Show Wild Birds Some Love

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter
The Massachusetts Presidential Primary is slated to take place on Tuesday, March 3 and for those who prefer not to chance having to wait in long lines to cast their vote, once again early voting has been approved.

In Mendon, early voting will take place on Monday, February 24 through Thursday, February 27 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Town Clerk’s office in Town Hall.

In Upton, early voting will be available in the Town Clerk’s office Monday, February 24 through Friday, February 28 during office hours, which 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. The office is in Town Hall.

The last day for all residents to register to vote on Super Tuesday and/or change one’s political party designation is Wednesday, February 12 at 8 p.m. Residents may register online and check voter status as well by viewing sec.state.ma.us/OVR.

Early Voting and Absentee Ballots Available in Mendon and Upton

By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter
Mendon Upton Regional school officials warn that this ballot year could look very similar to last year, ending in layoffs and program cuts for the district, as initial budgets come out from the state.

Superintendent of Schools Dr. Joseph Maruszczak informed the School Committee during their January 27 meeting that the Massachusetts House budget was released the previous week, bringing nothing unexpected to the district’s funding. “Unfortunately, we are in a very similar situation that we were in last year,” said Maruszczak. “We are one of the minimum aid districts so the additional Chapter 70 aid that we will receive is $30 per student.” He said $30 per student for Mendon Upton is equal to 0.52 percent, or $65,000, for the FY21 budget.

Regional Transportation reimbursement also increased, but only $20,000 for next year according to Maruszczak. “Because we have increases to local Class A Schools where students from Mendon Upton attend, those ‘minimal’ increases will be negated.”

Although the budget traditionally changes as it goes from the House to the Senate throughout the budget process, Maruszczak told the Committee they should not expect to see any windfalls for next year.

“We may pick up something modest in the line item of Regional School Transportation Reimbursement, but I don’t anticipate anything dramatically different for next year,” he said. Maruszczak reminded Committee members that although legislation signed this year for the Student Opportunity Act – an overhaul of the state’s funding formula for public education – the overwhelming majority of the money is going to a small number of districts. “Eighty-five percent of that money is going to 35 districts [across Massachusetts],” said Maruszczak. “It is not equal to 0.52 percent, or $65,000, for the FY21 budget. Regional Transportation reimbursement also increased, but only $20,000 for next year according to Maruszczak. “Because we have increases to local Class A Schools where students from Mendon Upton attend, those ‘minimal’ increases will be negated.”

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Override Being Discussed for FY21 School Budget

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Staff Reporter
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Show the wild birds some love by taking part in the Great Backyard Bird Count, visit BirdCount.org.

Those residents who are not around for the March 3 Primary may apply for an absentee ballot. A link to the application can be found at sec.state.ma.us/el/elefpl/absentees/English-Absentee-Ballot-A.

For those who are not enrolled, make certain to indicate the preferred ballot. Choices include Republican, Democrat, Libertarian, and Green-Rainbow. For those enrolled in a party, individuals must select that party’s ballot. All absentee applications must be received in the in the Town Clerk’s office for the voter’s hometown by noon on Monday, March 2. Ballots are due back in the hometown Town Clerk’s office by the close of polls on Tuesday March 3. Mendon residents with questions on early voting or absentee ballots should contact Town Clerk Ellen Agro’s office at 508-473-1085 or email townclerk@meldonma.gov. Upton residents with questions on early voting or absentee ballots should contact Town Clerk Kelly McFleaths office at 508-529-3565 or email kmcfleaths@uptonma.gov.

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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 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.

Canal Walk, Sunday February 23 at 1 p.m. A two-mile guided walk along the Blackstone Canal following the Blackstone River Greenway. The walk explore the canal’s historical and cultural significance and its role in the farm to factory transformation of the Blackstone Valley. All walks end at the start location. If conditions permit, bring snowshoes and hiking poles. The February 9 and 16 walks are at River Bend Farm; the walk on February 23 at Plummer’s Landing, Church Hill, past the Goat Hill Lock and along the Blackstone River. Hot chocolate will be served after the hike. Dogs are permitted on a leash. Portions of the trail are hilly and may be more strenuous if icy or snow covered. This forest trail has roots and rocks along the path. Be prepared for cold weather, wear appropriate footwear and consider bringing hiking poles. drinking water and a snack.

Winter Recreational Hike of the Goat Hill Trail, Saturday February 22, 1 p.m. An easy, three-mile round trip with the Blackstone River Watershed Association around Goat Hill, past the Goat Hill Lock and along the Blackstone River. Hot chocolate will be served after the hike. Dogs are permitted on a leash. Portions of the trail are hilly and may be more strenuous if icy or snow covered. This forest trail has roots and rocks along the path. Be prepared for cold weather, wear appropriate footwear and consider bringing hiking poles. drinking water and a snack.

Winter Nature Walk, Thursday February 27. Enjoy a one mile walk along 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.

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. The Mendon Upton Town Crier was established over 25 years ago. We are the good news newspaper. We know our readers and advertisers. Advertising with us means supporting a the community and recognizing the strength of a smalltown USA.

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Mendon Business Owner Donates to Help Trail Work

By Michelle Sanford

Upton resident Bill Johnston said it was a love of the outdoors and playing in the woods as a kid that would eventually navigate him toward a sport that he’s continued to enjoy for more than 50 years.

It was during his 20s that Johnston said he read a story about falconry. “It really peaked my interest. It was about falcons in North America and gave me an education into it. Over time, I found other people interested in the sport and have been doing it ever since,” he said.

Johnston explained falconers form a bond with their trained bird such as a falcon or hawk. Animals that these birds prey typically help hunt include ducks, squirrels, and rabbits. “It’s what they would naturally hunt in the wild anyway,” explained Johnston.

In North America, the sport of falconry is highly regulated by state and federal agencies. Johnston is Master Falconer, a title he earned after five years of study as an apprentice and a General Falconer. As a Master Falconer in Massachusetts, he’s permitted to own up to five trained birds.

Johnston explained falconers form a very strong bond with their birds because of the amount of time spent together daily. “It’s a commitment. You have to tame it. Feed it. There’s a trust that’s established,” he said. In January, the Upton resident of 32 years made headlines when he was duck hunting with his falcon Feona in Westbrook.

At some point, he lost Feona after she was attacked by a red tail hawk. While attempting to track his falcon with a GPS, he fell through the ice at Cedar Swamp Pond. “I was practically arm-pit deep in the water,” said Johnston. Fortunately, he was able to use his cell phone to call 911 and within minutes both eyes, that Johnston made the difficult decision to euthanize her. “It was a sad ending for her. I had her a long, long time. She was sweet. It was a pretty hard blow,” he said. Despite the unhappy outcome, the Master Falconer was so thankful to everyone who helped rescue him and treat Feona, he recently treated the Westbrook Fire Department and the staff at Tufts to a catered lunch to say thank you. “They’re all such good people. It was the least I could do.”

Mendon business owner, Kathy Rich, has donated a blue, green and cream original handmade quilt, Under Water, worth $450 to local nonprofit, Bay State Trail Riders Association, Inc. (BSTRA) to be the prize in the organization’s first opportunity drawing of 2020. Each year BSTRA has several raffles or opportunity drawings with proceeds going toward trail maintenance projects within State Forests and Parks in the community. Ticket sales are being sold for the March 29 drawing a BSTRA Benefit Event, the Nancy Maenzo Memorial Benefit Ride, in Douglas. Tickets are $20 for $20, 12 for $10 or five for $5. Online at BSTRA.org/support/raffle or by mail. The winner need not be present to win.

Johnston is the owner of A Stitch’n Good Time, in Mendon, and an avid trail user. She has been professionally hand quilting since 1987 and professionally long arm quilting since 2005. Her business, A Stitch’n Good Time, offers a range of services from quilting, sewing, binding, etc. to finishing.

Since 1989, BSTRA has put up more than $650,000 into trails within State Forests and Parks within 34 towns in Massachusetts, including, Mendon, and Upton. In 2020 BSTRA has projects in the pipeline for Douglas State Forest, Upton State Forest, and Pell Farm in Grafton. Additionally, trail work days are scheduled this Spring for West Hill Dam, Uxbridge, Upton State Forest, Douglas State Forest, and Hodges Village Dam, Oxford.

Mendon Relishing the Sport of Falconry for 50 Plus Years

By Michelle Sanford

Staff Reporter

Upton resident Bill Johnston said it was a love of falconry that brought him to Cummings School for Veterinary Medicine at Tufts University in Grafton.

Sadly, the birds’ injuries were so extensive and included losing her sight in both eyes, that Johnston made the difficult decision to euthanize her. "It was a sad ending for her. I had her a long, long time. She was sweet. It was a pretty hard blow," he said. Despite the unhappy outcome, the Master Falconer was so thankful to everyone who helped rescue him and treat Feona, he recently treated the Westminster Fire Department and the staff at Tufts to a catered lunch to say thank you. "They’re all such good people. It was the least I could do."

The winner need not be present to win. Memorial Benefit Ride, in Douglas. Tickets are 30 for $20, 12 for $10 or five for $5. Online at BSTRA.org/support/raffle or by mail. The winner need not be present to win.

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Last year the hospital also added a number of new technologies in surgery, became affiliated with more physicians, implemented a more efficient electronic medical records system and formed a partnership with Spectrum Health Systems, Inc. a non-profit that proves comprehensive addiction treatment in Massachusetts. Spectrum will provide rapid access to medication-assisted treatment to patients in the emergency department and at other MRMC facilities.

"Every day I see a team of nurses, ancillary staff and physicians who are all focused on providing excellent patient care, and all of whom made 2019 a very successful year at Milford Regional Medical Center," says Edward J. Kelly, president and CEO of Milford Regional Medical Center. "When we look back at the accomplishments of 2019, and look forward to what we are going to achieve in 2020, you can see we have a very special regional hospital."

A copy of the FY2019 annual report is available at MilfordRegional.org.
Volunteering with Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor

In celebration of the 50th anniversary of the Volunteers-In-Parks program in 2020, Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor is hosting Volunteer Open House events on Wednesday, February 12, and again on Wednesday, March 18, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Taft Public Library, 29 North Ave., Mendon. Sponsored by Beginning Bridges CFCE, Muffin House Cafe, and the Taft Public Library, this free, drop-in program offers up to 15 families an opportunity to build social connections and learn about family friendly resources.

Deb Hudgins Music & Movement, Saturday, February 15, from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. at the Upton Town Library, 193 Main St.: The program features singing and guitar music for up to 14 toddlers and infants accompanied by parent or caregiver.

Deb Hudgins Music & Movement, Saturday, February 28, from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. at the Upton Town Library, Main St.: The program features singing and guitar music for up to 14 toddlers and infants accompanied by parent or caregiver.

For more information contact: Deborah Hudgins, DebHudginsMusic@gmail.com, 508-429-8675.
Eastern Bluebirds socializing and enjoying some birdseed on a winter’s day. A recent comprehensive study found that since 1970, we have lost 29 percent of the birds in North America, which is a disturbing loss of 2.9 billion birds. It is not only the rare bird species in decline, but also the common birds we use to see often. The loss is across almost every biome from forests to the seashore.

"These losses are a strong signal that our human-altered landscapes are losing their ability to support birds, and that is an indicator of a coming collapse of the overall environment," stated one of the study’s authors, Ken Rosenberg, conservation scientist at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, in a 2019 issue of Living Bird magazine. Additionally, the study reports, "Habitat loss, climate change, unregulated hunting, and other forms of human-caused mortality have contributed to a thousand-fold increase in global extinctions in the Anthropocene compared to the presumed pre-human background rate, with profound effects on ecosystem functioning and services."

Bird loss is the latest warning of an ailing our environment. There are thousands of scientific reports which substantiate this and scientists, generally a reserved bunch, have been speaking out. Rosenberg has hope if we take action now, but is concerned that in 10 years it might be too late.

The good news in the report is that waterfowl, raptors and turkeys have increased in numbers. The reason is targeted efforts to help these birds, such as wetland conservation, the banning of some harmful pesticides and conservation funding. However, currently, the federal government is systematically stripping away vital environmental regulations across all sectors. This is the absolute wrong direction.

What can we do? Believe in science and substantiated facts, not baseless rhetoric politicians might blurt out for self gain. Vote. Attend public hearings when trees are unnecessarily being clear-cut for a subdivision. Join a local town supporter. Local land preservation. Reduce lawn size, avoid pesticide use and landscape with native plants to feed and shelter birds. Annually, over a billion birds are killed from window strikes and cats. Advocate for legislation that requires bird proof glass on tall buildings. Use WindowAlert decals on windows at home where birds strike. Keep cats indoors. Avoid plastic use. Sea birds die from ingesting plastic and getting tangled in it. Carry a travel coffee flask for hot/cold drinks. Buy organic foods and shade grown decals on windows at home where birds strike. Keep cats indoors.

READ THE TOWNSMAN ONLINE
To read the February 7, 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 20.02.07 pdf

THANKING UPTON RESIDENTS FOR THEIR GENEROSITY
To the Editor,

I am writing to thank Upton residents for sharing the true meaning of Christmas with children in need this past holiday season.

Because of the generosity of donors in Upton and across the United States, Operation Christmas Child, a project of Samaritan’s Purse, collected more than 8.9 million shoebox gifts in 2019. Combined with those collected from partnering countries in 2019, the ministry is now sending 10,569,405 shoebox gifts to children worldwide.

Through shoeboxes—packed with fun toys, school supplies and hygiene items—Upton volunteers brought joy to children in need around the world. Each gift-filled shoebox is a tangible expression of God’s love, and it is often the first gift these children have ever received. Thanks to the generosity of donors, Operation Christmas Child has collected and delivered more than 178 million gift-filled shoeboxes to children in more than 160 countries and territories since 1993.

It’s not too late for people to make a difference. Though drop-off locations serving Upton are closed until November, information about year-round volunteer opportunities can also be found at SamaritansPurse.org/occ or by calling 518-437-0690.

Thank you again to everyone who participated in this global project—many who do so year after year. These simple gifts, packed with love, send a message to children worldwide that they are loved and not forgotten.

Dana Williams
Operation Christmas Child

FINISH THE TREASURE HUNT
To the Editor,

I am writing to tell you about the treasure hunt at the town’s annual town meeting. In the story that ran in the Crier last week, there were several inaccuracies. According to the story, we had a 90 percent turnout. We actually had a 100 percent turnout on every year. The ninth grade students had a treasure hunt at the annual town meeting. The purpose of this was to make students actively engaged in the town government.

Samantha Fries
Upton Town Crier
Friends of Mendon Elders Book Sale

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

Nomination papers are now available in the Town Clerk's office for those residents interested in running for elected office. Mendon's Town Election will take place on May 12.

Offices up for re-election, their term length, and current officer holder 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; Mendon Upton Regional School Committee for three years, Sean Nicholoson; two Taft Library Trustees for three years, Ellen Agro and Wayne Phipps; Water Commission for three years, Alan Kent; Parks Commission for three years, Dan Byer; Highway Surveyor for three years, Alan Tetreault; Planning Board for five years, Barry Iadarola, and Housing Authority for five years, B. John Palumbo.

Mendon Nomination Papers Now Available

The deadline to obtain and return nomination papers to the Town Clerk's office is March 24 by 5 p.m. The last day for candidates to withdraw from the election is April 9. Campaign finance forms are due in the Town Clerk's office eight days prior to the election on May 4 and 30 days after the election on June 11. Campaign signs may be displayed beginning April 12 and must be taken down by May 17.

The last day to register to vote at the Town Election is April 22 by 8 p.m. in the Town Clerk's office. Absentee ballots may be obtained no later than May 11 at noon. The last day to register to vote at the May 1 Annual Town Meeting is April 10 at 8 p.m.

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. The Town Clerk's office is closed on Fridays.
Submitted by Andrew Jennisch, Library Director, and Tara Windsor, Children’s Librarian

Registration
To register for any program offered by the Taft Public Library, visit TaftPublicLibrary.org and click on “Library Event Calendar & Registration,” stop by or call 508-473-3259.

Adult Book Club – New Daytime Session
The Adult Book Club has added a daytime discussion session, along with the evening session. The evening meetings are typically the first Monday of the month (unless it is a holiday) at 7 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room. Daytime discussions are Wednesday of the same week at noon. For more information, call the library on Wednesdays or on Friday mornings at 508-473-3259 and ask for Kris. New members are always welcome and copies of the book are available at the downstairs circulation desk.

Upcoming selections are: April–Bridge of Clay by Markus Zusak; May–The poetry of Mary Oliver; and June–Little Fires Everywhere by Celeste Ng

Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club
The Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club meets quarterly downstairs in the library. The pick for The Hunger Games was John Green’s The Fault in Our Stars by John Green. The pick for the Thursday, May 7 meeting at 7 p.m. is The Radium Girls: The Dark Story of America’s Shining Women by Kate Moore. Copies of the book and audiobook are available at the downstairs desk. Please sign the registration sheet.

Two New Teen Events
A new monthly program for tweens and teens starts Thursday, February 13 at 6:45 p.m. When Meredith Daehlebous begins Yoga for Teens, those interested need only bring themselves (and perhaps a bottle of water) to the session. Yoga mats are provided and registration is required as space is limited.

The Taft Teen Book into Movie is back on Friday, April 3 at 6 p.m. with the screening of The Hunger Games. Gear up for the event by picking up a copy of the book to read since, following the movie, we’ll be discussing them both. Copies of the book are available at downstairs desk and registration is required. Bring a bag lunch, pillows, or comfortable chair and join us for a great night of pizza, snacks, refreshments, and a good movie and book.

Mount Washington Observatory Program
On Wednesday, March 25 at 6:30 p.m., scientist Bill Broussard of the Mount Washington Observatory will present, Mount Washington: Tales from the Home of the World’s Worst Weather. An infamous place of extremes, 6,288-foot Mount Washington has been captivating people for hundreds of years. While many places on Earth experience severe weather, few are inhabited by humans 24 hours a day, 365 days a year as the Mount Washington Observatory has been since 1932. Hear remarkable stories from a scientist with intimate knowledge and understanding of the mountain known as the “Home of the World’s Worst Weather.” Please register.

Upcoming Friends of the Library Events
Registration is required for all the Friends of the Library Events, which are for tweens through adults.

Do you like chocolate? Get ready for the first of the Friends Foodie Events. This monthly program begins Tuesday, February 11 at 6:30 p.m. with Healthy Chocolate Choices! Who knew there were healthy choices and reasons to enjoy that daily delicious treat? The program discusses where chocolate comes from and profiles different kinds. Participants will sample some of the yummy chocolate goodness.

What’s Your Word?, as seen on Good Morning America, The Today Show, Yahoo Health, Mt. Sinai Health System, and via many other independent and local media sources, will be presented on Thursday, February 27 at 6:30 p.m.

Investigate a special word that will remind you of what you want to focus on or express in your daily life, then make it into something you can wear every day. Part Maker Space project, part arts & crafts activity, part inspiration & encouragement, the keepsake you create in What’s Your Word? will be a great reminder of the word you’ve chosen to focus on every day. Or make one as a gift for someone you care about so you can support them through their word.

Soups on! And you are going to want to lick the spoon on Tuesday, March 10 at 6:30 p.m. at second monthly foodie event. Celebrate the delicious, warm, comforting qualities of soup, a delicious way to boost your immune system and treat your family to a great, healthy meal. The event is open to anyone who loves to make soup or wants to learn how to make it, no special skills needed.

Meeting Space Available
The Taft Public Library welcomes the use of its downstairs Art Holmes Community Room and/or the upstairs Clinkman Periodicals Area. Information is available at TaftPublicLibrary.org by following the Meeting Room Reservations link. Room Reservation Forms may be scanned and submitted via email to librarydirector@taftlibrary.org, or dropped off in person at the upstairs circulation desk. Please contact the Library Director with any questions at 508-473-3259.

Children’s News February
Mr. Vinny’s Shadow Puppet Show
Mr. Vinny is sure to entertain with a very interactive, silly and surprising puppet show on Tuesday, February 18 at 5 p.m. Kids use their heads to help tell the story of “The 12 Lil’ Pigs and the Big Bad Pineapple” and play the game “What’s that Shadow?” Fun with a family campfire feel! No registration is required.

Southwick Zoo Mobile
The library becomes the Zoo-Brary on Thursday, February 20 at 2 p.m. when the Southwick Zoo Mobile visits. The drop-in program includes an animal handler and a presenter who will provide a general introduction to the subject of animal ecology exploring topics about the traits used to classify different animals into groups, types of interactions between animal groups, how animals interact with their environment; and more.

Early Childhood Developmental Assessment – A free Early Childhood Developmental Assessment Mini Screening with Christina Hayes of BIBS Energy Works, LLC is offered on Thursday, February 20, March 12 and April 16 from 3 to 6 p.m. Does your child have: unexplained social, academic, emotional or coordination difficulties, learning or behavioral differences sensory challenges, anxiety, depression, or low confidence? Through play and observation, Hayes will provide a unique perspective on how Early Reflex Development may be the root of your child’s struggles. Registration required for this all ages program

Itty Bitty Story Time
Itty Bitty Story time for our youngest patrons: birth to 3 years old, is held Tuesdays at 9:45 a.m. and Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. The drop-in program with stories, songs, musical instruments, and a whole lot more to keep the little ones engaged and entertained is a great way to introduce your young child in your library to the library

Story & Craft Time
Story & craft time, a drop-in program for preschool children in Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. Themes are: February 12-Bilingual Farm Stories, February 19-Valentine Stories and February 26-Happy Birthday Dr. Seuss

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Upton, Mendon Town Crier

FEBRUARY 7, 2020

8
Industrial Tower and Wireless, LLC is proposing to voluntarily register an existing wireless telecommunications facility located at 7 Harrington Street, Mendon, MA in Worcester County.

The existing facility consists of a 150-foot lattice tower within an 80’ x 80’ fenced in compound. The tower does not require lighting per FAA Study 2019-ANE-7047-COE. Any interested persons may review the application by going to the website: www.fcc.gov/asr/applications and entering the Form 854 File Number. Any interested party that believes that this existing antenna structure causes a significant impact on the quality of human environment, may submit an environmental request by going to the following website: www.fcc.gov/asr/environmentalrequest. The mailing address for interested parties that would prefer to file a Request for Environmental Review by paper copy: FCC Requests for Environmental Review, Attn: Ramon Williams, 445 12th Street SW, Washington, DC 20554. Any interested party will have 30 days after issuance of this notice to make an environmental request. This notice is in reference to file number A1152100.

TOWN OF MENDON

The owners and occupants of the following described parcels of land situated in the Town of Mendon in Worcester County and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and all others persons, are hereby notified that the taxes, betterments, if any, along with all legal costs and charges thereon, to the extent permitted by law, unless the same shall be previously discharged. Amounts due are as of January 24, 2020, with payments received on or before January 28, 2020, and do not include the cost of advertisement associated with tax taking.

Jennifer Welch
Tax Collector
Town of Mendon

OWNER OF RECORD: STEWART SCOTT B & MARY-BETH N/O FERREIRA FARLEY & DIANINY
LOCATION: 13 B CARPENTER HILL ROAD
CONTAINING: 0 Acres more or less
ASSESSORS’ MAP 21, BLK 116, PARC 13, EXT B
RECORDED IN REGISTRY OF DEEDS, BOOK 48728, PAGE 398
2018 REAL ESTATE: $589.71
2018 INTEREST: $20.13
ADVERT PREP: $10.00
PAYMENT DUE: $5.00
UNPAID BALANCE: $624.84

The Mendon Brothers of the Brush Association announce an opportunity to honor a friend or loved one who has served, or is serving, in U.S. armed forces by participating in our Memorial Flag Program. Any interested Mendon resident should complete the Flag Purchase Form and mail it in, along with the $200 fee, to P.O. Box 551, Mendon, MA 01756. Forms are available at MendonBrothersoftheBrush.org or at the Taft Public Library, Mendon Post Office, Senior Center, or Town Hall. All forms must be received by April 3 to allow for adequate processing time. There are a limited number of flag locations available so participation will be on a first come, first serve basis. Questions may be sent to mendonbrush@gmail.com or call Flag Committee chairman Rich Schofield, 508-958-2958.
Upton, Mendon Town Crier

Cornell University Annual
Great Backyard Bird Count

Join Blackstone River Valley National Historic Park volunteers and West Hill Dam Team on Sunday, February 16 at 2 p.m. to take part in the Cornell University Annual Great Backyard Bird Count. The rain/heavy snow date is Saturday, February 22 at 2 p.m. Meet at the West Hill Dam office, 518 East Hartford Ave., Uxbridge. Explore various habitats and the birds that migrate or make their home in the pine groves, marshes, and riparian (river) habitats of West Hill Dam. Observations help researchers determine species decline and migration patterns. Participants should dress for the weather, be prepared to hike about a mile to the various sites, snow shoes or deep snow boots are recommended. All are welcome to bring binoculars, pack a snack and water. After the observations participants will enjoy warm beverages while supplies last. Junior Rangers Level 2 – earn wildlife credit. Scout Troops, home schooled students welcomed for merit badge requirements. Youth under the age of 18 please bring an adult. For more information, please call Park Ranger Viola at 978-318-8417.

Free Homebuyer Bootcamp

Michael Shain of Bay Equity Home Loans will host a free Homebuyer Bootcamp seminar on Wednesday, March 18 at 6:30 p.m. at Milford High School, Room A-1. Snow date is Wednesday, March 25.

A panel of experts will discuss and answer questions about the home buying process including mortgage programs and the importance of credit.

Pre-registration is required. Call 508-478-1119 or visit MilfordCommunity.com and click on “Register for Activities”, then select “Adult Winter/Spring > One-Night Workshops > Homebuyer Bootcamp.” Space is limited. Free pizza will be served!

For more information, call Shain at 508-330-8487 or email mshain@bayeq.com.

STOP & SAVOR the best of sports with exclusive NFL SUNDAY TICKET.

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Greenleaf Garden Club (GGC) member Sandra Tosches once again participated along with over 20 other designers in the Worcester Art Museum’s winter extravaganza combining works of art with imaginative floral interpretations, Flora in Winter. She has participated in the event for 16 years and this year was challenged to create a floral design to compliment their pottery vase by Morhiro Wada. The vase is an angular, geometric clay vessel. Inspired by the modern shape with its copper, black, speckled and gray facets, Tosches used a monochromatic palette of orange roses, protea and angular Bird of Paradise flowers to create a modern, contemporary interpretation of this work of art.

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 greenleagardenclub@gmail.com.
Charles River Bank Presents Donation Check to Couple Impacted by Accident

In early January, Charles River Bank President and CEO Jack Hamilton presented a $1,735 check to Malcom Clifton of Mendon from donations collected through a relief fund set up for he and his wife Illie. On October 22, their house was severely damaged when a wood chipper detached from its truck, struck a telephone pole and crashed into the side of their home. No one was hurt in the accident. The fund was established to help the couple with any expenses they may have had while their house was being repaired. Donations ranged from $5 to $250 and were received from dozens of local individuals, businesses and families including one from Charles River Bank and another from Bank President and CEO Jack Hamilton.

“As one of Mendon’s community banks, and a resident of Mendon myself, we felt the need to step up and help this family when an unfortunate accident wreaked their home. Through the generosity of this great community, we were able to raise enough money to help get this couple back on their feet. Over and over again I am reminded how lucky we are to work in such a close and caring community,” said Charles River Bank President and CEO Jack Hamilton.

World of Lights at Southwick’s Zoo

Southwick’s Zoo will hold a new World of Lights event in the fall and winter of 2020-21. The 14-week-long Chinese Festival of Illumination, featuring lanterns handcrafted by the award-winning Zigong Lantern Group, will be the first event of its kind hosted in New England.

From late September to early January, Southwick’s Zoo will be illuminated by custom-built exhibits consisting of a multitude of Chinese lanterns constructed from silk, steel, and environmentally-friendly LED lights. The theme of this year’s event will be Around the World, so in addition to highlighting traditional Chinese culture, this spectacular nighttime display will shine a light on a variety of regions and their traditions. World of Lights guests will also enjoy live acrobatic performances, a global marketplace, and specialty foods.

The Zigong Lantern Group is the world’s largest lantern manufacturer, and their displays have been featured in locations worldwide including the Dublin Zoo, RZSS Edinburgh Zoo, the Nashville Zoo, and the UK’s Longleat House. The group’s artisans will arrive at Southwick’s Zoo mid-summer to craft the lantern displays on-site. World of Lights will be open Wednesday to Sunday, from September 30 to January 3, 2021. Tickets for this attraction will go on sale at Southwickzoo.com, May 1.

Art Heals: Get Creative for a Cause

Calling All Artists... let your art speak for those who can’t find their voice and help build awareness and support for teen suicide prevention.

Artists, know that creating a visual image through any medium can produce physical, and emotional benefits. This healing power of art is what the Art Heals: Chalk Festival is all about. On Saturday, May 9, rain date of May 16, the Blackstone Valley Tech campus in Upton will come alive with color, creativity, and meaning as artists of all ages and experience levels create unique chalk murals on the theme Art Heals for a free exhibition, open to the public from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Artists can work solo or in pairs on a 5’ x 5’ pavement square starting at 8:30 a.m. Registration, $20 per artist, is required by April 9 and reserves a space to create a masterpiece. Proceeds will be donated to teen suicide awareness charities.

There will be 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes awarded in each category: Youth (Ages 12 & Under), Young Adult (Ages 13-17), and Adult (Ages 18+). Artists are reminded that it is a family friendly event, when creating a concept for the art. All concepts must be submitted to BVT’s Visual Arts instructor, Ashley Maclure, via e-mail at amaclure@valleytech.k12.ma.us before the event.

This event is made possible in partnership with the Blackstone Valley Tech’s Visual Arts program and supported in part by a grant from the Upton Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council.

For more information about the Art Heals: Chalk Festival, and to register, visit ValleyTech.k12.ma.us/artheals.

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A less expensive way to help get the dental care you deserve

If you’re over 50, you can get coverage for about $1 a day*
Keep your own dentist! You can go to any dentist you want
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Thank you for an AMAZING 2019

Robyn Nasuti
Branch Manager
Real Living Suburban Lifestyle
774-575-1338

Look for these and other spectacular properties this year

Real Living Suburban Lifestyle (next to Price Chopper) is expanding. If you’re looking to join a firm with competitive commissions and great people, call or text Robert (for details)

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Community Center Building Committee Elected

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

During a January 21 Board of Selectmen’s meeting, the town’s new Community Center Building Committee was elected. The seven-member committee will be responsible for overseeing the construction of the town’s new community center that will house the Library and Council on Aging.

In addition to the Board of Selectmen, Town Moderator David Loeper, Director of Elder and Social Services Janice Nowicki, and Library Director Matthew Bacholdt took part in the election.

There were eight residents interested in serving on the Committee, all of whom it was noted would bring a great deal of expertise to the project through their professional work and volunteer efforts on various committees and boards such as the Town Hall Renovation Committee and the Finance Committee.

Ultimately, residents Justin Pollard, Jay Rodriguez, Stéfanie Lalonde, James Brochu, Paul Flaherty, Dee Hakala, and Mike Howell were elected to serve on the Committee.

Town Clerk and Assistant to the Town Manager Kelly McElreath was also in attendance that evening and told the newly elected committee members that she planned to attend their first meeting to swear them in. She added nothing other than its support for the Owner’s Project Manager’s position was ready to be reviewed.

In November, voters passed an article to fund $700,000 toward the procurement, design development, construction documents, and bidding phases of design for the new Community Center to be located on the town-owned parking lot on Milford St. The new construction is likely needed to be funded through an approved debt exclusion.

Also that evening, Nowicki approached the Board seeking to supplement an account that helps with fuel assistance and some other needs for those Upton residents who have fallen on hard times. That funding comes out of the town’s Risteen Fund even more. “Just to be clear, from my perspective, my goal is to be more generous with this. We’ve got over $600,000 in the welfare fund and I’d like to use more of it. It’s clearly underutilized. It’s been sitting there for decades not being used. I’m not saying we need to spend it frivolously but I think there’s opportunity to do more for more people in this community.”

Before approving Nowicki’s request, the Selectmen wanted to take more than a few suggestions for how funding requests from the Risteen account work and to see if there are any other requests earmarked at this time. The Selectmen plan to bring the topic up again at their next meeting.

UPTON TOWN LIBRARY

2 Main St. Upton • 508-529-6272 • uptonlibrary.org
Tu, Wed, Th 10-8 • Fri, Sat 10-4, Sun & Mon closed

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

Boston Bruins PJ Drive

Upton Library is participating in the Boston Bruins state- wide PJ drive. Donate in two ways. Bring a new pair of children’s pajamas to the library and donate them or make a $10 donation to the Friends of the Upton Library and select one of our pairs of display pajamas to add to the drive. The pajama drive is supported statewide by the Boston Bruins, but donations made at Upton Library go directly to local children through the state Department of Children and Families office in Whitinsville.

Museum Passes and Room Reservations

Upton Library offers discount museum passes and study rooms that can be reserved by the public. Reserve either online with your library card at UptonLibrary.org.

Movies at Upton Library

Enjoy new releases and old classics. Upton Library has a browsing collection of DVD movies, arranged by genre.

Come look at our selection including Superheroes, War, Musicals, Documentaries and more.

The Movie Binder is a collection of movies of special interest, such as Classic Literature on Film, The Originals, Vitriol, and Much More. The binder is available for checkout and enjoys a variety of genres.

Special Events

On Wednesday February 19 from 5 to 8 p.m., we’ll have a movie screening of the final film in an epic superhero story. We will also be serving pizza at this event! Suggested ages 10-16. Registration is required at UptonLib.org or by calling 508-529-6272.

Baby Storytime

Baby Storytime, a drop-in program with stories and songs from birth to age three, is held Fridays at 10-30 a.m. in the Gathering Room. Lee Ann Murphy will hold regular Baby Storytime on February 7 and 21 focusing on Cars & Trucks and Dental Health. Deb Hudgins returns for Music and Movement on February 8 and 22. Beginning Bridges generously sponsors a portion of this program through a CFCE grant. Space is limited.

Preschool Storytime

Preschool Storytime, a drop-in program with stories, songs and a craft for ages three through six, is held Thursdays at 10:30 a.m. in the Gathering Room. Join Mrs. Murphy in February for programs on Valentine’s Day, Dental Health, Fish, and Body Parts. Spanish Storytime is February 27.
Upton’s Nomination Papers Available Next Week

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

Starting Monday, February 10, nomination papers will be available in the Town Clerk’s office for those Upton residents interested in running for elected office. Upton’s Annual Town Election is scheduled to take place May 19 at Nipmuc Regional High School.

Officers that will be on ballot, their term length, and current office holder include Moderator for one year, Dave Loeper; Selectman for three years, Stephen Matellian; Assessors of Taxes for three years, James Heize; Mendon Upton Regional School District Committee for three years, Philip DeZutter; Cemetery Commission for three years, Robert Pray; Cemetery Commission for one year, Jay Ferris; Board of Health for three years, Richard Desjardins; Recreation Committee for three years, Richard Gazzoian; three Trustees of Public Library for three years, Megan Donovan, Charlotte L. Carr, and Debra Amorelli; Planning Board for five years, Thomas Davidson; Board of Commissioners of Trust Funds for three years, Ken Glowacki; Board of Commissioners of Trust Funds for two years, James Brochu; and Board of Commissioners of Trust Funds for one year, Robert Fleming.

The last day to register to vote in the Annual 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 508-529-4558 or KMcElreath@uptonma.gov. Office hours are Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., Tuesday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Friday from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Tax Preparation Appointments

The Upton Center is hosting AARP tax preparers on Mondays through March 30 to help senior citizens prepare their taxes at no charge. Appointments, which must be scheduled by calling the Center, 508-529-4558, are held from 9 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. Spaces fill fast. Besides making an appointment pick up an AARP tax intake forms at the Center office, Farm St., and complete them in advance of your appointment. There are no appointments on Monday, February 17, President’s Day.

State Senator Moore Office Hour

On Monday, February 10 from 1:15 to 2 p.m. meet with a representative from the office of State Senator Michael Moore, D. Millbury, at the Upton Center.

Thank You from the Upton Center

The Upton Center thanks the following individuals and groups who helped out in January: Thanks are extended to the Valley Tech dental students who provided an oral hygiene talk. Cornersite of Millbury for lunch and a presentation senior bullying, West Hill Dam Ranger Viola Bramel for leading a museum trip, the Alzheimer’s Association for a presentation about memory issues, West Hill Dam Ranger Viola Bramel for leading a museum trip, the Alzheimer’s Association for a presentation about memory issues, and Health Connection for giving a presentation on financial planning and Paula Lepore, Jo McLaughlin and Judie Pitts for cleanup at the Center.

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

Friday, February 7
Nutrition Talk with Wendy, 10:45 a.m.
Following Your Trail of Shared DNA Matches, 12:30 p.m.

Monday, February 10
AARP Tax Appointments, 9 a.m. to 2:15 p.m.
Please call to schedule an appointment.

Tuesday, February 11
Painting Workshop, Starry Night, 3:30 to 5:30 p.m.
Painting Workshop, Miracle Flowers, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, February 12
Shopping Trip to Salvation Army, Shaw’s, Joe Lots, Walnut Loop*, Northbridge, 9:15 a.m.

Thursday, February 13
Valentines Breakfast with the Town Manager, 9:00

Friday, February 14
Super Man Birthday Bash with Music by Paul Lirange, 12:45 p.m.

Monday, February 17
Closed for President’s Day

Tuesday, February 18
Shopping Trip to Market Basket, Hudson, Lunch Trip to Wheelock Inn, Millbury, 12 p.m.

Wednesday, February 19
Podiatrist Appointments at the Center, 9:30 to 12 p.m. Call the Center to schedule an appointment.
Shopping Trip to Walmart, Northbridge, 9:15 a.m.

Thursday, February 20
Small Animals & Students from the 4H Club Visit, 12:30 p.m.

Monday, February 24
AARP Tax Appointments, 9 to 2:15 p.m.
Please call to schedule an appointment.

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.

ADVERTISING IN THE TOWN CRIERS MAKES GOOD BUSINESS SENSE ... WE DIRECT MAIL TO OVER 20,000 ADDRESSES !!!
Twice Blessed Thrift Shop
HOPEDALE-The Sacred Heart Church of Hopedale Twice Blessed Thrift Shop offers the following specials in February - sweaters, accessories, outerwear, boots and jewelry. During the first full weekend of February fill a bag with clothes for only $7 Open every Thursday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; the first and fourth Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and Sundays from 9 a.m. to noon.

Session 3 Swimming Lesson Registration
Lenny Morence, Director of the Milford Community School Program, announced registration is under way for Session 3 of Children’s American Red Cross Swim Lessons at the Milford High School Pool on Tuesday, February 6, from 7 to 8 p.m. in the pool lobby. Space is limited and registration is accepted on a first-come, first-serve basis for Milford residents only. Residents must choose proof of residency.

Online registration opens Monday, February 10 at 9 a.m. on a first-come, first-serve basis, again for Milford residents only. On Wednesday, February 12 at 9 a.m., non-Milford residents are invited to register for any available space.

The Saturday programs include Parent and Child Aquatics for ages four through three at 9:30 a.m. Preschool Aquatics for ages four through five from 10:30 a.m. Session 3 runs from February 15 through March 28. Classes for those age six and older, Level 6+- are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 to 6:40 p.m. from February 25 through March 26.

For questions contact the Milford Community School Use Program Office at 508-478-1119 or visit the Milford Milford Community School Use program website, MilfordCommunity.com.

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 508-234-9909 or stop by the chamber offices, 670 Linwood Ave. Bldg A, Suite 5, Whitinsville.

Central Mass Business Executive Roundtable, Tuesday, February 11 and March 14, 8:30 a.m., in the Chamber Lobby. Love Your Legislators Legislative Breakfast, Friday, February 14, at 7:30 a.m., Charles F. Minney VFV Post 3329, 16 South Main St., Whitinsville.

Valley Business Networking Group, Wednesday, February 19 and March 4 at 7:30 a.m. in the Chamber House and Community Expo, Saturday, March 14, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Northbridge High School Field House, Linwood Ave., Whitinsville.

Maple Sugaring-Themed Paint Night
WHITINSVILLE-Studio 35 will celebrate maple sugaring season in the Blackstone Valley. Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BRVHNC) has teamed up with artist Liba Gomelov of DCOlores. Art Lessons and Crafts for All to host a Paint Night on Thursday, March 5, at her new studio in Alternatives’ Whitin Mill, 70 Douglas Rd., Whitinsville, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. A portion of the $35 class fee will benefit Blackstone Heritage Corridor. Participants will do a maple sugaring themed painting created by Liba entitled First Snow over the Maple Field. The March 5 paint night falls just before the annual Maple Sugar Days event at Blackstone River & Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge. MA, on March 7 and 8. Seating is limited, so advance ticket purchase is required by going online at BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org/tickets or in person at Blackstone Heritage Corridor’s office, 670 Linwood Ave., Whitinsville.

For more info, contact Bonnie Combis at bcombis@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org or call 508-234-4242.

Free Coat Giveaway
MILFORD-The Sacred Heart Parish Religious Education Office will be holding a free coat give away for Milford residents in need of warm winter coats. Adult and children’s sizes are available. This year’s coat give-away will be held on Saturday, February 15 from 12 to 3 p.m. in the former Milford Catholic School building 11 East Main St. (side entrance near church elevator). To donate a coat that is no longer needed, please stop by the location on Sunday, February 16 from 9 to 11:30 a.m. Please call Amy Donahue at 508-478-0139 with any questions.

Thimble Pleasures Quilt Show
UPTON-Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild in Mendon is holding its annual Quilt Show on Saturday and Sunday, March 14 and 15 at the Blackstone Valley Technical High School, Pleasant St, Upton. The show will feature an exhibit of table runners, kay fridge, napkins, pillowcases, etc. The proceeds from the show go to support Guiding Eyes for the Blind. In addition, a hand-crafted quilt will be raffled on Sunday afternoon at the close of the show. Tickets for this quilt are available from any quilt member and ThimblePleasures.org.

Family Fun & Disability Awareness Fair 2020 - Exhibitors Needed
MILFORD-The Milford Family Fun & Disability Awareness Fair is seeking exhibitors for its 26th Annual Family Fun & Disability Awareness Fair which will be held Saturday, March 14, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Milford High School Cafeteria. Any business, agency or program which serves children or families, is asked to consider being an exhibitor. Tables are free, but space is limited. For more information, please call 508-277-4981 or email: familynetwork@milfordma.com by February 28.

Our Grandmothers Know What They Were Doing
MILFORD-The Greenfield Garden Club of Milford meets on Monday, February 10 at 6:30 p.m. in the Ruth Anne Beakney Senior Center, 50 N. Rose St., Milford. Landscape designer Laura Bibler will present a talk, Our Grandmothers Know What They Were Doing, going back in time to look at the historical garden designs of elderly women. Bibler has been creating landscape installations and designs for 22 years in historic and private estates. 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 Greenfield 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 greenfieldgardenclub@gmail.com.

Maple Sugaring-Themed Night at DoubleTree
MILFORD-Studio 35 will celebrate maple sugaring season in the Blackstone Valley. Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor (BRVHNC) has teamed up with artist Liba Gomelov of DCOlores. Art Lessons and Crafts for All to host a Paint Night on Thursday, March 5, at her new studio in Alternatives’ Whitin Mill, 70 Douglas Rd., Whitinsville, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. A portion of the $35 class fee will benefit Blackstone Heritage Corridor. Participants will do a maple sugaring themed painting created by Liba entitled First Snow over the Maple Field. The March 5 paint night falls just before the annual Maple Sugar Days event at Blackstone River & Canal Heritage State Park in Uxbridge. MA, on March 7 and 8. Seating is limited, so advance ticket purchase is required by going online at BlackstoneHeritageCorridor.org/tickets or in person at Blackstone Heritage Corridor’s office, 670 Linwood Ave., Whitinsville.

For more info, contact Bonnie Combis at bcombis@blackstoneheritagecorridor.org or call 508-234-4242.

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This is Tim Rice. A professional photographer, he spends a lot of time behind the camera, focused on his business, With powerful solutions from Charles River Bank, including personal connections that ensure he has someone to talk to when he has questions. How does he keep it all connected? With powerful solutions from Charles River Bank, including personal connections that ensure he has someone to talk to when he has questions.

Visit CharlesRiverBank.com to learn more about Tim Rice Photo and discover how Charles River Bank can help you.
Thinking Outside the Box, the Miscoe Hill Robotics Team

By Melissa Orff

Staff Reporter/Columnist

The Miscoe Hill Robotics Team took home some hardware this past competition season for their programming, innovation, and "outside-of-the-box" thinking. Approximately 25 students from Miscoe Hill School, part of the school's Lego Robotics/First Lego League club, had been working since last spring to prepare for the fall 2019 competition season.

The First Lego is a program aimed at "inspiring young people to be science and technology leaders and innovators, by engaging them in exciting mentor-based programs that build science, engineering, and technology skills, that inspire innovation, and that foster well-rounded life capabilities including self-confidence, communication, and leadership."

Students are tasked with two challenges – to build a program that will complete specific missions in order to score points, and to develop a research project that develops a solution to a problem within the community.

At Miscoe, the students from grades 4-8 spend all spring working on prototypes for their robots, learning to code, and coming up with innovative ideas for their project. Competition is in the fall when teams take their projects and robots on the road to test them out among other Lego Robotics Teams in Massachusetts.

This past season, Miscoe had six teams with close to 25 students participate in the Lego Robotics Club. Working in teams, the students presented projects to help their community. Projects included developing a bike path in Upton, using a 3D printer to "print" homes for shelter after a natural disaster, and building an aquatic robot to pick up trash in lakes and rivers.

After attending several qualifiers, four out of the six Miscoe Lego Robotics Team advanced to the State Level Tournament, held at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) on December 14. In the ten years that the Miscoe Robotics Team has been in existence, this is the first time so many teams had qualified for the state tournament.

Three teams won specific awards – The Champions Award to the Flying Pigs (Armaan Priyadarshan, Daniel Lau, and Ben Renty); the Programming Award and Lightning Round Champion went to J.A.W. (Jake Giancola, Aidan Callanos, and Will Spargo); and the Strategy and Innovation Award and 1st Place Teamwork Award going to the Builder Beans (Quin Black, Ethan Porzecelli, Kayla Valleccoli, Logan Rae, and Lucia Rae).

"It goes to show that they worked really hard and were well prepared," said Miscoe Robotics Coach Steve Taylor. "The effort they put into it turned into results for them."

Taylor has been the coach for the past eight years and has seen the passion and determination the students put into it turn into results for them.

"They were really engaged," said Robotics Coach Steve Taylor. "They loved working on their projects because it meant something to them."

Registration for next year's season, which starts in March, will be announced soon. The club meets once a week at night in the spring and two nights a week during competition.

The Miscoe Robotics Club is open to fourth grade students at Clough and Memorial Elementary Schools and Miscoe 5-8 graders.

Turk Giancola, left and Will Spargo of Team J.A.W. puzzling out a solution at the Marlboro Qualifier for the state tournament. Contributed photo.
MURSD Schools Pilot of State Program to Nurture Learning

By Melissa Orff

The Mendon Upton Regional School District (MURSD) has been chosen as one of 22 districts across the state to participate in a pilot program created to "nurture deeper learning in Massachusetts public schools." MA Education Commissioner Jayson Clough said Maruszczak during a community event that the district should take pride in being a part of this work.

"It is reflective of the work we are doing across the district," he said.

For more information about the MURSD Kaleidoscope Collective, visit MURSDInspires weekly.com/'
Nipmuc Boys Track Wins 1st League Title Since 2011

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

After Nipmuc knocked off Sutton in the first dual meet of the season, boys’ winter track head coach Richard Auger had a hunch this might be a special year. It turned out the coach was correct, as the Warriors won all seven dual meets and captured the program’s first Dual Valley Conference championship since 2011. “That Sutton win kind of made me think, ‘well, let’s see here,’” Auger said with a chuckle.

Still, Auger did not rest easy until the final score was tallied the night of the DVC championship meet. “It was nerve wracking,” he said. “I didn’t even look at the scores as the kids were running.” Dan DeZutter has been the top point scorer for the Warriors this winter. He has been running the two-mile and the 800-meter relay. August said both runners are qualified for the state qualifying meet, as is shot putter Shamus Birdsey, who has heaved the shot nearly 43-feet this winter. Nico Lauricella has been doing well in the 300-meter dash. Auger said, and Christian Moss has been winning nearly every meet in the 600-meter run. Another consistent winner has been Ben Skiba in the hurdles. “He has won every time in Dual Valley meets,” Auger said. “Tevon Devon and Jack Paine have added depth to the sprinting events, running the dash and the 4x200 meter relay, excelling in both. Senior Aidan Hayes has added depth to the 600-meter event and Matt Lembrun is a standout on the relay. Auger has also been encouraged by the improvement of some of this younger athletes, including Jack Leobruni, who has rallied on the 4x400 relay and run the mile. “He has improved a lot,” Auger said. “He came out for cross county this year for the first time and he has really improved.” Several Nipmuc athletes are prepared to compete in the district meet this Saturday and Auger said the hope is that more athletes will qualify for states. Either way, Auger said he is pleased with the first title in nearly a decade. “It’s been a great year,” he said.

Nipmuc Girls Win First Track League

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

A member of the Nipmuc High girls’ track team visited Sutton’s gym and noticed a banner on the wall denoting every winter track title in Dual Valley Conference history, all of which Sutton had won. She snapped a picture and the image served as motivation for the Warriors, who outlasted the competition to win the first league title for any girls’ track or cross country team in program history.

“That was a very special night and a night that will be forever etched in a lot of people’s minds,” said head coach Justin Townsend. “I was a very proud coach to be around that and see my kids do so well and work so hard.”

Townsend said he has seen a culture shift in the program over the past couple of seasons. Increasingly the Warriors are a team that consistently shows up, works hard, and expects to win. Nipmuc posted a 6-1 record in dual meets, falling to Sutton while short-handed in a close meet during the regular season.

Perhaps the best news for the program is how many freshmen are leading the way. Emma Nadolski has continued to excel and is the team’s top point scorer. While Townsend said she may not always be happy with her time, she is still besting the competition more often than not and has already qualified for the state meet on Sunday, February 16.

Another freshman, Gianna Yordanopoulos, has been a strong addition to this year’s team and won the 300-meter dash at the DVC meet. “She is a very good runner, she is a ton of energy in a small package,” Townsend said. An eighth grader, Elizabeth Lange, finished second in the league in the dash and is four-hundredths of a second away from the school record. “She is a great athlete,” Townsend said. “She is all smiles all the time but also a fierce, fierce competitor. She doesn’t take a second off, not one rep gets wasted.”

Alyson Casey has been among the team’s top point scorers despite missing time with an injury. She placed in both the dash and the high hurdles. Olivia Skiba finished third in the hurdles and has shown marked improvement after spending time working out at a camp during the offseason, Townsend said.

“These kids getting it done at such a young age has been an inspiration for a lot of people on the team,” Townsend said. “These are kids who are going to have great careers. They’ve accomplished a lot, but there is a lot more to do.”

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FEBRUARY 7, 2020
Girls Hockey Co-Op Continues to Improve

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Dover-Sherborn girls’ ice hockey co-op, which includes athletes from both Nipmuc and Blackstone Valley Tech, has continued to make strides over the course of the season despite a demanding schedule, according to head coach Steph Jahnle.

“The team just keeps getting better and better,” Jahnle said. “Our scores don’t always reflect how well we are doing, but the kids are getting it more and more.”

Some of the biggest improvements, the coach said, have come in the offensive zone. “We are moving the puck better and learning more about cycling,” she said. “Going into the season offensively we were going in a straight line and not cycling the puck, not using the corner, and now they are beginning to get more creative. It’s nice to see.”

Helping to spark the offense has been Nipmuc freshman Liana Patrick, who centers the second line. “She is probably just under 90lbs and you wouldn’t know it,” Jahnle said. “She is a force out there and gives 100 percent on every single shift.”

Fellow Nipmuc students Christine Derocher and Kelly Bailey have also seen ice time this year on the third or fourth forward lines. Jahnle said the depth on those lines has been solid, with a number of players showing similar levels of skill and allowing her to mix and match different combinations.

BVT’s Sophia Mazzuccello is a top-line winger for DS and has played important minutes for the team throughout the regular season. “She has a ton of talent and she works her butt off,” Jahnle said.

Megan Chrisbaie, another Valley Tech student, is the team’s backup goalie and has seen time in net over the course of the winter. Caroline Scharer is in the mix on the third line and, similar to Bailey, she has improved significantly, Jahnle said.

The team also has several younger players who are eager to learn and should garner more playing time as their careers progress, including BVT’s Luci Harper and Maggie McCann.

With a few games left in the season, Jahnle said she wants to see her team continue to come out strong to start games and work on its communication on the ice. Dover-Sherborn has a win and three ties under their belt this year, and the young roster has Jahnle confident for what the future may hold for the program.

“We have a lot of freshness,” Jahnle said. “I see a lot of potential with this team with a good core group over the next few years.”

BVT Girls Hoops Aims High for Tourney

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Blackstone Valley Tech girls’ basketball team has already qualified for the postseason, and head coach Bvt Kahler said the Beavers will need to continue to work hard if they are going to make some noise when the district tournament rolls around. “We need to push a little bit harder and come out fighting with a bit more intensity,” Kahler said. Despite beginning the week 11-3 and 7-1 in Colonial Athletic League play, Kahler said there are times when the Beavers have been outworked by their opponents. “We are continuing to try to put a whole game together, just leaving it out on the floor and working our hardest,” she said. “We are a talented group. But if we want to go where we want to this year, which is pretty far, we are going to have to leave it out on the floor.”

Valley Tech has been anchored by Victoria Russian all season. The senior forward is among the team’s top scoring threats and has also been effective at crashing the boards. Madison Magi, a junior, has been leading the way in the backcourt. “She has always been huge for us when it comes to controlling the game,” Kahler said. “She has been the voice of reason, slowing us down when we needed to slow down and speeding us up when we need to speed up.”

Magi has been scoring both inside and from the perimeter and dishing it off to teammates when needed.

Another perimeter points threat has been Brianna Carroll, a junior who Kahler said has been gaining confidence. “Her box scores say it all, she is hitting threes for us every game,” Kahler said. “When she is open she has felt confident shooting it when she should.”

Carroll buried six threes on six attempts against Parker Charter and her coach estimates Carroll is connecting on more than half of her three point tries this year.

Another junior, Madison Deppe, the team’s tallest player, has also stepped into a bigger role. “She is really aggressive and intense,” Kahler said. “She has a fierce drop step and she has really improved on defense and averaging two to three blocks per game.”

The Beavers dropped a close game against Monty Tech last week and Kahler noted her team has a tough closing stretch. After games against Assabet and Tyngsboro this week, BVT is slated for a rematch at home against Monty on Friday. Valley Tech will have Nipmuc, Tyngsboro and Northbridge over the final weekend before the district tournament.

Nipmuc Girls Basketball in Position for Tourney Berth

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Nipmuc girls’ basketball team is hitting the home stretch in position to qualify for the district tournament and head coach Missy Rhodes has been impressed with the way her squad has competed.

“The girls fight hard every single night,” Rhodes said. “We pride ourselves on our work ethic and we know we can play with anyone.”

Even in recent losses, Nipmuc has been competitive through all four quarters, the coach pointed out, and the Warriors are still learning how to finish games.

“The girls are driven and motivated to compete and grow,” Rhodes said.

Nipmuc, which began the week needing three wins in order to qualify for the district tournament, boasts significant depth. Rhodes praised senior guard Ashley Porter for her play on the defensive end and her ability to control the tempo of the team on the floor. Another senior, Sophie Sullivan, is an unslellish player looking to get to the tournament in her fourth year with the varsity program.

Sophomore Caleigh Christensen has been the team’s top scorer at more than eight points per game.

“Her box scores say it all,” she said. “I think if we continue to focus on what we can control and what we bring night in and night out, we can get to where we want to be. I’m so proud of this team and the passion and energy they bring.”

Rhodes said the greatest compliment she has received about her team this year is how hard the girls work and how united they are, traits she attributed to the leadership of the senior class.

“They are our ‘glue,’” she said. “I think if we continue to focus on what we can control and what we bring night in and night out, we can get to where we want to be. I’m so proud of this team and the passion and energy they bring.”
By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnnist

As the induction ceremony for the first ever Nipmuc Hall of Fame Class approaches, the committee tasked with putting the event together and selecting the athletes and coaches honored is looking to raise some funds to support the endeavor.

Nipmuc will host a Hall of Fame fundraiser Saturday, February 8, at CraftRoots Brewing in Milford. The event, which will begin at noon and continue until 5 p.m., costs $30 to attend with one drink and some appetizers and pizza included with the price of admission. Tickets can be purchased at the door.

All proceeds will benefit the Nipmuc Hall of Fame, which is set to enshrine its first class, consisting of eight individuals and two teams, on March 15 at Nipmuc High.

“We are trying to bring down the costs of that event a little bit,” said Brett Kahler, a 2004 Nipmuc graduate and a member of the Hall of Fame executive board. “We don’t want it to be an expensive night. This is our first ever induction and we want it to be special.”

Guests will also be able to enter to win raffle prizes. The potential prizes include a gift basket from Southwick Zoo valued at around $200, two free rounds of golf at Shining Rock Golf Club, a gift card to have breakfast at Stephanie’s in Upton and a free week at Chris Hadfield’s Next Step Sports Academy, among others.

The Hall of Fame project is part of a vision put into motion by Nipmuc Athletic Director Chris Schmidt, who also serves as the president of the newly-formed committee.

The two teams to be inducted on March 15 are the 1994 soccer team and the 2002 baseball team. Under the tutelage of Bill Leaver, who is also being inducted posthumously, the 1994 soccer team won the program’s first ever state championship. The 2002 baseball team won the second of back-to-back state titles.

The rest of the class includes basketball star, Matthew Brochu, field hockey, hoops and track and field standout Valerie Sumner (née Dugan), Shelly Grant, an all-star in soccer, basketball, and softball and Jeremy Harvey, the most decorated male soccer player in school history. Also to be enshrined are Paula Johnson, who set the scoring record for Nipmuc girls basketball, Susan Yanoschik, and one other point scorer in basketball and Jim Grant, who won 501 games in basketball, another 195 in baseball, and served as athletic director for more than 23 years.

Nipmuc Hosting Hall of Fame Fundraiser Saturday

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnnist

The Nipmuc ski co-op, which features several athletes from Blackstone Valley Tech, has expanded this winter and welcomed skiers from Hopedale, Northbridge, and Milford.

The team raced three times in January, and head coach Bob O’Hagan noted the squad’s improvement as the winter has turned a bit colder and they have more practices under their belt.

“It is amazing to see the improvement made by all the athletes,” O’Hagan said in an email. “Everyone has improved their form, getting more forward on their skis and rocking onto the edges of the skis.” Competing with other teams in the Central Mass. ski league, Nipmuc skiers run both slalom and giant slalom races, with the difference being the distance between the gates the skiers must navigate.

“The slalom race is a much more technical race compared to a giant slalom race and requires the athletes to be very quick on their skis, cross block the gates and of course go as fast as possible,” O’Hagan noted. “All of our athletes did wonderful and continue to learn with each race.”

The coaching staff has a constant emphasis on technical skill, O’Hagan said, getting the athletes to focus on the positioning of their arms and legs and keeping their feet sharp on the ice New England race courses.

The hard work has shown through on the slopes. The Nipmuc boys have been among the top teams in the league in the last two meets, placing third both times. Tristan O’Hagan and Jared Joyce have each been among the top-10 performers in the league in both slaloms and giant slalom events. Nipmuc students Ronan Joyce and Harry Rausch and BVT senior Sawyer Allen have also been strong performers.

The Nipmuc boys’ contingent also features Michael Flanagan, while Valley Tech students Baraka Consuerga, Chris Mason, John Hehir and Cameron Duncan round out the roster.

On the girls’ side, Nipmuc features six athletes from four different schools. Nipmuc freshman Astrid Lee has been a standout, with times nearing the top-10 among female skiers in the league. Emily Pollen of Nipmuc finished in the top-30 out of more than 80 skiers at the most recent race. Nipmuc’s Caroline DeZutter and Sydney Vanasse and Valley Tech student Lauren Flynn have also been strong contributors to this year’s squad.

The Nipmuc Ski Team, shown above, has expanded. Besides having students from BVT as members, the team now included skiers from Hopedale, Northbridge and Milford. Contributed photo.