Where Has Winter Gone?

Basking in warm, almost summer like temperatures the weekend of January 11-12, area residents could be asking what happened to winter this year? The local area experienced its deepest snowfall of the season during the first few days of December accumulating about a foot of the white stuff. Since then there have been small snow storms, ice and a lot of rain.

According to the Old Farmer’s Almanac the rest of the winter weather will be similar to what has already occurred. Its prediction for the next few weeks in southern New England and the Atlantic corridor, which stretches from Boston down the coast to Richmond, Va., states, “Winter temperatures will be much above normal, on average, with the coldest periods in mid- and late January and early and late February. Precipitation will be above normal, with below-normal snowfall. The snowiest periods will occur in mid- and late January and early February.”

Looking ahead to spring, the almanac predicts, “April and May will be warmer than normal, with precipitation near normal in the north [southern New England] and above normal in the south.”

The heat and rain continues for the rest of the year. It states, “Summer will be hotter and rainier than normal, with the hottest periods in mid-July and early to mid-August. September and October will be warmer and rainier than normal, with a tropical storm threat in early to mid-October.”

So if the predictions are right, get ready for snow during the next couple of weeks and then be prepared for a rainy 2020.

Mendon Board in Violation of an Open Meeting Law

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

After an investigation, the Attorney General’s (AG) Office found that Mendon’s Planning Board acted in violation of the Open Meeting Law. The AG’s office made the determination in December after looking into the matter.

Mendon resident Kristen Auclair filed several Open Meeting Law complaints against the Planning Board after an April 22, 2019 public hearing regarding zoning bylaw amendments that would expand areas in town for recreational marijuana establishments to operate.

The meeting notice for the public hearing was written “7:15 p.m. — Public Hearing — Zoning By-laws.” Auclair believed that wording was not adequate as no reference to marijuana establishments was made. “It wasn’t transparent about what was to be discussed,” she said.

The AG’s office agreed stating in its determination, “The notice included no mention of recreational marijuana establishments. As such, the meeting notice did not sufficiently alert members of the public that the Board would be discussing where in town these establishments might be located—a topic that was, no doubt, the subject of much public interest.”

In addition, Auclair stated the Planning Board limited public comment during the hearing. However, Auclair said Selectman Chris Burke was permitted to talk at length. “He spoke for at least 20 to 30 minutes. By the time he was through, I don’t think everyone had the chance to speak,” she said.

Still, the Opening Meeting Law gives the Chair discretion to decide whether to permit public comment and if so, to set restrictions on public comment, which Burke reiterated.

“The Planning Board, under the Direction of their Chair, has the right to determine the way in which they conduct their meetings,” stated Burke. “I attended the meeting as a resident and was permitted by the Chairman of the Planning Board to speak. I personally believe the Planning Board allowed adequate time for all attendees to speak, as does the Attorney General.”

The AG’s office found the Planning Board didn’t occur in mid- and late January and early February.”

Looking ahead to spring, the almanac predicts, “April and May will be warmer than normal, with precipitation near normal in the north [southern New England] and above normal in the south.”

The heat and rain continues for the rest of the year. It states, “Summer will be hotter and rainier than normal, with the hottest periods in mid-July and early to mid-August. September and October will be warmer and rainier than normal, with a tropical storm threat in early to mid-October.”

So if the predictions are right, get ready for snow during the next couple of weeks and then be prepared for a rainy 2020.

Section of Upton’s Warren St. to Close Next Week

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

During a January 7 meeting, the Upton Board of Selectmen voted unanimously to close a section of Warren St. beginning Friday, January 24. For the last several years, the Board of Selectmen and other town officials have been discussing closing the road adjacent to Town Hall for a variety of reasons, including safety concerns.

During the discussion that evening, it was stated the Department of Public Works will deliver letters to residents who live in the area regarding the closing and begin using message boards to notify all residents of the measure.

The DPW will put two sets of Jersey barriers up to close the street. one at the very end of the Town Hall parking lot, north of the dumpsters, and the other coming down Warren St. where Nelson St. crosses.

Initially, town officials planned to close the road sooner in order to begin construction that will reconfigure parking for the Town Hall, ultimately adding more spaces. However, that project is temporarily on hold explained Town Manager Derek Brindisi.

“We’ve had a lot of problems with sewer overflows here in Town Hall,” he said to the Board. “I would say we’ve had a good dozen in the past year or so.” Brindisi said they are trying to determine the source of the problem and have spoken to a plumbing contractor as well as contacted the Owner’s Project Manager from the Town Hall renovation project from several years back.

“We’re thinking there may be an issue with the connection that leads outside of the building to the sewer main. It’s over 60 years old and it’s a clay sewer main,” Brindisi said. “We may have to replace the sewer main.” As a result, he said it doesn’t make sense to start the parking lot construction until the sewer issue is resolved.

Regardless of the delay, the Selectmen were still in favor of closing the road. “I’m a fan of closing Warren St. as soon as possible. We’ve been trying to do it for years,” said Selectman Brett Simas. “There may be a resident or two that doesn’t like the change. I think that will always be the case. That’s not going to change.”

Warren St. is a part of a multi-intersection in the center of town that includes Rt. 140, Church St. and Grove St. Over the years, public
Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park Interpretive Programming

The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation announces the Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park January/February 2020 Interpretive Programming Schedule. All activities are held at the River Bend Farm, 287 Oak St., Uxbridge, unless otherwise listed and are for all ages unless an age range is noted. Children must always be accompanied by an adult. Call the park, 508-278-7604, for more information.

Winter Nature Walk, Thursday January 23 and 30. Enjoy a one mile walk around the field paths and along the river to look for signs of winter wildlife. Leashed dogs welcome. If conditions permit, bring snowshoes and hiking poles.

Kite and Snowshoe Walk, Saturday January 25 at 1 p.m. Bring a kite and snowshoes for an easy pace, two-mile walk through meadows and along the Blackstone Canal. If conditions permit, bring snowshoes and hiking poles.

Snowshoe Stroll, Monday January 20, 1 p.m. Bring snowshoes for an easy pace, two-mile walk along the canal tow path and meadow near River Bend Farm. If there is no snow this becomes a nature walk.

Reading New England's Forest, Saturday February 1, 1 p.m. Learn about the historic stone walls and man-made features that make up local forests during a 2.5-mile hike on an uneven path along the Blackstone Canal to Goat Hill Lock. If conditions permit, bring snowshoes and hiking poles.

Where is Groundhog Day, Sunday February 2, 10:30 a.m. Did the groundhog see his shadow? See what wildlife is up to in the winter around the park during a one-mile walk. Dress for the weather.

Playing with Shadows, February 2, 12 noon. In celebration of Groundhog Day come and play with the science of shadows on the back lawn of River Bend Farm Visitor Center. Create art using the shadows of branches and capturing them with photo sensitive paper.

Snowshoe Walk, Thursday February 6 and 27, 12 noon. Take a one-mile walk with some of the new things in the Blackstone Valley. All walks end at the start location. If conditions permit, bring snowshoes and hiking poles.

Creating a Nature Walk, Thursday January 23 and 30. Enjoy a one mile walk around the field paths and along the river and look for signs of winter wildlife. If conditions permit, bring snowshoes and hiking poles.

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Playing with Shadows, February 2, 12 noon. In celebration of Groundhog Day come and play with the science of shadows on the back lawn of River Bend Farm Visitor Center. Create art using the shadows of branches and capturing them with photo sensitive paper.

Snowshoe Walk, Thursday February 6 and 27, 12 noon. Take a one-mile walk around the field paths and along the river and look for signs of winter wildlife. If conditions permit, bring snowshoes and hiking poles.
Influenzas B Strain of Flu Virus Arrives Early This Season

Courtesy St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital

As flu season enters 2020, the influenza B strain of the flu virus has arrived earlier than normal making this year’s season off to an “atypically” early start, says Dr. Richard Webby, a member of the Infectious Diseases Department at St. Jude Children’s Research Hospital and the World Health Organization’s Vaccine Composition Team.

“Often we see the influenza B strain of the flu virus later in the season, sometimes following influenza A virus circulation – but this season, we see the influenza B strain arriving earlier than normal kicking off this year’s flu season ‘atypically’ early,” suggests Dr. Webby. “Regardless of what strain of influenza you get, the best protection from the flu virus is the flu vaccine. It is still the most valuable and life-saving public health tool in preventing and spreading the flu.”

At this moment the Influenza Victoria B strain is the most dominant strain of the virus in the country and is impacting children more than adults. The Victoria B Influenza strain appeared in Victoria, Australia some three decades ago and circulates in humans along with another Influenza B virus and two Influenza A viruses—which is the reason most of our flu shots have four components.

“We don’t know exactly why the Influenza B strain impacts children more than adults, but if we compare how much viruses have changed the B strain tends to change a little more slowly. Therefore, it is possible that adults have the opportunity to build up more immunity over time to this particular strain and thus resulting in greater natural protection,” said Dr. Webby.

Webby continued, “Because of the nature of the Influenza B strain’s greater impact on children and its early arrival, parents need to be extra cautious and take the necessary steps now, such as the getting their child the flu shot and going to their doctor early in the course of illness, to protect them from this potentially lethal strain.”

He concluded, “It’s certainly not too late to get the flu shot. It is composed of both Influenza A antigens and Influenzas B antigens, which will help fight the flu and keep you healthy. While we are seeing an early B season, last year we saw what was almost two consecutive flu seasons involving different viruses. If that happens again, now would be a good time to get vaccinated in preparation for the second virus.”

Snowman Contest

Our Snowman Contest is now going on.

Make a snowman, snap a photo and send it along with the snow person’s dimensions (height and circumference), the names anyone in the picture, and your hometown, to TownCrierEditor@gmail.com.

Another Successful MyFM Stuff-a-Bus

On Saturday November 30th local radio station MyFM 101.3 set up camp outside of the Milford Target for a 30-hour toy drive. The 3rd Annual MyFM Stuff-a-Bus partnered with Uxbridge-based Toys For Kids and Teens in 2019 to assist local families in need this holiday season. MyFM President Tom McAuliffe reported over 8,000 toys were collected, beating last year’s collection of 5,000. The effort was also supported by Affordable Junk Removal and Recyclables, TGIFridays, IHOP and Five Guys along with Vendetti Bus Company, which again provided the bus. Besides donating gifts, individuals and businesses also gave cash donations of $6,250, which was used to purchases other presents. These donors include Dinner and Co., Chelsie O’Meara – LuluLoo, Montgomery Lodge, Milford Tire, The Kearmans, Love Properties, KemForKids, Milford Hardware, Milford TV, Doyle Siding and Window, Ray’s Automotive, Friends of Holliston, Old Time Auto Sales, Masters Touch, Devlin’s Tavern, Depot St Tavern, Stephanie G Jewelers, Target and an anonymous Hopkinton donor. Gallo Moving and Storage transported the donations to the Toys For Kids and Teens drop off site.
Recognized as one of the nation’s safest hospitals... three times in a row!

As a nationally recognized healthcare leader,
Milford Regional has just been awarded - for the third time in a row - the country's top grade for hospital safety. Our commitment to quality care is stronger than ever, with new investments to enhance and support our team of dedicated nurses, physicians, and hospital staff in their mission to deliver the very best healthcare in our region.

While national recognitions are important, continuing to deliver quality healthcare to each patient is our real reward.
By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

Just walking into The Body Fixx an immediate sense of betterment comes over its patrons because they know full well they’ll be leaving feeling rejuvenated and refreshed and eager to return to the Upton wellness center.

Owner Holly Johnson and her highly skilled and welcoming professional staff offer an array of services including massage therapy, energy work, esthetic services, acupuncture, as well as invigorating spin and fitness classes and a calming meditation & mindfulness class.

Johnson holds a bachelor's degree in Corporate Communications and previously worked in logistics. However, at the encouragement of a friend, she enrolled in the Cortiva Institute of Massage in Boston and became board certified for therapeutic massage and body work.

Over the years, she worked as a massage therapist at some highly regarded sports facilities in Boston. “It’s not what I expected to do but I quickly realized how much I enjoyed it,” she said. “This job is just so rewarding.”

In July 2017, she bought The Body Fixx from Diana DelGrosso and moved its location to a North Main St. building in town and began a head to toe renovation of the space. The business now blends an old New England charm on the outside with a warm, zen-like feel on the inside.

Each room has been beautifully and purposely designed to reflect an element of nature including earth, fire, metal, wood, water, and wind, where patrons relax and enjoy all the services offered.

Licensed massage therapists offer Swedish, deep tissue, myofascial, sports, and prenatal massages. When we think of massage, we tend to think of being pampered and enjoying some valuable me time. And while this is certainly true, studies have demonstrated the many benefits a massage can provide.

Recent studies have shown massages reduce stress-related hormones, increase the body’s ability to relax, and allow the body to assimilate nutrients and toxins more effectively.

Beginning Bridges
CFCE January

Facebook Beginning Bridges CFCE – BeginningBridgesCFCE.webly.com – Emurravj@mac.org

Beginning Bridges CFCE, a non-profit offering free services, supports parents as their children’s first, best and most important teachers in Mendon, Upton, Northbridge and Uxbridge. Offering a variety of programs for children and parents, it’s goal is to support parents as they guide their children to reach their optimum potential and works with similarly-minded community partners. Funding for the Coordinated Family & Community Engagement Grant (CFCE) is provided by the Massachusetts Dept. of Early Education and Care and sponsored by South Middlesex Opportunity Council.

Upcoming Events
Winter 2020 Playgroups, Monday February 3 through May 22 at the Playcenter. Register by 9 a.m. on Tuesday, January 21. Registrations of families new to Beginning Bridges CFCE will be processed prior to the January 21 lottery. All other forms will be drawn randomly during the general lottery. Families will be registered into one group per week or placed on a wait list. All registered families will be notified of playgroup placements by e-mail by Monday, January 27. Playgroups for youngsters from birth through kindergarten entry and provide developmentally appropriate opportunities for children to learn through play. Groups are structured with the daily components of preschool. Parent-child groups are intended for parents to participate or for another relative or caregiver designated by the parent, who provides in-home care. Space is limited.

Monday Drop-In Playgroup, every Monday at the Playcenter, from 9:10-45 a.m. Drop in for a free and fun Playgroup at the Playcenter hosted by Beginning Bridges, CFCE. Registration is not required just show up and take one of the 12 tickets.

Read the Town Crier Online

To read the January 17, 2020 Upton Mendon Town Crier online visit, TownCrier.us. Click Online Newspapers in the left-hand column, scroll down to Mendon/Upton Town Crier PDF Archive, and click on UTC 20:01 17 pdf.

Winter Adult Education Courses

Leonardo L. Morcone, Director of the Milford Community School Use Program, has released the schedule for the Winter Adult Education courses, which are to begin the week of January 27.

A wide variety of classes and workshops are offered with the complete list available at MilfordCommunity.com under Adult -Winter/Spring.

Registration can be completed both online and offline at the same website. Offline registration forms may be printed and will be accepted immediately by mail to Milford Community School Use Program, 31 West Fourth St., Milford, MA 01757. Or the completed form and payment may be dropped off at the security kiosk in the front of Milford High School between the hours of 7 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. or in the Milford Community School Use Office from 2:30 to 4 p.m.

A separate registration form and a separate check are required for each course. Checks should be made payable to the Town of Milford - MCSUP. Individuals paying in person with cash are asked to have the exact amount.

For further information, please call the office at 508-478-1119.

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Glass bottled milk from Hatchland Dairy, N. Hadley, NH. Their milk goes directly from cow to bottling plant to you.

Also offering full line of Oakhurst Dairy Products and many other local premium products.

If this service is of interest to you, TRY IT FREE!!! We will be glad to drop off a bottle or two for you to try!

Call us OR Text!!!

508-478-MILK (6455)
Happy New Year Town Crier readers!

It’s not only the start of a new year, but it’s the start of a new decade. I don’t know about you, but the past 10 years have flown by. I remember when the clock struck midnight on the year 2010. I was the mother of very young children. Now I am entering the next decade with a daughter who will be leaving for college!

In the past 10 years the world has seen a lot of changes, some which have made our lives richer, and some we will probably regret for the next decade and beyond. I am sure many of you have seen the posts on social media listing the Top 10 of the last 10 years. Many of the items on the list I can’t even remember living without, while some, thankfully, were a passing phase.

Although too many to mention, some of the major events that happened between 2010 and 2020 that stood out to me include a reality TV star becoming President (I’ll leave the political rants to other columnists), the Ice Bucket Challenge craze, which raised over $315 million for ALS, and the day that millions of people came together to join a movement to stand up against injustices. Although these are memorable, there were a number of smaller, but no less life-changing events that happened over the past 10 years.

In the year 2010, the first-generation iPad was introduced. Holding a flat “computer” the size of a book went from a space-age idea to a household item in the past 10 years. This technological breakthrough is especially visible in the Mendon Upton Regional School District where every student has an iPad in their hands daily for 1:1 learning.

In the past 10 years, we have seen not one, but both, of the late Princess Diana’s sons get married in grand weddings that millions of viewers across the globe (including me) tuned in to watch. This was especially exciting for people who loved to live vicariously by watching the lives of the Royals through the years (again, me). This decade, one of those sons and his new wife don’t want to be Royal anymore! Call me gobsmacked!

Tom Brady of the New England Patriots led his team to numerous victories including three Super Bowl wins this past decade; but we will start the next decade wondering if Tom Brady is even going to be a New England Patriot much longer.

Whatever the next decade brings—another hotly contested Presidential election (see comment above), an answer to global warming, or laundry that self-pleases (please), I know it will be another one that will fly by. I just hope to be able to look back ten years later and be amazed yet again of how far we have come.

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

Last Wednesday
4:30-6 p.m. Dinner, Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Congress St., Milford. 508-473-4364 or office@trinitychurchmilford.org
5:30 p.m. Community Pasta Supper, St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, 23 Pine St., Hopkinton. Sponsored by the Hopkinton Christian Service Connection. 508-435-4538 or StPaulHopkinton@gmail.com

Thursday
3:30-4:30 p.m. Dinner, Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Congress St., Milford, sponsored by First United Methodist Church of Milford volunteers. 508-473-8464 or office@trinitychurchmilford.org
4:30-6 p.m. Dinner, Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Congress St., sponsored by First Methodist Church of Milford volunteers. 508-473-4364 or office@trinitychurchmilford.org

Friday
6-7 p.m. Dinner, Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Congress St., sponsored by the Altar Society. 508-473-8464 or office@trinitychurchmilford.org

Monthly Community Meals

Each month, we will feature a new meal

Every Thursday
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Lunch, St. Mary’s of the Assumption Parish, Small Hall, 27 Pearl St., Milford. Sponsored by St. Vincent DePaul Society. 508-473-2000

Third Thursday
5:30-7 p.m. Supper, United Parish, 1 Church St., Upton. Donations accepted.

Last Thursday
4:30-6 p.m. Dinner, Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Congress St., Milford, sponsored by First Methodist Church of Milford volunteers. 508-473-4364 or office@trinitychurchmilford.org

Last Friday
4:30-6 p.m. Dinner, Trinity Episcopal Church, 17 Congress St., Milford, in pink hats at the Hopedale Churches (Unitarian, Sacred Heart and Union Evangelical). 508-473-4364 or office@trinitychurchmilford.org

Right now, children are being raised in challenging and ever-changing circumstances. To help them process what they're experiencing, you can support children through 

The Fresh Air Fund, an independent, not-for-profit agency, has provided free summer experiences to more than 1.8 million New York City children from low-income communities since 1877. First-time Fresh Air children are boys and girls, from seven to 13 years old, who live within New York City. Children who are re-invited by host families may continue with The Fresh Air Fund through age 18 and can enjoy extended trips.

For more information about hosting a Fresh Air child this summer, please contact me, Leslie Breault at 508-451-3188 or visit FreshAir.org.

Leslie Breault
Fresh Air Fund
Compassionate Companions Needed

Milford Regional Medical Center is looking for volunteers to serve as Compassionate Companions to ensure that patients at the end of life are not alone.

On the second Tuesday of each month, there is a Compassionate Companion program, Compassionate Companion volunteers provide a comforting, compassionate presence for patients at the end of life who would otherwise be alone.

For more information about Compassionate Companions or to volunteer for this important program, contact Elaine Willey, director of Volunteer Services, at ewilley@milreg.org. Volunteers will be interviewed, screened, and trained. The deadline to apply is Thursday, January 30, in order to be included in this year’s training.

The Advertiser’s Club Introduces

A special feature offered to those businesses that contract to advertise 12 times in a year (1/16 page and larger) in the Upton & Mendon Town Crier. For more information contact:

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

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

Susanne Oedd Farber: 508-954-8148
susanne@solconsult.com

The Advertiser’s Club Directory

These are the businesses that contract to advertise in The Upton and Mendon Town Crier at least 12 times a year. Their ad rates reflect a 40% frequency discount, feature article about their business (minimum 1/16 page ad), and listing in this directory.

BUSINESS NAME AD PAGE

American Climbers ................................. next
Bright Insurance Agency ......................... 15
Boston & Laser ........................................ 14
C.J. Cilley Construction ......................... next
Cancun’s Mexican Restaurant ........................ next
Cape Cod Image and Wellness ........................... next
Contemporary Driving Academy .................. next
Cook Company ........................................ next
CRB Inc. .................................................. 18
Crown Images Hair Studios ...................... next
Francis’ Appliance ................................... 13
Galileos Restaurant .................................. next
Gibson Natural Pet Resort ......................... next
Iadela Plumbing & Heating ....................... 12
Imperial Car .............................................. 1, 24
J.C. Parmentier ......................................... next
John’s Market .......................................... next
Joyce Plumbing ........................................ 13
Koopman Paint & lumber ......................... next
Laquer Plus .............................................. 20
Lomba Hair ............................................... 9
Maple Farm Dairy ...................................... 5
Macronite Electrodynamics ....................... 12
Medway Oil & Petroleum Company ............ next
Medway Paper Products .......................... next
Mendon Motors ........................................ 19
Mertonowt Oral Surgical Associates ............. 21
Mildford Floral ......................................... 11
Mufin House Café ..................................... next
Nathan’s Jowers .......................................... 18
New England Steak & Seafood ..................... 9
Park Plaza Dental ...................................... next
P.A.W.S. Bed & Biscuit ............................ next
Phibbs Insurance Agency .......................... 23
Reliable Pet Sitting ..................................... 10
Riverine Equipment ................................. next
Robyn Nani, Real Life Realty Group ............ next
Rose Garden Restaurant & Lounge ................
Bushfield Insurance ................................. 23
Simonsen Electric ..................................... next
Tompelen Tree Service ............................. 13
UPS Store Milford & Franklin ...................... next
Upton Foreign Motors ............................... next
Wakonaka Japanese Restaurant .................. next
Wayne Grem Cor Electric ............................ 12
William-Pedersen Funeral Home .............. next
Wolf DDS ............................................... 17
Women’s Total Body Wellness / Mash Up next
Wright’s Dairy Farm .................................. 3
WPW Pest Control .................................. next

Obituaries

Sally J. Dupre

UPTON—Sally J. (Perkins) Dupre, 70, of Upton, passed away peacefully after a three-year battle with ovarian cancer on Friday, December 27, 2019 at her home surrounded by her loving family. Sally was the beloved wife of 44 years to Richard E. Dupre. Born in Framingham, she was a daughter of the late Ashley M. and Elmon A. (Hall) Perkins. She was raised and educated in Upton. Sally graduated from Nipmuc Regional High School and went on to receive her certificate from Senatorial Secretarial School. Sally worked her entire career in the Town of Upton, first at the former Knowlton Hat Factory, then as a waitress at the former Pine Ridge Country Club. She then worked as accountant and assistant for Shirley Lambert Realty and Lambert Auto Sales and Garage. Sally worked on her own and became a young star, earning 4 US patents for her inventions. In 1984, Sally went to work for Dow Chemical where she worked as a marketing specialist and taught 8th Grade Physical Science for a year at Hopkinton Middle School. While in that position she was able to convince her former colleagues to donate a laboratory robot to the school and taught students how to program and operate it as an extracurricular activity. In 1985 she went to work for Fronto-Temporal Degeneration, at The Alzheimer’s Association. Sally was an active member of the American Chemical Society, Women in Science, Mass BioTech Council, and the American Chemical Society, Women in Science Education. Sally was awarding scholarships and grants for science education.

Marsha Paul

Marsha Paul of Upton was born to Robert and Ivan Kissel in Framingham, Mass., Marsha was a loving, compassionate person who adored her family and would do anything to help others. After starting out as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. while Ray worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she moved with her husband to Merced, Calif. and worked as a hairdresser in 1965 she move...
Mendon Nomination Papers Available Early February

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

Mendon's Town Election is scheduled to take place on May 12, which means it’s time for interested residents seeking an elected office to think about obtaining nomination papers soon.

Beginning February 3, nomination papers will be available in the Town Clerk's office. There are 12 offices up for re-election in May. Those offices, their term length, and current officer holders include Select Board for three years, Lawney Tinio, Moderator for one year, Jay Byer, Board of Assessors for three years, Susan Edmonds; Board of Health for three years, Alan Greenberg; and Board of Education for three years, Alan Tetreault; Planning Board for five years, Barry Nicholson; two Taft Library Trustees for three years, Ellen Agro Edmonds; Board of Health for three years, Alan Greenberg; and two Taft Library Trustees for three years, Ellen Agro Edmonds; Board of Health for three years, Alan Greenberg; and two Taft Library Trustees for three years, Ellen Agro Edmonds; Board of Health for three years, Alan Greenberg; and two Taft Library Trustees for three years, Ellen Agro Edmonds; Board of Health for three years, Alan Greenberg; and two Taft Library Trustees for three years, Ellen Agro Edmonds.

Residents with questions on their voter registration status should contact the Town Clerk’s office at 508-473-1085 or townclerk@mendonma.gov. Normal business hours are Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and closed on Fridays.

Mendon Select Board Approves Increase in Dog Licensing Fees

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

During a December 11 meeting, Mendon’s Select Board approved an increase to the town’s annual dog licensing fees. Town Clerk Ellen Agro attended the meeting to explain the proposed new fees.

“If I’m proposing to raise the fees a little bit,” she said. “They’ve never been raised. They don’t really pay for the program.”

To support itself if you include the ACO’s (Animal Control Officer’s) portion of it”, Agro explained she did some research and presented the Select Board a study completed by other town clerk’s offices. “For spayed and neutered dogs, the licensing fee would increase from $6 to $10 and intact dogs would increase from $10 to $20 A one-time late fee would increase from $6 to $15. “To encourage people to register on time”, she said. “Looking at the study, Selectman Mark Reil noted most towns charge at least $20 for their late fees.”

Kennel fees with four or less dogs would increase from $30 to $50; kennels with five to 10 dogs would increase from $40 to $75 and those with 10 or more dogs would increase from $50 to $100. “That only affects I think one kennel in town right now”, said Agro. The Town Clerk said she’d like the new fees to go into effect for the next licensing period. “So, it would go on the census,” she said.

In November, Mendon voters supported a bylaw that removed all references of specific dog licensing fees. As of January 6, the Attorney General had not approved the change. Agro said a decision was expected no later than March 2. The Select Board voted unanimously to pass the fees, contingent on the Attorney General’s approval of the bylaw amendment.

Appointments

In other news that evening, the Board appointed Deborah Flanagan to the Local Historic District Commission as the realtor representative. Flanagan, a life-long resident of Mendon and who was present at the meeting, said she’s always had an interest in historical properties and their architecture. The Select Board approved the appointment unanimously, which will expire June 30, 2021.

And finally, after going through the interview process, the Board appointed Tracy Aicardi to the Municipal Clerk position for the Treasurer/Collector at a rate of $18 per hour for 15 hours per week. Town Administrator Kim Newman said Aicardi came highly recommended for the position.

Mendon News

Day Time and After Hour Book Clubs

The Taft Public Library, 28 North Ave., Mendon, is now offering two Book Clubs for adult readers.

The Day Time Book Club meets on the first Wednesday of the month, unless it is a holiday, at 2 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room. The next meeting will be February 5. The After Hours Book Club meets on the first Monday of the month, unless it is a holiday, at 7 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room. The next meeting is February 3.

New members are always welcome for both clubs, which are led by Kristie Heumann. Copies of the books to be discussed are available at the downstairs circulation desk. Stop by or call the library, 508-473-3259, for more information.

Mendon Town Calendar

Tuesday, January 21
Select Board, Town Hall, 6:30 p.m.
Capital Planning Committee, Town Hall 7:15 p.m.

Thursday, January 23
BVT Budget Committee, BVT, 5:30 p.m.
Conservation Commission, 18 Main St., 7 p.m.
Cultural Council, Town Hall, 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, visit MendonMA.gov/town-calendar

Mendon Trash Bills

As a reminder, the second half of fiscal 2020 trash bills were due Monday, December 16. This is for service starting January 1, 2020 until June 30, 2020. The rate is $137 and $69 for qualifying seniors. Unfortunately, if residents who pay the bill late must bring a receipt stamped paid from the Collector's office to the Board of Health office. If residents have not received a bill or have any questions, please contact the Board of Health office at 508-634-2656 or bobs@ mendonma.gov.
违第Open Meeting Law, but in its determination encouraged boards to allow as much public participation as possible.

Auclair also took issue with the hearing's location feeling it was not accessible enough to residents because the Board didn't make accommodations for a larger-than-usual crowd. The hearing was held in the lower level of the former Taft Public Library with close to 40 people, including both residents and Planning Board members, in attendance.

The AG agreed that the “meeting room was quite crowded and lacked ample seating, but we find no evidence that any members of the public were prevented from attending the meeting, or were unable to see and hear the discussions at the meeting.”

Another grievance Auclair filed was the Board suspended discussion of a topic for over an hour to hear the discussions at the meeting. “The Attorney General did an exhaustive job investigating these claims, contacting me several times. I felt the rulings were well and just. The AG’s office ruled correctly. “The Attorney General ruled that did not violate the Open Meeting Law, but in its determination encouraged boards to allow as much public participation as possible.

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Moving forward Auclair said she hopes town officials proceed with taping meetings, a measure which was supported by voters in November. “Recordings show proceedings to hold themselves accountable to the people.

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The Select Board also approved a number of town appointments including Kristal Simon as a per diem paramedic for the Fire Department for a rate of $25 per hour; Jonathan Dudley as a Heavy Equipment Operator for the Highway Department for a rate of $20.71 per hour; and Annie Romano and Monika Schmid as Library Assistants for a rate of $16.50.

The Select Board also approved a new Fire Union contract, Police Union contract, and Library Director Andrew Jenrich’s contract. Town Administrator Kim Newman discussed the town’s social media pages during the meeting, noting that they fall under state regulations. “Social media pages are considered public record. Therefore, they have to be archived and maintained per state law,” she explained. Mendon has various social media pages, including some boards that are setting up their own sites. Newman said she plans to meet with department heads and provide training for those who are maintaining those pages. And finally, the Board voted to open the warrant for the May 1 Annual Town Meeting.

The Select Board's next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 21 in the upper Town Hall at 6:30 p.m. View MendonMa.gov for the agenda.

**Select Board Approves Number of Appointments**

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

The Select Board checked off a number of items on their agenda during a January 9 meeting, including considering a number of marijuana host agreements, as well as approving committee appointments and various town positions. First up, the Select Board approved entering into host agreements with three marijuana companies, including JDM Sales, Inc., High Hopes, LLC, and United Mass Wellness. During the discussion regarding the agreements, it was noted that the owners of JDM Sales will have its community outreach meeting at Willowbrook Restaurant on Tuesday, January 28 at 7 p.m. for those residents interested in attending to ask questions and voice concerns. Town officials are investigating if the meeting could be taped for those who are unable to attend.

The Board also approved two committee appointments that evening including Frank Nino to the Land Use Committee and Dan Byer to the Local Historic District Commission.

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**Deb Hudgins: Music & Movement**

Join Deb Hudgins on Thursday, January 30 at the Taft Public Library for a 30-minute Nursery Rhyme Time theme-based program which features singing and guitar music for young children (infant & preschool). No registration is required. The program starts promptly at 3:30 p.m. in the Taft Upstairs Library.

**Join Deb Hudgins on Thursday, January 30 at the Taft Public Library for a 30-minute Nursery Rhyme Time theme-based program which features singing and guitar music for young children (infant & preschool). No registration is required. The program starts promptly at 3:30 p.m. in the Taft Upstairs Library.**

**Dining Guide**

- **Cancinos Family Mexican Restaurant**
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  - Greatest Margaritas Around!!
  - Featuring: Seafood dishes • Tacos al Pasto
  - Fajitas • Chimichangas
  - Burritos • Carnitas
  - Arroz con pollo
  - Lunch Specials Gift Certificates
  - Live Music Every Saturday Night 7-9pm
  - 75 Worcester St. Route 140/Route 122
  - N. Grafton
  - Mon-Sat, 6 am - 2 pm
  - Sun 6 am - 1 pm

- **Gourmet Coffee Bagels • and More**
  - Try our Award Winning Chowder on Thursday and Friday
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  - Soups, Salads & Roll-Ups
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- **Muffin House Cafe**
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  - • Breakfast with Fresh Muffins/Pastries
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  - 508-928-0928

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Ten Doctor-Recommended Health Tips for the New Year

4. Reduce your intake of processed foods, especially those with added sodium and sugar. Eat less red meat and processed meats, and add more plant-based foods, such as olive oil, nuts and seeds to your diet. Also reduce your consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and drink more water instead. Drinking sugary beverages -- even 100 percent fruit juices -- is associated with a higher all-cause mortality risk, a new study published in JAMA Network Open suggests.

5. If your health care professional determines that you need antibiotics, take them exactly as prescribed. Antibiotic resistance is a serious public health problem and antibiotics will not make you feel better if you have a virus, such as a cold or flu.

6. If consuming alcohol, do so in moderation as defined by the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans -- up to one drink daily for women and two drinks daily for men, and only by adults of legal drinking age.

7. Talk with your doctor about tobacco and e-cigarette use (or vaping) and how to quit. Declare your home and car smoke- and aerosol-free to eliminate secondhand exposure.

8. Pain medication is personal. If you’re taking prescription opioids or other medications, follow your doctor’s instructions. Store them safely to prevent misuse and properly dispose of any leftover medication.

9. Make sure your family is up-to-date on vaccines, including the annual influenza vaccine for everyone age six months or older. If you’re pregnant, you can receive the flu vaccine during any trimester, but should receive the Tdap vaccine early in the third trimester to protect yourself against flu and whooping cough.

10. Manage stress. A good diet, sufficient sleep (at least 7.5 hours per night), daily exercise and wellness activities, like yoga and meditation, are key ingredients to maintaining and improving your mental health, but don’t hesitate to ask for help from a mental health professional when you need it.
Massachusetts Highway Exits to Be Renumbered

Massachusetts Department of Transportation has announced that all highways in the commonwealth with existing exit numbers will be converted from sequential (i.e. 1, 2, 3, etc.) numbering to a milepost-based (i.e. 3.5, 11, etc.) numbering per a Federal requirement.

The new exit signage will be installed during off-peak hours beginning in late Summer of 2020.

The renumbering will occur on all highways with exits such as Interstates and other freeways. In Massachusetts all these highways are owned by MassDOT. Local highways that will be affected include I-495, I-90, I-290, Rt. 146.

The only exceptions concern Rt. 213, I-291, I-391 and the Lowell Connector, due to the length and spacing of exits on these highways.

State roads such as Rt. 16, Rt. 85, Rt. 20 which do not have exit signs will also not be affected. Locally I-495 exits for Rt. 126 Bellingham changes from 18 to 46, Rt. 109 Milford from 19 to 48, Rt. 85 Milford from 20 to 50 and West Main St. Hopkinton from 21 A/B to 54 A/B.

The work will be done through a route-by-route construction, with multiple roads be worked on simultaneously, beginning in Western MASS and moving eastward. Individual routes will be converted north to south, or east to west.

The new panels will look the same, green with white lettering. The only change will be the numbering. "Old Exit" signs, which will have a yellow background and black lettering, will be installed at key locations for a minimum of two years.

According to officials, the new system based on mileage provides several advantages to the existing sequential numbering system. The new system provides driver friendly navigation, allows drivers to quickly determine distances to destinations and more easily calculate miles driven, supports more accurate emergency response and helps improve reporting of highway incidents for emergency service. It also conforms to national standards being used by almost all other state.

The project, which is estimated to cost $2.8 million, will be paid for through Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funds. HSIP funding carries a 90/10 split, which means that 90 percent of the project will be funded through federal funds and the remaining 10 percent will be funded through state highway funds.

Also, MassDOT will update all recreational and cultural interest signage to reflect the new exit numbering system.

MassDOT officials anticipate minimal impacts to traffic during construction. The public will be notified in advance of construction start and MassDOT will use electronic changeable message signs to alert motorists along the route of the pending changes.

MassDOT is conducting a public outreach campaign to notify the public of the new numbering system. Outreach includes in-person and online communication strategies that will give the public ample opportunity to learn about the project and ask questions prior to construction. The next closest meeting to the local area will be held on in Lowell on Thursday, January 23 at 6:30 p.m. in the Lowell City Hall- Mayor’s Reception Room 375 Merrimack St. Another meeting will be held on Boston on Tuesday, February 11, at the Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Transportation Board Room, 2nd Floor, 10 Park Plaza Suite 4160.

Information about the project, including up-to-date construction installation schedules can be found at NewMASSExits. Comments on the project may also be submitted by following links on the site.

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Our Grandmothers Knew What They Were Doing

The Greenleaf Garden Club of Milford’s February meeting will feature landscape designer, Laura Bibler, who will present a talk entitled Our Grandmothers Knew What They Were Doing. The meeting will be Monday, February 10, at the Ruth Anne Bleakney Center, 50 N. Bow St., Milford and will start at 6:30 p.m.

Bibler will take you back in time to look at the horticultural wisdom handed down from a grandmother’s time. She will explore the design approach and sage advice of prominent garden writers of the early 20th Century. Their ideas continue to inform us today.

Their were doing designer, Laura Bibler, who will present a talk entitled Our Grandmothers Knew What They Were Doing. Bibler has been creating landscape installations and designs for 22 years in private homes and historic estates. She has studied at the Radcliffe Institute at Harvard University and has a Graduate Certificate in Landscape Design. The meeting will start with refreshments and will feature a horticulture display as well as a photo collage of the WAM Flora in Winter exhibit.

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

Looking to Buy a Home?
2020 May Be Your Year

Courtesy of StatePoint

If buying a home is on your near-future-to-do list, experts say that 2020 may be a good year to make it happen. Mortgage interest rates are near historic lows, providing you with the opportunity to finance a new home purchase at a much lower cost. According to a new forecast from Freddie Mac, mortgage rates will stay in the 3-4 percent range for all of 2020 and 2021, giving prospective homeowners substantial time to plan their purchase. This, combined with modest inflation and a solid labor market, makes for good climate to buy a home with a fixed rate mortgage. For those who are already homeowners, refinancing now may be a good idea.

“Those serious about homeownership, today’s 4-4.5 percent mortgage rates should not be taken for granted,” says Freddie Mac chief economist, Sam Khater. “For comparative purposes, in 2000, rates averaged eight percent; and in the 80s, they spiked to 18.5 percent.”

Khater stresses that while mortgage rates are an essential factor to consider in the home-buying process, there are other important items to think about as well as you lay the groundwork for your purchase. These include getting a firm handle on your finances, knowing your credit score (and taking steps to boost it if necessary) and familiarizing yourself with down payment options. For more information and tools on home buying and homeownership, visit MyHome.freddiemac.

Whether you are making the jump from renting to owning, or looking for a home that better meets your current needs, now may be a great time to consider making your real estate dream a reality. Today’s low rates could save you money for years to come.

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GGC Celebrates the Holidays

The Greenleaf Garden Club of Milford (GGC) ended 2019 with a traditional holiday potluck and workshop. Floriculturist, Tina Bennis of Bennis Farms, Spencer, led the group in making a Williamsburg style design that could be used as a door hanging or a table centerpiece. The design incorporated plant materials of the Williamsburg period and used locally grown materials-apples, pine cones, berries and greens.

The GGC will continue in the New Year with Garden Therapy and Junior Gardener workshops. Member, Sandra Tosches will design for the Worcester Art Museum’s Flora in Winter. Regular meetings will continue on February 18 when the club will host landscape designer, Laura Bibler, who will present, Our Grandmothers Knew What They Were Doing.

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

Greenleaf Garden Club member Ethel Koivivas shows her finished Williamsburg inspired holiday design. GGC photo
Upton News

Making Snowmen Indoors

Kate McCobb shows off the snowman she created at the Upton Town Library's Snowman Celebration on Saturday December 21. This was an event for tweens and teens, where they created snowmen crafts using mini clay pots to kick off the winter season. Upton Town Library photo

SHOP LOCAL

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

An hour-long discussion pertaining to Upton’s downtown revitalization took place during a January 7 Board of Selectmen’s meeting. The discussion centered specifically on a draft document involving the proposed design standards for the Upton Center Business District’s revitalization. David Ross, chair of the Request for Proposal (RFP) Committee, went over the information with the Selectmen. “One of the first things we decided to tackle was the design standards, the design standards are the look and feel of what we want the downtown to be,” explained Ross. Without design standards, Ross said it opens up the chance for a property owner or developer to come in and meet the zoning and structural code but construct a building how they want. “They could paint it pink with green polka dots, they could use cedar shingles, use metal roofing, or put up a Quonset hut; all that would be allowed.” The RFP Committee is drafting the design standards and have met with the Planning Board. “These design standards would become a Planning Board regulation. Any time a site plan review is triggered, these design standards would come into effect,” said Ross. If a property owner of an existing structure wants to put a deck on or change the color of their house, Ross explained that does not trigger a site plan review. However, if a property owner wanted to tear down their home and then construct some type of business in the district, that would need a site plan review as it constitutes a change of use. Ross further explained that although the design standards discuss neutral colors for properties, no one is going to be forced at any point to paint their house. That is, if your house is already a certain color, it is grandfathered in. Only if someone is going to change the main purpose of the property would the design standards come into play. Ross reiterated the finalized design standards, once adopted, will affect the entire Upton Center Business District, along Rt. 140, “Which runs from [the] Gasco [station] on the Milford side, up through what’s known as the Sanborn House, Right after MGM Auto going on towards the West Upton side.” The ten-page draft document discusses a number of design standard topics including site design, utility and service areas, driveway and parking, sidewalks and pathways, bulk massing and scale, styles and materials, façade treatment, lighting, gateways, wayfinding and branding, open and recreation space, landscaping and residential homes.

Selectman Stephen Mattelian questioned if the design standards would be a hinderance for a chain restaurant or store. “It’s not a hinderance but they will provide some obstacles,” said Ross, explaining a chain like McDonalds would not be able to put up their golden arches, but could instead alter their signage. “We’ve seen other towns do that.” The draft design standards document is on the town’s Web site, UptonMA.gov under the Town Center RFP Committee. Feedback from residents is encouraged.

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Genealogy Research Clinics

The Upton Historical Society continues its Genealogy Research Clinics on the first and third Wednesday of the month from 3 to 6 p.m. in 2020 in the Fay Room of the Knowlton Risteen Building on the Upton Town Common. During January the clinics will be held on January 8 and 22. There are no clinics in July or August.

The clinics are an opportunity to receive research assistance, hints on local resources, assistance with computer resources, or an understanding of genealogical standards. Limited supplies are available along with samples for creative ways to share genealogical research. No registration, no set curriculum.

The clinics are run by Seema Kenney, a professional genealogist with training from Boston University, National Archives, and the ProGen Study Group. She is an officer in three genealogical groups in Massachusetts as well as a member of the Genealogy Societies in Maine and Connecticut. Having self-published one-quarter of her family, Kenney is also familiar with many of the issues associated with completing, organizing, and writing research results. She continues her education by participation in local groups as well as online education and looks forward to assisting others research their family or other local history questions.

Upton News

Draft Design Standards
Presented to Board

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Sprucing Up the VFW

Ongoing renovations at the Upton VFW, Post 5594 has included repainting the walls, installing new lights, putting up new curtains and displaying seals from all branches of the U.S. military. Upton VFW photo

State Representative David K. Muradian, Jr. (R-Stafford) and State Senator Michael O. Moore (D-Millbury) announce that the Baker-Polito Administration has awarded the Upton Fire Department a $3,400 Firefighter Turnout Gear Grant.

This grant program is available to help Massachusetts Fire Departments provide gear and equipment to limit firefighters’ exposure to cancer-causing chemicals on the job. The Firefighter Turnout Gear Grant program provides firefighters in 144 departments new equipment, such as new hoods and gloves, for structural firefighting activities.

"First responders in our Commonwealth do so much to protect and maintain safety within our communities," said Muradian, who serves on the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security. "This grant program helps provide essential equipment to our fire departments in an effort to assist them in protecting themselves. In a profession where safety is of the utmost importance, providing these men and women with effective gear is crucial."

"Firefighters wake up, put on their uniform, and are faced with the uncertainty of not knowing what each day will bring," said Moore, who serves as Senate Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security. "This equipment is critical to ensuring that firefighters in Upton have additional layers of protection against workplace hazards."

"This gear will protect our firefighters from the immediate risks associated with fighting fires in dangerous environments, and just as importantly, protect them from the delayed risk of occupational cancers caused by exposure to the toxic chemicals produced during fires," said Upton Chief Mark DeFrancesco. "Properly equipping our firefighters with the gear they need to be safe allows them to do their jobs as effectively as possible, and is a great benefit to the overall safety of our community," he added.

Workshop on Alzheimer’s Legal & Financial Planning

The Upton Center will hold a free Legal & Financial Planning discussion for those affected by Alzheimer’s disease. The workshop on Tuesday, January 28 at 10 a.m. will be presented by the Alzheimer’s Association for anyone who would like to know more about what legal and financial issues to consider and how to put plans in place. Please call the Center, 508-529-4558 to register by January 22. The workshop is proceeded by breakfast at 9:15 a.m. for $3 per person.

Town Election and at the May 7 Annual Town Meeting is Friday, April 17. Anyone with questions on their voter registration status should contact the Town Clerk’s office at 508-529-3565 or KMcElreath@uptonma.gov. Office hours 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.
Trip to Museum of Work & Culture

Ranger Viola Bramel of West Hill Dam has kindly offered to take Upton Senior Citizens on a trip to the Museum of Work & Culture in Woonsocket, R.I. on Wednesday, January 22 at 9:15 a.m. Located in the historic Market Square, the museum tells the story of French Canadian immigrants who left Quebec to come to work in the mills and factories of Woonsocket. Come inside the replicas of a rural Quebec farm house and journey through the work day world of Woonsocket's residents from the early twentieth century to the present. Visitors are immersed in a narrative of the working class in America. Senior cost for admission and tour is $6. The van will stop for lunch on the ride home, returning to the Center around 2 p.m. Please call to register by Friday, January 17 and to reserve a seat on the van for $4.

The Upton Recreation Department Wins State Grant

The Upton Recreation Commission was awarded a $14,190 grant from the Massachusetts Office on Disability to make the fire pit and pavilion at Kiwanis Beach ADA (American with Disabilities Act) compliant. The Upton Department of Public Works has worked with the Recreation Committee to make the project, which is scheduled to be completed before the beginning of the 2020 beach season. The Recreation Department runs a summer program at Kiwanis Beach that serves more than 100 children daily during the summer months. The Recreation Department also holds summer concerts under the pavilion, which have seen attendance rise in recent years. "This is one of many improvements for accessibility that the Recreation Commission has planned as part of our master plan. We are really excited that this grant enables us to get this project done quickly. We are also grateful for the support of the DPW in completing these projects," said Andrew St. George, CPRP, Recreation Director. For more information about Upton Recreation programs visit, UptonMA.myrec.com/info/default.aspx

The Upton Center

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

- **Friday, January 17**
  - Birthday Bash, 12:45 p.m.

- **Monday, January 20**
  - Center Closed for Martin Luther King Day. No Meals Served.

- **Tuesday, January 21**
  - Shopping Trip to Market Basket, Hudson, 9:15 a.m.

- **Wednesday, January 22**
  - Depart at 9:15 a.m. w/Viola for Museum of Work & Culture and Lunch

- **Thursday, January 23**
  - Shopping Trip to Walmart, Northbridge, 9:15 a.m.
  - Representative Muradian’s Office Hours, 12 to 1 p.m.

- **Friday, January 24**
  - Afternoon Movie, 12:30 p.m.
  - Men’s Club Supper, 5:30 p.m.

- **Monday, January 27**
  - Mindfulness & Meditation with Robin, 9:30 a.m.

- **Tuesday, January 28**
  - Breakfast at the Center, 9:15 a.m.
  - Legal & Financial Planning for Alzheimer’s Disease, 10 a.m.

- **Wednesday, January 29**
  - Shopping Trip to Salvation Army, Shaw’s, Job Lots, Walmart Loop, Northbridge, 9:15 a.m.
  - Blood Pressure Checks, 12:30 p.m.
  - Trivia at the Center with Library Staff, 12:30 p.m.

- **Friday, January 31**
  - BVT Salon Visit, Departs 8:45 a.m. for 9 a.m. appts.

- **Monday**
  - Tai Chi, 1 p.m.

- **Tuesday**
  - Card Players Group, 10 a.m.

- **Wednesday**
  - Computer Class, 9 a.m. (Call to Schedule)
  - 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.
Two Boston Area TV Stations Changing Frequencies

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has announced that nearly 1,000 television stations nationwide have or will be transitioning to new frequencies in phases through July 2020. The current transition phase includes two local TV stations in the Boston area. Viewers in the Boston area who watch over-the-air television with an antenna do. To rescan, viewers will need their TV remote control or analog TV converter box, then choose “Channel Scan,” “Channel Tuning,” “Scan,” or “Channel Scan.” After pressing the button, viewers can try rescan their television more than once.

In addition, Rhode Island PBS, WSBE-TV (CH 36) also recently moved to a new frequency. Viewers in the Boston area who watch over-the-air with an antenna will keep their existing channels, while some viewers may lose one or more channels. The FCC has provided a variety of online materials to help inform consumers and the press about the rescan process. Visit FCC.gov/TVrescan, to find an instructional video by the FCC showing viewers how to rescan their TV, press resources, consumer toolkit, transition schedule, FAQs, and an interactive map where to see which TV stations are changing frequencies locally by entering a street address.

The changes to CH 7 and CH 38 will occur by January 17, 2020. In order to be placed on the eligibility list, applicants must apply by February 4 to sit for the March 21 exam. The Municipal Firefighter examination will determine applicants who are eligible for appointments in cities and towns covered by the Civil Service statute. In order to be eligible for the exam, all applicants must be at least 19 years of age by February 18, 2020. In order to be placed on the eligibility list, applicants will be asked to take and pass the written examination. The physical examination otherwise known as, the Entry Level Physical Ability Test (ELPAT), determines the capability of all applicants to perform basic firefighter tasks. Applications submitted after February 4 will be charged an additional $50 processing fee.

Firefighters Exam Deadline

The 2020 Municipal Firefighter examination are now being accepted online at MASS.GOV/CivilService. Applicants must apply by February 4 to sit for the March 21 exam. The Municipal Firefighter examination will determine applicants who are eligible for appointments in cities and towns covered by the Civil Service statute. In order to be eligible for the exam, applicants must be at least 19 years of age by February 18, 2020. In order to be placed on the eligibility list, applicants will be asked to take and pass both a written and physical exam. The physical examination is a one-time test, no matter how many times you take it. The physical examination otherwise known as, the Entry Level Physical Ability Test (ELPAT), determines the capability of all applicants to perform basic firefighter tasks. Application fees are non-refundable once submitted.

Applications submitted after February 4 will be charged an additional $50 processing fee.

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JANUARY 17, 2020 Upton, Mendon Town Crier
Genealogy Workshop WESTBOROUGH—Beth Tikvah Synagogue is hosting an Introduction to Genealogical Research on Monday, January 27 at 7 p.m. in the synagogue’s community center, 30 Oak St., Westborough. Jonathan Rappaport, who will lead the discussion, has been researching his heritage for over 40 years including family originating in central America, Quebec, England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Argentina, and Lithuania as well as extended family members from the Ukraine, Poland, and Galicia. This workshop will cover the basics of how to get started, where to start looking for information, and a host of valuable websites. Actual case studies of Rappaport’s family research will be used to illustrate “brick walls” that he encountered and examples of walls he has been able to scale.

Attendance is free, but an RSVP by January 24 is needed by visiting BethTikvahSynagogue.org. Please contact EJ Dotts, 508-616-9037 ext 700, or via email at president@BethTikvahSynagogue.org.

Captured Moments WHITINSVILLE—Captured Moments, an exhibit featuring three regional artists will open on Friday, January 17, with an artist’s reception from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Spaulding R. Aldrich Heritage Gallery, Alternatives’ Whitlin Mill, 50 Douglas Rd., Whitinsville. Photographers Tess Davis, Scarlett Hoey and James Hunt will be on hand at the reception to meet with the public and answer questions about their work, which reflect family relationships and human interaction with nature. The exhibit ends on February 28. Regular gallery hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., weekends and evenings by special appointment.

For more information, visit openeyesyc.org/news-events or visit Facebook/ValleyCAST. ValleyCAST’s mission is to foster a creative community in the Blackstone Valley that is inclusive and supportive of people with and without disabilities.

Red Cross Blood Drives MILFORD—The American Red Cross currently has a critical need for blood donors of all blood types – especially type O – and platelet donors to make an appointment to give blood. To help replenish the blood supply after the holiday weeks, donors are urged to make an appointment to give now at Red Cross Blood Drives, visiting RedCrossBlood.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or enabling the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device. Blood donations are being made at the Milford Regional Medical Center, 14 Prospect St., Milford and Wednesday, January 29 and February 26 at 2 p.m.

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.

Women’s Success Network—Money Matters, Wednesday, January 22 at 8 a.m., Awa Waters Mansion, 123 Elm St., Milbury.

Love Your Legislators—Legislative Breakfast, Friday, February 14 at 7 to 10 a.m., Charles F. Minney VFW Post 3329, 16 South Main St., Milbury.

Home and Garden Show—Saturday, March 14, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., NorthBridge High School Field House, Linwood Ave., Whitinsville.

In the Bag Sale MILFORD—MACC Auxiliary has announced that the In the Bag sale will be held at the Atrium Café in the hospital, 14 Prospect St., Milford, on Thursday, February 20, from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. This sale features a large selection of brand name and designer handbags, luggage, briefcases, wallets, mini-bags and small leather goods. There is always a huge selection to choose from in the newest styles and colors. The prices are discounted from 30 to 60 percent. Cash, credit cards and debit cards are accepted. The public is invited to attend.

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Upton, Mendon Town Crier JANUARY 17, 2020
2020 Student Journalism Scholarships

The New England Newspaper and Press Association awards up to 10 scholarships each year to aspiring journalists through the Journalism Education Foundation of New England. Applications are open through the deadline of March 27. The foundation strives to encourage and support young people who plan to pursue a career in the newspaper industry.

College students or high school seniors who are studying and acquiring work experience that will prepare them to work in the field of journalism are eligible to apply.

They must also be a New England resident, have a GPA of 3.0 or higher and be a high school senior planning to attend college the following year or an undergraduate college student studying journalism or a related field.

To demonstrate a serious interest in a career in journalism, applicants must send a cover letter, transcript, resume or biography, letter of recommendation, and a body of published work in a school news publication, general circulation newspaper, or a similar publication, and a body of work prepared for a journalism class.

For an application and more information visit NENPA.com/students/scholarships

Mendon Upton Kindergarten Registration

Anyone who has a child entering kindergarten in the Mendon Upton Regional School District this fall and was unable to attend the informational meeting held in mid-January, should stop into the school office to pick up a registration packet and make an appointment to come in and register your child. Packets for Mendon children are available at H.P. Clough School, while those for Upton youngsters are at Memorial School.

Kindergarten registration for the 2020-2021 school year is by appointment. Registration at Clough will be on February 5 and at Memorial on February 11 and 12. Incoming kindergarten students must be five years old on or before August 31, 2020. Registration is for parents only students do not need to attend. Proof of residence, original birth certificate, and immunization records are required at registration.

Mendon-Upton Regional School District also offers a Spanish Immersion (SI) Program at Nipmuc Regional High School. The SI Information Night will be held on Wednesday, January 22 at 6 p.m. in the Memorial School Cafeteria. Childcare will be available. Please RSVP to ohendricks@ muorsd.org or ograu@muorsd.org for childcare.

For information, please contact the appropriate school office: H.P. Clough School, 10 North Ave., Mendon (508-634-1580) or Memorial School, 69 Main St., Upton (508-529-1020).

MENDON-UPONTOWN CRIER

JANUARY 17, 2020

20 Upton, Mendon Town Crier

Compiled by Melissa Orff

School News

DIREKT: The Harlem Wizards are bringing their Trick Hoops & Alley Oops to the Mendon Upton Regional School District on Friday, January 31 for a game sponsored by the Mendon Upton Education Foundation (MUEF) along with the Memorial and Clough PTOS. The Wizards will be facing off against the district’s own MURSD All-Stars at Nipmuc Regional High School at 6:30 p.m. Order tickets early.

Registration for the Mendon Upton Integrated Pre-K runs from January 24 to February 7 at 3 p.m. Children must be 3 or 4 years old on or before August 31, 2020 and be toilet trained. Parents must be able to provide their own transportation and the children must be residents of Mendon or Upton. All classes are staffed with Master Level Teachers who are dually certified. In addition to the teachers, each classroom is staffed with two teaching assistants. Parents and children are invited to the Open House on January 24 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Clough Pre-K (Mendon residents) and from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Memorial Pre-K (Upton residents). All classes are integrated, including both children with and without disabilities. If there are more students registered than available slots, a lottery will be drawn on February 7. For more information, email Jackie Wheelock, Early Childhood Coordinator at jwheelock@mursd.org.

The exhibit is closed on weekends and on the 8th grade Walk for Giving, Miscoe’s Giving Program. This was made possible by the 8th grade students, who sponsored this community effort, presented a check to Amy Griswold from the Food Pantry in December. Memorial will continue their charitable efforts by sponsoring the Pennies for Patients drive for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Collection boxes were sent home last week and are due back at school by January 24.

MISCOE: MCAS dates this year for Miscoe are April 7 and 8 for ELA, May 12 and 13 for Math, and April 30 and May 1 for Science (5th and 8th grade only). Miscoe helped 17 families and 8 children celebrate the holidays through the Giving Program. This was made possible by the 8th grade Walks for Giving, Miscoe’s Student Council, the Staff Giving Tree and Saint Gabriel’s Parish.

The Friends of Rachel Club along with the Sandy Hook Promise has a New Year’s challenge for the rest of the school year. During the month of January, the club is challenging students to spread positivity by making three new friends in their grade. Recommendations to reach this goal include say hello to someone you don’t know, invite new friends to sit with you at lunch, and offer to help someone with school work.

Blackstone Valley Regional Technical High School will be held at Miscoe on February 7 for interested 8th grade students. Acceptance letters will be mailed out from BVT in late March.

NIPMUC: Nipmuc Science Teachers Samantha Wilson, James Gorman, Jennifer Field, and Erin Ellis invite parents and members of the community to come and hear what their students have been researching on Thursday, January 23 from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Nipmuc. Students are presenting work they have done as part of Advanced Placement Biology, Advanced Placement Environmental Science, Engineering Science and Design, and Marine Science courses.

The annual Nipmuc Showcase on January 28 at 6:30 p.m. is for students and their families who will be entering high school next year or in the next few years. The evening will begin with a brief presentation in the auditorium and then continue with tours, a fair that highlights opportunities at Nipmuc, food, raffles, and more.

Nipmuc Jazz Musicians are presenting a concert on Wednesday, January 29 at 7 p.m.
Superintendent’s Scholars Named

Blackstone Valley Tech announces that Brandon Kee and Daniel McDonald have been named BVT’s recipients of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents Award of Academic Excellence. Also known as the Superintendent’s Scholar Award, the annual commendation is presented to two BVT seniors who exemplify the school’s commitment to cutting-edge career technical training and rigorous academics. Brandon Kee, a Milford resident, and Daniel McDonald, a Grafton resident, will graduate in June from the Engineering & Robotics program and the Information Technology program, respectively.

Brandon Kee is currently the Class of 2020 Valedictorian and a member of the National Honor Society and National Technical Honor Society. His dedication to both his academic and vocational studies was on display when he earned a bronze medal in 2018 at the SkillsUSA Nationals in Principles of Engineering. Brandon is a Rensselaer Medalist, recognized for his academic achievement in math and science.

He is also an Eagle Scout with eight palms. He joined Scouting as a Pack 32 Bear Cub in 2010 and quickly advanced through the ranks and earned the rank of Eagle Scout as a 13-year-old eighth-grader. His Eagle Scout Service Project involved using his technical skills in building a meditation/monumental garden at Trinity Episcopal Church in Milford, where he regularly volunteers as an acolyte, reader, and Lay Eucharistic Minister.

His passion for helping others also led him to volunteer at the Milford Daily Bread Pantry and ultimately earn the Presidential Volunteer Service Award and the Lions Young Ambassador of the 21st Century. These awards recognize students for outstanding community service, leadership, and scholastic achievement. Brandon plans on following an engineering pathway to pursue his masters upon his graduation from BVT in June.

Daniel is currently the Class of 2020 Salutatorian and a member of the National Honor Society and National Technical Honor Society. Recognized as a National Merit Scholarship Program Commended Student, Daniel has made the Commendation List every term of his high school career. Daniel, who excels in the Information Technology program, has completed multiple IT certifications. He is a SkillsUSA Information Technology Shop competitor as well as the Founder and President of the Game Design and Development Club at BVT.

To strengthen his workforce entry opportunities, Daniel is interested in advancing his vocational-technical education post-high school by pursuing his passion for Computer Science at a four-year college.

Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick was joined by Assistant Superintendent-Director/Principal Anthony Steele in congratulating Kee and McDonald on their awards and thanking them for their many contributions to Valley Tech.

Mendon Upton PreK
Open House

The registration dates for the Mendon – Upton Integrated Pre-K for the 2020-2021 school year start January 24, and end on February 7, at 3 p.m. To register, children must be three or four years old on or before August 31, 2020 and toilet trained. Parents must be able to provide their own transportation and the children must be residents of Mendon or Upton. All classes are staffed with Master Level Teachers, who are dually certified, plus two teaching assistants. Parents and children are invited to the Open House on January 24, from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. at Clough Pre-K (Mendon residents) and from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Memorial Pre-K (Upton residents).

All classes are integrated, meaning they include both children with and without disabilities and use the ”Tools of the Mind” curriculum. In the event that there are more students registered than available slots, a lottery will be drawn on February 7. For more information, email Jackie Wheelock, Early Childhood Coordinator, jwheelock@mursd.org.
Nipmuc Boys Basketball Varsity Schedule

Sunday, January 19, 3 p.m. at Quaboag Regional Middle/High School
Tuesday, January 21, 6:30 p.m. at Oxford High School
Friday, January 24, 6:30 p.m. at Whitinsville Christian School
Monday, January 27, 6:30 p.m. against Dover-Sherborn High School
Wednesday, January 29, 6:30 p.m. at Blackstone-Millville Regional High School
Monday, February 3, 6:30 p.m. at Northbridge High School
Wednesday, February 5, 6:30 p.m. at Sutton High School
Friday, February 7, 6:30 p.m. at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School
Tuesday, February 11, 6:30 p.m. at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School

Blackstone Valley Tech Girls Basketball Varsity Schedule

Friday, January 17, 6 p.m. at Parker Charter Essential School
Tuesday, January 21, 6:30 p.m. at Millbury Memorial Jr./Sr. High School
Wednesday, January 22, 6:30 p.m. at Worcester Technical High School
Tuesday, January 28, 6:30 p.m. at Montachusett BVT High School
Friday, January 31, 5 p.m., against Abby Kelley Foster Regional Charter School
Tuesday, February 4, 5 p.m., against Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School
Wednesday, February 5, 6:30 p.m. at Tyngsborough High School
Tuesday, February 7, 6:45 p.m. at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School
Tuesday, February 11, 5 p.m., against Nipmuc Regional High School
Tuesday, February 11, 6:30 p.m. at Northbridge High School
Monday/February 17, 3 p.m., at Northbridge High School

Blackstone Valley Tech Boys Basketball Varsity Schedule

Friday, January 17, 6:30 p.m., against Worcester Technical High School
Tuesday, January 21, 6:30 p.m., at University Park Campus
Wednesday, January 22, 6:30 p.m., at Keefe Technical High School
Friday, January 24, 6:30 p.m., at Parker Charter Essential School
Friday, January 31, 6:30 p.m., at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School
Friday, February 7, 6:30 p.m., at Worcester Technical High School
Monday, February 10, 6:30 p.m., at Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical High School
Tuesday, February 11, 6:30 p.m., at Nipmuc Regional High School
Thursday, February 13, 6:30 p.m., against Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School
Friday, February 14, 6:30 p.m., against Innovation Academy Charter School
Northbridge/Nipmuc Starts Fast After Title Run
By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist
The Northbridge/Nipmuc hockey team has rolled to a 7-1 start after capturing a state championship a season ago, bringing back most of the roster that won the title last winter.

Head coach Ryan Neville said his team has set its sights high again this year. “We are trying to win the whole thing,” Neville said. “I think if that’s not your goal as a team, there is something wrong there.”

The Rams have both long and short term goals, including qualifying for the postseason, improving day-to-day, and having the younger players on the squad get playing time so they are ready to step into bigger roles in the future.

Northbridge/Nipmuc is also applying lessons learned from a season ago, when it had to work hard to rebound after a 2-5 start. “It took everything we had to even qualify for the tournament, never mind make a deep run,” Neville said. “It’s always first and foremost our goal to make the tournament,” Neville said, “but we know our

Nipmuc Unveils First of Four Classes
By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist
Nipmuc Regional High School recently announced its first ever hall of fame class, enshrining eight individuals who represent the history of Nipmuc Athletics, “The first batch of inductees is a diverse group, including great athletes, successful teams, and championship-winning coaches,” said Christopher Schmidt, Athletic Director and Hall of Fame President.

Matthew Brochu, a 1998 graduate, is among the inductees. He scored 1,791 points during his high school basketball career and led the Warriors to a Central Mass. title in 1997. Valuee Sumner (née Dugure) is a five-time all-star in field hockey and basketball and holds three school track & field records.

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Matthew Brochu, a 1998 graduate, is among the inductees. He scored 1,791 points during his high school basketball career and led the Warriors to a Central Mass. title in 1997. Valuee Sumner (née Dugure) is a five-time all-star in field hockey and basketball and holds three school track & field records.

Several returning Nipmuc players are playing leading roles this year. Nolan Brown has emerged into a top-line defender. "He has been pretty flexible for us, playing some minutes at center and shifting over to wing," Neville said. "He has really stepped up and he helps us both on the top two blue lines. Neville described the young Nipmuc student as a "real hard-nosed guy who brings a ton of physicality and toughness to our team."

Northbridge/Nipmuc will also have to navigate a realigned Russell Conference, with new opponents like Grafton/BVT joining a realigned league. "It's always first and foremost our goal to make the tournament," Neville said, "but we know our league just got a lot more competitive."
Saying Goodbye to My Biggest Fan

By Chris Villani

Any athlete can attest to the importance of having fans. But the concept of a fan is one that goes far beyond the boundaries of a court or a playing field. No matter who you are or what you do, you need someone who is going to be there to cheer you on through highs and lows. Someone to just be your fan.

It’s fair to say my mother had an unrealistic view of my own athletic ability during my playing days. My dad was my little league coach and never wanted to show favoritism. He also had an accurate sense of my capabilities as a baseball player, so I was usually in the bottom half of the lineup and playing somewhere in the outfield where I could do the least amount of damage to our cause.

One day, he was running late to the game, so my mom stepped in and filled out the lineup. There I was, batting third and playing shortstop. That anecdote is a snapshot of my mother’s fandom when it came to her only son. It’s also a story my dad told during her memorial service days before Christmas after a brief illness. While that story in and of itself is unfortunate not unique, and many families are forced to experience the shock and grief of losing a loved one without warning, my mom was unique. It’s fitting that, when my mom and dad met 47 years ago in high school, he was running late to the game, so my mom stepped out of line. That sentiment is one that goes far beyond the boundaries of a court or a playing field.

In addition to having talented post players, Valley Tech has a number of titles in their sights which is bad news for the rest of the Colonial Athletic League (CAL) considering the Beavers’ 7-1 start. “We are a very talented team and we are starting to play a lot better,” Kahler said. “If the other team is working hard, we are working harder. If there is a loose ball, we are the first ones to the ball.”

Even Valley Tech’s communication is more intense and has more of a purpose in recent games, the coach pointed out. BVT began the week riding a high tide of five game winning streak and had let to lose a game in the CAL. Among the strengths the Beavers bring to the court this year is depth. Kahler routinely has eight players who can do damage in the scoring column and compete on the defensive end of the floor as well. The teams’ three senior captains have led the way, including Victoria Russian who came into the season playing with a purpose, her coach said. “I can tell she really wants to go far this year,” Kahler said. “She has been putting in the time and effort to make sure we are going to go where she wants us to go.”

Fellow captains Gabby Muscatelli and Mackenzie Volletiere have also provided strong leadership for BVT. In addition to having talented post players, it’s fair to say my mother had an unrealistic view of my own athletic ability during my playing days. My dad was my little league coach and never wanted to show favoritism. He also had an accurate sense of my capabilities as a baseball player, so I was usually in the bottom half of the lineup and playing somewhere in the outfield where I could do the least amount of damage to our cause.

The thing about true fans is they stick with their teams, even during a losing season. When I’ve been at the lowest points of my life, my mom was always the one to love and support me unconditionally. Fans can also be critical of their teams when they’re called for, and my mom was certainly willing to call me out when I stepped out of line. It’s fitting that, when my mom and dad met 47 years ago in high school, she was an athlete and he was a cheerleader. She was his biggest fan too. We will miss her terribly, but the love and support she brought to our family will never be forgotten. And in our hearts we know, somewhere, she’s still cheering us on.