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Free by request to residents of
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SEND YOUR NEWS AND PICS TO NEWS@STONEBRIDGEPRESS.NEWS
Friday, July 31, 2026




Former Douglas Fire Chief John Furno (pictured at left) was sent off with an overwhelming display of gratitude from the community on the occasion of his retirement at the end of June after more than 40 years of service. Kelly Manning (right), who has served as Deputy Chief since 2024, succeeded Furno as the town's first female Fire Chief. Photos courtesy of the department's Facebook page.

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 his-

Turn To HISTORY page A8

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@waters-farm.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

Turn To EVENTS page A8

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

Turn To PROGRAMS page A8

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,

Turn To BOOK page A8



Congratulations to all of the Uxbridge Police Department's Youth Academy graduates. This annual program is run as a collaborative between Uxbridge and Northbridge Police Departments. Special thank you to Off DeJordy and Officer Deveau for their dedication! Photo courtesy of the department's Facebook page.

Courtesy

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



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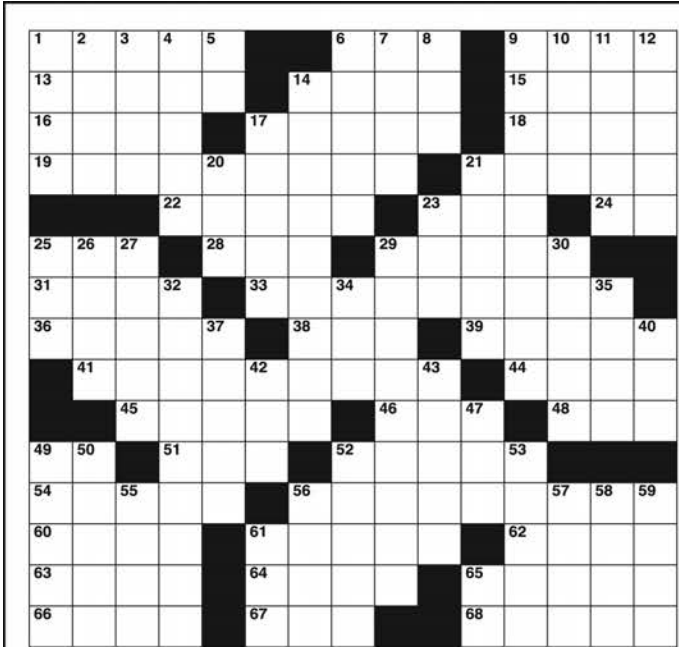
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all materials, website and social media. The Gold Tee-Shirt Sponsor of \$2,000 will provide your company name on all golf shirts, the sponsorship display board, and recognition on the website and social media. The Silver Golf Ball Sponsor for \$1,500 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.

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.



- CLUES ACROSS**

 - Bleated
 - Snakelike fish
 - Database management system
 - Social evolution anthropologist Service
 - American rocker Grohl
 - Greek personification of compassion
 - Negatives
 - Rescued
 - Self-immolation by fire ritual
 - Assigns tasks
 - Popular type of cigar
 - Discounts
 - The whole quantity
 - New York Giants legend
 - Indicates before
 - Lentils
 - Extremely angry
 - Body part
 - “North Star State”
 - David __, US playwright
 - Lower and raise one’s head
 - Private rendezvous
 - In a way, improved
 - A place to play
 - Astronomical period of 18 years
 - Automobile
 - Something you can take
 - A radio band
 - Jaws of a voracious animal
 - Short-billed rails
 - Chinese province
 - Shameless
 - Horizontal passage from the surface into a mine
 - Indian respectful titles
 - Fail to entertain
 - Dried-up
 - Central Utah city
 - Southern U.S.
 - German river
 - Necessary for breathing
 - Put into play
- CLUES DOWN**

 - Curved segment
 - Wings
 - Yellowish volatile liquid
 - Makes less severe
 - Debit note
 - Overhang
 - The nights before
 - Type of light
 - Lacking enthusiasm
 - Tattle
 - Some is “heavy”
 - One who is canonized
 - Indicates date and place of writing
 - “Peace” in Arabic
 - “Olaf” actor Josh
 - Fragmented rock
 - They __
 - Advanced degree
 - Backside
 - Influential architect and design couple
 - An act of undue intimacy
 - Words from which later words are derived
 - 10 meters
 - Neither
 - Fungal sacs
 - The law of God revealed to Moses
 - A woolen cap of Scottish origin
 - A promise
 - Challenges
 - British Air Aces
 - Large bank
 - Served as an omen
 - Cavalry sword
 - Vaccine developer
 - Belgian WW2 resistance leader Jules
 - Italian Seaport
 - Hip joint
 - __ Clapton, musician
 - Insect repellent
 - Constrictor snake
 - “The First State” (abbr.)

PUZZLE SOLUTION

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UMass Amherst announces Spring graduates

A M H E R S T — Approximately 7,000 students received bachelor’s degrees in over 100 majors at the University of Massachusetts Amherst’s Undergraduate Commencement on May 15, 2026 at the McGuirk Alumni Stadium.

Below is a list of students from your area that received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Massachusetts Amherst:

Blackstone
Jazlynn Bailey

Grace Margaret Buehler
Megan Beth Hebert
Rachel Michelle Morrisson

Douglas
John Dariotis
Kyle Shawn Gaskill
Sean Kevin Pellerin

Northbridge
Aiden Chase
Uxbridge
Riley Holt
Whitinsville
David Fernando Castellon
Maeve Olivia Kelly
Patrick Spain

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TRIBUNE
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REAL ESTATE

BLACKSTONE
None
DOUGLAS
\$815,000, 76 Old Farm Rd, Hadley, Matthew J, and Hadley, Melissa A, to Lynch, Meghan P, and Lynch Jr, Gregory P.
\$695,000, 5 Spring St, Canter, Benjamin, and Tivnan, Tara, to Gonsalves 2nd, Henry.
\$549,900, 117 South St, Sullivan, Courtney, and Sullivan, Paul E, to Rivera Jr, Peter, and Rivera, Joseph.
\$534,900, 60 Compass Point Dr #29, Thompson, Kathleen, to Marrocco, Kyle.
\$521,000, 238 South St, Garland, Scott D, and Garland, Wendy L, to Willsey, Samuel J, and Williams, Camille.
\$440,000, 60 Shore Rd, Beaudreault, Michael J, and Beaudreault, Nancy A, to Ferrante, John, and Ferrante, Laura.

NORTHBRIDGE
\$975,000, 204 Monica Way, D & F Afonso Builders Inc, and Afonso, Domingos, to Warner, Kathryn, and Warner, Jay Dustin.
\$619,900, 48 Crestwood Cir #48, Rogers Ft, and Sheehan, Elisa R, to Hebert, Susan R.
\$450,000, 48 Sullivan Dr, Dobelbower, Ashley L, and Dobelbower, Jake, to Hubert, Michael, and Barbieri, Juliet.
\$405,000, 235 Union St, Leshinski, Ryan, and Leshinski, Kerri, to Legassey, Jared, and Moore, Jared.
\$45,000, 21 Granite St, Baby Toot LLC, and Pagano, Brenda, to Coopertown Rt, and Vecchione, Gary V. Ware
\$39,900, Crescent St, Moutnain Stream LLC, to Kennedy, Neal.

Local residents to participate in Pan-Mass Challenge to support cancer research

NEEDHAM — This Aug. 1 and 2, the Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC) will bring together more than 6,000 cyclists and 4,000 volunteers on Aug. 1 & 2 to raise money for cancer research and patient care at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Participants from local communities will be among those helping support the PMC’s mission to fund lifesaving cancer research and treatment.

Local participants include:
Joseph Grant of Whitinsville
Anas Abdulwahab of Whitinsville
Cathy Grant of Whitinsville
Mike Tonry of Whitinsville
Kelly Rush of Whitinsville
Samantha Suss of Whitinsville
Meredith Rush of Whitinsville
Leo Sullivan of Uxbridge
Tim Orr of Uxbridge
Jeffrey Smith of Uxbridge
Leah Martel of Uxbridge
Brian Pidgeon of Uxbridge
Sally Selvidge of Uxbridge
Isaac Curley of Uxbridge
Robert Mahoney of Uxbridge
Cheryl Vasquez of Uxbridge
Karen Curley of Uxbridge
Molly Curley of Uxbridge
Susan Corman of Northbridge
Samuel Corman of Northbridge
Benjamin Corman of Northbridge
Charles Watler of Northbridge
Karen Plantinga of Northbridge
Dan Stomski of Northbridge
Alice Corman of Northbridge
Teresa Byrne of Northbridge
Paul Byrne of Northbridge
Rachel Trosclair of Northbridge
Deanna Pavone of Northbridge
Mia Hupprich of Douglas
Randy Smith of Douglas
Lisa Parella of Douglas
Peyton Manyak of Douglas
Joshua Aguiar of Douglas
Joe Gibree of Douglas
Chris Aguiar of Douglas
Lori-Ann Hippert of Douglas

Kelli Tower of Douglas
Bruce Thomas of East Douglas
The PMC, which raises more money for charity than any other single athletic fundraiser in the world, is aiming to raise more than ever this year, with a fundraising goal of \$79 million.

This year’s PMC comes at an especially critical time, with federal research support shrinking, grant approval rates reaching historic lows, and cancer cases continuing to rise. For the 20th consecutive year, 100 percent of every rider-raised dollar will go directly to Dana-Farber, one of the nation’s top three hospitals for cancer research and care.

“The theme for this year’s PMC, which is ‘now, more than ever,’ underscores the paramount importance of every single dollar raised in fueling the search for a cure,” said Billy Starr, founder and chairman of the PMC. “We are endlessly grateful to every rider, volunteer, donor, and sponsor who makes the PMC possible. Because of their training miles, long hours of volunteering, generous support, and unwavering commitment, we are moving ever closer to a world without cancer.”

Since its inception in 1980, the PMC has raised \$1.125 billion for Dana-Farber, making it the organization’s largest single contributor and accounting for 67 percent of the annual revenue of The Jimmy Fund, Dana-Farber’s community-driven fundraising arm. This unrestricted annual funding has empowered and accelerated advancements in cancer research, deeply benefiting patients across the world.

During each annual PMC weekend, thousands of cyclists and volunteers come together from across the world, hailing from 47 US states and 12 coun-

tries, with a shared purpose of raising as much money as possible for Dana-Farber. Cyclists ride routes ranging from 25 to 177 miles. Included among these participants is the PMC Living Proof community, riders and volunteers who were previously treated or are currently undergoing cancer treatment and serve as Living Proof of the progress made through raising funds for cancer research and treatment.

There is still time to participate in this year’s Pan-Mass Challenge. Folks interested in getting involved can learn more and register at PMC.org.

About the Pan-Mass Challenge
The Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC) is a bike-a-thon that today raises more money for charity than any other single athletic fundraising event in the world. Founded in 1980 by Billy Starr - who remains the event’s founder & chairman, an annual cyclist, and a fundraiser - the PMC has raised \$1.125 billion for Dana-Farber Cancer Institute through the Jimmy Fund. As Dana-Farber’s single largest contributor, the organization generates 67 percent of the Jimmy Fund’s annual revenue. 100 percent of every rider-raised dollar goes directly to fueling cancer research and treatment at Dana-Farber. In addition to its two-day bike-a-thon across Massachusetts, the PMC is powered by further “spokes in the wheel,” with initiatives including the PMC Winter Cycle, an indoor spin event; PMC Unpaved, a gravel bike ride; and PMC Kids Rides, mini bike-athons for children ages 2 to 15. The PMC attracts riders and volunteers from 47 states and 12 countries and over 300,000 individual donors. Across events, the PMC has successfully melded

support from committed cyclists, volunteers, corporate sponsors, and individual donors, all of whom are essential to the PMC’s goal and model: to attain maximum fundraising efficiency while increasing its annual gift.

The PMC’s aspiration is to provide Dana-Farber’s doctors and researchers with the necessary resources to discover cures for all cancers. For more information, visit www.pmc.org.

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PAW of the WEEK CHESTER

5 YR./53 LB./MALE/RETRIEVER/CATTLE DOG MIX

Hi, I'm Chester — I'm the kind of guy who will happily toss a toy around one minute and then roll over for belly rubs the next. I love my people deeply and bond closely with "my" humans. Once you're in my circle, you're in for life. I'm happiest when I'm playing, relaxing near you, or soaking up affection. I have a big heart, a playful streak, and a soft side that just wants to feel safe and loved.

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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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 peo-

ple 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.

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Friday's Child



K'Lonie
Age 16

Registration # 5794

joy to be around.

<https://www.mareinc.org/child/22543875088>

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.





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EDITORIAL

Teaching compassion before judgment

There are some lessons children never truly outgrow. Learning to read. Learning to share. Learning to say “thank you.” And perhaps the most important lesson of all: learning to see another person’s humanity before judging their circumstances.

That is the message behind “*Hope the Bear Finds Kindness*,” a new children’s book by Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter Founder and CEO Leslie Reichert. While the story follows a bear who unexpectedly loses her home, its message extends far beyond its pages. It reminds readers, young and old alike, that kindness costs very little, yet can change someone’s life.

Homelessness is often discussed through statistics. We hear about housing shortages, rising rents, emergency shelter capacity and economic pressures. Those numbers are important because they help communities understand the scope of the challenge.

But numbers alone cannot explain what it feels like to lose the place you call home.

Children notice far more than adults sometimes realize. They may see someone sleeping on a bench, asking for help outside a store or carrying everything they own in a backpack. Naturally, they ask questions. Those moments present an opportunity.

Parents and teachers can choose to avoid uncomfortable conversations, or they can use them to teach empathy. They can explain that difficult circumstances can happen to many different people and that every individual deserves dignity and respect, regardless of where they sleep at night. That lesson matters because today’s children will become tomorrow’s employers, educators, elected officials and neighbors. If they grow up understanding that people experiencing homelessness are not defined by their circumstances, they will help build communities that seek solutions rather than stereotypes.

The Blackstone Valley has long demonstrated that spirit. Faith communities, civic organizations, volunteers, first responders and nonprofits have consistently stepped forward to support neighbors during times of crisis. Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter itself is built upon that belief that local communities can accomplish remarkable things when they work together.

A children’s book may seem like a small contribution compared to providing emergency shelter or housing assistance. In reality, it complements those efforts in an important way.

Addressing homelessness requires more than buildings and funding. It also requires understanding. Compassion encourages volunteerism. Understanding inspires generosity. Empathy creates communities where people are willing to support practical solutions instead of turning away. That is why stories remain so powerful.

Long before children can fully understand public policy or economic challenges, they understand friendship. They understand fairness. They understand helping someone who has fallen down. Stories introduce these values in ways that facts alone cannot.

Adults could benefit from the reminder as well. It is easy to become overwhelmed by the complex problems facing our communities. Housing affordability, mental health challenges and substance abuse are difficult issues without simple answers. Yet amid those discussions, we should never lose sight of the individuals at the center of them.

Every person has a story. Sometimes, the most meaningful first step toward solving a problem is simply recognizing the humanity of the person standing in front of us.

Communities are ultimately judged not by how they treat those who are comfortable, but by how they respond to neighbors facing hardship. The Blackstone Valley has repeatedly shown that compassion remains one of its greatest strengths.

If a simple story about a bear helps even one child grow into an adult who chooses kindness over judgment, then its impact will extend far beyond the final page. In a world where empathy can sometimes feel in short supply, that is a lesson worth sharing.

OPINION

Opinion and commentary from the Blackstone Valley and beyond

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

They think we’re stupid!

To the Editor:
Listening to erstwhile candidate for Governor, Mike Minogue, I realized that Republicans still think we are all stupid... in fact they count on it as fundamental to their electability. It has worked - most recently when we elected a convicted sexual abuser, failed businessman, soon to be exposed pedophile, tax and spouse cheating, charity fraud, pathological lying draft dodger to the White House... so why not!

In his opening campaign ad, Mike promised “On Day 1...” - where have we heard that before? - he’s going to fix the housing problem! How Mike? Tell us how you are going to work this magic? And when you can’t/don’t fix anything, how do we hold you accountable? Then, there was the ad where a woman said her husband’s life was saved by a medical device that the ad implied had been developed by Minogue. Turns out his company bought the company that developed the device, so Minogue had nothing to do with developing or making the device available. But it was a nice, if deceptive story. Next came the so-called Democrat who was going to vote for Minogue because he was ‘a family man’. If she was willing to give public testament, why not provide her full name? How are we to validate her claims of being a Democrat? Should an anonymous reference even matter in making our choice? How do we determine that she possesses the character judgment worth listening to? Do we ask ourselves these questions? (This applies to all political candidates.) In his

latest ad, Mike is now a ‘healthcare leader’! A bold, unsubstantiated statement on par with Republican House leader Mike Johnson stating that “Republicans are the party of healthcare!” This after having just dismantled the Affordable Care Act, and eliminating health care insurance for millions. And 10 years later, we’re still waiting for their vaunted ‘best-ever, super-duper, I can’t believe it’s not butter’ health care plan.

Maybe you’ve noticed that Minogue never mentions that he is a Republican running for the office of Governor. Why not, Mike? Is there something toxic about being a Republican - throwing millions off healthcare and food assistance, starting illegal wars, dismantling every government agency that supports we-the-people, demeaning women, and pardoning insurrectionists and any fraudster willing to ‘donate’ a million dollars to Trump Inc.? All while rich donors and the Trump family become billionaires? Let’s see an ad about that! Are we still stupid enough to think that a businessman, no matter how successful in business, would make a good leader of a country, where ‘bottom-line profit’ – should never be a concern? Someone please show me where this has ever worked to our advantage? Do you hire a carpenter to do a root canal? After all, they have drills too. Yet, here we go again with the specious argument that we need a businessman for president. They know we are stupid.

RICK BEVILACQUA
WHITINSVILLE

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.

SIMON FAIRFIELD PUBLIC LIBRARY

Please note that some events do require registration. If you have any questions regarding any events, please do not hesitate to contact the library at (508) 476-2695 or email at us at douglas@cwmmars.org.

Address: 290 Main St., Douglas
Phone: 508-476-2695
Hours: Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Summer Reading Program
Wednesday, Aug. 5 at 1 p.m. - Science Heroes: Digging It
Wednesday, Aug. 12 at 1 p.m. - Robert Rivest Comic

Children’s Happenings
Monday, Aug. 3 & 10 at 10 a.m.
- Summer Storytime (Registration Required)
Thursday, Aug. 6 & 13 at 10 a.m.
- Summer Storytime (Registration Required)
Wednesday, Aug. 19 at 5:45 p.m.
- Reading to Bryce (Registration Required)

General Happenings
Tuesday, Aug. 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 4 p.m. - SFPL Game Night
Saturday, Aug. 15 - Picnic at the Park

Adult Book Clubs
Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 6:30 p.m. - Intrepid Readers, “The Secret Book of Flora Lea” by Patti Callahan Henry
Tuesday, Aug. 18 at 6:30 p.m. - SciFi Book Club, “What Move the Dead” by T. Kingfisher
Monday, Aug. 24 at 6:30 p.m. - Plot Twisters, “All the Little Raindrops” by Mia Sheridan

Adult Happenings
Monday, Aug. 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 at 6:30 p.m. - Writer’s Accountability Group
Wednesday, Aug. 12 & 26 at 5:45 p.m. - Fiber Arts Friends
Thursday, Aug. 13 at 6:30 p.m. - Summer Reading Finale
Saturday, Aug. 15 at 10:30 a.m. - SFPL Gardeners
Saturday, Aug. 29 at 9:30 a.m. - SFPL Sleuths

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When every errand took a little longer

LANTERNS
ALONG
MAIN
STREET
By CHARLES

I had three stops to make the other day. On paper, it should have taken about 30 minutes. Pick up one item, drop off another, grab a gallon of milk, and head home. An hour

and 15 minutes later, I finally pulled into the driveway.

The funny thing is, I wasn’t delayed by traffic. I was delayed by people.

At the hardware store, I bumped into a fellow I hadn’t seen since last fall. We spent a few minutes talking about the weather, which, in New England, is less a conversation starter than an ongoing community project. We compared notes on gardens, wondered whether we’d ever get enough rain, and somehow ended up discussing high school football schedules.

At the post office, another familiar face asked how my wife was doing. Before I could answer, someone else joined the conversation because they had overheard the question and knew exactly who we were talking about.

By the time I reached the grocery store, I had already had three conversations and learned about a church supper, a grandson’s first job, and a neighbor’s new puppy. None of it had anything to do with why I left the house.

It reminded me that errands used to be more than chores. They were social occasions.

You never knew who you’d run into, and that was part of the experience. If someone spotted your car in a parking lot, there was a decent chance you’d meet them inside before you made it to the checkout.

Nowadays, efficiency seems to be the goal. Order online. Pick up curbside. Self-checkout. Tap your card. Head home.

There’s nothing wrong with any of that. Sometimes convenience is exactly what we need.

But convenience has quietly eliminated some of the unexpected moments that make living in a small town feel different from living anywhere else.

Those chance encounters don’t accomplish much in the traditional sense. They don’t shorten your to-do list or make you more productive. What they do is remind you that you’re part of a community. You hear that someone’s daughter earned a scholarship. You learn that a longtime business owner is finally taking a vacation. You find out a neighbor had surgery and could use someone to mow the lawn next week. None of those updates arrive through an app. They travel the old-fashioned way—one conversation at a time.

I suppose that’s why I’ve never been too bothered when an errand takes longer than expected. If I leave the house with a list of five things to do and come home having completed all five, that’s a successful trip. If I also come home knowing a little more about the people who share this corner of Massachusetts with me, that’s an even better one.

The older I get, the more I appreciate those unscheduled conversations. They can’t be penciled into a calendar or squeezed between appointments. They simply happen when neighbors cross paths. And maybe that’s why they’re worth protecting. Because someday we’ll all finish our errands. What we’ll remember are the people we met along the way.

Blackstone Public Library announces August schedule of events

BLACKSTONE — Library Director Lisa Cheever and the Blackstone Public Library Board of Trustees are proud to present an August schedule packed with summer events and activities.

The library invites the community to escape the summer heat and enjoy this month’s lineup of crafts, book clubs, story times and more.

The Blackstone Public Library is located at 86 Main St.

Children’s Programs

Annual Touch-the-Trucks Event
Truck lovers of all ages are invited to visit the library and explore their favorite construction vehicles, fire trucks, school buses, farm equipment and more. All vehicles will be accompanied by an attendant.

- **WHEN:** 10 a.m. to noon, Friday, Aug. 7
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library parking lot
- **MORE INFO:** Attendees must seek off-site parking, as the event will be held in the library’s parking lot. Registration is not required.

Children’s Fall Story Times
The library is pleased to offer two, six-week story time sessions this fall. In addition to the Story Time and Craft Classes and Toddler Story Times, patrons are invited to attend Drop-In Story Time on Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Story Time and Craft Classes
Beginning in September, the library will offer a “Story Time and Craft Classes” for preschoolers and kindergarteners ages three to five. Each class includes two stories and a simple craft.

- **WHEN:** 11 a.m. on Mondays beginning Sep. 14, and 1 p.m. on Thursdays beginning Sept. 17
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Registration begins on Monday, Aug. 31, for Blackstone residents and Tuesday, Sept. 8, for all library patrons. Space is limited to 15 children. For more information or to register, call 508-883-1931 or email Tressy Collier at tcollier@cwmars.org. When emailing, please include your child’s full name, age and the caregiver’s email and phone number.

Toddler Story Time
Babies and toddlers from six months to three years old are welcome to participate in Toddler Story Time. Stop by the library to read board books, sing songs and fingerplays, play games and explore toys and books. This story time will last 45 minutes.

- **WHEN:** 10:15 a.m., Fridays, beginning Sept. 18
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Registration begins on Monday, Aug. 31, for Blackstone residents and Tuesday, Sept. 8 for all library patrons. Space is limited. For more information or to register, call

Local students named to Holy Cross’ Spring Dean’s List

WORCESTER — College of the Holy Cross congratulates the students named to the Spring 2026 Dean’s List for outstanding academic achievement during the spring semester of the 2025-26 academic year. The following local students made the list:

Christian Brown of Uxbridge, Class of 2028

Hannah Ostroff of Northbridge, Class of 2029

Daniel Wickstrom of Whitinsville, Class of 2026

To qualify for the Dean’s List, students must pass four or more letter-graded courses with no failing grades during the semester and earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

About Holy Cross
The [College of the Holy Cross](#), in Worcester is among the nation’s leading liberal arts institutions. A highly selective, four-year, exclusively undergraduate college of 3,200 students, Holy Cross is renowned for offering a rigorous, personalized education in the Jesuit, Catholic tradition. Since its founding in 1843, Holy Cross has made a positive impact in society by graduating students who distinguish themselves as thoughtful leaders in business, professional and civic life.

508-883-1931 or email Tressy Collier at tcollier@cwmars.org. When emailing, please include your child’s full name, age and the caregiver’s email and phone number.

Adult Programs

Library Craft at the Senior Center: Floating Candle Paper Straw Vases
Participants aged 60 and older are invited to participate in this month’s “Library Craft at the Senior Center,” where they will create their own decorative floating candle vase to bring home.

- **WHEN:** 12:30 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 4
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Senior Center, 15 St. Paul St.
- **MORE INFO:** Participants must be age 60 or older, or a member of the senior center. Call the library at 508-883-1931 to register.

Scrap It Up: Learn How to Preserve Family Memories
Scrap your other plans for the evening and join the Blackstone Scrapbooking Squad for a family history scrapbooking class on Thursday, Aug. 6. This is an opportunity to create beautiful scrapbooks, meant to preserve memories and family history. Guests at this Blackstone Public Library event are asked to bring at least four photographs each to use in the scrapbook, along with information about the subject. The rest of the supplies will be provided by library staff.

- **WHEN:** 5 to 8 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 6
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Registration is required. For more information or to sign up, please contact library staff member Jean Piechocki at jpiechocki@cwmars.org or call 508-883-1931. This event is funded by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

Music & More from Down Under & Beyond
This event takes the audience on a musical journey to Australia and other distant lands. This program is ideal for adult participants, but suitable for children with adult accompaniment.

- **WHEN:** 6:30 p.m., Aug. 17
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Registration is required. Visit the library’s events page on the website or call 508-883-1931 to learn more and register.

Give it Your Best Shot at the Photography Club
Join other photographers at the club’s monthly meeting and discuss various photography tips, tricks and ideas. Refreshments will be provided.

- **WHEN:** 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 18
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Registration is required. Call the Blackstone Public Library at 508-883-1931 for more information or to register. This club is funded by UniBank.

A Mermaid’s Clothesline: Senior Crafty Corner
This crafting event at the library is an opportunity to create your own under-the-sea themed piece of clothesline art. Seniors aged 60 or older are invited to join in on this month’s “Senior Crafty Corner.” All supplies will be provided at the event to help guests to build their own gnome to bring home.

- **WHEN:** 1 to 3 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 18
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Space is limited to 20 spots. Registration is required. Participants must be 60 years of age or older to register. Supplies will be provided. This event is funded by a donation from the Blackstone Public Library’s LIG MEG account as authorized by the Board of Library Trustees.

Fairy Tables: Adult Craft at the Library
This month’s “Adult Crafting with Jean” invites participants to make their own decorative fairy table for their home or yard. There will be two opportunities to join library staff member Jean Piechocki and create a summer craft. All supplies are provided and all skill levels are welcomed.

- **WHEN:** 1 and 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 20
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Registration is required. Space is limited to 20 spots for each of the two sessions. To sign up, contact the Blackstone Public Library at 508-883-1931. This event is funded by a donation from the Blackstone Public Library’s LIG MEG account as authorized by the Board of Library Trustees.

Puzzle Swap
Swap out your puzzles to enjoy ones that are “new to you” with the library’s puzzle swap. Bring adult puzzles into the library between Aug. 3 through 20 and receive a ticket for each puzzle provided. Return on Saturday, Aug. 22 to redeem your tickets for different puzzles.

- **WHEN:** 10 a.m. to noon, Saturday, Aug. 22
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Call 508-883-1931 for more information.

Blackstone Quilters Assemble at the Library
Patch it up with a group of like-minded crafters this August by joining the Quilting Club at the Blackstone Public Library. Come together for a relaxing and creative gathering with fellow quilters. Not a quilter? Become one. Learn some tips and tricks, while doing some quilting. Each meeting is an opportunity to learn, relax, share ideas, work on projects and enjoy each other’s company.

- **WHEN:** 1 to 4 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 27
- **WHERE:** Meeting Room, Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** This club is sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

Ongoing Book Groups:
Get Spooked With the Grim Reader’s Society, a Horror Book Club
The strange, scary and mysterious world of horror literature comes alive with the Grim Reader’s Society, also known as The Horror Book Club, at the Blackstone Public Library. This monthly book club focuses on spooky, spine-tingling tales. The Grim Reader’s Society welcomes newcomers, if they are brave enough. Scaredy cats are welcome, too. Copies of the book of the month are available at the front desk.

- **WHEN:** 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 6
- **WHERE:** Quiet Study #2, Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Contact Children’s Librarian Tressy Collier at tcollier@cwmars.org or call 508-883-1931.

The Blackstone Book Group
The Evening Book Group, also known as the Blackstone Book Group, offers participants the chance to discuss amazing works of literature with like-minded readers. Copies of this month’s book can be found at the circulation desk.

- **WHEN:** 6:30 to 8 p.m.,

Tuesday, Aug. 11

- **WHERE:** Quiet Study #2, Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Contact Renee Milliken at rmilliken@cwmars.org or call 508-883-1931.

Saddle Up With a Book at the Senior Center
The Senior Center Book Club meets on the third Tuesday morning of every month at the Senior Center on St. Paul Street. Monthly books are available at the library’s front desk or the Senior Center. New members are always welcome.

- **WHEN:** 11 a.m. to noon, Tuesday, Aug. 18
- **WHERE:** Blackstone Senior Center, 15 St. Paul St
- **MORE INFO:** Contact Ellen Goudreau at egoudreau@cwmars.org or call 508-883-1931.

Spend an Afternoon Recapping the Latest Book of the Month
The Afternoon Book Club meets on the last Tuesday of each month. Join the group for a lively chat and a cup of tea. Take a seat, relax and unwind during an afternoon of great conversation about the Afternoon Book Club’s latest book of the month. Newcomers are welcome. Copies of the book of the month are available at the front desk.

- **WHEN:** 3 to 4 p.m., Tuesday, Aug. 25
- **WHERE:** Quiet Study #1, Blackstone Public Library
- **MORE INFO:** Contact Donna Foster at dfoster@cwmars.org or call 508-883-1931.

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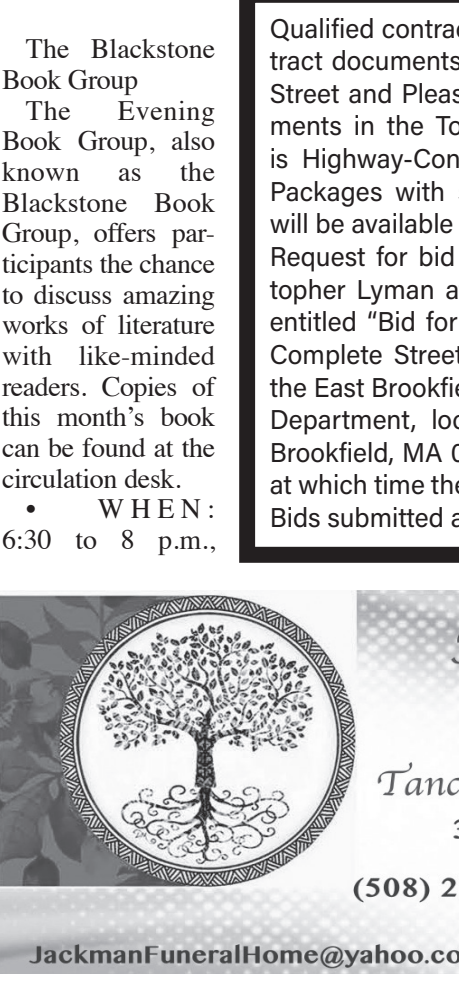
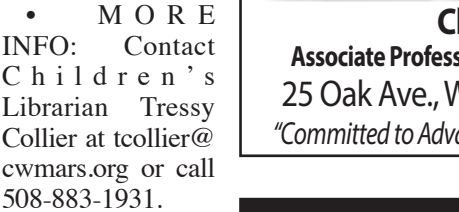
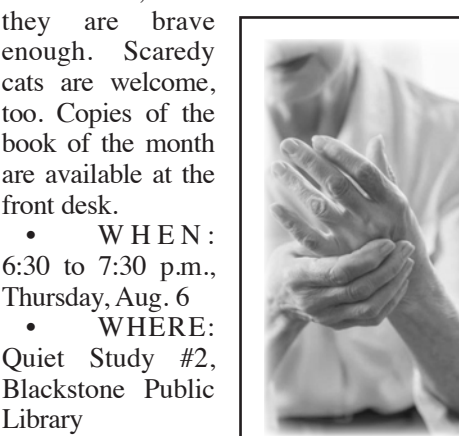
Qualified contractors are invited to bid on a set of contract documents for the construction of The Mechanic Street and Pleasant Street Complete Streets Improvements in the Town of East Brookfield. Class of work is Highway-Construction. Invitation for Bidders (IFB) Packages with specifications and a sample contract will be available on June 23, 2026. Request for bid documents can be emailed to Christopher Lyman at clyman@hshassoc.com. Sealed bids entitled “Bid for Mechanic Street and Pleasant Street Complete Streets Improvements” will be accepted at the East Brookfield Highway Department, located at 424 East Main Street, East Brookfield, MA 01515, until July 28, 2026, at 10:00 A.M., at which time the bids will be publicly opened and read. Bids submitted after this time will not be accepted.

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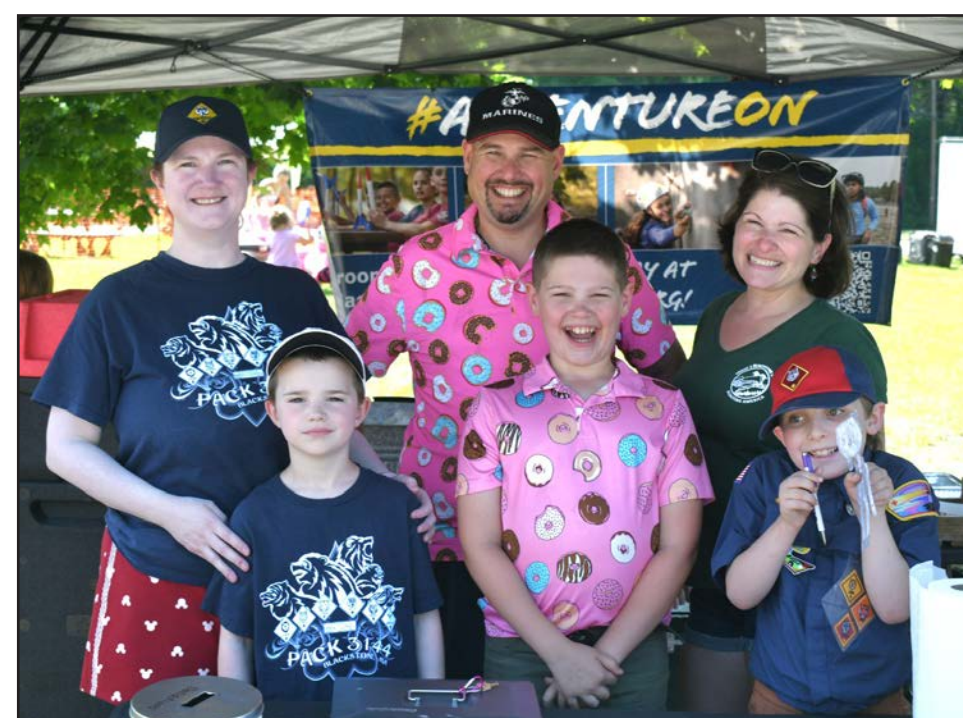
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A HISTORIC BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION





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HISTORY
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tory 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.

EVENTS
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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.

BOOK
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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.co/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.

PROGRAMS
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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.

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Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket NoWO26P2339EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
FORMAL ADJUDICATION
Estate Of:
Jay Easton St. John
Date of Death: 06/28/2026
To all interested persons:
A Petition for **Formal Adjudication of**
Intestacy and Appointment of Per-
sonal Representative has been filed
by **Collin E St. John** of Berkly MA re-
questing that the Court enter a formal
Decree and Order and for such other
relief as requested in the Petition.
The Petitioner requests that: .
Collin E St. John of Berkly MA be
appointed as Personal Representa-
tive(s) of said estate to serve **Without**
Surety on the estate in **unsupervised**
administration.
IMPORTANT NOTICE

You have the right to obtain a copy of
the Petition from the Petitioner or at the
Court. You have a right to object to
this proceeding. To do so, you or your
attorney must file a written appear-
ance and objection at this Court be-
fore: **10:00 a.m. on the return day of**
08/18/2026.
This is NOT a hearing date, but a dead-
line by which you must file a written ap-
pearance and objection if you object to
this proceeding. If you fail to file a time-
ly written appearance and objection
followed by an affidavit of objections
within thirty (30) days of the return day,
action may be taken without further no-
tice to you.
UNSUPERVISED ADMINISTRATION
UNDER THE MASSACHUSETTS
UNIFORM PROBATE CODE (MUPC)
A Personal Representative appointed
under the MUPC in an unsupervised
administration is not required to file an
inventory or annual accounts with the
Court. Persons interested in the estate
are entitled to notice regarding the ad-
ministration directly from the Personal
Representative and may petition the
Court in any matter relating to the es-

tate, including the distribution of assets
and expenses of administration.
WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey,
First Justice of this Court.
Date: July 20, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
July 31, 2026
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Worcester Probate
and Family Court
225 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608
(508) 831-2200
Docket No. WO24P2051EA
CITATION ON PETITION FOR
APPROVAL OF COMPROMISE
Estate of:
Grace Virginia Burns
Also known as: Grace V Burns
Date of Death: 08/31/2022
To all interested persons:
A Petition has been filed by: Jane E
Pawlowski of WebsterMA
requesting approval of compromise of
the Personal Representative to exe-

cute the agreement and administer the
estate in accordance with the agree-
ment..
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WITNESS, Hon. Kathryn M. Bailey,
First Justice of this Court.
Date: July 23, 2026
Stephanie Fattman,
Register of Probate
July 31, 2026

Major collaborative milestone marked at QCC Center Topping Off



Left to right: Deputy Commissioner Dr. Richard Riccardi of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education; QCC Trustee Dr. Barur Rajeshkumar; QCC Trustee Dr. Satya Mitra; Commissioner Adam Baacke of the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM); QCC Board Chair Dr. Linda Maykel; QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja; State Sen. Robyn Kennedy; State Rep. James O’Day; Assistant Secretary Robert LePage of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education; Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty; QCC Student Trustee Dawit Quilty and Craig Skurka, operations manager for Gilbane Building Company.

WORCESTER — Quinsigamond Community College celebrated a major construction milestone with a Topping Off Ceremony for its new QCC Center, marking the completion of the building’s structural frame. State and local leaders, project partners, and members of the college community gathered to witness the raising of the final beam and celebrate the progress of this transformational project.

“Through careful planning, advocacy, fundraising, design and construction, the vision is now becoming a reality,” said QCC President Dr. Luis Pedraja. “Most importantly, this will create opportunities for students to develop the skills they need to succeed in today’s workforce and strengthen the connection between education, industry and our community.”

The event featured a ceremonial beam signing and remarks from Pedraja; State Sen. Robyn Kennedy; State Rep. James O’Day; Worcester Mayor Joseph Petty; Assistant Secretary Robert LePage of the Massachusetts Executive Office of Education; Deputy Commissioner Dr. Richard Riccardi of the Massachusetts Department of Higher Education; Commissioner Adam Baacke of the Massachusetts Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM); and Craig Skurka, operations manager for Gilbane Building Company.

“The raising of the beam is a moment for us to give gratitude and thank those who have stepped up to make this a reality,” Kennedy said. “As you join into the growing skyline of Worcester, we continue to grow with you. By signing our names to these beams, we are signing our commitment to make sure the school continues to be successful.”

The Topping Off Ceremony commemorated the progress of the \$37.4 million renovation and expansion project, which is transforming a 1960s-era athletic facility into a modern, accessible hub for learning, workforce development and student life.

Upon completion, the 57,000-square-foot facility will feature advanced manufacturing and robotics laboratories, hospitality training spaces, flexible classrooms and revitalized athletic facilities. The project also includes significant upgrades to aging infrastructure and accessibility improvements designed to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment for all students.

“This project is so important to the mission and vision of Quinsigamond Community College, the region it serves and the Commonwealth,” Riccardi said. “We know that holistic student success incorporates curricular and co-curricular initiatives, and this project provides the infrastructure to check both of those boxes.”

Speakers highlighted the collaborative partnership among the college,

the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and project stakeholders that have made this investment possible.

“It is a necessity that we continue to improve our community college envi-

ronments,” O’Day said. “The legislature has made it very clear that not only is higher ed important, but certainly the community college segment is equally as important. It’s been an honor to be able to repre-

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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.

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the project reflects the type of transformational campus investment envisioned through the Commonwealth’s BRIGHT Act (An Act to Build Resilient Infrastructure to Generate Higher Education Transformation). The state-wide initiative is designed to support modernization of public higher education facilities.

“I want to thank our legislative partners for championing the BRIGHT Act to date and hopefully getting it across the finish line so we can keep doing impactful projects like this one,” Baacke said. “As someone whose parents both worked at community colleges, I know there are few things we do that are more important in changing the lives of residents across the Commonwealth than what community colleges do every day.”

Designed to achieve LEED Gold certification, the facility will support improved energy performance, enhanced indoor air quality and long-term sustainability goals.

“Buildings like this bring jobs to your community – great-paying opportunities for advancement. We are looking forward to continuing to make these investments. They are about the

future of the economy,” LePage said.

Skurka recognized the efforts of the construction team and project partners in reaching the milestone safely and efficiently.

“Today’s event celebrates a significant construction milestone and the many people and partnerships helping us bring this project to life,” Skurka said. “At Gilbane, we are committed to creating healthy, safe and sustainable spaces that have a lasting effect on the community. We are honored to partner with QCC on this transformative project.”

The QCC Center is expected to open in Fall 2027 and will serve as a centerpiece of the college’s campus, creating new opportunities for hands-on learning, workforce training and community engagement.

“When we look at this structure, we aren’t just looking at steel beams and concrete; we’re looking at the literal framework of Worcester’s economic future,” said Petty. “True progress means lifting everyone up. By expanding physical accessibility and producing state-of-the-art, energy-efficient systems, QCC is ensuring our green energy and equity goals move forward.”

SENIORS NAMED TO BAY PATH HONOR ROLL

CHARLTON — Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical School congratulates the following grade 12 students on being named to the honor roll for the fourth quarter of the 2025-2026 school year.

High Honors

Vincent Paul Bedard, Isabella Aria Bitar, Dominic Dewayne Boyd, Aleah Claire Brink, Brianna Livra Brink, Mecheanise Monic Calo Resto, Emily Ann Corey, Jacob William Creeron, Valentina Ashley Culberson, Brody Lawrence Cunningham, Joseph Michael Daige, Basil Oliver Doud, Jocelyn Elizabeth Evans, Yandel Feliciano, Jordan Mariah Ferreira, Jayla Marie Fowler, Nicholas Edward Jalbert, Zachary Raymond Landry, Phoebe Alyson Lawendowski, Miranda Kate Linde, Julianna Rose Lovejoy, Cullen Gregory MacLeod, Ava Rose Mastrototaro, Emily Jean McDonald, Felix Casey Menard, Alexis McGee Messina, Liam Macrae Nicoll, Sebastian Alexander Nieuwenhoff, Mariah Lynn Pereira, Kayleigh Jean Ramm, Sawyer Luke Schultz, Brianne Marie Sentane, Jaxon Russell Sitko, Luke William Smolski, Ashley Mikayla Tingle, Madeline Beverly Trimby, Anne Louise Turcotte, Haylee Marie Zurovski

Elizabeth Grant, Mya Rose Hammond, Isaiah Terrence Harris-Harrington, Luke Robert Heller, Liam Wayne Hesselton, Hannah Jean Ingalls, Natalie Rose Ingles, Joshua William Irons, Amara Kimberly Johnson, Tabian Marschall Keegan, Ayden Matthew Kennedy, Samuel Arjun Kittredge, Allison Hemenway Klar, Cassie Lee Kotomski, Marshall Thomas Lafond, Nia Mya Laforest, Joel Carlos Landor, Nicolas Sebastian Londono, Philippos Anastasio Markrodimitras, Mystic Leigh Marion, Sebastian Luke Moniz, Alexis Paige Moody, Gianna Marie Morelli, Jackson Ryan Mullins, Benjamin Francis Nocchi, Connor James O’Brien, Matthew Thomas Obrycki, Kelsey Lynn Olson, Cole Henry Paradis, Samuel Joseph Prefontaine, Jae Mia Prochnow, Samantha Jeanne Reeseigh, Nathan Alexander Rouille Montoya, Jordan Joyce Russell, Keagan Robert Standing, Nathan Adam Steen, Gaige Charles Thompson, Aynara Shirel Vazquez, Esmerelda Velez, Natalie Helen Vigeant, Harley Ann Wilson Wadden, Ava Quyn Wall, Hunter Earl White, Katherine Marie Widebeck, Trey Stephen Wilkin, Noah Williamson, Brook Michelle Worthington

Principal’s List

Violet Renee Aucella, Megan Lucy Bell, Ryan Michael Berthiaume, Lucien Stephen Brodeur, Marianelys Cintron Perez, Carla Janelly Diaz, Paige Cynthia Eddy, Matthew Michael Fornari, Aiden Mark Giroux-Provencher, Sadie Lynn Hawley, Kristine Marie LaFlash, Callie Mae Lambert, Mia Marie Lussier, Emily Lynn Manyak, Kyle Joseph Mondor, David Antonio Morales, Chase Patrick Newman, Jeremiah Betsaleel Noel, Aiden Charles Perzanoski, Jacob Paul Pratt, Grace Elizabeth Retallic, Vincent Timothy Rose, Braden Charles Smith, Damion Robert Taylor, Yandel Omar Torres, Elias Manuel Vega, Reece Verderber

Honors

Helena Rowan Adkins, Addison Emily Aho, Adriana Nataly Alicea, Alexander Tyr Audunsson, Victoria Rose Bachand, Rhianna Anne Balliet, Arianna Rose Belanger, Nathan Paul Bernard, David Betancur, Roger Joseph Bishop, William Stephen Blash, Dommic Raymond Brodeur, Alissa Lynn Burlingame, Dimitri Anthony Burt, Cameron James Cabana, Liam Michael Carlson, Samuel Elia Ceppetelli, Lily Sabina Chartier, Hunter Matthew Coombs, Lorelie May Curboy, Connor Anthony Czechowski, Treyton Joseph Dery, Zenovi Irene Dupont, Heidi Lynne Ebbeling, Aliyah Marie Gonyea, Molly

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REAL ESTATE

Spencer Diotte named to Dean’s List at Merrimack College

NORTH ANDOVER — Spencer Diotte of Douglas, Ma has been named to the Dean’s List at Merrimack College for the spring semester of 2026.

He is the son of Alan and Lisa Diotte of Douglas.

A Finance major, he is a Junior at Merrimack College.

Media: The full dean’s and president’s lists can be found at www.merrimack.edu/deanslist.

One of only two Catholic Augustinian colleges in the United States, Merrimack College is a rising institution with a decade-long trajectory of growth and innovation. Merrimack is a selective, research-oriented, master’s comprehensive institution with approximately 5,700 undergraduate and graduate students from 34 states and 36 countries, comprising schools of arts and sciences, engineering and computational sciences, nursing and health sciences, education and social policy, and business. The college’s 220-acre campus is just north of Boston in North Andover, Mass.

UMass Amherst announces Spring Dean’s List

AMHERST — The following students were named to the Spring 2026 Dean’s List at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Students are appointed to the Dean’s List at the end of a semester in which they have completed a minimum of 12 graded credits and have earned a grade point average of 3.500 or better.

Blackstone

Jazlynn Bailey

Joseph Robert Bouret

Grace Margaret Buehler

Savana Mae Charron

Addison Elisabeth Chita

Nathaniel J Cook

Ian Marcus Davies

Megan Beth Hebert

Douglas

Haley Marie Chamberlain

Christopher Jospheh Dame

John Dariotis

Olivia Frances DeFalco

Owen Christopher Gray

Avery Rose Greenough

Shaniquia Joniel McLachlan

Sean Kevin Pellerin

Ariana Sacco

Kaila Lynn Salera

Wayne Louis Simon

Daniel Joseph Twohig-Mann

Maia Elizabeth Tyra

Northbridge

Kathryn Elizabeth Andresen

Meghan Elizabeth Cummiskey

Anna Gao

Matthew Edward Godin

Edgar Nalbandyan

Natalie Salib

Nicholas Richard Vaughan

Emily Grace Wheeler

Graham Patrick Williams

Nathan Williams

Uxbridge

Maren Ruth Anderson

Danielle Alison Clish

Brynn Alexa Doherty

Syrianna Chavy Douangsavanh

Luke Barszcz Esposito

Riley Holt

Trevor Joseph Horgan

Lukas Ritacco

Manya Saini

Samuel Vincent Waugh

Megan Elizabeth Wingfield

Whitinsville

Sam Dominic Grilli IV

Maeve Olivia Kelly

Sean Walter McGrath

Angela Rose Niver

Scarlet Elizabeth Sergel

Oneida Sharif

Megan Catherine St. Jean

Jenny Lee Wagenhoffer

Local students graduate from Nichols College

DUDLEY — Nichols College congratulates the 2026 graduating class, who earned their academic degrees at the College’s commencement ceremony on May 2, 2026, at the DCU Center in Worcester, Mass. Delcie D. Bean IV, founder and CEO of Paragus IT, an employee-owned managed information technology (IT) services firm that is one of the most successful, fastest-growing IT firms in the region, delivered the commencement address.

The following local students earned the degrees listed:

Daniel Stockhaus of Douglas earned a Master of Business Administration

Matthew Brooks of Douglas earned a Master of Science in Organizational Leadership

Arthur Sheehan of Northbridge earned a Master of Business Administration

Nicholas Chausse of Uxbridge earned a Master of Business Administration

David Sanchez of Uxbridge earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration

We applaud these students for their achievement.

About Nichols College

Nichols College has earned business accreditation from the prestigious Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International), the longest serving global accrediting body for business schools and the largest business education network connecting learners, educators, and businesses worldwide. Founded in 1815, Nichols transforms today’s students into tomorrow’s leaders through a dynamic, career-focused business and professional education. Nichols offers real-world learning focused on professional depth - combined with vibrant living, competitive athletics, and an unmatched alumni advantage - equipping students to exceed their own expectations. www.nichols.edu

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@pscr.org, or visit <https://www.pscrc.org/adults>.

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.

A Cultural and Historical Reflection of the 1960s Through the Music of the Beatles

Tuesday, August 4th 1:00pm-2:00pm

This performance combines live music with a multi-media presentation to explore, not only the music of The Beatles, but the influence they exerted in every area of the cultural landscape. Presented by Fran Hart, founding member of the Beatles Tribute Band 4EverFab. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Northbridge Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Active Agers Health Fair — Thursday, August 6th 12:30pm-2:30pm

Vendors/Organizations: Alzheimer’s Association, Azza Law Firm, Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Blackstone Valley Physical Therapy Services, Hearjoy Audiology, Whitin Community Center, Salmon Home Care, Open Sky, Northbridge Fire Department, Northbridge Police Department, and Seraphic Springs Health Care.

Free Blood Pressure Screenings will be available.

Free door prizes!

Free frozen treats Courtesy of the Friends of Northbridge Elders!

Come and find out everything you need to support your health and well-being!

\$5 fee to attend payable in cash on the day of the event.

Please sign up in the main office to attend or by calling (508) 234-2002 so we can plan accordingly.

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. Complimentary coffee and tea will be provided, as well as free door prizes. Books will be available from all authors for purchase.

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