

June 10 - July 8, 2022

## Waffles is dog mayor-elect for Sutton parade, fireworks

By Rod Lee

No one could have predicted when the decision was made to create a “dog mayor” contest as a fundraiser for the town of Sutton’s parade and fireworks this year what kind of response the initiative would generate.

Any doubts about its prospects were quickly dispelled, setting the scene for Sunday, June 26 with activities on the Town Common (food trucks, cow chip bingo, live entertainment) starting at 3:00 p.m., a parade from the Early Learning Center to the Town Common at 4:00 and fireworks at 9:15.

The rain date for fireworks only is Friday, July 8.

“It was awesome!” Coleen Tarantino, one of the organizers of the effort, said. “The town absolutely rallied behind this event. The spirit of the fundraiser was contagious!”

With more than forty dogs registered and over 2500 votes cast over about a month’s time (online, April 11-May 14, at two dollars per vote), the campaign proved to be popular with residents—and a money generator.

“I was surprised, (co-collaborators) John Rocheleau and April Brown were surprised that this would take off like it did,” Ms. Tarantino said.

The entire grassroots push was organized and funded “by volunteers,” Ms. Tarantino said. Facebook post-



Waffles basks in the glow of his win as dog mayor-elect in the town of Sutton.

ings, yard signs and word-of-mouth publicity helped fuel interest in the dogs that were put up as candidates by their owners (i.e., campaign managers).

“Who doesn’t love dogs?” Ms. Tarantino said.

“It was a very competitive field,” she said.

“Interestingly, our neighbors in Grafton appear to have a similar con-

test. We can only say ‘imitation is the sincerest form of flattery!’”

“Waffles,” AKA “Sir Waffles the Goob” or “Shuffles,” a deaf rescue dog owned by Brian and Beth Brayton, was voted mayor-elect.

“Baylor” won the post of deputy mayor, “Copernicus” that of sheriff and “Reginald Percival Ambrose

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## Past, present on display at Grafton’s Antique & Arts Fair



Nancy Therrien, right, and Helen Blazis at the Grafton Historical Society’s table during the 53rd annual Antique & Arts Fair. Ms. Therrien is Society president; Ms. Blazis is a docent.

By Rod Lee

Residents of Grafton would undoubtedly say there is no better place

to hold special outdoor events than the Town Common—arguably the prettiest

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## WAFFLES

Continued from page 1

Walker” that of parade commissioner.

Talking about Waffles on June 7th, Beth Brayton said “we adopted him as a one-year-old, rescued from the puppy mill. He was kept in a crate that

was too small. He can run and jump but shuffles both legs,” hence that nickname. “He is just a really sweet pup. He is our third boxer. After the first passed, we got Waffles. We have three dogs. The others are Effie, a pit bull mix, and Shannon, a terrier mix.

“I saw his little mug and said

‘that’s him, that’s the one we want,’” Ms. Brayton said, of Waffles.

“He has a brother named ‘Pancakes,’ also a deaf boxer.”

The Brayton’s are active dog owners with strong ties to the adopt-a-boxer rescue network. Waffles is now five years old and a beloved member of the family.



Deputy Mayor, Baylor



Above, Sheriff Copernicus  
Below, Parade Commissioner Reginald Percival Ambrose Walker

“He’s just a giant mush,” Ms. Brayton said. “Sixty-five pounds, he sits on my lap and crushes my knees. He’s really, really spirited. He goes on vacations with us in Provincetown.”

When a neighbor mentioned to Beth Brayton early on that her own dog was running for mayor, “I said ‘what is this? There’s no way I can’t be involved!’”

“Waffles got six hundred twenty-five votes, which is insane. Even on the next-to-last day of voting he was in second place.”

Elected for a one-year term, Waffles, in addition to the “bragging rights,” proclamation/certificate in recognition of his ‘PAWSOME’ achievement and the chance to make appearances at local events, which Ms. Tarentino said go with the title, “he will have his own float and a sash and maybe a bow tie,” Ms. Brayton said. “We will be on the float with him!”

The lighthearted nature of the dog mayor contest—a charming ingredient—is reflected in one of the questions Waffles, by way of his campaign managers, responded to. Asked “if I were mayor, I would...” Waffles answered “...outlaw squirrels and make naptime mandatory after all meals. Also,” Waffles revealed, “my parents will match any donations (votes for me) by donating to local rescues/shelters to help pups like myself.”

As for what “occupation” he would hold if he was a human, Waffles replied “a career in politics, obviously.”

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## ARTS FAIR

Continued from page 1

in all of New England.

They would also probably agree that the Grafton Historical Society is the organization most ably suited to host an Antique & Arts Fair, the 53rd edition of which was held on June 18th.

Under refreshingly cool and breezy skies, vendors had come from near and far.

Jean Pellerin was there with “books and smalls;” Jim Ba-

vosi with “rocks, jewelry and photographs;” Denis Worden with samples from “Sweet Briar Florist;” Bonnie Frederico with “fine art;” Tom Tomaszek, offering “appraisals;” Joanne Beller with “Nantucket Baskets;” Kerry Simmler with “Chrysalis-Grafton Memorabilia;” Deb and Bob Goss, Elaine Koleshis, John Stephens, Tom and Deb Joralemon, Michael Paquette and others with antiques and vintage collectibles.

Elaine Blake of Sterling was present too, standing guard with her husband Steve over an as-

sortment of beautifully caned chairs she had arranged for viewing and purchase.

Ms. Blake does “wicker repair, hand-woven caning and shaker tape” from her home.

“This is our fourth of fifth year here,” she said. “Not too many people are doing caning, I’m trying to change that, one student at a time (as an instructor in the craft). I started caning in high school and I have been teaching off and on for twenty years.”

Ms. Blake says she finds the chairs she turns into absolute gems

“everywhere, at flea markets, on the side of the road. I’ll come back from shopping and there will be a chair on my porch!”

The opportunity to be more involved than just as an accommodating host was not lost on Nancy Therrien and fellow members of the Grafton Historical Society. The Society, which Ms. Therrien heads up as president, was represented with an

antiques table, books and maps and a silent auction table.

“See this 1887 map,” Ms. Therrien said, pointing to a large item lying on the table at which she and Helen Blazis were positioned. “It shows some of the oldest mills in the town.”

Charged with the lofty goal of fostering interest in Grafton’s past, collecting and preserving Grafton artifacts and memora-

bilia and providing resources for students and future generations, the Grafton Historical Society relishes the opportunity to put on an annual Antique & Arts Fair that draws hundreds to the Town Common. “The turnout was unbelievable,” the Society said, immediately afterwards.

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

## Xpressly Yours ... a letter from the editor

### Small-town medicine show



Ignore the warnings presented as advertisements in the newspaper and on television at your own peril. This was the message conveyed the weekend before Memorial Day, as seven yards of red cedar mulch that had been delivered by Chamberlain Construction of Douglas lay like a cone-shaped sand hill in the driveway—waiting to be spread.

For years there had been the cautionary messages, including the ones flashing across the TV screen that depicted a man, bare from the waist up, whose back is covered in nasty, festering welts; accompanying this image, symbolic bolts of lightning, as further evidence that shingles and all of the pain that comes with it is not to be taken lightly.

So began an ordeal that had loomed as a threat since childhood, and an outbreak of chicken pox.

Day One (May 21)

The front flower bed, facing the street, was mulched within an hour or so, the bright wood chips lying in perfect complement to the leafy lamb’s ear and azalea bushes and iris and rhododendron and lupine that were just starting to bloom. Mary Trottier, a neighbor, driving by, stopped to say “looking good” and to point out that she appreciated the restaurant column in the Xpress newspapers for having given a battered industry the attention it deserved as it fights back from the ravages of the pandemic. Early afternoon arrives. The first twinges of pain on the left side of the head.

Day Two (May 22)

A trip to Urgent Care and a visit with Dr. Scheinfein, who after examining my ears for wax

buildup (which I am prone to) and the scalp at the top of my head (“I’m jealous that you have hair”) declares “I believe this is shingles. I am going to prescribe an anti-viral drug, Valacyclovir. Take one tablet three times a day for seven days.” The pain sharpens. I manage to read the Sunday papers, nap in the recliner, and watch the final round of the PGA championship. I reach for the bottle of Excedrin Migraine tablets.

Day Three (May 23)

The mulch sits. It can wait. The stabs are coming more frequently. The Excedrin with Valacyclovir is not touching them. In the recliner, I can see my left foot jump every time a stab strikes. I call Northbridge Primary Care. Our PCP, Dr. Anderson, has no openings but I can see the nurse practitioner. I am convinced the problem stems from wax buildup in the left ear. I asked for the ear to be flushed and Tess Green willingly complies. She flushes the right ear too for good measure. But her verdict is the same as Dr. Scheinfein’s: shingles, which, she explains, can be caused by the massive headache I am experiencing. She puts me on a combination of Tylenol and Ibuprofen and says “keep taking the anti-viral med too.”

Day Four (May 24)

I discuss my situation with Tess, on the telephone. I tell her I had to force myself to sleep through the pain and that as soon as four hours or so pass the pain returns, every bit as severe as before. She expresses concern and says it will take some time for the mixture of two Tylenol tablets and three Ibuprofen to work their magic. “Let me know how you are doing,” she says. “If things don’t get better in a day or so, I will put you on a steroid.”

Day Five (May 25)

I want to avoid the ER in Milford at all costs. Milford Regional is a great hospital but a man I know mentioned that he had taken his wife there for a shoulder issue at 10:00 p.m. and they didn’t leave for home until 6:00 the next morning.

I stick to the regimen and do virtually nothing. Late in the afternoon, still in discomfort, I call for Tess and the woman at the desk takes my message.

Day Six (May 26)

In the morning, a nurse calls to pass along word from Tess. “Tess is prescribing Prednisone. Take that in the morning with food. It may cause sleeplessness. Follow the instructions on the container, you have to taper the dosages day-to-day. Keep taking the combination of Tylenol and Ibuprofen. You can keep taking the anti-viral pill too.”

Day Seven (May 27)

I wake to twinges at 5:00 a.m., get up, toast and butter some bread, take the Prednisone with a large glass of water and then the Tylenol and Ibuprofen with another large glass of water. “From virtually no pills at my age I have become a pill popper,” I say.

I go back to bed, waiting for the medicine to kick in.

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## Living with Luke

# Luke Valentino learns on the go; training tips and trips

By Amy LeClaire

I couldn't be happier with my new pup, Luke Valentino. He's playful, pugnacious and imperfectly perfect. In some ways he's a typical pup; testing his limits then dashing away from me, a dirty sock in his mouth. In others, he's as unique as his full name. "Thank you for being such a good boy, Luke." I



Luke visits Wells State Park, Sturbridge

kiss his nose and snout, traces of puppy breath still evident, even though he's almost too big to be held.

"Love you back, Mama." His body is pressed against my chest, causing his hind legs to open like a frog's while his paws rest on my shoulders. He licks my full chin and face as though cleaning dribbles of ice cream from a cone. I can't help but giggle to my puppy's innocence and honesty. His appreciation for me, I realize, falls somewhere between loving me for me, and the flavor of my facial cream.

"You're the best puppy." Either way, I cherish moments that are short-lived. Luke Valentino already weighs a healthy 28 pounds and picking him up is getting harder and harder. Whether his behavior is typical or atypical, one aspect has remained constant with the numerous dogs that I've owned. Training a dog takes a lot of time and work, but the rewards of putting forth the effort make a significant difference in living happily ever after (or not) with your pooch. I'm not a professional trainer; simply someone who has spent a lot

of time studying the behavior of dogs. Since Luke is nearly four months old, and we're both still in one piece (and living in peace), I thought I'd shared my secrets. Luke Valentino has stolen my heart, along with a few too many sneakers.

### Training happens all the time

Your dog may be able to sit on command for a reward and roll over (is there any benefit from the crazy trick?) or even hand you his paw in the kitchen, but what about when the spontaneity of life gets in the

way? What if your dog is accustomed, exclusively, to being trained in isolation and, consequently, freaks out in public? What if a quirky terrier catches her eye in the ice cream parlor line, and she snakes through your legs to drool over the poor dog? Or what if you need to host a party and your hungry pooch causes a guest to trip while counter surfing?

It might be time to train.

### Travel with your dog

Dogs need to learn how to behave in human situations, especially if they are to live with one. Traveling with your pet offers hands-on opportunity to train on the go, on the fly, and on the scene. The more time you spend with your dog, the more training opportunities naturally arise. Luke rides in the backseat, seated comfortably in a travel crate lined with a plush mattress and chew toys. The sides of the crate have netted windows so that he's enclosed, but can still discern what's happening. We're going for a ride! His on-the-go bed is designed for comfort, safety and leisurely naps. He adores the prospect of a new adventure equally as much as he does the journey. In fact, often times he'll awaken to the sound of my parked car and sit up with bedhead, one ear flapped open. "Where'd we end up? Mind if I just relax here for a bit?" Luke is more "chill" than most puppies we've had. We often refer to him as Professor Luke, the puppy most likely to study the sound of spoons dropped into the dishwasher bin. "Hmm." He'll cock his head to the sound. "That is fascinating." His curiosity draws him closer to the edge of the door, where he pokes his nose at a fork then backs off. "Ouch."

Amid traveling training days, he's even met some of his readers at CVS. Perched like a teddy bear in a metal carriage, he once raised his chin over the

edge to say hello. "Wait a minute. Is that Luke Valentino?"

"That's me!" Have you ever noticed how utterly happy puppies are (especially Golden Retrievers) to greet new people. He licks the hand of a loyal reader and smiles proudly. "Isn't this place incredible?" Since food is LOVE for Golden Retrievers (and most dogs), it serves as the ultimate motivator and training tool. "Good boy, Luke." I reward him for being positive. Lincoln taught me to wear rose-colored glasses and see the good in every situation. The legacy goes on. "Mommy is so proud of you, Luke." He gnaws at the fleshy part of my palm, testing me. "Luke Valentino." I lower my voice and he tests further, biting yet softening his grip. Puppies know more than you think.

### Consistency matters

My husband and I have been on point, and on the same page



A Travel Day at TJ Maxx, Auburn

ing Luke learn that we don't eat at the same table (unless we're at an outdoor restaurant café of course). So I've weathered the begging storm during tired mornings and scored big. He's so masterful that he'll now assume his dining spot through-

out throughout play times. This has been a process and has happened in gradual stages, with no perfection. Puppies drink a lot of water and pee a lot! It's important to watch the signals of your puppy and have patience. We've finally reached a stage where we can confidently trust him to "tell us" without staying on top of him. He'll casually sit at the front door to let us know he has to go out, even when we're engrossed in our own tasks.

### Set limits so that you're both happy

Although cuddling in bed with an eight-week old puppy may have been tempting, the decision to give Luke his own cozy sleeping quarters was a good one. Luke now sleeps comfortably in his crate from 11 pm to 8 am. He woke us up throughout the night during the first week home, then stretched his sleep time, finally, to 6 am. We realized he was getting up too early, and only to eat. He would play a bit; then want to sleep all morning. Why not just sleep later? Instead of rushing downstairs to his first whimper, at about 12 weeks, we decided to ignore him and see if he'd fall back to sleep. Our plan worked like a charm! Now we're all fully rested and ready for the day's adventures! The important thing is to help your pup to conform to the unique schedule that works for your household.

How is Luke Valentino faring with off-the-couch behavior? B- The low mark is ours to own. We've wavered. We've wobbled. We've been worn down by Luke's cuteness and manipulation. We have not consistently shown him (as we had Lincoln) that his bed in the family room is far more fun than the leather couch. "No one talks during my movie" is a lost cause when it comes to training your dog. Luke needs to know that we're willing to

Continued on next page



A travel day at CVS

in certain areas, though inferior in others. Luke is able to "stay at his own spot" while we eat with the patience of an English butler. We've battled out that back and forth labor of bringing him back to his spot for a reward amid countless instances during which he's snapped back to our feet. A meal eaten in peace is secondary to help-

out the day, waiting for us to sit down and eat, just so he can show off good behavior while waiting for a reward. The triumph has become a Luke Valentino classic. We gush. "Look how intelligent Luke is! He really is a gifted puppy."

We've also consistently potty-trained Luke, taking him out after naps and, frequently,

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## Millbury Federal Credit Union (MCU) recently announced the election of E. Bernard Plante as chairman of the Board of Directors

MCU President/CEO Joseph F. Barbato also announced a number of promotions and appointments, and welcomed all of the individuals to the team in their new capacities.

Mr. Plante has served MCU as a voluntary member of the Board of Directors for eighteen years. He replaces Robert L. LeClaire as Board president. Mr. LeClaire held that role for sixty-one years.

Mr. Plante is a resident of Millbury and well-known in town for his many contributions. He was a member of the Millbury Board of Selectmen for twenty-four years, including sixteen as chair. His other credits include having served with the Millbury Cemetery Commission, as town auditor, and as chair of the Shaw School Building Committee. He is a charter member of the Millbury Lions Club.



From left: E. Bernard Plante is the new chairman of the board at Millbury Federal Credit Union and Alise Breton, Keiran Holahan, Robert Leonardi and Thomas Clancy are all taking on new roles.

A graduate of the New England School of Accounting and the Williams College School of Banking, he is a veteran banking official who has worked with MCU, Bank of Boston and Shawmut National.

Alise Breton of Dudley has been promoted to VP and Retail Director at MCU. She has

fourteen years of banking experience, including twelve with MCU. She will oversee the four outlying MCU branches and continue as social media manager. She is a graduate of Worcester State University.

Keiran P. Holahan of Northbridge has been promoted to senior VP and chief executive of-

ficer. Mr. Holahan joined MCU in 2021 as chief financial officer. A magna cum laude graduate of Providence College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Accounting, he has thirty years of credit union and banking experience.

Robert Leonardi of Douglas has been appointed vice president and controller by MCU.

Mr. Leonardi has more than twenty years' experience in the accounting and financial services industry. He graduated cum laude from Nassau Community College.

Thomas Clancy has been appointed vice president and IT manager at MCU. A UMass Amherst graduate, he has ex-

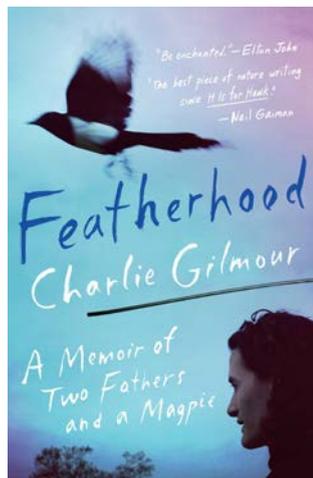
tensive experience in banking operations and IT management.

Millbury Federal Credit Union began with twenty members and total assets of \$100 in 1934. Today, MCU has assets in excess of \$460 million with offices in Millbury, Auburn, Worcester and South Grafton.

## Book groups highlight summer reading at GPL

Summer reading programs are in full swing at the Grafton Public Library, 35 Grafton Common, and will be continuing with these upcoming events, according to Sarah Banister.

Monday, June 27, 7:30 p.m. Reads Well with Others Book Group: Harmony, by Carolyn Parkhurst. An emotionally wrenching story of how a seemingly "normal" family could become desperate enough to leave everything behind and move to a "family camp" in New Hampshire—a



life-changing experience that alters them forever.

Tuesday, June 28, 7:30 p.m. Featherhood: A Memoir of Two Fathers and a Magpie, by Charlie Gilmour. A wry, moving story of a young man who, as his estranged father is dying, saves a baby Magpie only to find that caring for the mischievous bird has, in fact, saved him.

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Continued from page 4

wrestle, romp, redirect him to his toys and teach him to play at his own spot every single time. Luke needs to know that sometimes adults need to sit.

"I won't be any trouble." He sits at the edge of the couch and lifts his chin to us. "I was thinking we could watch the movie together." A teddy bear, it seems, wants to snuggle. "Luke, we're going to relax now." Luke is a puppy. He has no interest relaxing—now or later. "Come here, you." We cave. We coddle. We shake hands with a devil in sheep's clothing. Luke gets his way, and the suede pillows are about to pay a price. He thrashes them around with the aggression of a wolf. We struggle to discipline a pup that's taken a turn for the worst. He lifts his gums to reveal a rebellious set of jagged puppy teeth. My husband, also a male, takes the domineering tactic personal. "I'm not letting him boss us around this way!" I nod my head in dismay. We've been inconsistent with this aspect of Luke Valentino's training. Puppies can't figure out what to do with their own tails, never mind every do & don't of

domestic life. Still; neither of us could have predicted what was to come, and how dark things were about to get on that infamous leather couch.

"Oh gosh. Oh no." I left him on the floor beside the couch for two minutes one time. I didn't leave food or any choking hazards behind, only a risk I hadn't expected. I had planned to start writing this very column, and left my laptop screen flapped open, ready for words. A curious Luke, ready to chew, found the corner of the screen and dug his jagged choppers in to reveal a haunting sight. The screen, black as night, exposed the spread of a spider web, then a lightning bolt design which drew my index finger in, as though somehow I could zap an electrocuted system back to life. In shock, I touched the screen over and over again but the crack, now iridescent, had made its mark. Luke Valentino, a puppy learning his boundaries, had destroyed my Mac's screen.

Stories and documents and pictures sailed through my mind. I'm a writer. My words had been wiped. I stared down at my puppy. "Oh, Luke. You

didn't know what you were doing."

Luke smiled calmly up at me. "Want to play?" He was over it a full two seconds ago.

"It will cost \$578.00 to repair the screen." The Apple technician delivered the cost of my inconsistency with such patience. He had navigated the technical waters of password confusion and i-cloud cloudiness to track down the identification of my broken machine with blissful ignorance. I ran my fingers through my hair. "Wow. The screen alone costs that much." My gaze fell down on a patient Luke, who was seated beneath the workbench to partake on one of numerous "travel days." He smiled up at me as he does during our travel days together, and reminded me that perfection is impossible. "I love it here. Thank you for taking me along with you."

If you want to learn more about how to best handle your pup—take him for the ride!

Stay tuned for more on Luke Valentino's trips and triumphs.

Write to me at amy-leclaire@hotmail.com

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# Free spoken word/poetry event is June 26

The third in a series of free, spoken word/poetry readings will be held from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. on June 26th outside on the Community Plaza at the Alternatives' Whittin Mill, 60 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In case of rain or extreme heat, the event moves indoors to the Singh Performance Center at the same location.

An affiliation of regional poets is performing in this series, which is split between the Whitinsville location and Roseland Park, 205 Roseland Park Road in Woodstock, CT. All performances include an open mic segment as time allows. Sign-ups are at the event; five-minute limit. Featured on June 26th are authors Ben Gross-

berg, Dina Stander, Robert Eugene Perry, and open mic featured reader, Sarah St. George.

Ben Grossberg is the Director of Creative Writing at the University of Hartford. He has published four books of poems, including Sweet Core Orchard, which won a Lambda Literary Award. His collection, "My Husband Would," (University

of Tampa) won the 2021 Connecticut Book Award in poetry. This fall, he will be a Festival Poet at the Dodge Poetry Festival. Dina Stander is a poet, end-of-life navigator, and burial shroud maker. She has published two books, Old Bones & True Stories (2018), and Housewife Blues (2021) (Human Error Publishing). You can read her blog at www.dinastander.com. Robert Eugene Perry is a native of Massachusetts and the author of five books. His most recent book of poetry Earth-

songs, was published by Human Error Publishing in 2022. He has had several poems published in Worcester Magazine, as well as Poetica Magazine's Mizmor Anthology and NatureCulture's Honoring Nature collection.

All remaining readings in the series will be from 2-4 pm on July 17 (Roseland), September 11 (Roseland), and October 23 (Whitinsville).

This series is being hosted by ValleyCAST, the arts and culture arm of Open Sky Community Services in collaboration

with Poets at Large. Following Open Sky's current COVID safety protocols, all attendees will be required to wear a mask regardless of vaccination status if the event is moved indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

For further information about this program or to learn more about participating, email Karen Warinsky: karen.warinsky@gmail.com. To learn more about ValleyCAST and/or Open Sky Community Services, visit openskycs.org.

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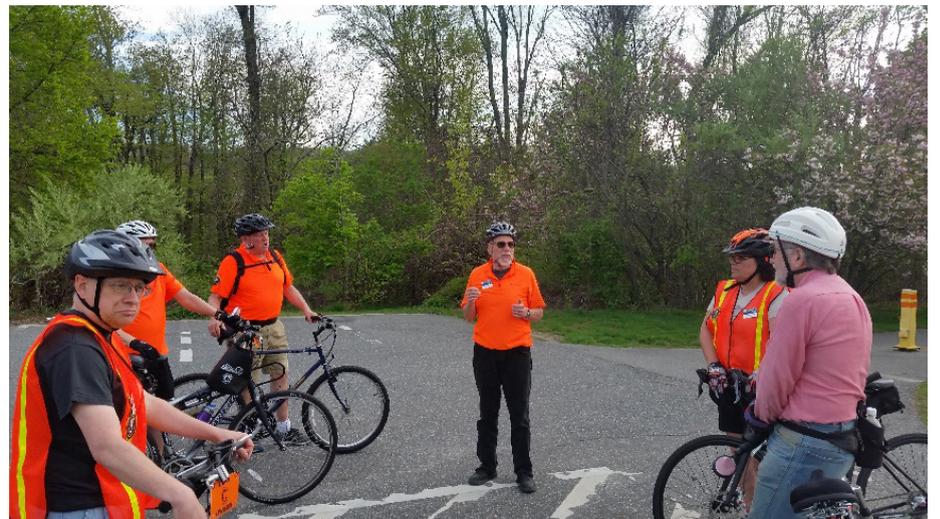
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## Explore the Blackstone River Bikeway with BHC's Bikeway Ambassadors



Blackstone Heritage Corridor's Bikeway Ambassadors will be leading guided bike rides along the Blackstone River Bikeway this summer. To learn more, visit [BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org](http://BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org).

### Wednesday, July 13: Worcester, MA

Meet at the Blackstone River Valley Heritage Center at 3 Paul Clancy Way, Worcester, MA. We will pedal along the Blackstone River Bikeway for 2.5 miles, where it ends in Millbury,

and bike over to Christopher's Homemade Ice Cream for a refreshing summer treat. Bring your own cash or credit. The approximate round-trip distance is five miles.

### Wednesday, July 27: Lincoln, RI

Meet at the Capt. Wilbur Kelly House Museum at Blackstone River State Park, 1075 Lower River Road, Lincoln, RI, for a guided ride along the Blackstone River Bikeway and Canal Towpath as we ride south to Lonsdale and back. The approximate round-trip distance is seven miles.

### Wednesday, August 10: Blackstone, MA

Meet at the Blackstone River Greenway, 85 Canal Street, Blackstone, MA, for a guided bike ride along the Blackstone River Greenway to Uxbridge, MA, and back. The round-trip distance is just over seven miles.

### Wednesday, August 24: Lincoln, RI to Old Slater Mill

Meet at the Lonsdale Drive-In parking lot, 121 John Street, Lincoln, RI, for a guided bike ride to Old Slater Mill in Pawtucket, RI. Much of this ride will be off the bikeway and on the street. The approximate round-trip distance is five miles.

To learn more about the Blackstone Heritage Corridor Bikeway Ambassadors, visit [BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org](http://BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org). To learn more about the Volunteers-In-Parks program, contact Molly Cardoza, Director of Volunteer and Community Engagement, at [mcardoza@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org](mailto:mcardoza@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org) or call 508-234-4242.

Save the date of Saturday, August 27, for clean-up and green-up events throughout the Blackstone River Watershed to celebrate the 50th anniversary of ZAP the Blackstone. Learn more at [ZAPtheBlackstone.com](http://ZAPtheBlackstone.com) and [BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org](http://BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org).



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# Greatest Hits Cannabis Co. striking all the right notes

By Rod Lee

It comes as no surprise to Joe Villatico, chief executive officer of Greatest Hits Cannabis Co., that the marijuana industry has exploded since retail sales of the product in Massachusetts began in 2018.

The state recently topped \$3 billion in revenue realized from purchases of marijuana for recreational and medical

a grand opening on Friday, June 24th and Saturday, June 25th, 2:00 to 8:00 p.m. both days.

The public is embracing the store, which sells only marijuana for recreational use (not medical).

“I think the response has been amazing,” he said. “A good amount of our dollars will go back to the community. To take an old mill that was used



Above, some of the merchandise that is available for purchase at Greatest Hits.

Right, “It takes a great team,” Joe Villatico, CEO of Greatest Hits Cannabis Co., says. Here he is pictured with some of the company’s retail-store staff.



use, according to the Cannabis Control Commission. Dozens of licenses have been granted by the CCC from one end of the Bay State to the other.

Mr. Villatico, the son of Arnie Villatico of Periwinkle’s Restaurant celebrity, and the brother of Jason Villatico, who now operates its successor—J. Anthony’s Italian Grill—on the Auburn/Oxford town line, is at the forefront of a business that is growing seemingly faster even than the plants that sustain its livelihood.

A father of two, Mr. Villatico left restaurant work at the age of fifteen “to become a serial entrepreneur,” he said in a small conference room in the Greatest Hits building on Chase St. in Dudley on June 2nd. After partnering with Robert Jordan, founder of Native Roots, on the startup of a cannabis company in Colorado, “my attorney said ‘maybe there’s an opportunity for you in Massachusetts.’ I came home in 2019 and put eyes on the premises”—the old Ethan Allen mill.

The success of Native Roots, which rapidly grew to more than twenty dispensaries, fed Mr. Villatico’s desire to replicate that achievement in Massachusetts.

Greatest Hits has “three locations, Dudley, Lynn and Taunton,” he said. “We have about forty employees and will grow to two hundred fifty to three hundred. We are starting cultivation (in a wing of the mill) July 1st.”

Greatest Hits will celebrate

for storage and turn it into this, giving back to the community is a very big thing. Cannabis is the vehicle in 2022; this is the new yesterday.”

A onetime dirt biking enthusiast who enjoys the fast-paced nature of the cannabis industry, Joe Villatico points to the “\$52 million we raised” as a positive indicator that the venture will prosper. Another reason for optimism, he said, is “Massachusetts has done a good job limiting licenses. A lot of it has to do with experience, like the kind my partner has. We went through roughly a year of approvals to get our Community Host Agreement. The CCC (Cannabis Control Commission) is highly involved. You have to take the right precautions. We have one of the best compliance rates and Lucas Baier, our VP of retail, he is phenomenal.”

The lobby of the building on Chase Ave. is situated in direct proximity to the retail store. The lobby is simply appointed with a welcoming floor mat bearing the message “Let the Good Times Roll”—a nod to a music theme that is prevalent throughout. Mounted guitars and a black-and-white décor with a heavy emphasis on musical notes contributes to a warm atmosphere.

There is an even a “DJ station” in one corner of the retail store; yes, Willie Nelson is among those marijuana aficionados whose framed pictures are displayed there.

The retail store is a beehive of activity, with ample staff in

place to handle transactions.

As expected, cannabis is booming in the Bay State, with cultivators, product manufacturers, retailers, independent testing labs, microbusinesses, couriers and others riding the wave.

Greatest Hits Cannabis Co. is off to a good start, in joining that mix.

Go to [greatesthittscc.com](http://greatesthittscc.com) for more information.

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

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## Pizzeria Bruno: a touch of Italy close to home

By Rod Lee

First impressions created by the new Pizzeria Bruno in the southeast corner of Pleasant Valley Crossing in Sutton are entirely favorable, offering proof that “the boy can be taken out of Italy, but Italy not out of the boy.”

Talking about the venture on the afternoon of May 27th, Marcello Bruno, owner of Pizzeria Bruno with his brother David, said the restaurant is an extension of a family business in the Milan area of his native country that dates to the

mid-1990s.

“We are trying do exactly what we did in the past, in Italy, same oven, same brand,” Mr. Bruno said. “We import flour, cheese, chips, soda, beer and wine from Italy. I live three minutes from here, it’s very nice. When we saw this location for the first time, we fell in love with it. Mike O’Brien (of Galaxy Development, developer of the plaza) is a good guy.”

Italia-themed throughout, Pizzeria Bruno features wood-fired, brick-oven pizza in a variety of combinations and flavors. There is red pizza (no

cheese), classic pizza, gourmet pizza and white pizza, along with calzone, panini, piadina (flat bread), a butcher mix (plate of meat and cheese), salad, focaccia and dessert.

Pizza toppings include artichokes, arugula, broccoli rabe, capers, cherry tomato, eggplant, egg, French fries, hot dog, mozzarella, mushrooms,

tuna, meat sauce and buffalo-milk mozzarella are also available.

Telephone ordering is provided at 508-917-8182.

“Delicious,” Beverly Ricciardona of Millbury, finishing lunch with her husband, said. “The music is good too.”

Already drawing steady patronage, Pizzeria Bruno joins



Marcello Bruno of Pizzeria Bruno in Sutton, with his wife Ang and employee Kyle Conlin.

Kalamata olives, red onions, peppers, pesto, red sauce, sausage, smoked caciotta cheese, spinach, taleggio cheese, truffle sauce, zucchini and ricotta cheese. Brie cheese, gorgonzola cheese, grana cheese, bresaola, ham, hot soppressata, nduja, porcini mushrooms, prosciutto, shrimp, speck,

such food and drink enterprises as Five Guys and Starbucks in an ever-expanding Pleasant Valley Crossing, which is anchored by a Market 32.

Contact Rod Lee with news for *The Feisty Fork* column at [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com) or 774-232-2999.

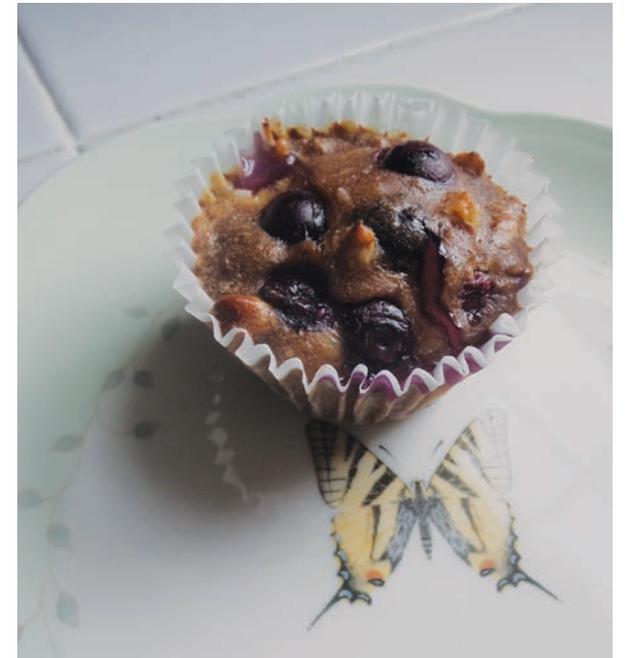
## Healthier Baking in the Blackstone Valley

By Christine Galeone

Summer mornings are something many of us enjoy. They’re a little slower-paced and brighter. And a leisurely breakfast

not try a healthier breakfast that features blueberries, a summertime favorite for many? These blueberry banana protein treats could be exactly what you need.

Although they look like muffins, these treats are much



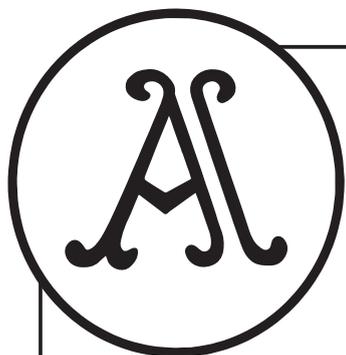
or morning snack is an added benefit.

But a leisurely breakfast consisting of donuts, pancakes or store-bought muffins isn’t always the best compliment to these summer mornings. Instead, why

healthier. They don’t have any added sugar or flour, and they’re packed with protein. They also contain heart-healthy ingredients, including blueberries, bananas and walnuts. Cinnamon also has antioxidant properties.

Blueberries are considered to be a superfood for many reasons. They are certified by the American Heart Association to be a heart-healthy food. Loaded with antioxidants, they are believed to be beneficial in fighting cancer and in improving brain health. Additionally, the anthocyanins – which give the fruit its deep color – may have antidiabetic effects.

Continued on next page



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PHANTOM GOURMET

# Grafton's Business Scene – June 2022

By Christine Galeone

Even in tumultuous times, many people look forward to July as a month of respite and relaxation. Having barbecues with family and friends, basking in the sunshine or building sandcastles at beaches, and dedicating time to hobbies are all activities made for the first weeks of summer.

Fortunately, Grafton organizations and businesses are happy to help people find the R&R they're seeking. Upcoming events and programs offer summer fun for children and adults of all ages.

Earlier this month, **Angel Hair Alpacas** in North Grafton, held its annual Shearing Day. It's the day when the farm's alpacas are shorn, so their fleece can be used to make knitted items. To celebrate it, the farm gave tours and demonstrations, and its shop, which sells hand-knitted accessories, was open for visitors. In the coming weeks, the alpacas will make several appearances at farmers markets in the area.

**Quite Fetching**, the bakery and pet boutique located on the Grafton Common, is another great place to find adorable animals. On Saturday July 2 and Sunday July 3, the shop will celebrate Independence Day by having a Yankee "Doodle" weekend. All doodles are invited to stop by the shop for special sales and contests – including an apple pie eating contest and

a best trick contest.

Independence Day will also be celebrated with a small **parade** this year. Justin Stone and Bob DeToma, members of Grafton's **Veterans Advisory Committee** – which was just formed last year – are the parade organizers. At 10 a.m. on Monday July 4, the parade will leave the North Street Elementary School, and it will end at Oak Street. At the time this column was written, the organizers were seeking participants, volunteers and donations of items such as bottled water, hard candy, miniature flags and streamers. For more information, people can email [grafton4thofjulyparade@gmail.com](mailto:grafton4thofjulyparade@gmail.com).

Additionally, the **Grafton Lions Club** is happy to reinstate its tradition of holding an **Independence Day concert**. The free concert will be held on Sunday July 3 at 7:30 p.m. on the Grafton Common. And it will feature the **215th Army Band**.

The **Town of Grafton's 2022 Concerts on the Common** will also provide relaxing music-filled evenings. Held on the Common every Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. starting July 13, the first concert will be performed by **Buzztones Rhythm Revue**, a rock and soul band; the July 20 will be by **Drive South**, a classic rock band; the July 27 one will be by the **Petty Larceny**; the Aug. 3 concert will be given by **Kelly & the Poor Boys**, a Creedence Clear-



water Revival tribute band; the Aug. 10 one will be by **Holdin' Back**, a pop and oldies band; **Beatles for Sale** will give the Aug. 17 concert; and the final performance of the season will be given Aug. 24 by the **Clafin Hill Symphony Orchestra**.

**Grafton Recreation** announced that **Silver Lake Beach** will be open every day (weather permitting) from June 18 through Aug. 14. Information about hours, fees and amenities can be found on the Grafton Recreation website, [www.grafton-ma.gov/recreation-department](http://www.grafton-ma.gov/recreation-department).

On the Grafton Common, a dance studio is offering kids something else to look forward

to this summer. **Beatz Dance Studio** has half-day summer program sessions. The programs include Broadway Cuties, Ballet & Jazz/Musical Theater, Jazz/Musical Theater, Dance & Design, World of Jazz, Beatzcanto, World of Legos Hip Hop, Tiny Tumblers and Acro. Registration information can be found on the studio's website, [www.beatzdance.com](http://www.beatzdance.com).

**Dance It Up** in North Grafton is another dance studio that has summer camp offerings. The programs include Pink Princess & Fairytale Magic Camp, Dancing Dolls Camp (for kids and their dolls), Stars on Stage Broadway camp and Summer Dance Workshop.

Cost, registration information and availability can be found on the dance studio's website, [www.danceitup.com](http://www.danceitup.com).

**Murphy Academy of Irish Dance** also has summer camp offerings. Its programs include the Annual Murphy Summer Fun Camp and the Mini Murphy Summer Fun Camp. Cost, registration information and availability can be found on the studio's website, [www.murphyacademy.com](http://www.murphyacademy.com).

Finally, in North Grafton, **Premier Sport Taekwondo** will once again offer summer camp sessions for kids. The day-long summer camp sessions are for kids entering grades one through six. Through martial

arts fun and games, the program teaches kids respect, discipline, focus and confidence. More information about its summer camp can be found on its website, [www.premierkick.com](http://www.premierkick.com).

Whether people find their respite from the daily stresses of life by kicking back and relaxing or by participating in fun hobbies, local organizations and businesses have something for nearly everyone. So, thankfully, it shouldn't be difficult to find that sometimes elusive R&R.

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

## HEALTHIER BAKING

Continued from page 8

### Blueberry Banana Protein Treats

Ingredients:

- 1 Cup of Blueberries
- 1 Cup of Chopped Walnuts
- 1 tsp. of Cinnamon
- ½ tsp. of Ground Cardamom
- 2 mashed ripe bananas
- 2 eggs

6 tablespoons of smooth peanut butter

Directions:

Rinse the blueberries.

Mix together all the dry ingredients.

Mix together all the wet ingredients.

Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients.

Pour the batter evenly into 8 muffin cups (glass cups or a muffin tin) after placing muffin/cupcake liners into the cups or tins

Press the blueberries into the

batter.

Bake at 350 degrees for about 21 minutes.

Although these treats are definitely better fresh, as refrigerating them with the paper causes them to stick to the paper quite a bit, they're a healthier choice than many leisurely morning snacks or breakfasts. And they're a great compliment to a summer morning! Happy (healthier) baking!

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# Happenings!

**NOTE:** Community bulletin board-type items are welcome for inclusion in the Happenings! section of the Xpress newspapers. Please allow enough lead time for publication. Email your calendar or event notice to [rodlee.1963@gmail.com](mailto:rodlee.1963@gmail.com).

reception will take place on Saturday, June 24 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. For more information contact Deb Horan at 508-949-6232 or [deb@bookovers-gourmet.com](mailto:deb@bookovers-gourmet.com).

### FRIDAY, JUNE 24

• EARTH Limited's largest annual fundraiser is back for 2022 at South-



Michelle Canning will perform at the Whitin Mill complex in Whitinsville on Thursday, July 28 as part of ValleyCast's summer concert series.

### THROUGH JUNE 30

• "Forget-me-not...An Artist's Healing Journey Through Flowers and Inspiration," by Cindy Smith, will be on display for the entire month in the café gallery of Booklovers' Gourmet, 72 E. Main St., Webster, during regular business hours, Tues.-Sat., 10-5 and Wednesdays 10-6. A meet-the-artist

will take place on Saturday, June 24 from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Proceeds support EARTH Limited's many education initiatives, such as internships, docent/volunteer training, rhino encounters, zoo mobiles, wild adventure programs, junior zoo keeping and more. Guests will enjoy an event of adventure and explore the zoo after-hours. Go to [earthltd.org](http://earthltd.org)

org to purchase tickets. Email Betsy Brewer Bethel at [betsy@southwick-zoo.com](mailto:betsy@southwick-zoo.com) for more details about EARTH Limited.

### SATURDAY, JUNE 25

• Dark Desert Eagles, the ultimate tribute band to The Eagles, comes to Indian Ranch in Webster as part of the Mike's Hard Lemonade Summer Concert Series. Songs from The Eagles' Greatest Hits 1971-1975 album along with hits from Hotel California and several gems from Joe Walsh's solo career will be featured in this live show. Touched by the passing of Glenn Frey, a co-founder of The Eagles, Pat Badger (an original member of the multi-platinum rock act Extreme) set out to form Dark Desert Eagles in paying homage to The Eagles' musicianship, vocal harmonies and timeless catalog. In doing so, "we really paid attention to the wardrobe, the hairstyles, the guitars...everything that made The Eagles so cool," he says.

Also upcoming at Indian Ranch:

July 2, Michael Franti & Spearhead; July 8, Get The Led Out; July 9, Scott McCreery; July 17, Little River Band; July 23, Ann Wilson of Heart; July 24, Three Dog Night; July 30, The Pike Hairfest; July 31, TESLA; August 5, "Weird" Al Yankovic; August 6, Collective Soul and Switchfoot; August 7, Lost 80s Live; August 12, ABBA The Concert; August 13, Badfish; August 20, Home Free; September 2, Extreme.

Tickets are available at [www.indianranch.com](http://www.indianranch.com), by calling 1-800-514-3849 or at the Indian Ranch Box Office.

Rolling Stones & CCR Tributes; 19th Nervous Breakdown with Kelly and the Poor Boys: A Creedence Tribute Band, will perform as part of the Summer Concert Series at Douglas Orchard and Farm, 36 Locust St., Douglas, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Admission is \$10 cash per person 16-and-older, kids get in free, no rain date. Go to [douglasorchardandfarm.com](http://douglasorchardandfarm.com) for more info.

### TUESDAY, JUNE 28

• A Narragansett Bay Lighthouse & Cruise Tour is being offered by the Millbury Senior Center. Cost is \$110 per person, all-inclusive, with departure at 9:30 a.m. and return at 5:30 p.m. A full-course luncheon is included. Call 508-865-9154 to sign up or for more information.

### THURSDAY, JUNE 30

• Tim VanEgmond will present an outdoor concert, featuring traditional



The Hip Swayers will deliver a dose of Americana at the Asa Waters Mansion in downtown Millbury on Saturday, July 30.

and contemporary songs as well as tales about what draws a community together, the Northbridge Senior Center, 20 Highland St., Whitinsville, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Sign up with Amy at the front desk. Call 508-234-2002 for more info.

• Dan Gabel & The Abletones will present a summer concert at the Asa Waters Mansion, 123 Elm St., Millbury, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Free admission.

• ValleyCast's 2022 summer concert series kicks off with back-to-back performances by Samuel Bowen, at 5:30 p.m., and the Blackstone Valley Community Concert Band, at 6:30 p.m., at the Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center. The series continues on Thursday evenings through September 1.

### FRIDAY, JULY 1

• Euphoralites performs at Andy's Neighborhood Center, 9 Frederick St., Webster, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

### MONDAY, JULY 4

• Celebrate the 4th on the Grafton Common! Dress up in costume! Decorate your bicycle! Build a float! Dress up your dog! From North St. to Oak St. starting at 12:00 p.m. Line up at the North Grafton Elementary School. For more details contact [graffton4thofjulyparade@gmail.com](mailto:graffton4thofjulyparade@gmail.com).

### THURSDAY, JULY 7

Valley Cast presents Chuck & Mud and the Hole in the Dam Band as part of its summer concert series, 6:00 p.m., Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road,

Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

### FRIDAY, JULY 8

• Static performs at Andy's Neighborhood Center, 9 Frederick St., Webster, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

### SATURDAY, JULY 9

• A Night of Zeppelin: A Led Zeppelin Tribute Band, comes to Douglas Orchard and Farm, 36 Locust St., Douglas, as part of the facility's Summer Concert Series, 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. Admission is \$10 cash per person 16-and-older, kids get in free, no rain date. Go to [douglasorchardandfarm.com](http://douglasorchardandfarm.com) for more info.

### SUNDAY, JULY 10

• The New England Country Music Club will host a dance featuring the Rachel Landry Band at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:30 p.m., live music 1:00-5:00 p.m. [www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub](http://www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub).

### WEDNESDAY, JULY 13

• A Blue Shades luncheon concert will take place at the Asa Waters Mansion, 123 Elm St., Millbury, from noon to 1:00 p.m. Free admission.

### THURSDAY, JULY 14

• ValleyCast presents Blackstone Valley Bluegrass as part of its summer concert series, 6:00 p.m., at the Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

### THURSDAY, JULY 14

• 4Ever Fab, a Beatles tribute band, will perform at the Millbury Senior Center, One River St., from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Call 508-865-9154 for more info.

### FRIDAY, JULY 15

• Joe Cicero performs at Andy's Neighborhood Center, 9 Frederick St., Webster, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

### SATURDAY, JULY 16

• The town of Northbridge's 250th anniversary festivities will kick off with a parade from the elementary school on Crescent St. at 10:00 a.m. and conclude with fireworks at the middle school on Linwood Ave. Gates will open at 6:00 p.m. for the pyrotechnics show, which will be preceded by activities for the whole family: food trucks, music, face painting, potato-sack races and more.

• Douglas Orchard and Farm, 36 Locust St., Douglas, welcomes Araxas—a Santana Tribute Band, for a show at 36 Locust St., Douglas, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Part of the Douglas Orchard and Farm's Summer Concert Series. Admission is \$10 per person 16-and-older, kids get in free, no rain date. Visit [douglasorchardandfarm.com](http://douglasorchardandfarm.com) for more info.

### THURSDAY, JULY 21

• Icons & Legends Concert, including a Maine Lobster Bake in York, is being presented by the Northbridge Senior Center. Cost is \$110 per person. Sign up with Amy at the front desk. Call 508-234-2002 for more info.

• Enjoy a Far from Eden summer concert at the Asa Waters Mansion, 123 Elm St., Millbury, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Free admission.

• ValleyCast presents the Country Wild Heart Band as part of its summer concert series, 6:00 p.m., Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

### SATURDAY, JULY 23

• Exit 17th Band, a Rock & Roll Band, will perform at part of Douglas Orchard and Farm's Summer Concert Series, 36 Locust St., Douglas, 5:30-

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**SUNDAY, JULY 24**

• The New England Country Music Club will host a dance featuring The Farm Hands at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:30 p.m., live music 1:00-5:00 p.m. [www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub](http://www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub).

**THURSDAY, JULY 28**

• ValleyCast presents Michelle Canning as part of its summer concert series, 6:00 p.m., Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

**FRIDAY, JULY 29**

• Rockwell Valentine Jazz Trio performs at Andy's Neighborhood Center, 9 Frederick St., Webster, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

**SATURDAY, JULY 30**

• Douglas Orchard and Farm's Summer Concert Series continues with a performance by Petty Larceny, a Tom Petty Tribute Band, 5:30-8:00 p.m., 36 Locust St., Douglas. \$10 cash per person, kids are admitted free, no rain date. Visit [douglasorchardandfarm.com](http://douglasorchardandfarm.com) for more details.

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 4**

• The Hip Swayers will perform a summer concert at the Asa Waters Mansion, 123 Elm St., Millbury, from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Free admission.

• ValleyCast presents Ash & Eric (formerly The Promise is Hope), 6:00 p.m., Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 6**

• 4 Ever Fab, a Beatles Tribute Band, will perform as part of Douglas Orchard and Farm's Summer Concert series, 36 Locust St., Douglas, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Admission is \$10 per person for those 16-and-older. Kids get in free, no rain date. Go to [douglasorchardandfarm.com](http://douglasorchardandfarm.com) for more info.

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 8**

The New England Country Music Club will host a dance featuring the Rustic Country Band at the Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge.



The music of Tom Petty will be showcased when the band Petty Larceny performs at Douglas Orchard & Farm on Saturday, July 30.

sive Club, 18 Whitin St., Uxbridge. Doors open at 12:30 p.m., live music 1:00-5:00 p.m. [www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub](http://www.facebook.com/NECountryMusicClub).

**TUESDAY, AUGUST 9**

• Judy Saves the Day, a puppet show, will take place at the Asa Waters Mansion, 123 Elm St., Millbury, from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. Free admission.

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 11**

• Valley Cast presents the Claffin Hill Symphony Orchestras Summer Wind, 6:00 p.m., Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 12**

• Evan Wood Trio performs at Andy's Neighborhood Center, 9 Frederick St., Webster, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 13**

• Counterfeit Cash, a Johnny Cash Tribute Band, will perform at Douglas Orchard and Farm, 36 Locust St., Douglas, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Admission is \$10 per person 16-and-older, kids get in free, no rain date. Go to [douglasorchardandfarm.com](http://douglasorchardandfarm.com) for further details.

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17**

• Taking it to the Streets: The Ultimate Doobie Brothers Tribute Show, will be performed in Plymouth, New Hampshire at the Flying Monkey Theatre—a trip offered by the Northbridge Senior Center. Show and a buffet lunch are included at a cost of \$110 per person. Sign up with Amy at the front desk. Call 508-234-2002 for more info.

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 18**

• ValleyCast presents Le'Mixx Band, 6:00 p.m., Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 25**

• ValleyCast presents Grayson Ty, 6:00 p.m., Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.

**FRIDAY, AUGUST 26**

• Joe Cicero performs at Andy's Neighborhood Center, 9 Frederick St., Webster, 7:00-10:00 p.m.

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 27**

• The Auburn Historical Society & Museum presents the first annual Parking Lot Craft Fair, 41 South St., Auburn, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., rain or shine. For more information or to reserve a spot contact Helen Poirier at [auburnmuseum@verizon.net](mailto:auburnmuseum@verizon.net), or stop by the museum Tuesdays or Saturdays between 9:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 1**

• ValleyCast presents The Eagles Experience, 6:00 p.m., Whitin Mill complex, 50 Douglas Road, Whitinsville. In the event of rain the show will move indoors to the Singh Performance Center.



The popular band Get The Led Out returns to Indian Ranch in Webster for a performance on Friday, July 8.

## Corridor to present nature and design workshop for educators

The Blackstone Valley National Heritage Corridor in collaboration with the New England Botanical Garden at Tower Hill, Mass Audubon Broad Meadow Brook Conservation Center and Wildlife Sanctuary and the Wade Institute for Science Education is presenting "Nature and Design: Connections Between Science, Engineering and the Natural World: A Professional

Development Institute for Grades 6-12 educators July 11-15 from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Educators are invited to examine how building and green space designs impact the natural environment.

This institute will view pedagogy through emerging science content, highlight ways to shift your lessons towards inquiry, incorporate science and

engineering practices and implement phenomena-based units.

Earn professional development points and optional graduate credit while you connect and collaborate with colleagues, scientists, fellow educators and STEM professionals.

Return to your classroom with ready-to-implement inquiry-based investigations and new science and engineering

knowledge.

Go to <https://www.wadeinstitute.org/spdi.k12/>

The North Smithfield Heritage Association is hosting a free cemetery workshop conducted by Jon Apel of Atlas Preservation on Friday, July 22 from 9:00 a.m. to approximately 4:00 p.m.

Participants will receive personal

hands-on education, including the proper techniques and use of correct materials to restore these valuable pieces of history.

The event will be held at Hotchkiss Cemetery on Great Road in North Smithfield.

No registration is required.

Call 401-651-6316 or go to [nsheritageassn.org](mailto:nsheritageassn.org) for more details.

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**RE: Real Estate**

# What does the rest of the year hold for the housing market?



Mark Marzeotti

By Mark Marzeotti

If you're thinking of buying or selling a house, you're at an exciting decision point. And anytime you make a big decision like that, one thing you should always consider is timing. So, what does the rest of the year hold for the housing market? Here's what we see.

The number of homes available for sale is likely to

grow. There are some early signs indicating that housing inventory is starting to grow and experts say that should continue in the months ahead.

The gap between this year's homes for sale and last year's is one-fifth the size that it was at the beginning of the year. The catch-up is likely to continue. This growth will likely mean more options for shoppers than they've had in a while, even though inventory continues to be behind pre-pandemic normal.

As a buyer, having more options is great news. Just remember, housing supply is still low, so be ready to act fast and put in your best offer up front. Let's get you prequalified!

As a seller, your house may soon face more competition when other sellers list their homes. But the good news is, if you're also buying your next home, having more options to choose from should make that move-up process easier.

Mortgage rates will likely continue to respond to inflationary pressures. Experts also agree inflation should continue to drive up mortgage rates, however more moderately.

As a buyer, work with trusted realtors/real estate professionals, including your lender, so you can learn how rising mortgage rates impact your purchasing power. It may make sense to buy now before it costs more to do so, if you're ready. Call us if you are ready, we're here to help!

As a seller, rising mortgage rates are motivating some homeowners to make a



move up sooner rather than later. If you're planning to buy your next home, talk to a trusted realtor/real estate advisor to decide how to time your move.

Home prices are projected to continue to climb. Home prices are forecast to keep appreciating because there are still fewer homes for sale than there are buyers in the market. That said, experts agree the pace of that appreciation should moderate – but home prices won't fall.

Statistics show that home prices throughout the country have surged for the better part

of two years, including in the first quarter of 2022. Given the extremely low inventory, we're unlikely to see price declines, but appreciation should slow in the coming months.

As a buyer, continued home price appreciation means it'll cost you more to buy the longer you wait. But it also gives you peace of mind that, once you do buy a home, it will likely grow in value. That makes it historically a good investment and a strong hedge against inflation.

As a seller, price appreciation is great news for the value

of your home. Again, lean on a member of Marzeotti Group or another professional to strike the right balance of the best conditions possible for both selling your house and buying your next one.

Whether you're a homebuyer or seller, you need to know what's happening in the housing market, so you can make the most informed decision possible. Connect with a realtor/real estate advisor to discuss your goals and what lies ahead, so you can pick your best time to make a move.

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Tales from beyond

# Gay City State Park, haunted ghost town – Part 1

By Thomas D'Agostino  
www.tomdagostino.com

Here is another two-part account of one of New England's most haunted ghost



village was Factory Hollow. A preacher named Elijah Andrus steered his congregation toward the wooded hollow in 1796 only to leave four

fortunately, the powers of the dark did not wait very long to taint the massive undertaking.

During the construction of the dam and canal, one worker studied the angle of the duct and concluded that the water was supernaturally flowing uphill toward the factory. He is reported to have dropped his tools and quit on the spot, calling the phenomenon the work of the devil. Others would follow in his wake, bringing the construction of the venture to a tem-

porary halt.

When the mill opened, and Factory Hollow saw a slight incline in prosperity. Many of the town's young men later enlisted in the Civil War. Most of them never returned from battle, leaving a number of homes in Factory Hollow unoccupied and crumbling until a time when the elements of nature reclaimed the land. The paper mill burned in 1879, leaving the last vestige of the hamlet to the elements. Before long, trees and brush

sprouted from the decaying cellar holes and foundations.

For the most part, Factory Hollow was now a true ghost town. Stories abound of ghostly encounters and unseen forces that wander among the living who visit the haunted hamlet.

Just before the Civil War, a jewelry peddler came rolling into town on his usual route. Peddlers were common in those days and sold everything from tin to top hats. The salesman suddenly

disappeared without a trace. Shortly after his disappearance, a human skeleton was discovered in one of the charcoal pits at the edge of town. Evidently the purveyor of goods had a healthy sum of money on him that attracted the attention of some unsavory kind. No clues as to who was responsible for the crime ever turned up, and to this day, the murder remains unsolved.

towns. It is difficult to imagine that Gay City State Park in Hebron, Connecticut was once a fully populated community of twenty-five families, a woolen mill, a satinet mill, two gristmills, charcoal pits, a church, a general store and other such necessary mercantilism found in the small hamlets that dotted the early New England landscape.

Other than stone walls and foundations, there is not much evidence left to show that people once called the place home. There are also the ghosts that occasionally remind explorers of the old town that not only were they once residents in the flesh, but they are eternally tenanted there in spirit.

A small burial ground near the entrance of the park contains a few members of founding families. The stones are placed on either side of the burying yard facing each other. This lends credence to what history tells us about the two prominent families of Gay City, The Gays and the Sumners, and the animosity they had toward one another.

The original name for the

years later due to disagreements and quarrels within the congregation. This left Reverend Henry P. Sumner as the new spiritual leader. His grave is among the scant stones in the burying ground near the entrance of the park. Also in 1800 John Gay was chosen to head the town's affairs.

Reverend Sumner held church services twice a week, which to some was a bit too taxing on their time. To augment the attendance, rum was served during the meetings, but the libations would prove to be the downfall of the sermons. Arguments and even fistfights became common during the lectures, so much so that many of the families began migrating away from the town, including several of the founding families.

Reverend Sumner's son, Charles, founded a mill for the production of rag paper. Residents, along with laborers from nearby towns, began the arduous task of transporting stones for the foundation, dam and beautiful stonework canal. Un-



## BLACKSTONE VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE SIGNATURE EVENT

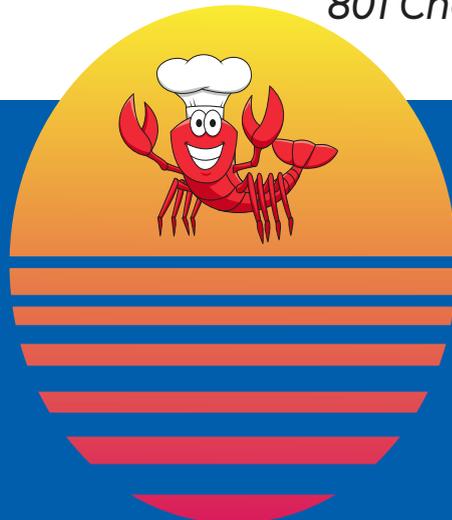
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## Paw's Corner

By Sam Mazzotta

### 'Hip Hold' Is No Way to Stretch Your Dog

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: My wife likes to pick up our dog's hind legs to help him stretch; that is, she holds Cheerio by the hips so his hind legs are up off the ground while he stands on his front legs. I thought I read once that this is not good and strains the dog's joints or back or something. Your advice would be ap-

preciated. -- Zina J.

DEAR ZINA: The "hip hold" is a safety grip to pull your dog away from a fight with another dog. It's not a hold that should be forced or held for long periods.

Stretching should be performed by owners when the dog's joints are not weighted -- meaning the dog should not be standing or leaning on the leg being stretched. Holding Cheerio up by his hindquarters and forcing him to brace on his front legs puts him at greater risk for injury. It can cause great pain in older dogs

with arthritis.

If your wife would truly like to keep Cheerio's joints healthy and improve his overall circulation and well-being, there are some great safe stretching methods, and safe massage techniques as well. Here's a YouTube video of safe dog stretching exercises by a veterinary therapist: [tinurl.com/4ay7sfjc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ay7sfjc). Notice that at no point does the therapist stretch a joint that the dog is standing on -- they are all unweighted stretches.

Dogs also stretch themselves frequently, especially when getting up after a long nap. Don't try to assist

their natural stretching -- dogs stretch in a way that's comfortable for them. Therapeutic stretching and massage are designed to help facilitate a dog's natural movement without placing stress on the joints.

If you have more questions about your dog's mobility, talk with the vet at his next checkup.

### Pet's First Visit to the Veterinarian

DEAR PAW'S CORNER: I'm planning to adopt a cat soon. This



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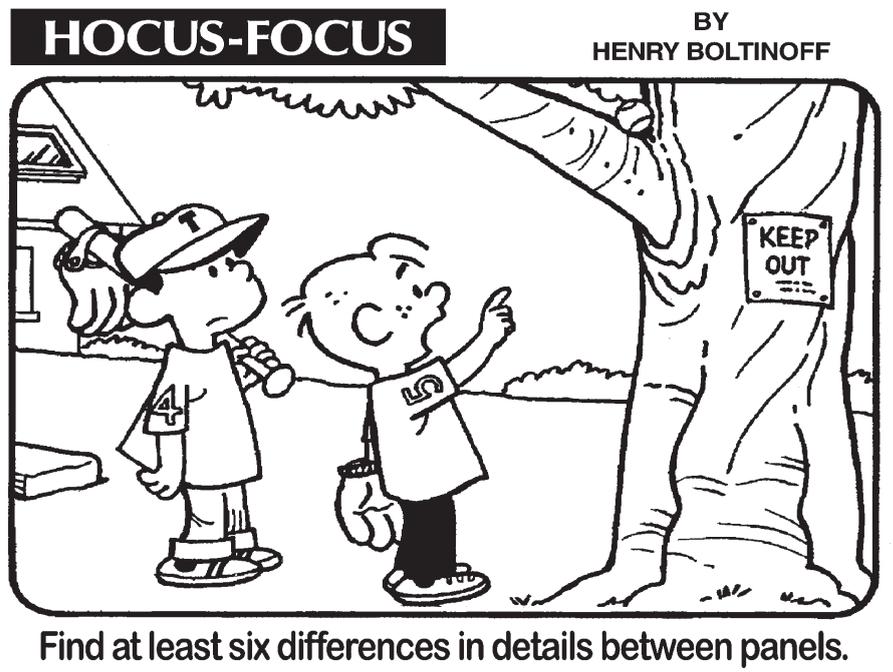
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Differences: 1. Roof panel is missing. 2. Glove is missing. 3. Shirt is different. 4. Number is different. 5. Arm is missing. 6. Sign is missing.

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Aug. 16-25, T/TH 5-8PM

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Session:  
July 18-Aug. 24, MON/WED 6-8:30PM

**CNC Machinist Apprentice Course**  
This training is a commitment to 150 hours which includes topics on shop math, blueprint reading, quality assurance, safety, work readiness, CNC mill operations, CNC lathe operations and gcode. Upon completion of technical training, the apprentice will be placed with a cooperative employer to receive on-the-job-training for 1 year.  
Session:  
July 18-Sept. 28, MON/WED/FRI 9AM-3PM

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is my first pet, and I'm looking forward to caring for it. The local shelter gave me a few instructions to follow, pre-adoption, including making an appointment for a veterinary checkup. Is there anything I should know about my cat's first vet visit? -- Kara L., Buffalo, N.Y.

**DEAR KARA:** Congratulations on deciding to accept a cat into your life! It will be a rewarding experience. I'm also glad that you're doing your homework ahead of time to give your cat the best start on a new life.

Here are a few tips that will help with your first veterinary visit:

- \* Research local clinics ahead of time. Is there one that specializes in cats?

- \* Purchase a cat carrier that best fits your cat (in terms of size, not decor). This will make transporting the cat from the shelter and to and from the vet much easier and safer.

- \* Keep all paperwork from the shelter in a folder and bring it with you.

- \* You should be able to be present during the exam. It's a great time to ask questions about caring for your cat. Be ready to take notes.

- \* Listen to the vet as he or she gives you information about your cat's general health. Vets or their assistants often talk to you throughout the process, telling you what they're checking for and the result.

- \* Follow the vet's instructions. If a follow-up visit or more tests are needed, make sure you do it. Write down special instructions like how much and what type of food to feed your cat, or instructions on giving medication. And don't be afraid to ask for clarification if you don't understand something.

### Fourth of July Fireworks Can Traumatize Pets

**DEAR PAW'S CORNER:** Please remind your readers that the noise and flash of fireworks can traumatize pets!

Last year, my son and his partner took their dog "Bliss" to a Fourth of July festival. Someone set off a string of firecrackers a few feet from the booth they were visiting. Bliss bolted and pulled her leash out of my son's hand. She ran straight out into the road. Luckily, the cars all stopped, and one of the drivers caught her. Afterward she remained very anxious. Bliss now takes medication to stay calm, and it's difficult to take her to unfamiliar places. Please urge people not to set off fireworks; go to a professional display and leave the pets at home. -- Judith in Lake City, Florida

**DEAR JUDITH:** You told them, and I thank you! I'm very sorry to hear that Bliss was traumatized, and I hope your son is able, through medication and training, to improve her confidence.

Bliss' parents didn't do anything wrong in taking her to the festival, but their experience shows how others' irresponsibility can have consequences for pets, and that owners have to be alert and ready to handle potential problems.

The Fourth of July can be a trying day for pets. Crowded parties and loud fireworks can really stress them out. Large fireworks displays are no different than big thunderstorms to most pets, and should be treated as such.

If fireworks will be within earshot of your home this holiday, prepare a safe area for your pet to shelter where the noise will not bother it as badly. If a ThunderShirt works for your dog (or cat), use it. Don't bring pets to fireworks displays, and if you're setting off backyard fireworks, put your pets inside.

Send your tips, questions or comments to [ask@pawscorner.com](mailto:ask@pawscorner.com).

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## Q & A with The Car Doctor



John Paul is AAA's Northeast's Car Doctor. He has over 40 years' experience in the automotive business and is an ASE-certified master technician. He will answer readers' questions each week. You can find the Car Doctor podcast at [www.johnspaul.podbean.com](http://www.johnspaul.podbean.com) or on other popular podcast sites. Email your car questions to [jpaul@aanortheast.com](mailto:jpaul@aanortheast.com). Follow John on Twitter @johnspaul and friend him on Facebook [mrjohnspaul](https://www.facebook.com/mrjohnspaul).

**Q.** We have a 2011 Ford F150 extended cab pickup truck. We have a problem with the airbag light on the dash staying on. The problem seemed to start after we adjusted the seat in order to put a child safety seat in the back seat. We have researched on the Internet and have noticed a lot of other owners having this problem. Not just with this certain year and style. How do we fix this? We have tried most of the solutions mentioned and still the light is on. We have raised the seat and played with the connections but have not taken the driver's seat off yet and checked them. We have not gone to a Ford dealer due to the costs mentioned of those that have. Second question, with all the other owners complaining of this problem, how do we set in motion for a recall? This is a safety issue dealing with the airbag not functioning properly.

**A.** The first place to start is with a scan of the restraint system and read the fault codes. When the light is on there will typically be a fault or error code, that code can lead to a proper diagnosis and repair. The other issue is sometimes this can be normal. The SRS or airbag light can be on when the seat is too close to the air bag or the weight sensor in the seat detects a low weight occupant and shuts off the airbag to prevent harm to the passenger. Regarding filing a complaint go to [www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov) and then file a complaint.

**Q.** I don't know if you can help me but I'm desperate at this point. I noticed that the back passenger floor of my 2008 Mercedes' C 300 was wet after it rained. On YouTube there are quite a few different cars that this happens to with all different attempts to fix the problem. Mostly, they try to unclog the drains from the sunroof. I've tried almost all possibilities to fix the problem to no avail. Most mechanics refuse to deal with this, and auto body places want to rip the interior out which will cost me a fortune. I think car dealers should be held responsible. Any advice you can give me may help.

**A.** Most water leaks are caused by clogged drains, leaky seals (doors

and windows) and clogged air conditioner evaporator drains. I would start with using low pressure air and blowing out the sunroof drains. I would also look to see that the drains in the bottom of the doors are clear. If that doesn't work, I would contact a few car dealers and see if they use a "freelance" leak detection technician. These air and water leak specialists know most of the tricks and locations of water leaks. Your 14-year-old car is well outside of any warranty and the dealer, or the manufacturer would not be responsible for a water leak.

**Q.** If I buy a five-quart jug of synthetic blend motor oil and use it over six months, would I be okay? With everything so expensive these days, if I see oil on sale, how long can I store it, before it "expires"?

**A.** This would not be a problem; I would only caution you to seal the container after each use. Many shops use oil stored in bulk containers and this oil can easily be months old. According to various oil manufacturers the typical shelf life of an unopened oil can be up to five years.

**Q.** Hello doc I own a 2016 Mazda CX5 with over 100,000 miles. I recently took it to the dealer for a new battery and asked to inspect the serpentine belt, to my surprise they said it looked fine. We take several trips a year and was hoping to get your thoughts on when to replace it?

**A.** We are seeing serpentine belts lasting well over 100,000 miles and even those that are 10 years old still look fine. If the belt shows no signs of glazing, cracking or fraying chances are it will be fine. Now for peace of mind for less than \$300 you should be able to replace the serpentine and water pump belt and have no worries on your road trip.

**Q.** I have a 2005 Chrysler Sebring convertible, I have shaking at 55 miles per hour. I have had the tires balanced four times but still have the issue. I switched front tires to rear and the shimmy moves from front to rear. One mechanic said replace the shocks and maybe the wheel is out of round, I put two different tires on to test if it was the slipped belt, but it didn't make a difference. Any thoughts?

**A.** If the shop that is balancing the tires can't detect a defective tire or out of round wheel it is time to find a new shop. Since the vibration moves with the wheels you at least know which wheel/tire is the problem. Since your car is 17 years old I would start by cleaning the backs of the wheels where they mount to the hubs. Corrosion can build up and cause the wheels to wobble. A good technician with a dial indicator should be able to look for problems and offer a solution.

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Sports

# Uxbridge Baseball Exceeds Coach Rice's Expectations

By Christopher Tremblay, Staff Sports Writer

Uxbridge Coach Peter Rice was entering his 13th season at the helm of the Spartans baseball team and outside of the Covid season, which was cancelled, the squad had managed to qualify for the tournament in all but one of his seasons. However, after the first five games of the season Uxbridge found themselves in a different scenario with a 2-3 record, but the Spartan skipper was not all that worried. And before too long his squad had rallied to win 11 straight victories and was back in familiar territory.

"During those first five games we played ok, it was just a matter of playing our game. In our losses we had been in some really close games, including an extra inning affair," Rice said. "We didn't take anyone out, but we shuffled the lineup around and in the sixth game our bats finally got going against Blackstone Valley and we had



18 runs on 14 hits. We felt the momentum switching our way."

When the Spartans finally got things going their way on the diamond, all 11 wins were not all one-sided as Uxbridge scrapped together a 2-0 and 2-1 win while also securing a

walk-off win during the streak allowing them to finish 14-4 on the regular season. With their 14 wins Uxbridge was awarded the number two seed in the Central Mass Tournament and after picking up two wins they unfortunately fell 2-1 to #15 Tyngsboro.

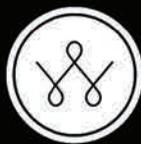
Next, it's onto the Division 4 State Tournament where Uxbridge will be the number two seed and will open up on June 6th against the winner of Wahconah (#31) and Assabet (#34).

Continued on next page

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## Sports

Continued on from page 16

"I'm hoping that we can continue to play good baseball and make a run through the State Tournament. Once you get here anything can happen; we just got to keep working hard in practice and be ready when we begin," the Uxbridge Coach said. "I knew that this was a talented team, but we have certainly past my expectations having won 16 games so far."

As the Spartans get ready to battle it out in the State Tournament the team has done been able to do so with a majority of underclassmen. Rice has three freshman and four sophomores on his roster this season with the addition of three juniors and three seniors.

"I typically don't have more than one freshman starting on the team, but I knew that these kids had the talent to play," he said. "I had high expectations but with freshman you never know as it can go either way."

The reason Rice went with the abundance of underclassmen was that he only had four returning varsity players coming back and only two of them were starters. Being on the younger side things could go either way once they took to the field.

With only three seniors gracing the roster Rice was looking for leadership from his three-character guys. Two of the three seniors also took to the mound for the Spartans. Seniors Zach Feeney and Sam Walton accounted for 9 wins and 2 loses throughout the season. Feeney, the team's starting third baseman when he's not on the hill, was the team's workhorse while Walton, who saw the occasional stint in the outfield, pounded the strike zone. Walton threw a three-hit win against Advanced math and Science when they were undefeated at



the time.

The team's third starter and the team's starting shortstop was freshman Charlie Criscola, who managed to go 4-1 for the Spartans. During in early scrimmage Rice noticed that the freshman had what it took to pitch on the varsity level.

Jack Sander was the team's third and final senior. Originally a left fielder he was moved to centerfield last season due to his ability to get a good read on the ball. Rice also noted that the now centerfielder also has a cannon for an arm.

Offensively Uxbridge was led by Criscola who has batted .429 with 14 RBI and 19 runs scored as the team's lead-off hitter, through the regular season and into the first three tournament games. Behind Criscola, sophomore Aidan Blood, who batted third for the team, has hit .371 with 17 RBI and 24 runs scored.

Freshman catcher Talen Rosborough batted second in the Uxbridge lineup this year.

While Rice and the Spartans still have the Division 4 State Tournament to partake in at the time of this writing the Uxbridge skipper is excited about what next year brings.

"I don't want to push the seniors out just yet, but we've got the majority of the team coming back next year so it's going to be fun to watch and see what they can do this year in the tournament," said the Coach. "Getting there at bats this year at such a young age will only be valuable in the future."

Despite beginning the season on a down note Uxbridge is clicking on all cylinders as they prepare for the State Tournament. As Rice tells his team "It's not how you start but how you finish" and the Spartans are playing some of their best baseball as of late.

# EXTRA! EXTRA!



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# Strange BUT TRUE

By Lucie Winborne

- President William McKinley always wore a red carnation for good luck, but sometimes gave it away as a memento. When greeting a crowd in 1901, he handed a 12-year-old girl named Myrtle the bloom off his lapel, saying, "I must give this flower to another little flower." While it's not known if the gesture proved lucky for Myrtle, just minutes later McKinley was fatally shot by a man in the crowd.
- The larger an animal's brain, the longer it will yawn.
- Smoking has long been banned by airlines, but ashtrays are mandatory on every plane, for safe disposal in case someone breaks the law.
- A Chinese farmer named Wang Englin, who quit school in the third grade, spent 16 years teaching himself law in order to sue a chemical company that was polluting his village. Unable to buy all the books he needed, he paid a local bookstore with bags of corn to let him sit and read, copying information by hand and using a dictionary when necessary. He finally won his case in 2017.
- During World War II, a Dutch warship was disguised as a tropical island to escape detection by the Japanese.
- Convinced that stomach ulcers were caused by H. pylori bacteria, although no one else seemed to believe it, Dr. Barry Marshall drank the bacteria himself (testing it on humans was illegal), developed ulcers within days, treated them with antibiotics, and ended up winning a Nobel Prize.

- On average, professional soccer players run as far as 9 miles in a match.
- Boston College has a policy allowing employees' children to attend for free once they've been accepted. One janitor's five children all made it in, saving the family almost \$700,000 in tuition costs.
- At some point, you've probably promised someone you'd "be there in a jiffy," but did you know that's an actual unit of time? 1/100th of a second, to be precise.
- Bob Ross, known for his TV show "The Joy of Painting," received up to 200 fan letters per day. If regular correspondents failed to keep in touch, he would phone them to make sure they were all right.
- The numbers on a roulette wheel, when added together, sum up to 666.
- The Eco Gym in Rochester, New York, uses cardio equipment that harvests energy from members' workouts as a means of reducing energy costs. Savings are passed on to the members as an incentive to keep coming back for regular exercise.
- Women's fashion changed with the invention of cars, when skirts in the 1900s were shortened to allow women to step into automobiles with more ease.
- The "XXX" that is often used to signify "poison" originated from moonshiners, indicating that their alcohol had been run through the still three times and was now pure and strong.
- In Sweden, millennials are known as the "Curling Generation," after the sport in which teammates sweep the ice in front of their stone to guide it, in the same manner as parents of millennials have swept away obstacles from their children's paths.
- Since snowflakes fall at about the rate of 1.5 mph, every one you see has traveled from 45-60 minutes to reach the ground.
- The next time you cut your yard, you can thank Edwin Bearn Budding for inventing the lawnmower in 1830. But while most inventors take

pride in their creations, Budding was so concerned about what his neighbors might think of his new contraption that he only tested his prototypes at night.

- There are more than 12,000 species of ants.
- Hall of Fame pitcher Lee Smith didn't play baseball until he was a high school junior and, even then, just tried out to win a \$10 bet. His turn to play came when his team's star pitcher was killed in a hunting accident.
- One sunflower is actually 1,000-2,000 tiny flowers held together by a base.
- Have you ever dreamed of smelling like a hamburger? No? Well, you could have in 2015, thanks to Burger King Japan's release of a limited-edition cologne called Flame Grilled ... and yes, it smelled like a Whopper.
- On Jan. 1, 1907, President Theodore Roosevelt shook the hands of over 8,510 people, setting a record that lasted more than 70 years.

• Sodium citrate makes any cheese into a creamy nacho cheese sauce. Curiously, its chemical formula spells out Na3C6H5O7 (NaCHO).

- In England and Wales, it's legal to consume alcohol on private premises from the age of five.
- Gesundheit! Ever wonder why someone "blesses you" when you sneeze? The custom was introduced by Pope Gregory the Great in 590 A.D. Since sneezing could be a sign of the plague, it was considered proper to offer a potentially ill person a blessing.

Thought for the Day: "Life is like arriving late for a movie, having to figure out what was going on without bothering everybody with a lot of questions, and then being unexpectedly called away before you find out how it ends."

— Joseph Campbell

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# Sports Quiz

By Ryan A. Berenz

1. Name the driver for Team Penske who won IndyCar Series season championships in 2017 and '19.

2. Who compiled a 3-10 record with the 1976 New York Jets in his only season as an NFL head coach?

3. On Sept. 14, 2008, Chicago Cubs pitcher Carlos Zambrano threw a no-hitter in Milwaukee's Miller Park against what team? (Hint: It wasn't the Brewers.)

4. What American snowboarder won Olympic gold medals in the women's halfpipe event at the 2018 PyeongChang and

2022 Beijing Winter Games?

5. Massachusetts hunters Charles Davis and William Foster are credited with developing what shooting sport in the 1920s?

6. On June 4, 1974, what promotion resulted in riots in the ninth inning and a forfeiture for Cleveland's Major League

Baseball team?

7. Name the Basketball Hall of Famer who was selected first overall by the Houston Rockets in the 1983 NBA Draft and was named NBA Rookie of the Year in 1984.

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- Answers
1. Josef Newgarden.
  2. Lou Holtz.
  3. The Houston Astros, who were relocated due to Hurricane Ike.
  4. Chloe Kim.
  5. Skeet shooting.
  6. Ten Cent Beer Night.
  7. Ralph Sampson.

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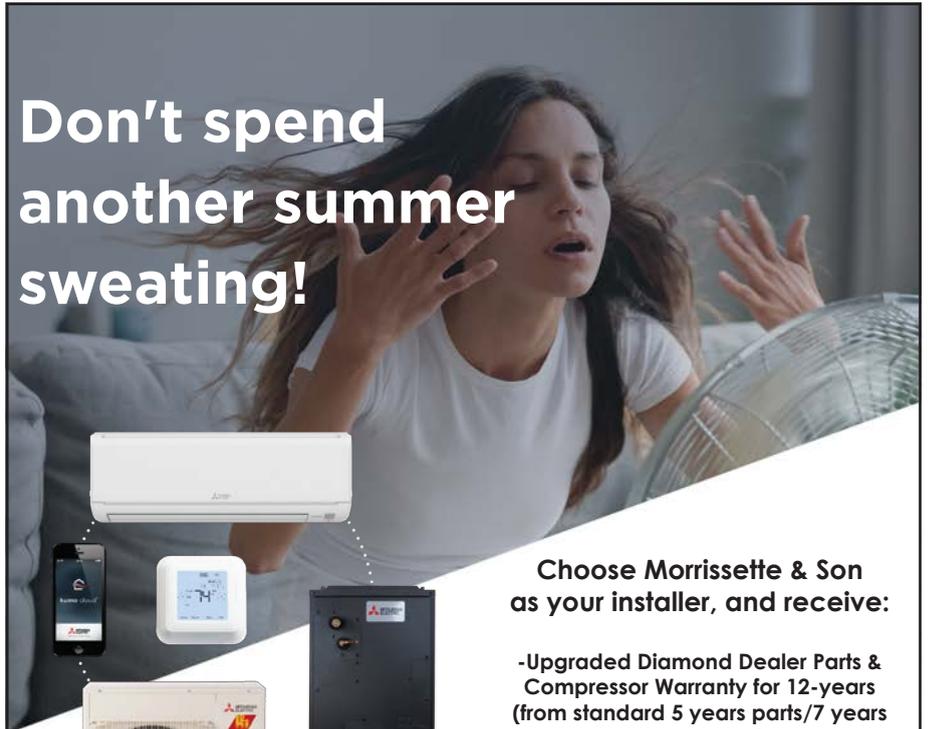
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