.

Spending money on experiences creates more and longer-



Glenn Brown

lasting happiness than spending on material goods, which people are more prone to comparisons and buyer's remorse. Also, objects tend to deteriorate with time, while experiences can cre-

ate lasting memories and become part of your identity.

Timing of experiences is critical.

Consider the family vacation to Disney, it is a different shared experience for all going when kids are 6 & 8 versus late teens.

Or the HS senior and family trip you've been meaning to do. What's their availability (and desire) once in college to go on a family trip with mom and dad? That window's closing.

Experience Spending isn't limited to just travel.

Consider having many small pleasures over a few big ones. Saving up for a big purchase is admirable. But in terms of your happiness, is this the best way to allocate finite resources? For many, happiness is more closely aligned to the frequency and variations as opposed to intensity.

Ask yourself if you'd be happier with a few big-ticket items, such as a luxury car, or rather indulge frequently in small purchases, such as cooking clubs, memberships, kid's activities, and spa days?

In closing, it's important to treat yourself and those you love along the journey of financial independence, as those opportunities and their impact may not be present later. For many, now is the time to act, expect sticker shock or compromise, and enjoy making new memories.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.



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Benjamin Agency Keeps Focus on the Customer

BY DAVID DUNBAR

"I went to the Benjamin Agency to switch my car and home insurance from another company to Allstate," writes Facebook poster John B. "The entire experience was really well done with a friendly and amiable staff in a couple hours. And they handled cancelling my policies with the old company."

This is the kind of feedback co-owner Cara Benjamin loves to read. She and her mother, Celeste, opened the agency in 2006 in North Smithfield, RI. In 2020, they opened a second office in Bellingham at 72 South Main Street.

"I tend to focus on the customer and take pride in being engaged and involved with all aspects of the business," explains Cara. "We're proud to represent a company that has been serving customers for more than 90 years. At our Allstate agency, we specialize in auto, home, business, life and retirement."

The Benjamin Agency has been designated by Allstate as a



Premier Service agency and has a 4.6-star rating by its customers.

"Giving great customer service is our top priority," says Cara. "We do that by making sure the customers know their options, getting customers' questions answered quickly and accurately, and making transactions easy for the customer. Owners are on site every day."

Facebook poster Jose G. adds: "We have had a very good experience with this insurance agency. The attention is excellent! We have a home and auto insurance package, and we couldn't have found better insurance than this! Thanks Cara and family!"

"The most rewarding part of our job is providing life insurance to customers," says Cara. "Explaining to them how important it is to protect their biggest asset which is future income of a lost

Business spotlight

loved one. Being there to deliver the life insurance death benefit and watch how the family reacts when they know their spouse/parent/loved one has taken care of them."

Running the Agency, and staying in close contact with customers, isn't the only thing Cara does. She's also involved in the local community. "I volunteer and assist with The Moran-Ventre Charitable Foundation and the Wildlife Rehabilitators Association of Rhode Island. I'm overwhelmed with joy when I contribute to helping non-profits bring awareness to a worthy cause."

When she's outside of the office, she enjoys spending time with her husband and daughter Mia. "We have a full house which includes a cat, a bunny and our puggle Nina," reports Cara. "Our love for animals doesn't end there. We also have chickens and ducks. And when I need to unwind, I enjoy all sorts of gardening, particularly vegetables."

"One of my favorite things about living in the Northeast," she says "is the opportunity to enjoy the beauty of nature we have during all four seasons. There's plenty to keep me busy



Cara Benjamin (left) and her mother Celeste opened The Benjamin Agency in North Smithfield, RI, in 2006 and two years ago opened an office in Bellingham. They offer Allstate insurance including for home, business, life, and retirement.

at home, but when I have the time, I also like traveling around the country to experience new scenery."

"We're a proud family-run agency and we are excited to meet and help families in Rhode Island and Massachusetts. I strive to be a trusted Allstate agent for the community. My staff and I

work hard to provide excellent customer service, so customers feel heard. We enjoy making a difference in people's lives."

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BWOT – Building Confidence While Helping the Community

BY MARJORIE TURNER HOLLMAN

Bellingham's chapter of Women of Today (WOT), a national organization, has been working in town as a non-profit since 1985 to promote community service, provide personal growth opportunities, and offer leadership training for women eighteen and older. Long-time members of Bellingham Women of Today (BWOT) Sue Beattie, Dee Clark and Melonie Mancini met recently to talk about how BWOT has made a difference in their lives, both in bringing them out of their shells socially and pointing them in more confident directions personally.

Many of us are familiar with their annual events such as Breakfast with Santa, Santa's Elves project for families in need, and Muffins with the Easter Bunny. Other less visible programs, yet greatly valued by those who have benefitted in our local community include Easter Baskets for seniors, in partnership with Meals on Wheels, an annual scholarship for high school seniors, and other more personal efforts with impact on individuals.

Beattie said, "I used to sit in a corner. My sister-in-law was a member and was having such fun. It took me a few years to decide I wanted to be more active, and now I have a national position with the organization."

Clark offered examples of the way the group supports mem-



Bellingham Women of Today members put together gift bags. From left, Ann Simpson, Phyllis Russell, Dee Clark, Sue Beattie and Julie Hutchinson.

bers who might be uncomfortable speaking in public. "These small challenges to speak up and get positive feedback carry over into our personal lives. I found it helpful in boosting self-esteem and simply helping me become more comfortable working with others."

Mancini listed some personal development opportunities available both at the monthly meetings and when helping out in their local service projects. She described impromptu speaking opportunities the meetings offer. "These can be simple topics or even just talking about what the member is working on," she said.

Clark noted she was one of those members who took a while in deciding to become more active in the group. She said, "I was one of those 'back and forth' members. But members make it easy to participate. We offer to pick someone up, we

reach out, we help others. It's a good feeling to volunteer and make a difference."

Mancini explained why she joined the group. "I was new in town and wanted to make friends. I found that once you participate in a project, it's fun." She continued, "I've made a lot of connections in the community, friends, and I wanted to offer an example for my kids about the value of volunteering."

The women spoke at length about how being part of the group has made a difference



BWOT member Melonie Mancini, with Buckets of sunshine

both in their personal lives and the lives of others they have worked with. There is not room in this article to list all the ways these women have benefitted both themselves and others.

Visitors are welcome to see what the group is about and learn how the group helps others, while benefiting each member. Bellingham Women of Today meets second Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Po-

lice Station conference room on Blackstone Street. They pointed out that the parking is well-lit, and handicapped accessible. Members use the time to review upcoming events, work on service projects together, and offer opportunities for personal development in a safe space. For more information, contact Dee Clark at joedee1986@verizon.net or (508) 966-4268

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Bellingham Dems to Caucus

The Bellingham Democratic Town Committee will hold a Caucus on Saturday, March 12 at 10 a.m. at the Municipal Center. At this time, we are planning on a hybrid meeting of part Zoom, part in-person. The purpose of the Caucus is to elect delegates to the 2022 Nominating Conven-

tion June 3-4 in Worcester. All registered and pre-registered Democrats may run for a delegate or alternate seat. The Caucus is open to the public. For more information call Kevin at (508) 533-1600, visit Facebook or the website bellinghamdems.com.

BBA to Hold Membership Drive Lunch March 9

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www.bellinghambusinessassociation.org
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Yoga at the VFW Starting Up Again This Month

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

Yoga is generally not a word you associate with the VFW, but that seems to be changing in Bellingham. You can sign up for a yoga class on Wednesdays, starting March 9th, at 6 p.m., you at the Bellingham VFW 7272. Some of the proceeds benefit the post.

"We launched it back in September," says David Dunbar, who also teaches at the Adirondack Club in Franklin three days a week and at the senior center in Bellingham. "My son is a member of the VFW. Tom Lane, the Commander, asked him if they should offer yoga here at the post."

And so, the class began. Dunbar teaches Kripalu Yoga. The instructor, who, before the pandemic, ran corporate yoga classes for CVS, Textron and at Blue Cross, says "I loved it, and I still love it, but I'm not teaching as many classes now." Since Dunbar didn't know who was going to show up, he designed the class to be accommodating to both those who are



Yoga at the VFW will run again at Bellingham VFW Post 7272 on Wednesdays, at 6 p.m., starting March 9th.

beginners as well as those with more experience.

"If you knew nothing about yoga, you could still go to this class and not feel left out," says Dunbar. "Some people will show up for these classes, and they're really experienced yogis."

Anyone can take the class, including the vets, and some members of the post have taken part, says Dunbar.

"(These) veterans are soldiers, they fought in foreign wars," says Dunbar. "The ones that do take it notice a very positive effect on their bodies. They probably suffered some trauma, and we can work on that and stress level, anxiety, all of that can be worked on. It's not just about touching your toes."

The idea changes up a stereotype of the traditional veteran who might be hurting and goes to the VFW to drink with buddies, says Dunbar. He points out yoga seems to be accepted lately in the veteran community.

"Nationally, the VFW is offering programs that include yoga, and it's under well-being or health care," he says.

To learn more about "Yoga at the VFW," visit the Facebook page under the same name. Classes begin March 9th, can run with a minimum of 15 participants, and if you sign up for eight classes, the cost is only \$7.50 a class. You can also pay at the door. The Bellingham VFW Post 7272 is located at 940 S. Main St., Bellingham.



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Newly expanded storage facility Key Storage opens in nearby Uxbridge

By CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Key Storage, a newly expanded and updated storage facility, is under the new ownership of MetroWest residents Ed Kelly and Kevin Price. The Uxbridge facility, formerly known as Capron Self Storage, now has triple the number of storage units, and it features several updates designed to improve both access and security. The 50 Depot St. site can be conveniently reached in about 15-20 minutes via several interstates.

Kelly and Price, who have extensive construction backgrounds and also operate a commercial solar panel installation company, looked on self-storage as a natural fit for their next business venture. One of their solar customers, Rocco Addeo, is the former owner of the Uxbridge storage facility. Addeo had originally purchased the site with the intention of expanding and selling the property, and he involved the pair in conversations about the facility's future. "So, Ed and I discussed the idea of jumping in," Price explains, "We ran the numbers, and they made sense. We approached Rocco and said, 'We'd like to be your buyer,' and here we are."

The Uxbridge site now has over 300 units, including a new temperature-controlled building and outdoor storage for RVs, boats and campers. Accessibility has also been improved with newly paved access lanes, full-perimeter fencing and an automatic entry gate. Key Storage offers a variety of unit sizes for both the temperature-controlled interior spaces and the drive-up units. Customers can access their unit 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and they can seamlessly rent and pay for units online at [keystorage1.com](#) — a contactless transaction that is especially appealing amid COVID-19 concerns.

In the spring, Key Storage will add solar panels to all its rooftops and will build a free-standing canopy for RV and boat storage, also with a solar-powered roof.

In addition to these features, Kelly and Price stress that they are longtime residents, so rather than dealing with a corporate entity, customers are instead interacting with local owners who genuinely care about their experience. As opposed to some older

Business spotlight

facilities, Key Storage is brand-new, clean, well-lit and secure, they add. Customers "can feel confident that when they place their belongings in our trust that we've taken every measure to deliver a secure, convenient and comfortable facility for them," Price says.

When it comes to the local community, Kelly and Price are proud to be supporting the Uxbridge Community Gardens by sponsoring five garden plots this upcoming growing season for families in need.

During the pandemic, with many people tackling house projects and cleaning out basements and garages, self-storage facilities have been a great help to many households, Kelly and Price say. Self-storage is also popular with people who are in the process of moving or for college students who need to store their dorm furniture between semesters. Key Storage also rents units to other businesses like moving companies and contractors.



Key Storage, a newly expanded storage facility in Uxbridge, now has over 300 units.

KEY STORAGE

Kelly says they are very excited about this new business venture, and he and Price are actively looking for a site where they might construct another facility. "The recurring income model complements our construction model," Price adds. "So, it's a great way for us to diversify." To continue educating themselves about the industry, they have also joined the New England Self Storage Association, which has been a helpful source of expert knowledge as

they dig into the field.

Kelly and Price look forward to serving more residents and

encourage potential customers to visit [Keystorage1.com](#), call (508) 278-3846 or email info@keystorage1.com for more information. Their onsite office hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday by appointment.



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Meet Deborah Sampson.

By DAVID DUNBAR

You won't find her at a local Starbucks or Market Basket. She died April 29, 1827, in Sharon, MA, after serving 17 months in the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War. She was one of a very few women who presented herself as a man, as Robert Shirtliff. No women were allowed in the Army at the time.

She enlisted in Bellingham where nobody knew her. She first tried enlisting in Taunton, but she lived nearby and was recognized and then fled. So, she joined the Light Infantry Company headquartered in Bellingham.

Sampson and many noteworthy women have been celebrated over the years, particularly during Women's History Month in March.

"When I first learned of Deborah Sampson," says Bellingham Librarian Bernadette Rivard, "it was a fascinating story of a woman who overcame obstacles and was motivated to fight for her country. She wouldn't sit on the sidelines, but thought instead



"I can contribute, I should'."

Sampson was born on December 17, 1760 in Plympton, MA to Jonathan and Deborah Sampson. An impoverished family, the Sampsons had seven children. Deborah's father, Jonathan, abandoned the family. Deborah worked as an indentured servant, then as a teacher. Physically, she is described as tall, strong, and agile but plain, with brown hair and eyes; she was intelligent, with a strong knowledge

Deborah Sampson served 17 months in the Continental Army during the American Revolutionary War, enlisting in Bellingham. Photo sources: Left, Frontispiece of *The Female Review: Life of Deborah Sampson, the Female Soldier in the War of Revolution*, Right, Wikipedia

of politics, theology, and war.

At five feet, nine inches she was taller than the average man. She was described as "tall, strong, and not delicately feminine."

And so, she enlisted using her oldest brother's name (he died before she was born). "Of one thing I am certain, I never wanted to be a boy or a man. I was content in my femininity," reports the book *Soldier's Secret* by Sheila Solomon Klass. "What I always wanted to be was the equal of any boy. Tell me if that is a sin."



She saw action in New York against Loyalists and Native Americans. That same year, she was injured in Tarrytown, but escaped discovery by removing a musket ball from her own leg with a pen knife and sewing needle. There was another ball which she could not remove and it stayed with her for life.

In 1793, she contracted brain fever in Philadelphia; Dr Barnabas Binney discovered that she was a woman. Though he did not expose her, he did make arrangements for her discharge. As a result, she was honorably discharged in October 1783. While Deborah was away at war, she was expelled from her Bap-

tist congregation for dressing in men's clothing and enlisting as a soldier.

After her discharge, Deborah moved in with her aunt, Alice Walker, in Stoughton, MA. She continued to dress as a man, passing herself off as her "brother, Ephraim," until she met local farmer Benjamin Gannet. The two married in April 1785 and raised four children: three of their own and one adopted child. Faced with financial problems, Deborah became one of the first female lecturers, describing her military experiences in different cities throughout the northeast.

In 1813, her son built their family home at 300 East Street, Sharon, MA. Deborah died on April 29, 1827 in her family home. She was buried in Rock Ridge Cemetery, located on the same street. Following her death, her husband Benjamin sought and became the first man to be rewarded pension benefits as her widower. And today, there is a statue of Deborah at the Sharon Public Library.

If you'd like to learn more about Deborah Sampson, Bellingham Librarian Rivard suggests these books which are available at the library: *The Life of Deborah Sampson* by John Adams Vinton, *Soldier's Secret* by Sheila Solomon Klass, and *Deborah Sampson* by Rick Burke.

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CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF PETITION FOR APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIAN FOR
INCAPACITATED PERSON PURSUANT TO G.L. c. 190B, §5-304

Docket No. N022P0288GD

In the matter of: Tyler J Best
Of: Bellingham, MA

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, a petition has been filed by
Alicia Weddeke of Bellingham, MA in the above captioned matter alleging that
Tyler J Best is in need of a Guardian and requesting that **Alicia Weddeke of Bellingham,
MA** (or some other suitable person) be appointed as Guardian to serve on the bond.

The petition asks the court to determine that the Respondent is incapacitated, that the
appointment of a Guardian is necessary, and that the proposed Guardian is appropriate. The
petition is on file with this court and may contain a request for certain specific authority.

You have the right to object to this proceeding.

If you wish to do so, you or your attorney
must file a written appearance at this court on or before **10:00 A.M.** on the return date of
03/16/2022. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to file the
written appearance if you object to the petition. If you fail to file the written appearance by the
return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you. In addition to filing
the written appearance, you or your attorney must file a written affidavit stating the specific
facts and grounds of your objection within 30 days after the return date.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-
named person's right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs
or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may
make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person
cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. Patricia Gorman, First Justice of this Court.

Date: February 10, 2022

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Senior Center Programs Continue in Spite of COVID-19

By KEN HAMWEY,
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Josie Dutil, who's approaching her fourth year as the Senior Center Director, remains positive while managing the day-to-day activities at the facility during the COVID-19 pandemic that's been ongoing for two years.

The 54-year-old native of Montreal firmly believes there's light at the end of the tunnel.

"All of this (pandemic) may have happened so we can access a deeper appreciation of all that we have in Bellingham," she said. "It's made us realize that we can do hard things. I'm confident good things will come out of all that we've been through."

When the coronavirus began in March 2020, the center closed, but help was still being offered. "We helped seniors with fuel assistance, food stamps, housing issues and food and grocery deliveries," Dutil said. "A staff person was on duty at all times. In June that year, transportation to doctors' appointments started again."

The staff returned in July and during that time frame a tent, grill and outdoor furniture were purchased for weekly cookouts conducted by the Bellingham Elder Service Group (BESG).

When January and February rolled around in 2021, programming again was stopped, but now, with masks a must inside the building, seniors are back to enjoying more activities than what was available pre-pandemic.

Programming that's available includes pool, bingo, card games, Tai Chi, Yoga, Enhanced Fitness, motion to music and supportive day care. Other activities offered are knitting, quilting, learn to paint, spiritual book club and mahjong. "The only program that has not returned is chorus," Dutil noted.

The grant process, which helps to sustain programs and projects, hasn't faded into the background because of COVID. Far from it.

The center has received grants for construction of an outdoor pavilion, the drive-by-lunch program, caregiver support and enhanced fitness.

"We received \$15,000 from Amazon for the pavilion, which is used for cookouts and other outdoor functions," Dutil said. "The State Formula Grant subsidized the rest of the cost. The drive-by-lunch program started, thanks to a CHNA6 grant. Now it's funded by private donations and occasional small grants. A caregiver support grant from the Mass. Council on Aging provided \$7,800 to supportive day services so caregivers can take a break. A CHNA6 grant for \$8,300 helped Bellingham residents offset the cost of Enhanced Fitness for a one-year period."

Grants, donations and possibly some Town Meeting funding will play a role in the senior center's kitchen expansion. "Plans are in the works for a commercial kitchen," Dutil said. "We want to



Josie Dutil's adoration and affection for seniors stems from her relationship with her parents, especially her 88-year-old mother, Maureen.

serve breakfast and lunches. Currently, we serve 35 lunches with the drive-by lunch program on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays but only 35 are available each of those days."

The cost of the project will be about \$300,000 and additional funding will be available from the American Rescue Plan Act.

"So much of the work we do depends on the commitment of so many caring and energetic volunteers and I can honestly say that Bellingham has some

of the best around," Dutil said. "We sometimes struggle with the magnitude of what volunteers do for this community and how we could possibly thank them."

The senior center always participates in scheduling a clinic for the seasonal flu but it was front and center in 2021 when a site was needed to provide the COVID-19 vaccine. Two clinics were held in March and April and a booster-shot clinic was held this year in January. "The senior center partnered with the health department and first responders for the first two clinics," Dutil noted.

Dutil estimates that about 400 Council on Aging (COA) members use the senior center on a regular basis and she says "a large majority of our seniors at the center are vaccinated."

Dutil labels her part-time and full-time staff members as "amazing, courageous people" for their teamwork in dealing with the pandemic. "They stepped up and did extraordinary things in extraordinary times," she emphasized. "They strive to im-

prove the lives of seniors every day."

Dutil, who majored in education at McGill University in Montreal, excelled as a college soccer player, achieving all-Canadian recognition. Before her hiring in Bellingham, she was the Health and Wellness Director for the North Attleboro Y.

When she took the reins in Bellingham, Dutil's vision was "to ensure that senior citizens are valued and that they're seen and heard."

One of her goals was to create space that makes people feel better leaving than when they entered. "And, I always want to be open to learning new things on a daily basis, about the work we do and my personal growth," she said.

Because she never utters any negativity about dealing with COVID, Dutil's optimism is contagious. And, she's emphatic when she says: "The staff and I will continue to do our best to serve seniors in a positive and optimistic setting."

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Polina Paskaleva, DO

Dr. Paskaleva enjoys counseling patients and their families on a wide range of health and lifestyle changes. Board certified in family medicine, her special interests include preventive care and ongoing management of chronic medical conditions and acute illnesses. Dr. Paskaleva earned her Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine at the New York Institute of Technology College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed her family medicine residency at Westchester General Hospital in Miami, FL. She is fluent in English and Bulgarian, and is proficient in Spanish.



Kristina McCarthy, PA-C

Kristina has over 20 years of experience in a variety of clinical settings, including family medicine, emergency medicine and occupational health. Kristina earned her Physician Assistant certificate from Springfield College/Baystate Health System and currently enjoys teaching Tufts University Physician Assistant students.

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2022

CAMP

GUIDE

How to handle the summer camp questions in the pandemic era

Children make cherished memories at summer camp, where many youngsters first discover passions and hobbies they will enjoy for the rest of their lives.

Summer 2020 was a camp season unlike any other. Some camps closed their doors due to the COVID-19 pandemic, while others downsized their offerings in an effort to keep campers safe while still providing them with a much-needed outlet. As the 2021 summer camp season approaches, parents may be a little less hesitant about sending their kids to camp than they were a year ago. The rollout of COVID-19 vaccines has helped millions of people return to some semblance of normalcy, and that rollout has put summer camp back in play for families.

Choosing a summer camp is not always so easy, and it might be especially tricky as the world slowly

continued on next page

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CAMP QUESTIONS

continued from previous page

emerges from the pandemic. The following are some tips for parents as they consider if camp is a good idea this summer.

- Consider your comfort level. It's understandable if parents are hesitant about sending their youngsters to camp this summer. In fact, some camps may still be closed while others may only offer limited day camps this summer. Parents should consider their comfort levels before enrolling kids in camp. Vaccines have proven effective, but COVID-19 hasn't gone away, and some regions have yet to vaccinate teenagers. Vaccines also have yet to be offered to children under 16. Parents can ask themselves how comfortable they are sending kids to camp, and if they're hesitant to do so they can explore their alternatives.
- Ask children if they want to go to camp. Everyone is experiencing some measure

of pandemic-related burnout, and that includes kids. Kids may be sick of wearing masks at school all day and, even if they have loved camp in the past, may not be looking forward to wearing masks all day at camp this summer. Others might not be experiencing such burnout and may see camp as a way to quell boredom at a time when boredom has seemingly lingered over every day. Either way, solicit kids' input and let them know their feelings matter regardless of which side of the fence they're on.

- Inquire about safety protocols. When researching summer camps, ask about the safety protocols each camp will have in place. Will masks be mandatory for both campers and staff? How much direct interaction will campers have with each other? Have staff members been vaccinated? What measures are being taken to keep kids safe? Camps should have detailed protocols and share those protocols with parents upon request.



- Ask about alternatives. If parents and/or children are hesitant about attending camp in person, ask camp officials if there will be any virtual events or programs this summer. Some camps may be organizing activities like craft projects online, and that can help kids overcome the boredom of being stuck at home all summer.

Summer camps may not be fully back to normal in 2021. However, families likely won't have to go without access to summer camps for the second consecutive summer.

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5 reasons why summer camp is a good choice for kids

Summer vacation offers students a respite from lessons and the routine of school. Children might once have eagerly awaited those final days of classes so they could lounge poolside, skip rocks across ponds and spend the long days



of the season playing with friends. But many of today's youngsters spend much of their summer vacations indoors playing with their digital devices.

Perhaps that's why one of the last vestiges of the classic summer vacation escape — summer camp — remains such a viable option for parents who want their children to get outdoors once the school year ends.

Although kids needn't be in camp all summer long, a week or two can benefit campers of all ages. The following are five reasons why summer camp might be the right fit this year.

1. **Explore talents.** Summer camps help young people explore their unique interests and talents. Under an organized, yet often easygoing, camp schedule, kids can dabble in sports, arts and crafts, leadership, community support, and so many other activities that may not be fully available to them elsewhere.
2. **Physical activity:** Lots of camps build their itineraries around physical activities that takes place outdoors. Campers may spend their time swimming, running, hiking, playing sports, climbing, and so much more. This can be a welcome change for kids accustomed to living sedentary lifestyles. Regular physical activity has many health benefits and can set a foundation for healthy habits as an adult.
3. **Gain confidence.** Day and sleepaway camps offer campers the opportunity to get comfortable in their own skin. Camps can foster activities in self-esteem by removing the academic measures of success and fill in with noncompetitive opportunities to succeed. Campers learn independence, decision-making skills and the ability to thrive outside of the shadow of their parents, siblings or other students.

4. **Try new things.** Camp gives children the chance to try new things, whether that's learning to cook, exploring new environments or embracing a new sport or leisure activity. Opening oneself up to new opportunities can build character and prove enlightening for children.
5. **Make new friends.** Camp is a great place to meet new people and make lifelong friends. Campers flood in from areas near and far. This provides kids with a chance to expand their social circles beyond their immediate neighborhoods and schools.

Camps benefit children in a variety of ways. Lessons learned in camp can strengthen values, build confidence, develop coping mechanisms when adversity strikes, and enable campers to make lifelong friends.



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Factors to consider before choosing a summer camp

Adults often look back fondly on their childhood experiences at summer camp. Camps can provide the opportunity to form lifelong friendships and discover rewarding hobbies that can enrich campers' lives for decades to come.

Choosing a summer camp is no small task, as the options at families' disposal range from overnight camps to weekday afternoon camps to camps that specialize in certain programs, such as music or dance. Cost also is likely to factor into families' decisions, as the American Camp Association notes that cost can vary greatly depending on which camp families choose. For example, the ACA notes that the average daily fee at a resident camp is \$85, while the same fee at a day camp is \$43.

When looking for a summer camp for kids, families should make the decision together. Kids should be involved in the selection process, as they're more likely to have an enjoyable camp experience if they had a say in where they will be

spending their summers. The following are some factors families should consider as they look for summer camps, courtesy of the ACA.

Kids' interests

The ACA urges parents to consider the child's interests and personality before choosing a summer camp. Parents might want their children to attend the same summer camp they visited as youngsters, but each child is different. Just because mom and dad liked a particular camp does not mean their children will. The ACA notes that summer camps should align with children's interests and maturity level.

Locale

Locale may only be a consideration for families considering overnight camps. Kids will likely be familiar with the locations of local day camps, but overnight camps might be set in mountain ranges, near the ocean or environments less



familiar to youngsters. Kids who love the ocean might benefit from oceanfront camps that focus on marine biology, boating or other activities involving

the water. In the same vein, youngsters who like camping and hiking might be more likely to embrace camps located in mountainous regions.

to commit their children to lengthy camp sessions, even if those sessions are close to home. If parents think their children can benefit from the same structure they're accustomed to during the school year, then an overnight camp that stretches for several weeks might be what they're looking for.

Summer camps give kids a chance to make memories that will last a lifetime. Choosing the right camp is an important decision that parents and kids should make together.

Session length

Camps may last as little as one week or up to a couple of months. Session length should be considered by families looking at both local day camps and overnight resident camps. Parents who want their children to enjoy a largely schedule-free summer might not want

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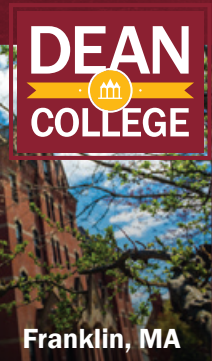
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Planning Board Continues Discussion of 152 Depot

By J.D. O'GARA

The Bellingham Planning Board continued the discussion of a 211,600 sq. foot property located at 152 Depot Street North in Bellingham on February 10th. The board discussed updates with the developer and addressed some prior concerns of abutters who had spoken up. The meeting began with questions to Officer Padula, of the Bellingham Police Department. William O'Connell, of the board, asked him what had been done concerning trucks parking on the side of the road from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m. Off. Padula responded that the Bellingham DPW had installed nine "no parking" signs, and that the BPD had conducted additional checks in the area.

"It seems like the situation has abated slightly," said Padula, "I believe some tickets have been issued, certainly warnings have been issued, and there's an increased police presence. We will continue to monitor (the area). O'Connell asked Padula if trucks were now staging in front of Walmart, to which Padula re-

plied that Walmart was generally friendly to the trucks, not always identifiable, so the answer would be hard to call, and he couldn't be 100% sure.

Moving on, John Kucich of Bowler Engineering, spoke regarding updates to the proposal. He noted that he believed every concern of residents had been accommodated, and that the plan was now much smaller. With the second proposed development abutting Box Pond Road eliminated, the focus was now on the north parcel. The proposed road in the back of the building was eliminated, the buffer where it was proposed was increased, and the company was committing to providing a signal at Depot St. and Hartford, or to donate \$250,000 toward what the town of Bellingham wants to do.

Frank DiPietro of BSC Group noted that the total building area was now reduced by 10,000 square feet, that all the comments had been barring one with a waiver request regarding curb inlet of catch basins placed on the driveway. He responded to

a question on whether standing trucks would leak gasoline into the ground water, noting that the structures this developer is using incorporates water quality units.

Greg Tocci, of Cavanagh Tocci (CTA), pointed out that the project adhered to all applicable noise limits of the Mass DEP and Bellingham noise bylaw, and that the company has provided the technical information requested in a January 13th letter. He concluded that the revised plan, with traffic on the opposite side of the building, is an improvement, and that the tech work as it stood was favorable in guarding against excessive sound.

A question was raised about a low area that would be draining into the drainage system, with the response being that the overflow, which would be unlikely to happen, would remain on the company site. Also, water quality units were sized larger than needed for the project.

With the truck spin table essential turning into a cul de sac, a question was raised on the queuing of trucks, to which the

response was there would be no queuing. The fire lane, paved, will also have signage that use is for emergency purposes. As for the air conditioning unit noise, the company noted each piece of equipment was included in the sound study. William O'Connell asked if a noise curtain was proposed or could be looked into, noting a desire to reduce noise from 6 p.m. until 5 a.m., and he was assured that the building's doors would be closed at that time.

Members of the public expressed concern about the operation of the center running 24/7, concerns over the traffic at Depot and Hartford and that 10 more streets might be blocked if backed up. One resident encouraged police to continue to enforce parking regulations, noted that some residents moved out of town due to parking, that home values decrease with more warehouses, and that when companies typically offer money ahead of time as mitigation, it could indicate the project has no benefit to residents. The same resident addressed pedestrian traffic on

Depot Street, noting that a third warehouse will just make traffic worse, and that the light proposed will not help.

Another resident questioned that, with backed up traffic already a problem, why is the town adding to the issue with more trucks, and all that spoke expressed skepticism that noise coming from inside the facility would not be a problem, noting that they regularly hear other businesses.

A Bellingham resident of Box Pond Drive noted she can hear trucks from Depot St., and that if this project was approved, the neighborhood would need sound barriers.

One abutter living on Depot St. expressed skepticism that there was proper drainage, noting that a gas easement behind her house was currently flooded, and used it as an example of the area soil not draining.

The public was thanked for its comments and encouraged to participate at the March 10th meeting, at which issues of traffic will be addressed.



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Tanglewood Marionettes Delight Youngsters at Stall Brook School

By J.D. O'GARA

On Thursday, February 17th, Stall Brook Elementary School hosted the Tanglewood Marionettes. The nationally touring marionette theater, based in New England, performed their award-winning presentation of *The Dragon King*, an underwater based on Chinese folklore. The show featured large, intricately hand-crafted sea- and other-creature marionettes, as well as colorful sets, integrated lighting and sound to students and staff.



This event was made possible by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council. For more information about the Bellingham Cultural Council, visit the Bellingham Town website at www.bellinghamma.org/cultural-council or find Bellingham Cultural Council on Facebook. To reach out, email BellCulturalCouncil@BellinghamMA.org

For more information on the Tanglewood Marionettes, visit <https://tanglewoodmarionettes.com>.



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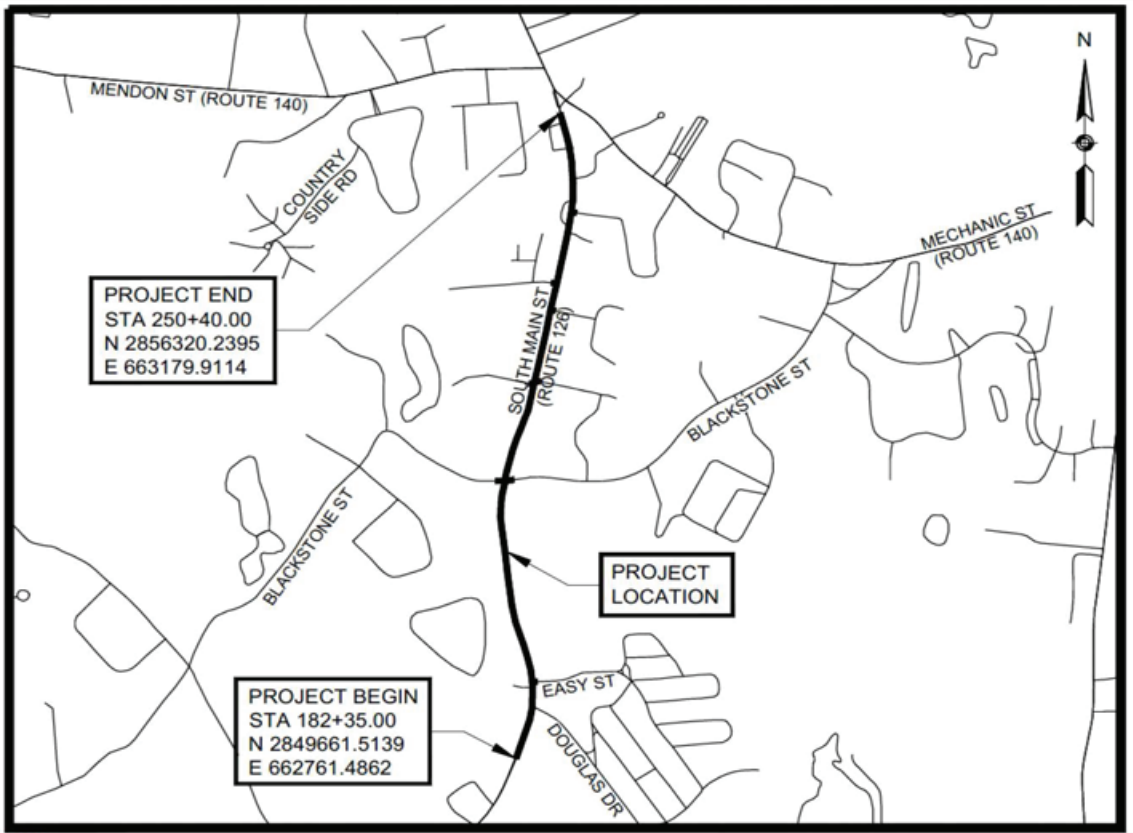
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\$6.9 million Roadway Improvement Project on Route 126 in Bellingham

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and the office of State Representative Michael J. Soter are announcing a \$6.9 million roadway improvement project for a segment of Route 126 in the town of Bellingham.

This project will rehabilitate the South Main Street (Route 126) corridor from Douglas Drive to just south of Mechanic Street (Route 140) by upgrading pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the corridor, reconstructing the pavement, updating signage and pavement striping, and replacing and upgrading the stormwater drainage system.

Specific project highlights will focus on improving mobility and safety of all roadway users along the 1.3-mile corridor. The existing sidewalks will be reconstructed, and an additional sidewalk will be included on the opposite side of the roadway throughout the project limits. Accessible ramps will be provided to meet current standards, and the roadway will be widened to provide five-foot shoulders for



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bicycle accommodations. A new updated pedestrian crossing signal and approach signage are planned at the midblock crossing at the Bellingham Middle School.

“We are proud to work with our municipal partners on projects like this throughout the Commonwealth,” said MassDOT Highway Administrator Jonathan Gulliver. “MassDOT continues to work to make improvements and invest in state and locally-owned transportation infrastructure.”

“This is a tremendous opportunity for the Town of Bellingham,” commented State Representative Michael J. Soter. “With this funding, we will en-

tirely transform almost a mile and a half of one of the busiest roadways in Bellingham. The repair and addition of sidewalks and implementation of bicycle lanes will promote useability as well as improve the safety of local students, pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists alike. I’ve advocated for this project for years, and I’m eager to see the residents of Bellingham enjoying the final product.”

“This is a project the Town has been working on for the past six years, and we are excited to see it move to the construction phase,” commented Denis Fraine, Bellingham Town Administrator. “Many thanks to our legislative delegation, and par-

ticularly Representative Soter, who attended many meetings before the Metropolitan Planning Agency which prioritizes funding for the greater Boston region. Without his leadership and advocacy, this project would not have secured State funding.”

Next steps are for the project bid opening to be scheduled and a construction contract to be awarded by MassDOT. Construction is anticipated to commence during the summer of 2022.

Construction for the project is being funded with Transportation Improvement Project (TIP) dollars. The project design was completed by the municipality.

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March at the Bellingham Public Library

For updates to library programs and services, please see the library website, www.bellingham-library.org. Click on the red alert banner on the top of the page for details.

Hours – Temporary through at least March

Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Friday & Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Special Programs

Yoga Series for Winter – Starts March 1st for 6 weeks

Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.
Join Carol, a certified Kripalu* yoga teacher, in movements that will incorporate your entire body. Along with postures, learn breathing exercises and relaxation techniques. Classes are one hour and appropriate for everyone. Please wear loose fit-

ting clothing and bring your own yoga mat and 2 blocks. Arrive 10 minutes early for the first class to sign a waiver. You must register for each class separately in the series. *Visit www.kripalu.org for more information on the Kripalu style of yoga.

Dr. Seuss Birthday Party, Wednesday, March 2nd at 4:30 p.m.

For all ages. Dr. Seuss was born 118 years ago today and we are going to celebrate his books with a variety of activities. Sign up and join us!

Tired of Arguing with Your Teen? Virtual Event – Monday, March 28th at 6:30 p.m.

Join Parent Coach Lianne Dixon through Zoom and learn how change is possible. In this presentation you will: discover high-impact strategies that create less room for arguing and more

room for connection; explore the benefit of using visualization to help create the relationship you want; and learn mindful practices that are critical in setting the scene for more peaceful communication and joyful connection. Lianne Dixon is a Parent Coach dedicated to helping parents who are tired of arguing with their teens. Please register to receive the Zoom link a few days prior to the event.

Other Children's Programs

Details on the programs below are available on the library website (<https://www.bellinghamma.org/library/kids>) and calendar (<https://bit.ly/3xMECct>)

Please note: The Bellingham Public Library is following the lead of the Bellingham Public Schools regarding masks for children's events. The policy

of the schools will be followed at the library.

After School Kids (ASK), Alphabits (ends March 24th), Baby Time, Chess Club for Kids Grades 4-9, Film Fridays*, Graphic Novel Book Club, Mother-Daughter Book Club, Ring a Ding, and Teen Room Activities.

Please check the current mask policy before attending

*Please note that Film Fridays will not resume until mid-March at the earliest.

Other Adult Programs

Additional details of these programs are available on the library calendar (<https://bit.ly/3xMECct>)

- Bellingham Skein Artists Adult Knitting Group, drop-in group, meets weekly on Wednesdays at 5:30 p.m.

- Book Club generally meets on the first Monday of the month, email Reference Librarian Cecily Christensen at cchriste@cwmar.org for details.
- Friends of the Library generally meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Email library@bellingshamlibrary.org for details.
- Library Board of Trustees generally meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m.. Email library@bellingshamlibrary.org for details.
- Adult Writing Group generally meets on the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Email marjorie@marjorieturner.com for details.

Bellingham Department of Public Works Note

IF YOU ARE REPORTING AN EMERGENCY CONDITION, PLEASE CALL (508) 966-5813.

Please use the Staff Contacts for general, non-emergency email only
DPW General Email: DPW@BellinghamMA.org
DPW Director Email: DDimartino@bellingshamma.org
DPW Assistant Director Email: JRiedle@BellinghamMA.org

Attention Veterans!

Bellingham's VSO Dennis Pimenta can be reached at (774) 292-2437. His office hours are 2-4 p.m. each Tuesday at Bellingham Town Hall, lower level.

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Rep. Soter Announces S.A.F.E and Senior S.A.F.E Public Safety Grants

[8th Worcester District] – State Rep. Michael J. Soter (R-Bellingham), is pleased to announce that over \$29,000 in Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) grants and Senior S.A.F.E. grants were awarded to the towns in the 8th Worcester district.

The money will be used by towns to educate students and senior citizens, two of the most vulnerable populations, on fire safety best practices. These programs will cover the basic principles of fire prevention, general home safety, and how to be better prepared in the event of a fire.

Representative Soter commented, “The S.A.F.E. grant program will help to better prepare our children and senior citizens for worst case scenario situations. This funding provides for key educational opportunities in the 8th Worcester district. I’m always thrilled to support and

advocate for public safety initiatives like the S.A.F.E. grant program.”

Bellingham FD is to receive \$5,175 in S.A.F.E. grants and \$3,055 in Senior S.A.F.E. grants.

Blackstone FD is to receive \$4,575 in S.A.F.E. grants and \$2,855 in Senior S.A.F.E. grants.

Millville FD is to receive \$3,675 in S.A.F.E. grants and \$2,555 in Senior S.A.F.E. grants.

Uxbridge FD is to receive \$4,575 in S.A.F.E. grants and \$2,855 in Senior S.A.F.E. grants.

The average number of children dying in fires annually has dropped by 78% since the S.A.F.E. Program began – a decline almost 30% greater than the decline in fire deaths overall. In light of its success, the Department of Fire Services launched the Senior SAFE Program to provide firefighters with funding to deliver fire safety education to older adults, who face a disproportionate risk of dying in a fire.

March at the Bellingham Senior Center

The Bellingham Senior Center is located at 40 Blackstone St., Bellingham. Reach them at (508) 966-0398.

GARDEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED: If you would like to volunteer, please call the Senior Center,

POP-UP PANTRY: Hockomock Area YMCA will dispatch a big box truck to the Senior Center on Wednesdays, beginning March 16th from 3-4 p.m., to hand out free bags of groceries to local seniors in need.

SENIOR LUNCH PROGRAM: The lunch program will start again this month with Mickey G’s catering the lunches for the price of \$3 for Bellingham seniors. Out of towners will pay \$8.

DONATIONS: We are accepting donations for the BESG yard sale and the Craft Fair’s like new room. We cannot accept shoes, clothing, or any electronics. Please bring any donations to the Senior Center.

BOOK CLUB: The book club will be reading *My Mother’s Secret* – a novel based on a true story of the Holocaust by J. L. Witterick. Enjoy the book and join us for the discussion March 29.

ST. PATTY’S DAY PARTY: The COA & BESG are having a St. Patty’s Day party Tuesday, March 15 at noon. We will be serving corned beef and cabbage and have great entertainment planned. Call the Center, make your reservation and join the celebration!

BRIDGE: Looking for bridge players! Come play bridge Thursday’s 9–11:30 a.m. at the Senior Center.

GRANT MONEY: Care giver grant money is available for supportive day care. If interested call Josie at the Senior Center – (508) 966-0398.

COA BOARD MEETING will be held Tuesday March 8 at 11 a.m.

Ladies of St. Anne Plan March Events

St. Patrick’s Day Theme for LoSA March Meeting

Ladies, it’s time to get creative and compete in the St. Patrick’s Day T-shirt contest! Prizes will be given in the categories of most colorful, most original, and the prettiest. Even if you don’t want to enter in the T-shirt competition, door prizes will be given for other games scheduled.

The meeting will begin at 7 p.m., March 10, in the Parish Hall. Please remember to bring a non-perishable item for the Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry for your free raffle ticket.

Ladies of St. Anne Bake Sale Scheduled

As discussed at our February meeting, a bake sale is planned for the weekend of March 5 &

6, after the 4 p.m. mass on Saturday and after the 7:30 and 10 a.m. masses on Sunday. Please stop by to pick up some delicious pastries. We truly appreciate your support of our Scholarship Program.

St. Blaise Parish is located at 1158 South Main St., Bellingham, MA 02019.

4

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It's Going to be a Hoppy Time in Bellingham

The Bellingham Women of Today will welcome the Easter Bunny for their annual Muffins with the Easter Bunny on Saturday, April 9th, from 9–11:30 at St. Blaise Church Hall, 1158 S. Main St., Bellingham.

Join us for muffins, bagels, juice, milk and coffee. Photos with Mr. Bunny are \$4 each or 2 for \$6 and food and beverage items are \$1.00 or less. There will be free crafts and coloring for kids and raffle baskets. All proceeds will benefit local charities. A food donation for the food pantry is welcome.

Hippity Hop - Let the Egg Hunting Begin!

The Easter Bunny has asked the Bellingham Women of Today to help in delivering pre-filled plastic eggs to your Bellingham doorstep or to be hidden throughout your yard the night before Easter.

“Egg My House” is a fundraising event that will be devoted to supporting the BWOT High School Scholarship Fund. Help us reach our goal and surprise your children in the process. Eggs are available as follows: 20 Eggs - \$10, 40 Eggs - \$20 and additional eggs are available at \$10 per dozen. You can send your order and pay through the following link: Givebutter.com/Bellingham-women-of-today-inc or by mailing to BWOT, PO Box 405, Bellingham, MA 02015 with your check made out to BWOT.

We must receive your order by March 31st to ensure the Easter Bunny Helpers have sufficient time to plan for your egg hunting fun. For more information call Julie at (508) 272-0978 or email bwoteventsma@hotmail.com.

Letters from the Easter Bunny

Bet you know someone who would love to get a letter from the Easter Bunny! The Easter Bunny is so busy preparing for the big day the Bellingham Women of Today will be helping him send personal letters to anyone on your list. The cost is \$2 for each letter or three for \$5. Send the name and address of recipient along with your name and phone number, including any information you would like added to the letter with check made out to BWOT to BWOT, PO Box 405, Bellingham, MA 02019 before March 31st. Contact us at bwoteventsma@hotmail.com and visit us on Facebook.



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Bellingham Receives 2022 Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness Grant

On January 19th, 2022, State Rep. Michael Soter and the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security (EOTSS) announced that the towns of Blackstone and Millville as well as the Bellingham School District were included in the FY22 Municipal Cybersecurity Awareness Grant program.

Municipal and public-school employees participating in this year's program will gain access to critical cybersecurity training materials to best prepare the Commonwealth's local workforce to identify, avoid, and defend against cyber-attack techniques most commonly used by cyber attackers in an attempt to gain access to government and public-school IT infrastructure, networks, and sensitive data. The overall purpose of the program is to promote good 'cyber hygiene' and to extend vital cybersecurity offerings to partners in local government.

With this release, the Bellingham Public School District will be able to train 50 of their employees.

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Bellingham to Get Funding for Two Electric Vehicle Fast-Charging Ports

In an effort to create additional infrastructure across the Commonwealth, the Baker-Polito Administration today announced that \$100,000 in funding has been awarded to Irving Oil Marketing Inc. in Bellingham under the Massachusetts Electric Vehicle Incentive Program (MassEVIP) to install Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) electric vehicle charging ports at Irving Oil Marketing's location. The MassEVIP DCFC program, administered by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), provides grants covering 100 percent of the eligible cost to acquire and install publicly accessible DCFC electric vehicle (EV) charging stations at government-owned properties and 80 percent at all other locations, up to \$50,000 per charging port.

"I am thrilled to see this innovative and environmentally-friendly step being taken to allow for owners of electric vehicles in our communities to have access to fast charging ports," said State Representative Michael J. Soter. "I look forward to working with the Governor's office and the Massachusetts Department of Education Protection to ensure further funding is brought to Bellingham and the whole 8th Worcester District."

"Our administration understands the importance of reliable infrastructure supporting the Commonwealth's energy future," said Governor Charlie Baker. "Today's announcement is a step towards the increased deployment of these clean vehicles, which will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, improve air quality and public health, enhance energy diversity and promote economic growth."

MassDEP's mission is to protect and enhance the Commonwealth's natural resources – air, water and land – to provide for the health, safety and welfare of all people, and a clean and safe environment for future generations. In carrying out this mission, MassDEP commits to address and advance environmental justice and equity for all people of the Commonwealth, provide meaningful, inclusive opportunities for people to participate in agency decisions that affect their lives and ensure a diverse workforce that reflects the communities served by the agency.

Metrowest Visitors Bureau Announces Mini Grant Program

The **MetroWest Visitors Bureau (MWVB)** announced today that their annual mini grant program is now accepting applications. Designed for marketing projects that will promote tourism in MetroWest, mini grants are available for funds up to \$5,000 each. The MWVB will consider applications for projects devoted to marketing a MetroWest event, attraction, business, service, or cultural or recreational offering.

The applicant does not need to be a 501(c)3 charitable organization but must be based in one of the 19 towns that comprise MetroWest or be devoted to attracting potential visitors to those 19 towns.

Eligible projects include brochures, print or online advertising, social media, websites, apps, and other print materials. The marketing project must be targeted, at least partially, at potential visitors who live more than 50 miles from the event or business location.

Grant applications can be submitted at www.bit.ly/minigrant2022 and will be reviewed on a rolling basis from now until April 1. Awarded grant funds must be spent prior to June 30, 2022.

For questions, or to discuss your project idea prior to submitting an application, please contact MWVB Executive Director Erin Lynch at erin@metrowestvisitors.org.

The **MetroWest Visitors Bureau** promotes travel and tourism throughout the 19 towns of the MetroWest region: Ashland, Bellingham, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopedale, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Medway, Milford, Millis, Natick, Northborough, Sherrborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Wayland, and Westborough. For more information, please visit the MWVB website at www.metrowestvisitors.org.

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U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum Seeks Artifacts, Oral Testimonies & Requests for Research of Families' Fates from NE Residents

The **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** will present a live virtual program, *"Preserving Holocaust History: Collecting Artifacts and Researching Fates,"* for New England residents on Wednesday, March 9th, from noon to 1 p.m., as part of its ongoing ef-

forts to rescue the evidence of the Holocaust.

"Despite the challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Museum is in a race against time to collect Holocaust artifacts and oral testimonies," Ross said. "The Museum is now

focusing its efforts within the New England region and is offering specialized one-on-one appointments for people interested in donating artifacts or researching their family history."

Immediately following the March 9th program, the Museum will offer participants the opportunity to schedule personal appointments to discuss donating artifacts to the Museum, contributing oral testimony, or requesting assistance researching family fates.

To RSVP for this free program, advance registration is required:

ushmm.org/events/new-england-collections

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Dooley to Run for MA State Senate in Newly Created District

State Representative Shawn Dooley (R-Norfolk) announced today that he will seek election

to the Massachusetts State Senate this November for the newly created Norfolk, Worcester, and

Middlesex District. He currently represents the 9th Norfolk District in the Massachusetts House of Representatives and the new Senate district will encompass all but one precinct from his current House seat.

The Dooley for Senate campaign launched their new campaign website www.Dooley4Senate.com as well as a campaign kick-off video "People Not Politics."

The cities and towns of the newly formed Norfolk, Worcester, and Middlesex Senate District include: Bellingham, Dover, Franklin, Medfield, Milford, Millis, Needham, Norfolk, Plainville, Sherborn, and Wrentham.



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Auchincloss Marks Gun Violence Survivors Week and Parkland Anniversary with Two New Gun Safety Bills

Following Gun Violence Survivors Week and ahead of the anniversary of the Parkland shooting, Congressman Jake Auchincloss, (D, MA-04), became an original co-sponsor of two gun safety measures introduced in the House.

The first, introduced by Congressman Andy Levin (D, MI-09), is the Protect Children Through Safe Gun Ownership Act, which will reduce the number of preventable firearm tragedies among children and teens by:

- Preventing any parent or guardian from providing consent to allow a minor to possess or use a handgun, unless they have actual knowledge that the juvenile will be in the presence and under the active supervision of the parent or another adult;
- Promoting responsible gun ownership by requiring firearms to be secured in a gun storage or safety device and allowing victims of gun violence or their families to sue if there is death or physical harm resulting from a firearm not being properly stored;

- Creating a grant program at the Department of Education to support eligible school districts conducting information sessions on gun safety and providing parents with educational materials on gun safety, including the importance of secure firearms storage and best practices on how to keep guns secure from children; and
 - Requiring the Secretary of Education to issue guidance on best practices for keeping firearms secure from children and ways that school districts can implement age-appropriate education on gun safety for parents.
- Auchincloss also became an original co-sponsor of the *Trafficking Reduction and Criminal Enforcement (TRACE)* Act, led by Congressman Mike Quigley (IL-05). This bill will help the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) reduce illegal firearms trafficking and make it harder for criminals to obtain deadly weapons.
- “The *TRACE Act* is a key step towards preventing gun violence. With this bill, we can close the loopholes that allow guns to

get in the wrong hands,” said Auchincloss.

This legislation is supported by Brady: United Against Gun Violence, Everytown for Gun Safety, Newtown Action Alliance, Purpose over Pain, and the Violence Policy Center.

The *TRACE Act* would:

- Require background check records to be maintained for a minimum of 180 days. The Tiahrt Amendments currently require 24-hour record destruction, making it nearly impossible to catch law-breaking gun dealers who falsify their records or track straw purchasers who buy guns on behalf of criminals.
- Require gun dealers to perform inventory checks to report lost and stolen guns, a measure currently prohibited under the Tiahrt Amendments. If law-abiding dealers reported inventories, the ATF would be

much more effective at identifying lost and stolen weapons and combating corrupt gun dealers.

- Repeal restrictions on gun trace data disclosures. Currently, members of the public, including researchers and litigants, cannot get trace data from ATF under Tiahrt restrictions. Trace data is also inadmissible as evidence in civil proceedings under existing policy. The *TRACE Act* would repeal these restrictions.

- Require that new firearms have a second, hidden serial number located inside the frame or receiver that is only visible under infrared light when the firearm is fully disassembled. This would make it harder for criminals to remove serial numbers from firearms in an attempt to thwart law enforcement.

To learn more about Congressman Jake Auchincloss visit <https://auchincloss.house.gov> or connect with him on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or YouTube.

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Thanks to Yanks Donates to Milford Legion's Troop Fan Mail

Pictured is Michael Shain the founder and president of Thanks To Yanks, a local charity that supports those who serve in the military. Recently, a donation was made to the American Legion Post #59 Auxiliary to support their efforts with Troop Fan Mail, an ongoing mission to

write cards and holiday wishes throughout the year to those who serve. Thanks To Yanks is proud to support such a noble idea said Shain.

For information regarding Thanks To Yanks, please like them on Facebook.



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Thimble Pleasures Quilt Show, Visions of Hope, March 12th & 13th

Event to Take Place at BVT

The Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild is pleased to present their 2022 quilt show, Visions of Hope, on Saturday and Sunday, March 12th and 13th at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School. Show hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Admission is \$10 and children 18 and under are admitted free. The entrance to the school is handicap accessible and free parking is available on site. The following Covid precautions will be in effect: masks must be worn by all visitors, hand sanitizing stations will be available throughout the site, and food and refreshments will not be available. There will be a diverse group of craft and quilt vendors also participating in the show.

The show will feature over 200 quilts designed and made by guild members. Also included are member quilts from Guild Challenges, Round Robins, and Youth Quilts. The show also offers a Silent Auction, raffle baskets, a Quilter's Boutique, and a

special raffle quilt (pictured here). Raffle quilt tickets are available at the show and are \$1 a ticket or 6 for \$5. The raffle drawing will take place on Sunday at 4 p.m. You do not have to be present to win.

This year the Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild will commemorate thirty years since its creation. This milestone will be noted at the show's special exhibit, Hindsight is 2020, which will feature a look back at all our past Quilt Show's Special Projects. This year's Special Project charity is Guiding Eyes for the Blind. There will be many pet-related handcrafted items for sale to support our donation to this charity.

Funding realized from the show will be used to assist the guild in purchasing materials for their community outreach projects, charity donations, and other special projects.

The Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild hopes to see you there and hopes that you will enjoy the show.

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Rep. Soter Supports Bill to Improve Oversight and Governance of State's Soldiers' Homes

State Rep. Michael Soter (R-Bellingham) has voted to support changes in the governing structure at the state-run Holyoke and Chelsea Soldiers' Homes to help improve oversight of the two facilities and ensure the delivery of quality services to the homes' residents.

House Bill 4441, *An Act relative to the governance, structure and care of veterans at the Commonwealth's veterans' homes*, was engrossed on a vote of 156-1 in the House of Representatives on February 10. The bill now heads to the Senate for its consideration.

"The measures outlined in this bill are a starting point for a greater call for veterans reform," commented State Representative Michael Soter. "What happened in the Holyoke Soldiers Home should have never occurred. The implementation of H.4441 will put the proper oversight mechanisms in place to improve the care of our veterans and ensure events like the one in 2020 never occur again. We

must continue to evaluate how we can do more to support our veterans here in Massachusetts. We must not stop here."

Representative Soter said the House bill implements a series of reforms in response to the 2020 COVID-19 outbreak at the Holyoke Soldiers' Home that claimed the lives of 76 veterans. Those reforms include a restructuring of the boards of trustees at both soldiers' homes; new professional qualification standards for the homes' superintendents; regular inspections of the two facilities; the appointment of an independent Veteran Advocate; and the establishment of a Veterans' Homes Council and a new Office of Veterans' Homes and Housing within the Department of Veterans' Services.

Under House Bill 4441, the Department of Public Health will be required to conduct a minimum of two inspections per year at both the Chelsea and Holyoke facilities. The bill

also mandates an annual review of both home's health record systems to ensure they are equipped with technology that allows for easy access to records for veterans and their families.

Representative Soter said the bill will help to empower veterans and their families by requiring the Office of Veterans' Homes and Housing to employ an ombudsman at each veterans' home. In addition, it establishes strong whistleblower protections to prevent retaliation against individuals who submit complaints to the ombudsman or who cooperate in any investigation initiated after a complaint is filed.

House Bill 4441 also creates a Veteran Advocate, who will be appointed by a majority vote of the attorney general, state auditor and governor. Representative Soter noted the Veteran Advocate will serve independently of any state agency, and will advocate on behalf of the state's veterans, including those resid-

ing in the Chelsea and Holyoke Soldiers' Homes, to ensure they receive timely, safe and effective services.

Under the House proposal, the executive director of the Office of Veteran's Homes and Housing will be appointed by the Secretary of Veterans' Services and will advise the secretary on matters relative to veterans' housing. The executive director must have at least five years of experience in health care management as well as military or other experience working with veterans.

Representative Soter noted the executive director will also chair the newly-created Veterans' Homes Council, which will be responsible for managing the state's veterans' homes. The Massachusetts Adjutant General and members of the Chelsea and Holyoke Soldiers' Homes' boards of trustees are among those who will serve on the 17-member Council.

According to Representative Soter, the bill requires the superintendents of both soldiers' homes to be licensed as a nursing home administrator and to

either be a veteran or have prior experience with the management of veterans in a nursing home or long-term care setting. Both superintendents will report to the executive director of the Office of Veterans' Homes and Housing and will be appointed by the Veterans' Homes Council based on recommendations submitted by the boards of trustees of their respective homes.

House Bill 4441 also reduces the size of the Chelsea and Holyoke Soldiers' Homes boards of trustees from seven to five members, while setting additional requirements for who can serve on these boards. In Chelsea, at least three of the board members will be required to be war veterans, Gold Star Mothers and/or Gold Star Family Members, family members of active or former residents, or family members of Disabled American Veterans. In Holyoke, the trustees must include at least one resident each of Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden and Hampshire counties, and at least three of them must meet the same background requirements as the Chelsea Soldiers' Home trustees.



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Calendar

March 5

Ladies of St. Anne of St. Blaise Parish Bake Sale, after 4 p.m. Mass., St. Blaise Parish, 1158 South Main St., Bellingham
Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra presents Winter Romance, 7:30 p.m., Grand Ballroom of Milford Town Hall, www.claflinhill.org or (508) 478-4924, program supported by Mass Cultural Council

March 6

Ladies of St. Anne of St. Blaise Parish Bake Sale, after 7:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. Masses, St. Blaise Parish, 1158 South Main St., Bellingham

March 9

Bellingham Business Association membership drive lunch, 12-1:30 p.m., Grumpy's Restaurant, 190 Pulaski Blvd., Bellingham, members \$25, guests free, RSVP March 7th, contact@bellingshambusinessassociation.org

March 10

Ladies of St. Anne of St. Blaise Parish Meeting, features St. Patrick's Day t-shirt contest, 7 p.m., Parish Hall, 1158 South Main St., Bellingham. Please remember to bring a nonperishable item for the Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry for your free raffle ticket.

March 12

Friends of Music Mattress Sale, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., Bellingham Memorial High School, 130 Blackstone St., Bellingham, All proceeds benefit the music program, grade 4 to 12, chorus, band and color guard. Link to

March 13

Thimble Pleasures Quilt-Guild 2022 Quilt Show, Visions of Hope, 10 a.m.- 4 p.m., Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School, 65 Pleasant St., Upton, \$10 , children 18 and under free

Folder with Mattress Sale info., coupons and flyers at <http://www.bellinghammusic.org/> or on Facebook, at "Bellingham Music"

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Home Remedies for Simple Eye Problems

By: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.
MILFORD FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

Many eye problems need an ophthalmologist's medical knowledge. But there are eye problems that you can treat safely at home, as long as they are simple. Here are a few problems that can respond to home treatment, with tried-and-true remedies.

Black eye

You can usually treat a black eye at home. But if there are more serious symptoms of black eye, see an ophthalmologist. These signs include: blurred/double vision; blood in the eye; or an inability to move the eye.

To reduce swelling and ease pain the first day, apply an ice pack to the eye for 15 to 20 minutes at a time, once every hour. If you don't have an ice pack, use a bag of frozen vegetables or ice cubes wrapped in cloth. The cloth protects your skin from freezing. Don't put a raw steak or other raw meat on your eye. Despite what you've seen on television and in the movies, there's no scientific basis for this. In fact, the bacteria in raw meat poses a

high risk of infection.

Pink eye (also known as conjunctivitis)

A virus causes most cases of pink eye. These cases don't respond to antibiotics. Viral conjunctivitis will disappear on its own. Have your ophthalmologist diagnose your particular case. Reduce the discomfort of conjunctivitis by applying cool compresses to the eye.

If your conjunctivitis is bacterial, follow your treatment plan. This usually involves antibiotic eye drops. In either case, you should take steps to reduce the chance of passing the problem on to someone else. Conjunctivitis is highly contagious. Follow these tips to prevent the spread: Don't share towels, handkerchiefs or cosmetics. Change pillowcases frequently. Wash your hands often.

Eye allergy and seasonal allergy

Just as you can get nasal allergies, you can get eye allergies that leave your eye red, itchy and teary. Limiting your exposure to the source of your allergy — whether it's pollen, pets or mold



— can help relieve symptoms. If you can't remove the source entirely, there are ways to reduce its effect with eye allergy treatments.

If pollen bothers you: Don't use a window fan, which can draw pollen into your house. Wear sunglasses when you go outside.

If dust is the problem: Use allergen-reducing covers for your bed. Use artificial tears, which temporarily wash allergens from your eyes. Use over-the-counter anti-allergy eye drops to lessen the symptoms.

Stye (also called hordeolum)

While a stye may look nasty, it's usually harmless and goes away within a week. You can treat it at home by running a washcloth under warm water,

wringing it out and placing it over your closed eye. When the washcloth cools, repeat the process several times, up to four times a day for at least a week. The heat will help unblock the pores in your eyelash area. Don't wear eye makeup or your contact lenses while you have a stye. And don't pop or squeeze the stye. Doing so can spread infection to surrounding areas of your eye. Shampooing with tea tree shampoo can also help.

Eye strain

Many people have symptoms of eye strain, because of long hours of computer use, reading and driving every day. In most cases, there are simple things you can do at home, work, and while driving to ease eye strain symptoms. These include: resting your eyes, using artificial tears, wearing computer glasses, and wearing sunglasses.

Bags under the Eyes

What we often call "bags under our eyes" is actually sagging skin under the eyes. It is a common complaint, and one that often accompanies the aging process. As we grow older, tissues around the eye gradually weaken and sag. This loss of skin tone allows fat to shift forward into the lower eyelids, making them look puffy and swollen. Fluid can also pool in this area and contribute to the puffy appearance.

Certain home remedies can help lessen or eliminate the puffiness of under-eye bags and the appearance of shadows. Wet a clean washcloth with cool water. Place the damp wash-

cloth around your eyes for a few minutes, applying very gentle pressure. Do this while sitting upright. Make sure you get enough sleep. Sleep with your head raised slightly. Try to avoid drinking fluids before bed, and limit salt in your diet. That can help reduce fluid retention overnight that can lead to bags under your eyes. Quit smoking. Try using makeup concealer to cover shadows under your eyes.

Use Common Sense for Your Eye Health

With any of these conditions, see your ophthalmologist right away if the symptoms worsen or don't go away, or if your vision is affected.

Some eye problems you should never treat on your own.

If you experience any of these, you should seek medical attention right away: Blurriness. Double vision. Pain in your eye. Serious eye injuries.

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Wildlands Trust Surpasses 50 Communities Served in Southeastern Massachusetts

Wildlands Trust, in Plymouth, is celebrating an exciting milestone in land conservation. The self-described “small organization with a big reach” took on projects in two new towns – Norwood and Foxborough – at the close of 2021, bringing the total number of Massachusetts communities served to 51.

According to Wildlands Trust’s president and executive director, Karen Grey, the organization continuously works to forge new partnerships with the cities and towns as these relationships are the foundation for its land protection work. “We are committed to providing equitable access to nature throughout the entire region because all people deserve the benefits of

nature every day, regardless of their zip code.” adds Grey. Currently, across the 51 cities and towns in which Wildlands Trust is working, 1.7 million people are impacted by their conservation efforts.

Wildlands Trust is a non-profit organization dedicated to conserving land and preserving the natural heritage of Southeastern Massachusetts. The organization works to permanently protect and steward important habitats and landscapes, including woodlands and fields, ponds, coastal areas, agricultural lands, and river systems. Founded in 1973, Wildlands Trust has worked to protect nearly 13,000 acres of open space in 51 Massachusetts towns.

Library Resource of the Month – LearningExpress Job and Career Accelerator

Finding a job or changing jobs can be a complicated and daunting process. LearningExpress Job and Career Accelerator is an online database that provides tools to help you find, apply for, and get hired for a position that fits your needs. Access is free-of-charge with your Bellingham Public Library card!

This job-hunting platform is comprised of two sections, the Job and Career Accelerator and the Computer Skills Center. Key features of the Job and Career Accelerator include a step-by-step resume builder to create your resume, step-by-step cover letter builder, and tutorials to guide you through the resume and cover letter writing processes. Skills and interest matchers help you learn what occupations are great matches for you. You can also explore numerous occupations to learn

about tasks, skills needed, education, wages, and machines/tools used in the occupation. The Job and Career Accelerator contains a job search engine, so that you can search for jobs as well as internships. There are tutorials and eBooks to help prepare for the job interview, such as interview techniques, common interview questions, sample thank you letters, and evaluating the job offer. A Career eBooks Library contains downloadable eBooks on such topics as changing careers, social networking, and guides for various careers. A scholarship finder searches over 24,000 scholarships and other awards. There is also a school finder to search for colleges and graduate schools.

The Computer Skills Center has tutorials on computer basics, Internet basics such as email and social media tools, as well

as many software tutorials such as Microsoft Excel, Word, PowerPoint, Outlook, Access, and more! Tutorials on computer graphics and illustration include Adobe Photoshop and Adobe Illustrator. There are also tutorials on Windows 7, 8, and 10.

To access LearningExpress Job and Career Accelerator, go to the Bellingham Library’s website at www.bellinghamlibrary.org. Click on the Online Resources tab, and then click Job Seekers. You will see the link to click for LearningExpress Job and Career Accelerator. You will need to create an account in order to save your work in progress.

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Sports

Bellingham/BVT Co-op Wrestling a Good Match

CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY, SPORTS STAFF WRITER

In 2002, Bellingham High School formed a club wrestling team and the following year was granted a varsity program under the guidance of physical education teacher Tom Forbes. However, once Forbes became an administrator, he was told that he could no longer coach. Forbes, also the football coach, would give up his coaching duties on the gridiron but begged the school system to allow him to keep coaching the new wrestling program.

"I asked them to let me continue to coach the wrestling program as I felt that if I had to give it up then the program would most likely fall apart," he said. "I was able to stay onto until we got a new superintendent in 2007. It was still a relatively new sport to the area with no feeder program and the new coaches, at no fault of their own, saw the numbers decrease as there was not a lot of wrestling in the Tri-Valley League."

The TVL only had wrestling programs in Bellingham, Holliston, Hopkinton and Norton before Dedham and Norwood moved into the league years many years later. Eventually, Forbes was reinstated as the wrestling coach only. Bellingham joined into a partnership with Medway for two years, but Medway's involvement dwindled to two wrestlers on the co-op team. Bellingham needed to do something to keep their program successful, as, while the Bellingham wrestlers were doing well on an individual basis, the program was not able to fill each and every weight class during dual meets. Athletic Director Michael Connor suggested trying Blackstone Valley Tech.

Bellingham and BVT formed a co-op three years ago while also adding a middle school wrestling program. That original co-op season saw the squad with 17 wrestlers (11 from Bellingham and 6 more from BVT). Last year, there was no season due to COVID and this year, the numbers increased significantly with 25 total athletes (16 from Bellingham and 9 from BVT).



Bellingham/BVT Co-op wrestling, in its third year, is drawing student athletes to the program.

"The numbers increased because of the kids themselves and word of mouth," Forbes said.

Entering its second season, Bellingham/BVT found themselves changing divisions. The MIAA rezoned by taking into effect both schools' populations, thus giving the program a larger number of athletes to draw from, so the program went from Division 3 Central to Division 2 Central. So, this season Bellingham/BVT will be up against some tougher competition.

Bellingham will also be hosting the Division 2 Central Sectionals this winter. Sectionals were at Bellingham High School on Saturday, February 12th, where the team finished in seventh place. Joel Puri, Paul Grieco and Landry Fitzgerald all finished third in their respective weight classes, while Jack Davidson was fourth, Xavier Belisle was fifth and Dillon Costa was sixth. All of the top finishes except Costa will be representing Bellingham/BVT in the State Tournament.

Prior to each season beginning, Coach Forbes is out looking for opponents in addition to the team's league meets, preferring to schedule between 21 and 24 matches each year, giving him

a variety of different opponents outside of the TVL. At this stage of the program, he wants wrestlers to capture at least 10 wins as a team, a goal his squad had already captured at the time of this writing. Forbes is more interested in his wrestlers improving each time they take to the mat than he is banners on the wall.

"Thus far this season, we are wrestling very well, but still dealing with COVID issues here and there. We are continuously adjusting our lineups," the Coach said. "Throughout the year, I am looking for everyone to do their part in the 14 weight classes. Wrestling is an individual sport, but one that is also a team sport as well."

Bellingham/BVT will rely heavily on their captains BHS junior Ethan Silva (195-lbs) and BVT senior Logan Hampson (138) for leadership. Silva has been with the program since his freshman year while Hampson is participating in the co-op for the first time, although Hampton has wrestled for New England Elite.

Wrestling in the heavy weight class, Forbes has two individuals, first year senior Mike Pitner and BVT sophomore Landry Fitzgerald, someone who will be with the program for a few years

giving them some stability.

Other wrestlers the Coach will be looking to this season will be freshman Joel Puri (106 from BVT), eighth grader Charlie Leighton (also at 106), sophomore Zach Mantegani (126), who has wrestled all his life, and junior Tim Gaunlet (145), who has been with the program since eighth grade.

Forbes knows that his team needs to be prepared and be able to walk off the mat with a sense of accomplishment.

"I want the kids to be able to succeed," he said. "This is a one-on-one sport and win, lose or draw, they have to be able to look at themselves in the mirror and ask themselves if they prepared properly and do what they needed to do on the mat."

While the season still has some matches to go. Bellingham/BVT looks like they are on their way to taking part in the Sectionals, and no matter what they do as a team and as individuals, it has already been a successful season. When the year does come to an end, Forbes will be only saying goodbye to six seniors, so the team on the whole shouldn't really be impacted.

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On a Mission to Combat Veteran Suicide

By GRACE ALLEN

After three military friends killed themselves in one month, David Campisano knew he had to do something. In April of 2020, the Army veteran and former Norfolk resident started 22Mohawks, a non-profit committed to raising awareness around veteran suicide.

Campisano served his country from 2001 to 2016, and after his honorable discharge he returned home and slipped back into civilian life. He was one of the lucky ones. Since the global War on Terror began in 2001, over 60,000 American soldiers have died in combat. While that number is stunning enough, it's eclipsed by the number of military veterans who have committed suicide in the same time frame. By some accounts, it's close to 120,000. On average, 22 veterans commit suicide each day.

"Veterans are trained not to ask for help. They're trained to suppress emotions and not show weakness because there's this stigma," said Campisano. "You're in the military, you get hurt and you're in pain but you're not going to tell anyone and you drive on. And that actually works very well when you're in the military. But when you get out, that doesn't work anymore. Some of the most A-type, hard-charging people I know took their own lives."

22Mohawks began with a few events to gather veterans together in an effort to provide support and create community over shared experiences. But after the chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan last year, Campisano was inundated with calls from veterans having difficulty processing the end of the war. He decided to create a website to get more visibility for the organization, and also to announce that he would help veterans get emotional support dogs as quickly as possible. There is a two-year waiting list for a dog through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

"The website went up and within two days we got a phone call from a veteran asking for a dog," recounted Campisano. "He was in bad shape, so I went to the local shelter, bought a dog, and drove it to his house."

That veteran was Michael McGee.

"22Mohawks sprang into action after I reached out to them,"

said McGee, a Marine Corps veteran now living on Cape Cod. "The days were getting harder and harder to fight through, but because of their intervention, today I feel confident in my ability to keep fighting on. They helped me understand that it's okay to reach out for help and their generosity and selflessness has given me a new outlook on life."

22Mohawks partners with Professional Canine Services in Middleboro to provide free lifetime training for the dogs, which Campisano gets from area shelters. Since September of 2021, 22Mohawks has placed on average one dog a week with veterans through its Pups for Vets program. If a dog is available, any vet that needs one will get it at no cost within 24 hours. (There can be up to a three-week wait if dogs are not available.) Veterans are responsible for the dog's medical bills and food, although 22Mohawks provides the first week of food for free.

Campisano and his team are working with local VA offices to become the first point of contact for veterans returning home after a tour of duty. Their goal is to provide support for vets in any way possible, although suicide awareness and prevention remains the organization's primary focus.

Rachel El Massih, the Public Relations Director for 22Mohawks, said Campisano is always taking phone calls from veterans he doesn't know, and often they simply want someone to talk to who understands what they're going through.

"Dave doesn't have a clinical background," said El Massih. "He's just a fellow veteran and I think that makes a difference for people. And that's what we want veterans to know, that we're just a phone call away, providing peer-to-peer support."

22Mohawks will help veterans navigate the mental health system, too, if they want or need more support than the organization can provide. Vets are often referred to a direct contact at Home Base, a Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital program dedicated to healing the invisible wounds of war for service members and veterans of all wars. There is no cost for services provided by Home Base.

There is also no cost for the yearly events 22Mohawks holds



From left, David Campisano, the founder and president of 22Mohawks, with Stacey Coyne, the organization's CEO, and Mike McGee, the first veteran to receive a dog through 22Mohawk's Pups for Vets program. Photos courtesy of 22Mohawks.



A recipient of the Pups for Vets program with Campisano, Charlie Young (rear), and Patrick Martin. Young and Martin of Professional Canine Services provide life-time training for the dogs.

understand what the vet is going through and maybe these events will help them see the challenges their spouse is facing."

22Mohawks also holds fundraisers open to the public, with the proceeds going towards the organization's Pups for Vets program, as well as to the yearly veteran-focused events. Upcoming fundraisers include an open skate night on March 26 from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Skating Club of Boston in Norwood, as well as a trivia night on April 8 from 7 to 11 p.m. at the Norwood Elks.

Campisano and his senior leadership at 22Mohawks hail from Millis, Franklin, Walpole, Norwood, and Wrentham. And while the organization is currently



Coyne and Campisano, along with Allyson Shean, right, the Pups for Vets program's Lead Ambassador, with a pup recipient.

Massachusetts-based, Campisano will try to help any veteran who needs support.

"We want veterans to know that there's a group of people that can be there for them for anything," he said. "If they're having a bad day, they can call us and we'll have a conversation and maybe they'll realize it's not actually a weakness to reach out. We all get sad and we all get depressed. So let's talk, because we don't want anyone else dying by their own hand."

To contact 22Mohawks, call (617) 680-9852 or (781) 251-9212. Campisano can also be reached via email: dave@22mohawks.com.

Visit the group's website at <https://22mohawks.com> for more information about the organization, including upcoming fundraisers and events for veterans, or to make a donation. Their online shop has gear available for purchase to help raise awareness about the organization and veteran suicide.

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