Mazzuchelli Retiring after 42 Years in Health Department

Health Officer Paul Mazzuchelli will retire in late March after spending nearly 42 years working in the town's Health Department. He started working for the town in 1977 at age 21 and is the longest-serving employee in Town Hall. Mazzuchelli said he is retiring prior to the April 2 Annual Town Election so that he can run for a seat on the Board of Health. "I want to be able to continue it at another level," he said about his career in public health. At their January 28 meeting, Board of Health members said they are just beginning to look at how to hire Mazzuchelli's replacement. Kevin Rudden photo

Annual Town Meeting Scheduled

By Kevin Rudden Staff Reporter/Columnist

The Board of Selectmen voted on January 28 to adopt Town Administrator Richard Villani's recommended schedule for the Annual Town Meeting:

• January 28 through February 28: warrant open for submission of articles
• March 4: Town Council begins preparation of official warrant
• March 25: Board of Selectmen approve final warrant
• March 26: Warrant goes to printer for reproduction
• March 25: Board of Selectmen approve final warrant
• January 28 through February 28: warrant open for submission of articles
• March 4: Town Council begins preparation of official warrant
• March 25: Board of Selectmen approve final warrant
• March 26: Warrant goes to printer for reproduction
• March 25: Board of Selectmen approve final warrant

Town, Water Company Submit Valuations to DPU

By Kevin Rudden Staff Reporter/Columnist

The Town of Milford and the privately owned Milford Water Company both submitted their valuations for the utility's assets to the state Department of Public Utilities (DPU) on January 25, with a $118 million gap between the town's $40 million estimate and the water company's $158 million. The submissions are part of the town's efforts to acquire the Milford Water Company. After an initial attempt to buy the utility for a mediated price of $63 million failed in 2017, the town filed suit in the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court (SJC), asking it to have the DPU decide the value of acquiring only the company's assets. The town's request before the SJC was successful, and the DPU established a procedural timeline calling for a decision by the end of this year. The town's valuation was determined by John Reed, chairman and chief executive officer of Concentric Energy Advisers in Marlborough. The Milford Water Company's valuation was determined by Mark Rodriguez, Managing Partner of MR Valuation Consulting, LLC of Colts Neck, New Jersey. The next step in the DPU process is for each side to file testimony by March 15 to rebut each other's valuation estimates.

Six Races Shaping up in Annual Town Election

By Kevin Rudden Staff Reporter/Columnist

With just a few days to go for candidates to return nomination papers for running in the April 2 Annual Town Election, it looks like there could be six races on the ballot. Candidates have until 5 p.m. today to take out nomination papers and until 5 p.m. next Tuesday, February 12, to submit their nomination papers to the Town Clerk's office for certification. As of January 31, nomination papers were taken out that – if certified – would mean races for Board of Selectmen, Constable, Housing Authority Planning Board, School Committee and Trustees of Vernon Grove Cemetery:

• Board of Selectmen: incumbent Michael Walsh is being challenged by Arni Clifford; Constable: incumbents Joseph Arcudi, Marl Calzolaio, Nadine Ladeau, Raymond Pagucci and Mark Yost face challengers Dana Gelinas and Robert Shedy for the two available seats; Housing Authority: incumbent Liorann Bria is being challenged by Kristen Nogler; Planning Board: incumbent Joseph Calagione is being challenged by John DePaulo, Jr.; School Committee: incumbent James Ligori, Justin Dulak, Tarik Miranda, R.J. Shedy and Michael Visconti are running for the two available seats; and, Trustees of Vernon Grove Cemetery: incumbents Marilyn Lowell and Scott Vecchione are being challenged by Kristen Gardner for the two available seats.

Other nomination papers taken out as of January 31 were:

• Board of Assessors: incumbent Joseph Arcudi;
• Board of Health: Paul Mazzuchelli;
• Board of Library Trustees (two seats available); Margaret Myatt and David Probert;
• Park Commission: Paul Pellegrini, and;
• Sewer Commission: Richard Cenedella.

Citizens for Milford will be holding its annual Candidates Forum on March 14 at the St. Mary of the Assumption-parish Police Hall, with a “Meet the Candidates” session at 6:30 p.m. and the actual forum beginning at 7 p.m.
Fattman Establishes Emergency Assistance Phone

The Office of State Senator Ryan C. Fattman (R-Sutton) is rolling out a new needs to be addressed immediately, “said Fattman during the winter, to be available to any person who may have an issue that and require assistance outside of regular call hours. It is essential, especially day and on weekends. “We recognize that things happen that may not fall into the 9 to 5 schedule, and require assistance outside of regular call hours. It is essential, especially during the winter, to be available to any person who may have an issue that needs to be addressed immediately,” said Fattman. Constituents may also reach his Boston office at 617-722-1420.

Retired State Senate Clerk William Welch Honored

Milford resident William “Billy” Welch, who retired on December 31 after 45 years of working for the Massachusetts state Senate – the last 14 as its Clerk, was honored at the Board of Selectmen’s January 28 meeting. State Senator Ryan Fattman, R. Sutton, and State Representative Brian Murray, D. Milford, presented Welch with a joint resolution from both the state House of Representatives and the state Senate. Selectmen Chair Michael Welch presented Welch with a proclamation from the board. Fattman called Welch an “unsung hero” who helped make the Senate work efficiently. Murray noted his orientation as a state representative – taught by Welch and his House counterpart, Steven James – was “like a history lesson on Massachusetts government and politics.” Welch said he achieved his goal of keeping the integrity of his office at the same high level it was when he was appointed as Clerk. “It was quite a run,” he said. Seen, left to right, are: Selectman William Buckley, Selectman William Ringkade, Walsh, Welch, Fattman and Murray. Kevin Rudden photo

MYC St. Pat’s Fundraiser

The Milford Youth Center invites community members to the ninth annual St. Pat’s Fundraiser on Friday, March 29. MYC’s largest fundraiser will be at CraftRoots Brewing, 4 Industrial Rd., Milford from 7 to 11 p.m. The event will include live music, community awards, raffles and appetizers! Tickets, which are $30 each and come with a pint of beer, are available at the Youth Center and at MilfordYouthCenter.org Besides being grateful to all those who attend, MYC would also appreciate any donations including prizes for the raffle. Recognition will be given of all donors. All proceeds of the event go towards the free physical fitness and educational programs of the Center. Fundraisers like this, help staff continue to work towards the MYC mission of providing a safe environment that promotes self-esteem, builds character, and fosters the notion of community and the importance of respecting and serving others for Milford youths. By providing programs and a safe environment during the after-school hours and its monthly events, MYC hopes to address adolescent risk factors as well as promote the partnership among community members to ensure a comprehensive vision and plan for the health of the youth in Milford. Now in its renovated facility for almost two years, MYC has seen attendance, programs and events flourish with over 500 registered After School members. Additional youth use the facilities during other programs and rentals. For more information about the Youth Center of the St. Pat’s Fundraiser, please call the Center at 508-473-1756.

Milford’s “Top Dog” Contest

By Kevin Rudden Staff Reporter/Columnist

The Animal Planet cable television channel has its annual Puppy Bowl. Now – as part of its annual dog licensing – the Milford Town Clerk’s office is sponsoring a “Top Dog” contest complete with first prize and runner-up awards. The requirements? Register your dog between April 1 and June 30 and provide a photo of your dog. All dog photos will be on display in the Milford Town Hall lobby, with the winners to be picked on July 1. The “top dog” – or, rather its owner – will receive free dog licensing registration in 2020. The runner-up will get a doggy gift bag donated by the Town Clerk’s office. The 2019 dog registration costs $6 each for a spayed female or a neutered male, and $25 each for an unspayed or unneutered male dog. After June 30, a late fee of $10 is applied to the licensing fee. Anyone wishing to participate can bring a photo of their dog to the Town Clerk’s office, mail a picture to the office at 52 Main St., Milford, MA 01757 or email one to mlaughlin@townofmilford.com. Please include the pet’s name, owner’s name and contact information. Photos will not be returned after the contest.

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(L-R) Rose Ann Fitzpatrick, Jill McLaughlin, Joshua Lioce; Melissa Pica, Steven Borges, John Peters III. (Not Pictured) Julie Lioce, Mandy Bradeen, Denise Schube.

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FEBRUARY 8, 2019
Milford Town Crier
Valley Tech Graduates 20 in its Practical Nursing of Class of 2019

The countless hours of studying, exams, assignments, and 1900 hours of course and clinical work met with success and celebration on January 23, as 20 members of the Blackstone Valley Tech Practical Nursing Class of 2019 took part in the 8th commencement ceremony honoring their achievements. The 20 practical nursing graduates received certificates in Practical Nursing and are eligible to take the National Council Licensure Examination (NCLEX-PN). The 8th commencement ceremony featured special guests State Senator Michael O Moore (D-Millbury) and State Representative Joseph McKenna (R-Webster), Superintendent–Director Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick thanked lawmakers and stakeholders for their ongoing support of the program. Dr. Fitzpatrick addressed the Class of 2019, “After tonight, I encourage you to shape your wellness training path with the realization that you have the potential to make a difference. Map out your next steps. Build new relationships. You are now a polished product of Valley Tech.” The guest speaker, Joyce Gilmore, RN (Advisory Board Member) spoke of the dedication and commitment that was required by the Class of 2019 to achieve their dreams of becoming a practical nurse. This was the 8th graduating class under the leadership of Joan L. Monks, MBA, MSc, RN BC, RMA, Practical Nursing Coordinator. Monks addressed the Class of 2019, “Tonight’s graduation is an acknowledgement of all your hard work. You are ready to be professional nurses and lifelong learners.” The Class Vice President, Jennifer Lang of Southbridge, delivered the class address and echoed the hard work and accomplishment of the Class of 2019. “We all share one thing in common, we are all nurses and we all made it.” Among the BVT Post-Secondary Practical Nursing Class of 2019 were the following local graduates:

Bellingham - Monday Pray and Shelley Wylie (Perfect Attendance Award)
Blackstone – Jamie Bourgery
Grafton – Carol Parlante (Perfect Attendance Award and Outstanding Academic Achievement Award)
Milford – Maria Sonia Dos Reis Soares
Northbridge – Maria Luiza Costa (Faculty Recognition Award) and Samantha Libby
Uxbridge – Sierra Thibeault
Whitinsville – Brianna Beaucoup and Savannah Veau

The BVT Post-Secondary Practical Nursing Program (PNP) was established in 2009 to provide adult learners with a life-changing opportunity to pursue a career in healthcare. The PNP has approval from the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Nursing (MABORN) and the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN). The PNP is a part time program that provides 1090 hours of course work and clinical experiences. Applications are currently being accepted for the class starting in August 2019. To learn more about the BVT Post-Secondary Practical Nursing Program, contact Monks at 508-529-7758 ext. 3014 or ValleyTech.k12.us/practicalnursing.

Milford Regional Recognized by American Red Cross for Blood Donation Milestone

Milford Regional Medical Center has been recognized by The American Red Cross for great success in blood donations at their site in 2018. Pictured (left to right): American Red Cross representatives Nancy Sullivan, senior account manager, Kathy Lawler, account executive, Anna Parello, district manager, donor recruitment and outreach, standing with Milford Regional’s Edward J. Kelly, president & CEO; Nicole Heim, executive vice president and COO: Camille Williams, blood bank/hematology manager; and Judy Barron, administrative laboratory director. RMMC photo

for collecting more than 1,000 units of blood during 2018 at the hospital’s Blood Donor Center.

The dedicated donor space at Milford Regional, located off the Imaging Center waiting room, opened in February 2017 and has since enabled the Red Cross to run scheduled blood drives three or four times a month, as well as additional drives when a special need for red cells has occurred on short notice. Milford Regional transfuses about 3,000 red cells annually and blood donor partners are now able to know where their collections have been used through the Red Cross’s “Blood Drive Partner Journey” Blood products collected at Milford Regional in November were used at Lahey Clinic, Salem Hospital, St. Joseph Hospital, St. Luke’s Hospital, Elliot Hospital, Tufts Medical Center, South Shore Hospital, Massachusetts General Hospital, Brigham and Women’s Hospital, Catholic Medical Center, VA Medical Center, West Roxbury VA, White River Junction, Children’s Hospital, Exeter Hospital, and Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center. For information on blood drives scheduled at Milford Regional, go to MilfordRegional.org.

February 8, 2019
Milford Town Crier
Staff Reporter/Columnist
By Kevin Rudden

The six former selectmen state, “Taken all in all, the decision to not renew Police Chief Thomas O’Loughlin’s contract was a difficult one, but one that was necessary to maintain the integrity of our government.”

The letters asks selectmen to “consider this decision in the best interests of the citizens of Milford now and in the years to come. Please consider a motion for reconsideration and open the path for compromise. We trust your review and hold hope for a compromise ahead.”

Seaver omitted reading aloud several sections of the written letter, including a sentence that reads, “The further opportunity costs of political distraction and loss of public trust are immeasurable.”

Another section of the letter which Seaver did not read aloud states: “We ask that each of you consider again the personal burden each of you will face at each interaction and discussion on this matter. Maligned words, open meeting violations, further personal attacks are challenges you cannot ignore. Each of you is responsible for your position and the views of Milford’s citizens, while quelling the divisiveness that has ensured. This reasoned approach serves the board and the citizens of Milford now and in the future.”

The letter concludes by asking the board to face those issues. Nevertheless, this further personal attacks are challenges you cannot ignore. Each of you is responsible for your position and the views of Milford’s citizens, while quelling the divisiveness that has ensured. This reasoned approach serves the board and the citizens of Milford now and in the future.”

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2018 Challenging for Milford Regional as it Strives to Remain a Community Hospital

By Jane Bigda

2018 was a challenging year for Milford Regional Medical Center, as it strives to remain an independent, non-profit community hospital according to officials in the corporation’s annual report.

Despite increases in total operating revenue last year, MRMIC’s expenses were twice that amount resulting in a total operating loss of $2.5 million. According to the fiscal 2018 Statement of Revenues and Expenses presented at the corporation’s annual meeting, January 28, the largest expense increases were about $5 million each in two accounts – Salaries, Wages & Benefits and Supplies & Expenses. Another significant increase was in the Bad Debt Account ($3.2 million). Offsetting the losses were a $9 million increase in Patient Service Revenue plus reductions in the Uncompensated Care, Depreciation and Interest accounts.

Referring to the financial picture in his Annual Report letter, MRMIC President and CEO, Ed Kelly said, “Fiscal Year 2018 challenged everyone “throughout Milford Regional’s healthcare system to contribute fully each day towards the realization of Milford Regional’s vision of our future. In a healthcare climate where operational costs increase and reimbursements drop, we kept our focus on delivering the highest quality care through innovation, hard work and a personal commitment to the patients we serve.”

Looking toward the future of keeping MRMIC independent, Kelly went on, “The importance of vision today for a community hospital cannot be understated... Milford Regional has remained steadfast in our determination to keep our independent roots in the fabric of the communities we have served since 1903.”

Part of that determination is reflected in the Annual Report theme of Building Momentum. According to Kelly the momentum rests on various factors including the hospital’s partnership with four academic medical centers – Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, which celebrated its 10 year anniversary with MRMIC, Brigham and Women’s, which enhanced its radiation therapy services locally by adding a second linear accelerator; UMass Memorial Healthcare, which expanded the robotic surgeries offered at Milford; and Boston Children’s Hospital, which now provides care locally.

Another factor in keeping MRMIC a community hospital is its strong presence in the region through its primary care and specialty care services. The hospital and the Milford Regional Physicians Group (MRPG). MRPG will be opening a new practice with urgent care, labs, imaging and other services on Rt. 140 in Franklin across from Gardlock Farms this spring.

The hospital itself will continue to change with the $7 million renovation of the fourth floor from a wing for up to 44 patients in multi bed rooms to a 15 private room ward for oncology and palliative care. The fund raising drive for the $6 million needed is being headed by the hospital and the Milford Regional Physicians Group (MRPG).

The Advertiser’s Club Directory

The Advertiser’s Club Directory is a listing of those businesses that have contracted to advertising at least 12 times in a year in The Milford Town Crier. Features include a listing in this directory, discounts and a feature article about your business (size and frequency requirements apply).

The Advertiser’s Club Introduces

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The Advertiser’s Club Directory
By the time you read this, the Super Bowl will be history and the Monday morning armchair quarterbacks will still be offering their opinions on why the Patriots did or did not win. That's how I'm looking at the letter six former selectmen sent to the current board on January 28, weighing in on the non-renewal of Police Chief Thomas O'Loughlin's contract. It's nothing more than armchair quarterbacking by folks not in the game.

Oh, I understand their reasons for the letter. The problem is, their comments are too late. For one thing, the chief has four legal actions pending against the town that he has to go away before selectmen could even think of reconsidering their vote. For another, the town won the initial courtroom battle: the judge who will decide the main law suit has already ruled that O'Loughlin's three main legal arguments in requesting a temporary injunction were not valid.

But, let's look a little deeper into the letter from John Pyne, Marie Parente, Salvatore Chinino, Dino Dellartolomente, Reno Delazzo and John Seaver. "Our intention is not to interfere in the current board's executive decisions, but rather to share our experience and understanding of the weight you bear concerning Chief O'Loughlin's contract renewal. At some point, each of us has been in your position, where town matters may create a difficult or unpopular decision at the time."

My parsing of the letter yields the following: the six former selectmen are doing just what they said they are doing – making hard "gotchas" before writing about them. I need to look at things deeper, to look for hidden meanings or cannot take anything at face value any more. I need to find out if they get it?

They have no access to? And, if so, how and where did they get privy to confidential legal information the general public has no access to? And, if so, how and where did they get it?

My problem is – that after 42 years as a journalist – I cannot take anything at face value any more. I need to look at things deeper, to look for hidden meanings or "gotchas" before writing about them.

There are just too many "gotchas" in the letter – including the basic message of "don't make hard decisions." I'm sorry, but isn't that what we elect our representatives in government to do – make hard decisions?

An opinion can be found on page 6 of the Milford Town Crier, February 8, 2019.

Opinion

How God Saved Me From Prison

By Christine Barnett

I stuck my oldest kid into faith-jail, erm, I mean, CCD. Which makes me a total hypocrite.

I go through phases of "sorta believe" to "total disbelief" alternately. Right now I am stuck in total disbelief and disillusion with the church as an organization.

But I promised my (the holy one, not the one buried under a tree) that I would lead my kids into faith. I realized quickly that they wouldn't learn anything about faith from me when I overheard my 6-year-old saying to a friend who mentioned Jesus: "He's been in a long time!" It had to be someone else teaching them. That meant CCD.

Don't get me wrong, I went to CCD in Germany too, but it was very different. We were basically playing outside admiring god's creations. Here, the kids are stuck in a church basement, and it is all very serious.

Nevertheless I am thankful someone else is teaching my kids about Jesus, because it turns out I am way to cynical.

Telling my 6-year-old to find the "god#$%@ jacket" is something. I am pretty sure, everyone who ever tried to get a 6-year-old out of the door can relate to. But since CCD my own kid is reprimanding me for such language. Thanks!

I love but there are positive sides to CCD too. Let me tell you the story of an unexpected benefit.

One fine Sunday I was late for CCD drop off. I zoomed into the church driveway, and cut off a police car on the main road. Oops!

The police car turned into the church drive to follow me. So I said to my oldest "You know, we are really late! So when I stop the car there is no time to dilly-dally. We jump out and we run!"

And this is exactly what we did. We made it from the carpark into the church in record time and uncaught.

Usually my drop offs are swift. In and out as quickly as I can. This time I maneuvered the hallways a bit, talked to other parents and leisurely made my way to the exit 15 minutes later. Ready to face my destiny. I was sure the CCD teacher would bring my oldest home to my husband, when she realized I wasn't coming back. I wondered if I would look good in an all-orange suit, and which prison gang I would end up in.

But the police car was gone. I was thrilled and relieved and made sure to stick to the speed limit. Thanks to God or whatever is out there!
Annual Town Audit Underway

By Kevin Budden
Staff Reporter/Columnist

The independent audit of the town’s finances during Fiscal Year 2018 – which ended last June 30 – began on January 28, with auditors from Scanlon & Associates of Deerfield expected to be in Town Hall and the School Department’s business office over a two-week period.

Finance Director Zachary Taylor introduced auditors Thomas Scanlon and Jeffrey Gendron to the Board of Selectmen on January 28, saying the pair led a team of six people. Scanlon also reviewed his firm’s “findings” from the Fiscal Year 2017 audit, noting that the town’s finances are strong and its financial reporting systems are “excellent.”

“Findings” in an audit typically detail recommendations to strengthen financial controls or change a financial process. Scanlon said there were only a few items from Fiscal Year 2017 to review.

“I expect findings,” Selectman William Buckley said. “I don’t know if you can look at an entity this size and not have findings.” His concerns are what caused a finding, the process needed to fix things, how to do that on a timely basis and whether the fix worked over time, Buckley said. “It keeps us on our toes,” added Selectman William Kingkade.

“An audit is really a tool for improvement,” said Selectman Chair Michael Walsh. “It’s nice to hear that we’re in good shape. It’s nice to hear there are areas for improvement,” he said.

One effect from an audit is being to show how the actions of one department can have a ripple effect across other departments, Walsh explained, adding that shows the importance of teamwork.

As a former School Committee member, Walsh pointed out that the annual audit does review the School Department’s finances. Scanlon agreed, saying that – as the town’s largest department – the School Department has its finances – including payrolls, grants, student activity fees and special funds – reviewed each year as part of the overall audit.

Taylor also took selectmen through the draft financial goals and objectives for Fiscal Year 2020, which begins on July 1. He asked for selectmen to comment on them before he issues his budget directive to town department heads.

The town’s financial team – including Taylor, Town Administrator Richard Villani, Town Treasurer Christopher Pilla, Finance Committee Chair Christopher Morin and Walsh – has set a target for the town’s operational budget increase to not exceed 2.5 percent, Taylor explained. That would bring the operational budget to about $107 million, he explained.

Taylor and the board stressed the need for all departments to list any requested capital expenditures on the Finance Committee’s five-year plan, so that all can be prioritized.

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Sewer Department to Conduct “I&I” Tests

By Kevin Rudden
Staff Reporter/Columnist

The Sewer Department will be conducting a townwide study this spring to measure the success of its 15-year effort to eliminate groundwater inflow and infiltration – “I&I” in engineering-speak – from sewer mains. The Board of Sewer Commissioners voted at its January 22 meeting to authorize a $143,000 study to repeat the monitoring it last conducted in 2003.

The state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) requires sewer departments across the state to look at ways of removing what is basically clean water from sewage systems. Groundwater can seep into sewer systems through cracks in older sewer mains or be dumped into them from roof drains or illegal basement sump pump connections. After its 2003 study, the Milford Sewer Department relined and sealed older sewer mains with the worst leaks and created a free program to disconnect homeowners’ sump pumps from the sewer system and reconnect them to the town’s stormwater drainage systems.

In December, John Mainini, the department’s Director of Operations, told commissioners those efforts have removed an estimated 800,000 gallons of groundwater per day from Milford’s sewer system.

Project Manager James Hoyt of Tata & Howard – the Sewer Department’s Marlborough-based engineering consultants – explained on January 22 that meters to monitor flows through the town’s sewer mains will be installed in March at the same locations across the town’s 18 sewer “basins” that were monitored 15 years ago. After a roughly 10-week period, data from this year’s monitoring will be analyzed to see what has changed and to show what areas in town need to be targeted for improvement, he said.

In addition, Hoyt said, the study will determine if there is enough capacity in the town’s sewer mains – in other words, making sure the pipes are large enough to handle the flows going through them. Also, the DEP has changed its regulations so that this new study must take into account I&I resulting from more severe rainstorms, he said.

Such storms would drop a half-inch to two inches of rainfall in a short period of time, he said. The $143,000 cost of the I&I study is within the Sewer department’s current budget, Mainini said in December. In January, Hoyt explained that $93,000 of that cost will go to a sub-contractor, EST Associates, Inc. of Needham, which specializes in sewer system flow monitoring.

Sewer Department to Study Causes of Grease in Sewer Mains

By Kevin Rudden
Staff Reporter/Columnist

The Board of Sewer Commissioners voted on January 22 to spend $23,000 on an engineering study to find out how fuels, oils and grease (FOG) are getting into the town’s sewer system. In November, a large build-up of grease during a period of heavy rainfall caused a sewer main along part of Main St. near Central St. to become clogged, sending raw sewage into the basements of several downtown businesses and the Police Station.

The study will involve Tata & Howard – the Sewer Department’s Marlborough-based engineering consultants – looking at every restaurant in town, reviewing the town’s existing rules and regulations, and educating the public about not dumping grease into the wastewater system, explained Project Manager James Hoyt.

The Sewer Department requires food-service establishments in town to install a “grease trap” to prevent grease from entering the sewer system, with the owner of each business required to have the grease trap pumped clean periodically. Restaurants built before the town made this a requirement may not have grease traps.

Hoyt said the study will include reviewing inspection records to ensure that grease traps are being cleaned. John Mainini, the Sewer Department’s Director of Operations, noted that inspection records for food-service establishments are kept by the Board of Health. That prompted Hoyt to say the study could recommend changing local by-laws to have the Sewer Department inspect the grease traps.

Tata & Howard Vice President Steven Howard noted the study will look at who is not in compliance and how to get them to comply with existing regulations.

Board member Thomas Morelli questioned whether there was a way to measure which businesses were or were not in compliance. “If there was a way to do it, we’d be on top of it,” Mainini said. “It might be worth it to have a conversation with the Board of Health,” Morelli said.

Mainini said the $23,000 cost for the FOG study is within the Sewer Department’s current budget.

Are you a Home Improvement company? Do you offer landscaping, plumbing, renovations, work around the house of any kind? Then your ad belongs here!
Annual Great Backyard Bird Count at West Hill Dam

The Annual Great Backyard Bird Count for Cornell University will be held Sunday, February 17, at West Hill Dam at 2 p.m. In case of heavy rain or snow, it will be Saturday, February 23 at 10 a.m. Meet at the office, 518 East Hartford Ave., Uxbridge to help count the winged winter residents and migrants at West Hill Dam. Past counts have observed rough-legged hawks, chickadees, robins, and others.

Blackstone River Valley National Historic Park volunteers and West Hill Team will discuss how winter residents and migrants survive finding water in the dam’s unfrozen sections of rivers and ponds. 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. 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. Observations will be reviewed over warm beverages while supplies last. Junior Rangers Level 2 –earn wildlife credit. Scout Troops, home schooled students welcomed (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. Observations help researchers determine species decline and migration patterns.

GGC Member Brings Flair to WAM’s “Flora in Winter”

Greenleaf Garden Club (GGC) member Sandra Tosches created an airy, monochromatic design for Worcester Art Museum’s “Flora in Winter” to compliment an 1802 Gilbert Stuart portrait. This is Tosches’ 15th year interpreting a work of art for this special event. This year, she was assigned the portrait of “Sarah Wentworth Apthrop, Mrs. Perez Morton”, a 29 x 24-inch oil portrait by Gilbert Stuart.

In studying the painting, she noted that it was predominately white with an impressionistic feel to the clothing. The subject’s character was expressed in the striking eyes and clearly defined face. Tosches choose to compliment the painting’s soft impression by using light, airy Baby’s Breath in her traditional design. White Calla lilies and white roses give strength to the design while capturing the feeling within the painting. The Greenleaf Garden Club of Milford is a member the National Garden Clubs, Inc. and the Garden Club Federation of MA, Inc. For information, email greenleafgardenclub@gmail.com.

Blackstone River & Canal Heritage State Park

The Blackstone River & Canal Heritage State Park, River Bend Visitor Center, Oak St., Uxbridge, will hold the following free programs for all ages. An adult must accompany children. Reasonable accommodations available upon advance request. For information or to register call 508-278-7604 or email blackstone.heritage@sma.gov.

Sunday February 10- Evergreen Walk, 1 to 2 p.m. Explore winter's beauty by searching for green on a brisk, easy, one-mile walk. See how plants adapt to the brisk, easy, one-mile walk. See how plants adapt to the cold weather and provide food or shelter for wildlife.

Friday-Monday, February 15- February 18- Storywalk® at Grandpa's Sugarbush by Margaret Carney, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Get the whole family outside and enjoy reading a story as you stroll along the park. A short, easy, self-guided walk.

Saturday, February 16- Winter Wildlife, 10 to 11 a.m. Learn about the different animals that live in the park and what they do in the winter with the hands-on program. All ages welcome.

Water and Fire River Walk, 1 to 2:30 p.m. Take an easy, one-mile walk, to the banks of the Blackstone River, gather around a campfire, and enjoy hot chocolate to talk about water quality and share stories of the river’s recovery.
Recent Actions by Milford Town Boards

Board of Selectmen
- Highway Surveyor Scott Crucifulli and Town Engineer Mike Dean brief the board on the status of the Main St. (Rt. 16) reconstruction project, which will run from Water St. to the Hopedale town line and include new turning lanes at the Rt. 16/16A intersection. The project will go out to bid this coming summer, with construction due to start in the fall, they said. (January 28).
- Town Administrator Richard Villani briefed the board that – under the governor’s initial budget proposal – state aid to Milford could rise by nearly $2 million in the next fiscal year. (January 28).
- Villani reported that two Zoning By-law amendments passed at last October’s Special Town Meeting were approved by the state Attorney General’s office. One allowed self-service gasoline stations in town and the other rezoned 1.16 acres off East Main St. owned by Kevin Meehan and Rudolph Porotti from single-family residential (RB) zoning to Neighborhood Commercial (CB) zoning. (January 28).

Board of Education
- Deferred action on former Town Counsel Gerald Moody’s request to classify as “special municipal employee” his two part-time positions as School Committee Labor Counsel and Zoning Board of Appeals 40B Coordinator. (January 28)
- Granted a Permit to Obstruct a Public Way to Milford Special Olympics held on its annual 5K road race and walk on September 21. (January 28)
- Approved a one-day Wine and Malt license for Canvas n’ Cup to hold a fundraising event for Kem for Kids from 2-5 p.m. on March 3. (January 28)
- Accepted a $5,000 gift from F&D Central Realty Corp., Inc. to help offset the cost of removing or cutting back and fallen trees throughout the town. (January 28)
- Granted a one-day Wine and Malt license for St. Mary of the Assumption church to hold a fundraising event in the from 8 p.m. to midnight on February 16 in the Parish Hall. (January 28)

Board of Sewer Commissioners
- Approved sewer connection permits for houses at 128, 130, 132, 134, 136, 138, 140 and 142 Beaver St., pending payment of inspection fees. (January 22)
- Approved preliminary plans for the new gas station and convenience store at 111A and 111B Cedar St. (Rt. 85). (January 22)
- Approved a sewer connection permit for a house at 204 Highland St., pending approval of engineering plans and issuance of a Drain License’s license. (January 22)

Calender

Blood Drive
MILFORD-A Blood Drive to benefit the Kraft Family Blood Donor Center in conjunction with Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Brigham and Women’s Hospital will be held at DCH Toyota of Milford, 300 Fortune Blvd., Milford on Sunday, February 17 from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. to also sponsor Toys for Tots. (January 22)

Family Fun & Disability Awareness Fair
The Milford Family Fun & Disability Awareness Fair is seeking exhibitors for the 25th Annual Family Fun & Disability Awareness Fair which takes place on Saturday, March 16 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Milford High School Cafeteria. Businesses, agencies or programs which serve children and or families, are invited to be exhibitors. Tables are free, but space is limited. For more information, call 508-634-2356, or email: familynetwork@milfordma.org by February 28.

Blood Drive
MILFORD-A Blood Drive to benefit the Kraft Family Blood Donor Center in conjunction with Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Brigham and Women’s Hospital will be held at DCH Toyota of Milford, 300 Fortune Blvd., Milford on Sunday, February 17 from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The drive is also sponsored by Toys for Tots. (January 22)

Donors must have a photo ID and should be well hydrated before giving blood. Appointments are recommended by contacting tinyurl.com/DCHFBFER2019, but walk-ins will be taken as time allows. For more information email BloodDonor@partners.org, or call 617-632-3206. Donors will receive a Kraft Family Blood Donor Swedehart.

February Events at Cornerstone at Milford
MILFORD-Residents are invited to attend the following events at Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living and Memory Support Community. Events begin at 2 p.m.
Steve Rudolf’s Swing Fever Trio will play lots of love songs for the Valentine’s Day on Thursday, February 14. Enjoy an Art For You Mind presentation by Jill Sanford on Thursday, February 21.

Milford Area Chamber of Commerce Events
AREA- The Milford Area Chamber of Commerce (MACCC) will be holding the following events. To register visit MilfordChamber.org, email hblau@milfordchamber.org, or call 508-678-6700 or stop by the office, 208 Main Street, Suite 306, Milford.
Business After Hours on Wednesday, February 13 at 5 p.m. at Peppercorn’s, 201 E. Main St., Milford.
CWL Connecting Women Leaders, Luncheon on Wednesday, February 20 at 11:30 a.m. at Benchmark Senior Living, 4 Forge Hill Rd, Franklin, the 9th Anniversary Celebration.

St. Camillus
WHITINSVILLE-St. Camillus Health Center, 447 Hill St., Whitinsville, will hold a blood drive on Saturday, February 23, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Mortuary located adjacent to their skilled nursing building. Positions available include Nursing, CNA, Housekeeping and Dietary and include full time, part time and per diem. Additionally, a per diem Physical Therapy is being sought. St. Camillus offers both weekend and shift differentials for all staff. For more information, please call Shelley at 508-234-7306.

American Red Cross Swim Lessons for Children
MILFORD—Lenny Moncore, Director of the Milford Community School Use Program, has announced the registration date for Session 3 of Children’s American Red Cross Swim Lessons, which are held from mid-February through the end of March, at the Milford High School Pool. Walk in registration will be held on Monday, February 11 at 6 p.m. in the Milford High School Pool lobby. Space is limited and registration is accepted on a first-come, first serve basis for Milford residents only: Residents must show proof of residence.

No-Milford residents are welcome if space is available beginning on Tuesday, February 12. Call the office, 508-478-1119 for openings. Saturday, February 23, from 9:30 a.m. and 5 hours lessons at 10:30 a.m. Classes for ages six and older in Levels 1-6 are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 6 to 6:40 p.m.
Call the Milford Community School Use Program Office for any questions or visit the website, MCS.Milford.MA.us.

Creating a Haven, Inviting Nature into Our Homes
MILFORD—The Greenleaf Garden Club looks at the winter months as an opportunity to reflect on bringing nature inside during its February meeting. Elizabeth Randall of Elizabeth Randall’s Interior Design, Winchendon will present the program Creating a Haven, Monday, February 11, at the Bath Anne Bleakney Senior Center, 60 North Rose St., Milford. The meeting will start with refreshments and displays at 6:30 p.m. Randall will present a program filled with ideas and creative ways to incorporate natural elements into our homes to create a more pleasant, inviting space. Her motto is “Your Space, Your Story”.
Randall has designed for residential, institutional and commercial space including Harvard University managing major preservation and interior design projects as well as participating in workshops and presentations. The Greenleaf Garden Club is a member of National Garden Clubs, Inc. and the Garden Federation Club of M.A., Inc. For information, email greenleafgardenclub@gmail.com.

Two Twice Blessed Thrift Shop
HOPEDALE: The Twice Blessed Thrift Shop at the Sacred Heart of Hopedale Church will offer the half off all domestics such as sheets and comforters plus all small appliances such as coffee makers and slow cookers during February. New, limited stock of First Communion dresses for $25 and men’s sports jackets from $9.99 to $14.99, beginning Thursday from 9 a.m to 3 p.m and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.
The following Milford residents were named to the Dean’s List at their respective schools for the fall 2018 semester.

Assumption College, Worcester: Kathlyn Samulis, Class of 2019; Brianna Bondou, Class of 2020; Ionna Smith, Class of 2022; and Elena Dello Russo, Class of 2021.

Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater: Lucas Bentos, Antonia Bonina, Justin Borges, Kirsten Buddington Davis, Megan Cacedolla, Victoria Chiarelli, Sarah Chiarello, Michael Da Silva, Ruby De La Rosa, Katelyn Ellison, Danielle Foka, Nicole Fekas, Amanda Hill, Alexandra Johnson, Nicholas Jordan, Emily LaVeigne, Elizabeth Lit, John McGowan Jr., Beshoy Mhareb, Dylan Moretti, Nathaniel Motuzas, Matthew Nolan, Page Philbin, Kelley Reichert, Leo Saco,lich, Smircogmu, Alexandra Shears, Richard Smith, Aimee Sousa, Justin Stiles, Lindsay Stiles, Dylan Tavano and George Tuttle.

Cedarville University, Cedarville: Olivia Cerabelli, Diploma, Academy of Science.


Nichols College, Dudley: Daniel Pitt.

Quinnipiac University, Hamden, Conn.: Kate Longo.

Syracuse University, Syracuse, N.Y.: Gregory A. Germano.


Westchester Polytechnic Institute, Westchester:}

Christopher Watson, a member of the class of 2021 majoring in chemical engineering; Alyse Momsod, a member of the class of 2021 majoring in computer engineering; Gabriela Chong, a member of the class of 2022 majoring in chemical engineering; James Chukals, a member of the class of 2019 majoring in mechanical engineering; Megan Pinette, a member of the class of 2020 majoring in biomedical engineering, and Peyton Grant, a member of the class of 2022 majoring in electrical engineering, and computer science.
School News

Except for Extreme Cold, Weather Has Been Kind to Milford Schools

By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter

The Polar Vortex brought an arctic blast with wind chills of -45 degrees to the Midwest and below-zero wind-chill temperatures to Milford, causing the school district to act to keep students safe.

The Milford Public Schools called a two-hour delay on January 31, the first school time change of 2019. “We typically do not delay school due to cold, but it was close to 15 below-zero with the wind chill factors and we knew that a two-hour difference would be about a 10-degree difference,” said Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kevin McIntyre in an interview with The Town Crier.

Besides the delay, they had busses to pick up all walkers on their routes to the school. “We have done this for a number of years,” said McIntyre. “It doesn’t happen very often, but we do this for the safety of our walkers, especially when there is a lot of snow and ice on the sidewalks.”

Although the extreme temperatures caused some issues, the lack of snow this winter has been a bonus for local administrators. “We have had a fairly mild winter so far; the storms we have had have been on weekends luckily,” said McIntyre.

McIntyre. “The weather has been very manageable to this point.”

The weather has been on the mind of the Milford district for some time now with the development of a pilot program to test a new “Alternative Learning Structure” day to take the place of a snow cancellation day. The School Committee approved a pilot of the new Alternative Learning Structure, or what some districts have coined a “blizzard bag.” The idea is for students to complete assignments while they are not in school due to weather cancellations. Students in grades 1-5 will be given work in advance while students in grades 6-12 will be given lessons and assignments online through Google Classroom or the classroom websites.

The day would then be considered part of the 180 days of school mandated by the Department of Education, and not tacked on to the end of the school year. The Alternative Learning Structure day will take place on the first snow cancellation day of the year, if any. After that, the district will access its success and survey parents, teachers, and students to determine how to proceed in the future.

With the district historically having two to three snow day cancellations or more per year, administrators are keeping an eye on the sky wondering if this unseasonable weather to continue. “We are ready to go, but I would very much prefer the idea of having no snow days,” McIntyre commented. “I am liking this promising weather.”

Community and Schools Mourn Passing of Stacy Student

By Melissa Orff
Staff Reporter

A Stacy Middle School student has died from a flu-related illness last week, leaving the community to mourn the loss of a “gentle, kind and caring soul.” Twelve-year-old Aaron Zenus died on January 31 after reportedly being treated at Milford Regional Medical Center for the flu. It was the first pediatric flu-related death of the season in Massachusetts. A 4-year-old Framingham girl died a few days later from a flu-related illness, but Department of Public Health officials stated that the two cases were not related.

News of the boy’s death was communicated to the school district later that afternoon by Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kevin McIntyre. “Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family,” he said.

The district offered counseling services during the day and evening throughout the week and into the next for students who were struggling with grief. McIntyre’s letter also offered resources for families to support their children as they grieve the loss of their peer and friend. “We are all deeply saddened by the passing of Aaron,” said McIntyre in a statement to The Town Crier this week. “He was a beloved member of our school community. Our faculty, students, and families are grieving their student, classmate, and friend. We are focused on supporting our students through this difficult time.”

According to his obituary, Aaron loved to Spending his time in support of the local Special Olympics program in Milford, played annually in Milford Youth sports including Little League Baseball, Biddy Basketball, and recently took on a Ninja Fit class that he loved dearly. “Aaron was remembered for his unselfishness and putting others first, for his playful spirit and the love of his family,” read the obituary. “Sharing these gifts for all of his 12 years are the legacy he leaves for all those who loved him.”

Aaron leaves behind his parents Danielle and Joseph Zenus, Jr. of Milford, brother Jackson, his maternal great-grandmother Rachel Candell of Upton, his paternal great-grandmother Claire Danos of Worcester, and grandparents Joseph and Donna Zenus Sr., of Hopedale and Wayne and Sandra Danos of Princeton along with several other aunts, uncles, close friends and relatives. His Funeral Mass was celebrated on February 6 at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Milford and he was laid to rest at Hopedale Village Cemetery in Hopedale. Donations can be made in Aaron’s memory to the Friends of Milford Area Special Athletes (FOMASA), PO Box 81, Hopedale, MA 01747. Arrangements were handled by Roney Funeral Home. A GoFundMe page, GoFundMe.com/The-Zenus-Family, has been set up for the Zenus family to ease any financial burden that may present itself with the sudden loss of Aaron.
Kindness, Responsibility and Positivity, Milford’s Project 351 Representative

By Melissa Orff Staff Reporter

Stacy Middle School eighth-grader Tessa Scrimgeour was chosen by the Town as an ambassador for Project 351, a statewide youth service initiative honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Project 351, a statewide youth-driven service organization, brings together eighth-grade students from across the Commonwealth to for a transformative year of development, enrichment, and impact through unique service opportunities.

The project kicks off with a day of celebration and service on Martin Luther King Jr. weekend, honoring Dr. King’s legacy and those students chosen by their schools to bring his mission of helping others back to their own communities. “It was really inspiring,” said Tessa of welcome the student received by alumni ambassadors and local politicians including Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker and Massachusetts Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley.

After the welcome, Tessa boarded a bus with nine other 8th graders to Cradles to Crayons, a non-profit organization that provides clothing and supplies to homeless and low-income children living in Boston. There the group put together packages of pencils, highlighters and rulers for students in need of basic school supplies. “We had a service project here at school last year collecting donations for Cradles to Crayons, but to see what goes on there first hand was amazing,” said Tessa. For three hours, the group put together over 800 school-supply packages before the weather cut their service trip short for the day.

“I could have spent all day there,” said Tessa. “It wasn’t what we were doing, but who we were helping that was so amazing.” Although Tessa is new to Project 351, she is no stranger to serving her community. In addition to being a member of Stacy’s student council and a peer mentor for sixth graders, Tessa is also a Cadette Girl Scout, having earned all of the community service badges at her level and has completed her bronze-level award, helping organize the 30th anniversary of the Milford Library, and is currently working on her silver-level award, creating a pamphlet listing all of Milford’s nonprofit youth activities for newly arrived families. Tessa also spends her summers volunteering at a math and science for 3rd and 4th graders.

“We have come to learn that service can be a career…that you can dedicate your life to,” said Tessa. “It doesn’t have to be just something that you do on the side.”

Students are chosen to be Project 351 ambassadors based on their values of kindness, compassion, humility, and gratitude; their leadership skills; and their ability to work as part of a team.

Technology isn’t completely the answer but it’s a great tool to support students in September, creating video tutorials for parents and families on technology offered in the district. “We are seeing some good results and getting some positive feedback from both teachers and students,” said McIntyre. Under the goal of Technology, McIntyre said that they have already made substantial progress. McIntyre went through the six goals he is focusing on this year as the head of the Milford Public Schools (MPS) – to foster a culture of continuous learning and growth for all students, to lead the completion of the Long Range Education Facilities Plan, to ensure that technology implementation and digital tools support the learning of all students, to foster high expectations for instruction and learning through professional development, to provide leadership for the implementation and expansion of a Social Emotional Learning Program, and to promote the success of all students by collaborating with families, community members and higher education and business partners.

Under Social Emotional Programming (SEL), a pilot is underway at Woodland for a Second Step SEL program. The district is developing a SEL website, and partnerships is well on its way, with enhanced media exposure and partnerships with colleges to provide early college courses according to McIntyre. “We are eight months away from another town meeting, can we have our ducks in a row for then?” asked School Committee Member Christopher Wilson. McIntyre said that they are working on the plan now, with the goal of having it finalized with the help of community input by June of 2019. McIntyre has scheduled three community presentations to discuss the future of the building projects for the MPS and gather input. The tentative dates are Monday, March 4 at 7 p.m., Monday, March 11 at 10:30 a.m. and Tuesday, March 19 at 6:30 p.m. in Spanish and 7:30 p.m. in Portuguese. School Committee Member Joseph Morias questioned the timing of the Long-Range Plan, asking if the plan would be ready for the Fall of 2019 Town Meeting, to which McIntyre responded that most likely it would not be ready until the following Town Meeting in May of 2020.

“We are eight months away from another town meeting, can we have our ducks in a row for then?” asked School Committee Member Christopher Wilson. McIntyre said that as the plan progresses, he will continue to update the Committee.

Under the goal of Technology, McIntyre said that they have already made substantial headway with the rollout of the Chromebooks initiative to the Milford High School students in September, creating video tutorials for parents and families on technology offered in the district.

“The teachers are already doing a lot of engaging and innovate things with technology,” said McIntyre. “Technology isn't completely the answer but it's a great tool to support learning.”

Under the goal of Administrative Professional Development, McIntyre said that this year the Administrators have been scheduling regular walk-throughs of the buildings focusing on educator evaluation, conducted monthly meetings with each Principal, and aligning individual School Improvement plans with the MPS Strategic Plan.

Under Social Emotional Programming (SEL), a pilot is underway at Woodland for a Second Step SEL program, the district is developing a SEL website, and partnerships have started to be developed with Wayside Counseling to provide a broader counseling experience for students. “We are trying to get more on-site resources, because we have seen greater needs,” said McIntyre. The final goal of promoting the success of all students by collaborating with families, community members and higher education and business partners is well on its way, with enhanced media exposure and partnerships with colleges to provide early college courses according to McIntyre.

WE walked in and realized this was everything we wanted to experience. Felt like you were walking into a real community bank, a hometown bank. Thats why we are at Charles River Bank.
West Point Tourney, New Team Eyed by Milford Legion

The Milford Legion is considering the establishment of a new team as part of the West Point Legion Tournament. The team would be created to complement the junior legion team already in place, and it is expected to be a three-day tournament starting late in June. The new team would be created in anticipation of the opening of a junior legion facility at West Point, which is scheduled for completion in 2020. The creation of the new team is in response to the increased interest in the sport and the need for additional competition.

Milford Boys Hoops Stays in Playoff Hunt

The Milford boys' basketball team is in contention for a playoff spot in the Hockomock League's Davenport Division. Head coach Paul Seaver has emphasized the importance of the team's performance in the final two games of the season, especially against rival Foxboro. Seaver has praised the mature and aggressive play of seniors Colby Pires and Danny Corsini, who have provided consistent contributions. The team's success will depend on the consistent performance of these players and the emergence of younger talents like Jordan Darling. The team's performance will also be influenced by their ability to adapt to the diverse playing styles of their opponents.

Pool Gives MHS Swimmers an Edge

Milford High School has a swimming pool that is regularly used by both the boys' and girls' teams. The pool provides a unique advantage to the Scarlet Hawks, who can practice at their own facility. This convenience is especially important for a high school like Milford, which has limited access to other resources. The pool also serves as a training ground for athletes who swim year-round, providing a competitive edge. The pool's accessibility and quality contribute significantly to the success of the Milford swim team.

Sports

Sports Flash

By Chris Villani

Milford hosting the state tournament again this year and getting the automatic berth that comes along with it is another feather in the cap of the program and an attractive bonus for potential players. In addition to Gulino, Richie Grivello, Lina Watson and Linda Caturano joined the board along with longtime board member Joanne Jarussi. "It's not a put down on the previous board, but we had to get some new blood, a new way of thinking, and new ways to promote and get exposure," Gulino said. Another idea being eyed is creating a junior legion team for players 17-years-old and under. Gulino said some of the ground work and planning may be started this year, but the new team is not likely to be created until at least the summer of 2020. "For us to have it come to fruition, the other teams in the zone have to put up teams too so we can have our own schedule," he said.

There are no other Zone 4 teams with junior legion programs and Gulino said he would rather start teams within Milford's current zone than join Franklin in Zone 6, which has a junior legion team. He said the plan would be for Shrewsbury, Leominster, Hudson, Sudbury and Worcester to field teams, creating a six-team junior legion zone with Milford.

"It's not likely to happen this year," Gulino said. "But we hope to get to the point where we could put together our own schedule."
**Hopedale Hockey Co-Op in Striking Distance of Playoffs**

By Chris Villani

Sports Reporter/Columnist

Despite the Blue Raiders’ 9-6-1 record over the past few weeks, the Hopedale hockey co-op and its contingent of Milford High School athletes is in a strong position to qualify for the district tournament, needing just a win and a tie over the final four games of the regular season.

“We are struggling to find consistency, but the bottom line is we have a good shot at making the tournament,” said Hopedale head coach Greg LaBossiere of his team’s 1-3-1 stretch through the past five games. “We are struggling to find consistency, but the bottom line is we have a good shot at making the tournament.”

The Blue Raiders, who also draw from Millis, Douglas and Whitinsville Christian, let a third period lead slip away against Fitchburg/Monty Tech on Monday night in a game that ended in a tie. The team entered Wednesday’s contest against Lunenburg/Ayer-Shirley 8-7-1 on the season.

“We really just have to play as a unit and outwork opponents like we were doing at successful earlier in the year,” said LaBossiere, who has scored and picked up a pair of assists. “Four helpers are good for an 11-point total.”

The Milford boys and girls each figure to be battling with some of the same teams, with Mansfield, North Attleboro and Sharon among the squads that put together comparable or better dual meet schedules when compared to MHS. The Scarlet Hawk boys finished in a three-way tie for the top spot in the Davenport Division, with Milford, North Attleboro and Sharon each sporting unusal 3-0-2 records.

The Milford girls finished 3-2 in league competition, trailing the same two schools the girls finished equalled in the standings. Both squads feature strong relay teams.

The boys 4x200 team of Sean Lehanne, Zach Browne, Joseph Madden and Hugo Lopes is seeded first in the league, as is the 4x400 grouping of Lopes, Madden, Ryan Kelley and Rafael Feliciano. Lopes is ranked first in the Hockomock individually in the 300 and Madden is going to be a high seed whether he ends up running the 600 or 1,000. Browne is also second in the hurdles.

In the distance events, Milford’s Max Manor is top three in the mile and will be a contender in either that event, or the two-mile, depending on which he decides to run. He will join Chris Berthrong, Miguel Torres and Anthony DiStauro in the 4x800.

On the girls’ side, the 4x200 figures to have a strong showing with Sydney Sutton, Sarah Flanagan, Kerry O’Connor and Sienna Pierce. O’Connor, a sophomore, is seeded first in the 300 and third in the long jump. Other athletes who could score points individually include Sutton, seeded in the top-six in the 55 dash, and Flanagan, a freshman, who is top-four in both the 55 and 300.

“It’s an impressive group,” Rose said. “We have a shot to finish one-two in the 300 with a sophomore and a freshman.”

Leni Marcolini will look to score in the 1,000, while Sarah Brogioli competes in the high jump Catherine Madden runs the hurdles. The Hockomock League meet starts at 9:30 a.m. Saturday morning at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston.

**Milford Resident Steers Sox Truck Back to Florida**

By Chris Villani

Sports Reporter/Columnist

Milford, MA. Stop in the office to fill out an application.

• Great if you are retired! Shifts available from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

• 7D drivers wanted to transport students to and from school in company vehicles. If you are interested but do not have a 7D license we have all the paperwork to get your license and walk you through the process. It’s very easy.

• Must be 21 years old and have a valid driver license for at least three years.

• Hours are early morning and mid afternoon. This is a split shift.

• Great if you are retired! Shifts available from 20-35 hours per week.

Monitors also needed!

Call Mark’s Transportation at 508-473-3600 for an interview.

Our office is located at 51 East Main St. (Route 16) Milford, MA. Stop in the office to fill out an application from 8:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

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Sports Reporter/Columnist

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The Milford girls finished 3-2 in league competition, trailing the same two schools the girls finished equalled in the standings. Both squads feature strong relay teams.

The boys 4x200 team of Sean Lehanne, Zach Browne, Joseph Madden and Hugo Lopes is seeded first in the league, as is the 4x400 grouping of Lopes, Madden, Ryan Kelley and Rafael Feliciano. Lopes is ranked first in the Hockomock individually in the 300 and Madden is going to be a high seed whether he ends up running the 600 or 1,000. Browne is also second in the hurdles.

In the distance events, Milford’s Max Manor is top three in the mile and will be a contender in either that event, or the two-mile, depending on which he decides to run. He will join Chris Berthrong, Miguel Torres and Anthony DiStauro in the 4x800.

On the girls’ side, the 4x200 figures to have a strong showing with Sydney Sutton, Sarah Flanagan, Kerry O’Connor and Sienna Pierce. O’Connor, a sophomore, is seeded first in the 300 and third in the long jump. Other athletes who could score points individually include Sutton, seeded in the top-six in the 55 dash, and Flanagan, a freshman, who is top-four in both the 55 and 300.

“It’s an impressive group,” Rose said. “We have a shot to finish one-two in the 300 with a sophomore and a freshman.”

Leni Marcolini will look to score in the 1,000, while Sarah Brogioli competes in the high jump Catherine Madden runs the hurdles. The Hockomock League meet starts at 9:30 a.m. Saturday morning at the Reggie Lewis Center in Boston.

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**Milford Resident Steers Sox Truck Back to Florida**

By Chris Villani

Sports Reporter/Columnist

Milford resident Al Hartz is seen closing the doors on the back of one of his moving vans. For the past two decades, Hartz has helped get the Red Sox equipment to their Spring Training home in Fort Myers, Fla. Billie Weiss, Red Sox photo

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**MHS Track Teams Seek Strong Finishes at Leagues**

By Chris Villani

Sports Reporter/Columnist

As he embarked on his 20th trip to Florida driving the Boston Red Sox equipment truck, one year ago, Milford resident Al Hartz said he prefers when “Truck Day” is a relatively quiet affair. This year, thanks to the Patriots, he seems to have gotten his wish.

The annual ceremonial departure of the truck and unofficial sign that spring is on its way took place amidst the fanfare of the Patriots winning their sixth Super Bowl and the day before fans flooded the streets of Boston to celebrate the Lombardi trophy.

But even as most of the Boston sports world was focused on the football team that had won a championship the day before — as opposed to the Red Sox who have endured a title drought spanning a little more than three months — Hartz was back behind the wheel for year number 21 steering the 53-foot truck down to the Sox’ spring training home in Fort Myers. The truck departed from Fenway Park on Monday as scheduled with Hartz driving and a flatbed truck carrying Wally the Green Monster and his sister Tessie leading the way.

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MHS Boys Earn 3rd Place Finish in Hock Swim Meet

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

Milford High School's boys' swimming team used its depth to earn a third place finish last weekend at the Hockomock League meet, with multiple swimmers putting together their best times of the year and securing state qualifying performances. "We had a spectacular boys' meet, spectacular," head coach Dave Chaplin said after Milford tied Oliver Ames for third in the 12-team competition. "We showed a lot of depth, that really helped us a lot. This group of guys was focused, they knew what their potential was and they wanted to reach it." The Scarlet Hawks earned a trio of top-four performances in the relay events. In the 200 medley relay, Josh Kravets, Liam Bennett, Gil Hobart and Riley Lynch collaborated to finish third with a time of 1:53.10, good enough to qualify for states. In the freestyle relays, Gianni Panno, Ted Stacks, Jacob Desmond and Lynch placed fourth in the 200-yard distance. Panno, Kravets, Hobart and Desmond finished third in the 400. "The relays for the stock in trade for us," Chaplin said. "Reaching the top two at this level is really a big deal."

Individuals, Panno finished a stellar Hockomock League career with second place finishes in the 100 and 200 freestyle events. Milford showed its depth in the 200 free, with Stacks placing ninth and freshman Jack Weiner finishing 15th to add to the MHS point total. Milford placed all four of its entries in the 50 freestyle in the point scoring top-16. Desmond placed fifth, Kravets sixth, Lynch checked in 13th and Bennett 16th. Chaplin said putting all four in the scoring positions is almost like winning another relay. Hobart dropped four seconds off of his state qualifying time in the 100-yard butterfly en route to a sixth-place finish and also finished third in the backstroke. Kravets finished fifth in the latter event. In the breaststroke, Bennet placed third, besting his top time by four seconds, and Desmond finished seventh. Stacks placed 11th in the 200-yard freestyle and freshman Xander Terrill swam his top time of the season to place 15th, earning two crucial points. "He came out of nowhere," Chaplin said. "If he doesn't swim his best race of the year, Oliver Ames is in third place all alone, it's that simple."

Franklin won the meet, edging King Phillip by five points. After Oliver Ames and Milford who, coincidentally, had tied during their dual meet as well, Attleboro rounded out the top five. Milford continues its season this weekend in the sectional meet at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Smiles & Personal Bests for MHS Girls Swim at Leagues

By Chris Villani
Sports Reporter/Columnist

The Milford High School girls' swim team put together a string of top individual performances at the Hockomock League meet en route to a seventh-place finish and a memorable day in the pool. "It was an unbelievable day for the girls, every single kid swam a personal best and we had state qualifying times across the board," said head coach David Chaplin. "It wasn't a big day for scoring, it was a day for smiles and tears through because they swam their best races, kid after kid."

Milford did score its share of points. The medley relay tea of Kim Stochaj, Victoria Monica, Eica Parsons and Michaela Blackwell placed fourth. Three members of that group, Stochaj, Parsons and Blackwell joined Katie Donahue for a fourth place finish in the freestyle relay.

Parsons anchored the freestyle relay, part of a strong individual day. She made the sectional and state qualifying cut in the 100-yard butterfly and swam to a third-place finish with a time of 1:03.63. Chaplin said the time was a three-second drop from her previous personal best. "She touched the wall, looked over her shoulder at the clock, and when the time came up she just had the biggest smile and started bawling," he said. "So much effort went into that race."

Parsons capped her day by finishing seventh in the individual medley with yet another personal best time. Stochaj placed ninth in the 200 freestyle, winning her heat from lane one, which usually wins swimming with slower seed times are placed. Blackwell earned a seventh-place finish in the 100 freestyle and checked in 10th in the sprint freestyle race. In addition to her work with the 400 freestyle team, Donahue, one of the team captains, scored in the 100 freestyle with a 16th-place finish.

Senior captain Piper Terrill posted her top times in her individual events and anchored the 200 freestyle relay with her first ever sub-30 second split. Junior Paige Reisman broke the seven-minute mark in the 500 freestyle and Chaplin said that, judging by her drive, "you would think she touched the wall in Beijing and was getting a gold medal."

"The kids did a great job," Chaplin said. "This can be a difficult meet, but between Donahue and Terrill, they inspired the kids at the top who were scoring the points and that's the thing we are going t carry into next year. This is a group that's going to battle at the top."