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he best stories are not always the loudest. Sometimes they are right around the corner.

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Friday, August 7, 2026

Douglas promotes new Fire and Ambulance Chief

Courtesy

Newly promoted Douglas Fire and Ambulance Chief Kelly Manning (center) is congratulated by Theresa and Z from Capital Cannabis, who stopped by the department recently with pizzas for the on-duty crew. Photo courtesy of the department's Facebook page.

DOUGLAS — The Town of Douglas has promoted Kelly Manning to Chief of the Douglas Fire and Ambulance Department. She will be the third person to serve as Chief since the Department began delivering full-time service in 2017, and the first woman to earn the top spot.

The Department provides 24/7 fire coverage and Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulance services with a full-time trained staff of 10 supported by over 30 active call members.

Manning started as a call firefighter in Wellfleet, Massachusetts in 2004. She earned her EMT-Paramedic status as a university student in 2006, the year she joined the call department in Douglas under then Chief Don Gonynor. She worked for the Amherst Fire Department for three years, more than nine years as a career firefighter in Southbridge, and two more in Westborough while she climbed the ranks of the Douglas call department. Chief Kent Vinson hired her as Assistant Chief in Douglas in November 2020, after town meeting created the position. Manning was promoted to Deputy Chief in

Turn To CHIEF *page* A10

Uxbridge Public Schools announces new leadership appointments

UXBRIDGE — The Uxbridge Public Schools community is pleased to announce several new leadership appointments strengthening our central office team.

Andrea Cameron joined the district as Director of Pupil Services beginning Monday, July 20. Ms. Cameron brings more than 20 years of experience in public education, including over a decade in district-level special education leadership as Special Education Coordinator for Chicopee Public Schools. She holds an M.Ed. in Special Education from Framingham State University.

Melissa Paquette joined the district as Director of Human Resources on or around Aug. 3, pending completion of standard background checks. This newly created position reflects Uxbridge Public Schools' ongoing commitment to building a stronger, dedicated human resources function to support our faculty and staff. Ms. Paquette is a SHRM Certified Professional with nearly a decade of municipal human resources experience, most recently with the Town of Bellingham.

Additionally, Valerie Nowlan transitioned into the role of Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, effective Aug. 3. Ms. Nowlan has served Uxbridge Public Schools since 2019 in a variety of administrative and financial roles, most recently as Finance Administrative Assistant in the Business Office.

The district also welcomes Tanya Benoit as the new Assistant Principal at Whitin Intermediate School. Ms. Benoit joins Uxbridge from Somerset Middle School, where she currently serves as Assistant Principal, and brings extensive experience in curriculum leadership and student support from her prior work with the Norton Public Schools.

The Assistant Principal search at Uxbridge High School is in its final stages under Dr. Rubin's direction; We look forward to sharing that appointment once it is finalized.

After nearly 30 years of service to the Town of Uxbridge, Barbara Emerick will retire this October, closing out a remarkable career that has touched nearly every corner of district leadership.

For 23 of those years, Emerick has served as Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent, supporting approximately ten superintendents through countless transitions, challenges, and milestones for Uxbridge Public Schools (Magdalene Giffune, Dan Stefanilo, Howard Boyaj, George Zini, Kevin Carney , Frank Tiano, Pat Dillon, Mike Baldassarre, Karen Dwyer, David Ljungberg).

Her institutional knowledge, steady presence, and deep commitment to the district have made her an anchor for the Office of the Superintendent across multiple administrations.

Emerick has been an invaluable resource to me personally and professionally, particularly during my first year as Superintendent in Uxbridge. Her decades of service reflect an extraordinary commit-

Turn To UXBRIDGE *page* A10

Whitin Community Center gears up for 12th anniversary of Cars In The Park

WHITINSVILLE — The Whitin Community Center (WCC) is excited to invite all automotive enthusiasts and families alike to celebrate the 12th Anniversary of our highly anticipated "Cars In The Park" event. Join us for a day of automotive excellence and community fun on Saturday, Aug. 15 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the picturesque seven-and-a-half-acre Whitin Park, located at 60 Main St., Whitinsville.

This year's Cars In The Park promises an unforgettable showcase of classic and contemporary cars, trucks, and motorcycles. Participants can vie for the prestigious Best In Show title and 25 other trophy categories, People's Choice Award, with the first 100 registered vehicles again this year receiving exclusive Show Dash Plaques and Goodie Bags. The event will also feature a selection of food trucks, exhibit vendors, a 50/50 raffle, and live entertainment, ensuring a fun-filled day for the entire family. Entry is complimentary for all spectators, making it the perfect summer outing.

Last year's event had a turnout of more than 300 cars! In anticipation of this year's event, vehicle owners are encouraged to register early and take advantage of a special $10 donation fee before July 15, after which the registration donation will increase to $20. Pre-registration closes on Aug. 12. Registration for vehicles is available online at www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com, in-person at our Member Services Desk, or on the day

Turn To CARS *page* A10

Courtesy

Officers from the Northbridge Police Department make it a rule never to drive past a lemonade stand without stopping. Photo courtesy of the department's Facebook page.

Friends of the Poor Walk set for Sept. 26

UXBRIDGE — The annual Uxbridge St. Vincent de Paul Society Friends of the Poor® Walk will be held on Saturday, Sept. 26. Registration begins at 9 a.m. We will meet at St. Mary's Church, 77 Mendon St., Uxbridge. near the OLV Grace Center gym.

The walk is rain or shine. Everyone is invited to join us, including friendly pets. We walk the town loop to bring awareness for all those who are struggling to make ends meet. We also offer a short walk for those who wish. This is our main fundraiser that helps us continue to provide financial support to those in need. Please call and leave SVDP a message at 508-278-2226 or sign up by using the QR code below. Our email is

Uxbridge.svdp@gmail.com, or you can check us out on our Web page, www.UxbridgeSVdP.org.

We welcome our past walkers and look forward to meeting new ones. Any donation is appreciated even if you aren't able to join us.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank last year's 2025 Sponsors: Bert's Breakfast & Lunch, Bob's Auto Service, J.F. Cove Insurance Agency, Inc., Craftech Restoration, T.F. Figuerido Custom Masonry, Harry's Famous Pizza (Uxbridge), Institute for Education and Professional Development, Martino Stained Glass Studio, Mullaly Material & Firewood, Nolin's Asphalt & Sealcoat, Nydam Oil Company, Inc, Savers Bank, Southwick's Zoo, Unibank for Savings and Uxbridge Lions Club.

Local nonprofit leader publishes children's book to help families discuss homelessness with compassion

WHITINSVILLE — After nearly a decade of helping individuals and families experiencing homelessness throughout the Blackstone Valley, Leslie Reichert, Founder and CEO of the Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter (BVES), has transformed those experiences into a children's picture book designed to teach empathy, kindness, and hope.

"Hope the Bear Finds Kindness" tells the story of Hope, a gentle bear whose life unexpectedly changes when she loses her home. Through simple acts of kindness from strangers, Hope discovers that even during life's most difficult moments, compassion can restore dignity, friendship, and hope.

The book was inspired by the countless stories Reichert has witnessed since founding BVES in 2017. During that time, the organization has grown into a regional leader in addressing homelessness through emergency shelter, homelessness navigation, police partnerships, volunteer engagement, and innovative housing initiatives serving communities across the Blackstone Valley.

"Many children notice people experiencing homelessness but don't understand what they're seeing," said Reichert. "I wanted to create a story that helps parents and teachers answer those difficult questions with honesty, while reminding children that every person deserves kindness and compassion."

Unlike many books that focus primarily on homelessness, "Hope the Bear Finds Kindness" centers on the power of ordinary people to make a difference. The story encourages children to look beyond circumstances and recognize the humanity in every person they meet.

The book is intended for children ages four to eight, and is an ideal resource for families, elementary schools, libraries, churches, and community organizations seeking to foster conversations about empathy, inclusion, and caring for neighbors in need.

Reichert believes children's literature has a unique ability to shape how future generations see the world.

"When we teach children kindness at an early age, we help build communities where people look out for one another. If this book inspires even one child to treat someone with greater compassion, then it has accomplished exactly what I hoped."

Proceeds from "Hope the Bear Finds Kindness" support the mission of Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter, helping provide emergency shelter, crisis intervention, homelessness navigation, and housing stabilization services to individuals and families throughout the region.

Since opening its doors, BVES has mobilized hundreds of volunteers and built partnerships with local police departments, faith communities, healthcare providers, businesses, and civic organizations to ensure that no one faces homelessness alone.

Reichert is available for interviews and is also scheduling author visits, school readings, library story hours, church presentations, and community events throughout Massachusetts. The book is a five-star bestseller on Amazon: https://a.cso/d/01UyVDuD

About Leslie Reichert

Leslie Reichert is the Founder and CEO of Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter, a Massachusetts nonprofit dedicated to helping individuals and families experiencing homelessness move from crisis to hope. Through innovative community partnerships and volunteer engagement, BVES has become a regional model for compassionate, collaborative homelessness response. "Hope the Bear Finds Kindness" is her first children's book.

About Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter

Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter mobilizes the community to ensure no one faces homelessness alone. Through emergency shelter, the Police Partnership Program, homelessness navigation, volunteer engagement, and Hope Housing, BVES helps individuals and families transition from crisis to stability while restoring dignity, hope, and opportunity.

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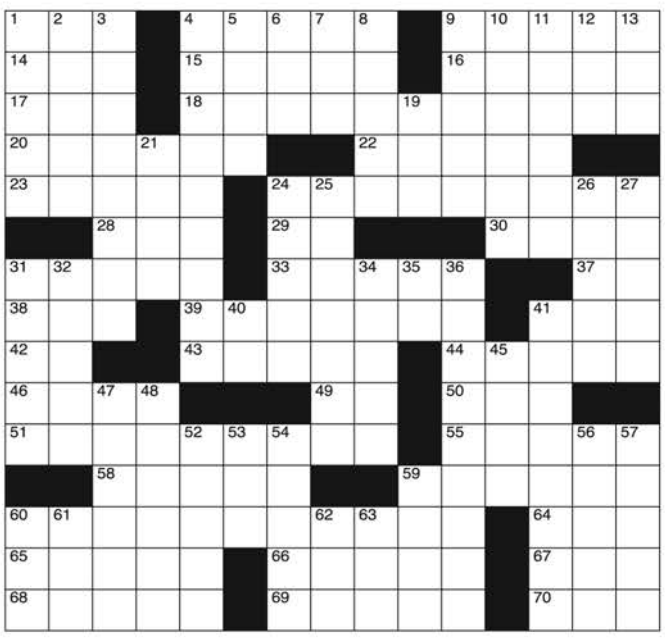


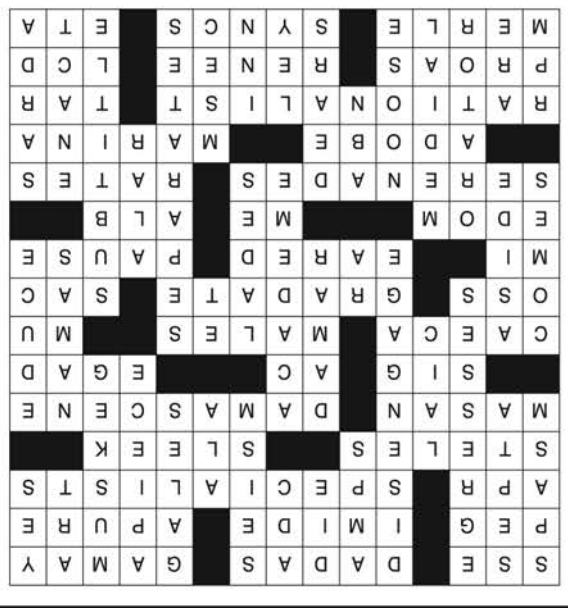
CLUES ACROSS

1. Midway between south and southeast
4. Fathers
9. Wine grape
14. Al Bundy's wife
15. Derived from ammonia
16. Venezuelan state
17. Interest rate
18. Experts
20. Vascular tissues
22. Smooth and glossy
23. Administrative region in S. Korea
24. One from Damascus
28. Special interest group
29. It cools your home
30. Oh, God!
31. Intestinal pouches
33. Men
37. Twelfth star in a constellation
38. Former CIA
39. Arrange in grades of size
41. A baglike structure in a plant or animal
42. "The Great Lakes State"
43. Having earlike appendages
44. Momentarily stop
46. Ancient kingdom
49. Of I
50. White clerical vestment
51. Songs to one's beloved
55. Charges
58. Computer application originator
59. A place to dock a boat
60. One guided by reason
64. Slang for cigarette
65. Sailboats
66. "Jerry Maguire" actor Zellweger
67. Screen type
68. Country legend Haggard
69. Puts together in time
70. When you anticipate arriving

CLUES DOWN

1. Involuntary muscular contraction
2. Eastern US transit agency
3. Leaves a place
4. Cease to participate
5. Current units
6. Cease to exist
7. General's assistant (abbr.)
8. Earth vibration
9. Very strong winds
10. For each one
11. A bog
12. The creation of beautiful or significant things
13. Affirmative
19. Pie _ __ mode
21. Nonclerical
24. Indonesian island
25. Educational environment
26. Namibian peoples
27. Bring out or develop
31. Moves into a place of thought
32. Out of the way
34. Loads a ship
35. Beloved Hollywood alien
36. Distinguishes
40. The ancient Egyptian sun god
41. Secondary or explanatory title
45. Relating to a wing
47. One who gives a speech
48. In the middle
52. Loop with a running knot
53. Airborne (abbr.)
54. Sweet persons
56. Put into play
57. Small cattle breed
59. Millisecond
60. Revolutions per minute
61. They __
62. Moon crater
63. A place to stay the night

PUZZLE SOLUTION



Emmanuel College announces Spring Dean's List

BOSTON — In recognition of their outstanding academic achievement, Emmanuel College has named more than 850 students to the Dean's List for the Spring 2026 semester, including Izabella Oum of Douglas, Ava Haire of Douglas, and Zoe Wojnowski of Uxbridge.

To earn a spot on the Dean's List, Emmanuel students must achieve a grade point average of 3.5 or higher for a 16-credit semester.

With more than 80 majors and areas of study, Emmanuel College combines outstanding classroom instruction and real-world experience to prepare students for lives of professional achievement, lifelong learning, and purpose. Voted the #1 college location in America in 2026 by Niche.com, Emmanuel offers ready access to world class medical, cultural, and business organizations in the Heart of Boston, all with a tight-knit 17-acre campus and 13:1 student-to-faculty ratio. Learn more at Emmanuel.edu.

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BLACKSTONE

$750,000, 14-R Orchard St, Geddes, Jeffrey, and Mossop, Tyler, to Hagopian, Stefanie, and Ferrara, Nicholas.

$510,000, 20 Ascension St, Parker Sr, Christopher S, and Parker, Corinne M, to Mcdonough, Brendan.

$500,000, 6 David Dr, Wassarman, Noelle, and Wassarman, Derek, to Donovan, Monica.

$425,000, 101 Edgewater Dr, Robillard, Andrew J, to Gotthardt, Kristin A, and Curtin, James M.

$299,900, 96 Main St #1, Harper, Diane, to Mcintyre, Roy, and Demartinis, Kelly Ann.

DOUGLAS

$725,000, 130 SE Main St, Cirka, Luke, and Cirka, Anna, to Allen, Joan.

$560,000, 39 Arch St, Mclean, Angela, and Heisson, Cory, to Ambert, Abner O, and Burgos, Melissa.

$518,000, 3 William Dr #3, Wang, Yao, to Kelly, Janet Lynn, and Kelly, Gerard.

$280,000, 71 Locust St, Curtis, Matthew T, to Hurteau, Kevin C.

NORTHBRIDGE

$682,000, 9-11 Central Ave, Khoury, Seth Benjamin, and Khoury, Seth, to Rojas, Yosbel Yorka, and Romero, Yaneida Leguen.

$675,000, 217 Brookway Dr, Ross, Randy D, and Ross, Laurie S, to Mcbride, Joshua Charles, and Breault, Jenna E.

$597,000, 106 Sherry St, Joseph M & K Onorato Ret, and Onorato, Kerrie A, to Smith, John W, and Smith, Amanda M.

$565,000, 608 Church St, Andrews, Devin, to Quezada, Daviana A.

$380,000, 2294 Providence Rd, Anderson Ft-2021, and Anderson, Adriana, to Rooney, Joseph, and Chamberlin, Kaylee.

Ware

$395,000, 19 Old Poor Farm Rd, Beer, Adam E, and Beer, Alycia M, to Stackhouse, Brandon, and Lablanc, Emma.

$385,767, 11-13 Webb Ct, Patti Glenn Jjs Cassistan, to Jjd Capital Ivestment LLC.

$345,000, 24 Maple Ave, Mancia Serices LLC, to Marques, Rosangela.

$340,000, 2 Boivin Ave, Meyer, David E, and Easton, June B, to Vendur, Kim M, and Vendur Sr, Jamie T.

$325,000, 20 Spring St, Miner, Greg, to Coutler, Elizabeth K, and Coutler, David M.

$55,000, 267 Osborne Rd, Allard, Beverly A, to Kibbe, Jessie E, and Kibbe, Jacob D.

Uxbridge Elderly Connection plans 20th annual golf outing

UXBRIDGE — A good idea became a great idea when, 20 years ago, the Uxbridge Elderly Connection planned its First Annual Golf Outing in 2006. This year they will be celebrating with a 20th Anniversary event on Monday, Sept. 21, at the Whitinsville Golf Club in Whitinsville, Mass. The very special golf outing fundraiser, which benefits the Uxbridge Senior Center, will begin at Noon with a shotgun start for golfers at one of the top-ranked, nine-hole golf courses in the world.

Teams of four may sign up to play for $125 per golfer for nine holes including golf cart and buffet supper. Only eighteen teams may play so early registration is essential. Special events will include two closest to the pin prizes, longest drive, team prizes and more. The team of Mark Wickstrom, Mary Pat Wickstrom, Dan Moors and Michael Horan, last year's first place winners, are the team to beat in 2026.

Sponsorships offer a way to show support for our senior community. A Platinum Sponsor of $2500 includes a tee sign, sponsorship display board, four golfers with golf cart and dinner with highest recognition on all materials, website and social media. The Gold Tee-Shirt Sponsor of $2,000 will provide your company name on all golf shirts, the sponsorship display board, and recognition on the website and social media. The Silver Golf Ball Sponsor for $1,500 provides your company name on tournament golf balls distributed to every player, recognition on sponsorship display board, website and social media. A mainstay of the Uxbridge Elderly Connection Golf Outing has always been the community business support in the form of tee signs. The Bronze Tee Sign Sponsor for $150 provides a tee sign prominently displayed at the practice green at the start of the golf outing. To respond to any of these offers, email uxbridgeelderlyconnection@gmail.com, or call the Uxbridge Senior Center at 508-278-8622 for more information.

Golfers and sponsors may locate a registration form on the Uxbridge Senior Center Facebook Page or at the senior center and pay online with QR code provided or make a check payable to the Uxbridge Elderly Connection, P.O. Box 215, Uxbridge, MA 01569.

Local businesses and community members have been consistently supportive over the twenty years of the golf outing by purchasing tee signs, making donations or providing gift baskets. Silent and live auction items donated have proved a fun and profitable addition. Make your contribution by contacting the Uxbridge Elderly Connection, P.O Box 215, Uxbridge, MA 01569 or call 508 278-8622.

The Uxbridge Elderly Connection, Inc., is a non-profit organization and donations are deductible to the extent allowed by law. The Board of Directors includes Russ Rosborough, President; Phyllis Dunn, Vice President; Marianne Shanley, Treasurer; Cathy Thornton, Secretary; Donna Oncay, Karen Sherlock, Sharon Emerick, Karen Beane and Harriet Platt. Its mission is to support the Uxbridge Senior Center and to help fulfill some of its needs, and the needs of seniors, such as facility improvement, education, nutrition, medical transportation, and socialization not provided by its municipal budget.

Blackstone River Heritage State Park offers full slate of outdoor programs

UXBRIDGE — From guided hikes through some of the region›s most scenic forests to evenings spent exploring the stars above River Bend Farm, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has announced a full calendar of free public programs for 2026 at Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park.

The schedule includes monthly Night Sky programs, weekly recreational hikes, family activities, history programs and environmental education designed to help residents explore the natural and cultural resources of the Blackstone River Valley.

All programs are free and open to the public. Registration is not required unless otherwise noted.

One of the park's most popular offerings returns with the Night Sky 2026 series. Held at the field across from the River Bend Farm Visitor Center, the evening programs invite visitors to observe the moon, planets and stars through telescopes while learning about astronomy from park staff.

The series begins April 10 and continues through Nov. 6, with each session highlighting different celestial events.

On Friday, Aug. 28, from 7:30 to 9 p.m., visitors will have an opportunity to view a full moon rising at 7:38 p.m. while observing Venus after sunset. The Nov. 6 program will feature excellent views of the Milky Way, along with Saturn and Neptune.

Families with young children can also take advantage of Kidleidoscope, held every Friday in August from 10 to 11 a.m. at River Bend Farm. The weekly program combines stories with hands-on nature activities for children ages three to six, with siblings welcome.

History enthusiasts will find several educational programs throughout August.

On Aug. 8, from 1 to 2 p.m., "A Shuttle into the Past: Textiles Talk" will explore how wool is transformed into woven fabric while examining the area›s rich textile manufacturing heritage. The presentation is intended for ages 12 and older.

A week later, on Aug. 15, visitors can join a guided Israel Plummer's Canal Store Tour beginning at Plummer›s Landing. Participants will learn about canal-era merchant Israel Plummer during a two-mile walk over moderate terrain.

The month's programming concludes Aug. 29 with the Woodlands and Waterways Tour, a one-mile guided walk along the historic Blackstone Canal focusing on local wildlife and watershed conservation.

For outdoor enthusiasts seeking a longer adventure, DCR will again offer its Exploring the Blackstone River Valley Recreational Hike Series, featuring guided hikes throughout Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, Douglas State Forest, Upton State Forest, Whitehall State Park and the Blackstone River Greenway.

The hikes range from 1.5 to 5 miles and vary in difficulty, with many including rugged forest trails, gravel roads and moderate to steep hills.

Among the scheduled August hikes are:

Aug. 2: Plummer›s Landing Hike, Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, 2 to 4 p.m.

Aug. 9: Chickadee Loop, Upton State Forest, 2 to 4 p.m.

Aug. 16: Tri-State Marker Loop, Douglas State Forest, 2 to 4 p.m.

Aug. 23: Blackstone River Greenway hike beginning in Blackstone, 2 to 4 p.m.

Aug. 30: Blackstone Gorge Loop, Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park, 2 to 4 p.m.

The July schedule features additional hikes at Skull Rock Lock, Upton State Forest, Douglas State Forest and Whitehall State Park.

Participants should wear appropriate footwear, dress for changing weather conditions and bring insect repellent. Most hike locations do not offer restroom facilities or drinking water, and children must be accompanied by an adult.

The Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park is located at 287 Oak St., Uxbridge.

For updated program information, weather cancellations or directions to meeting locations, call (508) 278-7604 or visit bit.ly/blstupdates.

Reasonable accommodations are available by contacting Moneesha Dasgupta at (617) 645-0358 or moneesha.dasgupta2@mass.gov.

Country music dance at Uxbridge Progressive Club

UXBRIDGE — The New England Country Music Club will hold a dance with live, classic country music on Sunday, Aug. 9 with South County Line at the Uxbridge Progressive Club, 18 Whitin St.. Doors open at 12:30 p.m., with music from 1-5 p.m. Admission charge, cash bar, snacks are allowed.

Houatchanthara of Whitinsville named to Regis College Dean's List

WESTON — Regis College today recognizes Haden Houatchanthara, Class of 2029, of Whitinsville, whose academic excellence and commitment to learning have earned them a place on the spring 2026 Dean's List.

To qualify for the Dean's List, students must earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher. First-year students qualify with a GPA of 3.25 or higher.

Founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph nearly a century ago, Regis College educates students to lead with integrity, purpose, and compassion. Through an inclusive and innovative learning community, Regis prepares graduates to build meaningful careers and make a positive impact in the world.

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A Few Honest Notes (Because Communication Matters)
I'm not a cat guy — it's just not my vibe.
I've been around other dogs at the rescue and have done fine, but I didn't have much proper socialization before coming here. When dogs rush up to me, I can feel unsure and a little overwhelmed. Because of that, I'd feel most confident being your one-and-only pup while I continue building skills and confidence at my own pace.

Vet visits used to make me nervous too — especially nail trims and being confined for exams. But guess what? I've made amazing progress. With the help of our awesome trainer, Jackie, I learned to file my own nails (yes, I'm basically a DIY king), and I've been muzzle trained so I can safely and successfully handle checkups and vaccinations! With a little medication beforehand and the right support, I'm doing so much better already. I'm proof that patience and training truly work.

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Frank G. Chilinski
President & Publisher

Brendan Berube
Editor

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Blackstone Valley and beyond

Editorial

Leadership earned through service

Communities place extraordinary trust in their fire departments. Whether responding to a house fire, a medical emergency, or a natural disaster, firefighters and paramedics arrive on what is often the worst day of someone's life. The person leading that department must possess not only technical expertise, but also the judgment, compassion and character to inspire confidence from both the public and the firefighters they serve.

Douglas appears to have found such a leader in its new Fire Chief, Kelly Manning.

Promotions to the highest ranks of public safety should never be viewed as symbolic. They should reflect years of preparation, experience and demonstrated leadership. Manning's career tells that story. Beginning as a call firefighter in Wellfleet more than two decades ago, she steadily built her credentials while serving in multiple communities, advancing through the ranks in Douglas and gaining experience as a paramedic, registered nurse, instructor and emergency management professional. Her educational background, including a master's degree in public administration, complements an already impressive list of certifications and field experience.

Equally important is the endorsement she has received from those who know the department best. Retiring Chief John Furno spent more than 40 years in public service and worked alongside Manning for the past several years. His confidence in her ability to lead carries significant weight. Likewise, Town Administrator Matt Wojcik highlighted not only her qualifications but also the mentorship she received during the department's recent evolution into a full-time organization.

Douglas' Fire and Ambulance Department is still relatively young in its current form. Since transitioning to full-time service in 2017, it has continued to grow while maintaining around-the-clock fire protection and Advanced Life Support ambulance coverage with a combination of career personnel and dedicated call firefighters. Sustaining that momentum requires thoughtful leadership focused on recruitment, training, operational readiness and fiscal responsibility.

Chief Manning's own priorities suggest she understands those challenges. Her emphasis on strengthening community partnerships, embracing innovation and protecting the health and well-being of department personnel reflects a modern approach to emergency services. Firefighters today face increasing demands that extend well beyond fighting fires. They respond to medical emergencies, hazardous materials incidents, rescues and countless other situations requiring advanced training and teamwork. Supporting those professionals is essential to maintaining the high level of service residents expect.

Her appointment also represents a meaningful milestone as the department's first female chief. While history should recognize that achievement, it should not overshadow the qualifications that earned her the position. The most significant aspect of this promotion is not that barriers have been broken, but that Douglas selected the individual it believes is best prepared to lead.

The best public servants rarely seek recognition for themselves. Instead, they focus on building strong teams, preparing for the unexpected and ensuring others have the tools they need to succeed. By all accounts, those are the qualities Kelly Manning has demonstrated throughout her career.

As Douglas looks ahead, residents can take confidence in knowing their Fire and Ambulance Department remains in experienced hands. Leadership transitions are always significant, but they also present opportunities for fresh ideas built upon a solid foundation. Chief Manning now has the opportunity to write the next chapter of a department that continues to evolve in service to its community.

That is good news not only for Douglas' firefighters and paramedics, but for every resident who may someday depend on them.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Fauci's infamy

To the Editor:

In 2021 and 2023, I wrote about Dr. Fauci and what many of us knew or suspected.

Now, we have his "Dear Diaries," which were discovered by Health and Human Services researchers in sequestered and hidden computer servers at the National Institutes of Health, owned by the federal government.

If Fauci had been as smart as he pretended, he never would have kept a "truth-telling" record of his thoughts on a government computer. They are public records!

Now we know for sure that he lied. About everything! Which is why is needed a pardon for any and all acts from Jan. 1, 2014 to Jan. 20, 2025.

We know in 2020, he was terrified that we Americans would find out he funded the Wuhan lab, "game of function" research, had been doing so for years, and that he was responsible for the Covid pandemic along with incompetent Communist China lab researchers and technicians. In 2015, French intelligence warned the U.S. state department that the Wuhan Lab was lax in safety protocols!

Yes, I deliberately said "game of function" because Dr. Faustus was playing a game of high stakes, developing a deadly virus with no known cure. I predicted he would take the Fifth on every question when he appeared on July 29 before the Senate Subcommittee on Covid. He did not disappoint.

Trump called it the "China virus" because he did not know he had a viper by his side. Now, let's call it the "Fauci virus." Let's say we were "Fauci-ied" during the Pandemic: fooled, lied to, bamboozled, misdirected, and inflicted.

In April 2020, my 97-year-old WWII veteran U.S. Navy Dad died in a nursing home, surrounded by nurses dressed like aliens, after a month of not seeing his family. It makes me cry. After reading Fauci's diaries, I am angry. Will Fauci be swallowed up like Don Giovanni into the pit of hell? My Dad did not die of the Fauci virus. Many of my friends' elderly parents in nursing homes also did not die of Covid, but died of loneliness in 2020. They had been contentedly living in care, with daily visits from daughters, sons, and grandchildren. Fauci stopped all visits to nursing homes. In conservative states, governors refused to shut down.

How many millions of Americans were harmed? Small businesses went bust. Education went bust. We the People paid Fauci $480,000 a year during the "Pandemic" — the highest paid federal employee. During the "Pandemic" Dr. Faustus [who also sold his soul to the Devil] grew wealthy, while school children fell far behind, Americans stayed indoors and developed fear of everything.

Here is what I wrote back in 2021 and 2023: "Let's begin with the Uber Dictator Fauci. During the President Trump Administration, Fauci told us that Covid was not a danger to Americans and that face masks should not be worn. On February 17, 2020, Fauci said, 'skip masks unless you are contagious.'"

"Fauci also said: 'Whenever you have the threat of a transmissible infection, there are varying degrees from understandable fear to outlandish extrapolations of fear'. This guy has made his TV career on "outlandish extrapolations of fear. Last week, the news reported that the National Institutes of Allergy and Infectious Diseases has in fact funded dangerous bat coronavirus research at the Wuhan lab. Fauci denied this before Congress in 2023. Lies, more lies and perjury. Time for him to resign at age 80, don't you think?" It was perjury. And why he needed a pardon.

Now, in his diaries, we learn he made us not see our relatives for Christmas, but he was going to dinner at Fake Jake Tapper's house multiple times!

If there is any justice, evil Fauci and his vainglorious diaries, and the misery he inflicted on us, will live in infamy, just like his testimony on July 29. May his Wikipedia page be revised to read: "Fauci remains one of the most vilified D.C. swamp creatures of all time, and deservedly so, for he caused more misery to Americans than any prior federal employee with his catastrophically stupid ideas."

He may have been pardoned for crimes. It is now time for the civil suits. Intentional infliction of emotional distress. Negligent infliction of emotional distress. Intentional interference with family relationships. Intentional harm to elderly patients in nursing homes. Negligent infliction of educational damage to students. Negligent infliction of psychological distress, causing mental illness. Intentional infliction of damage to small businesses.

During the Fauci Pandemic, my Learned Friend insisted that we continue to walk outside in the open air. We saw no one. It was as if an atomic bomb had gone off and ended all life in Uxbridge. Fauci made people afraid to go outside where sunshine and oxygen disinfected everything.

Do you have a civil cause of action against Dr. Faustus?

Bev Gudanowski
Uxbridge

What is at stake?

To the Editor:

Conservatives and Republicans alike are deeply concerned about the midterms, and some are even panicking. Talk show hosts on the conservative side are warning their viewers that the House and Senate are at stake. In my opinion, those talk show hosts are most likely right, and why?

The typical old school Democrat is deceased and what has risen from the ashes is something far more sinister, far left ideology. Now you might think that this far left thinking would scare people but its being rebranded by social media and liberal news as the answer to Trump. The democrats' plan is to take the House and Senate to impeach Trump, JD Vance, and Marco Rubio and by doing so would making Harkeem Jefferies Speaker of the House (another radical left-wing democrat). Is it possible? Yes, but maybe those of you will see what happens when you install career politicians with radical left ideology like Megan Romer and vote against it. Megan Romer, the National Co-Chair of the Democratic Socialists of America, had this to say during an interview, and it should make you realize how out of touch the radical left is with Americans. They (DSA) want to abolish the Senate: Romer confirmed the DSA platform's goal to eliminate the U.S. Senate, calling it an anachronistic structure and advocating for a single, expanded legislative chamber. Abolish Prisons: She affirmed the long-term objective to phase out and largely abolish the traditional carceral/prison system. Electoral College & Executive Branch: The DSA platform calls for replacing the Electoral College with a national popular vote and restructuring the presidency and Supreme Court to be subordinate to unicameral legislature. (Courtesy of Fox & the Wall Street Journal)

During that interview, Ms. Romer, who wants to abolish prisons was asked about freeing rapists, murders, and pedophiles and claims that, "she'll figure it all out when it happens". What is there to figure out if you rape, murder, or molest an innocent person in this country? Imagine letting out the most heinous criminals back out on the street so that they can reinvent themselves back into society? Thankfully, Ms. Romer is not running for any office, but she does encourage the ones who are and that should worry us all.

Dr. Anthony Fauci went before Congress this week and invoked his right to the Fifth Amendment only 111 times. Fauci was being brought forth to Congress for his admissions in a personal diary. Fauci admitted in his memoirs that he was a "rock star" during the COVID lockdown. I can tell you from experience that this guy was indeed enjoying the attention he was receiving. Dr. Fauci, do you think wearing two masks will save people who had the virus from getting it again? Dr. Fauci's response was yes in 2021, but back in 2004, he said that there was no need for a vaccine or precautions if your body fought off the virus. Previously, Fauci went before Congress and said to Sen. Rand Paul that he had nothing to hide and had no knowledge of gain of function research. We now know that was a lie and it is going to ruin his career and it should because his handling of the pandemic that killed millions. Fauci misled Congress and world health agencies, but most importantly, Dr. Fauci lied to the world. Fauci knew about the Coronavirus leak in Wuhan and tried to cover it up. Dr. Fauci should be stripped of his title and incarcerated. Joseph Biden, former POTUS (killed a million people under his term), gave Dr. Fauci a future pardon, along with the other clowns that were part of the political witch hunt to blame Trump for Jan. 6. It infuriates hard-working Americans to know that if you do wrong and you are a Democrat politician, you can use your "get out of jail free" card. Thanks for reading.

P.S.: to Mr. Bev, we don't think, we know.

Mike Downing
Whitinsville

The empty parking space

Lanterns Along Main Street
By CHARLES

I pulled into a crowded parking lot last week and did what most of us do. I started looking for the closest available space. There wasn't one. So I circled once. Still nothing.

By the second lap, I noticed something interesting. Every driver seemed to be doing exactly what I was doing. We were all hunting for the perfect spot while dozens of perfectly good spaces sat empty just a little farther away. I finally gave up, parked near the edge of the lot, and walked. It took all of about 45 seconds.

By the time I reached the front door, several of the cars that had passed me were still circling. It made me wonder why we're so determined to save a few extra steps.

When we were kids, walking wasn't something we tried to avoid. We'd think nothing of hiking across a field to visit a friend or riding a bicycle halfway across town because someone said there might be a pickup baseball game.

Now many of us will spend five minutes searching for a parking place that saves us 30 seconds of walking. I'm as guilty as anyone.

There's something strangely satisfying about finding that front-row space. It feels like winning a prize, even though the prize is usually a walk that's shorter than the average television commercial. The funny part is what happens when you park farther away. You notice things.

You see flowers planted along the sidewalk that you would have driven right past. You hear conversations instead of engines. You notice the small independent businesses tucked between larger stores. Sometimes you even run into someone you haven't seen in years because you're both walking instead of rushing from one door to another.

Those extra few steps become part of the outing instead of something to be avoided. I suppose that's true of a lot of life.

We're always looking for shortcuts. Faster internet. Faster checkout lines. Faster shipping. Faster routes around traffic. We measure success by how quickly we can get from one thing to the next.

But not everything improves by speeding it up. Some conversations are worth lingering over. Some roads are worth taking because they're scenic instead of efficient. Some Saturday mornings deserve to unfold without constantly checking the clock.

Living in New England reminds us of that every season. Nobody hurries through the first blaze of autumn color. People stop to watch a fresh snowfall. We pull over for covered bridges and scenic overlooks even when we're already running a little late.

Those moments aren't productive by any measurable standard. They're simply enjoyable. Maybe that's why I didn't mind the longer walk after all.

The parking lot gave me a few extra minutes outside on a pleasant afternoon. I watched a family loading pumpkins into the back of a pickup. An older couple strolled toward the garden center without seeming to be in any hurry. A little boy proudly carried a loaf of bread that was almost as long as his arm.

None of those moments would have registered if I'd found that perfect parking space. I still like parking close to the door. Old habits don't disappear overnight. But every now and then, the best spot in the lot isn't the closest one. It's the one that reminds us slowing down is sometimes the shortest path to enjoying the day.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The hidden mobility barrier isolating Blackstone Valley residents

To the Editor:

When discussions about public transit happen in Massachusetts, the focus almost always centers on major urban centers and the MBTA network. But for residents living in towns like Uxbridge and Whitinsville, the daily reality looks entirely different—and it is creating an invisible barrier to independence.

In our Blackstone Valley communities, traditional public transit options are sparse to nonexistent, and fixed bus schedules rarely align with real-world routines. For capable adults who want to work, handle daily errands, and contribute to the community on their own terms, getting around is a constant logistical hurdle.

The problem is compounded by infrastructure gaps. When sidewalks are narrow, missing, or poorly connected, elements like rain, sleet, or winter weather completely eliminate walking as a viable option. Without reliable, flexible local transportation or on-demand microtransit alternatives, residents find their world shrinking.

When the physical gap between point A and point B cannot be bridged safely, capable individuals are often cut off from the workforce or forced into structured programs simply due to a lack of mobility.

State and local leaders need to recognize that regional transit equity isn't a secondary issue—it is the foundational key to keeping suburban adults independent. It is time to put real focus on flexible, reliable transit solutions for the Blackstone Valley.

Sincerely,

Taylor Godin
Uxbridge

Satire, politics and self deprecation

To the Editor:

"Stunningly good!" is but one way to properly, and quite respectfully, describe the writer from Whitinsville's most recently published tour de force. To criticize others is so common these days, as we all know.

However, when one of our most popular contributors turns their biting humor upon themselves, doing so in ways that rather mercilessly mock that very same writer's formerly held political beliefs, we must all admit to the profoundness of such a literary endeavor's intrinsically noteworthy nature.

As readers, by the end of its first paragraph, we all began to suspect that, by some seemingly inexplicable way, a political epiphany had occurred between the author's consecutively published works.

Remember how it felt during those first confirming moments of Issue # 31 when the entire host of those abundantly clear facts so miraculously revealed themselves unto us?

The leftist from Whitinsville had actually jumped ship. Ditching both Joe Biden and his locally approved henchwoman, Maura Healey. Doing so to better lend his much desired support for our Republican candidate for Governor...Brian Shortsleeve.

So, what's not to laugh about with that highly expert presentation? That's what self-deprecating humor excels at, does it not?

Our little-people epiphanies came with the words written about one of our most evil, yet oddly unnamed leaders. That quintessential spouse cheating, lying, pathological, draft dodging scoundrel that we the people were so unfortunately duped into electing into the Whitehouse twice.

None other than Bill "Slick Willy" Clinton. The one and only President who ever managed to so adeptly squirrel-cage himself into all those openly stated categories simultaneously.

It was like bearing witness to a deliberately witless turncoat feat of left-wing legerdemain. Whereby the writer inspired us all to recall all the worst aspects of the Bill and Hillary Clinton administration's sexually explicit shenanigans as well as their leftist cover ups thereof.

In that way, forcing us all to look at that letter from a MassBackwards/Shortsleeve approach. Just so we could catch and latch onto all the jokes that we didn't want to Swiss and swish miss in this literary puzzlement of the leftist, self-deprecating, comical kind.

The mention of the convicted failed businessman and sexual abuser was quite obviously a direct reference to the left's time-honored views in regards to former president Thomas Jefferson. Who, despite being dead as a doorknob for a bit over two centuries, remains chief among the absolute favorite whipping boys of socialists, communists and their fellow Democratic Party ilk. Now what's not funny about that?

Meanwhile, we all know for a fact that even a stuffed animal, illegally imported from the legendary island of misfit toys, could fix the State's housing crisis "On Day 1" just by not being Governor Maura Healey. Thus, even Mike Minogue, despite his fame in having far more money than brains, could pull off the same stunt.

And how are we to validate some Minogue-supporting woman's claims of being a Democrat? We can't! And that's among the tersest jokes in the piece.

We all know that Democratic Party females don't know how to acquire birth certificates to prove to us all who they are. Leftist women just want the right to vote along with their illegal immigrant compadres without any sort of ID involved whatsoever.

Then came that hoot about Mike Minogue not stating that he's a Republican... because we all know it. Unless we are stupid beyond belief. Isn't that the implied joke with that part of the comedy bit?

The letter's final punchline is all set to become a cult classic among the Brian Shortsleeve converts.

"They know we are stupid."

Truer words from any present or former leftist have never been written or vocally expressed so succinctly.

And so we are drawn to an inescapable conclusion in regards to Issue #31's Opinion Section master work that stood alone for very good reason. There's a dire need to expand the number of voters exposed to this new turncoat comedy genre. In the end meaning we should consider having some AI generated reading of the entire piece. Which we can then send off to AM radio's Danny Farrantino and Howie Carr for their listening pleasure.

The voice of actor James Mason from "Journey to the Center of the Earth" seems the most fitting.

Since, in the most devilish of ways, Joe Biden and Maura Healey, along with their left-wing supporters, for some comically stupid reasons or other, felt duty bound to drag us all into some hellishly hot underground bunker that is still likely inhabited by Adolph Hitler's ghost.

So by some means, check that letter out for yourself. Because it is quite wickedly funny in the extreme.

Stephen Gambone
Northbridge

Letter submission policy

Letters to the Editor must include the author's name, address, and a daytime phone number for purposes of verification in order to be considered for publication. Only the author's name and the town in which they reside will be published. Letters submitted without all of the required information will not be accepted. It is the sole prerogative of the Editor to determine whether a submission satisfies our requirements and decency standards, and any submission may be rejected at any time for any reason he or she might deem appropriate.

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Is your arthritis care all that you would hope it to be?
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Women's Bible Study to explore Book of Genesis this fall

WHITINSVILLE — Women throughout the Blackstone Valley are invited to take part in a new season of Coffee Break, a community Bible study that begins Tuesday, Sept. 15, at Pleasant St. Church in Whitinsville.

The fall study, "Genesis: The Beginning of the Story," will focus on the opening book of the Bible and explore themes of God's character, faithfulness and His plans for humanity.

Organizers say the study is designed for women of all backgrounds and experience levels, emphasizing that no previous Bible knowledge is required.

"God loves us and has wonderful plans for our lives, no matter what the current events look like," organizers said in announcing the upcoming program. "Come join with others in a study of 'Genesis: The Beginning of the Story' as we look at who God is and the power and glory He is about to display in the earth."

Coffee Break meets every Tuesday from 9:30 to 11 a.m. and provides participants with an opportunity to read and discuss Scripture, share questions and concerns, and build friendships with other women in the community.

The program is intentionally welcoming to newcomers. As organizers like to say, "You're only allowed to be a newcomer the first week. After that, we're all friends."

There is no homework, and free study guides and Bibles are provided to all participants.

Complimentary refreshments will be available each week, and free childcare is offered for infants, toddlers and children through age 5, allowing mothers to participate while their children are cared for in a nurturing environment.

The study will be held at Pleasant St. Church, 25 Cross St., Whitinsville.

For more information, directions or questions, contact Anna at 774-287-9449, email churchoffice@pscrc.org, or visit https://www.pscrc.org/adults.

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Friday's Child

Paul
Age 1
Registration #9291

Paul is an adorable baby with a sweet, easy-going temperament. He enjoys teething toys and toys that he can spin with his hands. Paul loves sensory bubble timers and listening to nursery rhymes, and music is one of his favorite activities. His favorite songs are from "Super Simple Songs" on YouTube. When Paul likes a song, he will wave his hands around as if he is conducting an orchestra. Paul is easily soothed, enjoys engaging with others, and feels comfortable in new environments. His gentle personality and love of music make him a joy to be around.

https://www.mareinc.org/child/32358211403

Can I Adopt?

If you're at least 18 years old, have a stable source of income, and room in your heart, you may be a perfect match to adopt a waiting child. Adoptive parents can be single, married, or partnered; experienced or not; renters or homeowners; LGBTQ+ singles and couples. As an adoptive parent, you won't have to pay any fees, adoption from foster care is completely free in Massachusetts.

The process to adopt a child from foster care includes training, interviews, and home visits to determine if adoption is right for you. These steps will help match you with a child or sibling group that your family will fit well with. To learn more about adoption from foster care visit www.mareinc.org . Massachusetts Adoption Resource Exchange (MARE) can give you guidance and information on the adoption process. Reach out today to find out all the ways you can help children and teens in foster care.

Community Harvest Project's Pick Your Own Flowers returns

GRAFTON — Community Harvest Project (CHP) invites the community to enjoy one of summer's most colorful traditions while helping grow healthier communities. Pick Your Own Flowers is now open at CHP's Grafton Farm, offering visitors the chance to build their own bouquet while supporting local hunger relief.

The annual fundraiser features thousands of blooming flowers—including vibrant sunflowers, zinnias, cosmos, marigold, snapdragon, statice, and more—for just $1 per stem. Every dollar raised helps Community Harvest Project engage and educate volunteers to grow fruits and vegetables for local hunger relief. Every dollar

donated to the organization provides approximately three servings of fresh fruits and vegetables for local families.

Every bouquet picked helps grow healthier communities across the Commonwealth. Proceeds support CHP's volunteer-powered farming program, where more than 6,400 volunteers grow and harvest fresh produce that is distributed through a network of 27 hunger relief partners across central and eastern Massachusetts.

"Pick Your Own Flowers is a simple way for people to experience the beauty of our farm while making a meaningful impact," said Tori Buerschaper, Executive Director of Community Harvest Project. "Every bouquet purchased helps provide fresh, healthy food for neighbors who are having trouble stretching their dollars. It's a wonderful reminder that even small acts of generosity can bloom into something much bigger for our community."

Visitors are encouraged to stroll through the flower row, cut their own bouquet, and enjoy a peaceful visit to the farm. Whether stopping by after work, bringing family and friends, or creating flowers for a special occasion, every stem helps support Community Harvest Project's mission.

Event Details

Community Harvest Project Pick Your Own Flowers Fundraiser

Location: Community Harvest Project, 37 Wheeler Rd., North Grafton

Hours: Daily, 7 a.m.– 7 p.m.

Cost: $1 per stem (cash or Venmo @chpinc)

Season: Open now while flowers last

This year's flower garden is located along the driveway exit. Visitors should look for the arch to Carolyn's Garden, where scissors and payment information are available.

For more information, visit www.community-harvest.org.

August events at Waters Farm

SUTTON — Join Waters Farm, located at 25 Waters Rd., Sutton, for Picker's Paradise Flea Market, a relaxed New England-style sale set at a historic farm.

This event will take place on Aug. 8, 9, 15, and 16 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. We keep our event small and easy to explore, a welcoming starting point for anyone visiting a flea market for the first time. This is a great place for people who enjoy antiques, vintage finds, and other treasures but prefer a quieter shopping experience. If you would rather part with your treasures than collect more, we gladly welcome tax-deductible donations. Picker's Paradise is also a great opportunity for sellers. Outdoor vendor spaces are available for $10 a day. Bring your own tent and table, or sell directly from your vehicle. First-time vendors are welcome! This event will happen rain or shine, barring extreme weather. For vendor inquiries, donations, or to volunteer, please contact Pam Farnham at (508) 735-7146 or email pam@watersfarm.org.

We have a full slate of free, family-friendly, and fun activities planned for our next Open House on Sunday, Aug. 9.

9 to 11 a.m. | Waters Farm House Tours

9 a.m. to 3 p.m. | Picker's Paradise Flea Market

9 a.m. sign-ups; 10 a.m. start until done | Antique Farm Tractor Pulls

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. | Blacksmithing with Dan Soucy Located at Capt. Cornelius Putnam Blacksmith Shop

10 a.m. to 3 p.m. | Beekeeping with Harvey Blythe of It's Only Chemistry Includes a live hive, weather permitting.

Noon and 1 p.m. | Trail Hikes with Phil Johansson of Blackstone Heritage Corridor Hikes will last 40 to 45 minutes.

Finally, we always are open to volunteers of all ages, a great way to earn service hours! Coming up on Saturday, Sept. 12 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. is our annual Apple Crisp Preparation Day. Help Norma make her famous Apple Crisp by preparing the apples. Lunch and apple crisp samples are provided. Special thanks to First Congregational Church of Sutton (307 Boston Rd., Sutton,) for letting us use their kitchen.

To learn more about Waters Farm, find us on Facebook and Instagram, or visit our Web site at WatersFarm.org.

Spooktacular family fun returns to WCC with Halloween Roller Skating Costume Party & Haunted Swim!

WHITINSVILLE — The Whitin Community Center (WCC) invites families to join in the Halloween fun on Friday, Oct. 16 for a frightfully festive double-feature of spooky activities, on wheels and in the water!

Now in its 13th year, the Halloween Roller Skating Costume Party rolls into the WCC's Gymnasium with three skating sessions: 5:30-6:30 p.m., 6:45-7:45 p.m., and 8-9 p.m. Children ages 12 and under are invited to skate with their Halloween Costumes, to some spooky Halloween tunes in our Gymnasium, and each child will receive a goodie bag! This event is always well attended and space is limited. Concessions will be sold in the Lobby.

At the same time, our Annual Halloween Haunted Swim Party makes waves in the WCC's Competition Pool with fun inflatibles, spooky music, and a haungtingly good time for young swimmers and their families. All ages are invited. Sessions mirror the skating times as: 5:30-6:30 p.m., 6:45-7:45 p.m., and 8-9 p.m. Space is limited.

The cost for all events is $5 per child, per session. Parents are free. Proceeds benefit the WCC's Youth Outreach Program & Blackstone Valley Children's Place Playground Fund.

"These events bring so much joy to our community," says Jenn Castro, Director of Outreach. "It's about more than just costumes and candy, it's about creating lasting memories for families and supporting programs that truly make a difference."

For more information, please visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com or call 508-234-8184.

The Whitin Community Center is committed to enhancing the health and well-being of individuals and families and building a strong community in the Blackstone Valley. We offer social, recreational, educational, and outreach programs that bring community members of all ages and backgrounds together. The Whitin Community Center is the Blackstone Valley's most complete family and recreation center with two swimming pools, a gym, fitness center, early learning programs, summer camps and a seven and a half acre park. For more information call 508-234-8184 or visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com.

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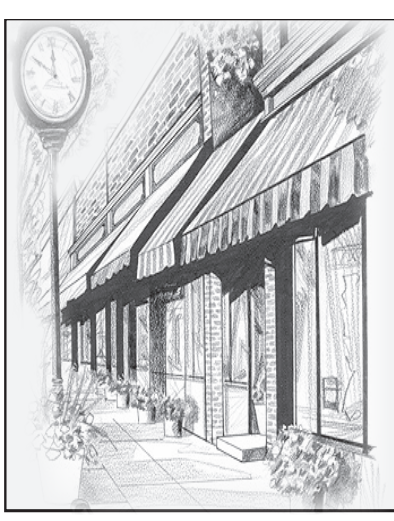

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bankHometown strengthens Retail Banking team with key leadership appointments

OXFORD — bankHometown is pleased to announce the addition of four experienced banking professionals across its retail network. These appointments reflect the bank's continued investment in customer service, employee development, and community-focused banking throughout Central Massachusetts and northeastern Connecticut.

Jerusa DeBrito

Alison Tozzi

Dhimitri Piluri

Maria Baker

Jerusa DeBrito appointed AVP, Branch Officer in Leominster

Jerusa DeBrito has joined bankHometown as assistant vice president, branch officer of the bank's 9 Sack Blvd., Leominster office.

With nearly 30 years of retail banking experience, DeBrito most recently served as AVP, bilingual branch manager at M&T Bank. She is known for her relationship-focused approach and commitment to serving customers and the community.

DeBrito serves as a board member of Fresh Start Furniture Bank and She's Local and is a member of the American Heart Association's Go Red Awareness Committee. She earned a Certificate in the Fundamentals of Banking from the New England College of Finance and has participated in the Certified Financial Educators' Financial Wellness Program.

Alison Tozzi named AVP, Branch Officer in Putnam

Alison Tozzi has joined bankHometown as assistant vice president, branch officer of its 182 Main St., Putnam, Connecticut office.

Tozzi brings nearly 30 years of banking experience to the organization. Most recently, she served as branch manager at KeyBank and previously worked as a senior personal banker at Bank of America. Her extensive background in branch leadership and customer service will support the continued success of the Putnam team.

Dhimitri Piluri joins Worcester Office as Branch Officer

Dhimitri Piluri recently joined bankHometown as branch officer of the bank's 1001 Millbury St., Worcester office, bringing more than 10 years of banking experience to the role.

Most recently, Piluri served as branch manager at Savers Bank and previously held positions as a relationship banker at Main Street Bank and Santander Bank. He has developed expertise in customer service, relationship management, and retail banking operations.

Piluri holds a Bachelor's degree in marketing from La Sapienza University in Italy and a master's degree in information technology from Southern New Hampshire University. A strong advocate for financial education, Piluri has volunteered with Junior Achievement, assisting with lessons on budgeting, saving, credit, and loans. He has also participated in financial workshops for immigrants and low-income families and served through the IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program.

Maria Baker joins Sturbridge office as Assistant Branch Manager

Maria Baker recently joined bankHometown as assistant branch manager of its 331 Main St., Sturbridge office.

Baker has 25 years of banking experience and most recently served as market manager at Cornerstone Bank. Her extensive knowledge of retail banking and customer relationship management will be an asset to the Sturbridge team and its customers.

"At bankHometown, our success is driven by the talented individuals who serve our customers and communities every day," said Robert Morton, president & CEO of bankHometown. "We are excited to welcome these accomplished banking professionals to our team. Their experience, leadership, and commitment to relationship banking will strengthen our ability to deliver exceptional service, build meaningful customer connections, and support the communities we proudly serve."

About bankHometown

Founded in 1889, bankHometown is headquartered in Oxford, Massachusetts. We have $1.6 billion in assets and offer a complete line of consumer and business deposit and lending products and services through 15 locations throughout Central Massachusetts and northeast Connecticut. We're proud to fulfill our community banking mission—providing individualized financial support, comprehensive products and services, and banking tools—to ensure our customers can unlock their potential and build a successful future.

Through our charitable giving program, The Giving Tree, we support non-profit organizations and causes throughout Worcester and Windham Counties. In 2025 alone, The Giving Tree donated more than $550,000 and over the last decade donated more than $3.3 million. bankHometown was named a Corporate Citizenship Award winner by Boston Business Journal for the past six years, reaffirming our status as one of Massachusetts' most charitable companies. Additionally, we were named a 2025 Top Place to Work award winner by The Boston Globe, and both bankHometown and our parent company, Hometown Financial Group, were recognized as five-time USA Today Top Workplaces award recipients. For more information, visit bankHometown.com.

History comes alive at the Asa Waters Mansion this August!

MILLBURY — In celebration of Asa Waters Mansion 200th Anniversary, and in conjunction with the 250th Anniversary of the United States, the Mansion is proud to announce, History Comes Alive at the Asa Waters Mansion. History Comes Alive, is a three-day Civil War living history experience, taking place on the historic grounds, located at 123 Elm St., Millbury, from Friday, Aug. 7 through Sunday, Aug. 9, with battlefield demonstrations taking place nearby at Stowe Farm, 15 Stowe Road, Millbury.

Presented in collaboration with the 15th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Reenactment Regiment and The Liberty Greys, this immersive weekend event will transport visitors back in time through engaging historical interpretation, live demonstrations, educational programming, and authentic encampments designed for all ages. Throughout the weekend, guests will experience narrated battle demonstrations, military drill and weapons demonstrations, civilian and domestic life programming, educational lectures, Candlelight Mansion Tours, live period music, Officer's Gala & Cotillion, sutlers, Sunday church call, and additional interactive experiences that showcase the Civil War-era America from multiple perspectives.

The weekend begins on Friday, Aug. 7, with the Mansion's Candlelight Tours, an immersive living history experience offered by advance registration only. Guests will explore Asa Waters Mansion by candlelight as every room comes alive with historically accurate portrayals of Civil-War era life. Reenactors will depict military officers planning strategy, surgeons and nurses tending to a field hospital, civilians navigating daily life, guards standing watch, and moments of faith, music, and civic duty. Tours will be offered in 15-minute intervals from 7-10 p.m. Guests are invited to enjoy live music by period era Shades of Gray – Civil War Camp Band, light bites, and cash bar under the tent happening in conjunction with the tours. Pre-registration is required. Tickets are $20 per person, free for ages 12 and under, and can be purchased online at, https://unipaygold.unibank.com/transactionInfo.aspx?CustomerID=1686&TransID=38449.

On Saturday, Aug. 8, the historic grounds of the Asa Waters Mansion will host an authentic Civil War encampment from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission to the encampment is free and open to the public, offering guests the opportunity to interact with reenactors, explore military and civilian camps, and experience daily life as it would have been during the Civil War. This day will also feature experiences for the whole family including, a dress parade and company drill, "Buttons, Books, and Battles: Growing up in the 1860s", Military demonstration, lectures, and so much more! Festivities at the Mansion with continue Sunday, from 9:00am-1:00pm.

Saturday evening continues with the elegant Officers' Gala & Cotillion under the tent, and advance registration in required. Inspired by the documented traditions of Civil-War era truces and civilian galas, this event will begin at 5:30 p.m., guests will enjoy a cocktail reception, ceremonial toasts, an elegant cotillion, cash bar, and a four course, family-style dinner prepared by Simply Delicious Catering while reenactors seated throughout the room bring history to life through engaging conversation and authentic portrayals. Live music by Shades of Gray – Civil War Camp Band playing pre and post dinner while Chris Ricciotti & Spare Parts will be calling and playing during the cotillion. The four course, family-style dinner will include Chicken Consommé Served with Corn & Brown Bread, Shoe Peg Pickled Corn Salad served on Butter Leaf Lettuce, Braised Beef with Guinness, Carrots and Pearl Onions, Roasted Chicken, Whipped Potatoes, Roasted Root Veggies, Colonial Marlborough Pudding with Apples, Sherry, Lemon, Fall Spices and Whipped Cream. Tickets are $75 per person and can be purchased online at, https://unipaygold.unibank.com/transactionInfo.aspx?CustomerID=1686&TransID=38448.

Battlefield demonstrations will take place at Stowe Farm, 15 Stowe Road, Millbury on Saturday, Aug. 8, and Sunday, Aug. 9. Guests planning to attend the battlefield demonstrations are asked to drive directly to Stowe Farm, as shuttle service will not be provided between the Mansion and the battlefield site. This event is also free and open to the public, however donations are welcome. Saturday's battle will begin at 3 p.m., with live-narrated Civil War battle reenactment with infantry, cavalry and artillery, with the closing battle on Sunday beginning at 2 p.m.

The event is intended to create an engaging and educational environment where history can be explored in a meaningful, approachable, and community-centered way. Organizers hope visitors will gain a deeper appreciation for the region's Civil War Heritage while experiencing the sights, sounds, and stories of the era firsthand.

"This event is about bringing history to life in a way that is immersive, thoughtful, and accessible for everyone," said Asa Waters Mansion, Executive Director, Traci Parath. "Whether your are a history enthusiast, a family looking for a unique weekend experience, or someone interested in learning more about the stories behind the Civil War, there will be something meaningful for everyone."

Asa Waters Mansion remains one of the Blackstone Valley's treasured historic landmarks, and History Come Alive aims to connect the community with the rich and complex history that helped shape both our region, Massachusetts and the nation.

For more information, please contact Asa Waters Mansion Executive Director, Traci Parath at 508.865.0855 or email Traci at, tparath@millburyma.gov.

www.StonebridgePress.com

Santa's Coming to WCC for free holiday event Dec. 12

WHITINSVILLE — The Whitin Community Center (WCC) is excited to welcome families to one of the most heartwarming events of the season, Santa's Coming to WCC, happening on Saturday, Dec. 12 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the WCC's Gymnasium, 60 Main St., Whitinsville.

This free event is open to the public and brought to you by the WCC's Blackstone Valley Children's Place staff. Families are invited to join us for a festive morning filled with holiday games, crafts, cheek art, and a special visit with Santa Claus.

Each child will receive a surprise gift from Santa, and parents are encouraged to bring their cameras to capture these joyful moments.

"This event brings our community together in such a warm and joyful way," says Ginny Alicea, WCC's Blackstone Valley Children's Place Director. "It's a chance for families to slow down, make memories, and truly enjoy the spirit of the season. We love seeing the smiles on the twinkle in the children's faces when they meet Santa. This event is a gift to the community, and truly magical, and we're proud to offer it at no cost to families."

For more information, please visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com or call 508-234-8184.

The Whitin Community Center is committed to enhancing the health and well-being of individuals and families and building a strong community in the Blackstone Valley. We offer social, recreational, educational, and outreach programs that bring community members of all ages and backgrounds together. The Whitin Community Center is the Blackstone Valley's most complete family and recreation center with two swimming pools, a gym, fitness center, early learning programs, summer camps and a seven and a half acre park. For more information call 508-234-8184 or visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com.

Got Space?
we do.
Contact Mikaela Today
774-200-7308
mikaela@
stonebridgepress.news

Plummer Place

Home of the Northbridge Senior Center

The following events will take place at Plummer Place, Home of the Northbridge Senior Center. We are located at 20 Highland Street in Whitinsville. Telephone: (508) 234-2002. Northbridge residents have priority for all programming and events. Please call the main office to sign up for special events and programs, so we can plan accordingly.

Medical Drivers
We are in need of medical drivers for out-of-town medical appointments. This is a very important service that we provide for seniors who cannot drive themselves to their medical appointments. If you are interested and can spare any time, it would be most appreciated. Drivers are reimbursed for their mileage. For more information, please call the main office.

Regular Programs:

Meditation with Kelly:
Every Thursday morning at 9:30am
Book Club:
Third Wednesday at 10:30am
Please call Kelly for more information
Brew Crew:
No Meetings in August
Dull Men's Club:
No Meetings in August
Scrabble:
August 10th and 24th at 9:30am
Women's Collective:
No meeting in August
Writing Your Way:
2nd and 4th Thursdays at 2:00pm

Special Programs and Events:

Petting Zoo for Seniors
Tuesday, August 18th 1:00pm-2:00pm
Come enjoy a fun and interactive petting zoo experience featuring 20+ animals. Space is limited, and Northbridge seniors have priority. Please call the main office to sign up. $5 cash admission fee payable at the door on the day of the event. Any questions, please call Amy at (508) 234-2002.

Aging Gracefully: A Fall Prevention Workshop
Thursday, August 20th 1:00pm-2:00pm
Please join UMASS Prevention Specialist Dominick Dunbar to learn how to prevent and recover from fall injuries, as well as the importance of diet and exercise as preventive measures. Light refreshments will be served. Sign up in the main office.

Local Authors Fair
Wednesday, August 26th 10:00am-12:00pm
Calling all bookworms! Don't miss this chance to meet talented local writers, explore their books and enjoy a morning celebrating storytelling and community connection. FREE admission. Complimentary coffee and tea will be provided, as well as free door prizes. Books will be available from all authors for purchase that day. Please call the main office to sign up so we can plan accordingly (508) 234-2002. Looking forward to seeing you there!

Douglas Adult Social Center

331 Main St.
(508) 476-2283
Hours of operation: Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.; Friday 9 a.m. to noon

DAILY ACTIVITIES: All our daily activities are free of charge.
Monday: Painting class 9:45am to 11:45am, Balance & Strength Exercise 12pm, Mat yoga 2pm
Tuesday: Walking club 9am, Cribbage 9:00am, Lunch & Bingo 11:30am, Technology class 1pm (call to make an appt.)
Wednesday: Balance & strength 10am, Darts 11:30am, Mahjong 12:45pm, Dominoes 1 to 2:30pm
Thursday: Walking club 9am, Pitch 9:00am, Chair Yoga 9:30am, Tai Chi 10:45am, Hand and Foot card game 12:30pm
Friday: Balance & strength 10am, Zumba 11:15am

Cooling Center: The center is open as a cooling center all summer long. Feeling hot? Come on in enjoy some free ice cream, or a free cup of coffee and a pastry. We have tons of activities going on every day or if you like could sit read a book, play a game on one of our tablets, color on our poster table or put some pieces in the puzzle at our puzzle table. The staff and the patrons are a friendly bunch! Stop in to say hello and to cool off anytime.

Tuesday & Thursday lunch club, please call the Friday before to sign up. Lunch is $4.00 per person. If you would like to attend, we offer free rides to & from the center and are willing to waive the lunch fee is necessary.
July Lunch Menu:
Tuesday 7/7: Baked chicken, mashed potatoes w/ gravy, corn & chocolate cream pie
Thursday 7/9: Sub sandwich, chips & ice cream sundae
Tuesday 7/14: Spinach & cheese quiche, English muffins & fruit
Tuesday 7/21: Stuffed peppers, carrots & ice cream
Thursday 7/23: Cheese lasagna, salad, garlic bread & cake
Tuesday 7/28: Salad bar w/ grilled chicken & fruit
Thursday 7/30: Fish sticks, tater tots & ice cream

Friday Shopping Schedule: Please call 48 hours in advance to schedule your ride. Grocery shopping pick up starts at 9:30.
Hannaford: 7/24
Walmart: 7/17
Price Chopper: 7/10
Rider's choice: 7/31

JULY EVENTS:
WELLNESS CLINIC DATES: Monday July 13th & Tuesday July 21st. Clinic is open from 10 am to 12 pm.
Thursday July 30 @ 11:30: Lunch & a movie, we will be watching Remarkably Bright Creatures. Lunch is $4.00 per person, fish sticks, tater tots, & dessert. Sign up by 7/27.

AUGUST EVENTS:
WELLNESS CLINIC DATES: Monday August 10th & Tuesday August 25th. Clinic is open from 10 am to 12 pm.
Hearing aid cleanings: Thursday August 13th from 10:00 to 11:00. Darci will be here to assist you, please call the center to schedule your appointment.
Thursday August 6th @ 12:00: Zentangle class, this is a beginner course. The class is free of charge, the tile is $7.00. When signing up for the class we ask that you come in to pay for your tile. Refreshments will be served. Please sign up by 8/3.
Friday August 7th from 11:00 to 3:00: Sunshine club is hosting their senior picnic at Wallum Lake. Lunch, beverages, & watermelon will be supplied for you. Bring a chair, & sunscreen. We will have the pavilion with picnic tables to sit at. Come enjoy sometime outdoors with friends, play games, maybe go for a swim. We will be meeting at the center and carpooling to the park. If you need transportation to the lake, please mention that when you sign up. They have allowed us to enter through the boat ramp to avoid the walk down from the upper parking lot. If you arrive yourself, there is a chance you may have to park in the upper parking lot and pay for parking. Sign up by 8/1.

PLEASE CALL (508) 476-2283 TO SIGN UP FOR PROGRAMS & CLASSES
Check our website for events that may not be listed here
https://www.douglas-ma.gov/202/AdultSocial-Center-Senior-Center

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LEGALS

(SEAL)
THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
26 SM 002371
ORDER OF NOTICE
TO:
Gertrude E. Doiron; Brian R. Letendre and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50 §3901 (et seq):
U.S. Bank Trust National Association, not in its individual capacity but solely as owner trustee of GS Mortgage-Backed Securities Trust 2022-RPL4 claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Uxbridge, numbered 641 West Hartford Avenue, given by Gertrude E. Doiron, Brian R. Letendre, Robert W. Doiron, Jr. to National City Mortgage a division of National City Bank, dated September 14, 2006, and recorded in the Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 39777, Page 305, as modified by a certain modification agreement recorded on July 1, 2015, and recorded with said Worcester County (Worcester District) Registry of Deeds in Book 53950, Page 22 and now held by the Plaintiff by assignment, has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.
If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108 on or before September 7, 2026 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.
Witness, Gordon H. Piper, Chief Justice of this Court on July 24, 2026.
Attest: Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
24201
August 7, 2026

The Town of Douglas Water & Sewer Commissioners will hold a public hearing on **August 25th at 7:00PM.** The meeting will be held at the **Water & Sewer Department, 29 Charles St, Douglas, MA** for the proposed changes to the Water & Sewer rates. These rates will go in to effect Aug. 26th 2026. These rate increases are necessary to fund the essential maintenance and needed improvements to the Town's Water and Sewer Systems. Those in attendance and wishing to speak on this matter will be given the opportunity to do so at the public hearing.
August 7, 2026
August 14, 2026

(SEAL)
COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS LAND COURT
DEPARTMENT OF THE TRIAL COURT
Worcester South, ss
26 SM 002339
ORDER OF NOTICE
TO:
Linda M. Barry
and to all persons entitled to the benefit of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act, 50 U.S.C. c. 50
§3901 *(et seq)*
YMA Investment LLC
claiming to have an interest in a Mortgage covering real property in Uxbridge, MA, 01569, 206 Hazel St., given by Linda M. Barry to YMA Investment LLC, dated January 10, 2025, and recorded in Worcester South County Registry of Deeds in Book 71553, Page 1 I 9 has/have filed with this court a complaint for determination of Defendant's/Defendants' Servicemembers status.
If you now are, or recently have been, in the active military service of the United States of America, then you may be entitled to the benefits of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act. If you object to a foreclosure of the above-mentioned property on that basis, then you or your attorney must file a written appearance and answer in this court at **Three Pemberton Square, Boston, MA 02108** on or before 9/7/26 or you may lose the opportunity to challenge the foreclosure on the ground of noncompliance with the Act.
Wittness, Gordon H Piper, Chief Justice of this Court 7/22/202
Attest:
RECORDER
Deborah J. Patterson
Recorder
August 7, 2026

Bay Path Continuing Education's fall catalog available

CHARLTON — We are excited to announce that the Fall 2026 catalog is now available at www.baypath.net/bpce. There is something for everyone, featuring offerings in trades exam preparations, continuing education, professional development, health & wellness, art, food & entertaining, financial wellness, and much more.

Here are some of the new classes available:

Basket Weaving
Breadmaking and more
Gluten-Free Pasta Making
Japanese Ikebana Flower Design
Professional Writing
Tai Chi
and more

Additionally, we have returning favorites including:

Line Dancing
Ballroom Dancing
Stained Glass Making
Bob Ross Art Classes
Yoga for All
Classes for Two People to Take Together

Registration Opens on July 20 – Make sure to sign up early for the classes that catch your interest so you don't miss this opportunity! You can reach us at www.baypath.net/bpce or call 508-248-5971, ext. 1715. Bay Path has been providing engaging adult continuing education classes for the past 30 years, conveniently located at 57 Old Muggett Hill Rd., Charlton.

Discover your next favorite book at the Northbridge Senior Center

NORTHBRIDGE — Book lovers and community members are invited to a special free literary event on Wednesday, Aug. 26 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Northbridge Senior Center featuring a group of talented local authors.

This engaging mid-morning event offers attendees the opportunity to meet local writers, discover their latest works, and purchase books directly from the authors. Guests can also have their books signed and enjoy some meaningful conversations about the writing process and creative inspiration.

In addition to meeting the authors, attendees can enjoy complimentary coffee and tea while browsing. Free door prizes will also be available throughout the morning, adding an extra element of excitement to the event, and the first 15 people in the door will receive a free writing journal!

Whether you're an avid reader or simply curious about the local literary scene, this event provides a welcoming and relaxed environment for all. Those interested in attending are encouraged to RSVP by calling the main office to sign up at (508) 234-2002 so we can plan accordingly.

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41st Valley Friendship Tour raises nearly $110,000 for Open Sky Community Services

Courtesy

Worcester-based nonprofit Open Sky Community Services brought together over 250 participants for its 41st annual Valley Friendship Tour fundraiser. The community event, for all ages and abilities, was held on June 6 in Whitinsville to support Open Sky's programs throughout Central Massachusetts.

Lorie Martiska (right), Open Sky Executive Vice President and Chief Advancement Officer, poses with Teresa Pitaro, the 2026 Valley Friendship Tour top fundraiser. Pitaro, of Norwood, has been the top fundraiser for five years in a row and she raised nearly $7,000 for this year's community events.

WORCESTER — The 41st annual Valley Friendship Tour drew more than 250 participants who walked, ran, and rolled through the Blackstone Valley on June 6 and raised nearly $110,000 to benefit Open Sky Community Services, a nonprofit behavioral health and human services organization.

The Valley Friendship Tour, which starts and ends at Alternatives' Whitin Mill, is Open Sky's signature fundraising event for the agency's nearly 150 programs serving children, adults, and families with mental health challenges, intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, brain injury, homelessness and other complex challenges. Since it began just over four decades ago, the tour has raised millions in support of individuals and families in Central Massachusetts.

"The Valley Friendship Tour is a visual representation of Open Sky's mission – individuals of all abilities coming together in the community with purpose," said Ken Bates, President & CEO of Open Sky Community Services. "We are grateful to this community that has been created over the past four decades and for its unwavering support of our neighbors throughout Central Massachusetts facing complex challenges. Thank you to our participants, attendees, sponsors, and staff for making this year's Tour another one to remember."

Teresa Pitaro, a resident of Norwood who has a family member served by Open Sky, was the top fundraiser for the fifth year in a row. She raised nearly $7,000 for the 2026 Valley Friendship Tour.

The individual and team participants of all ages and abilities had the option of a 1-mile walk, 5K run or walk, or a 30-mile bike ride through the Blackstone Valley. The all-day event featured lunch, live music, raffles, and entertainment on the Dennis H. Rice Community Plaza at Alternatives' Whitin Mill.

About Open Sky Community Services

Open Sky Community Services is a 501(c)3 nonprofit agency based in Worcester that has been helping individuals in our community achieve more than they imagined possible for over 50 years. The agency provides a wide range of services throughout Central Massachusetts for children, adults and families with mental health challenges, intellectual and developmental disabilities, substance use disorders, brain injury, homelessness, and other complex challenges. Open Sky Community Services has over 1,300 dedicated employees and nearly 150 programs throughout the region, supporting more than 8,000 individuals annually. Open Sky is committed to equity and belonging, and promotes a trauma-informed, whole-person care culture. For more information, please visit www.openskycs.org.

Ryan Rushford joins Weichert, Realtors® - Hope & Associates

WORCESTER — Weichert, Realtors® - Hope & Associates is proud to announce Ryan Rushford has joined their Worcester office. Rushford joins a dedicated team of knowledgeable agents at Weichert, Realtors® - Hope & Associates, who bring many years of combined real estate expertise to their clients.

Weichert, Realtors® - Hope & Associates, located at 470 Park Ave., is an independently owned and operated affiliate of Weichert Real Estate Affiliates, Inc. For more information, please contact Julia Acquaah-Harrison at (508) 795-3885 or jharrison@hope-homes.com.

About Weichert Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.

Weichert Real Estate Affiliates, Inc. is a top real estate franchisor established in 2001 by Jim Weichert, president, chairman and CEO of Weichert Companies, which has been in operation since 1969. The company provides a clearly defined business model for operating, managing, and marketing a real estate brokerage, along with industry-leading technology, marketing tools, and support. Its first affiliate opened in 2002, and the franchise network has since grown to over 330 offices, serving markets in over 40 states. The company has appeared on the Entrepreneur Franchise 500 list as a top residential real estate franchise and been identified by Franchise Business Review as a top franchise for owner satisfaction 11 years in a row. For more information about Weichert, visit Weichert.com. For more information about franchise opportunities, visit WeichertFranchise.com.

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CHIEF

continued from page A1

2024 by Chief John Furno.

Douglas Town Administrator Matt Wojcik noted, "Kelly is highly qualified to serve as Chief. In addition to her experience, she has a master's degree in public administration, numerous certifications including hazardous materials response, SCUBA, fire training and instruction, fire prevention, and emergency management, and she is a registered nurse. She has had the last three years to work with retiring Chief Furno, whose more than 40 years of public service and experience as a manager provided a perfect example of leadership from which to draw."

Furno noted, "In her role as Deputy Chief, Kelly has been a tireless advocate for health and safety, professional development, and operational readiness. She embodies the definition of public service—selfless, dedicated, and deeply committed to helping others. This is truly the best job in the world and I will miss working full-time with a team who will overcome any obstacle to fulfill their calling."

Manning commented, "It is both an honor and a privilege to serve alongside and support the dedicated men and women who provide fire, EMS, and all-hazards response to the Town of Douglas as your Fire Chief. I look forward to continuing to build strong community partnerships, embracing innovation, and ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of our personnel as we move into the future."

CARS

continued from page A1

of the event. Additionally, we are now welcoming applications from exhibit and food vendors looking to be part of this exciting event.

Funds raised during Cars In The Park will directly support the Whitin Community Center's mission as a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to enhancing the health, well-being, and community spirit of the Blackstone Valley. For a century, the WCC has been a cornerstone of the community, offering a diverse range of social, recreational, educational, and outreach programs.

We are also calling on community members to join us as volunteers for this summer event. Volunteers will not only enjoy complimentary refreshments and a free t-shirt, but also the satisfaction of contributing to their community. Opportunities include coordination, ballot input, event setup and teardown, fee collection, flyer distribution, overseeing children's activities, and more.

For more information on vehicle and vendor registration, volunteering, or any other inquiries, please visit our website at www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com or contact Tammy Bodwell, Director of Operations, at Tammy.Bodwell@OurGym.org or call 508-234-8184, ext. 118.

Join us at the 12th Annual Cars In The Park for a day of automotive admiration, community engagement, and family fun. Let's drive into a new decade of this cherished event together!

The Whitin Community Center is committed to enhancing the health and well-being of individuals and families and building a strong community in the Blackstone Valley. We offer social, recreational, educational, and outreach programs that bring community members of all ages and backgrounds together. The Whitin Community Center is the Blackstone Valley's most complete family and recreation center with two swimming pools, a gym, fitness center, early learning programs, summer camps and a seven and a half acre park. For more information call 508-234-8184 or visit www.WhitinCommunityCenter.com.

UXBRIDGE

continued from page A1

ment to this district and this community, and it's hard to overstate the impact she's had on the smooth functioning of this office across so many years and so many leaders.

Emerick will remain with the district through the summer to support the transition of Valerie Nowlan into the Executive Administrative Assistant role before her retirement takes effect in October.

The Uxbridge Public Schools community thanks her for her nearly three decades of dedicated service and wishes her a well-deserved retirement.

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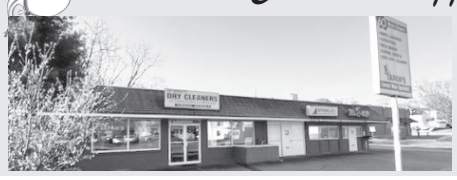

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Dudley - 3 Marshall Terrace

A Contractor's Opportunity! 8,000 SF (80'x100') level lot, great location, est. neighborhood, key resources > town water & sewer & natural gas in street. By appointment only!
MLS No. 73544127 $155,000.

Webster- 18 DiDonato Ave

THIS IS THE ONE: AN AFFORDABLE-ONE-LEVEL-MOVE-IN-READY-RANCH! Offers 980 SF+, 2 BRs, 1 Bath & partially finished walk-out LL Family Room. Situated on a 7,104 sf level lot w/80' road frontage, a fenced backyard, & 2 CAR GARAGE! Conveniently located in East Village. First Time Offered!
MLS #73534105 $333,000

Featured New Listing!
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Experience ultra-luxury lakefront living on prestigious Webster Lake. This masterfully designed, brand-new construction masterpiece spans 2,556 square feet of sophisticated, two-story living space optimized for panoramic Western water views and direct lake access. The upper level features a magnificent primary bedroom suite, anchoring an exquisite year-round sunroom that flows seamlessly onto an expansive open deck. Designed for seamless entertaining, the lower level serves as a private guest floor, complete with a full second kitchen, additional bedroom, and premium finishes throughout. From morning coffee to sunset gatherings, you'll enjoy every minute while overlooking the water from the lakeside deck, gorgeous covered patio, open 2nd story deck/sunroom. Every detail of this high-end estate redefines waterfront elegance.
MLS#73542689 $1,550,000.

Webster ~ 33 Slater Street

Sprawling fieldstone faced Ranch! Located on a +/- 0.5-acre, 2 car garage. Offers: 1,860 sf main level plus 1,000 sf +/- finished lower level, 3 BRs, 2-1/2 Baths, 2 stone fireplacesFHW BB heat. Open floor plan kitchen, living rm, dining rm, breezeway w/sliders to rear deck, and 3 season sunroom MLS # 73500183 NEW PRICE $479,900

Webster - 24 Cooper Rd
New Construction-Craftsman Style home

Tucked away on Cooper Rd. Webster Lake with access at Lakeside beach/boat ramp. 3rd of 4 homes being built at this site. Offers 2,155 sq. ft +/- of living area, 7 rms, 4 brs, 3 ½ baths, 9ft ceiling, wood flooring throughout with ceramic tyle baths. Spacious main BR Suite w/ walk-in closet, and private full bathr, double sink vanity, finished lower level walk-out w/ slider. Central AC, garage
MLS # 73534271 $679,900

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QCC professor gives voice to formerly incarcerated in new documentary

Kristy Glover

WORCESTER — What is it like to get out of prison and start over? QCC Professor of Criminal Justice Kristy Glover spent her sabbatical researching this question and creating "Voices of Justice," a documentary film that she produced, filmed and edited herself.

"Voice of Justice" features accounts from three men who have firsthand experience with the justice system. The documentary highlights how multiple support systems are critical for re-entry, the period of time when individuals are transitioning out of incarceration. Support from family members, community organizations and probation officers, along with raising awareness to reduce stigma, were all mentioned as ways to reduce recidivism and influence personal and professional growth.

"There are so many things that we expect of individuals when they're just getting released. They have to get a job, pay their monthly supervision fees and find a place to live," Glover said.

Glover witnessed the re-entry process during her time as a parole officer for the state of Georgia, but the connection is also personal. Her grandfather encountered challenges when he was released from prison, which left a lasting impression on the family, including Glover's mother, who also joined law enforcement, eventually becoming a police captain.

In the documentary, Glover interviews Mario Rivera, who spoke about his own re-entry experience. Rivera praised Worcester-area nonprofits such as Legendary Legacies and Open Sky Community Services for providing services such as counseling and assistance with obtaining a laptop and hygiene products. He also acknowledged his family as a large source of support.

"Without initial help in the first 60 days of me coming home, my progress wouldn't have taken off the way it did," Rivera said.

Rivera didn't wait until he was released to start preparing. He completed QCC's culinary re-entry program, a partnership with the Worcester County Jail and House of Correction that teaches skills needed to work in food service and includes multiple certifications upon successful completion. In "Voices of Justice," Rivera shared that during the program, he realized education was a vital part of his path to a new future. After his release, he enrolled at QCC and in the Liberal Arts for Returning Citizens (LARC)program at Clark University.

"The culinary program has had a significant impact on hundreds of incarcerated individuals," said Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis. "We are proud to have helped Mario build a successful path forward after incarceration."

Anthony Bryant, who also appeared in "Voices of Justice," has seen multiple sides of the criminal justice system. Before he was incarcerated, he held roles as a corrections officer, a deputy sheriff and a highway patrolman.

"Law enforcement is not just a job; it's your identity. And losing that role can produce deep internal shame," Bryant shared.

Bryant, however, drew on his law enforcement training to stay calm and focused during his incarceration, using that discipline as a foundation for working to improve his life. As his release date approached, he didn't receive any re-entry preparation from the prison, so he got ready by reading self-help books and journaling.

After his sentence, Bryant relied on employment assistance programs, but he was often steered into manual labor positions that didn't reflect his skills, making it difficult to rebuild his professional career.

In addition to family and community programs, both Bryant and Rivera said that a strong relationship with a probation or parole officer can make a positive difference. They noted that the stigma of having a criminal record can be detrimental to progress, but even one person who sees past their mistakes can be instrumental. They hope others can offer the same grace to those who are going through re-entry.

"People change when their dignity is restored, responsibility is entrusted gradually and their story is allowed to mean something more than their worst decision," Bryant remarked. "It's a mindset shift that many people and legislators don't understand."

Rivera and Bryant have also taken it upon themselves to help others with similar experiences. Bryant has become an ethics trainer for law enforcement and other public service organizations. Rivera has stayed connected with Legendary Legacies to educate others and advocate for those in the re-entry process.

"I'm taking accountability in my own life for the things that I've done," Rivera said. "Some people might not be receptive to my situation, but I take it as motivation to do better."

"Voices of Justice" can be viewed at youtube.com/watch?v=odTT0Stx3Tg.

Saint Joseph School celebrates Kindergarten Class of 2026

Courtesy

The Saint Joseph School Kindergarten Class of 2026 proudly displays their graduation certificates following their ceremony on Wednesday, June 10, in the Richard A. Nowak Gymnasium.

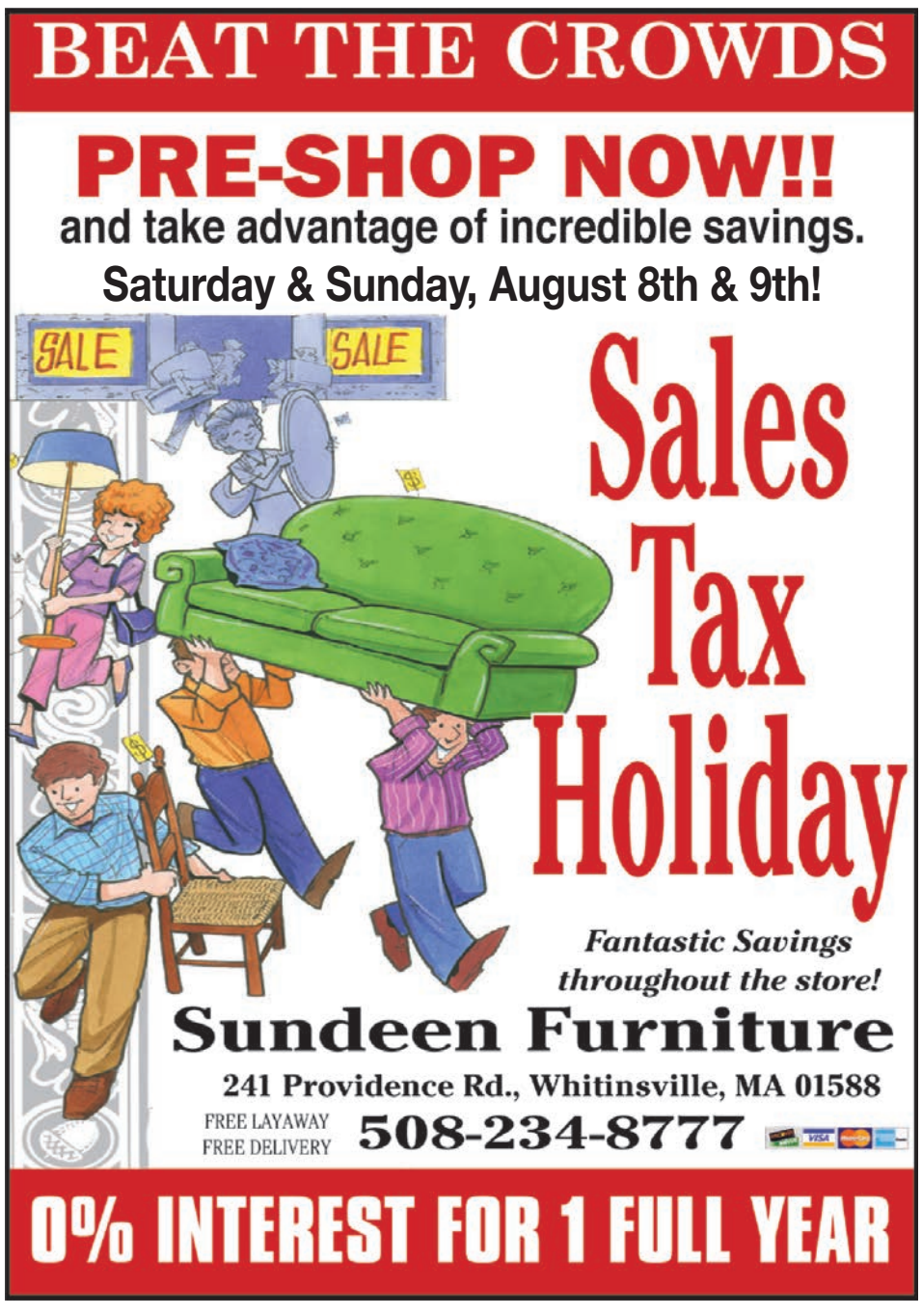
WEBSTER — On Wednesday, June 10, Saint Joseph School Kindergarten students and their families gathered in the Richard A. Nowak Gymnasium to celebrate an exciting milestone as the students participated in their Kindergarten Graduation Ceremony. Dressed proudly in traditional Saint Joseph School red and white caps and gowns, the students processed into the gymnasium as family members, faculty, and friends looked on with pride.

The ceremony began with welcome remarks from Kindergarten Instructor, Mrs. Alicia Maurer, followed by the students leading the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance, The Our Father, and The Hail Mary. The graduates then showcased their talents through musical performances of "One Small Voice," "Hosanna!," and "Kindergarten Graduation," inspired by songs from the beloved musical Grease.

One of the highlights of the morning was the students sharing what they hope to become when they grow up. Their dreams reflected both creativity and ambition, with students sharing aspirations of becoming teachers, singers, a nurse, police officer, astronaut, soccer player, veterinarian, zoologist, artist, baker, banker, builder, construction worker, gymnastics coach, ballerina teacher, dog sitter, reading teacher, and even a Savannah Bananas baseball player. The wide variety of responses brought smiles to the audience and served as a reminder of the limitless potential within this special group of students.

The ceremony concluded with the presentation of graduation certificates by Principal Beth Boudreau, followed by a special slideshow celebrating memorable moments from the school year and the many accomplishments of the Kindergarten Class of 2026.

This year, 23 students proudly advanced to First Grade: Joel Anobah, Gloria Basha, Wesley Goulet, Maeve Haynes, Anna Berry, Zuzanna Bialik, Faustyna Kicilinski, Giovanni Laramee, Alex Chruslicki, Emy Corbin, Lillith Marchand, Elliette Nowicki, Sadie Dejordy, Milena Deptula, Eve Pytko, Sonny Saad, Marcus DiTullio-Cedeno, Sophia Dowd, Robert Thrun, Brody Walker, Charles Dziedzic, Aceson Wright, and Emilia Dziobak.

Saint Joseph School Kindergarten students are taught by Mrs. Alicia Maurer, with the support of Mrs. Sandra Gibson, whose dedication, encouragement, and care helped prepare these young learners for a successful transition into First Grade.

Congratulations to the Saint Joseph School Kindergarten Class of 2026. We wish each of these students continued success as they begin the next chapter of their educational journey!