Tinio Running for One Year Selectman’s Seat

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

Former Mendon Selectman Lawney Tinio has turned in his completed nomination papers for the one-year Selectman’s seat that was previously held by Rich Schofield prior to his resignation. Tinio served as a Selectmen for three consecutive terms until he chose not to seek the seat again in 2014.

In addition, incumbent Mark Reil has pulled his nomination papers for the three-year Selectman’s seat and incumbent Alan Tetreault has pulled and returned his nomination papers for the three-year Tree Warden’s seat.

Other candidates who have pulled nomination papers include incumbent Andrew Foke for the three-board of Health seat, incumbent Amy Fahey for the three-year Taft Library Trustee seat, incumbent Jay Byer for the one-year Moderator seat and John Vandersluis for the five-year Planning Board seat.

Incumbent Sharon Luttrell who is currently serving in the three-year Taft Library Trustee seat will not be running again, papers have not been pulled for that office as of February 25.

Other offices which have no papers pulled as of February 20 include School Committee for three years; the incumbent is Diane Duncan, Assessor for three years; the incumbent is Kenneth O’Brien, Park Commissioner for three years; the incumbent is Allan Byrne, Water Commissioner for three years; the incumbent is Kevin Ruddin, and Housing Authority for five years; the incumbent is Diane Stevens.

Candidates must have completed their nomination papers to the Town Clerk’s office no later than March 26 at 5 p.m. Mendon’s Annual Town Election is scheduled for May 14. The last day to register to vote in the May election of April 24 at 8 p.m. The Town Clerk’s office will have extended hours that day until 6 p.m. for those interested in registering. Any one may also register online at www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/.

Residents are reminded that Mendon’s Annual Town Meeting is scheduled to take place Friday, May 3. The last day to register to vote at the Town Meeting is April 12 at 8 p.m. Residents with questions on their voter registration status should contact Town Clerk Ellen Agro at 508-473-1085 or eagro@mendonma.gov. Regular business hours for the Town Clerk’s office are Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Upton Could Have Three Candidates Running for Selectman

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

As of February 21, three residents have pulled nomination papers for the Board of Selectman’s three-year seat. Upton’s Annual Town Election is scheduled for May 14. David Ross, Michelle Antinarelli, and Maureen Dwinell have taken out nomination papers but not returned them to the Town Clerk’s office. Incumbent, Gary Daughtery, has not yet pulled his nomination papers.

Other candidates who have taken out nomination papers include David Looper for the Moderator’s one-year term, William Taylor for the Assessor’s one-year term, Dorothy Scally for the Mendon Upton Regional School Committee’s three-year term, Steedman Briggs for the Board of Health’s three-year term, Judith Katz-Goodman for the Trustees of Public Library three-year term, Anne O’Brien for the Trustees of Public Library three-year term, Michael Oliver for Board of Commissioners of Trust Funds for three years, and Michael Moran for Constable for three years. Glenn Fowler has also taken out and returned his nomination papers for Cemetery Commission for three years.

As of February 21, offices without nomination papers pulled include Recreation Commission for three years, the incumbent is Richard Porter, Trustees of Public Library for one year, the office is vacant due to a resignation, Planning Board for five years, the incumbent is Paul Carey, and Constables for three years, the incumbents are Sandy Hakala, Steve Driver, James Bates, Jr., and one vacancy.

Completed nomination papers must be submitted to the Registrars of Voters for certification of names on or before 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 26. After certification, papers must be filed with the Town Clerk or before Tuesday, April 9 by 5 p.m. Those who wish to withdraw their nomination papers must do so through the Town Clerk’s office no later than Thursday, April 11 by 5 p.m.

The last day to register to vote in the Town Election or the May 2 Annual Town Meeting is Friday, April 12 from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. The Town Clerk’s office will have extended hours that day.

Residents with questions on the election or their voter registration status should contact: Town Clerk Ellen Agro at 508-473-1085 or eagro@mendonma.gov.

Laughter and Fun at the Taft Public Library

Jungle Jim Manning returned to the Taft Public Library last week to hold a Hogwarts Training Academy. The fully-interactive program that prepared participants to become wizards themselves was enjoyed by the packed house. Here young participant, Owen Hill, reacts to a statement by Jungle Jim. Harry Platcow photo

Giant Challenges in Upton

A number of activities were on tap for youngsters and their families at the Upton Town Library during Winter Vacation Week. They included playing larger than normal games. Here the Neal family of Upton, Tara Neal and her children, play a giant-version of Connect 4. Harry Platcow photo
All book club meetings are typically the first Monday of the month, unless it is a holiday, and start at 7 p.m in the downstairs meeting room. New book club members are always welcome. Copies of each book are available at the downstairs circulation desk.

Registration is needed for any program at the Taft Public Library, visit TaftPublicLibrary.org and click on the Events page.

Upcoming Adult Book Club Picks

- **March:** The Sun Does Shine by Anthony Ray Hinton
- **April:** The Music Shop by Rachel Joyce
- **May:** Mom & Me & Mom by Maya Angelou (including poems by Maya Angelou)
- **June:** A Gentleman in Moscow by Amor Towles

New Museum Passes

The library now has passes available for the Museum of Science and the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston as well as passes for the Discovery Museums in Acton. Stop at the downstairs Circulation Desk to reserve a pass or pick one up. For information on other available passes click on 'About' at the top of the library website, TaftPublicLibrary.org and then click on 'Museum Passes.'

Children's News March 2019

**Itty Bitty Story Time**

Itty Bitty Story time, designed for our youngest patrons: birth to three-years-old, includes stories, songs, musical instruments, and a whole lot more to keep the little ones engaged and entertained. It is a great way to introduce the young child in your life to the library. Itty Bitty Story time is held Tuesday mornings at 9:45 a.m. No registration required.

**Story & Craft Time**

Preschoolers are invited for a story and craft time Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m. No registration required.

- Wednesday, March 6: Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss!
- Wednesday, March 13: Bilingual Story Time: Animals
- Wednesday, March 27: I Like ME!

**Pajamaarama!!!**

Join us at the Taft Public Library on Thursday, March 14 at 6 p.m. for a bedtime extravaganza with Music & Movement by Deb Hadgins and local author Annie Romano reading her new book Before You Sleep and leading us in a craft. Registration is required.

**Muffins with Mom**

Sponsored by Beginning Bridges CFCE, The Muffin House and the Taft Public Library, Muffins with Mom will be Thursday, March 21 at 9:30 a.m. This is a free drop-in event for up to 15 families, first come, first serve. Light refreshments will be served and families will have the opportunity to build social connections and learn about family friendly resources.

**Deb Hadgins: Music & Movement**

Join Deb Hadgins on Thursday, March 21 at 3:30 p.m. in the Taft Upstairs Library for a program for infants and preschoolers. No registration required.

**Book Clubs**

- **Ages 6-9:** On Thursday, March 28, at 5 p.m. the members will discuss Keeley Green, Reading Queen by Claudia Mills.
- **Ages 8-12:** On Thursday, March 21 at 3:30 p.m. the members will discuss Tom’s Midnight Garden by A. Philipps Pearce & Tom’s Midnight Garden (a graphic novel) by Edith.

Registration is required for the book clubs, since pizza and refreshments will be served. Books can be picked up at the Children's Desk.

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**Children’s News March 2019**

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Departments Heads Meet with Finance Committee to Discuss FY 20 Asks

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

Throughout the month of February, Mendon’s Finance Committee met weekly and will continue to do so throughout March to put together the final touches on the Fiscal Year 2020 budget. The recommended new budget will come before voters during the Annual Town Meeting on May 3.

Part of the process each year consists of department heads coming before the Committee to review their budgets and discuss any “asks” they have. Recently, Council on Aging Director Amy Wilson Kent, Highway Surveyor Alan Tretteault and Town Clerk Ellen Agno presented their requested budgets.

One of Wilson Kent’s asks includes increasing her assistant, Laura Newton’s, hours from 18 to 32 hours. As a result, the part-time job would become a full-time position and provide Newton with benefits. Newton’s current salary is $19.39 per hour.

During her discussion with the Finance Committee, Wilson Kent stated as Mendon’s senior population continues to grow, more residents are reaching out the senior center for programs, assistance and van use resulting in the requested additional hours Newton. Wilson Kent said during calendar year 2018, the Senior Center had nearly 11,000 visitors and almost 2,900 phone inquiries. In addition, the Center’s coordinated 1,186 van rides to the elderly or individuals with disabilities and assisted 60 clients with fuel assistance.

“The senior population in town is 1,400, which accounts for 22 percent of Mendon’s entire population,” said Wilson Kent. “It’s growing laps and bounds. We’re trying to do the best we can with Laura working just 18 hours a week but she’s maxed out.”

Highway Surveyor Alan Tretteault had several capital item requests in his fiscal year 2020 budget including replacing a 1993 truck totaling $185,000 and an excavator totaling $66,000. Those capital requests, which must come before the town’s Capital Planning Committee, could be presented as warrant articles at the May Town Meeting.

Part of the request made by Town Clerk Ellen Agno was for a $300 stipend to pay for her Parking Clerk services. She’s also requesting an increase in her hours from 32 to 35 weekly.

On February 27, the Finance Committee met jointly with the Mendon Upton Regional School Committee to discuss the District’s budget. The following week, on March 6, the Finance Committee will continue to meet with department heads. On the agenda that evening are discussions on the Public Safety and Water Enterprise budgets.

Mendon Senior Center

The Mendon Senior Center serves Mendon residents 60 years of age or older, people with disabilities, and caregivers. Hours of operation are Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and Friday from 9 a.m. to noon, or call 508-478-6175.

Monday, March 4
Food Pantry, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Tuesday, March 5
Blood Pressure Clinic, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Monday, March 11
Friends Meeting, 11 a.m.

Tuesday, March 12
Leprechaun Craft, 10-10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, March 13
Free Tai Chi Class, 9 a.m.
CDA Meeting, 10 a.m.

Thursday, March 14
Orchestra of One, 11 a.m.
Tri Valley Holiday Meal, 12 p.m.

Friday, March 15
Hero Art Clough School, 9-30 a.m.

Saturday, March 16
St. Patrick’s Day Dinner, 2 p.m.

Monday
Walking Club, Various Locations, 8 a.m.
Weather Permitting
Food Pantry (First Monday of the Month), 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.
Whole Foods, 9 a.m.
Cribbage and Bridge, 9 a.m.
Mendon Ministris, 12:30 p.m.

Tuesday
Walking Club, Various Locations, 8 a.m.
Weather Permitting
Food Pantry (First Monday of the Month), 9 a.m. to 12 a.m.
Whole Foods, 9 a.m.
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Cribbage and Bridge, 9 a.m.
Mendon Ministris, 12:30 p.m.

Thursday
Walking Club, Various Locations, 8 a.m.
Weather Permitting
Reasonable Pantry, 9 a.m.
Landis Group, 10:30 a.m.
Thursday of the Month
Leprechaun Craft, 10-10:30 a.m.

Friday
Walking Club, Various Locations, 8 a.m.
Weather Permitting

Mendon Meetings

Wednesday, March 6
Finance Committee, Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Wednesday, March 13
Finance Committee, Town Hall, 7 p.m.

Thursday, March 14
Conservation Commission, 18 Main St., 7 p.m.

All meeting dates, times, and locations are subject to change. For the most up to date information on Mendon meetings, including agendas or cancellations, view www.mendonma.gov.

Senior Citizen Breakfast

The Clough School third graders will be hosting their senior citizen breakfast on Wednesday, March 20 at 10 a.m. at the school. Van transportation will be available for this event. Space is limited, so please sign up soon by stopping by the Mendon Senior Center, Providence St. or calling 508-478-6175.

Friends of Mendon Elders Book Sale

Back by popular demand is Friends of Mendon Elders annual book sale, Friday, April 5 from 3 to 7 p.m., Saturday, April 6 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and again on Sunday, April 7 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Mendon Senior Center, 62 Providence St. Besides a large assortment of fiction, nonfiction, science fiction, and children’s books, puzzles, games, CDs, DVDs, and other previously viewed videos will also be offered. All sold at unbelievable prices. Books are all sorted and organized by author or subject to make shopping easier for buyers to find favorite writers and categories. Proceeds from this fundraiser support the Friends of Mendon Elders. Donations for this event are gladly accepted.

St. Patrick’s Day Dinner

Get ready to wear the green and enjoy a mighty cragie, a very good good, at the traditional Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner on Saturday, March 16 at 2 p.m. at the Mendon Senior Center. The St. Patrick’s Day celebration is generously hosted by the Faith Baptist Church with support from the Friends of Mendon Elders. Seating is limited, so sign up at the Mendon Senior Center or by calling 508-478-6175.

Friends of Mendon Elders Scholarship

Applications are now available for the Friends of Mendon Elders Scholarship, which will be presented to a graduating senior from the Class of 2019. Candidates should have volunteered 20 hours or more of their time and talent at the Mendon Senior Center. Up to $250 can be awarded and may be used for any school related purpose at any accredited school at the discretion of the recipient. Applications must be received by Friday, April 26 to be considered. Applications can be found at Nipmuc Regional High School, Blackstone Valley Tech or the Mendon Senior Center.

Grand Opening Special

$200 OFF SUV Package

$790

Only Offered By CDA

Where you Learn to Change A Tire, Check Air Pressure, Understand Vehicle Maintenance Plan, etc.

Free Life Skills Class

(Only Offered By CDA)

Refer a friend and Receive a $20 VISA CARD with each paid referral

The most comprehensive driving program in MetroWest

Sign Up Now at www.centerpointdrivingacademy.com

MARCH 1, 2019

Upton-Mendon Town Crier

3
New England Tenors and GMCC Concert

The New England Tenors and Greater Milford Community Chorus will perform a joint benefit concert to support the Union Church of Hopkinton, 25 Dutcher St on Sunday, March 10, at 2 p.m. at the Church. Tickets are $20 for adults and $6 for students. The New England Tenors, John Middleton-Cox, Damian Corcoran, and Stefan Barner, will bring their distinctive unique style and flair to the stage as they perform perennial favorites. The 47-member Greater Milford Community Chorus, led by Dan Zabinski, is a not-for-profit organization run under the umbrella of the Milford Community School Use Program and supported by the Milford, Hopkinton, and Mendon Cultural Councils. Doors will open for seating and ticket purchases at 1:30 p.m. Light refreshments will be served. For more information about the concert, contact Kristi at 508-473-1476. For information about the GMCC, visit GreaterMilfordCommunityChorus.org.

Upton Men's Club Scholarship

The Upton Men's Club announces the Scholarship Award Program for 2019. A total of $4,500 will be given to graduating High School seniors, from Upton pursuing higher education at an accredited school. Applicants will be evaluated primarily on their contributions to our community. Applications for the 2019 scholarships are available from Nipmuc Regional High School and Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School guidance departments, and on the Upton Men's Club website. UptonMensClub.org. Applications must be submitted no later than April 17, 2019. More information about the club activities, accomplishments and membership can be found at UptonMensClub.org.
MARCH 1, 2019

Upton-Menon Town Crier

Upton Men's Club Community Charity Auction

WORCESTER-The Upton Men's Club is bringing back a Hart from the past, the popular Community Charity Auction, will be held Saturday, March 9, from 6 to 11 p.m. at Maxwell Silverman's Banquet Center, Union Station, Worcester. It will feature a keynote from New England Patriots Hall of Fame Matt Light and music entertainment by the Reckless Party Band.

This great night out for a great cause has been the signature event of the Upton Men’s Club since club’s inception back in 2007 throughout 2018, but together members of the community and raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for special projects around town. As the club’s biggest annual event, this has helped fund student scholarships, athletic and arts programs, monthly senior dinners, police and fire safety equipment, pets and so much more.

The beautiful new Union Station Grand Hall venue is the perfect place to meet community members, make new friends, dance, dine and win great auction items. Visit UptonMenClub.org for information on the club and to get tickets for this event.

Living with Hearing Loss: Share Your Experiences

NORTHBOROUGH-The Hearing Loss Association of America-Central Massachusetts' Saturday March 16 “meeting” at the Northborough Free Library from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. will not be the typical chapter meeting. Instead, everyone will be the speakers during the meeting.

Attendees will break into small groups to identify common issues experienced with hearing loss and brainstorm potential solutions. Everyone will come back together as a whole group to find out what each of the groups came up with. This will be an excellent opportunity for us to introduce ourselves, share our experiences, and learn from each other.

Light refreshments will be served and CART Provided (Computer Aided Real Time Captioning). First-timers welcome. There is ample free parking in the back of the Northborough Library. For more information, please visit Northboroughlibrary.org/hrs.aspx.

Please email info@hearinglosscentralma.org for more information on Hearing Loss Association of America-Central Massachusetts and notification of future events.

Thanks To Yanks Spring into Spring Fundraiser

MILFORD–The Milford Regional Medical Center Auxiliary will offer an silent auction which will be held on Saturday, April 13 from 2 to 5 p.m. at Double Tree by Hilton, Beaver St., Milford. The event will include a dance with a DJ, silent auction, 50/50 raffle, hot and cold hors d’oeuvres and a cash bar. Net proceeds will go to support the Women’s Health Services, and support other future events. There will be an emergency, banquet and needy families support activities for active duty military, veterans and their families.

Tickets are $35 online now until April 6. ThanksToYanks.org or $40 at the door. ThanksToYanks, is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization whose mission is to support military veterans, members and their families. For more information or to donate, please visit ThanksToYanks.org. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.

Milford Area Chamber of Commerce Events

AREA-The Milford Area Chamber of Commerce (MACC) will be holding the following events. To register visit MilfordChamber.org, email bhalley@milfordchamber.org, call 508-478-6700 or stop by the Milford Chamber, 114 Main St., Milford.

Health Connector for Small Business Information Session on Tuesday, March 5 at 7:30 a.m. at Dean College, 99 Main St., Franklin. Free for all, but please register.

Breast and Bone Health Expo-The expo, and learn from each other. Light refreshments will be served and CART Provided (Computer Aided Real Time Captioning). First-timers welcome. There is ample free parking in the back of the Northborough Library. For more information, please visit Northboroughlibrary.org/hrs.aspx.

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Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce

AREA-The Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce will be holding the following events. For more information or to register visit BlackstoneValleyChamber.org, email administrator@blackstonevalley.org, call 508-234-9090 or stop by the chamber offices, 670 Linwood Ave. A1gA, Suite T, Wakefield.

Paid Family and Medical Leave Listening Session, Monday, March 4, 2 to 4 p.m.

Chamber Member Appreciation Night at the Worcester Racers Hockey Game, Saturday, March 9, 7:50 p.m. at the DCU Center, 50 Foster St., Worcester. See the Stanley Cup. Free tickets for Chamber members.

Business Executive Roundtable on Tuesday, March 12, 6:45 a.m. at the Chamber Offices. Home & Community Expo, Saturday, March 16, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Northbridge High School Fieldhouse, Linwood Ave., Whitinsville. Local businesses, guest appearances, Cham Chowder Contest and more. Contact the chamber for a free ticket.

Mistress-of-Disguise: The only woman known to have hoodwinked George Washington’s army by disguising herself as a man, remaining in Mount Menon for four months. The Mount Menon Historical Society will host a portrayal of Massachusetts heroine Deborah Sampson, a post war female soldier who risked humiliation and imprisonment to serve her country as a soldier on Tuesday, March 19, 2019 at 7 p.m. in the Unitarian Church, 13 Maple St., Upton.

For more information, call 508-488-9680 to speak to a member of the Mount Menon Historical Society or visit MountMenon.com.

This program is supported in part by the grant from the Mount Menon Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Knights of Columbus Foxwoods Trip

MILFORD-The Knights of Columbus Valentine Council 80 is sponsoring a Foxwoods trip on Friday, April 26. The bus will leave the municipal parking lot across from Sacred Heart Church, Millbury, at 6:30 p.m. and leave Foxwoods at 11 p.m. The cost is $125 per person and includes transportation, a free buffet and $10 in slot play. Anyone interested in attending must reserve a spot by Friday, April 19, by calling James Burke at 508-478-9813. The trip opens to anyone age 21 andabove. Proceeds will benefit the St. John’s Food for the Poor.

The Advertiser’s Club Directory

These are the businesses that contract to advertise in The Upton and Mendon Town Crier at least 12 times a year. They receive a frequency discount, feature article about their business (minimum 1/16 page ad) and listing in this directory.

Business Name ........................................... Ad on Page
American Appliance ........................................... 9
Bright Insurance Agency ................................. 9
C.J. Cilley Construction ................................. 12
Constantine Romanoff ........................................ 8
Center for Image and Wellness ......................... 11
Cook Company ........................................ 10
CPR, Inc .................................................. 12
Creative Images Hair Studio .............................. 4
Crystal Room .............................................. 4
Frank’s Appliance ........................................ 9
Golden Seal Pet Resort ................................. 10
Golden Pond .......................................... 11
Happy Valley Asian Bodywork ..................... 10
Iadarola Plumbing & Heating ......................... 10
Imperial Cars ........................................ 16
J.C. Parmenter ........................................... 11
Jokesters Overhead Door .............................. 8
Joyce Plumbing ........................................ 10
Just A Ware Day ........................................ 7
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LaRose Musical Therapy ............................... 10
Liquor Place ............................................. 10
Little Coffee Bean ....................................... 10
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For more information, email milfordsepac@yahoo.com or on Facebook at Milford SEPAC.
LETTERS

Letters may be edited for length and clarity and will be published on a space available basis. Maximum 300 words. Must include signature, address & telephone number.

Opinions expressed are solely those of the writer. Town Crier Publications will not be responsible for inaccuracies. No Political Endorsements, please!

To the Editor:

We would like to express our sincerest thank you for the many prayers, condolences, kind thoughts, emotional support, gifts, cards, and donations provided us this past few weeks in memory of our dear sweet Aaron.

Aaron was a very loving, caring, giving, and compassionate young man, who touched the hearts of everyone he met. He will always be a part of our life and minds and will be truly missed by all who knew him.

Words cannot express our gratitude to the entire Milford community for the outpouring of love and affection they provided to help us through this tumultuous time, including the Emergency Room staff and doctors at the Milford Regional Medical Center, [Superintendent] Dr. Kevin McIntyre and the entire Milford School District, the administrative staff and numerous teachers from the Brookswood, Woodland, and the Stacy Middle Schools who taught and touched Aaron in so many ways, the Milford Little League, the Milford Special Olympic family, the Milford Police Department, and surrounding towns, including Grafton, Upton, and Hopedale Police Departments for the escort provided for his final services, and all his classmates and dear friends.

We would especially like to thank Mr. Christopher Roney, and the Rosey Funeral Home for providing the funeral service and Katie Sculli, pastor of Sacred Heart of Jesus parish for presiding over Aaron’s funeral Mass.

Your many acts of kindness and sympathy continue to be a great comfort to us in our time of sorrow.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts Editor’s note: Aaron Zenus was the Milford middle school student who passed away recently due to complications from the flu.

The Zenus Family

Milford

**25th Annual Snowman still going on!**

Send a photo of your snowman, with your name, hometown, and snowman size to our editor Jane Bigda at TownCrierEditor@gmail.com

**MONTHLY COMMUNITY MEALS**

Free, nourishing meals offered monthly to all in the local community.

**TOWN CRIER PUBLICATIONS**

48 Mechanic Street, Upton, MA 01568 | 508-529-7791 | TownCrier.us

**PUBLISHER**

Alfred C. Holman

Office: 508-529-7791 ext. 222
Cell: 508-889-1067
al.holman@towncrierpubs.com

**MANAGER**

Marllyn C. Holman

508-529-7791
Manager@TownCrier.us

**EDITOR**

Jane Bigda

508-526-1319
TownCrierEditor@gmail.com

**ADVERTISING**

Lori Tate
508-529-6035
LoriTate@TownCrier.com

Upton, Mendon, Uxbridge, Northbridge

COLETTE ROONEY
508-522-9747
crooney@charter.net

Milford, Hopkinton, Oxford, Franklin

SUSANNE GOLLER FABER
508-524-2762
sgollerfaber@comcast.net

Holliston, Ashland, Foxboro

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MILFORD
March 15, 2019, • April 19, 2019, • May 17, 2019, • June 28, 2019

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**MARCH 1, 2019**

Upton-Mendon Town Crier

BY Michelle Sanford

I’m the parent of two children involved in sports. Over the years, they’ve played everything from karate, basketball, volleyball, and softball to baseball, cross country, and flag football. Recently, I was told by my daughter that I’m about to add track to that list in the spring.

Since they were about five-year-olds, I have loved watching them lovingly as sports and as they got a bit older, compete individually or with their teams. I think sports does wonders for kids and their self-confidence. Still, the other day, I had one of those parent moments where I actually questioned adding something else to our family’s already full plate.

Currently, my son, James, is playing in a town basketball league and indoor flag football, which my husband coaches. Unfortunately, many games fall on the same day and times. On this particular day, I took him to a last-minute scheduled basketball practice and then to his baseball practice that was over, I rushed him over to join his flag football team to play the second half of that game. While watching, I checked my emails and saw that James had been asked to participate in an AAU basketball league scheduled to start next month with tournaments taking place both Saturdays and Sundays throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island. And when I got home, my daughter asked me if she couldn’t keep taking weekly cross fit classes in preparation for track.

And just when I was about to put the kibosh on adding one more sport or even a fitness class to our schedule, I saw a story posted on Facebook about the Uxbridge junior varsity basketball team and the heartwarming gesture they did for a classmate who was part of their team.

Fifteen-year-old Jaeden has Asperger’s Syndrome and serves as the team’s manager. During the last game of the season, he was given the chance to suit up and play the last five minutes of the game as an emotional support player. He will always be a part of our life and minds and will be truly missed by all who knew him.

Words cannot express our gratitude to the entire Milford community for the outpouring of love and affection they provided to help us through this tumultuous time, including the Emergency Room staff and doctors at the Milford Regional Medical Center, [Superintendent] Dr. Kevin McIntyre and the entire Milford School District, the administrative staff and numerous teachers from the Brookswood, Woodland, and the Stacy Middle Schools who taught and touched James had been asked to participate in an AAU basketball league scheduled to start next month with tournaments taking place both Saturdays and Sundays throughout Massachusetts and Rhode Island. And when I got home, my daughter asked me if she couldn’t keep taking weekly cross fit classes in preparation for track.

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Beginning Bridges, CFCE March

Facebook beginning Bridges CFCE - Email Tara Windsor TWindor@smoc.org

The Taft Public Library from 6 to 7 p.m. A special Redstone Story Hour with music and movement by Deb Hudgins and local author, Annie Romano reading her new book, Before You Sleep. Please wear PJ’s and register at TaftPublLibrary.org.

Tuesday, March 19: Music and Movement with Deb Hudgins at the Whittier Social Library. 10:30 a.m. Enjoy STEM based science and sound program for preschoolers. Contact the Library; 508-234-2151, for more information.

Thursday, March 21: Muffins with Mom: Taft Public Library, 29 North Ave, Mendon, 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Sponsored with the Muffin House Café and the Taft Public Library this is a free drop-in event for up to 15 families. Light refreshments are served, family friendly resources are available and socializing encouraged.
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- Extended Labor Warranty Available
- Highly Trained Technicians with Installation & Service
- Looking to replace your electric heat? Ask us about HUGE rebate opportunities through MassSave!
An Apothecary in Bloom Design

The 2019 Tower Hill Botanical Garden's February event, Apothecary in Bloom, focused on the mystical and healing power of plants. Greenleaf Garden Club member, Hazel Schroder entered an interpretive design using a container inspired by the seed boxes of old and choosing plants aromatic herbs, flowers and greenery from the natural world. Schroder used scented florals (roses, stock and Asiatic lilies) and herbs (lavender, rosemary and eucalyptus) to interpret the theme. Her arrangement expressed the stimulating beauty of the garden and fragrances of the garden to stimulate, uplift and relieve stress. Schroder is an accredited National Garden Show judge and enjoys studying the natural world and interpreting its beauty through floral design.

The Greenleaf Garden Club is a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc. and the Garden Club Federation of MA, Inc. For information, email greenleafgardenclub@gmail.org.

Upton Garden Plots Are Available

Upton residents, who want to raise their own food but don't have space for it can get a plot in the Upton Community Garden. Most plots are 4 by 16 foot, raised beds for growing organic vegetables, flowers and herbs. Plots are available to Upton residents and Upton based community groups. Elevated beds may be available for gardeners who have difficulty accessing the standard height beds.

There is a $5 participation fee to defray costs. To sign up for the 2019 season send a note to: UptonMACommunityGarden@gmail.com by April 1. Available plots will be assigned by lottery. A number of plots are reserved for individuals with disabilities, seniors, and community groups. Please indicate if you fit into one of these categories.
March Events Blackstone River & Canal Heritage State Park

The following list of activities are offered by the Blackstone River & Canal Heritage State Park. All programs, which take place at the River Bend Farm Visitor Center, 287 Oak St., Uxbridge, unless another site is listed, are free and open to the public. An adult must accompany children. Reasonable accommodations available upon advance request. For more information, to register or get weather updates call 508-278-7604 or email blackstone.heritage@mass.gov.

Maples Days, Saturday and Sunday, March 2 and 3: from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Guided tours of the art and science of producing maple syrup start at 11 a.m., 12, 1, and 2 p.m. Identify maple trees, see trees being tapped, participate in gathering sap, and visit the steamey sugar house to watch syrup being made. Tours include both indoor and outdoor elements. Dress for the weather, and wear appropriate footwear for a short walk, up to ¼ mile.

Maple Days Group Tours, Saturday and Sunday, March 9 and 10, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Guided tours for groups available by pre-registration. Park staff and volunteers take you through the art and science of producing maple syrup. Identify maple trees, see trees being tapped, trees growing roots and rocks along the path.

The following list of activities are offered by the Blackstone Valley and its communities from pre-European settlement through European style agricultural development, industrialization, and into today. Guided tours for groups with advance notice.

Real Estate Seminars for Buyers and Sellers

The Milford Community School Use Program is presenting two free adult education seminars to help Milford-area residents prepare for the spring real estate market. The Buying Seminar on Wednesday, March 20 and The Selling Seminar on Wednesday, March 27, will focus on buying and selling real estate. Each seminar, which begins at 7 p.m. at Milford High School, are open to Milford residents and non-residents.

Mike Shain of Village and David Hodgdon of Millenium Realty will discuss the process of buying a home in The Buying Seminar for both first-time homebuyers and those who have purchased a home previously. Topics will include types of financing, choosing a buyer’s agent, the home inspection, and legal issues involved in purchasing a home. Other speakers are Upton home inspector Sue Reeder of Keystone Home Inspections and real estate attorney Glen Sutherland of Cushing and Dolan, PC.

The Selling Seminar will feature Hodgdon. In Selling Your Home: Strategies for Success, “he will discuss de-cluttering, what repairs to consider, and how agents successfully market a home to maximize the sale price. Hodgdon will be joined by Melissa Lodi, an organizational consultant, giving insights on the purging and packing process. Omar Rohoman, licensed home inspector with Mass Integrity Home and Pest Inspection, will discuss what home inspectors actually look at and what sellers should do before the inspection.

Although each seminar is free, space is limited to only the first 30 pre-registered attendees. Register on the Milford Community School Use Program website MCS.Milford.MA.us or email Laura Knorevich at lknorevich@milfordma.com.

Upton Democratic Town Committee Meeting

The Upton Democratic Town Committee will be holding its monthly meeting on Tuesday, March 19, at the United Parish Visitor Center, 287 Oak St., Uxbridge, unless another site is listed, are free and open to the public. An adult must accompany children. Reasonable accommodations available upon advance request. For more information, to register or get weather updates call 508-278-7604 or email blackstone.heritage@mass.gov.

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Lookout Rock Hike, Saturday, March 16, 1 to 3 p.m. Meet at 366 East Hartford Ave, Uxbridge, Rice City Pond Parking Lot. This three-mile round trip moderate hike along King Philips Trail will break at a scenic lookout. Portions of the trail are hilly and steep and may be more strenuous if icy or snow covered. This forest trail has roots and rocks along the path. River Bend Farm Visitor Center, ongoing daily, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The Following the Plough exhibit explores the story of the Blackstone Valley and its communities from pre-European settlement through European style agricultural development, industrialization, and into today. Guided tours for groups with advance notice.

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Upton News

Upton Town Employee’s Home Vandalized

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

During a February 19 Upton Board of Selectmen’s meeting, it was announced that a town employee’s home was vandalized.

Selectman Chair Gary Daughtery reported that on August 30, 2018, the home of Building Commissioner Patrick Roche was vandalized in the late evening hours. Roche immediately called the Police Department to report the matter. “The vandalism included eggs and rocks being thrown at his home and car and an oil-like substance being dumped on his driveway, damaging a 10 by 12 area.”

Daughtery said the police investigated the incident and have a suspect but cannot prove anything beyond a reasonable doubt. “Mr. Roche is asking for reimbursement for damages done to his driveway. To date, the police report and call-to-the-officers involved and I personally believe this is a retaliation against Mr. Roche for enforcing building codes and town bylaws. I think it’s the correct thing for the town to do,” he said concerning the reimbursement.

Selectman Stephen Matellian agreed. “It seems pretty clear to me it was a retaliation act against him. My feeling is he should not suffer the consequences for actions on behalf of the town.”

It was explained Roche was only seeking damages done to his driveway. He had already gone through his insurance for the damages done to his home and has also taken other security measures since the incident. The Selectmen agreed to take $4,752 out of the Knowlton Distress Fund to reimburse Roche, pending Town Counsel’s approval. “It’s not approved by Counsel it will revert back to the William Knowlton Trust,” explained Daughtery.

Other Business

In other business that evening, Bonnie Combs of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor was invited to speak about Upton’s annual town-wide clean-up day this spring. This will be the community’s third consecutive clean-up day. In both 2017 and 2018, approximately 100 individuals came out to volunteer for the community event.

A tentative date of Saturday, April 27 was discussed to possibly coincide with the Upton State Forest’s Park Serve Day but still needs to be confirmed.

Also Selectman unanimously appointed John Westerling to the Personnel Board. Selectman Cable said the DPW Director for the Town of Hopkinton. “I’m looking for a way to give back to my community; to become a more active member,” he said.
The Upton Selectmen have received departmental requests for the Fiscal Year 2020 budget during the May 2 Annual Town Meeting. However, residents will vote on the town’s finalized Fiscal Year 2020 budget during the May 2 Annual Town Meeting. Residents will see a reduction in their surcharge fees on their bills. “2020 should be a kinder year for water capital outlay and a large amount of debt serviced that dropped off.” As a result, residents will vote on the town’s finalized Fiscal Year 2020 budget during the May 2 Annual Town Meeting.

Sen. Moore Office Hours

State Senator Michael O. Moore (D-Millbury) or a representative from his office will meet with Upton residents at the Upton Center, Farm St. on Monday, March 11, from 9 to 10 a.m. to discuss concerns or other matters of interest.

Sure It’s Grand, Irish Step Dancing

Remember to wear the green for the Upton Center’s St. Patty’s Day celebration on Friday, March 15 at 12:30 p.m. Young Irish Step Dancer, Sarah Hurley, who is kindly taking some time out of her school day, will entertain with her lively performance. Sarah was at the Center last year and gave a grand performance. Everyone is looking forward to her encore. Light refreshments will be served. Please call the Center, 508-528-4558, to register. No fee.

Fiscal Year 2020 DPW Budget Reviewed with Selectmen

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

With budget season in full swing, the Upton Selectmen continue to hear from department heads concerning their Fiscal Year 2020 requested budgets. During a February 20 meeting, Department of Public Works Director Dennis Westgate came forward to discuss his new budget with the Board. The DPW is made up of four divisions, including highway parks and cemeteries, water, and wastewater. Because of that, Westgate stated he was going to “touch upon the highlights” of his new budget. First up was the highway division’s new budget which is estimated to total $1,035,938, an increase of $80,700. Part of that increase is due to a 2.3 percent cost of living adjustment as well as an additional 2 percent cost of living increase, which was not received by the majority of workers last year as their contracts were just settled.

Westgate also requested a part-time department specialist be made full time for a cost of $9,950, plus benefits. “We’re trying to control the budget as best we can and not add any full-time employees, we’re still waiting for some final numbers,” said Selectman Stephen Matteliano. “If we can hold off on this personnel move, we can revisit it in November or next May,” Westgate stated he understood, and hoped the change could happen in the future. Concerning the park and cemeteries budget, Westgate explained there is a $6,659 increase due to contractual raises. In addition, he’s requested a $6,500 increase for aquatic weed control. Westgate explained that budget had been cut over the years and was looking to restore it to help control the weeds in the town’s ponds. The overall new water division’s budget of $1,045,441 has decreased by approximately $306,000 from last year because capital and enter to win a free treatment session.

MARCH 1, 2019
Upton-Mendon Town Crier

Upton News

Upton Cultural Council 2019 Grants

The Upton Cultural Council (UCC) is part of The Mass Cultural Council as a Local Cultural Council a network of 329 (LCC) cities and towns in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The LCC Program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of community based projects in the arts, science and humanities every year. UCC awarded nine grants totaling $4645 for 2019. LCC projects take place in schools, community centers, libraries, elder care facilities, town halls, parks, and wherever communities come together.

The following projects were fully or partially funded by the Upton Cultural Council for 2019:

- Mendon-Upton Regional School District, Humanities, Cultural Field Trip for Elementary English Learner
- Mendon-Upton Regional School District, Arts, he Inspired Learning Library
- Muscoe Hill School, Arts, Home of the Brave—School Newspaper
- Muscoe Hill School, Science, Heat and Temp by MUS
- Nipmuc Regional High School, Arts, Illustrating and Writing Close to Home
- John Porcino, Arts, To Life: Celebrations in Story, Song and Music
- Upton Recreation Commission, Arts, Mac Dayton Concert
- Upton Town Library, Science, Playful Engineers
- Upton Town Library, Arts, Rolie Polie Guacamole

The UCC will be accepting grant applications again this fall. For guidelines and complete information please visit the Local Cultural Council online at MassCulturalCouncil.org. Applications are due in October.

WANT YOUR BEST BODY BY SUMMER?

Build and tone muscle and lose fat while you recline and relax. 96% Patient satisfaction.

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- ABDOM: Em sculpt tones and sculpts abdominal muscles.
- BUTTOCKS: Strengthens and tones for firmer buttocks, giving a non-surgical “butt lift”
- 10 years of research and development and 5 patents, validated by 7 clinical studies: Em sculpt delivers results.
- Non-invasive, high intensity focused electromagnetic (HIFEM®) technology induces supramaximal muscle contractions not achievable through voluntary muscle contractions. Each 30 minute session induces 20,000 muscle contractions.
- Averageweight reduction of 1.7 inches (4.37 cm) at 3 months post-treatment
- Shown to increase muscle by 15% and decrease fat by 19% on average.
- No prehab, no anesthesia, no needles, no downtime.
- Four 30-minute sessions.
- Adults 18 and older, any fitness level.
- Evening and Saturday appointments available.

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CULTURAL EVENTS

PERFECT GIFT FOR YOURSELF OR LOVED-ONE!

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Schools Propose Ten Percent Assessment Increase for Mendon and Upton

By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter

The Mendon Upton Regional School District will be meeting with town officials over the coming days to discuss the challenges facing the district in the upcoming budget season.

With the School District’s Open Budget Hearing scheduled for March 11, the district needs to finalize the budget they plan to certify and submit to the towns for final approval.

School officials presented the first-pass budget at the January 28 School Committee Meeting, a budget that maintains level services – keeping the same programs and staff in place – while making some “critical” investments.

“In building a budget you have to start with your beliefs about learning; what are your core values,” said Superintendent Dr. Joseph Maruszczak while presenting the budget.

The preliminary FY20 budget was $37,273,111, a $1,920,843 (5.43 percent) increase over FY19 (the current school year). Some of the major drivers of the increase include a $644,000 (3.26 percent) increase in salaries due to contractual obligations; a $360,000 (3 percent) increase in Health Insurance; a $80,735 (5 percent) increase in Transportation costs; a $146,000 (17.2 percent) increase in Special Education Transportation costs; and a $62,370 increase in heating oil and boiler maintenance at all four district schools.

According to school officials, the budget also includes funding for four new “critical” positions in the district including two district-wide school psychologists, one Elementary Special Education Team Chair/Dean of Students; and one Health and Wellness Teacher at Miscoe. The new positions are important to their goal of “providing social-emotional services that all learners need to thrive,” said Maruszczak.

On the revenue side, Chapter 70 aid only increased $820 per students for a total of $44,020, while regional transportation reimbursement was level funded.

“In the eight years at Superintendent, I have never seen a worse State Budget come out for a regional school district,” said Maruszczak during the meeting. “As a result, the burden for funding this falls to our two communities.”

Representatives of the Finance Departments and Boards of Selectmen will meet with the School District on February 27 (as per the date of publication) to discuss the budget and the assessments amounts that this budget will mean for the two towns. Based on the preliminary budget, the assessment increase to Mendon would be $908,667 (10.12 percent) and Upton of $1,127,665 (10.13 percent).

Even with using $380,000 from the district’s E&D (Excess and Deficiency) account and $150,000 from revolving accounts, there will still be a “substantial” funding gap.

“There are still a lot of variables on the revenue and expenditure side, but I have some serious concerns at this juncture,” had said Maruszczak to the School Committee. “If the gap isn’t closed through discussions with officials from both communities, we are looking at fairly significant cuts to staff and programming.”

Just four years ago in 2015, the voters approved an override to fund the school district after the proposed budget exceeded the 2.5 percent tax levy.

The Mendon Upton Regional School District will present it’s FY20 Budget at their Open Budget Hearing on March 11 at 7 p.m. in the Nipmuc Regional High Auditorium.

CLOUGH: The staff thanks the PTO for the “Wow” Valentine refrigerator with treats and beverages.

Clough also thanks the following Clough Fourth Graders who took the initiative from “Project BASSO (Be An Animal Savior Organization)” to collect and donate supplies to local pet shelters: Lyla McCarthy, Lia Romano, Madison Tucker, Taylor Smith, Madelyn Olson, Annabelle Samuels, Emma Coombs, Molly Klupa, Holly Brennick and Miriam Harrati. Additional thanks to those who donated to the project. Congratulations to Lauren St. Pierre’s second graders and Marie Brigham’s fourth graders for “powering up” with soaring behavior and completing their school wide catpillars.

Clough School celebrated Read Across America Day on March 1, which is sponsored annually by the National Education Association (NEA) to focus the country’s attention on the importance of children learning to read. In celebration of Dr. Seuss’s birthday, students were invited to dress up as their favorite character. Every class visited the library and listened to a Dr. Seuss book read by a community and/ or school district leader. The celebration lasted the entire week of February 25 through March 1 in the library, which offered games and prizes. Students were also invited to participate in Read Across America BINGO for a prize. Prizes were donated by the Mendon-Upton Regional Teachers Association (MURTA).

MEMORIAL: Students enjoyed Spirit Week, February 25 through March 1. Students had fun with Mix up day, Crazy Hat and Crazy Hair Day. Many students showed team loyalty by wearing pro team gear on Sports Day. Friday, the school community celebrated Dr. Seuss’s Birthday by reading many of his books in class. Memorial plans to celebrate National Library Week in April.

Boston Museum of Science is bringing some furry and slinky friends for first graders in a presentation about Animal Habitats on March 5. Second grade students will learn about solids, liquids and gasses in a class presented by States of Matter on March 7.

Memorial students will again support the American Heart Association by jumping rope in gym class as they participate in the Kids Heart Challenge during the week of March 11. Flyers were sent home about the event.

MISCOE: Eighth grade students will meet with Nipmuc Counsellors at Miscoe on March 6 to discuss scheduling for their first year of high school.

On March 7, Principals Jennifer Mannion, Janice Gallagher, and School Resource Officer Stephen Sinko will offer an information night at the Miscoe Hill School Auditorium from 7 to 8 p.m. on new ALICE safety protocols. All parents are welcome to attend. The administration, teachers, and staffs of Clough, Memorial and Miscoe participated in an initial ALICE training on January 18. The next step is this program for parents and guardians explaining of how safety practices are evolving.

Miscoe will host a Book Fair Night and open mic night on Tuesday, March 12 from 5 to 7 p.m. Participants will be encouraged to purchases and meet librarians from the Taft Public Library, Mendon, and the Upton Town Library. Students will entertain with musical performances in the cafeteria. Contact Miscoe Librarian Karen Arnold at karnold@mursd.org for information.

On March 13, the Miscoe Vertical Choral Concert and on March 20 the Miscoe Vertical Band Concert will be offered at Nipmuc. Both give the middle school students a chance to perform with Nipmuc students.

Miscoe’s drama club is performing Madagascar Jr on March 22 at 7 p.m. and March 23 at 4 and 7 p.m. Ticket information will soon be published.

Miscoe has welcomed a student teacher, Liz Maloney, a Framingham State University senior, to Miscoe’s drama club is performing Madagascar Jr on March 22 at 7 p.m. and March 23 at 4 and 7 p.m. Ticket information will soon be published.

Miscoe has welcomed a student teacher, Liz Maloney, a Framingham State University senior, to Miscoe.

Dean’s List

The following local students were named to the Dean’s List at their respective schools during the fall 2018 semester.

Bryant University

- Southfield, R.I.:
- President’s List for a GPA of 4 or greater: Mendon-Michael Aflitti and Brittany Gauthin; Upton-Kathryn Hall; Dean’s List: Upton-Nathan Charron, Julia Pavlichenko and Nathan Zadowski.

Rochester Institute of Technology

- Rochester, N.Y.:
- Upton-Nicole Mazzola majoring in biomedical engineering.

University of Rochester

- Rochester, N.Y.:
- Upton-John Gallagher, a senior majoring in economics and data science.
Valley Tech FY 2020 Budget Up 3.53 Percent; Mendon/Upton Assessments Decreases

By Jane Bigda

Using various state and district funds, Blackstone Valley Tech Superintendent- Director Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick said the projected increase in the school’s overall budget for Fiscal Year 2020 has been held to 3.53 percent. The budget is expected to be approved by the school committee at their March 7 meeting and then be forwarded to the 13 district communities for approval at their Annual Town Meetings.

Dr. Fitzpatrick had good news for the towns of Mendon, Milford and Upton. All three will have reduced assessments for next year. The estimated reduction for Mendon is $18,000, for Upton $8,450 and for Milford $51,000. Each town’s assessment is based on a formula that factors in the number of students from that community attending Valley Tech. Fitzpatrick noted that while the overall student population accepted at Valley Tech has risen, the number from specific towns may have fallen in any given year.

Other drivers in holding down assessments for the towns are the use of $250,000 from the district’s Excess and Deficiency Account, a zero increase in the health benefits account and use of the Massachusetts Governor’s Economic Equipment bond to purchase new technology and equipment. The district will also self-fund the reroofing of the 54-year-old building with reimbursement funds from the Massachusetts School Building Authority along with the $360,000 realized from the sale of the Trask Land on Chestnut St. The land was sold last summer to Alfonso Builders of Milford.

Fitzpatrick noted that the overall budget increase of 3.53 percent in FY2020 was the result of “normal inflationary costs” including a 2.6 percent in contractual raises.

Once the budget is approved by the school committee in March a copy will be available on the school’s website, ValleyTech.k12.ma.us.

State Art Award for Miscoe Hill’s Alice Gentili

Alice Gentili

Miscoe Hill Art Teacher Alice Gentili has been named the 2019 NAEA National Middle Level Art Educator by the Massachusetts Art Education Foundation. Along with being a Visual Art Educator, Gentili also serves as a Department Chair in the Mendon-Upton Regional School District, where she has taught for 21 years. In December 2017, Gentili was appointed to the Arts Education Advisory Council to the Massachusetts Department of Education. In April 2018, she was appointed Co-Facilitator for the development of the Media Arts Frameworks for Massachusetts, an ongoing project which is expected to be completed by September 2019. She was also named the 2017 National Art Education Association (NAEA) Eastern Region Art Educator of the Year, the 2017 NAEA/Art Education and Technology Outstanding Educator, the 2015 Massachusetts Art Education Foundation. Along with being a Visual Art Educator, Gentili also serves as a Department Chair in the Mendon-Upton Regional School District, where she has taught for 21 years. In December 2017, Gentili was appointed to the Arts Education Advisory Council to the Massachusetts Department of Education. In April 2018, she was appointed Co-Facilitator for the development of the Media Arts Frameworks for Massachusetts, an ongoing project which is expected to be completed by September 2019. She was also named the 2017 National Art Education Association (NAEA) Eastern Region Art Educator of the Year, the 2017 NAEA/Art Education and Technology Outstanding Educator, the 2015 Massachusetts Art Education Foundation.

Outstanding Educator, the 2015 Massachusetts Art Educator of the Year, and the 2012 Massachusetts Middle School Art educator of the Year. Contributed photo.

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MARCH 1, 2019

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**Nipmuc Girls Track Looking Strong Heading into Spring**

**By Chris Villani**

Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Nipmuc girls’ track and field team cannot wait for spring after a strong finish to the winter season, according to head coach Justin Townsend, led by a group of talented underclassmen as well as veteran athletes who set positive examples for their younger teammates.

“We finished strong, this team is very solid and it was encouraging to see the bulk of the people we brought to the district meet were eighth, ninth and tenth graders,” Townsend said. “It’s a lot of people who are on the verge of doing great things in track.”

Townsend said the success is helping spur on the growth of the program, noting some girls are going out for the spring track year instead of participating in another sport. “There is a lot of momentum going into the spring,” he said. “I am encouraged to see where we go.”

Eighth grader Emma Nabolski capped off a successful season by qualifying for the Division 5 state track and field meet. While she did not have her best race and made a mistake, Townsend said, the talented young runner was quick to learn. “It’s awesome to see her doing well as a young runner but also learning a lot about how to race and how to train and take care of herself,” Townsend said. “It’s exciting to not only have an athlete who is on that level, but also very coachable.”

Another young runner, Alyson Casey also finished strong by posting her best hurdle time at the district meet, putting her right on the cusp of qualifying for the state meet. Townsend said he expects her to excel in the high hurdles during the spring season.

Upperclassmen provided a shining example for the younger Nipmuc athletes. Senior captain Chloe Hoff was the most improved member on the team, according to Townsend. Said he expects her to excel in the high hurdles during the spring season.

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Upperclassmen provided a shining example for the younger Nipmuc athletes. Senior captain Chloe Hoff was the most improved member on the team, Townsend said, slaying significant chunks off of her time in the 50-yard dash. Townsend said. “She was one of our spark plugs, a great example for everyone else.”

Junior Isabelle Frieswick also peaked at the end of the season, setting a new personal best in the shot put. “She is a heck of a kid,” Townsend said. “She is a good role model for everybody to look up to.”

Good role models, like Frieswick are plentiful among the Nipmuc upperclassmen, the coach said. “Iazy works hard as a sprinter and a thrower and she got better in both, “ Townsend said. “These are good character kids.”

**BVT Girls Hoops Enter Tourney After Voke Final Trip**

**By Chris Villani**

Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Blackstone Valley Tech girls basketball team will head into the Central Mass tournament with some positive vibes after a jam-packed vacation week during which head coach Britt Kahler said her team showed signs of playing their best basketball of the season.

“It was a tough week and I want to complain because we had no vacation, we played four games, but actually this week has been so big for us,” Kahler said. “I can see the team coming together and all of a sudden, it seemed liked it clicked. They are playing well together and working hard.”

The Beavers played games Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday over vacation week, competing in tournaments in Maynard as well as the state vocational tournament. BVT finished 2-2, scoring a win over Greater Lawrence in the state semi-finals before falling to Monty Tech in the title game.

Victoria Russian, a junior, put together another big game in the win over Lawrence, pouring in 24 points to go with 12 rebounds and three steals. Against Maynard, when the opponent keyed in on stopping Russian, fellow junior Gabby Muscatell stepped in with 16 points and 12 rebounds.

Kahler described the Many Tech game, a 51-40 setback, as a “total team effort,” but highlighted the defensive play of senior Alyssa Clark. “She had a great game and has been one of our hardest workers,” Kahler said. “She was out with a concussion for a while and we weren’t sure if she was going to come back, but she did and she has been huge for us. Her energy on the court is just contagious.”

The Beavers enter the Central Mass districts with a 14-7 overall record. The team’s 7-3 mark in Colonial Athlete League play trailed only Monty Tech. Valley Tech’s first tournament game was set for Wednesday against Parker Charter, a team the Beavers had beaten during the regular season.

Kahler said the biggest difference between her team then and now is how it is executing on defense. “It starts with defense and we have been up and down defensively all season,” she said. “Part of it is communication, but it’s also better intensity. We are much more intense on defense.”

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Kilcoyne's Two Wins Pace Grafton at State Swim Meet

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Grafton girls swimming and diving co-op finished the 2018-2019 season with a top-20 finish in the Division 1 state meet, checking in 19th of the 40 teams that qualified.

The team was led by Nipmuc senior Samantha Kilcoyne, who captured a state championship in the 100-yard butterfly and earned All-American consideration in the process with her time of 55.41 seconds. Kilcoyne counts the butterfly as her best stroke and plans to compete in that event at the collegiate level.

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**Sports Flash**

**By Chris Villani**

Willow Dunster is shown center after signing her LOI with mother Diane and father Gary.

By Chris Villani

**Sports Reporter/Columnist**

The water is calling Nipmuc senior Willow Dunster, 18, said her father, Gary, loves to fish. Spending time on the water and snorkeling seemed like the perfect fit, Dunster said. “I loved the swimming pool and the ocean. The water is calling.”

“Having diving and swimming together, it was nice. And I am hoping to do shark biology and focus on the basics,” she said. “In preparation for next year.”

Dunster will be busy with her club program, Zap Diving in Sudbury, as she competes in dives that had been challenging her. “I decided to focus on the basics,” she said. “In preparation for next year.”

“I had a great experience buying my new jeep at Imperial Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram. The sales representative I met with, Zoch, was very helpful. I would recommend this dealership to anyone looking to buy a new or used vehicle.”

By Chris Villani

**Sports Reporter/Columnist**

The last time Grafton/Blackstone Valley Tech’s ice hockey co-op squared off against Assabet Valley it was December and the two teams were only a few games into their respective seasons, so Grafton/BVT head coach Mike Binkoski does not see that result — a 4-0 win for his team — having much of an impact when the two meet Saturday in the Division #A Central Mass. quarterfinal.

“It’s been over two months, they have gotten better as a team and I think we have too,” Binkoski said. “They are very well coached and when you look at their scores, they are in every hockey game they play. It’s going to be a tight game, a battle, we need to swing some of those bounces our way.”

The Indians finished the regular season 13-3-4 overall and posted a 4-1-3 record in conference. Binkoski said his team played well down the stretch, but still doesn’t feel they have peaked.

“It starts with a great start, a great first period, being ready to go right from the puck drop,” he said. “Especially come playoff time. We are still working hard but I don’t think we have played our best hockey. But it’s a new season, it’s playoff time.”

BVT senior forward Trevor Thomas, a co-captain, is among the team’s top offensive threats and has produced eight points through the regular season. Griffin DiAntonio, a Valley Tech senior, is another “tremendous forward,” his coach said, adding, “those guys work hard every day and bring it.”

Binkoski said DiAntonio is due to score a big goal in the tournament. “I think he is playing the best hockey of his career,” the coach said. “The hockey gods have to pay him off sooner or later.”

Junior Cam Bern has 10 points this year, one of five Grafton/BVT players who finished in double digits in goals and assists. The Indians head into the playoffs with a number of players on the roster who have significant playoff experience, including winning a state title.

“We can draw in our experience,” Binkoski said. “If we go down a goal, we know not to panic, it’s a long game and we have to fight our way back. Every team is good, they are all playoff teams for a reason, so we have to bring our game”