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Building a Better Playground a Mission for Stall Brook Teacher

Sensory-Friendly Touch-a-Truck Fundraiser
May 14th for Inclusive Playground

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

Not all of Stall Brook Elementary's 250 students can enjoy its current playground, and special education teacher Hallie Glassman, has a solution — to build an inclusive playground.

The idea was hatched when Cerah, an Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) technician who works with a boy in Glassman's class approached her about trying to add a ramp to get the boy to an adaptive swing.

"This is a sweet boy who absolutely loves to go on the swing at recess. We have one swing bucket he can sit in, but unfortunately, the way our playground is set up, it is very challenging to bring his wheelchair close enough to the swing to safely transfer him," says Glassman. "He's close to 100



This little boy, a student at Stall Brook Elementary School, is in his happy place when he's in this swing, but he can't get to it without a lot of help. Special education teacher Hallie Glassman has embarked on a four-year mission to build a better, inclusive playground for him and other students who encounter obstacles to play. Its first fundraiser will be a Touch-a-Truck event May 14th at Bellingham Memorial School.

pounds, so we have to move his wheelchair to (the one side without posts) and maneuver him over the woodchips to bring him to the adaptive swing." Aside from the swing,



says Glassman, "there's nothing for him to do except be pushed around the blacktop."

PLAYGROUND

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151st Memorial Day Ceremony Scheduled for May 22

First Woman Commander of USS Constitution Keynote Speaker

By KEN HAMWEY,
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Bellingham's 151st Memorial Day ceremony will be held on Sunday, May 22, starting with a parade that will begin at 1 p.m. at the Memorial School.

Both the parade and the ceremony will focus on a theme that salutes women veterans.

"There'll be a float that will feature female veterans from Bellingham, and the keynote speaker will be Commander Billie Farrell, who's the first woman commander in the 224-year history of the USS Constitution (Old Ironsides)," said Jim Hastings, the Chairman of the Memorial and Veterans Day Committee. "She's the ship's 77th commanding officer."



Commander Billie Farrell is the keynote speaker for Bellingham's Memorial Day ceremony.

Farrell, who's a native of Paducah, Ky., attended the United States Naval Academy and was commissioned in 2004 after earning a Bachelor of Science degree in political science. She received

MEMORIAL
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MEMORIAL*continued from page 1*

her Master of Science in operations management from the University of Arkansas in 2009.

Her first division officer tour was aboard the USS Vella Gulf as electrical officer. Then, she took over as division officer before fleetwing up as navigator for her second tour. After her two division officer tours, Farrell reported to Millington, Tenn., where she became an action officer in PERS-833 (Post Selection Board Matters). There, she served as delay section head and assistant board screener.

After departing PERS-833, Farrell started the department head pipeline. She reported to the USS San Jacinto in March 2012 as the weapons officer. She later served as combat systems officer onboard.

Her next tour was as the Deputy Director for Professional Development at the United States Naval Academy. After leaving the academy, Farrell reported to Commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic as Deputy N3. She previously served as executive officer onboard the USS Vicksburg.

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Farrell's awards include three Meritorious Service Medals, four Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals, and three Meritorious Unit Commendation Medals.

Master Sergeant Linda Calderiso of Bellingham also will be speaking.

Calderiso retired from the U.S. Army Regional Support Command as a Regional Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer (REPLO) for FEMA Region 1 in July, 2008. She was promoted to the position on Sept. 8, 2001.

Although not formally assigned to the team, upon hearing of the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on New York and the Pentagon, Calderiso reported to the FEMA Region 1 Regional Operations Center. That center oversaw the federal rescue effort in New York City while Region II rebuilt its damaged operations center.

Calderiso was deployed to Atlanta in support of the FEMA Region IV Regional Operation Center in September, 2004 after Hurricane Ivan and during Hurricane Jeanne. She served as the senior operations non-com-

missioned officer at the center for the REPLO team. Calderiso was responsible for preparing and disseminating mission assignments to three Defense Coordinating Elements (DCE), in Florida, Alabama, and South Carolina.

Calderiso was also deployed to First Army Headquarters Center in Atlanta in support of Hurricane Katrina; attended the Inspector General Academy as a Staff Sergeant (E6); conducted surveys and sensing session of all New England Units in response to the Aberdeen Providing Ground scandal; and served as the Army Physical Fitness Leader Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge.

The parade route will start at the Memorial School and continue along Rte. 126 to Bellingham center. Parade participants are encouraged to refrain from parking at the school's lot. "It will help if people are dropped off so there'll be room for parade participants to line up and form the marching order," said Hastings.

Parade participants include: the Army, Marine Corps, and Navy Color Guards, the Bell-

ingham High School Band, the Old Colony Bagpipe Band, the Douglas High Band, the Highland Light Scottish Pipe Band, the Mass. State Police Bagpipe Band, and the Worcester Fire Brigade Bagpipe Band.

The floats in the parade will represent the Bellingham DPW, the Vietnam veterans of Rhode Island, Milford veterans, the Bellingham Women of Today, the Bellingham Senior Center, the USS Constitution, Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, WWII tank, Crawford family veterans, VFW veterans and women veterans from Bellingham.

Hastings said he was pleased that the parade, which was called off for the last two years because of the pandemic, has again become an integral part of the holiday.

"Memorial Day is a time to pause and honor the memory of our servicemen and women for protecting us," Hastings said. "If it weren't for those who made the ultimate sacrifice, we'd be living in a different type of United States. They're the ones who've enabled us to enjoy the freedoms we have today."

The ceremony at the Town Common will begin at about 2 p.m. with a wreath-laying ceremony to honor servicemen from Bellingham who made the ultimate sacrifice. A prayer will be offered at the War Memorial near the Rte. 140 entrance. An invocation will start the program at the gazebo, followed by the *National Anthem*, sung by the Memorial School Chorus, and the Pledge of Allegiance. The Get-

tyburg Address will be recited before the Senior Chorus sings God Bless America.

Hastings will deliver opening remarks, and State Representative Mike Soter will offer his thoughts about the holiday. The ceremony will continue with Nick Mobilia reading the names of deceased Bellingham veterans who passed away during the last year. The Oliver brothers (Robert and Joseph) will sing "The Possible Dream."

Lori Fafard, a former teacher at Stallbrook School and a member of the Memorial Day and Veterans Day Committee, will present gift cards to three fourth-grade students whose Memorial Day posters are judged 1-3. Ten other students will be cited for honorable mention.

Tom Earnest, a Navy veteran, will introduce Commander Farrell who'll deliver the keynote address.

Closing ceremonies will include the reading of names by Memorial School students of all Bellingham residents who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country during the Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam. The Old Colony Bagpipe Band will perform Amazing Grace followed by a rifle volley, Taps and the closing prayer.

Hastings emphasized that if anyone knows of a Bellingham resident who enlisted in the military during the last two years to contact him at (508) 966-0364 so names can be added to the War Memorial to recognize their service.

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PLAYGROUND*continued from page 1*

She and the ABA technicians then discussed various other play obstacles. For example, children who engage in pica always need an adult by their side when around wood chips.

"It really does limit them," says Glassman. "We see typically developing peers and the way they interact with each other. Their interactions change as soon as an adult comes by. We really want to make sure (all) our students have that opportunity to interact with their peers in as natural a way as possible."

Glassman consulted a playground designer and was told the Stall Brook playground was no longer up to code. Due to a grandfather clause, if a permanent change was to be made, the whole playground would need to be updated to meet current regulations.

"I naively said, well, let's just build a new playground, and no one told me that I was crazy, and now it's April, and we're doing it!" Glassman explains. "The inclusive playground concept has blossomed over the last five years. If you don't think about these things, (i.e.,) if you don't need a different surface option, then it doesn't occur to you."

The cost will be substantial, ranging from \$149,000 to \$206,000 for some of the inclusive designs, which incorporate rubber surfacing, ground-based activities, ramp structures, and wheelchair accessibility. so Glassman's fundraising goal is \$250,000. Rep. Soter advised Glassman to create a 501 c3 organization for the project, in order to apply for grants. The teacher created a website, www.ourplayability.com, and presented it to her PTO, asking for support. She's also consulted school officials, Bellingham conservation agents and DPW and the school committee.

One parent at that PTO meeting, Manny Toscano, came forth with the project's first (of many) fundraisers, a kickoff Touch-a-Truck event at Bellingham Memorial School from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. on (sensory-friendly from 11-12) Saturday, May 14th that will feature vehicles, a K-9 demonstration, a Boston Med-flight helicopter landing, free pizza, hamburgers and hot dogs and more for \$5 per person or a maximum of \$20 per family.

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"I work for the Sheriff's Office as a K-9 officer, and I reached out to a bunch of different law enforcement agencies and a bunch of businesses," says Toscano, inspired by Glassman's passion for the project.

Although Toscano's chil-

dren are typically developing, his youngest, Joe, was chosen to greet his classmates with special needs. "I was like, 'wow, that's my 4-year-old. He just sees a kid as a kid. You want to try to instill that in your kids, to be helpful to everyone and try to see people for

who they are and not anything else."

I want to help, too. When you see kids who can't go out in their wheelchair or their walker and have the same fun and opportunities as other kids, we need to change that."

It's not only the student who is limited by obstacles at the playground.

"The families of children with disabilities lose out on a lot of opportunities based on accessibility," says Glassman.

Meredith Piotti, of Bellingham, who has three daughters, aged 8, 5 and 18 months, was excited when she heard about Glassman's proposal. Her oldest, Reagan, was diagnosed with the rare inherited disease, Niemann-Pick Type C.

"Starting Kindergarten, her gross motor skills were really lagging her peers', and even when it was just Reagan, we had

difficulty finding playgrounds around town that she'd have a good time and be independent at," says Piotti. Reagan, who uses a walker and has a wheelchair, feels more confident on playgrounds with continuous handrails and smooth surfaces, not woodchips, that feature "interactive make-believe spaces where she can sit and play pretend or music instruments with her sisters," says Piotti. Her family often must travel to find those features. "Now that we have three kids, it's especially challenging to find a place where everyone can have fun – and have fun together."

To learn more about the Stall Brook inclusive playground project, visit <https://www.ourplayability.com>, look for "Our PlayAbility on Facebook, or find @OurPlayAbilityMA on Instagram.

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Milford Federal Bank appoints Jeremy Leap Senior Vice President Commercial Lending

Milford Federal Bank announced today that Jeremy Leap has joined the Bank as SVP, Commercial Lending. Mr. Leap

will lead a growing team of Milford Federal's Commercial Bankers, Jeremy will join Anna Case, AVP, Commercial Credit Officer

& Operations Manager, Anita Carroll, Commercial Portfolio Manager and Stephanie Saraidarian, Commercial Credit Representative.

"We couldn't be happier to welcome Jeremy to our Commercial Banking Team" said Paul Gilbody President & CEO, "Jeremy's depth and experience in commercial lending expands our capabilities significantly with this important growth area for Milford Federal. He brings strong relationships and familiarity in the communities we serve that will benefit our existing clients and future expansion of our lending portfolio"

Jeremy has 16 years' experience as a Commercial Lender most recently at Savers Bank. Jeremy is involved with the United Way & Habitat for Humanity.

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Stephanie Saraidarian, Anna Case, Jeremy Leap and Anita Carroll.

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Momma, can I take the \$40 from grandma and grandpa to the Dollar Store?

Dada, how much does a dog cost?

Yes, a third grader and kindergartner can be curious and money conversations become more difficult as they grow older. Making kids understand how money works is a start, however financial literacy doesn't equate to understanding value or making good, responsible decisions.

A book to help create financial decisions as teaching opportunities is *The Opposite of Spoiled: Raising Kids Who Are Grounded, Generous, and Smart About Money* by Ron Lieber.

Let me share the central strategy: Allowance & Three Jars.

No allowance for chores. Lieber argues when parents tie allowance to completion of chores, they make work the primary focus, not money. Kids should do chores for the same reason we do - because they need to be done. If done poorly, there are plenty

of privileges we can take away.

Allowance as a teaching tool.

If your child can count and ask to buy things, start an allowance. Consider 50 cents or \$1 a week per year of age, raised each year on birthdays. Your focus is to have them learn patience, strive for a goal and make decisions with defined resources.

Three jars: spend, save & give.

They divide allowance into three clear jars each week: spending now, saving for later and giving to those who may need it more - an introduction to budgeting.

Now here is where I've come to differ from Lieber.

He pays an unrealistic interest rate each week (i.e. 20%) for "save jar" to help kids visibly see the power of savings and compounding. Once spent, less interest is paid, helping teach selective spending decisions and building of savings.

Thinking like an investor. I want them curious if something can be invested in, think why (or why not) it is a good investment

and participate in risk/reward.

To execute, some investment firms allow buying slices of shares, up to 5 companies for \$50 total. Can be in a child's name via custodial account (beneficial capital gains rules) and viewed as a teaching tool rather than education savings since they'll be spending on their larger wants.

As a holiday gift, we started three companies they knew and two I educated why they own it. Monthly we review values, if dividends were paid, total account value, if they want to add more and/or if there's a new company they want to invest in.

I've explained their favorite pizza shop is a small business that doesn't have shares. Also explained who makes a game they like, which they decided to take from their "save jar" to buy. It's down ~15% in a short time but I asked if the reason they bought is still true, if they want to buy more, still hold or sell.

Remember, it's about learning and making mistakes now, to



Glenn Brown

benefit when they're older with their real earnings.

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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New Development Will Help Bellingham Meet Affordable Housing Goal

BY DAVID DUNBAR

When the new Curtis Apartments in Bellingham open in the fall, 63 of the units for rent will be designated "affordable housing" and awarded through a lottery this month. The new apartment complex, located at 161 Mechanic Street, covers 15 acres and will have a total of 250 units.

A state law widely known as "Chapter 40B" mandates that all communities dedicate a minimum of 10% of their housing stock to be affordable to lower income households.

"Bellingham was at 7.6% in 2019," reports Town Planner Jim Kupfer. "The Curtis helps us meet a number of community goals including a boost to 12.6% in our affordable housing stock."

"Affordable" means the cost of housing – rent or purchase – plus utility payments must total less than 30% of a household's gross annual income. According to Kupfer, "Annual income for a family of four must not ex-

ceed about \$89,000" to qualify (there are many more details and exceptions in the qualification process).

Rentals frequently require first and last month's rent, plus a security deposit, that can amount to \$5,000 or more. There are state programs available to help lower income families purchase a home or condo without having to lay out as much cash (check out www.mass.gov for options).

Kupfer says, "Bellingham over the years has been trying to meet the needs of its residents... trying to piece together a plan to create a positive impact." If you'd like to know more, then review the Town's Housing Production Plan which you can find here: www.bellinghamma.org/planning-board/pages/plans-and-studies.

Now, about the lottery coming later this month.

"The Reader's Digest version," explains David Cashman of SEB Housing, "is that all (applying) households who are eligible for the lottery will be included



Construction continues on The Curtis Apartments in Bellingham. The 250-unit complex is expected to open in the fall.

in the lottery and all households picked will be placed on waitlists that correspond to units for which they applied and were eligible. There will be multiple waiting lists for this property created from the lottery drawing as there are multiple unit types. The waitlists simply establish the order in which lottery households will be invited to apply for leases and, if lease eligible, the order in which they'll be able to select from available units on that list."

SEB Housing is an off-site affordable housing consulting group.

Cashman continues, "My best advice is that this is a great opportunity, and we hope to receive many applications, but households should also recognize that they need to provide a lot of income/asset/tax documentation to demonstrate their eligibility for the program. The upside is that there are a lot of affordable units at this development and any household who is eligible for the lottery will have a terrific chance of having the opportunity to lease a unit."

The deadline to submit applications is May 16. On May 31, the lottery will be held on YouTube.

There will be two lottery drawings. The first will be a "Local Preference Drawing" for town residents, town employees, and employees of town businesses. The second drawing will be for everyone else. More information is available at www.sebhousing.com

"We want Bellingham to be well represented in the lottery," says Kupfer. In addition, "The Curtis will be a top 10 taxpayer in town."

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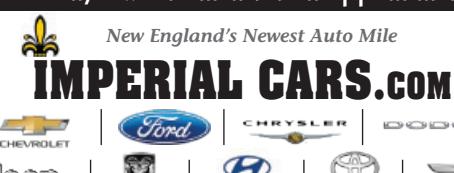


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"A lot of what we do is educate," says Tyler O'Connor, president of American Historic Coins & Collectibles in Bellingham. "We help the customer understand movements in the economy and how holding a physical asset, like coins or gold or silver, might be in their best interest. We're more than just a coin shop."

The store is located at Bellingham Plaza on North Main Street and offers the visitor a panorama of coins and collectibles to consider. You can also bring in coins, collectibles, and precious metals for appraisal and possible purchase by the store.

"It is great to have a 'coin shop' so close that has knowledgeable people who are willing to interact with their guests," writes Jay Emmitt on Facebook. "From advice, insight, help and sharing of ideas to selling you the right coin... they do it all!"

American Historic Coins & Collectibles was first opened in December 2015, by Tyler's father. He was a longtime coin collector (he has since passed away). Tyler took over the business in 2017 and, last year, was joined by his brother, TJ. Third generation O'Connors – six- and 11-year-old sons – spend time in the store and are "interested" in helping.

The COVID pandemic had a significant impact on the O'Connors' business. It was closed for a couple of months in 2020 recalls Tyler. "But during the pandemic, people stayed and worked at home, saved their money, and got stimulus checks from the government."

And now, many want to invest in a tangible asset. "Some are looking for specific coins," says TJ. "But there has been a mental shift to incorporate gold and silver into their portfolios."

"Recently," according to Tyler, "inflation and the war in Europe have driven interest even higher in investment grade coins, gold and silver bullion, while some traditional assets have lost value."



Business spotlight

Uncertainty in the economy has caused customers to investigate metals – particularly gold, silver, platinum, palladium, copper, and iridium. "During a time of transition, when there is fear and doubt, customers can be triggered," explains Tyler. "We can offer assistance," adds TJ, "and help customers preserve their purchasing power."

Having a "trusted and reliable source" to turn to, says Tyler, will help make any purchases safer. He says not long ago, an entire shipping container (like the ones on ocean-going vessels) turned up filled with fake coins from China. And there are lots of scams online. "We stand behind what we sell... not like eBay or others on the web," says Tyler.

A "grand re-opening celebration" is planned for May 7 from 11am-4pm. Tyler says to look for "sidewalk sales, pop-up tents and a local silversmith who will be melting and pouring."



Tyler O'Connor (left) and his brother TJ at their store, American Historic Coins & Collectibles in Bellingham. On display with them are American Eagle Gold Coins, Silver Dollars, and Silver Bullion Bars.

"We are in this business for the long term," says Tyler. "We try very hard to be open, transparent and welcoming; that's how we provide more than just intrinsic value."

Find out more about American Historical Coins & Collectibles at www.ahcoinco.com or call (508) 657-9002. The store is located at 15 North Main Street in Bellingham and is open every day except Sunday and Monday.

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Massachusetts Walking Tour to Return for Free Concert June 2nd

By MARJORIE TURNER HOLLMAN,
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Be sure to mark your calendars for next month, when Mark Mandeville and Raianne Richards are returning to Bellingham. They will be performing their music live at an outdoor concert at the Bellingham Senior Center, Thursday, June 2 at 5 p.m. A return engagement for the pair, they are also bringing their full band. Their music has been described as "Fresh and refined folk music for modern times." Think live, acoustic bluegrass—guitars, banjo, bass, pedal steel, clarinet, and penny whistle. Mandeville

commented recently that "We don't take for granted being able to perform live, as opposed to offering concerts by Zoom from our house. Our music sounds so much better in person."

This year, Mark and Raianne will be performing outside in the parking lot at the Senior Center on Blackstone Street. The Senior Center will be providing shuttle service for attendees, who will park their cars at the Bellingham High School. This concert is free and open to all ages. Bring your appetite, since the Senior Center will be providing grilled hot dogs and beverages at a small cost.

These musicians are no strangers to Bellingham residents. Last summer they offered a live concert at the Bellingham High School parking lot. In 2017 they brought their Massachusetts Walking Tour here, and returned to nearby towns for their Ten Mile River 10th anniversary tour in 2019. They are resuming their Walking Tour tradition after a two-year hiatus because of the pandemic and will be walking and offering live community concerts in 10 towns along the Appalachian trail beginning in June.

To find where else Mark and Rainne are performing, head over to www.markandraianne.com

The Massachusetts Walking Tour is sponsored in part by grants from ten western MA cultural councils, local agencies which are supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.



Mark Mandeville and Raianne Richards will be performing their music live at an outdoor concert at the Bellingham Senior Center, Thursday, June 2 at 5 p.m.

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- Leave grass clippings on the lawn to lessen the need for fertilizer.
- Never discard yard waste down storm drains or into waterways.
- Water deeply and infrequently, and time watering to avoid evaporation and runoff.
- Reseed bare areas with drought-tolerant varieties of lawn grass.



For more information, visit our community's website or go to www.stormwatermatters.org.

New Bellingham Garden Club Sets Focus on Agri-Education, Beautification

Plant Sale Set for May 7th at Bellingham Senior Center

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

The Bellingham Community Garden is teeming with life this year, and a huge part of that growth is the emergence of the Bellingham Garden Club of Massachusetts.

"We made a significant amount of changes from last year to this year, bringing it to where it should be," continues DeFosses, who's lived in Bellingham for about seven years. "This past year has been really exciting with some of the newer things we brought in as well."

Probably the biggest news is the newly formed "Bellingham Garden Club of MA," which is actively seeking members. "We started a brand-new club, a nonprofit 501 c3 under that umbrella, and we also fall under 509A2, which is a public charity," she adds. "We've centered a lot of our work to help with food disparity, food insecurity and do a significant amount of donations from the produce we grow. Our focus, and mission, is to be able to continue that platform while concomitantly addressing some of the needs toward beautification of town property and the community in general." The fledgling Garden Club will work to educate the community, helping people to understand what's involved in agriculture.

In the past three months, the Bellingham Community Garden and Farm stand has raised \$2,700 in personal community resident and business donations, including a considerable \$2,500 donation from Dean Bank in Bellingham.

The young garden club has a \$1,500 grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council for a breadth of educational community activities, and, through DeFosses' effort, the town of Bellingham has received a Food Security Infrastructure Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture, for \$22,755 for the Community Garden and Farm stand.

"That was a long task. It took me about 3 months to write," says DeFosses of the very complicated grant. "That ... will improve the grow space of the garden itself. This is specifically for funding to build a greenhouse, to be able to have a new shed that will house



Bellingham gardeners Mary, Micky, Jack and Ben eagerly work their springtime plots at the Bellingham Community Garden. Interested in gardening? Join the new Bellingham Garden Club of Massachusetts!

tools and supplies, to build a better irrigation system and to also enhance the farm stand, which is in deep need of repair."

These two grants were DeFosses' first.

"This was my first rodeo, just putting that old college experience into writing and a whole lot of prayer," she laughs. "We were very, very excited (to receive the grants)."

In the meantime, she says, the fundraising and awareness campaign continues for the Bellingham Garden Club. This month, in fact, the group will hold a plant sale on May 7th, at the Bellingham Senior Center at 40 Blackstone Street, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Funds will go toward outreach programs and efforts to alleviate food disparity.

"Last year, we raised over 100 pounds of food, in a small grow season, we donated to the Uxbridge Food Pantry as well as Dorchester Food Fridge," says DeFosses.

The continued fundraising will help with agri-educational programs as well.

Next month, the YAG Program, a youth agriculture program, kicks off with a Junior Farm Day workshop on June 4th for children aged 3-18, in which young people can learn about agriculture, including plants, seed cultivating, soil quality and planting.

"Also, they'll have a plot available to them where they can plant pumpkin seeds, then we show the young people how to plant it and what to expect. That's a really exciting program," says DeFosses. In March, the Garden Club pre-

sented a program on composting, and in April, a program on the benefits of bees. Aspiring artists can also sign up for "Art in the Garden," taught by experienced artists, which will take place on Sundays in June.

DeFosses is thrilled to be able to do so much this year.

"We're hitting the ground running, as they say, and we're looking also to beautify grow spaces in the town of Bellingham as well," she says. "Fundraising will continue these programs and expand further."

In mid-April, DeFosses said the group was looking to launch an improved website to make it easier for the community to connect with the group.

"We have a Facebook page that is wonderful, that's geared a lot toward the farm stand," she says. "It also helps for people to see how we grow and how they can obtain a CSA purchase."

The new garden club's focus will be on the community in general, as well as supporting the community garden, explains DeFosses.

"All of the workshops are under the auspices of the Bellingham Garden Club, including the education and the beautification," she points out, "We're looking for members and to get those members interested in becoming part of the community, to support the Garden Club mission."

The Bellingham Garden Club meets virtually or in person every third Tuesday of the month. The Bellingham Community Garden is located at 200 Center St., in Bellingham, and their temporary

Plots Still Available at Bellingham Community Garden

"We have a total of 40 plots, right now over 80% capacity full," said Micky DeFosses, Bellingham Community Garden Manager, in mid-April. DeFosses is in her second year managing the garden. "From last year's membership to this year's membership, we've welcomed a considerable number of families into the community."

For information on purchasing a plot, email DeFosses at bellinghamfarmmarket.ed@gmail.com You can also visit the Bellingham (MA) Community Garden and Farmstand Facebook page for more information.



The Bellingham Community Garden, which will be the site of a number of Garden Club programs this year, recently got a donation of mulch from Scally's Tree Service.

site, until the more permanent one is established, is at <https://sites.google.com/view/bellinghamgardenclubma/home>. You can also search "Bellingham Farm Stand" on Facebook.

Interested in becoming a member of the Bellingham Garden Club? Find a registration form at <https://forms.gle/Uva7ZYIvyJH2A5ap7>

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Local Resident to Bike Cross Country for a Cause

By JUDITH DORATO
O'GARA

Bellingham native and resident Taylor Sutherland will embark on an affordable home-building journey this month. On May 18th, he'll join national non-profit organization Bike & Build, on a ride beginning in Jacksonville, Florida and finishing on August 3, 2022, in Santa Barbara, California. Bike & Build is dedicated to engaging young adults in addressing this country's affordable housing crisis through a unique adventure/service platform. Riders, ages 18-29, participate in cross-country cycling trips to raise money and awareness for the cause and help at build sites along the ride.

"Volunteering, the concept of service and giving back is what drew me to it," says Sutherland, who learned about the program from a friend he'd met while earning his architectural degree from Roger Williams. "A big part of why I enjoy working as an architect is to make an impact in people's lives and in the community around me. I love biking, and that, too, is the half of it. Riding my bike across the country is a goal." Sutherland, who has some experience building with his father's company Jolicoeur Overhead Doors and often visits construction sites as an architect, adds that the hands-on experience will be valuable to him in his chosen career.



Taylor Sutherland, from Bellingham, will join Bike & Build on a trip from Jacksonville, Florida to Santa Barbara, Calif. From May to August this year, helping to build homes at 20 different sites along the way.

Sutherland has some experience riding on long bike fundraisers. "In the past I've participated in some other volunteer rides, specifically with Bike MS, a 2-day, 150-mile ride from Boston to P-town," he notes. To train, Taylor was riding 50 miles a day by early April, hoping to squeeze in at least one 100-day before he leaves. "We're required to log 500 miles before we leave," says Sutherland.

About 25-30 riders will be in Sutherland's group, hailing from various parts of the country.

"The program I'm doing offers three different trips, Northern, Central Southern and Southern. I'm doing Southern," he says. In all, the group will have 20 build days, helping to erect affordable housing.

"The cause is really important to me," says Sutherland. Although he hasn't focused on residential construction so much in his career, he says, "I'm pretty aware of how important and how much of an issue affordable housing is in our country. Something I'd like to learn more about is being able to advocate, and something that is integral to this program is wherever we're hosted, we'll give presentations to people we're working with on the importance of affordable housing, why it's important to provide better housing to people of different social classes."

For more information about Bike & Build, visit <https://bikeandbuild.org>.

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May Performance “a Triumph” for Local Community Chorus

BY JUDITH DORATO O’GARA

When it presents its Spring Concert this year, American Roadtrip, on May first at 1:30 p.m., the Greater Milford Community Chorus will finally be performing a repertoire it planned to perform before the pandemic shut it down a couple years ago.

“It’s nice to be able to bring that back,” says the chorus director Mark Schiapucci. “This concert we’re performing is the concert we were getting ready for when COVID struck. It’s something triumphant, to dust it off and pull it off a shelf and finally be able to perform this concert we’ve been thinking about for two years now.”

The Greater Milford Community Chorus (GMCC) was organized in April 1973. The nonprofit draws from communities all around Milford. Would-be singers are invited to join in on one of three open audition events at the beginning of each season, which includes a holiday concert and a springtime concert each year.

“We actually have singers from all around the area,” says Schiapucci. Right now, he says, membership has been down. “In a pre-COVID year that number would have been about 40, but it’s enough to get our concert together and carry on, says the chorus director.

The volunteer group is open to anybody over 18 with a rudimentary understanding of reading music.

“Though this is my first year participating, I have found it fun and very rewarding so far to be a part of something like this where

likeminded singers and music lovers come together to perform,” says chorus member Jenn Russo, of Bellingham. “I have loved that there are members representing all ages and backgrounds. Mark has been amazing – very talented and with a wonderful sense of humor as he guides us to be our best.”

“I’m so relieved and excited that we can get back into the concert hall,” says Schiapucci, himself a Milford High graduate, who brought the chorus back to the concert hall just this past holiday season. “It’s been an interesting couple of years for live music,” he says. “There are enough challenges, in preparing music, without having to do all these other things. It’s enough to get together in the same room with a piano and to make music. There’s not really a substitute for that.”

The group, says Schiapucci, was able to “think outside the

box” during the lockdown, with a virtual concert project during the holiday season, in which members recorded themselves at home and those clips were edited and merged, and then last spring, with an outdoor socially distanced concert.

“I was very proud, that even in the lockdown year, we were able to keep music going and the group active, which was a big priority for me, especially a group like this, where singers aren’t paid. If you don’t keep up momentum you risk the program falling apart,” says Schiapucci, who laughingly notes, I don’t miss rehearsing over Zoom, I’ll tell you that. It just really goes to prove how much people love and are devoted to music in their lives.”

For more information on joining the Greater Milford Community Chorus, visit

www.greatermilfordcommunitychorus.org

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Art Heals: Shine Your Light Chalk Festival

An Evening Chalk Walk at BVT to Take Place May 12th

Student artists at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) in Upton will get creative for a cause by sharing their personal stories through their artwork to help raise awareness of mental health and support teen suicide prevention.

As an artist, you intuitively know that creating a visual image through any medium can produce physical and emotional benefits for you, the creator, and those who view it. The Art Heals: Shine Your Light Chalk Festival on Thursday, May 12th, is all about the healing power of art. The school campus at 65 Pleasant Street in Upton will come alive with color, creativity, and meaning as student artists create unique sidewalk chalk murals that reflect their mental health stories on the theme of light and how "art heals." In collaboration with the School Based Health Center, they'll showcase art as a positive way of expressing emotions, diminishing negative feelings and thoughts.



An Evening Chalk Walk

Later that evening, the community is welcomed to attend an evening chalk walk from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. to view the completed masterpieces. The event is free and open to the public. It's an opportunity to connect with others in a shared appreciation and awareness of how art can be used as a strategic tool in the treatment of mental health.

This event is possible in partnership with BVT's Visual Arts Department, School Based Health Center, and supported by grants from Grafton, Mendon, Milford, and Millville Cultural Councils (Mass Cultural Council's Local Cultural

Councils Program).

Please visit the school website www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/arteals2022 as all events are subject to change.

May is for the Mamas!

BY ASHLEY KAZIJIAN

None of us would be here without our mothers. No matter who you call Mom, that very special day in May is right around the corner and here are some ways to celebrate that very special person:

Brunch and bites:

- Lowell's Restaurant (Mendon)
- Coachmen's Lodge (Bellingham)
- Kay's Restaurant (Woonsocket, RI)
- Galliford's Restaurant and Tavern (Mendon)
- Lake Pearl (Wrentham)
- 3 Restaurant (Franklin)
- Primavera (Millis)
- King Street Cafe (Franklin)
- GlenPharmer Distillery (Franklin)
- Birchwood Bakery (Franklin)

Events:

- Mother's Day Market (Redemption Rock Brewing Co., Worcester)
- Wicked Tulips Flower Farm - PYO experiences (multiple locations)
- Vandervalk Farm and Winery (Mendon)

Gifts:

- CBD Releaf Center (Bellingham)
- Vivilicious Artisanal Delicacies (Bellingham)
- Runways Salon (Bellingham)
- Piette Jewelers (Bellingham)
- Brian's Country Greenery (Bellingham)
- Fiori Florals (Franklin)
- Halo Beauty Salon (Bellingham)
- Ulta Beauty (Bellingham)
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Bellingham Cubs Celebrate Achievements at Blue and Gold Ceremony

By JENNIFER RUSSO

The Cub Scout Blue and Gold ceremony is a long-standing tradition where cubs celebrate meeting their various requirements to move to the next rank of their scouting journey. This annual banquet is met with excitement as scouts and parents come together to honor these achievements, share a meal, and participate in some fun activities. The ceremony also celebrates the founding of the Boy Scouts of America back in 1910, with the Cub Scout branch kicking off in 1916.

The colors blue and gold have specific meaning for the Cub Scouts. Blue symbolizes the sky, loyalty, spirituality, and truth. Gold stands for the sun, happiness, and good cheer. This was fitting as the sunshine poured through the windows of the function room at River Falls restaurant in Woonsocket, Rhode Island. The space was decorated with these colors – centerpieces, balloons and a glorious stand of cupcakes all sported blue and gold to remind the audience of these important traits.

The scouts and their parents arrived wearing their various uniforms and immediately were drawn to a table full of raffle baskets that included everything from Pop Its to Nerf guns, games and Funko Pop figures, along with a money tree that had an array of folded bills and gift cards attached. Families then enjoyed a delicious dinner of chicken, meatballs, pasta, and salad as they talked about upcoming summer plans, camping trips, spring sports and other activities they are planning to participate in.

After the meal, winners of the Pinewood Derby held earlier this year were recognized with medals and trophies, as well as laminated certificates for the superlative car design wins. Following these recognitions, scouts were called up by den and asked if they were willing and ready to move into the next rank, given a badge for that rank and had their faces painted as part of the ceremony.

The marks are specific to rank. For example, those who are moving to Bobcat rank are painted with three red lines

across the bridge of their nose, symbolizing the 3 “steps” they have taken to earn this rank – learning the promise, the law of the pack and the motto. Those who are moving up to Wolf rank are marked with two brown inverted V shapes above their eyebrows, signifying the “ears” of the wolf and expressing eagerness to listen.



Bellingham Cub Scouts held their Blue & Gold Ceremony on April 8th.



Additionally, those that had achieved the Arrow of Light in a ceremony earlier this year called the Bridge Crossing were recognized. Those cub scouts moved to the Boy Scout rank and received wooden arrows and their new badges. Scouts which moved to the Boy Scouts were Colin Brooks, CJ Schmaelzle, Colin Barrows, Riley Parker, and AJ Hagopian.

After the ceremonial piece, scouts eagerly looked at their raffle tickets as winners were announced for the various prizes and enjoyed their cupcakes.

Cub Scout leaders were then recognized with years of service pins and as many will be transitioning out of their respective positions. Parents were encouraged to step in to fill the roles and continue the work that has been done for our local Pack 118. The support of the adults in our community to make the program successful is critical.

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

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From the Town Clerk:

May 3rd Election News

Our Local Town Election will take place on Tuesday, May 3rd at the Bellingham High School Gymnasium. The polling hours will be from 12:00 Noon until 8:00 PM. There will be no Early Voting hours for this election, so anyone who is unable to make it to the polls must apply for an Absentee Ballot. Applications are available at bellinghamma.org, on the Town Clerk's webpage. If you have any questions, please contact my office at (508) 657-2830.

The ballot is as follows:

Selectmen for 3 years (1 open position)

Town Moderator for 3 years (1 position)

Town Clerk for 3 years (1 position)

Constable for 3 years (4 positions)

Library Trustee for 3 years (2 positions)

Planning Board for 3 years (2 positions)

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Lawrence J. Sposato, Jr. (Incumbent)

David H. Brown (Incumbent)

Richard J. Martinelli (Incumbent)

William Paine (Incumbent)

William Roberts (Incumbent)

Nicole Buckley (Incumbent)

Open

Phillip Devine (Incumbent)

Elizabeth Berthelette (Incumbent)

Nick Mobilia

Jennifer L. Altomonte (Incumbent)

Michael Reed, Jr. (Incumbent)

May 25th Spring Town Meeting News

The Annual Spring Town Meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 25th, 7:30 p.m., at the Bellingham High School Auditorium. Copies of the Warrant are available online at bellingham.org. Copies of the Finance Committee's Recommendations will be available in the Town Clerk's office ten days prior to the Town Meeting. Hope to see you at the Town Election and Town Meeting!

Blackstone Valley Tech to Host Annual Golf Tourney in June

It's not a day at the beach; it's so much better! It would be a hazard if you didn't register now for BVT's 23rd Annual Golf Tournament to be held on Monday, June 13th, at Highfields Golf & Country Club. A fun-filled day of golfing will benefit the Valley Tech Education Foundation and Athletic Department activities and programs.

Your registration (individual golfer \$150/golf foursome \$125 per person) includes 18 holes on the championship course, a golf cart, delicious snacks, a silent auction, and raffles, all to help support a special cause. Not a golfer? Sponsor a tee, a putting green, or a cart to display your company name in the program proudly and during the event.

The day promises to be full of fun and friendly competition. For all tournament details, to view sponsorship opportunities, donate a raffle item, access the online golfer registration and payment portal, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/golftournament. Register today to secure your spot.



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St. Vincent de Paul Clothing Drive

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul will be having a clothing drive the weekend of June 4th and 5th in the parking lot of St. Blaise Parish. The donation trailer will be parked at the back of the St. Blaise parking lot. The trailer will be open for donations 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday (6/4) and 8 a.m. to 12 noon on Sunday (6/5). We will accept all clean usable clothing and shoes, bagged and boxed.

We cannot accept furniture, household appliances or bric-a-brac. So, start your spring cleaning now and gather up your no longer wanted but still usable items and help our neighbors in need while fulfilling the mission of the Society by putting the Gospel message into action: *"As long as you did it for these, the least of my brethren you did it for me."* (Matthew 25:40)

A Busy May for Ladies of St. Anne

- The Ladies of St Anne Sodality will hold their annual plant sale after Masses at St. Blaise parish on May 21-22. Each pot will feature three different varieties of flowers and be perfect for adding color to your home garden or planting at the cemetery for Memorial Day. Each pot costs \$5.
- On Sunday, May 29, at the St. Blaise 10 a.m. Mass, Ladies of St. Anne members will honor deceased Sodality members who died within the past year. Family members will receive invitations to attend the memorial for their loved ones.
- Applications for the Ladies of St. Anne Scholarship can be found on the St. Blaise website, saintblaise.org, and are being accepted until May 15. Parishioners who will graduate high school and are planning on attending college or are already enrolled in college are encouraged to apply. Multiple \$500 scholarships may be awarded.
- Our next meeting will be on May 12 at 7 p.m. in the St. Blaise parish hall. Please remember to bring a non-perishable item for the Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry.

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Ernest A. Taft Jr. Museum Grand Reopening, May 22nd at 12 Noon

Bellingham Historical Commission Announces the Grand Re-Opening of the Ernest A. Taft Jr. Historical Museum, 3 Common Street, with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on Sunday, May 22nd at 12 noon, prior to the start of the Memorial Day Parade. The museum will be open that day from 11 a.m. until at least 2 p.m.

Over the past two years the Commission members, with the cooperation of the Town, have spent untold hours renovating both the physical space and organizing the collections to highlight the best of Bellingham history. The physical space has newly painted walls, bright lights, and new flooring and the collections organized by topic.

On entering, you will find a summary of the history of Bellingham by the century. In the main display you will see some of the Town's best historical assets, including the Boston Post Cane, Amethyst that was mined

on Rose Avenue, a toddler dress (with pantaloons!) that was worn by Alice Burr in the 1830s, as well as books and written materials that are hundreds of years old. Other amazing items in the collection include: a quilt that was made by the Ladies Aid Society of the First Baptist Church between 1903 and 1916; a horse-drawn sleigh that was used to deliver groceries in Bellingham in the early 1900s; a 1891 bell from the Center School; and 1831 Boston to Bellingham mile marker; a 1919 Estey Folding Organ that was commonly used by chaplains during World War II, and so much more!

Over the past year, we have acquired a few new items, including a doll house replica of the 1820 Cape Cod home located at 156 Mechanic Street, a medical kit from a Bellingham woman who was Mrs. Babe Ruth's personal nurse, and a home-made cobbler's bench from the early 1900s

Our sections include: Municipal & Schools, Home & Farming, Transportation & Manufacturing, Sports & Recreation, Civil Defense & Public Safety, and Military. We also provide an extensive collection of research materials including a complete set of the Crimpville Comments, Annual Town Reports, Yearbooks and so much more!

We would like to thank Town Administrator Denis Fraine, Town Carpenter Ron Paulhus, and all of the Commission Members and volunteers who worked together to make the renovation and reorganization possible. We will announce hours and open by appointment scheduling in the near future so stay tuned.

We look forward to seeing you on May 22nd or some other date soon!

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iStent Inject and Microgoniometry for Glaucoma

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

What is glaucoma and how is it treated?

Glaucoma is a chronic disease defined by characteristic optic nerve damage. It is a multi-factorial disease with over 300 different anatomic variations and affects over 40,000,000 people worldwide. Glaucoma is a slowly progressive and irreversible disease and, in most cases, causes a painless loss of eyesight. It is, in short, "the silent sneak thief of sight". The damage to the optic nerve is commonly caused by a fluid imbalance, or pressure, in the eye, as well as possible alterations in the blood flow to the optic nerve. It is well established that lowering the intraocular pressure can slow the process of optic nerve damage. The degree of pressure lowering necessary to prevent optic nerve damage is individualized for each person and each optic nerve. The greater the optic nerve damage, the lower the intraocular pressure is needed to achieve stability and

prevent further optic nerve damage and further visual field loss.

If glaucoma is left untreated you may experience vision loss and eventual blindness. Treatment strategies for glaucoma are individualized to achieve the greatest lowering of the intraocular pressure with the least amount of risk to the individual's eyesight and well-being. Commonly, in the United States, topical medications are used as a first line of treatment. In many situations, multiple medications are tried to achieve the desired pressure level. Unfortunately, there can be difficulties with compliance, cost and side effects with many of these medications and laser therapy is commonly substituted as a first line of therapy.

What is the iStent® trabecular micro-bypass stent?

Minimally invasive glaucoma surgical procedures, so-called MIGS involve alterations of the drainage area that are performed inside the eye. The iStent® trabecular micro-bypass stent is a surgical therapy for patients who have mild to moderate open



angle glaucoma and have been tried possibly on topical medications or laser therapy. It is designed to improve the aqueous outflow to better lower the intraocular pressure and reduce the need for medications. The iStent® is the smallest medical device approved by the FDA to date. It is placed in the eye into

the drainage area, so-called Schlemm's Canal through the trabecular meshwork. The iStent® is an elective procedure. The iStent® is potentially beneficial in helping to reduce the number of glaucoma medications and drops needed to control this condition.

What is microgoniometry surgery?

Microgoniometry surgery (using the iAccess trabecular trephine device from Glaukos) is another type of MIGS. This procedure provides control of the eye pressure at lower risk than more traditional glaucoma surgeries. It alters the eye's drainage system to lower the eye pressure and reduce the need for medications. Microgoniometry can be done standalone or combined with iStents during cataract surgery in a tissue sparing fashion to improve resistance to outflow in glaucoma. This tissue-sparing procedure can help lower the pressure even more compared to implanting iStent alone. During this procedure and ophthalmologist (Eye MD/ surgeon) will make 3 trephination cuts in a part of the eye's drainage system called the trabecular meshwork. This will allow fluid to leave the eye much easier.

Benefits (how the surgery can help)

The goal of the iStent and microgoniometry surgery is to lower your eye pressure and help

preserve vision. It will not bring back vision already lost from glaucoma. After implantation, many patients are able to better control their eye pressure with fewer medications.

Risks

As with any surgery, there are risks with the iStent and microgoniometry procedure. The surgery may not lower the eye pressure or control the glaucoma even when it is properly performed. In addition, sometimes there can be complications that do not appear in the early post operative period but may develop days, months or years later. Further treatment or surgery to treat those complications may be needed. As with any intraocular surgery, there may be loss of vision, blindness, loss of the eye, as well as bleeding, infection and injury to the eye or nearby body parts.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we use state-of-the-art technology and lasers to diagnose and treat a variety of eye problems, including glaucoma. We offer high-definition optic coherence tomography testing (OCT) that can predict glaucoma before it even happens. We also offer laser treatment when medications alone are not enough. All our offices are equipped with OCT and state-of-the-art computerized visual field testing. We operate in a state-of-the-art surgery center close to home, here at the Cataract and Laser Surgery Center of Milford. Are you still being directed to go to Waltham and Attleboro for your eye surgery? Call us for a second opinion! We were among the first surgeons in New England to introduce this new technology and we offer stellar outcomes closer to home. With 20 years of established experience and tens of thousands of procedures performed, we are happy to offer state-of-the-art medical and surgical eye care and now the iStent inject /microgoniometry for treatment of glaucoma closer to home than ever before.

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Looking to Rent in Bellingham? Be Flexible (and Careful!)

BY DAVID DUNBAR

"Be positive. Pay attention. Don't give up! Keep looking... every day new listings come up."

If you're looking for a rental apartment, house, or condo in Bellingham, take to heart the above advice from realtor Michelle Sebio Savje. She has been in the business for 20 years and says she has never seen rental prices this high.

"I think we'll continue to see rents increase over the next six months, and likely the next year," reports Jon Leckie, a data journalist at Rent.com. "We had expected increases to be smaller because year-over-year prices in 2021 were compared to a depressed market in 2020, but so far that hasn't been the case and rents continue to climb at similar

rates to what we saw in 2021."

Bellingham only has a handful of rentals on the market. There are more in neighboring towns including Franklin, Milford, and Woonsocket, RI.

Finding a suitable rental is time consuming, frustrating, and sometimes dangerous. Sebio Savje Premier Realty owner Michelle says, "There are many avenues to pursue. Facebook Marketplace, Craigslist, local newspapers, and social media can be helpful." Also check Rent.com, ApartmentGuide.com and MLS. But she warns of "shady" offers by scammers that ask for your financial information.

"If anyone wants money before you even see the property, then it's probably a scam," says Sebio Savje.

"I advertise all of my properties on Facebook Marketplace," says Josh Harris who owns Empire Properties (part of Harris & Company Landscape Design and Construction in Bellingham). Empire owns 18 properties in the area.

He typically posts an available property and "30 people message me that they're interested." He responds with a questionnaire and offer to talk. Fifteen respond. Five actually show up for a meeting. Three fill out applications. And only one or two get approved.

Harris started out in the rental business by "house hacking" with his family in Northbridge in 2006. And by house hacking, he means purchasing a house and then renting out half of it. "You

get a lower interest rate and income," he notes.

Empire Properties will have one rental available May 1. It's a three-bedroom unit in Bellingham. If you're interested, get on Facebook and send Harris a message.

Some advice from Jon Leckie: "If renters are looking to save money in a tight market, they'll need to negotiate with their landlords. I would encourage renters to be prepared and to do their homework before coming to the negotiating table. Research the local rental market. Show the landlord you're willing to move on price, but those prices should be in line with historical trends and the local market."

"If that fails, renters should look to make landlord friendly

concessions," Leckie continues. "Things like longer lease terms, giving up a parking space, or flexibility on certain maintenance responsibilities can all bring down prices and are enticing to landlords."

Given the highly competitive nature of the local rental market, negotiating with the landlord may not produce the results you want but is worth a try.

Sebio Savje suggests finding a reliable, trustworthy real estate agent who can help you locate the best property, negotiate with the landlord, complete all the paperwork while avoiding scams. As for right now, "you might just want to wait it out," she says, "look again as rentals become more available and affordable."

Members of Massachusetts Congressional Delegation Call to Stop Closure of Leeds VA Medical Center

WASHINGTON, D.C. – On April 15th, Rules Committee Chairman Jim McGovern (MA-02) led nearly every member of the Massachusetts Congressional delegation, including Senators Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) and Ed Markey (D-MA), and Representatives Richard Neal (MA-01), Stephen Lynch (MA-08), Bill Keating (MA-09), Katherine Clark (MA-05), Ayanna Pressley (MA-07), Lori Trahan (MA-03),

and Jake Auchincloss (MA-04), in calling on the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to reconsider their recent recommendation to close the Central Western Massachusetts Veterans Affairs Medical Center in Leeds, Massachusetts. Their concerns are the closure of the center could jeopardize the essential care veterans living in Central and Western Massachusetts earned during their time in service.

Full text of letter at https://mcgovern.house.gov/uploaded-files/cwm_vamc_closure_letter.pdf

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Winter Recovery Assistance Program (WRAP) to Provide \$845K for 8th Worcester District

State Representative Michael J. Soter (R-Bellingham) is pleased to announce that the House and Senate have agreed to a supplemental spending bill that will provide \$100 million in road funding for cities and towns as part of a Winter Recovery Assistance Program (WRAP), including \$845,379 for the 8th Worcester District.

Under the supplemental spending bill, the following will be distributed to the respective 8th Worcester District town:

Town of Bellingham: \$308,362
 Town of Blackstone: \$137,016
 Town of Millville: \$73,934
 Town of Uxbridge: \$326,068

Representative Soter voted to support the additional funding for municipalities when the FY22 supplemental budget first came before the House on March 9. The Senate approved its own version of the spending plan on March 24, and both branches were able to reconcile the differences between the two bills on March 31. The final compromise bill is now on Governor Charlie Baker's desk for his review and signature.

"After passing the transportation infrastructure bill earlier this week, I'm delighted to see even more funding flow into the district for our roadways," commented State Representative Soter. "This funding will help our

towns cross projects off of their priority lists and make significant improvements to the roads we use every day. With this base funding, we can turn our attention to the many grant programs that will be opening in the coming months."

The passage of the supplemental budget came just one day after the House approved a \$350 million bond bill to help maintain municipal roads and bridges under the state's Chapter 90 program and to provide additional funding for several transportation-

related municipal grant programs, including the Municipal Small Bridge Program and the Complete Streets Program. That bill, House Bill 4638, is now before the Senate awaiting further action.

Although Chapter 90 funding is allocated using a formula that takes into account the weighted average of a community's local road mileage, population and employment, the WRAP funding will be distributed to communities using a formula based strictly on local road miles. According to

Representative Soter, the WRAP funding can be used for reconstructing, resurfacing, and striping roads, as well as for repairing or replacing traffic lights, signage, guardrails and storm grates.

Under the Chapter 90 program, cities and towns pay for eli-

gible expenses and then receive reimbursement from the state. Representative Soter said the WRAP funding is structured so that the money is provided up-front to cities and towns to spend on local roadway priorities.



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BVT's Ireland-Themed Fundraising Dinner a Great Success

Irish eyes were smiling at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School's

28th Annual Superintendent's Gourmet Dinner held at the school on St. Patrick's Day. There

were many smiles and a lot to celebrate.

Each year, students in the Culinary Arts program look forward to the Superintendent's Gourmet Dinner, a culmination of months of preparation. The planning and production of the gourmet dinner give students a taste of what skills are necessary for success in the food, beverage, and hospitality industry. This fine-dining experience is the school's largest fundraiser.

The gourmet dinner was established to support technology advancement at the school and, through the years, many initiatives benefiting student learning. Since 1995, the annual dinner has raised awareness of vocational-technical education by showcasing the skills of the shops involved. Each year, during the first few weeks of the school year, Culinary Arts seniors complete a rigorous selection process that consists in nominating and voting on a theme for the dinner. Subsequently, the menu and decorations are all based on the selected theme.

The Culinary Arts program has produced dinners with a wide variety of themes, from "The New Millennium" in 2000 to "A White House State Dinner"



in 2009, and across the United States from Las Vegas to Hollywood and New England to Hawaii. Around the globe, they've gone from China to the Roman Empire, and France, Italy, Spain, Greece, Moscow, and this year, they enjoyed Ireland.

Over the years, the themed dinners have included events such as a "Kentucky-Derby" meal in 2017, which brought the "greatest two minutes in sports" to life by celebrating the food and culture surrounding the nation's longest continuously held sporting event with a menu of authentic southern fare. In 2015, the food and culture of the 1920s was celebrated with a dazzling Gatsby-themed dinner, worthy of approval from the Great Gatsby himself.

While a large group of students and staff contributes to the success of each dinner, key personnel make up the Executive Board in Culinary Arts. The executive positions include a food crew with a General Manager, two Executive Chefs, two Executive Pastry Chefs, and two Garde

Managers responsible for cold food. In addition to a Beverage Manager, Sous Chef, Banquet Managers, Photographer/Social Media, Emcee, and Decorations Facilitators. This team works together to achieve the same goal: a successful dinner.

Meet the 2022 Superintendents' Executive Dinner Team:

General Manager, Samantha Stephens of Mendon

Executive Chefs, Natalie Lambert of Millville and Nolan Holt of Uxbridge

Banquet Managers, Makala McQueston of Blackstone and Sofia Yitts of Grafton

Emcees, Amanda Wallace of Sutton and Ansha Khan of Northbridge

Beverage Manager, Colin Buckley of Bellingham

Decorations Facilitators, Katelyn Barrows of Northbridge and Erin Morrissey of Douglas

Executive Pastry Chefs, Emily Warner of Uxbridge and Alex Mach of Uxbridge

Garde Mangers, Darlene Johnson of Northbridge, and Kymber Morin of Douglas

Photographer/Social Media, Allison French of Northbridge

Sous Chefs (juniors), Leyla Hudson of Northbridge and Makayla Dunton of Sutton

Pastry Sous Chef (junior), Naomi Tsuda of Mendon

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Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild Announces 2022 Ribbon Winners at Biennial Quilt Show

The Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild held their 2022 biennial quilt show on March 12th and 13th. The guild welcomed over 1000 enthusiastic visitors during the two-day show. Visitors were awed by the display of over 200 member-designed and made quilts, the presence of a variety of vendors, a well-stocked Quilter's Boutique and the opportunity to win one of many raffle baskets and to win a beautiful raffle quilt. Visitors were also able to vote for their favorite quilts. Viewer's Choice ribbons as chosen by the visitors were awarded to Shirley Bangma, Joyce Gilmore, Denise Gosselin, Marcia Nichols and Kathryn Sperino.

Guild members also selected ribbon winners in several categories. (Winners are listed in order of first, second, third and honorable mention.) In the Garment and Accessories category winners were Annie Bosma, Amy Stephens, Jean Hampel and Grace Aliose. The Holiday Quilts category winners Denise Gosselin, Marcia Nichols, Grace Aliose and Terri Vadenais. Winners in the Small Wall Hangings category were Donna Hopkins, Rita Partridge,



Rhonda Edmison and Amy Stephens; in the Medium Wall Hanging category winners were Rita Partridge, Terri Vadenais, Rhonda Edmison and Susan McCarthy; and in the Large Wall Hanging category ribbons were awarded to Kathy Sperino, Denise Gosselin (two ribbons) and Marcia Nichols.

In the Small and Medium Bed Quilt category award winners were Gina Brooks, Marcia Nichols, Coral Barry, Rita Partridge and Debbie Wendt; Large Bed Quilt category winners were Shirley Bangma, Susan Pelland (two

ribbons) Sherri Noel and Annie Bosma. The Mystery Quilt category ribbon winner were Kathy Sperino, Christine Moyer, Barbara Delphos, Jane Hilliard and Pattie Trachimowicz. The President's Ribbon was awarded to Amy Stephens for her quilt Beach Walk. Quilt Show Chairs ribbons were awarded to Gina Brooks and to Kathleen McKenna for two quilt entries.

One of the highlights of the show was the participation of the public in this show's special project, Guiding Eyes for the Blind. Through the extraordinary efforts of Project Chair Amy Stephens enough funds were raised to name two guild dogs. Names chosen for these guide dogs are Stitch and Ripley.

Thimble Pleasures would like to thank all the visitors who made this show a success and all the guild member volunteers who made this show possible.



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2021-2022 Bellingham Youth Basketball Champions!



Bellingham Youth Basketball Association would like to thank all parents, players, coaches and volunteers that participated this season! Congratulations Champions!

3rd/4th Grade Boys



Left to Right: Coach Jim Cerone, Cooper Milham, Mark Borelli, Jack Simpson, Matthew Parker, Logan Szafir, Ryan Rancourt, Joseph Kiley, Mason Levasseur, Torin Cerone, Liam Choquet.

After a successful season for all the teams in the 3rd/4th grade boys league, the Championship match came down to a battle between Coach Cerone's team Charron Tree and Coach Ostreicher's team Millennium Logistics Management. Both teams played their hearts out, but in the end, the depth and talent on Coach Cerone's team was too much to overcome, and they won in a decisive fashion 28-14. Key contributors included Ryan Rancourt who led the team with 9 points and Joe Kiley kept the pressure on with his tight defense and great passing.

5th/6th Grade Boys



Left to Right: Coach Kevin Landrigan, Landon Park, Andrew Hagopian, Andrew Hatley, Sean Landrigan, Tyler Mounsey, Sam Ojukwu, Luke Proler, Cameron Schupp, Tyler Hayward, Coach Eric Mounsey, Coach Brian Martin

The playoffs for the 5/6th grade boys league were very exciting with most games being decided by a few points. The championship game did not disappoint. The game was tied between Coach Jennings' team Grove Street Auto Repair late in the last period with #4 seed Coach Mounsey's team Weisman Roofing hitting a 3-point shot in the final seconds. The season was an outstanding opportunity to watch the boys' basketball skills develop week after week.

3rd/4th/5th Grade Girls



Left to Right: Coach Joe Mearn, Reagan Mearn, Mackenzie McKeon, Emma Marder, Safiye Sezen, Mackenzie Walton, Olivia Donlon, Chloe Goodwin, Coach Matt McKeon

The final game for 3rd/4th/5th grade girls league was a classic match-up between #1 seed Coach Perry team Power Painting Plus and #2 seed Coach Mearn team Jennifer Lynn Photography. Coming into the game, Coach Perry's team had been undefeated. After an extremely competitive game, Coach Mearn's team pulled out with the 26-30 win. It was great to see the girls in action again this year. The progression of basketball skills and teamwork from Game 1 to the final game was remarkable.

3rd/4th/5th Grade Girls



Front row left to right: Emily Bishop, Julia Magill, Hannah Matczak
Back row left to right: Erin Peters, Coach Paul Painchaud, Stephanie Painchaud, Ava Donato, Sophie Shaw, Mila Choquet, Coach Andy Donato

The 6th/7th/8th grade girls league had a fantastic 2021-2022 season, and the playoffs were exciting to watch! Coach Painchaud's team Ve'lace Bridal battled all year. They really peaked at the perfect time, earning a few playoff victories, and coming away with the girl's 6th/7th/8th Championship against Coach Robey's team Mike Soter in a nail biter!

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2021-2022 Bellingham Youth Basketball Champions! (continued)

7th/8th Grade Boys



Left to Right: Tyler Enright, Andrew Sweet, Dougie Walton, Liam Cunningham, Jake Rothschild, Evan Donlon, Eric Mounsey, Coach Eric Mounsey

Congratulation go to #2 seed Coach Mounsey's team Bellingham Bee who battled against #1 seed Coach Sullivan's team Grumpy's Restaurant for the 7th/8th grade boys Championship. The Bellingham Bee team came out fast hitting two early 3-pointers and controlling the boards on both ends of the court. Both teams played hard until the very end, but the Bellingham Bee team proved too much to handle and ended up with a definitive win. Many of the 8th grade boys on these teams have been playing basketball together since 3rd grade and are continuing to play on the high school court!

Challengers



Left to Right: Coach Melissa, Colin (volunteer), Gretchen (volunteer), Oliver, Anthony, Evan (volunteer), Brayden, Aria (volunteer), Coach Jim, Timmy, McKenzie, Coach Maddie, Juliet, Casey (volunteer), (Missing from picture Colin)

Bellingham's best kept secret, the BYBA Challengers league basketball season did not disappoint. Every week the players worked on their ball handling and basketball skills. Thanks go out to the coaches, their sponsor MASS-INK Custom Tattoo and the volunteers who made this such a successful year!



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The Bellingham Lions Club 2022 Golf Classic is scheduled for Monday May 23 at 8 a.m. at the New England Country Club in Bellingham. This tournament helps raise funds to award a

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Blackstone Valley Tech graduation – May 26th, 5 p.m.

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Board of Health Notification:

The Breakdown of COVID-19 Cases in Bellingham

Latest Bellingham COVID-19 cases as of Thursday, April 14, 2022. These numbers will be reported on Mondays and Thursdays only, unless there is a significant increase or event that warrants daily reporting.

Tested - Number Not Available through the State System at this time. Will update as soon as information is provided

As many of you may know, the way COVID deaths are being counted has changed. Instead of counting a death as being attributed to COVID within 60 days of diagnosis, it is now being counted as attributed to COVID within 30 days of the COVID diagnosis. As a result, we now have 11 deaths attributed to COVID. Please share this information with those that may be interested.

Confirmed/Probable - 3931

Active Confirmed - 12

Active Probable -4

Recovered - 3904 - 99%

Deaths - 11*

*The way COVID deaths are being counted has changed. Instead of counting a death as being attributed to COVID within 60 days of diagnosis, it is now being counted as attributed to COVID within 30 days of the COVID diagnosis. As a result, we now have 11 deaths attributed to COVID.

For more information regarding vaccination numbers for the town, please go to; <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-covid-19-vaccination-data-and-updates>

Email any questions regarding COVID19 to Covid19@bellinghamma.org

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Blackstone Heritage Corridor Announces John H. Chafee Heritage Award Recipients

The Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor announces the recipients of its 2021 John H. Chafee Heritage Awards: Congressman Jim McGovern (MA-02); U.S. Senator Jack Reed (RI); John Marsland of Cumberland, RI; Ross Weaver of Sutton, MA; and a class of Painting and Design Technology students at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT), including Sophie Jacobson, of Bellingham.

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

At a ceremony held at Blackstone Valley Tech on April 11th, BHC's Board Chair Richard T. Moore presented the prestigious Chafee Award to Congressman McGovern, a class of Painting and Design Technology students at BVT, and Ross Weaver. On April 22nd, John Marsland will receive his award at the premiere of "Kittacuck Speaks" at Blackstone River Theatre in Cumberland, RI. Marsland co-directed the short film that tells the story of the Blackstone River. A ceremony for Senator Reed will take place later this spring.

Seventeen sophomore students from the Painting and



Blackstone Heritage Corridor presented its John H. Chafee Student Award to 17 sophomore students from the Painting and Design Technology program at Blackstone Valley Tech. Pictured here, L-R, (standing): Devon Kurtz, Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Executive Director; Tom Lamont, Painting & Design Technology instructor at Blackstone Valley Tech; Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick, Blackstone Valley Tech Superintendent; Richard T. Moore, Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor Board Chair; Amelie Botelho (Milbury), Giana Duquette (Milford), Nelle Norris (Milford), Katie Huff (Douglas), Stella Lentini (Milford), Emma Fiore (Grafton), Emma Sanborn (Milford), Jonathon Spiller (Northbridge), Marley Koopman (Northbridge), Madison Moore (Milbury), Hailey Feehan (Northbridge), Logan Feehan (Northbridge), and Alexandra Nunnemacher (Sutton). From left to right (kneeling): Madison Collins (Grafton), Sophie Jacobson (Bellingham), and Riley Austin (Northbridge). Not pictured: Carlie Jensen (Grafton). Photo by Molly Cardoza.



**Blackstone River Valley
National Heritage Corridor**

Design Technology program at BVT were nominated by Blackstone Heritage Corridor's Board of Directors to receive the John H. Chafee Student Award for their participation in an interpretive map restoration project

in the town of Whitinsville, MA. The project was led by BVT instructor Tom Lamont and involved the restoration, printing, and installation of a 4' x 3' map of the Whitinsville Historic District created by town historian

Ken Warchol. Lamont took on the project as an educational opportunity for the students and as a way for the school to give back to the community. The sign is located on Church Street, across from the Whitinsville Social Library.

Nominations for the 2022 John H. Chafee Heritage Award will be posted later this year. To learn more about the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, visit BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org.

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Franklin Art Assoc. to Feature Painter N. Lee Ball May 4th

The Franklin Art Association's May 4 monthly meeting (held at the Franklin Senior Center as well as on Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7298884226>), will feature demo artist oil painter N. Lee Ball.

Lee creates contemporary oil paintings celebrating overlooked mundane people and places, from images obtained from her

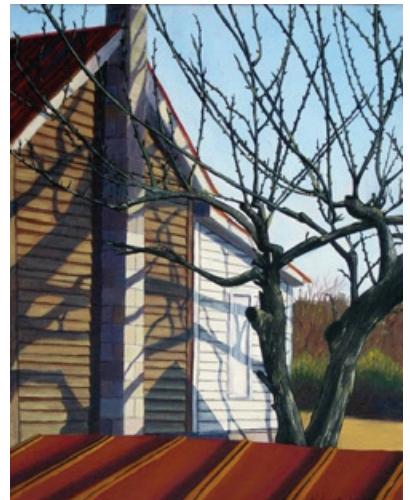
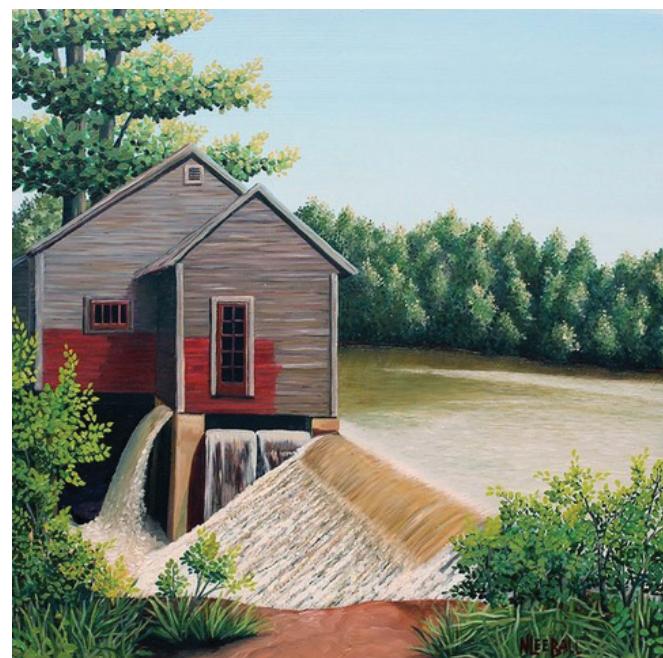
travels by car, train, bike, plane, and even comfortable shoes! Born in North Carolina, she was influenced by the rural countryside as well as urban areas. She studied architecture at NC State University School of Design, and then earned a BFA from Meredith College, concentrating in Painting and Sculpture. After relocating to Franklin, she has

been teaching students at Danforth Art School and Hopkinton Center for the Arts.

Lee's work has been juried into regional and national shows including the NC Museum of Art, Raleigh Fine Art Society, Morini Gallery, Lexington Artwalk, Hopkinton Center for the Arts, Danforth Art Museum School, and Cambridge Art As-

sociation. Much of her work is inspired by her interest in theatre, museums, and travel. Lee's web-site is <https://nleeballart.com/>

For more information on the Franklin Art Association, visit <http://www.franklinart.org>. For updates, you can also find Franklin Art Association on Facebook.



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Library Resource of the Month – Qello Concerts

Do you enjoy watching concerts and music documentaries? Try Qello Concerts! Bellingham library cardholders have access to Qello Concerts free-of-charge through Overdrive's Libby app and Libby website. Stream the world's largest collection of on-demand full-length music performances, concert films, and music documentaries. Qello Concerts transforms your connected devices into the ultimate live music concert film experience! There are thousands of concert films and documentaries, and new concerts are added every week. There are streamed live concerts with major partners, available on all your streaming devices. A 7-day pass gives you full access to content, and when your pass expires you can return to the database to get another one. Note: some content may include mature themes and language.

Some of the amazing documentaries that are available include: *Adele: Homecoming*, *Beyoncé*:

Life is but a Dream, *Prince: Purple Reign*, *Mick Jagger: the Ultimate Performer*, *Pink Floyd: the Making of the Dark Side of the Moon*, *Bob Marley and the Wailers: Freedom Road*, *The Who Quadrophenia: Can You See the Real Me?* and *The Story of Hip Hop Don't Stop*, just to name a few.

Some of the legendary performances that you can access include *Madonna Confessions Tour*, *Queen: Rock Montreal*, *Coldplay Live at La Cigale 2012*, *Meat Loaf Classic Album: Bat Out of Hell*, *Blake Shelton Live: It's All About Tonight*, *Tony Bennett and Lady Gaga Cheek to Cheek Live*, *Gloria Estefan and Miami Sound Machine Homecoming Concert*, and *Ed Sheeran Live at iTunes Festival*, plus much more!

To access Qello Concerts, go to the Bellingham Library's website at www.bellinghamlibrary.org. Click on the Online Resources tab, then click Digital Music, Movies & TV. Scroll down to Qello Concerts and click on Libby Extras.

Electronics Recycling Day RESCHEDULED DATE

Saturday, June 11, 2022

The First Congregational Church of Milford is sponsoring an Electronics Recycling Day on Saturday, June 11, 2022 from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. The church will ensure that 99% of dropped off items will be reused and recycled. A drive through process will allow those donating to quickly drop off their items where help will be available.

All computer monitors, computers, parts and accessories, faxes, copiers, printers, scanners and TV's can be recycled. Recycling fees range from \$5 to \$35 per item. Cell phones can be recycled at no charge and will be donated to charities that recycle and reuse

them. The recycling vendor will erase and shred all hard drives at no additional cost. Cash payments only, please.

The First Congregational Church Electronics Recycling event is held twice a year in spring and fall. We very much appreciate the support of those who have previously chosen to responsibly recycle with us and look forward to continuing to offer this recycling opportunity.

Drop off in the church parking lot at 4 Congress St., Milford. (Opposite Draper Park, next to the Post Office). Please enter lot from Church Street entrance.

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Sports

Hamwey Inducted into Millis Athletics Hall of Fame

Journalist A Bellingham Resident For 50 Years

Ken Hamwey, who's lived in Bellingham for 50 years, was inducted into the Millis High Athletics Hall of Fame on March 19 at the Medway VFW before a crowd of 300.

The 78-year-old sports writer, who was honored as a contributor, was among seven selected for Millis' third induction ceremony. Also chosen were Dennis Breen (posthumously), Rich Monaghan, Molly Breen, Pete Vigue, the 1980 state champion boys track team, and the 2008-09 state champion girls basketball squad. Monaghan and the Breens were inducted as athletes and Vigue was selected as a coach/athletic director.

Hamwey, who continues to report and write about high school sports in semi-retirement, works for *Local Town Pages*, a group of monthly newspapers in the area and the Bellingham Bulletin. The towns where his stories are published include Bellingham, Holliston, Millis, Medway, Norfolk, Wrentham, Franklin and Natick.

Hamwey served as the *Bulletin's* sports editor but now writes one monthly sports feature and a municipal column for that edition. Before retiring from full-time journalism, he worked at

the Providence Journal as its Night Sports Editor.

The Natick High and Babson College graduate has covered Millis sports for 54 years and his very first story was on the Millis football team in 1967.

"I'm honored and humbled to be recognized by the Millis Hall of Fame Committee," said Hamwey. "My work is a testament to the outstanding athletes Millis High turns out and to the school's state championship teams."

Hamwey also thanked Millis Athletic Director Chuck Grant for introducing him, acknowledged Gordon Browne, a former three-sport athlete at Millis, for nominating him, and thanked his wife "for her patience, understanding and support."

Hamwey's remarks then turned to what makes a Millis student-athlete tick.

"Players from Millis are three-dimensional," he said. "They're 3-D. They play with desire, they're dedicated, and they're devoted to the task at hand. They also compete with a chip on their shoulder because they're usually viewed as underdogs because they hail from a school with a small enrollment."



Ken Hamwey, of Bellingham, (with plaque) and Millis Athletic Director Chuck Grant at the Hall of Fame ceremony.

Commenting on the other six inductees, all of whom he covered at various times, Hamwey lauded their talent, ability

and their three-dimensional approach.

Hamwey then focused his remarks on some of the professional sports icons he covered.

"I was on the scene when Red Auerbach and the Celtics were winning their 10th and 11th NBA championships," he said. "I also covered a press conference that featured Vince Lombardi, the Green Bay Packers high-profile coach who led his team to the first two Super Bowls titles. Another interesting character was Earl Weaver, the Baltimore

Orioles manager who often was ejected from games for kicking dirt on umpires' shoes and for being a bit too vocal."

Hamwey said after the ceremony that he was very appreciative of former athletes and coaches who attended the event to thank him for coverage of their games. They hailed from Bellingham, Milford, Medway, Franklin and Holliston.

Hamwey's career began at the *Framingham News*, now the *MetroWest Daily News*, in 1967. After six years in Framingham, he was hired at the *Providence Journal* where he spent the next 35 years working for the four-time Pulitzer-prize-winning newspaper. He finished his career there as Night Sports Editor, retiring in 2008.

On Hamwey's last day in Providence, the Rhode Island State Senate read aloud a citation for his efforts and contributions to R.I. athletics. Two years later, in 2010, he was honored by the Mass. Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), which presented him with its Distinguished Friend Award.

At the *MetroWest News*, Hamwey wrote a popular weekly column — "Yesterday's Heroes" — that focused on athletes' and coaches' past achievements.

In 2007, Hamwey began covering sports for the *Bellingham Bulletin*. As Sports Editor at the Bulletin, he launched a column similar to Yesterday's Heroes called "Where Are They Now," reporting on former Bellingham athletes.

"My career has been very enjoyable, and it's been a delight to watch and report on Millis' excellence in the athletic arena," he concluded.

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Sports

Track Star Ames Awarded Mickey Sullivan Award

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Bellingham High School Athletic Director Michael Connor and Principal Megan Lafayette announced that senior Gretchen Ames was awarded the Mickey Sullivan Student Achievement Award.

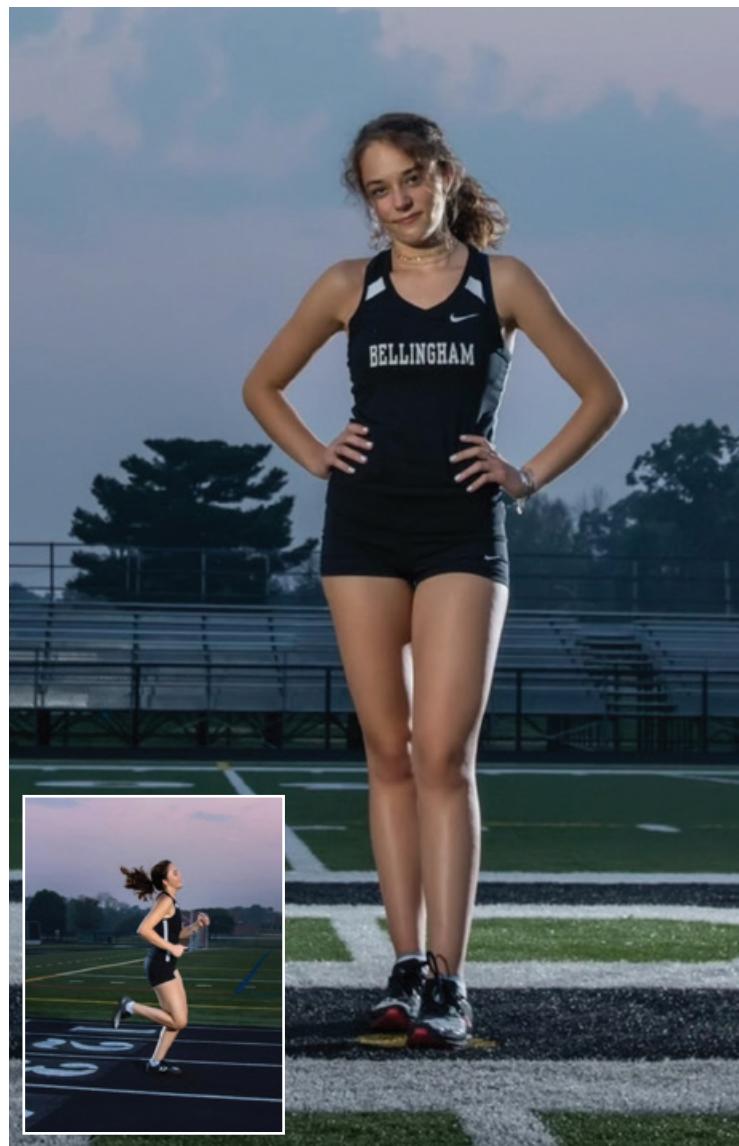
The award is recognized by the Massachusetts Secondary Schools Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA) and honors a student who has contributed to high school athletics in a meaningful and lasting way. The Bellingham senior was one of nine students, one from each of the MSSADA district, to be nominated for this prestigious award.

Ames, a member of the Blackhawks cross country, indoor track and outdoor track and field teams, was the District 7 (Bay State, Hockomock and Tri-Valley Leagues) selection due to her efforts not only on the field but also as a member of the National Honor Society, the school band and most notably as a sophomore MIAA Student Ambassador as well as a two-year member of the MIAA Student Advisory Council.

"Gretchen is the total package; student-athlete, a member of the band, a standout in the classroom and volunteer for a variety of endeavors," the Bellingham AD said. "As a freshman, Gretchen's personality shined and as a sophomore, I named her the Bellingham MIAA Student Ambassador. The following year, she was interviewed by the MIAA for the coveted MIAA Student Advisory Council position and while generally a one-year role, she was invited to return for a second year."

While many students today say they just don't have the time to do many things, Ames is continually adding projects to her plate.

"She is a great example for all of our students that you can be involved in a variety of programs. She has an extraordinary ability to manage her time and maximize her involvement," Lafayette said. "Her contributions to the MIAA, BHS athletic and music department and activities



Track runner Gretchen Ames, of Bellingham High School, recently received the Massachusetts Secondary Schools Athletic Directors Association (MSSADA) Mickey Sullivan Student Achievement Award.

have not gone unnoticed. We are very thankful for all that she has done. This award is certainly well deserved."

Although knowing that the BHS AD had nominated her for the award, she was not prepared to win it.

"A few days before school break, I heard from Mr. Connor that I won the award – I was in total shock," Ames said. "I really didn't think that I'd win it at all. There are millions of others who could have won. Coming from Bellingham, where many people have never heard about us, it was exciting to represent our school and state."

Growing up, Ames was a gymnast who was looking for a sport to compliment her training. In the eighth grade, she found track, along with a bunch of her

friends. The pre-high schooler decided on distance running.

"I ran the 800 that first year, and I thought that I did relatively well for an eighth grader," she said. "There was nothing earth shattering, but I was able to keep up with the rest of the runners."

The following year, as a freshman, she had originally planned on trying out for the cheerleading team, but after her stint with track she aborted that idea and went out for the cross-country team. She felt that running distance was a powerful event where she was in total control of herself.

"I really like running cross country, especially for the courses. It's (my) favorite of all the running, the mile and 2-miler seem never ending while cross country just seems to flow," Ames said. "My run times are

average, but it's a personal sport, and I like seeing my growth."

"I think that one of the reasons that I received the Mickey Sullivan Award was because I was a captain at such a young age. When I joined cross-country, the program was just in the beginning stages and I happened to be one of the older girls on the team," she recalled. "I just wanted to try to be a good leader to the rest of the team. Bellingham is a tiny team, but it has a lot of school spirit."

As the Bellingham Student Ambassador, Ames took part in student leadership summits, but it was being part of the Student Advisory Council that had its moments.

"I had heard so many things that intrigued me about being part of the Student Advisory Council as well as making new

friends and learning," she said. "That first year was really different as we were going into it blind because of Covid, but I feel that I have made a difference, especially in the mental health workshop that year."

Ames had also taken part in the local backpack drive for those in need. She felt a great accomplishment when Bellingham was named the recipient of the drive as she was helping people in her community, and that was important to her.

No matter what she has taken part in, whether being the Blackhawks Student Ambassador, taking part with the Student Advisory Council or helping Bellingham on the track, Ames has always given her best to help those around her and is certainly deserving of the Mickey Sullivan Student Achievement Award.

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Bellingham Library News & Events for May

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Special Programs

Public Speaking for Homeschoolers, Mondays at 1 p.m.

In this six-week class, homeschooleders will learn and gain confidence in public speaking through games and a variety of activities in a judgment free environment. Please register.

Yoga for the Seasons – A Practice for Spring, Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m., through May 24th

Join Carol, a 200-hour certified Kripalu yoga teacher for this 60-minute yoga class. Masks are optional if you are vaccinated. Wear loose fitting clothing and bring your own yoga mat and 2 blocks. Arrive 10 minutes early for the first class to sign a waiver. Register for each class separately.

Bellingham Memory Café – Tuesday May 3rd at 11:30 a.m.

The library is pleased to host the Bellingham Senior Center's Memory Café! A memory café is a welcoming place for people with forgetfulness and other changes in their thinking and for their family and friends. Cafés are a place to talk with others who understand what you are going through, to forget about limitations and instead focus on strengths, to enjoy other's company, and to explore something new. RSVP to Terri Graham at the Senior Center at (508) 657-2710 or tgraham@bellinghamma.org.

The Wild Side, Thursdays at 1:15 p.m.

For ages 3-5. Each week for The Wild Side, we are going to learn about a different animal through stories, videos and other activities. Please sign up. You only need to sign up once to attend any/all Wild Sides!

Mother's Day Crafts – Thursday, May 5th at 4 p.m.

Make a variety of Mother's Day crafts for your mother, grandmother, or special woman in your life! Please register!

George Kinder Presents Reflections on Spectacle Pond – Virtual Event

Monday, May 16th at 6:30 p.m.

Inspired by Zen poets, landscape painting from China and Japan, and Thoreau's Walden, author and thought leader George Kinder has spent the last 30 years finding creative inspiration from the solitude of living on the edge of a New England Pond. Attuned to nature's teachings, Kinder recorded its seasonal changes through poetry and photography that culminated in his latest book, *Reflections on Spectacle Pond*. Please register to receive the Zoom link a few days before the event.

Memorial Day Crafts, Wednesday, May 18th at 4 p.m.

Make a variety of Memorial Day crafts that you can bring to the Memorial Day Parade on Sunday, May 22nd. Please register.

Fact or Fiction? Bermuda Triangle, Thursday, May 19th at 4:30 pm

For ages 7+. Today's Fact or Fiction topic is the Bermuda Triangle. Learn about it through stories, videos, and a variety of theories. Please register.

KMA Arts Night – Thursday May 19th at 6 p.m.

Join us for a night to celebrate the art of the Keough Memorial Academy 7-12 grade students. The walls of the community room are full of beautiful artwork from these talented students. There will be music and the refreshments will be provided by the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library.

The Highwaymen – Concert with Matt York – Friday May 20th at 6:30 p.m.

Longtime New England singer/songwriter Matt York will perform the songs of Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, and Waylon Jennings and tell stories of their careers in an hour-long performance. The four songwriting legends joined forces in the 1980s to form the country supergroup, The Highwaymen. York has twice been nominated as Best Male Artist by the New England Music Awards and his latest release "Bruisable Heart" was named one of the Boston Globe's best albums of 2019. Registration is preferred. This program is supported by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Talking Sports with Ken Hamwey, Monday, May 23rd at 6:30 p.m.

Join 50-year Bellingham resident and award-winning sports journalist Ken Hamwey for a talk about Ken's experiences as a sports reporter, including stories from professional sports icons Red Auerbach (longtime coach and GM of the Boston Celtics) and Vince Lombardi. Ken was in Philadelphia in 1968 when the Celtics defeated the 76ers to win the Eastern Conference Championship. Registration preferred but not necessary!

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>)

After School Kids (ASK), Baby Time, Crayon Box Story Time, Graphic Novel Book Club, Mother-Daughter Book Club, Picnic Stories, Ring a Ding, STEAM Time, and Teen Room Activities. Please check the current mask policy before attending.

Chess Club for Kids Grades 4-9 is starting a new 6-week session on May 2nd, check website for details and to register!

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@cwmars.org for details.
- Friends of the Library generally meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Email library@bellinghamlibrary.org for details.
- Library Board of Trustees generally meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. Email library@bellinghamlibrary.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.



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FEMA Awards Nearly \$7.7 Million to Mass. for COVID-19 Admin Costs

The Federal Emergency Management Agency will be sending almost \$7.7 million to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to reimburse it for some of the administrative costs incurred responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) will receive a total of \$7,670,434 in federal funding through FEMA's Public Assistance grant program to reimburse the cost of administering grants FEMA provided to the commonwealth for such expenses as testing, sheltering and providing meals to vulnerable populations.

The administrative costs are calculated as a percentage of the grants provided.

"FEMA is pleased to be able to assist Massachusetts with these costs," said FEMA Region 1 Regional Administrator Lori

Ehrlich. "Providing resources for our partners on the front lines of the pandemic fight is critical to their success, and our success as a nation."

FEMA's Public Assistance program is an essential source of funding for states and communities recovering from a federally declared disaster or emergency.

So far, FEMA has provided more than \$913 million in Public Assistance grants to Massachusetts to reimburse the commonwealth for pandemic-related expenses.

Additional information about FEMA's Public Assistance program is available at <https://www.fema.gov/public-assistance-local-state-tribal-and-non-profit>. To learn more about the COVID-19 response in Massachusetts, please visit <https://www.fema.gov/disaster/4496>

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Calendar

May 7

Bellingham Garden Spring Plant & Veggie Sale Fundraiser, 10 a.m. - 1 p.m., Bellingham Senior Center, 40 Blackstone St., Bellingham

May 12

Art Heals: Shine Your Light Chalk Festival, 5:30-7:30 p.m., 65 Pleasant St., Upton

May 14

Touch A Truck, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., Bellingham Memorial School, 130 Blackstone St., Bellingham, will feature free pizza donated by Blackhawk Pizza, free hamburgers, hot dogs donated by Norfolk County Sheriff, bouncy house, crafts, raffle, vehicles and more, \$5 per person, proceeds toward a new, INCLUSIVE playground at Stall Brook Elementary School

May 18

Memorial Day Crafts, 4 p.m., Bellingham Public Library, make a variety of Memorial Day crafts that you can bring to the Memorial Day Parade on Sunday, May 22nd. Please register.

RECYCLE

The Blackstone River Watershed Association Annual Meeting Presentation: Pakachoag: Where the River Bends, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., film at 7 p.m., Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, Grafton, Registration is required at <http://thebrwa.org/annualmeeting2022>

May 20

The Highwaymen – Concert with Matt York, 6:30 p.m., Bellingham Public Library,

Program is supported by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

May 21

The Ladies of St Anne Sodality annual plant sale, following masses at St. Blaise Church, 1158 S. Main St., Bellingham, \$5 per pot featuring 3 different types of flowers

May 22

Bellingham Memorial Day Celebration, 1 p.m., Memorial School, 130 Blackstone St., Bellingham

Ernest A. Taft Jr. Historical Museum Grand Reopening, 12 p.m., 3 Common St., Bellingham, presented by Bellingham Historical Commission

The Ladies of St Anne Sodality annual plant sale, following masses at St. Blaise Church, 1158 S. Main St., Bellingham, \$5 per pot featuring 3 different types of flowers

May 23

Talking Sports with Ken Hamwey, 6:30 p.m., Bellingham Public Library



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3" Gray Stone	\$28.00
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1 1/2", 2 1/2" Multi Color River Stone ..	\$70.00

3/4" Lavender Stone	\$70.00
3/8" & 3/4" Blue Stone	\$38.00
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