Upton Voters to Act on a $24 Million FY20 Budget, Up by 3.9%

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

On May 3, Upton’s Finance Committee will present voters their new recommended operational budget totaling $23,777,922 which is 3.9 percent, or $890,055 higher than last year.

According to Town Manager Derek Brindisi, this year’s budget process, although challenging, “Was much more efficient, extremely streamlined, and allowed for more detailed conversations,” he said.

According to Town Clerk and Assistant to the Town Manager Kelly McElreath, the warrant and budget were completed one month prior to the May Town Meeting. “In my 18 years here, that’s never happened before,” she said.

Upton’s fiscal year 2020 budget is broken down as follows: education totals 56 percent, town services amount to 31 percent, and fixed costs are 13 percent.

Much like years before, several of the Fiscal Year 2020 budget drivers were increased from $1,140,750 to $1,243,018. This year, Upton’s recommended contribution will increase approximately 5 percent or $592,000 for a total operating expense from the town of $11,721,117. According to the Worcester County Retirement Fund, and step or cost of living increases of approximately 2 percent. Health insurance reflects a smaller increase of $23,675 versus last year’s increase of approximately $120,000.

This year, if voters approve, the Regional School District will be given a 5 percent increase from last year. The May 3 Meeting will take place at Miscoe Hill School and begin at 7 p.m.

According to Town Administrator Kim Newman, the budget process this year was challenging due to a number of factors including the Regional School District’s requested budget increase of $502,751, an increase of approximately $96,000 to the Worcester County Retirement Fund, and step or cost of living increases of approximately 2 percent. Health insurance reflects a smaller increase of $23,675 versus last year’s increase of approximately $120,000.

This year, if voters approve, the Regional School District will be given a 5 percent increase from Mendon totaling an additional $502,751, for an overall total operational assessment of $10,165,539 from the town. Some of the drivers behind the increase include an additional $650,000 for salaries, a $166,000 rise in health insurance, an additional $151,000 for special education transportation, and $156,000 for nonresident vocational tuition.

As a result of these increases, Town Administrator Kim Newman explained a number of department asks were denied and other reductions were necessary that totaled $517,000. “We got very creative with our budget this year,” said Newman. “We had to put off project work, delay equipment purchases, decrease reserves, and phase in new hires.”

Finance Committee Chair Mike Morrello added, “The big issue is that the legislature has been shifting the budget from state level to the local level in so many different areas, but particularly the schools.”

Blackstone Valley Tech’s operating expense budget
BHC Celebrates National Bike Month

In celebration of National Bike Month in May, Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BHC) is partnering with All Out Adventures and the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation's Universal Access Program to offer a series of five complimentary adaptive cycling events on the Blackstone River Bikeway/Greenway. Three rides will depart from the new Blackstone Heritage Corridor Visitor Center, Worcester and two will depart from the Blackstone River Greenway in Blackstone. Scheduled dates include Wednesday, May 1 (Worcester); Wednesday, May 8 (Blackstone), Wednesday, May 15 (Worcester), Saturday, May 18 (Worcester), and Wednesday, May 22 (Blackstone). Rides will be available at 11 a.m., 12:30 p.m. and 2 p.m., by advanced registration only. To RSVP, call All Out Adventures at 413-584-2052. All Out Adventures will spend time talking with each individual to learn about their disability to help select the proper piece of equipment ranging from single and tandem recumbent trikes, to two-wheel tandem and upright and slow style hand cycles.

Suzanne Buchanan (front), volunteer coordinator at Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor, leads participants and volunteers to the finish line at last year's adaptive cycling event at the Blackstone River Greenway in Blackstone. Five new adaptive cycling events, presented in partnership with All Out Adventures and Universal Access Program, are scheduled in May leaving from Worcester, and Blackstone. BHC photo
Milford Regional Medical Center is offering a free seminar on concussion treatment. John C. Park, DMD, studied at Worcester State University, completed his general practice residency at Vincent Hospital in Worcester. Michael is a 2012 graduate of Nipmuc Regional High School. He studied at Worcester State University and volunteered as a mentor at several area hospitals. Michael has been working as a mason for seven years and is currently employed by R. P. Marralli. A fall 2020 wedding is planned.

Milford Regional Celebrates National Donate Life Month

Milford Regional Medical Center is joining hospitals around the country in celebrating National Donate Life Month this April. The month-long celebration showcases various perspectives of those touched by donation and transplantation.

National Donate Life Month focuses national attention on every individual’s power to make life possible by registering their decision to be an organ and tissue donor and learning more about living donation. In 2018, Milford Regional had a total of 20 tissue donors. The generosity of these donors restored health in grateful recipients of lifesaving transplants. Milford Regional is proud to be a Donate Life Month organization. Approximately half of the U.S. adult population is registered as donors. Still, the number of people in need of transplants continues to outpace the number of donor organs. On average, 22 people die each day because the organs they need are not donated in time. Registering your decision to become a donor is the most effective way to ensure you can save lives through donation and serve as a sign of hope to those who continue to wait.

To register as a donor or for more information about how to get involved, please visit RegisterMe.org.

A Taste of Home Sent to Local Active Military Members

Recently Thanks To Yanks is a local charity that supports the U.S. military, held a community event to package and ship care packages to deployed service men and women, sending a taste of home and letting them know, they are not forgotten. For additional information visit ThanksToYanks.org or like them on Facebook. Contributed photo

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APRIL 19, 2019

Upton-Mendon Town Crier
Pumper Truck and Revitalization Project on Upton’s Warrant

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

Upton voters will determine the outcome of more than 30 articles during the town’s May 2 Annual Town Meeting. Among the articles are funding for a new rescue pumper truck and the Fowler St. bridge plus authorization to sell the former Holy Angels Parish. Article 19 is seeking $575,000 to purchase and equip a Rescue Pumper truck. Upton’s Rescue 1 is 27 years old with more than 2,600 engine hours. Primarily used for serious vehicle crashes, it has no pump, fire hose or water, so it cannot be used to fight a fire. Currently a fire engine is also needed to respond to minor crashes to extinguish any vehicle fire, creating the need for more firefighters and increased costs for crash responses.

The Fire Department, in Article 20, is also seeking $14,000 to purchase four sets of protective firefighter gear to meet the National Fire Protection Association’s standards and in Article 27, $10,000 for portable radio equipment. The funding is part of a collaborative grant with the Mendon Fire Department.

Articles 32 through 34 are related to the downtown revitalization project. Article 32 is requesting $5,000 for the Economic Development Committee to assist with consultants, structural engineering assessments and hazardous testing for the downtown project. Article 33 is asking voters whether or not they will accept the shared vision for the downtown revitalization that was developed through several working group sessions of volunteer residents.

To further the project Article 34 is seeking authorization for Selectmen to sell the former Holy Angels Parish, 3 Milford St.

Article 26 is requesting an additional $310,000 for procurement services, engineering design, project management, and construction/repair costs to complete the Fowler St. bridge project. The Municipal Small Bridge grants program approved the project for reimbursement up to $500,000. The total cost is $1 million.

Article 9 is seeking $546,000 to supplement the Chapter 90 funding for construction and improvements to town roads. Voters are also asked to authorize the acceptance of Chapter 90 funds.

Article 18 seeks $5,000 to survey land donated by the Desjardin family to be utilized by the DPW as a turnaround at the end of Brooks St.

Article 21 is requesting $10,000 to purchase services will comprehensively review and update the town’s general and zoning bylaws.

Article 22 is seeking $16,000 to purchase two state approved election tabulators. The current tabulators are 16 years old and vendors cannot supply replacement parts. Article 23 seeks $12,000 to fund the costs in the first fiscal year of the DPW Truck Driver’s three-year collective bargaining agreement.

Article 25 is requesting $16,592 to purchase and equip a grass mower for Parks and Cemetery.

In order to replace an outdated town computer system, Article 28 seeks $10,000 and Article 31 is requesting $5,000 for site development of a new Municipal Community Center.

A number of articles are routine and voted annually. Among those are Article 3 which requests appropriation of $1,035,544 to the Water Enterprise Fund and Article 4 to appropriate $717,944 into the Wastewater Enterprise Fund. Article 5 sets the spending limits of Upton’s Revolving Funds, Article 7 a transfer of $200,000 into stabilization, Article 10 to fund $200,000 for the FY19 snow and ice deficit, and Article 11 is requesting $180,000 for Other Post-Employment Benefits.

Articles 12A and 12C are Community Preservation Act articles. 12A requests $15,000 for administrative and operating costs for the Community Preservation Committee and 12C is the routine transfer of 10 percent, $16,152, into the Historic, Open Space and Community Housing Accounts.

Article 13 is requesting $11,000 for the Board of Assessor’s revaluation of properties, Article 14 seeks $5,000 for the Conservation Fund, and Article 16 is seeking $2,000 for the initial payment of a three-year contract for assessing services in Upton.

Last, three nonfinancial items are Article 15 to accept altered layouts of North Main St. and Forest St. as public ways, Article 17 to amend bylaws allowing Selectmen to appoint five members to the Capital Budget Committee rather than three, and Article 35 to amend the general bylaws on where warrants will be posted.
Upton News

Three Citizens Petitions on Upton Warrant

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

At the Annual Town Meeting this May, the Board of Selectman said there are three citizen's petitions. Michelle Antinarelli has brought forward three citizens petitions to be voted on during the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for Thursday, May 2. The petitions concern buying down the tax rate, as well as the oversight of commissions and sub-committees, and the reorganization of the Recreation Commission.

Article 36 is,"To see if the town will vote to buy down the tax rate by $250,000 from free cash, stabilization funds, or any other reserve funds collected via appropriation and dedicated or reserved for emergency or unanticipated expenses."

Antinarelli explained the tax rate in Upton increased by eight cents per thousand for fiscal year 2019 which resulted in a large increase in property taxes and a surplus in revenue through collections. She believes the taxpayers should have a portion of that funding returned to them instead of placing it into reserves. It's estimated the move could save citizens more than ten cents per thousand on their tax bills. The Selectman's candidate says there's no clear definition of what stabilizations funds are meant to be used for. "In general, there's that feeling of a 'rainy-day fund'," she stated. However, Antinarelli believes the stabilization should be utilized to solve a specific problem within the year. "I was at a Finance Committee meeting where free cash was certified at over $1 million," she said. "I don't support just throwing it into stabilization for an unidentified emergency that may never arrive. Let's give it back to the taxpayers."

Article 37 is a citizen's petition that seeks to name the Board of Selectmen as the authority of all those defined as town employees, including commissions. "We have in this town, employees who report through the Board of Selectmen," said the Selectmen. "The lack of control and the model of the Selectmen's jurisdiction," Antinarelli explained. "However, there are commissions, such as Recreation, Parks, the Board of Health, that act independently of the Selectmen's control and independently of a Human Resource Director, Derek [Beneduzi] per se." The citizen's petition aims to protect Upton against negligence, acts of omission, and activities that carry liability to the town without controlled authority. "This isn't the fault of any committee or commission. I applaud everyone who volunteers, but we're not experts in things like ADA compliance or personnel matters. Why wouldn't we want to take advantage of the people who are the experts. You need a boss who knows the guidelines. It's not to replace the responsibilities, but to actually provide a resource to the employees to carry out those directives and missions."

With Article 38, Antinarelli is bringing forward a citizen's petition that would restructure the Recreation Commission currently made up of three members. She believes five members should make up the Commission, one member elected for three years by majority vote, three members appointed by the Board of Selectmen for three years on a staggered basis, and one member from the Capital Budget Committee to serve for one year. The five-member Commission would report to the Selectmen. The Recreation Commission is currently an elected three-member commission that does not have the authority or responsibility to make decisions, it believes it's important to give the Selectmen the authority to appoint several members who have experience in certain areas, such as ADA compliance. "We need to appoint someone who's thinking about inclusion policies and universal design. In addition, because she says the Recreation Commission oversees a large budget with sometimes costly projects, someone involved in the Capital Budget Committee be involved too. This is about a greater collaboration among those with overlapping interests," she says.

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Lori Tate: 508-529-0301
loritatetowncrier@gmail.com

Colette Rooney: 508-922-9674
cerooney@charter.net

Susanne Odell Farber: 508-954-8148
Sue@sodelconsult.com
Opinion

Anthony W. Bonina
MILFORD—Anthony W. Bonina, 83, of Milford and a former longtime Upton resident, passed away on Saturday, April 13, 2019 at the Countryside Health Care of Milford after a long illness. He was the beloved husband of Susan A. (Leland) Bonina. Born in Milford on May 19, 1935, he was a son of the late Biagio and Mary (Napoli) Bonina. Mr. Bonina was a graduate of Milford High School and Worcester Junior College where he earned his Associate Degree in the past few months. Mr. Bonina was an Army veteran who served in the Korean Conflict. He was employed by the Draper Corporation in Hopkinton for many years and later worked for the Avery-Dennison company in Framingham. Additionally, Mr. Bonina spent 28 years working for the Upton Board of Assessors. He was a communicant of St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish in Upton.

In addition to his beloved wife of 54 years, Mr. Bonina is survived by his children, Lisa Tielar and her husband Alan of Upton, Bill Bonina and his wife Amy of Upton, Melissa Bonina of Upton and Tina Gebartowski and her husband Jon of Milford. He is also survived by his brother, Gaetano Bonina and his wife Sandra of Milford, his sister Ann Lemerie of Hopkinton, ten grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

His funeral Mass was celebrated on Wednesday, April 17, in St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish, 151 Mendon St., Upton. Burial, with military honors, followed in Lakeview Cemetery in Upton.

Calling hours were held at the Williams-Pedersen Funeral Home, Inc., Upton.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his memory may be sent to Countrywide Health Care of Milford, made payable to "C4M, Inc", One Countrywide Dr., Milford, MA 01757, where he received loving and attentive care.

LETTERS

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

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

Thank You

To the Editor,

We have been the grateful receivers of much kindness and assistance in the past few months. The past months have been a long nightmare made bearable by our many friends in Upton, Nick and Miljene Galace, Tom and Dottie Bair, Ken and Kristen Paulson, the members of Upton Grange, The Upton Historical Society, Cousins Janice Cooper and Judy Hebb, and many others who have reached out to us during this time. All have been important to us and have truly helped us get through this difficult time. My husband is now in rehab, and although he has a long road ahead, please know you have participated in his recovery, and we will forever be grateful.

Karen Adelman,
Milford

Calling all Graduates!

Graduating from High School or College this Spring? Our Mendon Upton Souvenir Graduation Issue is June 7.

Want to be included? Send a brief graduation announcement, (75 words) as a Word Document AND a 250 DPI photo jpg attached by email attachment to Jane Biga, TownCrierEditor@gmail.com. Include the graduate’s name, parents, hometown, high school or college degree and any special academic honors.

May 10, 2019 • Deadline April 30
June 7, 2019 • Deadline May 28

Free, nourishing meals offered monthly to all in the local community.
Second Tuesday 6-7 p.m. Dinner, St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Small Hall, 27 Pearl St., Milford. Sponsored by Food with Friends. 508-473-2000

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MONTHLY COMMUNITY MEALS

Episcopal Church, 61 Wood St. (Rt.135), Hopkinton. Sponsored by the Hopkinton Christian Service Connection. 508-435-4536 or StPaulHopkinton.org
Every Thursday 11:30 a.m. -12.30 p.m. Lunch, St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Small Hall, 27 Pearl St., Milford. Sponsored by St. Vincent DePaul Society. 508-473-2000
Third Thursday 5:30 p.m. Support, United Parish, 1 Church St., Upton.

Upton. Donations accepted. Reservation, three days ahead by calling 508-529-3192.
Last Thursday 4:30-6 p.m. Dinner, Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Congress St., Milford, sponsored by First Methodist Church of Milford volunteers. 508-473-8443 or office@trinitychurchmilford.org
Last Friday 4:30-6 p.m. Dinner, Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Congress St., Milford, sponsored by the Hopkinton Upton Grange, The Upton Historical Society, Cousins Janice Cooper and Judy Hebb, and many others who have reached out to us during this time. All have been important to us and have truly helped us get through this difficult time. My husband is now in rehab, and although he has a long road ahead, please know you have participated in his recovery, and we will forever be grateful.

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Karen Adelman,
Milford
Mendon/Upton Easter Services

Bethany Community Church
15 Cape Road, Mendon
Pastor Peter McCutchen
508-478-0482
Sunday, April 21
Easter Services, 9:15 a.m.
and 11:15 a.m.
BCC Kids and Nursery on both services.

Faith Baptist Church
7 Main St., Upton
Pastor Varun Shultz
Sunday Services, 10:30 a.m.

Immanuel Chapel OPC
38 Hopkinton Road, Upton
Pastor Mark Marquis
508-529-4468
Sunday, April 21
Easter Services, 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Mendon Community Church
4 Harrington Street, Mendon
Conservative Reformed - Evangelical
Pastor Marion Deliguinessides
508-473-9030
Friday, April 19
Good Friday Communion Service,
7:30 p.m.
Sunday, April 21
Resurrection Day Worship Service,
10 a.m.

Mendon Mononite Church
70 Cape Road, Mendon
Pastor Glenn Auiker
508-473-7448
Regular Sunday Service, 10 a.m.
All are welcome.

Unitarian Universalist Society of
Upton and Grafton
3 Grafton Common, Grafton
Reverend Daniel Groppe
508-839-3927
Sunday, April 21
Look Among the Living, An Easter
Service, 10 a.m.

St. Gabriel the Archangel Parish
151 Mendon Street, Upton
Father Larry Brault
Good Friday, April 19
Living Stations, 3 p.m.
Service, 7:30 p.m.
Saturday, April 20
Holy Thursday Vigil, 7:30 p.m. (No 5 p.m. Mass)
Sunday, April 21
Easter Services at 8 a.m.,
10:30 a.m.,
and 5:30 p.m.

Unitarian Congregation of
Mendon and Uxbridge
13 Maple St., Mendon
Rev. Ralph T. Clarke
508-473-6861
Sunday, April 21
Easter Services, 10:30 a.m.

United Parish of Upton
1 Church Street
Rev. Lourey Savick
508-529-3192
Good Friday, April 19
Stations of the Cross, 12 to 6 p.m.
Sunday, April 21
Sunrise Service at Kinnis Beach,
5:30 a.m.
Easter Worship, 9:45 a.m.

Upton Historical Society Antique Appraisal Night

The Upton Historical Society will sponsor an Antique Appraisal Night on Friday April 26 at 7 p.m. at the Upton VFW on Rt. 140, with appraisals by Tom Tomaszek, noted antiques dealer and appraiser. The event is open to the public.

The cost of appraisals for Members $6 for one item, $10 for two, non-members $7 for one item, $12 for two or a $3 entrance fee. There is a two item limit. Attendees do not have to have an item appraised. The total number of appraisals will be limited based on available time. Owners are responsible for their own items.

Tomaszek has appeared at Historical Society programs in the past and he has always presented an interesting and informative program. His ability to provide detailed background on a wide variety of items is amazing. Tomaszek entered the antiques business in 1964 at the age of 12 and apprenticed with the House that Jack Built Antiques in Bellingham. He traveled extensively in Europe as well as Japan and Singapore studying antiques and has exhibited at shows along the East Coast.

Tomaszek has done appraisals for over 30 years. His expertise is in numismatics (coins and tokens), militaria (military antiques) ephemera, stamps pre-1900, fine jewelry of the Georgian to Edwardian period, artwork, and American folk art. He displays and sells in antique cooperative shops located in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine.

Hymn Sing to Benefit Vacation Bible School

Hymn Sing to benefit Slaterville Congregational Church Vacation Bible School, 25 Green St., Slatersville, R.I. will be held Sunday, May 5 at 6 p.m. in the church sanctuary.

Participants can choose from two available hymnals and hear some old favorites and newer arrangements. All ages are welcome.

A free will offering with a matching donation from the Missions Committee provides the funds to offer Vacation Bible School to any community family at no cost.

Broadway Matinee by GMCC

The Greater Milford Community Chorus (GMCC) will perform well-known show tunes at their upcoming concert, Broadway Matinee, at 1:30 p.m. Sunday, May 5 in Milford Town Hall’s Grand Ballroom. The show is open to the public and admission is $10 at the door or $8 at Music & Arts in Milford or from a chorus member.

The performance will include crowd favorite songs: Les Miserables, Phantom of the Opera, Jersey Boys, My Fair Lady and many more.

Refreshments will be served during intermission, and there will be raffle baskets to support GMCC. The 42-member GMCC is a not-for-profit organization run under the umbrella of the Milford Community School Use Program and is supported by the Milford, Bellingham, Hopedale and Mendon Cultural Councils. For more information about the GMCC, visit website: GreaterMilfordCommunityChorus.org

Passover Services

Chabad House Jewish Community Center
34 Cedar St., Milford, 508-473-1299
The community is invited to join one, or both of the Community Seders
April 19, 7 p.m.
First Night’s Seder:
A 90-minute Seder on Cedar
The Seder on the first evening is reserved for anyone (kids included!) who want to “do the Seder” in record time. Complete Seder and four course dinner (brisket, and more) with family-fun activities to keep the children and adults stimulated. The children get to ask (and sing) the Mah Nishtana Limited space. First-come-
April 20, 9:15 p.m.
Second Night’s Sederzzzz: The Traditional, Kvinym style
The Seder begins later, and incorporates all the traditional customs, explanations and songs. Complete four-course meal.

For reservations or more information about these events, visit GotChabad.com, or call 508-473-1299.

Passover at Chabad is open to Jews of all/any background, regardless of affiliation or lack of affiliation.

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2 South Maple Street – Bellingham
1 Hastings Street – Mendon

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By Michelle Sanford  
Staff Reporter/Columnist

A number of Upton town officials will be taking part in short video presentations which are aiming to educate residents on some key issues coming up for vote at the Annual Town Meeting scheduled for May 2.

“It’s another strategy to use to educate our voters,” said Town Manager Derek Brindisi. “The videos are another tool in our tool kit we want to try out.”

Some of the video topics include the Regional School District’s new fiscal year budget request, the vision for the Economic Development Committee’s downtown revitalization project, a new fire truck for the community, and Board of Health’s recycling fees, among others. Brindisi hopes the videos will be posted by April 15 on the town’s Website, its Facebook page, and Twitter.

Something else different residents will notice is the way the new fiscal year budget has been formatted and will be presented to voters at the May meeting.

Previously, the town used an Excel spreadsheet format that was created 20 years ago. According to the Finance Committee’s report, “with all of the changes over the years, the formulas were becoming unreliable as the data it pulled was either deleted or relocated in the spreadsheet.”

The new budget format now pulls data directly from the accounting system, is fully integrated, minus wages, and is more dependable. “We were determined to use our accounting system to prepare our nearly $24 million budget,” said Brindisi.

According to Town Clerk and Assistant to the Town Manager Kelly McElreath, the new format will “look different,” but displays what figures were approved from the last year two years and what the recommended budget numbers are for the new fiscal year.

The benefit of the new format said Brindisi is there’s less opportunity for errors and department heads were able to input their budget amounts directly into the system. “I think that saved us at least 80 hours of work,” he said.

Upton’s May 2 Annual Town Meeting will take place at Nipmuc Regional High School and begin at 7 p.m. The 38 article warrant includes, among others, the new fiscal year budget, three citizen’s petitions, a new rescue pumper truck, and to authorize the town to sell the former Holy Angels Church located at 3 Milford St. property in order to facilitate the development of the downtown.

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, 15 Milford St., Rt. 140, for coffee, donuts, a meet and greet and to sign up for cleanup areas. Please be on time.

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The new budget format that will be presented to Upton voters at the Annual Town Meeting.

Clean Up Day in Upton

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, 15 Milford St., Rt. 140, for coffee, donuts, a meet and greet and to sign up for cleanup areas. Please be on time.

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.

These FREE lectures are presented at Milford Regional’s Physicians Conference Center on the ground floor of the main building, adjacent to the main lobby.

Registration is required, as seating is limited. Please call 508-422-2206 or visit milfordregional.org.

FROM KIDNEY STONES TO CANCER  
State of the Art Treatments for Common Urologic Conditions and Complex Cancers  
Tuesday, April 23 at 7PM  
Matthew Ingham, MD - Urology Associates of Milford  
Urologist Matthew Ingham, MD will discuss common urologic conditions ranging from kidney stones and benign prostate hyperplasia (or BPH) to more complex urologic cancers such prostate, kidney and bladder cancer. Dr. Ingham will focus on treatments for common urologic conditions in men and women, as well as his specialty, urologic oncology -- which includes the treatment of kidney cancer, bladder cancer and prostate cancer. FREE

The Journey to Parenthood  
Wednesday, May 15 at 7PM  
Brian Clark, MD, FACS - New England Reproductive Medicine & Surgery  
Infertility is not uncommon, affecting an estimated one in eight couples. Advances in fertility treatments are offering hope and helping more couples become parents. Brian Clark, MD, is one of the area’s leading experts in reproductive health, specializing in infertility care. Dr. Clark will discuss a range of topics regarding infertility and the medical options available to help you build your family. FREE

LIVING WITH LUNG CANCER  
How Early Detection and Advanced Treatments Are Increasing Survival Rates  
Thursday, May 23 at 7PM  
Brian Whang, MD, FACS & Matthew Rochefort, MD - Brigham and Women’s Hospital Chris LeSiege, PA-C - Milford Regional Medical Center  
Lung cancer can affect anyone and the symptoms often go unnoticed until the disease has progressed. While smokers have an increased risk of the disease, those who don’t smoke can be diagnosed with lung cancer as well. Thoracic surgeons Brian Whang, MD, and Matthew Rochefort, MD, will discuss risk factors and symptoms of lung cancer. The discussion will also include smoking cessation, early detection with lung cancer CT screen and the latest treatments (including robotic surgery at Milford Regional). FREE
Writing Your Autobiography

A three-part evening/weekend series on writing an autobiography will be held at the Upton Center on Thursday, April 25 at 6:30 p.m.; Thursday, May 16 at 6:30 p.m.; and Sunday, June 9 at 2 p.m. The series will be led by local genealogist, Seema Kenney. Session 1 will focus on sketching out a plan plus some writing homework; Session 2 will review the written materials and include a discussion of editing and publishing plus some homework; and Session 3 will be a gathering the completed works shared with family and friends. Please call the Center, 508-529-4558, to register by April 19. Light refreshments will be provided. No fee.

The Upton Center

The Upton Center is open Monday through Friday 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Staff is available by phone 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Activities are subject to change. Please call 508-529-4558 with any questions.

Friday, April 19
One-on-One Nutrition Meetings, 10:45 to 11:30 a.m. Call Center to Schedule Birthday Bash, 12:45 p.m.

Tuesday, April 23
Shopping Trip to Market Basket, Hudson, 12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 24
Lunch Trip to Olive Garden, Worcester, 11:30 a.m.
Blood Pressure Checks at the Center with Town Nurse, 12:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 25
Part 1 of Writing Your Autobiography, A Three Part Series with Genealogist Seema Kenney, 6:30 p.m.

Friday, April 26
Shopping Trip to Walmart, Northbridge, 9:15 a.m.
One-on-One Nutrition Meetings, 10:45 to 11:30 a.m. Call Center to Schedule Afternoon Movie, Mammut Mia, 12:30 p.m.
Men’s Club Supper, 5:30 p.m.

Monday, April 29
Shopping Trip to Northborough Crossing Loop, Wegman’s, Kohl’s, etc. in Northborough, 9:15 a.m.

Tuesday, April 30
Breakfast at the Center, 9:15 a.m.
Medication Safety Talk, 10 a.m.
One-on-One Medication Review w/ Pharmacist, 11 to 12 p.m. Call for 15 minute appt.
Art Project with Teens at the Library, 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 7
Complimentary Manicure at B7T, Time to be Determined

Wednesday, May 8
Police Spaghetti Supper at the Center, 6 p.m.

Monday
Tai Chi, 5 p.m. ZENgenvity, 2:30 p.m.
Jeffery Clayton – PanNeubean Steel

performing Caribbean (reggae, soca, calypso), Afro-Caribbean, professional Caribbean band.

The event is free and open to the public.

Friends of Milford Town Library Spring Book Sale

MILFORD-The Friends of the Milford Town Library will be holding their semiannual book sale on Saturday, April 27, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Membership of the Friends may also participate in the sale on Friday, April 26, from 4 to 7 p.m. Memberships are $10 per year and may be paid at the door.

Thousands of books are available from bestsellers to nonfiction, children’s books, audio books, CDs, DVDs, puzzles and videocassettes. Prices are 50¢ for mass-market (small pocket-size) paperbacks and $1 for hardcovers and trade (large-sized) paperbacks in the adult section. All children’s books are 25¢. This is a great chance to gather books for beach reading, entertaining visiting grandchildren, or to lower the cost of required school reading, all while helping the Friends fund programs, museum passes and materials for the Library.

To donate items, please bring them to the Milford Town Library before the sale. Textbooks that are more than five years old or Readers Digest condensed books are not accepted.

Red Sox Tickets to Help the Mendon Legion Post

MENDON-Mendon’s American Legion Commander Susan Tetreault is offering two tickets to the Saturday, July 27 Red Sox-Yankee game to raise funds to renovate the Roger L. Woods American Legion Post, 13 Milford St. (Rt. 16), Mendon. Tetreault needs to raise a total of $20,000 for the overhaul measure.

Seats are located in the Pavilion Reserve Section just after the first base side, Section 15, Row G. The cost is $15 for one raffle ticket and $30 for three; 100 tickets must be sold for the raffle to take place. Winners will be notified if the minimum sale is not met. The drawing will take place right after Mendon’s Memorial Day Parade on May 27. The winner does not need to be present.

To purchase tickets, contact Tetreault at 508-473-5681 or stop by the Mendon Computer Outlet, 14 Hastings St. (Rt. 16) in the plaza with Willowbrook Restaurant.

A Tribute to Robin Williams with Roger Kabler

MENDON-Noted impersonator Roger Kabler visits Mendon on July 7 to perform a tribute to Robin Williams. The program for mature audiences, 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. His tribute show will be the subject of an upcoming motion picture entitled Being Robin. Since space is limited, register by logging onto TaftPublicLibrary.org and click on ‘Library Event Calendar and Registration.’ Call 508-473-3259 with any additional questions.

Twice Blessed Thrift Shop

Hopedale Twice Blessed Thrift Shop will offer 50 percent off kitchenware, dishes and glassware in April. Spring fashion items are also 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. Holy Thursday April 18 and Easter April 21.

Coffee House

MILFORD-The First Congregational Church of Milford, 4 Congress St., is hosting a Coffee House, Saturday, May 18. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Performances will be by students and instructors from Music and Arts of Milford. Donation at the door are $5. Serving Fair Trade coffee, tea and desserts.

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 May 19 at noon. Come sing familiar hymns, hear favorite scripture passages, and say beloved 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 508-473-3259 with any questions and to R.S.V.P.

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An Eastern bluebird, feeding on winterberries, is a bird that might be found at the bird banding session at Inman Hill in Mendon. Data collected from bird banding is an essential tool for research and conservation. To learn more about Metacomet Land Trust and this event, visit MetacometLandTrust.org.

A juvenile Cedar waxwing, a bird in the hand being released after bird banding. Robert Stevens photo

**The 2019 Daniels Farmstead Farmers Markets**

The Daniels Farmstead, 286 Mendon St., Blackstone, on the Mendon town line, will open with the season with a Birds & Blooms theme on Sunday, May 19. At 11 a.m., naturalists Kathy Barton and Beth Milke 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.

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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.

All computer monitors, computers, parts and accessories as well as any office equipment, faxes, copiers, printers, scanners and any audio/video devices or electronics including televisions can be recycled; fees range from $5 to $35 per item. Cash payments only.

The recycling vendor will erase and shred all hard drives at no additional cost. Cell phones can be recycled at no charge and will be donated to charities that recycle and reuse them.

A drive-through process will allow those donating to quickly drop off their items where help will be available. The First Congregational Church Electronics Recycling event is held twice a year during May and September.

For more information, contact Martha at 508-904-4741.

Architectural Plants for the Summer Landscape

The Blackstone Valley Garden Club meeting on Thursday, May 9 will feature Suzanne Mahler, lecturer, horticulturist and garden writer, who will speak about Architectural Plants for the Summer Landscape. She will help explain the beauty, elegance and design advantages of using statice as plants as focal points and vertical interest to meld shorter plants with taller trees and shrubs in the landscape.

The meeting will be held at the Blackstone Valley United Methodist Church, 61 Linwood Ave., Whitinsville at 7 p.m. Parking and entrance are at the rear of the building with access by the Dominos Pizza on Church St. There will be a $5 guest fee for non-members of the Club.

Blackstone Valley Gardeners Annual Plant Sale

Blackstone Valley Gardeners Annual Plant Sale will take place at the VFW Hall, Rt., 140, Upton on Saturday, May 18 from 9 a.m. to noon or until sold out. Members will offer a large variety of perennial plants which have been carefully dug and potted up from local gardens. Past buyers have given many compliments on the quality and assortment of plants offered.

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Upton State Forest Spring Trail Work

The Upton State Forest, a Department of Conservation & Recreation (DCR) property, which encompasses many multi-use trails through its 2,660 acres, is a popular destination for individuals and families who come out to enjoy nature. Some of those trails are now degrading and that’s why Bay State Trail Riders Association, Inc. (BSTRA) has targeted the Upton State Forest for a major trail maintenance project this Spring. BSTRA has a history of commitment to the Upton State Forest, having put more than $90,940 into trail maintenance within this forest to date. BSTRA received a DCR Partnership Award to complete the current project, which will be to improve all of Park Rd. and part of Middle Rd. The roads will be repaired and resurfaced with new materials, swales added to keep water off the trail and drainage ditches cleaned out and put back into working condition. This is a major project is estimated to cost over $79,700. Under the terms of the award, BSTRA’s share of the expense is over $27,615 and DCR pays for the balance. Lawrence-Lynch Corp. of Falmouth will be doing the work for this project, which is expected to be completed before summertime, so the trails can again be enjoyed by many people for hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, cross country skiing, snowmobiling and hunting.

Volunteers can help BSTRA during Trail Work Days this Spring. On Saturday, April 27, volunteers at the Upton State Forest in an event sponsored by Homefield Credit Union. The joint BSTRA, DCR and Friends of Upton State Forest event runs from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. followed by pizza for lunch for volunteers. Volunteers are asked to bring hand tools such as pruners, hand saws or loppers. Contact Suzanne at hso7641@gmail.com or email news@friednsofuptonstateforest.org, to volunteer.

Another work day will be held on Sunday, April 28 from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. followed by lunch at Douglas State Forest. The joint DCR, BSTRA event is sponsored by UniBank. Volunteers meet at 107 Wallum Lake Rd, Douglas at the Headquarters Building. Contact Becky at bstra@charter.net to volunteer. For more BSTRA information visit BSTRA.org.

Paper and Electronics Shredding

Need to securely dispose of electronics and papers? Naï’i Shalom, 117 E. Main St., Westborough will hold a paper and hard drive shredding on Sunday May 5 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. All items will be disposed of securely - including hard drive shredding. All shredding of paper will be done off-site, however HIPAA certification will be given on site. This is a fundraiser for Congregation Naï’i Shalom Price list and information atCBnaiShalom.org/event/shred-and-recycle.html.

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Home Improvement

118 North Main St., Uxbridge

Plumbing • Air Conditioning • Heating

Residential and Commercial

For more BSTRA information visit BSTRA.org.

Upton-Mendon Town Crier

APRIL 19, 2019

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Blessing of the Animals, Birdfeeders, and Seedlings

On Sunday, May 19, from 2 to 4 p.m., the United Parish of Upton invites all to bring live or stuffed toy animals for a “Blessing of the Animals.” Participants will also have the opportunity to craft a hummingbird feeder, birdseed feeder and nesting ball from recycled items. Blessings are joyfully and freely given; however, a $15 donation for the craft will assist in covering material costs. Pre-register by May 12 at UnitedParishUpton.org/siteforms/view.php?id=15 or with forms found in the United Parish church office. Also, stop by the Seedling Sale to check out the vegetable and flower seedlings just in time to start a garden! Donations from this event will go to the United Parish Building and Grounds Committee. For more info on the bird feeders, contact Leanne Luetkemeyer, lmluetkemeyer@earthlink.net. For more info on the seedling sale or to donate seedlings, contact Tally Reeverts, tally.reeverts@gmail.com.

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. 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 Reeverts, tally.reeverts@gmail.com. For more info on the bird feeders, contact Leanne Luetkemeyer, lmluetkemeyer@earthlink.net. For more info on the seedling sale or to donate seedlings, contact Tally Reeverts, tally.reeverts@gmail.com.

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Mendon Candidates’ Night

The Brothers of the Brush will hold its annual Candidates’ Night at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 7, at the Mendon Senior Center on Providence Road. All candidates in the May 14 Annual Town Election have been invited to attend.

The purpose of Candidates’ Night is to give all candidates an opportunity to introduce themselves to their constituents and to address issues that are important to them and to the community. Each candidate will be allowed to make a five-minute presentation. After all candidates have spoken, there will be a question-and-answer period for Mendon voters to ask any candidate questions and receive their answers. Richard Ferrucci will serve as moderator for this event.

Mendon Historical Society Spring Tea

Just in time to celebrate Spring and Mother’s Day, the Mendon Historical Society will be hosting a Tea on Saturday, May 11, at the Society’s new museum, 15 Hastings St, Mendon. A seating at 2:30 p.m. and at 3 p.m. are available. The cost is $18 per person, payable by cash or check.

This event requires reservations as space is limited. Dads and children over 10 are also invited. Reservations can be made by emailing Sue Ober, mendonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com. Please include the number attending, which seating is preferred, a phone number and an email address. A reservation confirmation will be emailed to the given address. The reservation deadline is Friday, May 3.

A variety of finger sandwiches, a selection of desserts, various teas and fruit will all be served. Due to the limited kitchen space and other restrictions, it will not be able to accommodate food allergies. Come and enjoy a pleasant Spring afternoon, while helping support the Mendon Historical Society, a volunteer run organization.

Troop 44 Can and Bottle Drive

Mendon’s Troop 44 Boy Scouts will be holding their next can and bottle drive from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, April 27, at the Mendon Town Hall parking lot. Anyone with cans and bottles that they would like to donate, but is unable to drop them off, can contact the Troop via email at fundraising@troop44mendon.org or via phone at 508-478-3124 to arrange a pick-up.

Proceeds from both the can and bottle drive will be used to help fund Troop 44’s activities throughout the year. Troop 44 would like to thank everyone for their continuing support of scouting in Mendon.

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Mendon News

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Citizen Petitions Involve Revolving Fund and Rezoning Districts

By Michelle Sanford

Three citizen petitions are on Mendon’s Annual Town Warrant that involve the Park’s Department’s revolving fund and rezoning two areas of town.

Article 12 on the warrant was brought forward by Director of Parks and Recreation Dan Byer. The intent is to raise the Department’s spending limit for its revolving fund.

Byer stated to the Selectmen during a March meeting that he brought the forward the citizen’s petition to make certain it was placed on this year’s warrant. “It wasn’t necessarily an attempt to subvert the Board,” he said. Byer attempted to bring such an article to Town Meeting several years ago, however the Selectmen chose not to move forward with it.

The proposed petition would eliminate the Park’s revolving fund cap altogether, which is currently at $10,000, but would however the Selectmen chose not to move forward with it.

“The general fund subsidizes most of these departments and boards as it is. The idea that they’re going to, on their own, establish accounts to fund their own priorities and projects outside the general budget, which is so small, seems unnecessary to me,” she said.

Tom Merolli, Chair of the Economic Development Committee, was also sponsoring two citizen petitions. Articles 32 and 33 aim to reroute two areas from General Business to Highway Business.

One area includes Cape Road from the Hopedale town line to the Bellingham town line and Hartford Ave. East. The second area includes part of Rt. 16 extending east from the intersection of North Ave. to the Hopedale town line and all of Harrington St.

Currently Highway Business zones allow for marijuana establishments. Merolli stated to the Selectmen during a meeting that due to the unsatisfactory situation with school funding, “Mendon needs to take control of its destiny a bit and I think this is one option to do that.”

He pointed out that two communities will split $66,000 in local taxes from one week of marijuana sales. Expanding the zoning Merolli said would not allow for more establishment than is currently permitted in the bylaw, but would make a more marketable area for them.

Selectman Chris Burke said he’s a proponent of adding more commercial businesses but said he’s never been in favor of bringing marijuana into town. Still, he doesn’t necessarily oppose the Rt. 140 zonng expansion but would be concerned with the Rt. 16 area. “It’s within the line of sight of a school, regardless of it being 500 feet away,” he said.

Burke added anyone coming from Hopedale could see a strip club, then a marijuana establishment and then the drive in, which could potentially steer away other potential investors.

Unbeknownst to Merolli, the Planning Board is bringing forward similar articles on the warrant that also discuss expanding those areas to Highway Business. The May 3 Annual Town Meeting will take place at Miscoe Hill School and begin at 7 p.m.

Mendon’s New Substitute Van Driver

The Mendon Board of Selectman unanimously appointed resident Mark Rousseau (pictured right) as a substitute van driver for the Senior Center. According to Senior Center Director Amy Wilson Kent (pictured left), Rousseau is a retired military colonel and was looking to volunteer for the town.

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.

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.

Mendon Community Clean-up Day

The Mendon Community Clean-up Day is Saturday, April 20, from 9 a.m. to noon. Volunteers will meet at Henry P. Cough School, 10 North 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 Southwick’s Zoo as a thank you. Register at Mendon.gov/ clean-up or at the event.

Friends of Mendon Elders Scholarship

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

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New Mendon Police Station Votes Coming Up

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

In the upcoming weeks, Mendon residents will determine two key decisions concerning additional funding for their new Police Station. One involves a vote at the May 3 Annual Town Meeting and the other is a ballot vote during the May 14 Annual Town Election.

In 2017, Mendon voters approved a $5 million debt exclusion to renovate and expand the former Main St. fire station into a 9,200 square foot building for their new police headquarters. Because old school debt was coming off and $1.5 million in Community Preservation Act funding was approved by voters to help defray costs, there was no tax impact to residents.

However, due to large increases in plumbing, HVAC, electrical, and fire protection costs, in addition to unsuitable soils, it was realized an additional $1.4 million was needed to bring the complete vision of the headquarters to fruition. Last November, voters authorized the town to borrow $800,000 to award the contract to the general contractor. Three other parts of the project were not funded and awarded at that time. Article 9 on the May 3 Annual Town Meeting warrant is requesting the $520,000 which is the anticipated cost of the three parts of the project: the establishment of the current police station, final paving of the parking lot, and to complete the second level of the new addition.

If passed, the entire $1.4 million amount will be brought to voters during the May 14 Town Election as a Proposition 2 1/2 debt exclusion. The tax impact for a $400,000 home in Mendon is expected to be approximately $54 per year over 20 years. However, each year, that number will fluctuate due to the total valuation of the town changing annually.

The Board of Selectmen has stated the only way to afford the $1.4 million is through a debt exclusion, otherwise the funding would need to come out of the operating budget, putting a financial strain on the town.

A member of the Police Station Building Committee is expected to put on a presentation during the May 14 Town Meeting to explain to voters in more detail the reasoning behind the debt exclusion.

The Annual Town Meeting will begin at 7 p.m. and take place at Millscove Hill School. The May 14 Election will also take place at Millscove Hill School. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Ratcliffe Withdraws from Mendon Election

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter/Columnist

Mendon Board of Health candidate Deborah Ratcliffe withdrawn her nomination papers on April 10 according to Town Clerk Ellen Agro. As a result, there will be no race between Ratcliffe and incumbent Andrew Fiske for the three-year seat. Mendon’s Annual Election is scheduled for May 14. The only race that will now appear on Mendon’s ballot is between candidates Kerry Ann Ratcliffe and incumbent Andrew Fiske for the three-year seat. Mendon’s Annual Election is scheduled for May 14.
BVT Students Earn 95 Medals at SkillsUSA District Conference

In the first stage of the SkillsUSA competition series, Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) students showcased their creativity and brought 33 gold, 31 silver, and 31 bronze medals home from the SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Conference. BVT students are honored to compete among the Commonwealth’s most talented vocational technical students in the annual SkillsUSA competitions. These events operate as showcases for vocational technical educational programs as students compete with their peers in hands-on technical exams designed and judged by industry leaders and experts. Lauren Flynn, a sophomore from Upton in Multimedia Communications (Web Design) said, “I learned a lot and advanced my skills in my trade, I had a lot of fun talking to other people in my competition and I met a lot of new people in my trade.”

The 2019 series kicked off for Valley Tech students on March 13, when Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School hosted the SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Leadership Conference. Competing against more than 900 vocational technical students from seven schools, 95 Valley Tech students were able to learn about these exams and the students earned perfect scores on their trade testing.

Following their strong district level performance, there are 65 district competitors moving on as candidates. Learn about SkillsUSA’s two BVT students will compete in leadership events at the Massachusetts State Leadership and Skills Conference on April 13. A group of ten students will serve as delegates for Valley Tech officer candidates.

Blackstone Valley Tech will once again host the state competition in which students compete for the honor of representing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at the SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference held each summer in Louisville, Kentucky.

The following local students, organized by hometown, earned gold, silver, and bronze medals at the SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Leadership Conference.

Hopedale:
- State Officer Candidate: Madeleine Poitras
- Gold: Eli Moore, Culinary Arts
- Silver: Lily Allen, Commercial Baking
- Bronze: Chaves Silva, HVAC/R

Mendon:
- Gold: Selah Harper, Nursing Assistant; Zachary Riverminder, Mobile Robotics
- Silver: Sydney Chasse, Multimedia Communications; Jainelle DeCaro, Culinary Arts
- Bronze: Stephon Morelli, Automotive Service Technology

Milford:
- Gold: Demitri Almeda, Telecommunications Cabling; Erin Bethel, Health Knowledge Bowl
- Silver: Christopher Calvao, Urban Search & Rescue
- Bronze: Logan Keefe, Digital Cinema Production; Joash Ramirez, Collision Repair Technology; Melissa Vass, HVAC/R

Miscoe:
- Bronze: Michael Boone, Collision Repair Technology; Willow Harvey, Customer Service; Christopher Martin, Automotive Service Technology
- Silver: Cameron Pelletier, Metachromas; Pamela Pereira, Web Design; Joseph Tutela, Commercial Baking

Upton:
- Gold: Ryan Conrad, Health Knowledge Bowl
- Silver: Mackenzie LeClair, Photography; Patricia Ober, Robotics & Automation Technology
- Bronze: Adam Dickey, Mechatronics; Aiden Silver: Adam Dickey, Mechatronics; Aidan Trimble, who dressed in costumes.

Compiled by Melissa Orff

School Highlights

Mendon-Upton Regional Community (MURC) PTO Launches Melissa Orff Staff Reporter

DISTRICT: An AILCE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) Training Parent Information Night will be held at Miscoe Middle School on Wednesday, April 17 at 6:30 p.m. Learn about AILCE protocols, how everyone in the school will be trained to respond to an emergency, from the Mendon and Upton School Resource Officers.

CLOGH: National Library Week was celebrated with students listening to stories about books read by Clough Librarian Lara Trimboli, who dressed in costumes.

Clough Students and staff hosts the annual Arbor Day Program on April 26 where they will be joined by the Miscoe Hill Student Council. This year, a tree will be donated in memory of Christopher Tisoni, brother of Clough and Miscoe student Anthony and Aarun, a member of Mendon, and Deborah Clare, mother of Miscoe students Tyler and Abigail Clare. The Clough PTO is thanked for sponsoring the Mad Science Cultural Art programs for Second Grade and the Zoe Mobile Preschool. Thanks also to the BYT dental students who taught first graders good dental habits.

Congratulations to Lauren Poitier’s first grade class and Amy Nofsky’s Third Grade class for correctly answering “grow up” with loving behavior and completing their schoolwide caterpillars. Congratulations to the following students for “growing up” M3, M5, M6, M7, M41, M42 and M51.

Students in Esther Willinski’s class presented in both the school-wide and class activity assisted by parent volunteers. Clough thanks Lowers, for providing eight cedar boards, with which parent volunteer Russell DeWitte created five bird feeder kits and five bird house kits which students could assemble with the help of another parent volunteer. The students will use the constructions, which will be installed and donated to seniors center. Director of Technology David Quinn will help install a bird feeder with a sensor to capture images of the birds feeding. Middle School Art students will make 1, 2, and 4th grade Math - May 8 and 9.

Save the Date for the annual Spanish International Night being held at Nipmuc on May 9.

MEMORIAL: First grade students traveled to Mechanics Hall to see the play The Cat in the Hat on April 11. Students enjoyed the show. The first grade also had a visit from Andrew Green of Potato Hill Poetry. After a lesson in poetry writing and listening to some of Green’s poems, students wrote a class poem and then one of their own. Fourth grade students are participating in a contest to design a tip for this year’s yearbook. All entries are due in office by Tuesday, April 23. Students will vote on the cover in May. To purchase a yearbook, please contact the school office by May 10.

Community Reading Day will be held on April 30. Many special guests from the Upton community will visit classrooms and talk about their role in the community before reading stories to the students. Thanks to Karlee Yale, Memorial Librarian, for coordinating this event.

Kindergarten Screening will be held on April 24, 25, and 26. Anyone who has not yet registered for Kindergarten, please contact the school office to set up an appointment.

MICSCO: Congratulations to Miscoe’s 5th Grade Choirs for winning a bronze medal at the Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association (MICCA) Festival on April 6. Students who participated had the chance to perform for a panel of expert choral musicians, receive feedback, participate in a clinic and judged on their performance. The Miscoe track and field team had a successful meet against Hardsort Middle School and Hopedale. Over 30 kids qualified for states during the meet. Top performing athletes for the girls were Alexis Gibson in the shot put, Bell Merrill in the javelin and Reed Dunster in the long jump. Qualifying for states were Rachel Caravanh in the discus and carolyn Brigham in the discus and Cassano in the shot put.

Top track performances for the boys were Bell Merrill, Carolyn Brigham, Kristina Fabishe, Alexis Gibson, Billie Hill and Reading Dunster. Other strong performances included Leah Kirby, Lauren Plum, Julia Mistrutta and Olivia Webb and. Having great performances were Emma Wierimo in the 800 and Rachel Caravanh in the 200. Qualifying for the states were Natalia Vanquez in the hurdles, Reed Dunster in the 100, Carolyn Brigham in the 4x100 relay, Alexa Gibson in the mile and Julia Mistrutta in the 400.

Top field performances for boys were Roman Joyce in the javelin and Liam Martel in the long jump. Qualifying for the states were Jacob Biglow in the discus and Hampton Kaye-Kuter in the shot put.

State qualifiers in the running events were: Riley Driver, Christopher Morrison and Carter Koeca in the hurdles; Jacob Biglow in the 100, Alex Healer in the 400; and Christopher Morrison, Jason Somm, Michael Depinho and Liam Martel in the 4x100 relay. Other strong track performances were Michael Giannarini in the mile, Sam Aubut in the 800, John White in the mile, Jacob Biglow in the 400, Alex Gibson in the mile and Julia Mistrutta in the 400.

Sixteen Nipmuc DECA students have qualified for the National DECA Competition in Orlando, April 27-30. More than 10,000 DECA members will demonstrate their career and college skills and knowledge participating in DECA’s competitive events.

On May 6, Upton resident, illustrated and author Lauren Scheuer will share her journey in becoming a children’s book author with the Nipmuc community. Scheuer will host two sessions during the day thanks to a grant from the Upton Cultural Council, the Nipmuc community and a professional illustrator and author over a dozen children’s books. Her work can be seen at one of the Nipmuc Libraries or the Nipmuc Museum of Science, she is currently working on a picture book about the Upton Beaver Pond. Students and parents are invited to join the presentation at either 11:45 a.m. or 1 p.m.

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Massachusetts Auto Tech Champions Excel Under the Hood

By Melissa Orf
Staff Reporter

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) was recently named one of only 67 high schools across the country to receive the designation, and only one of 34 schools to receive the award in the Commonwealth, Blackstone Valley Tech Technical High School (BVT) was recently named a 2018-2019 Project Lead the Way Distinguished High School for the second year in a row, but the honor really belongs to the students, who include four from Mendon. Project Lead the Way (PLTW) is a nonprofit organization that “provides transformative learning experiences for students and teachers by empowering them to develop in-demand, transportable knowledge and skills through computer science and engineering pathways.”

BVT was recognized for its commitment to increasing student access, engagement, and achievement in their programs. It has given students exposure to real-world experience in various engineering disciplines.

“It’s really important to have that real world experience in various engineering disciplines,” said Vocational Director Dr. Matthew Connors.

During his PLTW courses, Conner and his BVT Engineering classmates including Mendon residents Zachary Conner, Charles Doe, and Mary Kennedy, have built gliders, and even created prototypes of space equipment that would make the colonization of Mars viable.

“Designed to be relevant in the real world, this nationally recognized competition held during the New York International Auto Show, is on their way to New York City to compete in the 2019 National Auto Show in today's technologically advanced automotive industry. Each correctly repaired issue is measured in points, specific vehicle components, and job interview skills.

“Together the nation's best high school automotive technicians to test their skills, measure their knowledge, and challenge their ability to diagnose and repair vehicles. Designed to be relevant in the real world, this competition reflects the knowledge and skills that are in demand for success in today's technologically advanced automotive industry. “This nationally recognized competition is a wonderful opportunity for our students,” explains Paul Perreault, BVT’s Automotive Technology Vocational Instructor. “They get to test themselves and their abilities against the best automotive students in the country.”

On the first day, the contestants are tested on their knowledge of tools, measuring instruments, specific vehicle components, and job interview skills.

On the second day, each two-person team has an allotted amount of time in which to diagnose and repair a number of preassigned problems under a car's hood. Each correctly repaired issue is worth a set number of points depending on the level of difficulty.

For more information or to apply for more information.  Applications are on their way to New York City to compete in the 2019 National Auto Show in today's technologically advanced automotive industry.
By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter
For the 57th year, Nipmuc Regional High School honored the leadership, character, scholarship, and service of the National Honor Society inductees during a ceremony on April 4.

National Honor Society (NHS) President and Nipmuc senior Michelle Barboza welcomed the inductees and their families to the annual event.

"NHS has distinguished excellence in the school and the community," she said. "Inductees, you are here tonight because of your hard work, determination and character."

Senior Thomas Doyle sang the National Anthem and Barboza welcomed the evenings speakers –Superintendent Dr. Joseph Maruszczak and NHS advisor Christopher Evans.

"It is the little decisions we make every day that define our character," advised Evans. "It is my experience that it is the little things – the way we treat people – what defines us."

Congratulations the inductees on their hard work and dedication to helping others Evans said, "Our inductees supported our schools and donated 750 hours to volunteer work in our community. I believe in the young women and men seated before you; I look forward to seeing what you will become."

In order to be eligible for NHS, students must have a grade point average of over 85, complete 100 hours to volunteer work in our community. I believe in the young women and men seated before you; I look forward to seeing what you will become.

One of the new inductees supported our schools and donated 750 hours to volunteer work in our community. I believe in the young women and men seated before you; I look forward to seeing what you will become.

"We taught the seniors how to enlarge text size, change ring tones, and connect with their families online," she described. "They were really appreciative."

Junior Katie Laurence spoke about how her passion for music led her to plan and organize a community-wide concert to benefit a non-profit music scholarship fund. "I was able to raise over $400 for the Encore Music Education Foundation," said Katie, who because of its success, hopes to turn it into an annual event.

After the speeches the inductees were presented with certificates and both the current and new members pledged the NHS oath to conclude the ceremony.

The 2019 inductees into the Nipmuc Regional High School National Honor Society are: Paige Alcott, Paige Allen, Megan Bailey, Amelia Ball, Isaiah Barnes, Ciara Boyle, Cassidy Candela, Kelsey Casamento, Sarah Clark, Casey Costello, Emma Cote, Kate Dawson, Rachel Dupre, Kerri Farragher, Jared Heather, Lauren Kirby, Katherine Laurence, Christopher Lavoie, Jason Lazarz, Joseph LeClaire, Ethan LeFebvre, Kaylee Lukasek, Benjamin Moeckel, Kacy Morford, Maren Morrice, Brenden O’Neill, Abigail Paul, Walker Penfield, Lindsey Plumb, Mikki Pisani, Emily Pollen, Brynna Seligman, Maryn Shilale, Ava Siegel, Myles St. Jean, Keri Stewart, Tessa Stewart, Jack Thompson, Daniel Trainor, Ava Uthoff, Sophie Vincens, and Gianna Weed.
"Dewers" at Miscoe Hill Featured in Ad Campaign

Several Mendon Upton Regional School District students, staff, and community members will be part of Honey Dew’s new ad campaign coming out this Spring. Filming for a series of new commercials featuring "the Dewers" of New England, was done by Viewpoint Creative, based in Newton. viewpoint filmed two scenes for the new campaign in Mendon – at the Blessing Barn, Hastings Rd. and at the Miscoe Hill School where scenes show the power of taking on everyday challenges "It’s all about the dew," said Dave Shilade, General Manager/Executive Producer of Viewpoint Creative and Mendon resident about the campaign that will air in a few weeks. "It’s people in your community that participate in your community." Joanne Quinn, Marketing Manager for Honey Dew, said that the new campaigns feature real people in everyday, sometimes challenging, situations. Pictured is a behind-the-scenes action shot of the filming at Miscoe Hill School with students Lily Mosher, Jack Mosher, Ben Joseph, Andrew Lindquist, Kylie MacDonald, Kendra Shilade and Administrative Assistant Raphuela Morais-Perroba. Viewpoint Creative photo.

Work Completed and Ongoing under the District’s Yearly Action Plan

By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter

The Mendon Upton Regional School Committee received an update on the 2018/2019 district’s yearly action plans to date during an April 8 meeting. Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Maruszczak reviewed the status of the eight initiatives the district has worked on this year, initiatives that are aligned with the district’s new Strategic Plan. The first initiative is to improve school and home communications with families. While Maruszczak cited the roll out of the new district strategic plan and several online digital tools as areas of progress towards this goal, he also stated that more work needed to be done in the area of ongoing, consistent communication to families. “Some of that work has commenced with the development of a homework committee, but I would still like to see a district-wide guide of exemplary practices (in the area of communication),” he said. The second initiative is to provide tiered SEL (Social Emotional Learning) supports and interventions. Maruszczak said much of the work is being done at the elementary level. Both Clough and Memorial Elementary Schools have rolled out a new positive behavior program (PBIS), SEL Committees have been established at the elementary and middle school levels, the bi-annual Metrowest health survey will be administered, and Miscoe and Nipmuc will host several Wellness Weeks this year. The third initiative is to teach and model SEL competencies. According to Maruszczak, the district has been focusing on creating best practices, sharing resources, and leading book studies to focus on SEL in the classrooms. Plans to have a community-wide book study of SEL in the Home is still in the planning phases, but according to Maruszczak, a handbook when costs were deemed prohibitive. The district’s fourth initiative is safety and crisis planning. Since the beginning of the school year, the district has taken part in a number of ALICE (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, and Evacuate) trainings. ALICE is a new protocol being taught in schools to proactively handle the threat of an aggressive shooter or active shooter event. “We are also really pleased with the upgrade of the security camera systems at Nipmuc and are cautiously optimistic we will be able to the same at Miscoe thanks to a grant,” said Maruszczak. This summer the district will continue working on this initiative by updating the school crisis plan and evaluating and updating the current new protocol being taught in schools to proactively handle the threat of an aggressive intruder or active shooter event. "Dewers" at Miscoe Hill School where scenes show the power of taking on everyday challenges “It’s all about the dew,” said Dave Shilade, General Manager/Executive Producer of Viewpoint Creative and Mendon resident about the campaign that will air in a few weeks. "It’s people in your community that participate in your community." Joanne Quinn, Marketing Manager for Honey Dew, said that the new campaigns feature real people in everyday, sometimes challenging, situations. Pictured is a behind-the-scenes action shot of the filming at Miscoe Hill School with students Lily Mosher, Jack Mosher, Ben Joseph, Andrew Lindquist, Kylie MacDonald, Kendra Shilade and Administrative Assistant Raphuela Morais-Perroba. Viewpoint Creative photo.

Several young artists from the Mendon Upton Regional School District were chosen to have their artwork displayed at the 13th annual Art in the Valley Show at the F.W. Hartnett Middle School in Blackstone on April 5 and 6. Sponsored by the Blackstone Valley Education Foundation, the annual exhibit allows Art Teachers from schools in the area to choose student artwork to be showcased for their “high quality and inventive artistic expression.” Pictured are the students with their artwork chosen for the Art in the Valley show in Miscoe Hill Art Teacher Jonathan Hansers’s classes - Top row: Annalise Weibe, Nicole Ernst, Libby Fernald, Shanae Victor, Phillion Clark, Kateyson Steele; Bottom row: Julia Bern, Til Wright, Alyssa Cottry, Noelle Fedor; Missing from Picture: AnnMarie Stann, Alyssa Rubaout, Anna Gracia, Leah Harris, Alex Heather. Artists also chosen to have their artwork displayed were - Miscoe (Art Teacher Alice Gentry); Finn Lucusas, Mason Kirkpatrick, Kyle Moran, Brooke Ferla, Brynn Dickens, Irindy Bradley, Connor Bellville, Elia Habonm, Kassity Walker, Ethan LaRue, Eliza Kurze, Fallon Lucusas, Arman Asyaparydramhan, Kayla Aubut, Sophia Blalock, Theo Bates, and Molly Dishington; Clough Elementary (Art Teacher Chelsea Stowe’s) Cassidy Housse, Ivan Barroza, Layla Heghet, Sofia Gambonui, Mackenzie Guimond, Joey Poparkinski, Hailey Stone, Brayden Dollicker, Lexcie Gardner, Corbin Devoremy, Cam Houde, Abije Drapeau, Connor McFesters, Elyse Garland, and Danielle Royal; and Memorial Elementary (Art Teacher Ian Fowler); Maxwell Bennett, Ryan Moran, Cooper Bundzel, Jack Morse, Anastasia Koch, Max Labonte, Ben Moran, Lily Hamed, Ilana Tausone, Eljah Brear, Lucas Wang, Isabelle Daugthery, Phoenix Allen, Veronica Botvinnik, and Ella Daugthery. Contributed photo.
By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Nipmuc boys track and field team features a combination of experienced and new athletes that have shown enough promise to have head coach Richard Auger hoping to have his team atop the Dual Valley Conference standings by the end of the season.

“We certainly want to win the DVC this season,” Auger said. “Once we get to the DVC meet, when you only put your three best athletes in an event, I think we'll have a good shot of winning it.”

The Warriors dropped their first meet of the season against Blackstone-Millville Regional and are off until taking on Douglas next week. Several athletes showed some promise during the first meet of the year. Nico LaCortiglia and Jared Joyce earned the top two spots in the 100-meter dash. Joyce added a strong 52-second time in the 400.

LaCortiglia, who is only a sophomore, has also shown strength in the high jump clearing 5-feet-2 inches. Senior hurdler David Round has also been running well, his head coach said. The Warriors feature depth in the distance events, with DeZutter leading the way in the two mile and sprinters Meg Curran and Sage Hurtleau. Lauren Flynn returns in the mile after earning a spot in the district meet last season. Molly Curley and Ava DiDonna add depth to the team’s crop of hurdles talent. “We have a lot of kids who can make some noise in the districts,” Coonan said.

The head coach is back for his second season as the head coach in his second stint with the program after spending time at the collegiate level. Former Division 1 runner Caitlin Forgit, Jim Mulcahy, who coached with his mother a quarter-century ago when she was a state champion and state vocational titles in the high and low hurdles.

“During a game, I'll watch where the ball is when we are on offense and Shannon will talk to the girls about what to change the next time the ball is down in that zone,” Manzella said.

The league has changed a lot over the past couple of years,” Manzella said. “It's a really competitive league now, we won't have any easy games.”

“Those are our returning players and they have taken on a huge role and responsibility working with the younger girls through the offseason, in captain’s practices and indoor practices,” Manzella said. “They have done a good job mentoring other girls on the team.”

The Warriors have experience all over the field, thanks to the versatility in their experienced players. Utter and Bailey are on the attack. Salguero moved to midfield this season and Schrafft is the most experienced defensive player, something that has already paid dividends.

“During a game, I’ll watch where the ball is when we are on offense and Shannon will talk to the girls about what to change the next time the ball is down in that zone,” Manzella said.

Some of the team’s younger players have come along quickly, in part due to the tutelage of their older teammates. Sophomore Amelia Ball has stood out in the midfield in her first varsity season after putting in considerable effort during the offseason. Freshman Cami Leary has also fit in well with the seniors on the attack, Manzella said.

With so many young players, Nipmuc is focused on getting better as the season gets underway. “It's back to basics,” Manzella said. “I want to make sure we are improving every game. I ask the girls to set a goal for the day, they can do it quietly, to themselves. It might be the same goal throughout the season or a different one each game, they have so many things to improve upon because they are so young.”

The Warriors, who earned a win in their first game against Worcester, will be looking to hone their skills on the draw and scooping up ground balls, among other things. They will also be gearing up to compete in a strong Mid-Mass League.

“With so many young players, we're going to have to be very good,” Auger said, noting Lanier's 4-foot-10 jump in the high jump. Maddie Garvone in the two mile and sprinters Meg Curran and Sage Hurtleau. Lauren Flynn returns in the mile after earning a spot in the district meet last season. Molly Curley and Ava DiDonna add depth to the team's crop of hurdles talent. “We have a lot of kids who can make some noise in the districts,” Coonan said.

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Sports

Young BVT Athletes Challenging Veterans on Track Team

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Blackstone Valley Tech boys' track and field team enters the new season after a double-digit win total a season ago and a trip to the state vocational title game, but the Beavers are hoping to take an additional step and bring home a state voke crown this spring.

“People have to earn it, if a freshman is beating out a senior than he gets to go to the league meet,” Coonan said. “We want our athletes to know they have to perform and prove themselves at every practices.”

The Beavers feature a large senior class this spring, with experienced players dotting the top of their games.

Barry Coonan has made one thing to clear to his squad and district meets, the veterans are on notice to be at their best when they are competing in the league. "I told them, 'if you're a freshman and excelling in an event, whoever is hot, they have to get to the uniform and go to the league meet,'” Coonan said.

The BVT track program has more than 140 athletes this year between the boys and the girls, numbers that dwarf what Coonan recalled having when he first coached the program years ago.

“We used to be lucky to have 40 or so combined,” he said. “Twenty-five years ago 140 kids would have been about a quarter of the school.”

“Once we got rolling, we just kind of put it in gear and played well,” Barksdale said. “Bay Path wasn’t an extremely competitive game, they are a newer program and not as skilled as some of the other teams. But we got to work on a lot of things while playing them.”

The defense is expected to be the cornerstone of the Valley Tech squad. Barksdale said the team has a significant amount of depth on that side of the field, with veteran players like Jack Kinsella, J.D. Antya and John Nasuti, along with goalie Adam Kaminski-Miller.

The offense is also starting to click, Barksdale said, pointing to Andrew Vasile, Luke Casey and Trevor Harper as players who will help carry the load.

The Beavers feature a large senior class this spring, with experienced players dotting the field. This year's group finished 14-7 a season ago, falling to St. Bernard's in the district tournament and losing to Shawsheen in the state vocational title game.

Barksdale said his team should be the class of the Colonial Athletic League this spring, but said Advanced Math and Science Academy and Assabet Valley Tech will also be very competitive squads.

“I feel that we are a couple of steps ahead of them, from scouting a few of their games, but it comes down to how we come out and play,” Barksdale said. “I feel what we have to do, we should be able to take care of them.

APRIL 19, 2019
Upton-Mendon Town Crier
Shane Dougherty has been practicing martial arts for most of his life, but the well-rounded 21-year-old has also made sure to find time to be a student, play other sports and take advantage of other opportunities that have come his way.

All of that has not kept the Nipmuc graduate from excelling in the mixed martial arts cage, where he captured an amateur featherweight championship a little more than a week ago.

“It was a huge honor for me,” Dougherty said. “This was the first time in a while I felt like I could 100 percent concentrate on the fight. The day of the fight, I had never felt better.”

With his coaches and friends sporting shirts with the slogan “Straight Outta Upton,” Dougherty needed just two minutes and 22 seconds to topple his opponent and end the fight with a barrage of blows. He described the win as being like “something out of a movie” and celebrated the title — won just days after his 21st birthday — with a celebratory shot in the middle of the ring. Dougherty competes for New England-based MMA promotion Cage Titans, and the road to winning this championship has been anything but direct.

After practicing martial arts as a young child, Dougherty turned his focus to Nipmuc team sports, lacrosse in particular. He competed in MMA after discovering the sport on television when he was about 14, and traveled with his father to tournaments all over New England. When Dougherty turned 18, he won his first cage fight. Again, life stepped in with another opportunity. After graduating from Nipmuc in 2016, Dougherty went to Bridgewater State University and had the chance to study abroad in Spain.

He returned to the cage last summer, earning another win. But just before a November win winning the MMA featherweight title, Dougherty lost in a fight that he was confident he would win. He decided to focus on his education and take a break from the ring.

“We talked about it, and he decided to take a break from the ring,” Dougherty’s coach, Chris Dougherty, said at the time. “It was a huge loss for the community, but at the same time, it was important for his future.”

The next step is still in my fighting and training, “ Dougherty said.  Dougherty still won the fight, setting up the title shot earlier this month. On his personal deleted his focus cleared, Dougherty was able to remain undefeated in MMA competition. The next step is still unclear for the college junior, because, as always, there is more than just fighting on his plate. He’s a double major, studying marketing and English.

“I am a student athlete and student comes first, so I need to take care of my studies,” Dougherty said. “I’ll talk to my coaches and my family and plan my next move.”

With the love and support of his mother, Jasmine and step-father, Michael, Dougherty knows he will have plenty of options ahead of him. As one of the top-ranked amateur fighters in the Northeast, MMA may be one of them. “I know this could be a career path,” he said, “if I want to take it”