Groundbreaking for the New Mendon Police Station

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist


Two Races and Additional Police Station Funding on Mendon Ballot

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

On Election Day, Mendon residents will determine the outcome of two races as well as a ballot question for additional funding needed to complete the new police station. Mendon’s Annual Town Election is scheduled to take place on Tuesday, May 14.

Newcomer Jerry Ann Lawrence and Geeta Von der Lub are both running for the Mendon Upton Regional School Committee seat for the next three years. The other seats are for the Board of Health of three-year terms, and for the Taft Public Library Trustee for three years, Shana Jo Miller for the other Taft Public Library Trustee for three years, Kevin Rudden for Water Commissioner for three years, Amy Fahey for Taft Public Library Trustee for three years, Shana Jo Miller for State Rep. Brian Murray, and Police Chief David Kurczy. Shana Jo Miller is expected to win her seat. Other candidates on the ballot are unchallenged and include John Vandersluis for Housing Authority for five years, and Senator Ryan Fattman, R. Sutton, and State Rep. Brian Murray D. Milford.

“I want to thank the construction team, the taxpayers, and legislators for their help,” said Selectman Mark Reil. “It’s good to see this project start. It’s been a long time coming.”

Murray added “there’s no better way to increase a strong municipality than with a strong municipal building.”

In 2017, Mendon residents passed a $5 million debt exclusion to renovate and expand the former Main St. fire station into a 9,200 square foot building. Because the former fire station is a historical building $1.5 million from Community Preservation Act funding will also be utilized to help defray costs.

Community Preservation Committee Chair Anne Mazar was in attendance at the groundbreaking and said utilizing a historical building for the new station is a positive move for the community. “The adaptable reuse of an old building helps maintain the historical village in Mendon,” she said, adding that its location in the center of town is also beneficial to the police department and residents. “It’s a win, win for everyone.”

Police Chief David Kurczy stated when he began his career in Mendon 22 years ago, there was talk of a new police station back then and is thrilled the measure is finally coming to fruition for his department and community members.

Although voters previously approved the $5 million debt exclusion and additional CPA funding is also being utilized for the project, during the last year the Police Station Building Committee has run into rising construction costs and discovered unsuitable soils at the site. As a result, the original price tag has increased by an additional $1.4 million.

Voters authorized the additional $1.4 million for the project at the November 27, special town meeting. That vote limited the amount that could be borrowed to $880,000 until the full $1.4 million could be excluded from the Proposition 2½ debt exclusion. The $880,000 allowed the town to award the contract to the general contractor. The entire $1.4 million will be voted on as a ballot question during the May 14 Town Election.

Board of Health: Skyrocketing Recycling Costs

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

Members of Upton’s Board of Health will be asking residents to approve approximately $120,000 increase to their Fiscal Year 2020 budget as part of an effort to keep recycling services in town. The reasoning behind the increase was discussed with the Board of Selectmen during a March 19 meeting.

The request for an increase in funding pertains to the town’s new contract with E.L. Harvey & Sons. Part of the increase results from miscalculations made by Harvey, which did not charge the town for in prior contracts. Those shortfalls are now included in the new contract. Additionally, the new contract includes a significant increase in recycling costs.

More than a year ago, China made the decision to no longer accept much of the world’s imported recycled waste, including paper and certain plastics. China also set stricter standards for what it will accept, resulting in more sorting and cleaning for processors, thus driving up costs considerably.

“It’s not just in Upton or the state of Massachusetts; it’s a country wide issue,” said Board of Health Chair Ali Holman. In fact, some cities have discontinued their recycling programs altogether because they cannot afford the increased costs. “The community has gotten used to recycling, plus, if we stop, the state will fine us,” explained Holman. The fine amount has not been determined yet.

“Just to be clear, up until this year, it didn’t cost us anything to get rid of our recycling and to have our recycling picked up. Now that the trash hauler has had the opportunity to renegotiate the contract, it’s now $68 a ton, which used to be free,” explained Selectman Brett Simas.

In addition to the request for a budget increase, the Board of Health is planning to raise bag fees approximately 30 cents each, which will add up to approximately $40,000 which will be funneled into free cash. The bag increase will take

Recycling Costs

p 8
By Kevin Rudden
Staff Reporter/Columnist

Nursing facilities across the state are at a crisis stage," with 20 closing last year and an estimated 39 more to close this year, according to Frank Romano, president of Essex Group Management Corp., which owns Blaire House of Milford and several other senior care facilities throughout the state. The main reason for this is that Medicaid reimbursements are smaller than the actual costs of providing care, he said. "After 40 years in this business, I've never seen it as bad as it is today," Romano said at Blaire House's tenth annual legislative event, held on March 25 in Milford. "The Current State of Senior Care in Massachusetts and the Nation" forum also featured remarks by State Senator Ryan Fattman, R. Sutton, State Representative Danielle Gregoire, D. Marlborough, and State Representative Brian Murray, D. Milford. Salaries and benefits typically account for 75 percent of every dollar spent at a senior nursing facility, Romano explained. Romano noted that Blaire House's nursing facility manages through a $300,000 deficit because, as a campus, it offers other services that can offset that loss. He noted that to be competitive in wages, it has to start people off at $15 per hour while being reimbursed only $12 per hour. And, Romano stated, the job of a trained certified nursing assistant (CNA) is far different than a worker at a Dunkin Donut franchise or a Walmart store. The state’s Medicaid reimbursement has not changed since 2007, Fattman said, outlining several pieces of pending legislation that could help the situation. There are 401 nursing homes in Massachusetts with operating deficits, the senator said, with some deficits as high as $1 million each year. "There's no business that can operate like that for the long haul," Fattman said. In addition to pending legislation, Fattman said, people need to take personal responsibility by paying for long-term care insurance.

"You, as an industry, have our attention," stated Gregoire. Last year, she chaired the House Committee on Elder Affairs and is now chair of the Joint Committee on State Administration and Oversight. "This issue is something facing every person in Massachusetts.\" There is no question that this industry is in crisis,\" Murray said. As a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, he gets to hear first-hand from top officials in Governor Charles Baker’s administration, he said. But, there is a discrepancy between what the nursing home industry says and what the Executive Office of Health and Human Services says about the problem, Murray noted. "Advocacy is key," he stated. "We need to get correct information." Because of the reimbursement gap and the subsequent losses in nursing facilities' operating budgets, bankers are now compounding the problem by refusing to lend to or refinance existing facilities, Romano said. It took him months to get federal government permission, but Romano said he now has permission to recruit up to 150 people from Puerto Rico to be CNAs at his facilities, Romano stated.

Rudden Receives Scouting Award

Kevin Rudden of Mendon received a "Sparkplug" award at the Headwaters District, Mayflower Council of the Boy Scouts of America's Annual Recognition Dinner held on March 23 in Milford. Troop 44 Mendon nominated Rudden for the award for his 15 years of service to the Troop, including serving as its Eagle Scout Coach for the past 11 years. Rudden is also a staff reporter and columnist with the Town Crier.

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**DA Early Gives Grant for Safe Post-Prom to Nipmuc**

The Nipmuc Regional High School After Prom Party Committee was presented with a $1000 Grant from District Attorney Joe Early’s office and the Massachusetts Office Victims’ Assistance. Drunk Driving Trust Fund on March 19. “The money will be used for entertainment and supplies for the After Prom Party (APP), which has been hosted at Nipmuc for the past 26 years. The APP gives students a safe place for kids to go after the prom and to not be out on the roads. Pictured are Upton Police Chief Michael Bradley, Nipmuc Principal Mary Anne Moran, APP Committee Members Nicole O’Brien and Tanna Jango, D.A. Early, Nipmuc Principal John Clements, and MURSD Superintendent Joseph Maruszczak. For questions or to make a donation to the After Prom Party, please email nipmucapp@mursd.org or send a check made out to Nipmuc Prom Party directly to the school. Contributed photo.

**Nasuti Receives Platinum Service Recognition**

Robyn Nasuti of Real Living Realty Group in Hopkinton was awarded the highest level of service achievement in the real estate industry, Quality Service Certified Platinum. The award is in recognition of earning 100 percent client service satisfaction in 2018, as measured by Leading Research Corporation (LRC). Quality Service Certified (QSC) status is the only award in the real estate industry based on independently validated, measurable service results. Clients of QSC agents receive a customer satisfaction survey at the end of each transaction. The surveys are administered and the results are compiled by LRC.

Client feedback from the surveys becomes part of the agent’s credentials. An overall satisfaction rating is displayed on the consumer website (www.RatedAgent.com) where buyers and sellers have the ability to select a real estate professional based upon each agent’s validated record of service satisfaction. “Nothing is more important to a prospective client in selecting a professional than the service results achieved with past clients,” says Larry D. Romito, President and CEO of QSC. He adds, “Consumers have greater confidence in service reliability, results and satisfaction with a Quality Service Certified real estate professional because they know that the agent’s service record has been validated by an independent third party. A one-hundred percent service satisfaction record like Robyn Nasuti has achieved is just awesome.”

**Charles River Bank Helps Homeowners through FHLBank Boston Program**

Charles River Bank has been selected to participate in the Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston’s Equity Builder Program, which assists local homebuyers with down-payment and closing costs as well as homebuyer counseling and rehabilitation assistance. The $3.6 million program provides grants to financial institutions to assist households at or below 80 percent of the county median income. For example, in Norfolk County, the median income limit for one person is $56,800 and $64,900 for two people. Borrowers are eligible to receive up to $15,000 in assistance on a first come first serve basis. Buyers must also complete a homebuyer counseling program. The grant does not need to be repaid if the home buyer remains in the new home for at least five years, or if they do not refinance the home within 5 years.

“Homeownership is not easily attainable for many households, so we are pleased to offer this assistance to help individuals and families purchase a home. Homeownership helps build wealth and create financial stability, and programs that assist homebuyers can be effective in adding to the vibrancy of our communities,” said President & CEO of Charles River Bank Jack Hamilton.

Charles River Bank is eligible to receive up to $150,000 in 2019 through the Equity Builder Program depending on availability of funds. Since 2003, the Equity Builder Program has awarded more than $38.8 million in EBP funds assisting 3,512 income-eligible households to purchase a home. To learn more about applying for this down-payment and closing cost assistance, please contact Mickee Whitney, Assistant Vice President/Mortgage Loan Officer, at mmwhitney@charlesriverbank.com or 508-321-3142.

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**July 15 - 19 Under The Sea**

**July 22 - 26 Under The Big Top**

**Aug. 5 - 9 Movie Mania**

**Aug. 12 - 16 Unicorns & Rainbows**

**Aug. 19 - 23 Wet ‘n’ Wild**

1/2 Day Theme Weeks - $125.00 Full week
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Clean Up Day in Upton Time Change, 10 a.m.

On Saturday, April 27, residents are invited to take part in a fun day of beautifying Upton. Volunteers will meet at 10 a.m. in the Upton VFW parking lot, t. 15 Milford St., Rt. 140, for coffee, donuts and a meet and greet. Please be on time. Bonnie Combs, of the Blackstone Heritage Corridor will hand out vests, pickers, gloves, and to register volunteers for this event as part of a region wide effort. The DPW will be on the scene to hand out bags. Once volunteers are registered, they can choose to clean their own streets or another part of town. Volunteers will be asked to say where they are cleaning. A Sign-Up Genius of streets will be sent out. Bag counters are also needed to see how many bags of trash collected. Participants should not go onto anyone’s private property, or the state forest since it is DCR property.

This great opportunity to teach children about the value of caring for Upton and the environment. Volunteers are responsible to follow safety rules and the event may not be suitable for young children. Volunteers will meet back at the VFW at 12:30 p.m. to return the vests and pickers and for a group picture. The DPW will pick up the litter where it is left on the side of roads.

Upton Center Volunteer Appreciation Day

The Upton Center will hold the annual Volunteer Appreciation Day on Wednesday, April 10. The event begins with a social at 11:30 a.m., followed by a potato bar lunch at noon and then entertainment provided by The Singing Trooper, Daniel Clark. This is a great opportunity for Center to show appreciation for the many volunteers who help all year through. This year’s theme is Every Moment Makes A Difference, where volunteers work on the Council of Aging Board, assist with Meals on Wheels, help with Bingo, fold or mail newsletters, work on fundraisers and give time in many other ways. Volunteers will eat free at the lunch, while guests will be asked to donate $3. Contact the Center at 508-529-4558 for more information or to save a place.

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Submitted by Matthew Bachtold, Library Director and Lee Ann Murphy, Children’s Librarian

Museum Passes
Welcome to spring, the weather is getting nice and it is time to think about going on some day trips. Upton Town Library offers a variety of discount admission passes to Massachusetts and Rhode Island museums. Along with attractions like the Boston Science Museum, New England Aquarium and Worcester Art Museum, don’t miss the Tower Hill Botanic Gardens, which are beautiful year-round. See the full list of museum passes UptonLibrary.org. Thank you to the Friends of the Upton Library and Blackstone Valley Gardeners for funding our pass program.

Passport Services
Upton Public Library is a passport acceptance office. We can help you with assembling all the forms and documents needed to apply for a US passport. Is your passport expiring this year-make sure you start the application process early, as it can take up to two months to apply and receive a new passport. Get more information at travel.state.gov or ask us at the library!

Children’s Vacation Events
On Thursday April 18, Playful Engineers will be at the Upton Town Hall from 1 to 3 p.m. Teaching artist Jay Mankita will bring his Traveling Maker Space and all 8-12 year olds are invited take part in this kinesthetic adventure. No registration required. Not a drop-off event. For more information, see UptonLibrary.org or PlayfulEngineers.com. Generously funded by a grant from the Upton Cultural Council.

On Friday April 19, from 1 to 3 p.m. will be Library Movie Day when a PG-rated film will be shown for those age 5 through 12. Registration is suggested but not required. Call the library for this month’s title or for more information or visit the Events link on our website.

Mrs. Murphy will be hosting Peep Catapults on Saturday April 20 from 10:30 a.m. to 12 noon, a STEM challenge to build catapults and launch these seasonal marshmallow treats. Suggested for ages 7-12. Registration is required for this event. Please call the library or visit the events link on UptonLibrary.org.

Baby Storytime
Baby Storytime is held Fridays at 10:30 a.m. in the Gathering Room. Drop in for stories, songs, & nursery rhymes. Mrs. Murphy will hold regular Baby Storytime on April 5 and 19. Themes will include Baby Animals and Frogs. Deb Hudgins returns for Music and Movement on April 12 and 26. Beginning Bridges generously sponsors a portion of this program through a CFCE grant. All sessions are for ages birth-3. No registration required. All sessions are limited due to space and are first come first served for the first 14 participants and caregivers.

Preschool Storytime
Preschool Storytime is held Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Gathering Room. Join Mrs. Murphy in April with themes including Baby Animals, Earth Day, Frogs, and Clothing. Yoga Storytime is April 11. Spanish Storytime is April 25. Drop in for stories, songs, and a simple craft. All sessions are for ages 3-6, no registration required.

LEGOC Club
Join Library Director, Matthew Bachtold, for the Thursday afternoon LEGO Club, a drop-in club from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. in the Gathering Room. Make new friends while building new creations. The library has the LEGOS, participants come for the fun.

Teen Group
C.A.R.T. the teen group will be working on the theme of Libraries/Strong Communities in April when they meet on Tuesdays at 3 p.m. in the Gathering Room. Participants will learn about making connections in Upton. Best for ages 10-16. No registration required. Be sure to check out some of the creations throughout the library from this Creative Artistic Reading Team!

Library Book Discussion Groups
The Library hosts monthly book discussion groups. All groups meet in the Library gathering room, and discussions last for 1 hour.

Library Book Group – meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m and alternates fiction and non-fiction titles. On April 24, the group will discuss The Word is Murder by Anthony Horowitz, a novel in which the author himself investigates a murder.

Upton Reads – meets on the second Tuesday at 12:45 p.m., and the second Thursday at 6:45 p.m. to read an eclectic mix of contemporary literary fiction. The group will discuss The Glass Ocean by Beatrice Williams, historical fiction that links the lives of three women across the 1900s on April 9 and 11.
Upton Rec Director Receives Award

Andrew St. George, Recreation Director for the Upton Recreation Department received the New Professional of the Year award from the Massachusetts Recreation and Parks Association (MRPA) at their annual meeting in March. St. George has been serving at the Upton Recreation Director for two years. Graduating from Gordon College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Recreation and Leisure, St. George began his career working for the Center of Hope, Southbridge, assisting with the Special Olympics program and running their summer camp for children with disabilities.

During his tenure, the camp, which was originally designed for those who have intellectual disabilities, was made more inclusive by opening it up to all children. Among his accomplishments as Upton’s Recreation Director is the revamping of the department’s marketing to make it more recognizable by the public. Another of his accomplishments was revitalizing the Upton Recreation summer program “Kids @ Play” by introducing new scheduling concepts which encourages the children to have the freedom to plan their day and do what they want.

Upton Easter Egg Hunt

An Easter Egg Hunt sponsored by Upton Men’s Club and Upton Police Department will be held Saturday, April 13 from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the VFW, Rt. 140, Upton, rain date of April 14. Free for children age one through 10. Bring a basket to collect Easter eggs and a camera for photos with the Easter Bunny. Non-perishable food donations are appreciated for the Upton Food Pantry.

The Upton Bloomer Girl Scholarships

The Upton Bloomer Girls will be awarding three $1,000 scholarships to graduating High School Seniors who are Upton residents attending any high school and who are looking to continue onto higher education. Scholarships are also available to children and grandchildren of any current Bloomer Girl members.

The Upton Bloomer Girl Scholarship applications are available at the Nipmuc Regional High School and Blackstone Valley Tech guidance departments.

The Scholarships are funded by Bloomer Girls fundraising events and donations.
A Clean Start for Spring
By Anne Mazar

Help get spring off to a clean start by participating in one of the area clean-up days. The mounds of trash a group can collectively scoop-up off the streets, open spaces and waterways is impressive. This is not a solution to the problem of our over-consumption habits and all too frequent use of non-biodegradable, one-use items. But the garbage is littering our public spaces. It looks trashy and we need to pick it up. Birds, mammals and aquatic life can die from getting tangled in or eating our garbage.

According to a recent Wall Street Journal article, in 1950 people produced about 4 billion pounds of plastic a year worldwide and today 600 billion pounds is produced annually with 20 billion pounds ending up in the oceans. Plastic does not decompose, but could linger in the environment for centuries. Recycling is helpful, but will not solve the problem, especially now that China does not want our garbage. And they shouldn’t. We need to reduce our waste. Easy steps include, using reusable water bottles, travel coffee mugs, shopping bags and up, instead of using a plastic straw. Be mindful of consumption.

The clean-up events below are open to everyone, volunteers will receive clean-up supplies at each event and there are no rain dates. Children are welcome with supervising adult. MENDON-Community Clean-up Day: Saturday, April 20, 9 a.m. to noon, at Henry P. Clough School, North 10 Ave. Food and drinks will be provided after the event by the Mendon Lions Club. All volunteers ages 3-12 will receive one free admission ticket to Community Clean-up Day: Saturday, April 13, 9 a.m. to noon at Blackstone River Watershed.

I have two high school friends who are still my closest friends to this day. They know me better than anyone and vice versa. In high school, we were constantly together either in classes, or attending football games, proms, or just hanging out on the weekends. My family always considered them both bonus daughters or sisters and still do. We went to different colleges, but somehow post college and well into adulthood, we managed to stay close. We have seen each other through the highest of highs and the lowest of lows. And I am grateful beyond measure that they are still a part of my life.

So, to those high school seniors preparing to graduate soon, you have the most exciting experiences ahead of you. You’ll meet new people and form new friendships; it’s all a part of growing up. However, if you’re lucky enough, you’ll somehow circle back to those high school friends who always seemed to have your back and from my experience, always will.

Two More Snow People

Somehow, someway we missed two entries in our 2019 Snowman Contest. Here they are!

Patrick and Cillian Scott, Mendon, worked hard to create this 70 inch tall NFL snow fan. A great job and thanks!

A Stylish Scene

I recently had the opportunity to speak to two women, Molly and Kimberly, who have been best friends since high school. Although Molly lives in Massachusetts and Kimberly resides in Colorado, they have somehow remained the best of friends throughout the years; something that seems all too rare these days.

Throughout those years, they’ve been there for each other through the highs of graduations, new jobs, each other’s weddings and the birth of children. They’ve also seen each other through the difficulties of divorce and throughout the struggles of raising a child with a disability.

As they spoke about their bond and flashbacked through some of their more difficult phases of life, they are still able to laugh, recalling the two dancing and singing along to Madonna in their teens.

And now, Kimberly is preparing to travel to Hopkinton to run the Boston Marathon for the third time in order to raise funds for the Michael Lisnow Respite Center; a place that Molly’s daughter attended for many years and where she flourished. It is an amazing gesture of true friendship and love.

As we move on from high school, many of us seem to take the same path; we attend college, possibly join the military, begin our professional careers, eventually marry and start families. At that point, we tend to lose touch with so many of the high school friends that at the time, seemed like our lifetime.

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Throughout those years, they’ve been there for each other through the highs of graduations, new jobs, each other’s weddings and the birth of children. They’ve also seen each other through the difficulties of divorce and throughout the struggles of raising a child with a disability.

As they spoke about their bond and flashbacked through some of their more difficult phases of life, they are still able to laugh, recalling the two dancing and singing along to Madonna in their teens.

And now, Kimberly is preparing to travel to Hopkinton to run the Boston Marathon for the third time in order to raise funds for the Michael Lisnow Respite Center; a place that Molly’s daughter attended for many years and where she flourished. It is an amazing gesture of true friendship and love.

As we move on from high school, many of us seem to take the same path; we attend college, possibly join the military, begin our professional careers, eventually marry and start families. At that point, we tend to lose touch with so many of the high school friends that at the time, seemed like our lifetime.

I have high school friends who are still my closest friends to this day. They know me better than anyone and vice versa. In high school, we were constantly together either in classes, or attending football games, proms, or just hanging out on the weekends. My family always considered them both bonus daughters or sisters and still do. We went to different colleges, but somehow post college and well into adulthood, we managed to stay close. We have seen each other through the highest of highs and the lowest of lows. And I am grateful beyond measure that they are still a part of my life.

So, to those high school seniors preparing to graduate soon, you have the most exciting experiences ahead of you. You’ll meet new people and form new friendships; it’s all a part of growing up. However, if you’re lucky enough, you’ll somehow circle back to those high school friends who always seemed to have your back and from my experience, always will.

Two More Snow People

Somehow, someway we missed two entries in our 2019 Snowman Contest. Here they are!

Patrick and Cillian Scott, Mendon, worked hard to create this 70 inch tall NFL snow fan.

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Obituaries

Mary Alice Hayes Lemieux - Kalmes
UPTON: Mary Alice Hayes Lemieux - Kalmes, 92, went home to be with the Lord on Tuesday, March 19, 2019. She was the daughter of the late Frank Hayes and Alice Morrill Hayes-Schoely. Born in Chicago, Ill., on June 18, 1926, Mary moved to Massachusetts at the age of six weeks where she spent the majority of her life. She was employed as a Letter Carrier for the United States Post Office, along with driving the school bus for the Upton School District and delivering local newspapers. Mary was well known and loved by all who knew her. Mary moved to California in 1993 where she spent the love of her life, Bert, who passed away in 2008, after 13 wonderful years of marriage. Mary and Bert had a love beyond what anyone could imagine and enjoyed life together camping, traveling, going to yard sales, playing Bingo and participating in local groups, such as the Elks, Emblem Club and Grasshoppers. Mary's family was very important to her and she and Bert would travel across country in their motor home at least once a year to visit family and friends.

Mary is survived by her children, Donna and her husband Gene Leclaire, Sharon and her husband James Fitgbiggens, Stephen and his wife Cheryl Lemieux, Michael Lemieux, daughter-in-law Donna Lemieux, Ronald Lemieux, Molly Smith, Rachel and her husband Charles MacRae, step children, Diane and her husband Craig Cotton, and Larry Kalmes, as well as 20 grandchildren, 35 great-grandchildren and six great, great-grandchildren, and her dear lifelong friend, Hazel Saderl. She was predeceased by her brother James Hayes, her son David Lemieux, granddaughter Tammy Lemieux, grandson James Gormally, Jr., great-granddaughter Kaitlyn Fitgbiggens and son-in-law Eric Smith. Services were held in the Cornerstone Church, 5 East Hartford Ave., Uxbridge, on Saturday, March 30, 2019. The church was formerly North Uxbridge Baptist Church, where Mary attended and received Christ as her Savior. In lieu of flowers, the family is asking for donations in her memory to be made to the St. Camillus Health Center Van Fund, made payable to "St. Camillus Van Fund' 447 Hill St., Whitinsville, MA 01588. Their love and care for Mary, as well as her family, was beyond amazing. Arrangements were handled by the Williams-Pedersen Funeral Home, Inc. of Upton.
Upton Ballot Set; Three Candidates Vying for Selectman

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

On May 14, Upton voters will elect a new Selectman and there are three new residents running for the seat. The towns Annual Election will take place at Nipmuc Regional High School. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. Current Selectman Gary Daugherty announced he will not be seeking re-election after serving one term. Three residents are now competing for the three year seat and include David Ross, Michelle Antinarelli, and Maureen Dwinnell.

Other seats up for re-election remain unchallenged and include David Looper for Moderator for one year, William Taylor for Assessor of Taxes for three years, Dorothy Scally for the Mendon Upton Regional School District Committee for three years, Glenn Fowler for Cemetery Commission for three years, Stedman Briggs for Board of Health for three years, Judith Katz Goodman, Michelle Antinarelli, and Anne O'Brien for the three, three year seats for Library Trustee, and Paul Carey for Planning Board for five years.

In addition, James Bates, Stephen Driver, and Michael Morgan are running for three of the five Constable seats for three years. The two other seats remain without candidates. Several other seats also remain without candidates. Richard Porter took out nomination papers for Recreation Commissioner for three years, but the papers were not returned by deadline. Michael Oliver for Board of Commissioner of Trusts Funds also took out papers but did not return them. In addition, the one year Library Trustee's seat remains vacant without a candidate. Residents interested running, can consider a write in campaign. 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 the Town Clerk's office at 508-529-3565 or kmcelreath@uptonma.gov. Regular office hours for the Town Clerk are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Friday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Dog Park Discussed at Upton Selectmen's Meeting

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

An initial discussion on a possible dog park in Upton was brought up by resident Michael Howell during the Board of Selectmen's March 19 meeting. Howell stated he was looking for some direction from the Board on what the initial steps might be toward the creation of the park.

In a letter to the Selectmen, Howell stated he's spoken to several residents who also believe the dog park would be a positive move for the town and noted several town-owned properties, such as a portion of Stephanis Farm, could be a possibility for the fenced in park. "It's very well situated for handicap accessibility and parking," said Howell.

Selectman Chair Gary Daugherty supported the idea of at least investigating the measure. "After talking to a few people, I think we might want to look into forming a committee to study this. We have to look into the bylaws; the liability to the town. What if someone got bit there?" he said, Daugherty added it might be a good idea to reach out to other communities that have dog parks to see what's involved, including funding. It was questioned whether or not anything related to the park would need to come before a town meeting vote. " Anything that requires some type of funding appropriations is going to need town meeting action," explained Town Manager Derek Brindisi. "Dog parks are becoming very popular and there is significant grant funding available to design and construct such parks... In the town of Plymouth, they developed a dog park at zero cost to the taxpayers."

Selectman Stephen Mattaliani stated he did not want to add an additional section to the town's budget for the dog park should it come to fruition. "I think it's a one time expense that would make sense, but I don't want anything revolving in the budget. It may be a good idea to get feedback from the animal control officer," he said. Bill Taylor of the Land Stewardship Committee stated a survey was just completed which asked residents about improvements or facilities they would like to see in town. "A number of people selected dog park," said Taylor. It was suggested that any kind of dog park committee formed could fall under the Land Stewardship Committee since its charge concerns assisting with the management of various town-owned properties. Taylor stated he would bring the matter up at the next Committee meeting.

Upton Democratic Town Committee

The Upton Democratic Town Committee will be holding its monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 16, at the United Parish Church of Upton at 7 p.m. The meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. New members are invited to join. To learn more about, connect on Facebook or at UptonDems@gmail.com.

Legislators' Office Hours

Upton residents who would like to speak with local legislators may stop by the Upton Center, Farm St. on Monday, April 8. A representative from State Senator Michael Moore's office will be available from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. A staff member from State Rep. David Muradian's office will be available from 12 to 1 p.m.

The Upton Center

The Upton Center is open Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Staff is available by phone from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Activities are subject to change. Please call 508-529-4588 with any questions.

Friday, April 5
One-on-One Nutrition Meetings, 10:45 to 11:30 a.m.
Saturday, April 6
Bloomer Girls' Spring Dinner Dance, 5 to 8 p.m.
Monday, April 8
Senator Moore's Office Hours, 9 to 10 a.m.
Rep. Muradian's Office Hours, 12 to 5 p.m.
Tuesday, April 9
Shopping Trip to Trader Joe's, White City Loop, Shrewsbury, 12:30 p.m.
Wednesday, April 10
Volunteer Appreciation: Social at 11 a.m., Lunch at 12 p.m., Singing Trooper at 12:45 p.m.
Thursday, April 11
Breakfast with the Town Manager, 9 a.m.
Podiatrist Appointments, 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m., Call Center for Appt.
Friday, April 12
BVT Simon West, Depart at 8:45 a.m. for 9 a.m. appts.
One-on-One Nutrition Meetings, 10:45 to 11:30 a.m., Call the Center to Schedule
Shopping Trip to Market Basket, Devens, 12:30 p.m.
Tuesday, April 16
Craft Time with Betty, 10:45 a.m.
Wednesday, April 17
Shopping Trip to Solomon Pond Mall, Marlborough, 10 a.m.
Thursday, April 18
Shopping Trip to Salvation Army, Shaw's, Job Lots, Walmart Loop, Northbridge, 9:15 a.m.
Friday, April 19
One-on-One Nutrition Meetings, 10:45 to 11:30 a.m., Call the Center to Schedule
Birthday Bash, 12:45 p.m.
Monday
Tai Chi, 1 p.m.
ZENgenvity, 2:30 p.m.
Tuesday
Card Players Group, 10 a.m.
WG Games, 12:30 p.m.
Wednesday
Computer Class, 9 a.m.
Strength and Stretch, 10 a.m.
Library Table, 11 a.m.
Canasta, 12:30 p.m.
Thursday
Knit and Crochet Group, 10 a.m.
Bingo, 1 p.m.
Friday
Strength and Stretch, 10 a.m. (Call Tai Chi at 1:40 p.m for a 1:30 Nutrition Appt afterwards)
Pests & Diseases Web Page

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is launching a new “Pests and Diseases” webpage. The new page lists all pest and disease programs managed by APHIS as part of its mission to protect American agriculture and natural resources. The web address is APHIS.usda.gov/pests-and-disease or click the Pests and Diseases link under the Resources tab.

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Greenleaf Garden Club Member (GGC), Teddi Weber interpreted the title “Warm Breezes” with her airy design at the Boston Flower and Garden Show. Judges commented that it was an “innovative and creative interpretation” of the theme. Composed of all foliage and all fresh plant material, several new techniques for manipulating leaves were used to create other forms and looks for her presentation. The all foliage design used largely green leaves-aspidistra, lily grass and foxtail ferns. Weber introduced color with Ti leaves, leucodendron and dusty miller. She created a captivating, breezy impression with much rhythm and contrast in texture and received an Honorable Mention. The Greenleaf Garden Club is a member of the National Garden Clubs, Inc. and the Garden Club Federation of MA, Inc. For information about the club, email greenleafgardenclub@gmail.org.

Teddi Weber stands next to her all captivating foliage design entry at the Boston Flower and Garden Show. Contributed photo.

GGC Member Exhibits in Boston Flower and Garden Show
Electronics Recycling Day

The First Congregational Church of Milford, 4 Congress St., is sponsoring an Electronics Recycling Day on Saturday, May 4, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. The church will ensure that 99 percent of dropped off items will be reused and recycled.

For more information, contact Martha at 508-904-4471.

Blackstone Heritage Corridor Offers Skills Workshops

Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor is offering several Skills Workshops in April through its Volunteers-In-Parks (VIP) program.

Wednesday, April 10, Cemetery Conservation Skills, 6:30 to 8:15 p.m. at Swan Point Cemetery, Gray Coale Reception Hall, 585 Blackstone Blvd., Providence. This workshop, presented by volunteers Betty and Carlo Mencucci, will introduce the proper method of conserving gravestones. Participants will learn about the various stone types as well as different techniques and materials used in the conservation process. For more information, call Betty Mencucci at 401-564-8449 or bmencucci@verizon.net.

Monday, April 22, Green Cleaning for a Healthy Home and Planet, 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Blackstone Heritage Corridor office, 670 Linwood Ave., Whitinsville. Come celebrate Earth Day and learn all about green cleaning. In this fun and informative workshop, local green cleaning experts Leslie Reichert and Verusca Mazzola will introduce homemade non-toxic cleaners and will talk about which ingredients to avoid in store-bought ones. Imagine salt, baking soda, cornstarch, hydrogen peroxide, and rubbing alcohol, just to name a few, can get a home clean and smelling fresh. Bring questions and a notebook to jot down handy tips and green cleaning facts! To RSVP for any of the workshops, contact Suzanne Buchanan, Volunteer Coordinator at 508-234-4242 or Volunteer@BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org. To learn more about Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor and its Volunteers-In-Parks program, visit BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org.

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- Landscape Lighting/Sound, Hardscaping:
- Design/Planting, ICPI Certified, UMASS Green School Certified
- Patios, Walkways, Walls, Firepits, Outdoor Kitchens
- Mowing, Landscape Maintenance:
- Landscape Lighting/Sound, Hardscaping:
- Design/Planting, MA HIC License #194556

Since 1984
The Greenleaf Garden Club of Milford will host Suzanne Mahler, avid gardener, photographer and lecturer at the April 22, meeting at the Ruth Ann Bleakney Senior Center, 66 N. Bow St., Milford. The meeting will start with refreshments and displays at 6:30 p.m. and the presentation will start at 7 p.m. Entitled, Dividing and Transplanting Perennials, her presentation will give information and advice for division of perennials in the garden including the best time to divide and plant. Mahler will demonstrate “tools of the trade” and methods of division.

Mahler has been developing her own acre garden for 40 years with extensive collections of woody plants and perennials. Among Mahler’s favorites are daylilies and she is an active member of the New England Daylily Society.

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

Transplanting and Dividing Perennials

The Daniels Farmstead, 286 Mendon St., Blackstone, on the Mendon town line, will open the season with a Birds & Blossoms theme on Sunday, May 19. At 11 a.m., naturalist Kathy Barton will lead a wildlife walk through the trails at Daniels. At 1 p.m., Landscaper and Naturalist, John Root will give a 90 minute presentation, Edible Perennial Gardening and Landscaping, in the 1850 barn. This program is supported in part by a grant from the Blackstone Cultural Council, supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Spring plants, annuals & perennials will be available for sale. Vendors are welcome to this event. Visit DanielsFarmstead.org for vendor form.

The 2019 Farmers Markets will begin on July 7 and continue every Sunday, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. through September 29. Many special events are planned as well as the tours of this historic property. The grill will be open from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. for lunch, and musical entertainment will be provided during Farmers Markets from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

A Revolutionary War Reenactment, in partnership with Blackstone Valley Technical School, will be held the weekend of October 5 and 6. Planning for the organic garden is underway and many vendors are confirming for this season. For further information, visit DanielsFarmstead.org, or contact Justine Brewer at justine@southwickszoo.com.

Touch A Vernal Pool

APRIL 5, 2019

UXBRIDGE-Enjoy Big Night on Saturdays, April 6 and 13 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at West Hill Dam. Park Rangers will lead an exploration, up close and personal, of a typical Massachusetts vernal pool. Learn what do salamanders and wood frogs look like crossing fields and roads as they migrate to vernal pools for spring mating. Learn about the sounds of the wood frogs mating and more.

Meet at the West Hill Dam office, 518 East Hartford Ave, Uxbridge. Dress for the weather, rain or shine this program will take place and bring a flashlight. Nets are not permitted.

Youth under the age of 17 must be accompanied by an adult. Participants will view a brief slide show of vernal pool characteristics and indicator species. A one-mile hike will discover several vernal pools to observe wood frogs.

For more information, contact Ranger Viola Bramel at 978-318-5317. Junior Rangers Level 2, earn wildlife credit.

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For more information, contact Ranger Viola Bramel at 978-318-5317. Junior Rangers Level 2, earn wildlife credit.
Easter Egg Hunt
MILFORD-The Easter Bunny of Jesus Parish is sponsoring an Easter Egg Hunt on Sunday, April 7 in the Bell Tower Room at 11:30 a.m. Admission is free for those two and under, $6 for ages three to 12, and $8 for 13 and up.

Lunch includes salad, pasta, meatballs desert and drinks. Please call the rectory at 508-634-5435. Please bring a basket and a camera to take pictures with the Easter bunny.

Knights of Columbus Foxwoods Trip
MILFORD-The Knights of Columbus Valencia Council 80 is sponsoring a Foxwoods trip on Friday, April 26. The bus will leave the municipal parking lot across from Sacred Heart Church, Milford, at 4 p.m. and leave Foxwoods at 1 a.m. The cost is $20 per person and includes transportation, a free buffet and $10 in slot plays. Anyone interested in attending must reserve a spot by Friday, April 19, by calling James Burke at 508-478-9813. The trip is open to anyone age 21 and above. Proceeds will benefit the St. John’s Food for the Poor.

Mendon Egg Hunt
MENDON-The Mendon Festival Committee, Mendon Parks Department and Custom Home Realty will hold an Egg Hunt on Saturday, April 13 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Cogswell School, North Ave, Mendon. The day will begin with a variety of games, crafts and photos with the Easter Bunny. The egg hunt will start at noon and bags will be provided. Entry is free but there will be a suggested donation bucket. More sponsors are being sought with information available at MendonEggHunt.com. Sponsors. All proceeds will be donated to the Mendon Block Party Committee.

Celebrate National Poetry Month with Mary Bonina
MILFORD April is “National Poetry Month,” so come celebrate it with Mary Bonina on Saturday, April 6 at the Milford Town Library, Spruce St., as she conducts a poetry workshop and gives a reading of her poems. The workshop will run from 10 a.m. to 12 noon, while the reading will be at 2 p.m. Native of Worcester, Bonina spent time as a child visiting relatives in Milford and grew to love her hometown. My Father’s Eyes, was published in 2013.

Bonina earned an MFA from the acclaimed Warren Wilson Program for Writers. Her poems and excerpts from her memoir have been published in Salamander, Hanging Loose, and Gulf Stream. A short story, “March,” was published in the Istanbul Literary Review. She serves on the Board of Directors of the Writer’s Room in Boston. Space is limited for the workshop. To register, please call the Reference Desk at 508-473-2145 x 2. Sponsored by the Friends of the Milford Town Library, this event is free and open to the public.

Rak Pack participating in Jimmy Fund Walk
BOSTON-Jason Rakitin grew up in Upton, and his friends and family, the Rak Pack are participating in the Sunday, September 22 Jimmy Fund Walk in his memory. Rakitin passed away in September 2017 from gastrointestinal sarcoma. This is the second walk in Rakitin memory.

Some of the participants, Steve and Eileen Rakitin still live in Upton. Others such as the Rak Pack are living in other parts of the state. New team members are invited to join and donations to sponsor the walk are welcome. The team raised $34,000 last year and hope to do better this year. For more information about the Rak Pack or to donate visit DanaFarber.JimmyFund.org/site/TR/ JimmyFundWalk/JimmyFundWalk?team_id=2910&pg=team&fr_id=1160.

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 BlackstoneValley.org. email administrator@blackstonevalley.org, call 508-234-9090 or stop by the chamber offices, 670 Linwood Ave. Bldg A, Suite 5, Whitinsville.

30th Annual Golf Tournament on Monday, May 13 at Pleasant Valley Country Club, 95 Armley Rd., Sutton at 10 a.m. Includes a round of golf, dinner and raffles. Reserve by Monday, April 15.

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 offices, 258 Main Street, Suite 306, Milford.

The 97th Annual Meeting and Awards Breakfast: Magic in Membership will be held Tuesday, April 23 at 8 a.m. in The Crystal Room, 49 Cedar St., Milford. Justine Brewer will receive the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Beth Tikvah School Open House
WESTBOROUGH-Beth Tikvah Synagogue, 30 Oak St., Westborough, a warm, inclusive and diverse Jewish congregation, will hold its annual Religious School Open House on Sunday, morning April 7th, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. Attenders will have the opportunity to meet with Rabbi Michael Swarts, Religious School coordinator Cindy Avergon, teachers and families. Children are invited to sit in on classes that day. RSVP to EJ Dotts at vpsecretary@bethtikvahsynagogue.org.

Twice Blessed Thrift Shop
HOPEDALE-The Sacred Heart Church of Hopedale Twice Blessed Thrift Shop will offer 50 percent off kitchenware, dishes and glassware in April. New spring fashions are available as are a limited supply of First Communion dresses starting at $24.99. Open every Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m and Sundays from 9 a.m. to noon. Closed Palm Sunday April 14, Holy Thursday April 18 and Easter April 21.

The Garden Tourist
MILFORD-Weekend gardeners, garden tourists, landscape professionals and everyone else is invited to a presentation by Jana Milbocker, The Garden Tourist, on Wednesday, April 10 at 7 p.m. in the Milford Town Library. Spruce St. Milbocker will offer a visual presentation and discussion of her new book The Garden Tourist- 120 Destination Gardens and Nurseries in the Northeast. It includes photos and discussions of the best public gardens, nursery display gardens, and private gardens in the Northeast that are open to the public and ready to offer an inspiration. Learn about each garden’s highlights and ideal times to visit, while enjoying a visual tour of each amazing destination.

Milbocker is an avid gardener, garden designer, lecturer and writer, as well as the owner of Enchanted Gardens, a landscape design firm in Holliston. Sponsored by the Friends of the Milford Town Library, this event is free and open to the public.

Hook n’ Event
WOODSTOCK-The Quiet Corner chapter of ATHA (Association of Traditional Hooking Artists), a group of fiber artists specializing in hooked rugs, will be hosting a Hook n’ Event meeting monthly in Woodstock, Conn. The group is hosting a Hook n’ Event with vendors on Saturday, June 15 at the Woodstock Conn. Fairgrounds from 9 a.m to 3 p.m. Pre-registration by June 1 is required and a form can be obtained from Gretchen Gray at gretchg@verizon.net.

Pottery Night
MILFORD-A Pottery Paint Night is being held in the Bell Tower Room of Sacred Heart Church, Milford, on Wednesday, May 15 at 7 p.m. Refreshments will be served at 6:30 p.m Cost is $25 per person. Sign-up by May 4.

Jesus Christ Superstar
WHITINSVILLE-On Sunday, April 13, at 7 p.m. Jesus Christ Superstar will be performed at the Whitinsville Presbyterian Church, 51 Cottage St. Jesus Christ Superstar is a timeless work set against the backdrop of an extraordinary and universally known series of events usually seen through the eyes of Judas Iscariot.

Open to all, a freewill offering will help support Peace of Bread Community Kitchen and Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter.

Bunny Breakfast
HOPEDALE-The Hopedale Union Church, 25 Dutcher St. will hold a Bunny Breakfast on Saturday, April 13 from 8 to 11 a.m. The potluck breakfast will include a free photo opportunity with the Easter Bunny, kids’ crafts, face painting, and raffles. Admission is $6 at the door, age two and under free.

Alzheimer’s/Dementia Friendly Worship Service
MILFORD-The First Congregational Church in Milford invites those with Alzheimer’s/ dementia and their caregivers to worship at a special Sunday service on April 7 and May 19 at noon. Come sing familiar hymns, hear favorite scripture passages, and say special prayers during a 20-minute worship service. Everyone is invited to enjoy fellowship, coffee, tea and light refreshments following the service. The church located on Congress St. Milford, next to the Post Office, is handicap accessible. Parking is available in the church lot, the Post Office parking lot and area streets. Please call 508-473-5259 with any questions and to R.S.V.P.

Thanks To Yanks Spring into Spring Fundraiser
MILFORD-Thanks To Yanks Spring into Spring Dance will be Saturday, April 13 from 7 to 11 p.m. at DoubleTree by Hilton, Beaver St., Milford. The event will include a cash bar, 50/50 silent auction, 50/50 raffle, hot and cold hors d’oeuvres and a cash bar. Net proceeds will be used to provide direct aid, and support to meet emergency, unmet and basic needs support initiatives for active duty military, veterans and their families.

Tickets are $35 online now until April 6 at ThanksToYanks.org or $40 at the door.

Thank You Yanks, is a non-political 501(c) (3) organization whose mission is to support military members, veterans and their families. For more information or to donate, please visit ThanksToYanks.org, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram.
Mendon Continues to Foster New Construction

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

Mendon residents may be noticing more and more trucks hauling building materials in and out of town, trees being cut down and land being leveled. That's because new construction seems to be on an uptick these days.

"When I started on the Planning Board ten years ago, one of the priorities was broadening the commercial scope of the town but with the intention that it suits the town," said Planning Board Chair Bill Ambrosino.

Over the years, Mendon has taken the approach of slowly but surely when it comes to increasing its commercial base with restaurants such as the successful Galliford’s Tavern and Greenhouse Wood Fired Pub. In addition, smaller commercial businesses such as a hair salon, jewelry store, barber shop, and a medical office were constructed and operate under one roof on the Imperial Car Dealership lot owned by Kevin Meehan.

Residents driving by Imperial have also noticed some impending new construction underway at the 45 – 59 Uxbridge Road address, which Meehan also owns. To date, a public hearing for a site plan review came before the Planning Board for new parking areas, an automotive restoration business and a new access road for future entry to the back portion of the property.

And, due to the passage of a new bylaw at the November Town Meeting last year, new marijuana establishments could be constructed in certain areas of the Highway/Business District that runs along Rt. 140 and Hartford Ave. However, any such businesses would need a host agreement from the town first.

Besides commercial structures in town, new residential construction continues. Currently, Mendon has a number of subdivisions underway including the Applewood Estates off of Providence St. that contains eight lots as well as the Pond St. subdivision with a total of 16 lots. "And the Miscoe development is ongoing," said Ambrosino of the 50-house subdivision. "That seems to be a forever project, but the development continues there."

Ambrosino said for the most part, residents are in favor of the new commercial construction in town as it helps with the tax base, but once in a while he hears from frustrated individuals. "What some people don't understand is that if an owner sells a property and someone buys it for development, they have rights too, as long as the developer stays within the confines of our zoning bylaws and subdivision rules and regulations," he said. "If we were to constantly deny new construction, it would open up the town to law suits."

Mendon resident David Capone, whose property abuts the new Applewood subdivision, says he doesn't particularly mind the commercial and residential building, but said he hopes the community doesn't lose its charm as the town continues to evolve. "I'm not necessarily against new construction, I just don't want to lose what makes Mendon—Mendon." Ambrosino said keeping Mendon looking like Mendon is certainly a priority for the Planning Board. "You have to prepare for growth and manage growth. It's important to keep it tidy and eye appealing. Honestly, I think Rt. 16 looks better today than it did 15 years ago."
Upcoming Adult Book Club Picks

All book club meetings are typically the first Monday of the month, unless it is a holiday, 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. Upcoming selections are:
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

Nonfiction Book Club
In May a new quarterly Nonfiction Book Club will be introduced! Each discussion will feature a topical, timely, buzzworthy nonfiction read. The inaugural book will be Susan Orleans’s The Library Book. Orleans, author of the bestselling The Orchid Thief, recounts the story of the devastating 1986 fire at the Los Angeles Public Library, a fire that has baffled investigators for over thirty years. Despite all their efforts, one mystery has remained: Did the library burn in a fit of passion or was it the work of a pyromaniac? The book includes informative interviews with authors and will include a question and answer session with the author afterward.

Upcoming seed releases are set for April 8, April 22, and May 6. Details to follow. In the meantime, the library welcomes seed and gardening talk on Thursday, May 2, time TBD in the Art Holmes Community Room. Those interested in reserving either space are asked to visit the library’s website at www.taftpublisherlibrary.org-click on Meeting Room Reservations at the top of the page. The Meeting Room Use policy includes guidelines for use by groups. To reserve either meeting space, click on the Room Reservation Form link. Room Reservation Forms may be scanned and submitted via email to librarydirector@medonnon.ma, faxed to 508-473-7049, or dropped off in person at the upstairs circulation desk in the library. Please contact the Library Director with any questions at 508-473-3259.

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. Information on other passes click on ‘About’ at the top of the TaftPublicLibrary.org and then click on ‘Museum Passes.’

Join the Friends of the Taft Public Library
The Friends of the Taft Public Library typically meet once a month upstairs in the library. Come and join in on the fun and help them strengthen the Library’s connection with the Mendon community. For more information visit TaftPublicLibrary.org and click on the Friends of the Taft Library link or email friendsoftaftlibrary@gmail.com.

Children’s News April 2019
If registration for any the following, please log onto TaftPublicLibrary.org and find the events page to register.
- Itty Bitty Story Time
- Deb Hudgins: Music & Movement
- Muffins with Mom
- Drama Adventure
- How to Run a Book Club
- Easter Storytime

Drop in Craft
Come craft with us on Thursday, April 11 from 3 to 6 p.m. Stop by and celebrate Spring! Spring Crafts will be available in the Children’s Room.

Makerspace
The Taft Library & Friends of Taft Library proudly introduce our newest addition to the library! Love to create? Can you take everyday items and make something great? Want to spend some time tinkering??? Stop by the library on Tuesday, April 16 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and see where your mind takes you!!

Lego Club
Back by popular demand, the Lego Club meets on Wednesday, April 17 at 1 p.m. The hour includes a story or two to help guide creativity as members use the library’s Legos to make creations. This program is great for all ages...as long as they don’t eat the legos! Registration is required.

Muffins with Mom
Sponsored by Beginning Bridges CFCE, The Muffin House & The Taft Library. The free drop-in event for up to 15 families, first come, first serve will be held Thursday, April 25 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. Light refreshments will be served and families will have the opportunity to build social connections and learn about family friendly resources.

Deb Hudgins: Music & Movement
Join Deb Hudgins on Thursday, April 25 for a 30-minute program. Welcome Spring themed program which features singing and guitar music for infants through preschoolers at 3:30 p.m. No registration is required.

Book Clubs
- Graphic Novel Book Club: Love reading Graphic Novels?? Then you will love our new book club! Join us on Thursday, May 9 at 5 p.m. to discuss this month’s book picks, Dog Man & Dog Man Unleashed. Pizza and refreshments will be served.

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Dining Guide
Help the Mendon Legion Post by Taking a Chance on Seeing a Sox-Yankee Game

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

Mendon’s American Legion Commander Susan Tetreault wants to give one lucky winner two tickets to a Red Sox versus Yankees game at Fenway— all while supporting a very special cause.

According to Tetreault, the town’s American Legion building, located at 13 Milford St., needs a complete interior overhaul. So, she came up with an idea to donate two of her own Red Sox tickets to raise funding needed for the project.

“The building is just a little hole in the wall, built in the 1940s. And when you walk in, it’s still in the 1940s,” said Tetreault of the Roger L. Wood Post.

The Commander said she, hoping with a more updated look inside, people will be interested in renting out the facility for football games, welcome home parties, and baby or wedding showers.

Tetreault needs to raise a total of $20,000 for the overhaul measure. “I only need the materials for the renovations. All the labor has been donated,” she said. “I’m not sure I’ll raise it all with one fundraiser, but it’s a start.”

Because all of her veteran members are in their 70s and 80s, she is overseeing the project herself and also doing it for those members whom she says deserve an updated American Legion. Tetreault has used her own money to pay for certain expenses in order to keep the building operating.

The raffle tickets are for a Red Sox vs. Yankees game on Saturday, July 27 at 4 p.m. Seats are located in the Pavilion Reserve Section just after the first base side, Section 15, Row G. The cost is $10 for one raffle ticket and $20 for three. The drawing will take place right after Mendon’s Memorial Day Parade on May 27. The winner does not need to be present.

Residents may enter the raffle by contacting Tetreault directly at 508-473-5681 or tickets may be purchased at Mendon Computer Outlet, 14 Hastings St. in the plaza with Willowbrook Restaurant.

“What’s better than a summer day at Fenway Park watching a Sox, Yankees game?” said Tetreault. A minimum of 100 tickets must be sold for the raffle to take place. Monies will be returned if the minimum sale is not met.

A Tribute to Robin Williams with Roger Kabler

Noted impersonator Roger Kabler visits Mendon at 7 p.m on Thursday, April 25, for a night of laughs in a tribute to Robin Williams. The program, sponsored by the Taft Public Library, will be held at the Mendon Town Hall. Kabler has been performing as a comedian for over 30 years. He was featured on VH-1’s Stand Up Spotlight and was a regular on The Carol Burnett Show, both in 1991, and his impression of Robin Williams has long been a part of his stand-up routine. His tribute show will be the subject of an upcoming motion picture entitled Being Robin.

A funny, poignant, and sometimes wild ride through the mind of a loveable madman will be offered for mature audiences only. Registration is required as space is limited. To register, log on to TaftPublicLibrary.org and click on ‘Library Event Calendar and Registrations’ at the top right of our web page. Call 508-473-3259 with any additional questions.

Let’s Laugh Today

On Thursday, April 11, from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at the Mendon Senior Center, enjoy a unique exercise program of laughing and clapping combined with gentle breathing that any age and level of physical ability can do. There are no fancy poses; participants can sit or stand. Experience all the health benefits of a good belly laugh; no comedy or jokes involved! Led by Certified Laughter Yoga Teacher Linda Hamaker of Let’s Laugh Today, Let’s Laugh Today.com. This program is free of charge, but please register at the Senior Center, 508-478-6175.
2019 Senior of the Year Nominations

The Mendon Council on Aging is now accepting nominations for the 2019 Senior Citizen of the Year. Since 1978, a Mendon resident or residents, age 60 or older, who exemplifies a spirit of public service and made a positive difference in the community has received this honor. Written nominations will be accepted until June 1. The award will be presented in September. Forms are available at the Mendon Senior Center or online at MendonMA.gov.

Learn American Sign Language (ASL)

A six-week course will be offered on Wednesday mornings at 11 a.m. the Mendon Senior Center, beginning April 10. The instructor, Rachel Largy, raised by deaf parents, is a graduate of the National Institute for the Deaf in New York, and a certified interpreter in ASL. With sign language as her primary language, Largy has taught at several high schools and colleges. The classes at the Senior Center will consist of basic sign language for beginners and all are welcome. Registration is required for this free program, by stopping by the Center 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 assortment of fiction, nonfiction, science fiction, and children’s books, puzzles, games, CDs, DVDs, and other previous 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.

Mendon Board of Health-E.L. Harvey and Sons Scholarships

The Mendon Board of Health (BOH), in partnership with E. L. Harvey and Sons, is proud to announce their annual Good Citizen Scholarship Awards, which are provided to high school graduating seniors in the Town of Mendon. Two scholarships in the amount of $500 each will be offered. Applications are available online at MendonMa.gov-click on Board of Health and in the Board of Health office. Applications must be received by the BOH office no later than Thursday, April 25, at 3 p.m.

Cemetery Cleaning

The Trustees notify all lot owners in the Swandale and Quaker Cemeteries in Mendon that all plants and decorations on the graves should be removed before April 15. The cemeteries will be cleaned and all items will be discarded and disposed during that process. Cooperation is appreciated.

Mendon Senior Center

The Mendon Senior Center serves Mendon residents 60 years of age or older, people with disabilities, and care givers. 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.

Friday, April 5
Book Fair, 3 to 7 p.m.

Saturday, April 6
Book Fair, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Sunday, April 7
Book Fair, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Monday, April 8
Friends Meeting, 11 a.m.

Wednesday, April 10
Council on Aging Meeting, 10 a.m.
ASL Six Week Course, 11 a.m.

Thursday, April 11
Let’s Laugh Today, 10:30 a.m.

Friday, April 12
Beautification Committee Meeting, 11 a.m.

Tuesday, April 16
May Basket Craft, 10:30 a.m.

Wednesday, April 17
Free Tai Chi Class, 9 a.m.
ASL Six Week Course, 11 a.m.

Monday, April 22
Scrapbooking, 10:30 a.m.

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

Tuesday
Walking Club, Various Locations, 8 a.m.
Weather Permitting Stretch and Flexibility, 9 a.m.
Lunch Club, 12 p.m.
Hand and Foot (Canasta), 1 p.m.
Yoga, 6 p.m.

Wednesday
Walking Club, Various Locations, 8 a.m.
Weather Permitting Walking Club, Various Locations, 8 a.m.
Weather Permitting Panera Bread, 9 a.m.

Thursday
Walking Club, Various Locations, 8 a.m.
Weather Permitting Cribbage, 9 a.m.
Stretch and Flexibility, 9 a.m.
Wellness Group, 10:30 a.m. (1st and 3rd Thursdays of Month)
Lunch Club, 12 p.m.
Yarn Works, 1 p.m.

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

Mendon Meetings

Monday, April 8
Board of Selectmen, Town Hall, 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 11
Conservation Commission, 18 Main St., Public Hearing on 39 Providence St., 7 p.m.

Thursday, April 18
Zoning Board of Appeals, Town Hall, Public Hearing on 147 Hartford Ave. East, 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.

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**School District Budget Equals Money Worries**

By Melissa Orff  
Staff Reporter

Discussion on budgets during the March 25 Mendon Upton Regional School Committee meeting, with both FY19 and FY20 causing some concerns for the district.

Several repair and maintenance issues plaguing the Mendon Upton Regional School District (MURSD) will put a strain on already tight finances as the remainder of the 2018-19 school year winds down, said school officials. Director of Finance Jay Byer presented a list of repairs that need to be completed this year that total close to $300,000 including the boiler at Miscoe High School for approximately $60,000, a water pressure pump that needs to be replaced for approximately $15,000, and the replacement of the water treatment system at Clough Elementary for $45,000.

"The DEP (Department of Environmental Protection) said that we need all new equipment [for the water treatment system]," said Byer. "The water quality is fine, it is tested every week, but it is 15-years-old and it’s time they want us to upgrade the system." The repairs come from the Operating Budget, and even with offsets in the Snow and Ice Removal and Heating line items, funding the unexpected repairs will be "tight." "We are trying to watch every penny, but it’s going to be a struggle," said Byer. "This year has been a really tight year in many ways, mainly because of these unexpected repairs."  

The district is looking at another tight year in FY20, with their proposed level service budgets -- no increases in programs or services -- going up close to 4 percent. The School Committee certified a $36,749,234 operational budget for FY20 during their March 11 Open Budget Hearing. The proposed budget would have meant increases in assessments to Mendon and Upton of $606,452 (7.59 percent) and $836,022 (7.51 percent), respectively, well over the 2 ½ percent levy limit. After discussions with Town Officials since the budget was certified, the School Committee Budget Subcommittee said that the towns have agreed to fund up to the Minimum Local Contribution, or what the state mandates that the town should fund the school district. The MLC for Mendon would be an increase of $502,571 and Upton of $592,771.

"This is very good news," said School Committee Member Sean Nicholson, who also sits on the Budget Subcommittee. "We are extremely grateful for this." Even with receiving the increase from both towns, the level services budget is still looking at a $450,000 gap between revenue and expenses. Some of the major drivers for the increases in expenses year over year, school officials said, are still in negotiation, such as estimated increases in salaries of $66,000, health care insurance of $166,000, special education services of up to $46,000, and an additional $45,000 for a 50% increase in the student's state aid tuition of $156,000. Once those numbers are finalized, coupled with the House and Senate budgets being released in April and May, the district will have a better picture on how much of a gap there will still be. "It is our hope that by some sort of combo [cost reductions and increase in State Aid], we are going to be able to close that gap, but $450,000 is still a sizable gap to close," said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Maruszczak. "It is a significant positive that both communities have committed to get that Minimum Local Contribution, because we know it is a stretch for both communities." Once the FY20 budget is finalized, there will still be work to do to plan for future school budgets, including the possibility of an override, according to the Budget Subcommittee. "We are going to run into this problem consistently unless we have a long-term, unified plan that the towns can use to support the school budget in the future," said Nicholson.

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**School Highlights**

**Mendon-Upton Town Crier**

Compiled by Melissa Orff  
Staff Reporter

Clough thanks the PTO for sponsoring a School Wide Cultural Arts Program, Bob Sarett - Amazing Hero Art. Sarett shared inspiring artwork as well as stories and videos of kindness and empathy. Sarett's presentation kicked off Kindness Week at Clough which was filled with daily kindness messages, random acts of kindness, theme days and a variety of kindness activities. Thanks goes to second grade teacher Lauren St. Pierre who spearheaded the Kindness Rock Project in which every student and staff member participated in. During the week, students collected canned goods for the Mendon Food Pantry and donated change to help the students with a mini grade class hosted a breakfast for Mendon residents from the Senior Center during the school’s Kindness Week.

Principal Janice Gallagher took the Show a Student challenge again this year and spent a full day shadowing a student in Melissa Leone's second grade class. Assistant Superintendent Dr. Maureen Cohen also shadowed a first grade student in Lauren Pausen first grade classroom.

The third-grade students had a visit from port David Zuckar March 25, thanks to the PTO. Zuckar performed a variety of engaging poems that excited the students who had recently been studying poetry in their 3rd-grade classrooms.

Clough bus drivers, who continue to work collaboratively for the safety and wellbeing of students, visited school to learn from Guidance Counselor, Stafni Hicks and Principal Gallagher about Clough's Soaring Positive Behavior Incentive Program. Ways they can use and reinforce this practice on the bus were discussed.

**MEMORIAL**

Memorial families raised $23,695.62 for the American Heart Association. Students had fun learning many jumping styles during “Kids Heart Challenge!” Thanks to Physical Education Teacher Christine Hoorn who coordinated this event and the parents who volunteered to watch and parent volunteers who twisted the ropes. Special thanks to Ava Dargue who raised over $700, and to Janet Livstitt's Kindergarten class for collecting over $2000 and as a result naming the school gym “The Healthy Heart Gym” for the next year.

Students and staff celebrated National Donut/ Syndrome Awareness Day on March 21 by wearing mismatched socks, a great way to celebrate the uniqueness of each person. The winnig photo from Clough’s contest for the PTO’s annual March 15. Students contributed over $400 in box top boxes. Amy Henderson’s class collected the most (397 box tops) and won an extra $50. So far, over $2200 in Box Top money has been collected for the 2018-2019 school year, which is 10th in the state, out of 2,011 schools. Residents may contribute year-round in the drop off boxes at the library, town hall, and Town line Dairy Farm. 

Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education Jeffrey Riley visited a Spanish immersion kindergarten and fourth grade classroom and met with Principal Debra Swan, School Psychologist Kathy Gurrin, and School Nurse Lisa Ryan to learn about how the school has been addressing social/emotional/behavioral learning on April 1.

**MISCOE:**

Miscoe students and two chaperones will be traveling to the Amazon during April vacation. Highlights of the trip include a visit to Quinto, Ecuador and a volcanic hot spring. A class will be sleeping in tents and an Amazon jungle hike. While there, the group will be taking part in a community service project. Students individual research and work on the trip to complete an Independent Learning Project connecting to their middle school curriculum.

Miscoe reports cards will be posted to Jpass on April 11.

Miscoe’s fourth session of Enrichment classes runs April 7 until May 31. Miscoe is offering classes like Rubik’s cube, Cooking, Drama and improve and Beginners Genealogy and Move for Girls.

Opening day for Softball and Raebelle are on April 8 at Miscoe and the first track meet will be on April 10 at Blackstone Millville.

The Student Council is putting together a talent show, for Miscoe students to show talents on April 24 from 6 to 9 pm.

**NIPMUC:**

On April 5, History teacher Brian Moloney will accompany Nipmuc juniors Meghan Kane and Ida Kozuchowska to Boston for the annual Student Government Day. Students from Massachusetts public and private high schools will learn about the structure of state government, how to become engaged citizens, and how to develop an understanding of the rights and responsibilities that are shared in a democracy. Students will assemble at the State House where most will replicate activities of the Massachusetts State Legislature, while others will meet as constitutional officers and as members of the Supreme Judicial Court.

On April 5, Nipmuc’s Marketing 1 students will be presenting their marketing plans to Cumberland Farms Marketing Executives in Westborough. Two to three teams consisting of three to six members per team, after working on and creating marketing ideas to drive usage of Cumberland Farms proprietary SmartPay app, will be presenting their marketing plans in a competitive and advisory capacity to executives. This is the second year of the Marketing Collaborative between Nipmuc Regional students and Cumberland Farms.

The annual MCCA Festivals will be held April 5 through 7 at King Philip, Hopkinton and Westborough High Schools. Good luck to Miscoe and Miscoe Choruses and Bands who will participate.

To kick off Spring Wellness Week, April 5 through 7 will be a “no homework” weekend for Nipmuc students to relax and recharge. Nipmuc will host its spring wellness week, April 8-12. These weeks are designed to provide wellness activities that encourage the social, emotional, and physical well-being of students and staff. April 8 is Move It Monday with students wearing comfortable clothes and participating in outdoor activities; April 9 is Traingleity Tuesday featuring the "Therapy Animals"; April 10 is Workout Wednesday with students wearing workout clothes and doing activities; April 11 is Throwback Thursday with everyone dressing like a little kid to participate in activities; and April 12 is Fitness Friday with students wearing Nipmuc gear and visiting with alpacas.

Term 3 Report Cards will be posted to Parent on April 11.  

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**School News**

Upton-Mendon Town Crier

**APRIL 5, 2019**

**Term 3 Report Cards will be posted to iParent on April 11.**

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Empowering Parents of Special Needs Children

By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter

There is a group in the Milford Public Schools with a mission of giving “support and education” to parents of special needs children called the Milford SEPAC. SEPAC – or Special Education Parent Advisory Council – meets the second Wednesday of every month in different school buildings in the district to connect parents of special needs students to administrators in the Special Education Department, but most importantly, with each other. “We give information and support to families of kids with special needs,” said Chris Wilson, who is SEPAC’s Vice President, who shares the board with officers Hank Matthews, Mike Dolan, and Robyn Bratica. The SEPAC group had disbanded many years ago due to lack of parent involvement, but with the help of Milford’s new Special Education Director Lucy Jenkins and Assistant Special Education Director Vicky Houston, the advisory council has found a second life and is providing families with resources on a number of different topics relating to Special Education. With presentations ranging from Special Education rights, to anti-bullying, to navigating the IEP (Individualized Education Plan), the Milford SEPAC is endeavoring to empower parents with knowledge of the Special Education system and let them know that they have a support system. “It can be daunting when you are one or two parents in a room full of educators who are well versed in Special Education,” said Wilson. “We want parents to have that knowledge of what to expect.” March’s meeting was held on the 13th, with a presentation from guest speaker Sarah Ward, CCC/SLP; an internationally recognized expert on executive function skills. Speaking to an audience of over 100 parents, teachers, and community members, Ward presented strategies to improve Executive Function skills both at home and in the classroom. “We wanted to bring Sarah to Milford as a keynote speaker as we knew how much of a statement she would bring to the families and staff in the Milford Public Schools,” said Wilson. “She really drove home the message that this is something that effects students both at home and at school. Any child could benefit from her knowledge and skills in Executive Functioning. “Upcoming SEPAC meetings will include a presentation on Mental Health: First Aid (April 10) and a presentation on the “Age of Majority” by Vocational Coordinator Jen Walsh (May 8). And although the SEPAC group has tried to increase participation since it reformed, the number of parent involvement is still low, despite the benefits, according to officials. “We would love more parent participation,” said Houston. “The Special Education process can be very overwhelming and confusing, and the SEPAC provides a support to parents from parents who have been in the same position.”

Along with the support of other parents, SEPAC members will also have the chance to have their voices heard by the administration, who is there to listen and collaborate with Special Needs families. “We want parents to know that we are always available for them if they have issues,” she said. “Our goal is to provide the absolute best education and programming for each student. “To find out more information or to join the Milford SEPAC, visit their Twitter page: @ Milford_SEPAC, or email them at milfordsepac@gmail.com.

Helping Others in the World by Doing Chores at Home

Memorial School second graders raised $800 by doing chores at home in a “Chores for Change” fundraiser for Heifer International. “The money will be used to purchase four goats, one alpaca, four chickens, three ducks, and a hive of honeybees to be given to families in need in Africa and South America.

By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter

The second graders at Memorial Elementary School are learning what it means to be good global citizens as they help people across the globe by giving gifts that keep on giving. For a second year in a row, the 2nd grade team has partnered with the Heifer International organization in raising funds to buy livestock to help people in impoverished countries with sustainable farming. Heifer International is a nonprofit organization who “works to end hunger and poverty and save the earth through gifts of farm animals and training.” The project kicked-off with the four, second grade classes reading the book Beatrice’s Goat, a true story about a girl living in Uganda whose dream it is to attend school. Unfortunately, Beatrice’s family can’t afford to send her to school, but that all changes when her family is gifted with a goat through a special international project and Beatrice is able to sell its milk to earn money for school books.

Representatives from Heifer International also came out and spoke with the students about the company’s mission and the benefit of each of the animals that will be donated. “We learned about all of the people around the world that aren’t as lucky as us, so we need these animals for food,” said second grader Sarah Bratica. Taking the global learning opportunity a step further, the teachers connected the students via Skype with a professor in Nigeria so they could learn about her culture and country. “She showed us what kinds of clothes she wears and what type of presents people would get for their loved ones,” said Ava Corrier, also in second grade. “It was cool to talk to someone all the way in Africa, where life is very different from ours.”

Once the students got a full appreciation of how they could help people in need, the got to work doing chores at home so they could earn money for this cause. “We did all sorts of chores…washed dishes, shoveled driveways, helped our moms with the laundry,” explainedLisa Lenfest. In total, the class raised $800, money that will be used to purchase four goats, one alpaca, four chickens, three ducks and geese and some honeybees for families in need in Africa and South America. “Your family has helped make a difference in the world,” read a letter sent home to Memorial parents by second-grade teachers Alyssa Couture, Marta Hernandez, Katie Nieviera, and Kathleen Perry. Although the teacher’s goal throughout this process was for the students to gain a global perspective and learn that the world is bigger than Upton, the lesson the second-graders took away was more simple. “We learned that raising money to help others feels good,” said Lucas Wang.

Fundraising for Furry Friends

Ten Clough Elementary School fourth graders helped furry friends in need as they collected donations of pet food and supplies for the Blackstone Regional Animal Shelter. Pictured with the donations is (front 1 to r): Molly Klupa, Holly Brennick, Annabelle Samuelson, Emma Coombs and Lyla McCarthy (back 1 to r): Madison Tucker, Taylor Smith, Miriam Harratti, Lia Romano, and Madelyn Olson.

By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter

Ten fourth grade Clough Elementary School students have a work on a special service projects to help some furry friends in need. Clough student Holly Brennick had the idea to raise money to help shelter animals and enlisted her friends Lyla McCarthy, Lia Romano, Madison Tucker, Taylor Smith, Madelyn Olson, Annabelle Samuelson, Emma Coombs and Molly Klupa to help her.

The group sat down with Clough Principal Janice Gallagher in January to present their idea and to get her approval to proceed with a school-wide fundraising effort for this important cause. “I was so impressed with them,” said Gallagher. “They came to me with a lot of information and research.”

After getting Gallagher’s blessing, the group began to work on the logistics – making posters to hang on the walls of the school, decorating a donation box for the lobby, and most importantly, developing a presentation to give to the school to emphasize the importance of helping shelter animals.

For the next few weeks, the self-named RAASOs (Be An Animal Savior Organization) presented their idea to the rest of the Clough student body during their KCR (Kindness, Caring, and Respect) classes. “I was so amazed with how well they worked together,” said Gallagher. “I was so impressed with how they got up in front of 70 to 80 children during the KCR classes to share their passion about this wonderful charity.”

After promoting the idea, the girls waited to see if their words made an impact on others. It wasn’t long before they could see that they weren’t the only ones who wanted to help man’s best friends. “The donation box is literally overflowing,” said Holly. Over 100 donations of dog and cat food, treats, dog beds, and cat toys poured in. The group also received about $50 in cash donations.

All of the donations were brought to Blackstone Regional Animal Shelter, a shelter for homeless animals in the communities of Blackstone, Millville, Uxbridge, Mendon, and Douglas. They will be used to give love and comfort to the animals who are staying at the shelter while they await their forever homes. “We did this because people have animals and love their animals and we wanted to help animals get the love they deserve,” said Holly.

For more information about the Blackstone Regional Animal Shelter, visit their Facebook page: Blackstone Regional Animal Shelter.
Experience All Over the Field for Nipmuc Boys LAX

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Nipmuc boys' lacrosse team begins the 2019 season having graduated 11 seniors from last year's squad and with a first-year head coach, but the Warriors boast experience at key positions on the field, with the veteran players set to lead some of the varsity newcomers.

“We have a good core group of guys who will get a lot of playing time and they've already stepped up and been leading the other guys,” said head coach Ron Hamwey. “Everyone is kind of coming into their own and they are realizing what their roles on the varsity team will be.”

One thing that Hamwey brings along with some of the newer players is the fact that Nipmuc's experience is spread all around the field, rather than concentrated in one area. Preston Dougherty will lead the attack and figures to be a scoring threat. “He is a really big, strong kid who is also really smart and a heads-up player,” Hamwey said. “He is someone we feel confident when it comes to having the ball and making good decisions when he has it. He is also doing a good job bringing the younger guys up to speed.”

Tom Carey, a long stick midfielder, is a player Hamwey said “does a lot between the lines,” including controlling the wing on the face-off and making sure the Warriors have control in transition.

Junior captain Christian Moss will take most of the face-offs this season, Hamwey said, calling him “a great face-off player and do a lot of ‘all kind of guys’.”

Senior Dan Cook is a close defender who played short stick midfield a season ago. “He has really stepped up,” Hamwey said. “He is being a leader down there and helping out two first-year players in transition.”

Hamwey said having experience at so many different spots is a significant positive for his team. “We have someone at each level who has taken ownership and has been able to bring the young guys along and help them get up to speed,” he said.

The level of talent and the quick learning curve for some of the team’s newer players has Hamwey setting high expectations for his first year. “I expect us to have a pretty strong season,” he said. “I see a lot of potential and we have a chance to compete with anyone we step on the field with, it’s just a matter of putting it together and peaking at the right time.”

The Warriors begin the season Friday at Medfield in a non-league game.

The Tie Between the Impossible and the Possible Lies in a Person’s Determination

― Tommy Lasorda

Thomas Charles Lasorda is a former Major League Baseball pitcher, coach, and manager, who is best known for his two decades at the helm of the Los Angeles Dodgers.

Trio of Aces Lead BVT Baseball

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

Blackstone Valley Tech baseball coach John Burke has plenty of options when it comes to his pitching staff with three players so talented and experienced, he declines to call any of them his ace. “We could be in a really good situation where we have three guys who are number ones,” Burke said, noting Nick Kazarian, Justin Metcalf and Steve Earle could start for any other team in the area.

A number of younger players, including outfielder Tyler King and catcher Issac Curley, will also step into larger roles this year, Burke said. “Those guys can guide the younger guys on the ups and downs of the season and hopefully give them an idea of what to do and how to do it.”

Nipmuc’s preparation for the new season has been helped by the relatively mild and dry spring, allowing the team to get out on the field earlier than in past seasons. “It feels like the beginning of April, I am happy with where we are at this point in the year and with how we are figuring things out,” Dellarovere said. “We graduated a number of guys last year so there are some roles to fill, but at this point I am happy with the big picture.”

The Warriors begin the season Friday at Medfield in a non-league game.

Experience All Over the Field

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The 2019 season begins this week.

“Experience all over the field,” Burke said. “The way the seeding is done, the end of the season records aren’t necessarily a good depiction of the strength of the teams, ‘he said. “When you play these guys twice per year, anybody can get you on any given day.” he said. “You get familiar with each other and it can make for some competitive games. You have to take everyone seriously.”
By Chris Villani

SPORTS FLASH

Matt Richards, a graduating Nipmuc senior, will continue playing the football at Bentley University in the fall. Here he is shown in his Nipmuc uniform with his dad, Doug, mom, Anne, and brother, Ryan at Gillette Stadium for the high school Super Bowl in the fall. Contributed photo

Nipmuc Football Standout Richards Heads to Bentley

By Chris Villani

Sports Reporter/Columnist

After helping build up the Nipmuc football program over the past four years, Matt Richards is going to continue his athletic career at Bentley University in Waltham, a place he said “felt like home” from the first visit. “I first went there almost a year and a half ago and then I had an overnight with one of the players, another Central Mass. kid, and I just kind of connected with them,” Richards said. “It felt like I belonged there and like it was the top option for me both academically and for football.” Richards, 18, is set to graduate from Nipmuc this year. His father, also a former Nipmuc football standout, was a three-time captain and helped the Warriors to an appearance in the Super Bowl last fall. “Being able to play with the team is one of the best experiences I had,” he said. “Going to the Super Bowl, I lost but building up that program with the players I started with was the highlight for me.”

Richards stayed active after football, including skiing and snowmobiling, and played three years of basketball. He said he plans to hit the gym constantly to train between now and next fall and, given the proximity between the school and his Mendon home, could visit for some summer workouts with the team. Richards said he plans to study finance and hopes to narrow his area of study once he arrives at Bentley next fall. He said his parents, Anne and Doug, were instrumental in helping him through the recruiting process. He had called his older brother, Ryan, who plays lacrosse at St. Anselm College. “He went through the whole recruiting process, so I had an understanding of what it would be like,” the younger Richards said. “It helped me with my recruiting process.”

With Matt Richards choosing Bentley, it means both Richards boys will be playing in the Northeast 10 conference, albeit in different sports. Ryan Richards’ college roommate is a brother, Ryan, who plays lacrosse at St. Anselm College. “He went through the whole recruiting process, so I had an understanding of what it would be like,” the younger Richards said. “It helped me with my recruiting process.”

Hamwey Named New Nipmuc Boys LAX Coach

By Chris Villani

Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Nipmuc boys’ lacrosse program welcomes a new head coach this season, with Ron Hamwey taking over the program hoping to bring his enthusiasm for the sport to his first varsity head coaching gig.

“I am really passionate about coaching, I think it’s an important thing to do, I want to help these kids come into their own,” Hamwey said. “I hope they can understand their potential and, at the same time, that I can help them learn what it means to be a young man and respect others and just kind of help them grow up.”

Hamwey, 25, comes to Nipmuc after spending time as the junior varsity coach at Algonquin Regional. He also spent a year coaching at the collegiate level as the defensive coordinator at Becker College.

The 2012 Nashoba Regional graduate was a midfielder during his high school career. Hamwey went on to the college level as a face-off specialist at Grand Canyon University in Arizona. When he applied for the job at Nipmuc, he was a bit surprised to see two of the team’s current players, Tim Carey and Christian Moss, at his first interview. “They were part of the interview process, so I got to meet them and answer their question,” he said. “I got a feel for what they are expecting and what the culture is like. It seemed like a good fit.”

In his past coaching jobs, Hamwey had just interviewed with the head coach of the program. In this case, the players were involved along with a parent who helps with the youth lacrosse program and, of course, Nipmuc Athletic Director Chris Schmidt.

“That was not something I expected,” Hamwey said, referring to the players’ participation. “I thought it was really cool, “ he said. “It showed a lot to me about the investment the players have in the program and how much they care about it.”

Hamwey works for Amazon and lives in Worcester. He said he is “extremely excited” to begin his first season as a varsity head coach. Among other things, he said he sees the job as a chance to pass on some of the lessons he learned in his time as a player and assistant coach. “I had a lot of great coaches help me along the way,” Hamwey said.