Celebrating Our Graduates

Our celebration of local graduates continues. In this paper, we continue celebrating local students who graduated from universities and colleges plus the Nipmuc Regional High School Class of 2020 and its Valedictorian and Salutatorian. Please turn to pages 8 and 9, to see our coverage.

Nipmuc plans to hold its graduation ceremony on July 18 and we will cover that event in the August 7 Upton Mendon Town Crier. We hope you will enjoy our extended graduation coverage and join us in wishing congratulations to all the 2020 graduates.

Tinio Wins Mendon Select Board Recount by Two Votes

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

After a recount vote on Monday, June 22, Lawney Tinio officially won Mendon’s Selectman’s seat by two votes; 548 to 546. Results also showed there were four write-ins and 63 ballots left blank for the seat.

Tinio, the incumbent, was being challenged by long time resident David Atkinson for the three-year seat.

According to the initial results of the June 9 election, Tinio had beat Atkinson by just one vote. As a result, Atkinson called for the recount by filing a petition, which also required 10 registered voter’s signatures to move forward.

Once the petition was filled, the Board of Registrars set a June 22 date for the recount at the Town Hall. Town Clerk Ellen Agro stated both Atkinson and Tinio were present for the recount and were permitted to bring witnesses to watch over the procedures. Ballots were unsealed and then recounted 50 at a time.

The town will be responsible for paying fees for legal counsel, several elections workers, an officer detail, as well as extra sterilizing measures.

There was also a second race on the ballot for the Moderator’s seat. Incumbent Jay Byer beat challenger Matthew O’Brien by a vote of 631 to 450. All other elected seats were unchallenged.

Tinio voters also supported two questions that included abolishing the farming tax a vote of 854 to 267 and an override must also pass at the June 29 Annual Town Meeting.

Mendon Voters Pass All Warrant Articles

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

A total of 285 registered voters took part in Mendon’s June 29 Annual Town Meeting, which took place in the Muscoke Hill gymnasium. Town officials had hoped to have the meeting outdoors but rain foiled that plan.

Attendees were required to wear masks throughout the meeting and social distance from one another, unless sitting with an immediate family member.

There were 25 articles on the warrant and it took approximately one hour for voters to pass all of them.

Prior to reviewing Article 3, the new fiscal year budget, Finance Committee Chair Mike Merolli spoke of resident Sharon Cutler, who passed away in March. Cutler was a long-time resident of Mendon and the Selectman Maureen Dwinnell who was the Treasurer/Collector for the town of Hopkinton.

Selectman Brett Simas explained it was important to hire the most qualified individual noting certain financial experience and a municipal government background are needed as well as certifications.

Selectman Maureen Dwinell who was the Treasurer/Collector for the town of Hopkinton for 12 years, agreed it should become appointed. “It’s more intricate. I just think this is much too important to let this go elected,” she said.

However, Selectman Steve Matellian stated he was against the measure. “I like the position being elected. I like to see these positions elected and let the people control that seat.”

Finance Committee Chair, Paul Flaherty, speaking on his own behalf disagreed. “This position is one of the most
Mendon News

Mendon Annual Household Hazardous Waste Day

Mendon's Annual Household Hazardous Waste Day is Saturday, August 1 from 9 a.m. until 12 p.m. at the Highway Department, 66 Providence St. It is for Mendon residents only; proof of residency required. It is a first come first served event. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic residents must stay in their cars during the event. Please place your items that need to be disposed in your trunk or in the far end of truck beds. Social distance will be followed at all times during this event. If social distancing cannot be followed, mask must be worn. For more information, contact the Board of Health office or visit MendonMA.gov.

Mendon Senior Center Saying Farewell to Newton

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

After working at Mendon's Senior Center for the last three years, Assistant Laura Newton is moving to the Midwest to be exact. Newton and her family are relocating to Wisconsin as a result of her husband's job. By the sounds of things, it seems everyone from Director Amy Wilson Kent to the frequent visitors at the Senior Center are going to miss Newton.

"Excuse the cliché, but Laura's been a breath of fresh air," said Wilson Kent. "One of the seniors just remarked at how pleasant Laura is, never getting flustered. She's professional, yet so warm and welcoming." In addition to assisting Wilson Kent with special projects, Newton has been responsible for assisting the Senior Center with an array of support throughout her time there including managing van transportation, creating the Senior Center's newsletter, event planning, answering calls, making appointments, and basically, "helping with whatever needs to be done." Newton said.

Newton has been a resident of Franklin for the past 20 years but during her time in Mendon she's developed a strong connection with the senior community in town.

"I really love working at the Senior Center," she said. "I have met so many nice, caring people and made some wonderful friends. What I love most about the Senior Center are the relationships between the seniors. They check in with each other, care about each other, help each other. It's an amazing community!"

Wilson Kent said it will difficult to replace someone like Newton. "She's been priceless. Laura's created a connection for the Senior Center on social media. Her artistry and creativity have helped to draw in so many new patrons," Wilson Kent said watching Newton's enjoyment in her work has rubbed off. "I have to say Laura has made me a better director. Having an employee with such enthusiasm and such wonderful ideas can only make you want to strive for greater possibilities. Her pleasant optimism and generosity of spirit is what I think everyone will miss most."

Newton said working with Wilson Kent, her co-workers and all of the seniors she has grown to know, "have made the Senior Center such a fun and fulfilling place to work for Newton said working with Wilson Kent, her co-workers and all of the seniors she has grown to know, "have made the Senior Center such a fun and fulfilling place to work for."

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Newton said working with Wilson Kent, her co-workers and all of the seniors she has grown to know, "have made the Senior Center such a fun and fulfilling place to work for these last three years." Newton's last day at the Senior Center will be in mid-July.

Mendon Senior Center Donation

The office of Worcester County Sheriff Lew Evangelidis presented the staff of Mendon's Senior Center with Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) and individually wrapped cookies. Sponsors of the donations were Christopher Heights Assisted Living Community, 1 Worcester Homes, The Overlook, CareOne at Millbury and Reserve Deputies Peter & Mary Carboneau. Shown in the photo are, l-r, Mendon Council on Aging (COA) board member Jenn Talamanu, Overlook Community Liasons (employees) Marie Lefebvre and Kate Caty, LPMC Sheriff's Office Communications Director Kim Roy, COA board member Ann Vanderlis; Senior Services Director Amy Wilson Kent; Senior Center Van Driver Wayne Phipps; Senior Center Administrative Assistant, Laura Newton; and COA Co-Chairman Earl Pearlman.

Donna Ostiguy, Sheriff’s Office photo.

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- Live and let live for life

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At Paws Bed and Biscuit

Upton, Mendon Town Crier

JULY 3, 2020
Mendon Police Station Committee Wrapping Up its Work

By Michelle Sanford  
Staff Reporter

After four years, it appears the Police Station Building Committee’s work is just about complete. The nine-member Committee is wrapping up the final details and is eager for the Mendon Police Department to move into their new headquarters.

The project faced a number of hurdles including the discovery of unsuitable soils on the site, rising costs, and delays due to COVID-19. But the end is in sight. “We’re almost done,” said Committee Member Don Morin. “It’s been a long time.”

There are still plans to dedicate the station in honor of former Mendon Police Chief Mathew Mantoni, who was killed in the line duty while responding to a robbery in 1950. Initially, the dedication ceremony was to take place on Memorial Day, however due to the pandemic, the ceremony will be rescheduled for another time. Bigger projects down the road include paving the parking lot and taking down the current police station when move is complete. Those projects will be turned over to the town, since they are not under the purview of the Building Committee, and there are left over funds to assist with their completion. Also, Mendon received a Southeast New England Watershed Grant Program grant for technical assistance redesigning the landscape in the Town Hall Campus incorporating low impact development techniques. The Town Hall Campus includes the Town Hall, the new Police Station and the former Taft Public Library building.

The design plan was used to apply for a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Action Grant to implement the plan. "This would be an alternative to just paving the area and would include much more landscaping and pedestrian friendly areas," said Anne Mazur. The town will find out in mid-August if the grant was awarded.

During a June 22 meeting, Select Board Chair Chris Burke said he was pleased, “The place looks fantastic...the efforts of the Building Committee certainly show.” Committee Chair Joe Cronin summed up the Committee’s objective, saying, “We hope the police are happy with it. The goal was to take care of them so they could take care of the town.”

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Upton, Mendon Town Crier

$500

Development techniques passed by a majority vote.

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

Upton Town Library Status

Upton Town Library is currently offering curbside pickup of library items. Items will be snapped and bagged at the library, given a call number, and dropped off at your request. You will be notified by phone or email when items are ready for pickup. You can place holds on your CW/MARS account online, call the library at 508-529-6272 or email mbachtol@cwmars.org or email mhachtol@cwms.org to request items for pickup.

Interlibrary loan services have not resumed, so we are limited to items owned by Upton Town Library. Because specific titles may not be available, we encourage you to check out your local library’s catalog or type of item, and let us make some selections for you!

To open the library building for limited visits starting in mid-July, State guidelines do not yet allow use of public computers, but with your help, we allow visitors inside to browse the collection and borrow items. Curbside pickup will continue as an option. Visit www.utplibrary.org for news and updates.

For other library services, such as printing or faxing, please contact us, and we will attempt to safely meet your needs.

Item Returns

The Upton Library drop box outside the front door is open for returns. If you have library materials and would like to return them, please use the drop box. Loan periods and overdue charges continue to be extended for everyone that cannot safely return items.

Summer Reading Program

Our Summer Reading Program continues this month with all virtual programming. Patrons should use the UptonLib.org event Calendar to learn about programs and register to receive YouTube or ZOOM links. Many programs are unlisted or private to protect copyright issues. Events this summer include: Magic Mondays, Escape room Wednesdays, Read around the Town Storytimes, Virtual Animation Workshop, Harry Potter Party, Dragon Storytime, Virtual Storytime from the Zoo (email us a picture!), Summer Storytime at Upton State Forest, and Raffle drawings! Summer materials can be picked up on our library porch or downloaded from UptonLibrary.org. Click on the Summer Reading Program icon, Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, as well as check our website calendar. We’ll have shows, singalongs, workshops, and more to help inspire kids to keep reading throughout the summer!

Summer Reading Assignments

Our collection has limited copies of all the Mendon Upton and Valley Tech school summer reading titles that are required for students. Be sure to reserve your copies online for pickup or give us a call. This year’s lists provide you with a variety of books, in all genres, and a wide variety of choices, so staff is ready to help with recommendations. We can help you find what you need, either at our library or another CW/MARS member library.

Storytimes

Mrs. Murphy will be posting a Preschool Storytime and a Baby Storytime every week to Upton Town Library Kids YouTube channel. These will be posted at our usual times of Thursday at 10:30 a.m. for preschoolers, and Fridays at 10:30 a.m. for babies. Watch them as often as you like to help foster literacy skills with your little ones. Other programs, such as storytime, may be made for babies, kids, tweens, and teens, such as crafts to try or other activities. Be sure to subscribe!

Teen Group

Our teen group, ages 10-16, will be working on the theme of Fairy Tales in July. We’ll discuss theme related books and have craft tutorials. Members will receive an email with a ZOOM link to join our weekly meetings at 3 p.m. New members should email Mrs. Murphy for an invitation at al.holman@cwms.org. This is a great chance for kids this age to connect!

Book Clubs

Children’s Book Club will meet virtually via ZOOM. New members should email Mrs. Murphy for an invitation at al.holman@cwms.org. At our meeting, we will discuss books we’ve been reading during our time at home, and learn about new releases. Once our interlibrary delivery service resumes, we will read selected titles together.

Teen Book Club for ages 8-12 – August 5

Teen Book Club for ages 14-18 – July 15 at 3 p.m.

Reading Out Digitally

Upton Town Library is on Facebook and Instagram, and at UptonLibrary.org. We post frequently! Be sure to email Director Matthew Bachold at mbachtol@cwms.org or Children’s & Young Adult Librarian Lee Ann Murphy at lmurphy@cwms.org with questions or feedback.

Read the Town Crier Online

To read the July 3, 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 20:07.03.pdf.
The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) is administrating a grant program to small businesses in Central Massachusetts impacted by the closure and losses as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The grant program is funded by the Massachusetts Office of Attorney General Maura Healey through the Small Business Relief Partnership Grant Program. CMRPC was awarded $45,000 to distribute funds to small businesses in Central Massachusetts. Applications are now being accepted on a rolling basis through the Central Massachusetts Small Business Emergency Assistance Grant Program, administered by CMRPC. For the purposes of this grant, a “small business” shall mean any for-profit business or non-profit organization with a physical place of business within one of the 40 communities within the CMRPC service area with 20 or fewer employees prior to Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker’s state of emergency declaration (on or about March 10, 2020). All applicants will be required to demonstrate a direct or indirect financial hardship resulting from COVID-19. For more information on eligibility and the application itself, CMRPCRegionalServices.org/agrant.

**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. CMRPC is administering the Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce. Call 508-334-6090 or stop by the chamber offices, 670 Lakeview Ave, Bldg A, Suite 5, Whitinsville, office. Visit the chamber website for links to all meetings. Following all state and federal guidelines, the Chamber Offices have re-opened. Visitors must make an appointment before stopping by the office. Most services provided by the chamber are still done remotely. Grow with Google Live Stream Event, Digital Summer Skills, Wednesday, July 22, at 12 noon.

**CPR, AED, First Aid Training**

Offering classes in keeping with the social distancing guidelines. All participants have their own manikin, so no sharing is involved. Classes are provided on site.

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It’s like leaving your friend with a family member.
Budget, School Funding, and Capital Purchases Approved by Upton Voters

By Michelle Sanford
Staff Reporter

A total of 99 Upton residents showed up to the Annual Town Meeting and eventually passed the new fiscal year budget, additional school funding, and various purchases for the Fire Department and DPW.

Residents were asked to wear face coverings throughout the meeting and were seated several seats apart from each other, using every other row in the auditorium. Only immediate family members were permitted to sit next to one another. In addition, voters held up green or red cards to vote, microphones were wiped down after each use, and residents were offered travel sized hand sanitizers to keep.

Still, prior to the meeting getting underway, several residents requested the meeting be adjourned and rescheduled to a date when it could be held outside, feeling it was safer and more people could attend. However, when put to a vote, attendees rejected that motion. One of the first articles on the warrant, Article 2A, was the additional funding for the schools totaling $259,699, $202,261 for the Mendon Upton Regional School District and $57,438 for Blackstone Valley Tech. Residents passed the article by a majority vote.

Residents also passed Article 2B, the new fiscal year operational budget totaling $24,656,796, an 879,874 or 3.7 percent increase over last year’s budget of $23,777,922. Budget drivers this year were primarily the schools, insurance, healthcare, wages, pensions, and curbside trash and recycling. Articles 18 through 20 were requests from the Fire Department and were passed unanimously. Article 18 funded portable radio equipment totaling $159,000. Article 19 funded three sets of PPE gear for $11,070, and Article 20 funded repairs to the heating system and replaced the air conditioning condensing unit at the Fire Station totaling $25,000.

Voters also supported requests from the DPW which included Article 22 to purchase a forklift for $10,000 and Article 23 to purchase a replacement turf truck for $30,000. Article 9 was passed and funded additional monies for road repairs and maintenance totaling $562,380. Residents supported Article 12C, utilizing Community Preservation Act funding to finance 36 percent of the design and engineering costs, or $35,000, for improvements to Leland Field. Article 12 D also passed to utilize $7,500 of CPA funds to repair the roof of the shed at Maplewood Cemetery. Article 26 passed to transfer from Water Enterprise Retained Earnings $280,000 for the Water Division’s Capital Improvement Program and Article 27 passed to transfer from Wastewater Enterprise Retained Earnings $450,000 for the Wastewater Division’s Capital Improvement Program. Due to remaining balances leftover from two water projects that are now complete. Article 28 transferred $293,796 back into Wastewater Enterprise Account for future expenses and projects. Article 15 funded $10,000 for the Board of Assessors to contract for a utility appraiser and Article 29 funded new software totaling $13,000 to keep track of employee's attendance, vacation time, and sick time. Residents also supported using the consent calendar to pass nine articles on the warrant. These articles are voted on each year.

Several nonfinancial articles were passed and included Article 16 requiring special permits for common driveways, Article 32 will permit the Town Manager to appoint the Assistant Assessor, Article 32 to change the dates of the town meeting and town election, Article 33 which discusses requirements on when a warrant will be posted in town, and Article 36 to accept Azalea Lane as a public way.

2020-2021 Upton Telephone Directory

Planning for the 2020-2021 Upton Telephone Directory has begun. The announcement and order forms have been mailed to local businesses in Upton and the surrounding communities since 1902 to those of all faiths in Upton and the surrounding communities.

1/2 Day Theme Weeks - $125.00 Fall week
9:00 AM — 1:00 PM Monday — Friday
10% Discount on each additional full week.

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For his 23 years of working for all you citizens, and thank you for your support,” said Glowacki to the attendees that evening.
It All Began on a Basketball Court Over Seven Decades Ago

Their romance started when they were teens at a Westminster High School basketball game and has lasted over seven decades. In 1946, St. Mary’s of Milford was playing Westminster when fan Robert Fagan of Mendon saw 14-year-old Shirley Christensen and said “I’m going to marry you.” Four years later on July 1, 1950, the couple tied the knot in Shirley’s hometown of Westboro, at St. Luke’s, with Aldore Trettien as best man and Betty Foley, the maid of honor. The couple settled in Mendon in a home Bob built and kept adding onto over the years. They still live in that home. Shirley worked in a variety of manufacturing and waitressing positions. Bob was a trucker most of his life traveling across the country sometimes with his wife and sometimes with his granddaughter. He was a member of Local #251 and received awards from the N.E. Teamsters & Trucking Industry. He also drove a bus for the Mendon Upton Regional School District. Leading a full life, the couple took many family trips around the United States and overseas; enjoyed boating and snowmobiling, and loved having their family at their home. Bob is an avid woodworker. Shirley loves to sew, knit, solve the crossword puzzle and read. She and her sisters played cards twice a month and enjoyed going on cruises and to the casinos together.

This July the Mendon couple is celebrating their 70th Wedding Anniversary with a small family gathering. The couple has three daughters, Kathy Schug of Colorado, Maureen Ames of Mendon and Valerie Fagan of Northbridge; three grandchildren, Heather Rae Murray, Jon Harris and Jenny Harris; and six great-grandchildren.

Mendon & Upton COVID-19 Cases Hold Steady

For COVID-19 Updates in Mendon visit MendonMA.gov and for Upton visit UptonMA.gov

By Chris Villani
Staff Reporter/Columnist

For the fourth week in a row, Upton did not report any new COVID-19 cases, while Mendon’s cumulative number of infections also held steady for the second straight week.

Upton has 24 confirmed cases of the disease caused by the novel coronavirus, for a rate of 265 infections per 100,000 residents. Mendon’s number held steady at 30 confirmed cases and a rate of 518 cases per 100,000 in data released on June 24. The statewide numbers, including the metrics that are guiding Massachusetts’ plan to reopen the economy, remain on the lower end and dramatically down from April peaks. Milford reported five new COVID-19 cases, bringing its total to 641 and a rate of infection of 2,187 positive tests per 100,000 residents.

The new data from the Department of Public Health also shows the total number of tests performed based on municipality and the percentage of those tests that came back positive. In Upton, 462 people were tested for a rate of 5.19 percent positive. A total of 408 Mendon residents had been tested with 7.35 percent of the tests coming back positive.

In Milford, the relative hotspot in the area, 18 percent of its 3,480 tests were positive for COVID-19.

Most area towns have shown little uptick in the number of infections, even as the state moves ahead with reopening more sectors of the economy that had been shuttered during the pandemic. Still, the death toll continues to pass grim milestones, with more than 7,895 deaths reported among confirmed COVID-19 cases. Another 200 deaths had been reported, as of Monday’s data, among those who were counted a “probable cases,” meaning they had COVID-19 listed as the cause of death on their death certificate.

Through Monday, the state had reported more than 103,000 confirmed cases. The number of probable cases, meaning a person who showed positive for an antibody test and either had COVID-like symptoms or likely exposure to the disease, stood at 5,140. Four key public health indicators showed positive progress in Monday’s report. The seven-day weighted average of positive tests continued to hover at around 2 percent a 93 percent drop from April 15.

The seven-day average of positive tests continued to hover at around 2 percent a 93 percent drop from April 15. The three-day average of COVID-19 deaths is down by 88 percent from April highs.

As of June 29, the number of people with COVID-19 being treated in Massachusetts hospitals was 762 after a slight uptick in Monday’s report.

YOU'RE SAFE WITH US

Now for some good news...

Milford Regional is pleased to once again offer ALL of our services to the community.

As we welcome back patients in every department, we want to reassure you that we are committed to the highest level of safety for our patients, visitors and staff. Our adherence to strict guidance from the State, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) ensures that everyone who enters Milford Regional can have confidence in the safety measures we have taken.

To underscore our commitment to patient safety, Milford Regional was recently recognized nationally with an “A” safety grade for the fourth consecutive time, a designation only given to the country’s safest hospitals.

So, if you are looking forward to the birth of your baby or are ready to schedule an elective surgery or a routine diagnostic test or exam (colonoscopy, mammogram, X-ray, etc), you can feel confident that your safety is always our top priority.

For more information about our newest safety guidelines and procedures, please visit milfordregional.org/safe-with-us

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CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES

Congratulations to the Nipmuc Regional High School Class of 2020

Abate, Lindsey
Abdelwahab, Salwa
Adams, Abigail
Akerman, Rochelle
Andrade, Jordan
Arton, Casey
Barrios, Ethan NHS
Belanger, Mia
Bendisk, Shamus
Bohan, Elizabeth NHS
Bour, Emily
Braun, Nicole
Bren, Richard
Bryant, Riley
Buolick, Evans
Burke, Peter, Ian
Caplatz, Jennifer
Carcillo, Rachel
Cassetti, Isabella
Caughey, Faith

Cedrone, Sofia
Chaker, Valentina
Chase, Ale NHS
Cillers, Nicole
Cinlin, Ryan
Cormier, Joseph
Contello, Casey NHS
Contello, Michael
Cote, Emma NHS
Croffil, Liam
Croffil, Rory NHS
Crosby, Elijah
Cross, Emily NHS
Davis, Abner
Davis, Lauren
Dawson, Katherine NHS
De Castro, Thiriany
Deschenes, Christopher
Deshemmel, Ilene
Drilitzer, Daniel NHS

Dishington, Judah
Delbos, Cameron
D’elcor, Kane
Dominguez, Emilio
Dos Santos, Mirandas
Dunleavy, Rachel NHS
Ellers, Anthony
Ellers, Joseph
Elliot, Sky
Feest, Caitlin
Fitzgerald, Jamie
Flanigan, Braimna
Friso, Hannah
Flynn, Katrina
Fourtner, Zachary
Franko, Isabella NHS
Gallegos, Camille NHS
Gaudy, Nyla NHS
Gebhardt, Benjamin
Ginuras, Emmanuel

Gould, Nathaniel
Graham, Heather
Grimes, Andrew
Guyart, Dev
Hackett, April
Hackett, Brett NHS
Hagan, Emma
Harper, Charles
Harron, Room NHS
Hayes, Aidan NHS
Hosley, Mackenzie
Hoparty, Natalie
Hernandez III, Ivan
Hey, Samuel
Herley, Sarah
Impey, Cassandra
Johnson, Taylor NHS
Johns, Erika NHS, Salutatorian
Joyce, Jared
Kadi, Elvin

Kane, Meghan
Kant, Emmanuel
Karentz, Mylen
Kimball, Garrett
Kirby, Lauren NHS
LaCross, Matthew NHS
LaPonte, Devin
Lawrence, Katherine NHS
Lomas, Felix
Lubin, Frances
MacRae, David
Manoschko, John
Manzoni, Samantha
Masters, Reagan
Maynard, Jack
McCarthy, Holly
McFarlen, Holly
McHale, Mark
Milton, Matthew
Mingione, Erin

As of May 31, 2020
CELEBRATING OUR GRADUATES

Congratulations to the Nipmuc Regional High School Class of 2020

Kane, Meghan
Kent, Emmaline
Kierstead, Myles
Kimball, Garrett
Kirby, Lauren
LaCross, Matthew
LaPlante-Dube, Ethan
Laurence, Katherine
Limas, Felype
Lubin, Francine
MacRae, David
Manocchio, John
Manzolini, Samantha
Masters, Reagan
Maynard, Jack
McCarthy, Molly
McEathron, Holly
McManus, Mark
Milton, Matthew
Mingione, Erin
Moffitt, Jaden
Morford, Kacy NHS
Mosher, Rory
Moss, Christian
Munaret, Jadun
Muhareb, Andrew
Munro, Andrew
Nee, Coleman
Nicholson, Justine NHS, Valedictorian of the Class of 2020

The Nipmuc Regional High School Class of 2020 Valedictorian is Justine Sharon Nicholson and the Salutatorian is Erika Lynn Jolie.

Nicholson, the daughter of Sean and Kathleen Nicholson of Mendon, is president of the National Honor Society, a member of the Spanish Honor Society and was on the Nipmuc Student Council. She was named a John and Abigail Adams Scholar and a Milford Chamber of Commerce Scholar. Nicholson received the English Medal Award, the DAR Good Citizen Award, Certificate of Academic Excellence Award, the Nipmuc Calculus Award, the Faculty Recognition Award, and the Top 10% Award.

She plans to further her education by attending a dual Bachelor of Arts program between Columbia University, New York City, and Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland.

Jolie, the daughter of Michael and Jennifer Jolie of Upton, is a member of the National Honor Society and the Spanish Honor Society. She is a John and Abigail Adams Scholar and a Milford Chamber of Commerce Scholar. Joie received the Broadway Youth Dance Theater Scholarship, Nipmuc Economics Award and Top 10% Award.

She plans to further her education at Tufts University in Medford.

First Unitarian Society of Upton Scholarship

The First Unitarian Society of Upton Memorial Scholarship, sponsored by the Unitarian Universalist Society of Grafton and Upton, has been awarded to Ian Perez, an Upton student who will be attending Hofstra University in New York in the fall.

Taylor Leacy

Taylor Leacy, a management major from Upton, graduated from Coastal Carolina University Conway, S.C. during a virtual commencement ceremony on Friday, May 8.

Jared Plumb

Jared Plumb of Mendon graduated Summa cum Laude with a degree in biology from Saint Anselm College, Manchester, N.H.

Congratulations from the Town Crier Team to all Graduates! WE ARE PROUD OF YOU!
Western New England University

Late this spring, Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in Worcester celebrated the Class of 2020 with a socially distanced commencement season in place of its traditional 152nd Commencement exercises. Among the graduates were: Karin Plante of Upton, who was awarded a bachelor of science degree in biochemistry with high distinction.

Amanda St Germain of Upton, who was awarded a bachelor of science degree in biomedical engineering with high distinction.

Michael Alhavila of Mendon, who was awarded a bachelor of science degree in electrical and computer engineering with high distinction.

Angelica Puchowski of Mendon, who was awarded a bachelor of science degree in industrial engineering with high distinction.

Olivia Kiritsis of Upton, who was awarded a bachelor of science degree in mechanical engineering with high distinction.

Michael Palmiert of Upton, who was awarded a bachelor of science degree in physics with high distinction.

Melissa Wojnowski of Mendon, who was awarded a master of science degree in biochemistry.

Mary Utter, Bachelor Science in Health Science Studies of Upton.

Upton residents: Kathryn Patrick, who was awarded a master of science degree in information technology.

Trushna Das of Upton, who was awarded a master of science degree in information science.

Melissa Wojnowski of Mendon, who was awarded a master of science degree in biochemistry.

Kaitlyn Dmohowski, daughter of Terry Dmohowski, from Upton has graduated from Rhode Island College in Providence, with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Theater. All of the world is now her stage.

Quinnipiac University

Quinnipiac University in Hamden, Conn. announces its list for graduates for the spring of 2020. Among those receiving degrees are: John Cutler, Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and Bachelor of Science in Economics, and Rachel Fearing, Bachelor of Science in Health Science Studies, both of Mendon, plus Lucas Uter, Bachelor Science in Health Science Studies of Upton.

Members of the Clough Elementary School faculty and staff bid farewell their students and the 2019-20 school year during a rolling goodbye on June 18. Students in cars picked up their things and some special surprises. Fourth-graders who took part in the Pen Pal program with the Mendon Senior Center also picked up items from their pals. To view a few more farewell photos, visit Facebook Town Crier Publications. Scott Calzolaio photo
Debra Swain Retires from a Job She Truly Loved

By Scott Calzolaio
Staff Writer

Longtime Memorial School Principal Debra Swain has retired.

with her for the past few months.

Swain, a Blackstone resident, said the job has done more for her than she could ever do for Memorial. “It’s just an amazing community, and everyone is 100 percent committed to these kids,” she said. “If I could go back and do it all again I would.”

She said she truly loved her job; there wasn’t a moment she did not cherish working with children.

Swain started teaching in 1991 after 18 years in banking. “My parents didn’t believe in women going to college,” she said. “Learn to type was their advice.”

She took that advice and became a secretary and manager at a bank, and “I hated every second of it,” she said.

“I always knew I was a teacher, and I always found ways to work with kids,” she said.

When her youngest child was in kindergarten, she volunteered to be “the fluoride lady.” “I did the swish and spit with 500 kids every Wednesday morning,” Swain laughed. “And I just loved it.”

She applied to become a paraprofessional, and was met with a strange offer. She would have to attend college, and get her own degree, if she were to get the job.

She was not given the job, but was promised if she were to get a degree, she would be hired as a teacher.

“Fortunately, my husband was a bit more insightful than my parents,” she said. “So, I went to college, graduated in 1991, and went on to work at Blackstone-Millville.”

Swain taught there for 14 years, before participating in an internship and becoming the principal at Avon’s Butler Elementary School.

The 48-mile commute was daunting. When she was teaching, Swain said the Mendon-Upton school district was where everyone aspired to work. “They were known for being very creative, they were known for being cutting edge, they were known for hiring the best of the best,” she said. Swain applied for the Memorial Principal job, despite just signing a three-year contract in Avon.

Now, with her youngest son’s son going into kindergarten, she has committed to helping with his education. With that, everything comes full circle. But there’s no way Mendon-Upton has seen the last of Debra Swain, she laughed.

“I am so blessed to be one of the only people I know that truly love the work that I do,” she said. “There was not one morning that I woke up and thought I don’t want to be there.”

Superintendent Hopes to Have Most Students Back in Class

By Scott Calzolaio
Staff Reporter

With the status of the 2020-21 school year still undetermined due to COVID-19, Mendon-Upton Superintendent Joseph Maruszczak said Massachusetts has given districts three viable options - full-remote learning, half-remote, or fully in session.

After reviewing state guidance from June 25, he said there is a large amount of work to do, and much uncertainty. He hopes to see most of the students back in their classrooms this fall saying, “We’ve got some pretty intensive work to do over the next five or six weeks,” there are currently five groups of about 45 people working the local plans.

“The piece that I agree with the guidance is I think there is going to be an emphasis on getting kids back into school for in person instruction,” he said. Maruszczak agrees that full-time remote learning can be unhealthy for social-emotional learning, as well as being less effective.

Due to the state press conference, medical representatives clarified social distancing of three to six feet minimize infection risk and is considered safe. Also experts have said children are at less risk for infection, but could be carriers of the virus. He said that the protocols will be implemented to keep the faculty and staff safe too.

Noting the protocols are needed to keep employees safe, Maruszczak said, “I have some staff that are in the high risk category. We are going to have to really flexible, really nimble in providing opportunities for kids, but for staff as well.”

Parents will be surveyed in a few weeks to get a feel for how the average household feels about reopening schools.

From the feedback he’s gotten so far, he said there is a spectrum of opinions. From concerned parents looking for a full-remote option, to parents who do not have time for that kind of schedule.

A full remote program would involve live streaming instruction, along with online worksheets and games.

Maruszczak said if there is another large COVID-19 outbreak, continuing remote learning is an option, but definitely not ideal. Since every student from grade five and up has their own school-administered laptop, remote learning would be doable.

But he added nothing can replace a classroom. He hopes everyone will be back to the normal soon, or whatever normal will be, noting, “you’re not getting done what you could if you were live, face-to-face with the kids.”
2. Only purchase fuel containers approved by federal or state authorities. For example, the Scepter SmartControl fuel containers for gasoline, kerosene and diesel, are designed to substantially exceed standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

3. Store fuel containers in a secure, dry location away from furnaces, hot water tanks and any other potential source of heat.

4. Never allow children to operate pumps or fill fuel containers.

5. Never smoke when filling a gas tank or fuel container.

6. Remove fuel containers from vehicles before refilling, and turn off your vehicle’s engine. Place containers on the ground a safe distance from vehicles when refilling.

7. Never fill past the “fuel fill line” on your container. Leaving space allows for expansion.

8. If a static-caused fire occurs, leave the nozzle in the fill pipe. Immediately move away from the vehicle and notify the station attendant.

9. Secure filled fuel containers in your vehicle against tipping and sliding. Never leave filled containers in car trunks or the flat bed of pickup trucks, and keep out of direct sunlight.

10. Never leave filled containers in car trunks or the flat bed of pickup trucks, and keep out of direct sunlight.

11. Use fuel outside only, in well-ventilated areas where you will not breathe in the fumes.

12. Gasoline is a fluid with fumes that can generate dangerous explosive power. Keep gasoline away from ignition sources and hot or running equipment.

13. If you run out of fuel during a project, let the hot motor cool down before adding more. This eliminates the risk that fuel is accidentally spilled on a hot surface. If this happens, the fuel or fumes could ignite and potentially explode.

14. Should a flammable liquid spill, immediately contact your fire department or local authorities for cleaning instructions and restrict access to the area from children and pets.

15. Gasoline is not a lighter fluid. Never try to start or accelerate a bonfire, barbeque or grill with gasoline.

16. Never allow children near fuel containers or running equipment.

17. Don’t guess. Check which fuel type is recommended for your outdoor lawn and sports equipment. Follow all manufacturer safety recommendations.

18. Never use gasoline as a cleaning agent, or to start or accelerate a bonfire, barbeque or grill with gasoline.

19. Choose the right container.

20. To help get you ready for fuel-related tasks, review safety videos online by visiting Scepter.com.

With that in mind, Marshall shares the following tips:

1. Seek out containers with a user-controlled flow valve, child safety features and a flame mitigation device (FMD) for safety. Never remove or alter the FMD.

2. Only purchase fuel containers approved by federal or state authorities. For example, the Scepter SmartControl fuel containers for gasoline, kerosene and diesel, are designed to substantially exceed standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials and the Consumer Product Safety Commission.

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14. Should a flammable liquid spill, immediately contact your fire department or local authorities for cleaning instructions and restrict access to the area from children and pets.

Outdoor Activities

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16. Never allow children near fuel containers or running equipment.

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19. Choose the right container.

20. To help get you ready for fuel-related tasks, review safety videos online by visiting Scepter.com.

This summer, don’t fuel up without first reviewing how to do so safely and properly.
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Nipmuc Girls Miss Chance at DVC Track Title

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

“They brought leadership, for sure,” Townsend said. “They are hard workers and they really worked hard to improve over the years.”

Akerman had been a versatile piece of the puzzle for Nipmuc and Gallagher had also been willing to step into any event where she might be needed. Additionally, Gallagher was a captain for the spring season, Townsend said.

As good as the winter season was, Townsend said the depth would have been even more apparent during the spring season.

The spring season brings with it more events and the teams that have point-scorers across the spectrum are the ones that do the best in the dual meet competition.

“We added some depth in the distance and the throws,” he said. “I think we would have been even better in outdoor.”

Another opportunity missed is the chance to continue to build on the success for a program that has rapidly risen to the top of the league.

“We have been developing a culture the past couple of years of working hard in practice and performing at the right time and that culture is put on pause,” Townsend said. “But I think the younger kids on our team will pick up where we left off. As a coach, you just want to see that momentum continue.”

Director Chris Schmidt said he was pleased to see Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker acknowledge the importance of high school sports in a recent press conference. The governor, who has unveiled guidelines for a return to in-classroom learning in the fall, has promised more guidance on fall sports sometime in July.

Still, Schmidt stopped just short of saying he is “confident” that a season will take place in the fall.

“If we do have a fall season, I assume anyone who is not playing their sport is going to need PPE. I assume we are all going to wear masks, that is something we are looking at providing,” Schmidt said. “Optimistic, sure. Hopeful. But it’s hard to be confident until we know what the return to school looks like.”

Until the state weighs in, Schmidt said he is going about his work through two sets of preparations. One is the normal prep work that needs to be done for a sports season, including making sure schedules are set and that the school’s teams have enough supplies. The other set of preparations centers on the “new normal” imposed on sports due to the virus.

“A big piece of it is going to be personal protective equipment and what that’s going to look like,” Schmidt said. “I am hopeful that a season will take place in the fall. I assume anyone who is not playing their sport is going to need PPE. I assume we are all going to wear masks, that is something we are looking at providing.”

Temperature taking, which is already being used as part of the screening process to travel to some locations or enter certain buildings, is something else that has been floated, Schmidt said. But neither the state nor the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association has said anything definitive.

Schmidt is preaching patience, even has noted how anxious athletes and coaches are to get back out onto the field.

“If you polled people, they are going to tell you they want to play and our coaches are going to want to coach,” he said.

“Everyone is itching to get back out there and I don’t fault anyone. But he noted the record numbers of COVID-19 cases being reported in the South and West as evidence that a cautious approach to reopening is best.

“If the powers that be decide it is safe to play, we are going to play,” he said. “I don’t think anyone wants to hold anyone back, but the worst thing we can do is rush back into this.”

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Valley Tech graduate Justin Metcalf will be playing for Framingham State next year.

**BVT Boys LAX Had Title Hopes in 2020**

By Chris Villani

The Blackstone Valley Tech boys’ lacrosse team captured a state vocational title and advanced deep into the Central-Western Mass. tournament last year, accomplishments they hoped to repeat and build upon seeing the COVID-19 pandemic end their season before it began.

“That group brought hard work and definitely heart,” said head coach Andrew Barksdale of the team’s seniors, many of whom were driving forces on last year’s squad.

That heart was on display in the tournament a year ago when the Beavers erased a six-goal deficit to come back and beat Wahconah. “They really brought a confidence to the team and they were just good teammates,” Barksdale added. “One of the things I have tried to do over the past couple of years is turn the attitude of the team around and they were a huge part of that.”

Some of the key cogs that were members of the 2020 class included J.D. Antaya, Adam Kaminski-Miller, Jack Nasuti, Kevin McGowan, Brady Murray and Sawyer Allen, who Barksdale called one of the program’s “biggest losses.”

“Last year we lost a lot of our offense but we still had a solid defense and a great opportunity this year,” Allen said. “We really think we had a shot, if not almost a guarantee, to go back-to-back in the state championship for the vocational league.”

In addition to the team goals, Allen was primed to take a run at the state career record for face-off wins and, after coming up three short, had hoped to break the single-season face-off record as well. “There is a lot of stuff we left on the table with all of this going down,” Allen said. “It’s something I wish we would have been able to capitalize on.”

Barksdale said the team kept in touch through the spring, taking about how they thought certain games that were on the schedule might have played out.

“It was kind of depressing, there were some beautiful days and we couldn’t do anything,” the coach said.

“To see them still want to be in it, even though there wasn’t going to be a season, it was special,” Barksdale added. “This group proved they care about the team and the season. Even when we had nothing to look forward to, they still wanted it.”

**BVT Baseball Was Ready to Surprise in 2020**

By Chris Villani

Led by a quintet of seniors, the Blackstone Valley Tech baseball team was in a position to excel this spring, head coach John Burke said, adding to the disappointment when the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancelation of the 2020 campaign.

“They are all just tough, hardworking kids,” Burke said. “So I think we would have surprised some teams. We lost a lot from last year’s team, but this group worked hard.”

The seniors included Justin Metcalf and Tim Haarstick, who were slated to be the top two pitchers on the staff. Cam Bern was back to play shortstop and Ethan Lynch would have been in the centerfield. Adding in Ben Mendoza gave the Beavers a strong core and a great deal of experience in the middle of the field.

“We would have had a solid team,” Burke said. “It stinks for those guys having played so many years of baseball to have their senior years end the way they did. They were looking forward to stepping into bigger roles.”

A number of returning players on this year’s roster saw some time at the varsity level last year despite BVT having a big senior class. Burke said he was in touch with his players constantly throughout the spring, making sure the team kept up with workouts in case they did end up returning for the spring.

“With the season officially canceled, it was another disappointment piled on, especially for a group of seniors who had already seen their academic year and other events upended by the virus, the coach added.

“They were holding out hope as long as they could, even when the odds of playing looked dimmer and dimmer,” Burke said. “There is a certain point where there is only so much you can do and this was out of our control.”

The work ethic shown by the members of the 2020 class should rub off on the younger players, Burke said. Metcalf and Haarstick, he noted, gained significant weight through training and proper diet over the course of their four years with the program.

“They have been in the weight room, training hard, and they took some of the younger guys under their wing,” Burke said. “The younger guys should see the example set by this year’s seniors and it should be something we benefit from for a long time.”

**Milford Baseball Roster Includes 10 Nipmuc & BVT Players**

By Chris Villani

Milford’s entry in the planned Worcester County Baseball League will include seven players from Nipmuc and three more from Blackstone Valley Tech, manager Steve DiVitto said, as the team prepares to play this summer without the formal backing of American Legion baseball. When Post 59 was still potentially going to play this summer, DiVitto said he had interest from 38 players. After the COVID-19 pandemic led to the cancelation of the legion season nationwide, 10 teams from Zone 4 came together to put on a Worcester County league with expanded 25-player rosters. Exactly 25 of the original 38 hopefuls told DiVitto they were still interested, leaving him with his 2020 roster.

“We have a lot of young kids and a mix of veterans,” he said. “I am excited about the prospect of just putting out on the field.”

DiVitto and his assistant coaches have been bringing in players for workouts in groups of six to allow for social distancing and so as not to run afoul of current state guidelines. The Worcester league and all other summer youth sports are counting on Massachusetts moving to the third phase of its reopening plan in order to actually play games that can begin as early as Monday, July 6, and Milford currently has a game scheduled on Wednesday, July 8. Milford will be playing games on the road for at least a week.

DiVitto said, as the town Board of Health will not immediately open Fino Field for games against out-of-town opponents. DiVitto said the program has been stronger since more Mendon and Upton players started coming out for the team. BVT ace Justin Metcalf will return after pitching in a number of big games for Milford last summer. Nipmuc rising seniors Lucas Basile and Dominick DeCarlo are also back. Andrew Griswold is a Nipmuc graduate DiVitto is happy to welcome to the program this summer, and there are a few young players he said he is excited to see play. "Patrick O’Connor has shown a lot of promise early on," DiVitto said of the Nipmuc-to-be senior. "He is getting some good swings in.”

Nipmuc also brings graduates Devon and Jack Paine to the field this summer and rising junior Noah Carley. Joining the program from Valley Tech along with Metcalf’s fellow 2020 graduate Tim Haarstick and rising senior Tyler King.

"It’s important for these kids to get back out on the field,” DiVitto said. "We are still in preseason mode, but it’s great to get out there and throw the ball around, get some swings, and play baseball.”

**Upton, Mendon Town Crier**

Victoria Metcalf, who Barksdale said is one of the program’s "biggest losses," was special, " Barksdale added. "This group proved they care about the team and the seniors and it should be something we benefit from for a long time."
By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

With the COVID-19 pandemic ongoing, Nipmuc was unable to provide the typical awards ceremony to celebrate seniors who have competed in multiple sports or earned four varsity letters over the course of their careers.

So Athletic Director Chris Schmidt and several Nipmuc coaches put on their masks, hopped in their cars, and got creative.

"Some of the coaches and I went from house to house," Schmidt said. "We hit 29 houses in all and covered about 50 miles when it was all said and done." Schmidt was joined by Nipmuc football coach Dave Tupper, track coach Dick Auinger, volleyball coach Brian Gerard, girls' soccer coach Miguel Vidal, girls' basketball coach Missy Rhodes, boys' soccer coach Chris Hadfield and baseball coach Steve Dellaloverre.

The rolling caravan made more than a dozen stops each in Upton and Mendon, passing out awards to students. The recognitions included the "Triple Crown," which is given to athletes who played three varsity sports during their senior year. There are also scholar-athlete awards given to the highest academic achieving male and female seniors.

The Jack Gaskill Award is presented to a pair of athletes who showed athletic skill and dedication during the school year and the Senior Leadership Award is given to a senior who has gone above and beyond in the area of leadership.

Nipmuc athletes who have accumulated over six varsity letters doing their career and have been a multi-year all-league player are recognized with the "Career Athlete" award.

In one change this year, the coaches and Schmidt decided to replace Athlete of the Year with the All-Nipmuc team because the COVID-19 pandemic canceled a full season of high school sports.

"We felt it unfair to choose two individuals since so many lost a chance to shine," Schmidt said. "The six athletes on the All-Nipmuc team, as one coach put it, put Nipmuc athletics on the map during their senior year." Schmidt said the rolling awards ceremony was a big success.

"The original plan was to have our best attempt at our traditional awards night the week leading up to graduation, but once we got more guidance from the town’s Boards of Health, we knew we weren't going to be able to do the way we wanted to do it," Schmidt said.

"This was a good solution," he added, "and our athletes were very appreciative.

"This was a good solution," he added, "and our athletes were very appreciative.

Sports

Nipmuc Brings Traveling Award Ceremony to Athletes

Jenny Capalucci with the athletic awards she received - Senior Leadership, Triple Crown, 4-year Field Hockey. Contributed photo

Cam Dolbec, with Steve Dellaloverre, left, and Chris Schmidt shows off the Jack Gaskill Award which he received. Contributed photo

Nipmuc 2020 Athletic Awards

Andrew Griswold-Triple Crown, Senior Leadership Award
Mark Memmanus-4-Year Letter Golf
Camille Gallagher-Triple Crown, Outdoor Track
Ashley Porter-4-Year Soccer
Kate Dawson-4-Year Field Hockey, All-Nipmuc Team
Casey Costello-4-Year softball
Brett Hackenson-4-Year Cross Country
Shamus Birdsey-Triple Crown, 4-Year Indoor Track And Outdoor Track
Matt Lacroix-Triple Crown, Cross Country Directors Award
Elizabeth Bohan-4-Year Soccer
Dan Derutzen, Scholar Athlete, All-Nipmuc, Triple Crown, 4-Year Cross Country And Indoor Track
Jenny Capalucci - Senior Leadership, Triple Crown, 4-Year Field Hockey
Christian Moss-4-Year Lacrosse, All-Nipmuc Team
Ben Rodman-4-Year Golf
Alex Ott-All-Nipmuc Team, 4-Year Soccer
Ben Gilchrist-Triple Crown
Justine Nicholson-Scholar Athlete, 4-Year Softball
Sophie Sullivan - Career Athlete, 4-Year Soccer, Basketball
Fath Caughey-All, Nipmuc, 4-Year Volleyball, Softball
Kacy Morford-4-Year Soccer
Cam Dolbec-Jack Gaskill Award
Reagan Masters-4-Year Cheerleading
Taylor Johnson-All-Nipmuc
Izzy Frieswick-Jack Gaskill, Triple Crown, 4-Year Girls
Samantha Strollo-All-Nipmuc
Sophie Sullivan-All-Nipmuc
Sarah Hurlbut-Senior Leadership, Triple Crown
Morgan Laflin-Scholar Athlete, 4-Year Soccer
Mark McManus-4-Year Letter Golf
Bret Hackenson-4-Year Cross Country
Ben Rodman-4-Year Golf

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