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Volume 32, Issue 10

Blackstone's Hometown Newspaper Since 1993

MARCH 2026

Could the Blizzard of '26 Top the Blizzard of '78?



by Elizabeth McGeough

New Englanders love to talk about the weather. It's predictably unpredictable. Or, as Mark Twain would say, "If you don't like the weather in New England, just wait a minute." We didn't have to wait long – The record-breaking Blizzard of 2026, (named Winter Storm Hernando), will be remembered for a long time.

At T.F. Green International Airport, in Warwick, the snowfall record of 37.9 inches easily bested the 27.6 inches recorded during the Blizzard of '78 – a foot more! It was the greatest Providence snowfall

(32.8–37.9 inches) since they began recording depths 120 years ago. Providence saw both its snowiest two-day period and snowiest single day on record—the snowfall that dropped on Monday alone almost equaled Providence's entire annual average of 36.6 inches.

The historic East Coast Blizzard of 2026 smashed all-time Blizzard continued on page 12

Transforming Biotech Curricula BVT Students Benefit from Grant-Funded Tools



Biotechnology Students (L-R): Ella Drumheller, MacKenzie Moran, and Fiona Comeau. Submitted photo. BVT Biotech story on page 5



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Blackstone Historical Museum

Historical Notes

by Hellen Murray

The long spell of inclement winter weather has prevented necessary work on the museum's wheelchair ramp. The ramp still needs some adjustments. We hope for milder weather soon so that the needed adjustments may be completed and the wheelchair ramp will again be available for use.

Blackstone's Historical Museum is open every Thursday and the first and third Saturdays of the month, free of charge. Museum hours are noon until 3pm. Saturday openings in March will be on the 7th and 21st.

Note: Museum volunteers follow town guidelines. If schools and the municipal center are closed due to inclement weather, the museum is also closed.

Winter Sand and Salt Mix for Residents Salt Mix Notice

FOR RESIDENTS ONLY

Sand/salt mix is available outside the salt shed. Residents of Blackstone are allowed to fill up to two 5-gallon buckets for use on their own property.

The filling of pick-ups, SUV's, other vehicles, and use by contractors is prohibited.

BYOB-Bring your own bucket (and shovel). Location is 6 Rear Mill Street - Behind the Polish Hall. If you have any questions, please contact the DPW at 508-883-9331.

April Election

Vote by Mail applications for the 2026 calendar year are now available. Paper applications can be found on the Town Clerk's website <https://www.townofblackstone.org/829/Voting-by-Mail> or may be requested online through the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website at: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/MailIn-RequestWeb/MailInBallot.aspx>

The last day to apply for a Vote by Mail ballot for the Annual Town Election is Monday, March 30, 2026, by 5:00 PM.

Additional election dates, deadlines, and information can be found on the Town Clerk's webpage <https://www.townofblackstone.org/827/Annual-Town-Election>. Residents with questions are encouraged to contact the Town Clerk's Office.



Open Burning Season Blackstone

Kevin Roy, Fire Chief

Open burning season runs from January 15, 2026, through May 1, 2026. Burning is limited to brush only and is permitted between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., weather permitting. No burning is allowed on Red Flag Days. A valid burning permit is required, and residents must call each day they wish to burn. Obtain permits in person at the Blackstone Fire / Police Dispatch Center, 15 Saint Paul Street, or online at www.townofblackstone.org under "Permits."

For more information, contact the Blackstone Fire Department at (508) 883-1030.

Winter Weather Reminder!

Before your scheduled delivery service please make sure:

- Your driveway is clear of snow and ice.
- The oil/gas fill location is accessible.
- The path to and from the house is clear of snow and ice for the delivery or service person.
- Your exhaust vents are clear.
- Clear Mailbox areas.
- If you lose power and decide to charge your iphone in your car, MAKE SURE the area around the exhaust pipe is clear of snow.

Shoveling Snow in the Street... Is it legal?

According to the town by-laws (part 157-43 section C), if the snow impedes the flow of traffic it would violate the by-law. See below: No person, other than an employee in the service of the Town of Blackstone or an employee in the service of an independent contractor acting for the Town of Blackstone, shall throw, pile, push, or plow snow or ice onto a Town layout, including but not limited to a street, roadway, lane, byway or sidewalk so as to impede the flow of traffic on such ways. Whoever violates this section shall bear the cost of cleanup and shall be punished by warning on the first offense; not more than \$50 on the second offense; and not more than \$100 for any subsequent offenses. Such provisions to be enforceable by the Blackstone Police Department under the provisions of MGL c. 40 § 21D.

Blackstone Enlightener March 2026 email:enlightener@blackstonema.com



Salon Fox
Men~Women~Children
508.883.8309

Saying Goodbye isn't easy...

Salon Fox is closing as of March 28th!

Arlene & Debbie
Tina & Lynn



157 Main St. Blackstone

Salon equipment will be for sale all month, make an offer, final pick up by 3/28-3/29.

As of April 1, Tina will be working at Salon Sunflower in North Smithfield.

Thank you to all of our loyal friends/guests through the years! I've never worked in such a good atmosphere with such a great group of girls in my almost 46 years in the hair business, until these last several with Debbie, Lynn & Tina!

I will miss you all!
Arlene




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Buy one ham & egg breakfast at regular price, get the 2nd at 1/2 off. with coupon only!

CHECK OUT WEEKLY SPECIALS ON FACEBOOK!
Tues - Sat 4 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Sun 5 a.m. - Noon

DOORDASH

Worcester County Sheriff's Medical Named Wellpath Facility of the Year

[Worcester, MA] — The Worcester County Sheriff's Office (WCSO) is proud to announce that the Worcester County Sheriff's Office Medical Team, the Office's subcontracted medical provider, has earned the title of Facility of the Year by its parent company, Wellpath. The award recognizes excellence in leadership, innovation, and the delivery of high-quality correctional healthcare.

Sheriff Lewis Evangelidis noted that shortly after taking office in 2011, he decided to privatize the WCSO Medical Department, believing that it was one of the best decisions of his tenure.

"Subcontracting medical services through Wellpath significantly reduces liability for the Commonwealth while allowing us to provide a higher level of care to those in our custody," Evangelidis said.

The recognition reflects a year of sustained progress under the leadership of Anjuli Richard, Health Services Administrator, and Kayla Carlo, Assistant Health Services Administrator. Together, Richard and Carlo built upon the facility's strong foundation by strengthening workplace culture, refin-



Sheriff Lewis Evangelidis presents a congratulatory plaque to the WCSO Medical Team for being named 2025 Wellpath Facility of the Year. Submitted photo.

ing clinical and operational processes, and expanding access to care through enhanced interdisciplinary coordination.

Anjuli Richard commented, "This award highlights the hard work, resilience, and teamwork demonstrated every day by our staff, as well as the strong collaboration with the Sheriff's Office in supporting a safe, respectful, and effective environment for care."

Wellpath is an international provider of contracted healthcare services for correctional facilities

and other high-risk environments. The company employs more than 8,000 professionals and serves nearly 300 facilities across the United States and Australia, providing care to approximately 200,000 patients each day.

The WCSO medical team includes physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, nurses, and other healthcare professionals who provide 24/7 medical coverage. The medical unit is housed within the Sheriff's Office Intake and Medical Unit, a modern, purpose-built facility that opened in 2021 and

was designed to centralize intake, medical screening, and long-term care.

Key accomplishments contributing to the Facility of the Year designation include securing a \$25,000 UMass Medical School grant to expand ophthalmologic services and vision care, as well as partnering with MCPHS University to enhance dental health education through student involvement. The facility also prioritized workforce development by establishing a nurse-led onboarding committee, implementing shift huddles and a staff Idea Board,

achieving zero first-year staff turnover, and maintaining 100 percent compliance with annual training requirements.

Additional partnerships with Anna Maria College allowed 27 Bachelor of Science in Nursing students to complete clinical observation hours. Collaboration with UMass hospital case managers further improved continuity of care for patients returning from hospital stays. Operational enhancements included the creation of an Infirmary Committee to support com-

Sheriff cont. on page 5

Blackstone Enlightener March 2026 email:enlightener@blackstonema.com

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Blackstone COA

Senior Center Updates

Tiziana Milano COA Director 508-876-5135

See our Newsletter online: www.townofblackstone.org/326/Newsletters.

Our hours are: Mon-Thurs 8:30 AM-4:30 PM, Fri: 8:30AM -12 Noon. RSVP in person at the Blackstone COA, by phone (508) 883-1500 ex 151, or via email KCoffey@TownOfBlackstone.org.

Please RSVP for meals one week in advance, see newsletter for menu. Suggested Meal Donation: Tri-Valley Tuesdays:\$3 Other Meals:\$4.

Weekly Programs & Activities:
Join us on Monday afternoons for Artist Alley! Bring your craft or art project and work alongside other artists. More info in the newsletter!

Monday: 10: Pound Fitness, Game Day. 12 – 4: Artist Alley.

Tuesday: 9:15: Strength & Stretch. 10:10: Chair Yoga. 11: Winter Walking Club. 12: Lunch. 1:15: Strength Circuit.

Wednesday: 9:30: Coffee Club, Tap Dance. 10:30: Line Dance. 11:30: Meditation. 12: Lunch. 1: BINGO. 2:15: Zumba

Thursday: 9: Tai Chi Beginner. 9:30: Cribbage. 10: Tai Chi Intermediate. 11: Journey Through Grief. 12: Lunch. 1: Aging Gracefully.

Friday: 10: Mah Jong, Pound Fitness. 11: Winter Walking Club.

March Happenings:
2nd:12 noon: Movie Monday: PBS Documentary: Hidden Ireland (56 minutes).

4th: 9:30 AM Bus: Travel Breakfast, Patriots Diner, Woonsocket.

5th: 12 Noon: Pizza with Vinnie! Join Vincenzo Tirone, building commissioner and pizza aficionado for a handmade pizza lunch.

9th: 11 AM Bus: Mystery Lunch: "Feel Welcome, Feel Hungry, Feel Like Family" Lunch Mains & Burgers: \$13-\$21.

12th: Noon: Lunch & Learn: Noah from My Personal Home Health Care presents: Navigating the Home Health Care Decision.

16th: 11 AM: "Wharf-rats and Irish-ies": The Blackstone Canal and the Story of the Irish in Worcester, presented by Austin Alexander from the Blackstone River Greenway Visitor Services.

17th: 12 Noon: St. Pat's Lunch. Space limited, RSVP Required. Meal provided by Tri-Valley, \$3 suggested donation collected day-of.

19th, Noon: Lunch & Learn: Kathryn Toomey of the Worcester Registry of Deeds and Stephanie Fattman of the Probate Courts.

23rd, 10:30 AM: Garden Club: Spring Planting. Help us clean up the garden beds, and put the first round of seedlings into the ground. Storm Date: Mar 30.

25th, 11-Noon: Visit Luisa Lewis, Senior Plan Consultant of BCBS MA to find the answers to your questions about Medicare, Dental, and GeoBlue Plans.

30th 10:30 AM: Garden Club, Milk Jug Seed Starting. If the Spring Planting is rescheduled for this date, Seed Starting will be on April 13th.

30th, 1 PM: "Baseball in Worcester and the Blackstone Valley" presented by Austin Alexander from the Blackstone River Greenway Visitor Services.

31st: Noon: Birthday Bash Lunch: RSVP Required 7 business days in advance, Space Limited. Hot-Dog Bar provided by Tri-Valley, \$3 donation collected day-of.

31st, 1pm – Todd Goodwin presents "That's a Good Wun: Seasonal Fireside Stories" Thanks in part to the Blackstone and MA Cultural Council.

Visit our website for upcoming April dates and events.

Millville COA

Tina Cook COA Director

508-883-3523

The hours for the Center are Monday, Tuesday, Thursday 9-3. 508-883-3523. The Senior Bus is available Monday through Friday. Please call to set up an appointment between the hours of 8am to 3pm 774-573-6084. Medical trips are given priority.

Friday March 13: HOBBY LOBBY Trip followed by Lunch at Hibachi Grill Buffett. Bus leaves at 9:30 am.

MONDAY:
March 2nd: Zumba.
March 9: Senior Club Lunch 11:30 am, Coastline Show Chorus.

The class is sponsored by the Mass Cultural Council and the Millville Cultural Council.

March 16th: Making Dog Toys for Animal Shelter 11:00 AM
March 23rd: BINGO 1:00PM.

TUESDAY:
March 3rd: Line Dance 9:30 am, Pitch 10:45 am, Chair Yoga 1:30 pm.

March 10th: Line Dance 9:30 am, Pitch 10:45 am, Chair Yoga 1:30 pm.

March 17th: Line Dance 9:30 am, Pitch 10:45 am, Chair Yoga 1:30 pm.

March 24th: Line Dance 9:30 am, Pitch 10:45 am, Chair Yoga 1:30 pm.

March 31st: Line Dance 9:30 am, Pitch 10:45 am, Chair Yoga 1:30 pm.

WEDNESDAY:
Hand, Foot & Knee Card Game is every week at 12:00 pm. Come and enjoy the fun. All Are Welcome.

THURSDAY:
March 5th: Lunch \$3.00 noon, Prok Tenderloin BINGO to follow at 1pm. All Are Welcome.

March 12: Painting starts at 10 am. Call to register \$5.00. 508-883-3523. Lunch \$3.00 at noon

Corned Beef & Cabbage. The class is sponsored by the Mass Cultural Council and the Millville Cultural Council. You don't have to be a painter to come for lunch!

March 19th: Surprise Lunch noon \$3.00. COA Meeting at 1pm.

March 26: Movie at 11 am, Lunch noon \$3.00.

March Birthday Celebration at 1. If you have a birthday in March, please come join us.

MISC Information:
SNAP (formerly known as Food Stamps) Please contact me if you need assistance signing up for this program.

Blackstone/Millville Food Pantry is open Tuesdays 7:00 pm – 8:00 pm and Saturdays 10:00am – 11:00 am at the Divine Mercy Parish Hall, St. Paul Street, Blackstone, MA.

Senior/Veterans Tax Work Off Program: you can save up to \$1,000 from your property tax bill by volunteering to help the town. Please call for more information to sign up.

The Millville Senior Center has a drop off box to dispose of unused or expired prescription and non-prescription drugs feel free to drop off.

We also collect used eyeglasses for the Lions Club. Feel free to come in to drop those off.

Medical equipment is available for loan, such as wheelchairs, canes, and shower chairs. Please call for more information. 508-883-3523.



Blackstone and Millville Garden Club March Events



please email BlackstoneAndMillvilleGC@gmail.com.

• March 30th at 10:30, we will be Milk Jug Sowing our Summer crops. Blackstone Senior Center. All the materials are provided.

Email us at: BlackstoneAndMillvilleGC@gmail.com if you have any questions. We are an inclusive and welcoming club and are always looking for new members. Please check us out at <https://blackstone-millvillegarden.club/>

• The Blackstone and Millville March meeting will be held on May 12th at 6:30 at the Blackstone Public Library.

• March 23rd at 10:30, we will be planting our Spring Garden at the Blackstone Senior Center. If you would like to join us,

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From Chief Gilmore's Desk

Tax Season Means Scam Season

With tax season underway, in order to avoid falling victim to common scams, we'd like to advise the community to be careful with personal and financial information when filing. Unfortunately, IRS and other financial scams are common during this time of year. It's important to verify the legitimacy of anyone who contacts you regarding your taxes or refund before providing them with any personal information.

Residents are encouraged to complete and file taxes as soon as possible to give potential scammers less time and opportunity to submit a refund using their information. Other scams that have been known to occur, especially during tax season, include scammers calling residents claiming to be from the IRS or another government body. The scammer informs victims that they did not pay, or incorrectly filed their taxes and now owe money to the IRS, which must be paid promptly through a pre-loaded debit card or wire transfer. If victims refuse to cooperate, they are then threatened with arrest, deportation or suspension of a business or driver's license.

To avoid becoming a victim of an IRS scam, residents are encouraged to remember the following:

- If you owe back taxes, the IRS will contact you by mail, and not by phone, email or social media.
- The IRS never requests personal or financial information by email, text or social media. (The IRS says it has no way to text people.)
- The IRS does not leave prerecorded or urgent voicemails.
- The IRS will not ask for payment using a pre-paid debit card, gift cards, a money order or wire transfer.
- The IRS will not ask for a credit card number over the phone.

If you receive a call from an IRS scammer, hang up. Do not engage with these callers. If you get a call from someone claiming to be with the IRS asking for a payment, or if you think you may owe money, hang up and call the IRS directly at 800-829-1040.

If you are ever unsure about a potential scam, contact the Blackstone Police Department at 508-883-1212.

Sheriff Medical Named

continued from page 3

pliance with updated NCCHC standards and the launch of regular interdisciplinary meetings with non-Wellpath mental health partners.

"This award affirms the meaningful progress we have made over the past decade to strengthen the operations of the Worcester County Sheriff's Office," said Lew Evangelidis. "I'm especially proud of the strong partnership we have built with our healthcare team and the professionalism our corrections staff demonstrates in working alongside them to support those in our care."

Through consistent results across patient care, workforce engagement, partnerships, operational processes, and performance outcomes, Worcester County Jail Medical exemplifies Wellpath's Five P's and is a deserving recipient of the Facility of the Year award.



Transforming Biotech Curricula BVT Students Benefit from Grant-Funded Tools

UPTON – Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) has been awarded a grant from the National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS) through its BioLEAP Classroom Grant program. The competitive grant allowed the school to purchase 10 life-size rat models for its Biotechnology program, eliminating the need for traditional animal dissection and equipping students with modern educational tools.

The male and female rat models are detailed anatomical replicas designed specifically for educational dissection. Each model features interchangeable reproductive systems, detachable organs—including the heart, lungs, liver, and intestines—and a numbered key to support student learning. These tools allow students to explore anatomy thoroughly without the use of real animals.

"The reusable models are cost-effective, humane, and easy to manage," said BVT's Biotechnology Instructor Zoë Army, M.S. "Introducing our students to the accessible rat models allows them to gain early exposure to animal anatomy without the pressure of a full dissection. This approach supports student learning and engagement, while fostering curiosity in career paths where lab animals are important components."

Fiona Comeau of Millbury, a sophomore in BVT's Biotechnology program, recently used the model in class. She said, "I liked them a lot more than if we had an animal dissection, which I think is rather off-putting. I think we got a lot of useful information about identifying rat anatomy via the dissection model."

"The dissection model made learning anatomy less stressful and more interactive, and it encouraged more discussion and participation," said MacKenzie Moran of Grafton, also a Biotechnology sophomore. "I would recommend that we continue using them for future classes."

As part of the grant agreement, recipients are required to submit a video of the models in use. This requirement created an opportunity to collaborate with students in BVT's Multimedia Communications program, who are producing a professional video for NAVS highlighting the benefits of the grant-funded models.

Logan Didio of Upton, a senior in the program, assisted with video production. "It was exciting

to be part of this grant-funded initiative and see how our multimedia skills support humane science education," he said.

Joseph Bache of Hopedale, also a senior in Multimedia Communications, participated in planning and filming interviews with Biotechnology students. "It was a great experience attending meetings, selecting equipment, and preparing interview questions to clearly communicate the purpose of the grant while keeping students comfortable on camera," he said. "We used a Canon cinema camera on a tripod, an external clip-on microphone for clean audio, headphones for sound monitoring, and LED lighting to ensure consistent, well-lit shots."

"The on-camera interview gave me a chance to reflect on what I learned using the rat model and how it applied to our biotechnology work," said Ella Drumheller of Douglas, a sophomore in the Biotechnology program. "The model reduced the anxiety of traditional dissection while building my confidence and understanding of rat anatomy, which will support my future labs, animal-based co-ops, and science fair projects."

Once completed, the video will be shared with NAVS and available on the school's website.

The BioLEAP Classroom Grant is awarded by NAVS to help teachers purchase humane, non-animal models that replace the use of specimen dissection. The goal of the grant is to support excellence in science education without harming animals.

About Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT): Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School serves the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. Located in the heart of the Blackstone Valley, BVT creates a positive learning community that prepares students for personal and professional success in an internationally competitive society through a fusion of rigorous vocational, technical, and academic skills. For more information about the school, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us.



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*Happy 55th Anniversary
Robert and Joyce St. Jean*



We love you!

Lisa, Jeff, Amy, Jeremy, Luke, Al, and Penny

Midlife Weight Gain: You're Not Alone

by Carol Archambault

Over the last few years, I have had countless conversations with women that start the same way:

"I haven't changed anything... So why am I gaining weight?"
"Why does the weight seem to settle in my midsection now?"
"Why don't the things that used to work...work anymore?"

If you have asked yourself these questions, please know that you are not alone. Midlife, especially the years of perimenopause and menopause bring real biological changes. As estrogen begins to fluctuate and decline, our bodies naturally shift how and where it stores fat. Muscle mass naturally decreases if we are not intentionally working to maintain it, which can slow down your metabolism. Sleep becomes disrupted and stress can become heavier too.

Many women in this season are caring for aging parents, supporting adult children, navigating career changes, and trying to keep everyone steady. Often at the expense of their rest and recovery.

Chronic stress can raise cortisol levels, which encourages fat storage around the midsection. Poor sleep disrupts hunger hormones and blood sugar regulation. Add in busy schedules and infrequent strength training and daily movement, it's a recipe for slowing down that metabolism. Midlife weight gain is often a

signal, your body is asking for a new approach. The solution is rarely eating less and exercising more. Extreme dieting can make things worse by accelerating muscle loss and increasing fatigue.

This stage of life responds better to:

- Strength training to protect muscle and bones
- Eating enough protein to support metabolism
- Daily walks for blood sugar balance and stress relief
- Calming the nervous system through breathwork and walks outside

Start thinking about building the kind of health that will support a vibrant life for the years ahead. Strong bones, clear thinking, stable energy and emotional resilience.

Carol Archambault is a Certified Menopause Coaching Specialist who helps women navigate perimenopause and menopause through lifestyle, nutrition, strength training and mindset. She believes knowledge is power and midlife is a time to take charge of your health, so that you can live this chapter with vibrancy. You can reach her at 774-573-8030, email -carolarch23@gmail.com or follow her on Instagram @ Balance_in_midlife.

BEGORRA!

**It's a St. Paddy's
Celebration!**



at the

P.A.C.C.

**Sat. March 14th
1:00PM until ?**



**Enjoy
Corned Beef
Sandwiches**

Music & Fun

**Featuring
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6 Mill Street, Blackstone 508.883.9485**

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Coffee or Tea, and Juice**

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Adults.....\$12
Seniors/Veterans.....\$8

CASH AND CARD ACCEPTED

Divine Mercy Parish Hall
March 29th
8am-12:30pm

And Meet the Easter Bunny!

Main Street

Business of the Month

Rejuvenate with Expert Skincare at *Boutique Nurses Studio*



Looking to start your medical grade skin-care journey? Look no further! Boutique Nurses Studio, located at 61 Main St, Studio 103, Blackstone, is a collaboration of medical professionals specializing in beauty wellness. Established in 2016, Boutique Nurses' unique mini-spa setting caters to a one-on-one experience for each of its clients.

They offer Vein Treatments, Laser Hair Removal, Lash Services (Lash Lifts & Tints), Boutique Skin Rejuvenation (Microneedling Enhancement); Collagen-Building Series and Restoration Program; Lip Enhancement; Wrinkle Reduction and Facial Balancing.

Also, Under-Eye and Midface Rejuvenation Sessions; Brow Services; Hand Rejuvenation; DermaPlane, Botox and other treatments, with consultations, and more.

Boutique Nurses Studio embodies what patient-centered aesthetic medicine is all about—skill, safety and caring. The Studio is opened Monday, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM; Tuesday, 9:00 AM-7:00 PM, Wednesday-Friday, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM; Saturday, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM; and Sunday is closed. Get ready for a fresh Spring look and call Gina, Jessica, Jenni or other staff at 833.204.3826 today!

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Parks & Rec Looking for Spring!

by Celeste Langlois

We are looking forward to Spring! We have so many great things planned for this year! Our Annual Easter Egg Hunt will be held on March 28 at 1:00pm. Register for the event on our webpage on the town website. Children ages 3 to 16 are welcome to attend. If you have a family member that would love to attend but may need special accommodations, please specify that on the registration form or email parksandrecreation@townofblackstone.org. We will do all we can to make sure all registrants can be included in this annual tradition.

Other upcoming "Save The Date" events are listed below and we hope you'll join us:

April 18th - Town Hall Clean Up For Earth Day

April 25th - Tags n Trout

April 30th to May 2 - Blackstone Derby Day (Think Kentucky Derby Fun)

June 20 - Ice Cream Social

July 23, 24, 25, and 26 - Blackstone's 250th Semiquincentennial Celebration

Our meetings for March are on the 9th and 23th in the Main Meeting Room at the Municipal Center at 6:00 pm. Please join us if you have ideas and/or want to get involved.

As a reminder, our local Sports Leagues are running registrations. If you are looking for information on a particular organization or sport, here are some important contact emails:

Baseball and Softball - Youths and Adults: Blackstone-Millville Youths Athletic Association at bmyathleticassociation@gmail.com

Soccer - Youths: Blackstone-Millville Youths Soccer Organization at secretary@bmyso.org

Men's Softball - Adult: Pat McCarthy at Pryanmcc@gmail.com

Adult Sports - Adult: Blackstone Valley Adult Sports and Recreation Association at bvadultsportsrecassociation@gmail.com

Basketball - Adult: Swishville Hoops at swishvillehoops1@aol.com.

Divine Mercy

Divine Mercy Parish in March
2-Night Lenten Mission
Thursday, March 5th and Friday,
March 6th.

Mass and Mission begins each evening at 6:30pm.

Our speaker will be Fr. Stephen Gemme from the Worcester Diocese.

Nine Week Novena to Saint Peregrine. Fridays starting March 6th thru Friday, May 1st at 8:30am, (right after 8am Mass).

Divine Mercy Youth Ministry for youths in grades 7 thru 12. The next meeting is: Friday, March 13th in the Parish Center Lower Hall.

During this meeting we will be filling easter eggs with candy for the parish's upcoming Easter Egg Hunt on April 4th. The evening also includes: Snacks, Games, Music and hanging out with other youths.

Knights of Columbus IRISH NIGHT 2026

Join us at 48 St Paul St Blackstone in the Parish Center Lower Hall. On Saturday, March 14th beginning at 5:30pm, (all proceeds from this evening will be used to purchase an Automated external defibrillator (AED) for the Church.

Tickets are \$25 per person - kids ages 8-12 \$10 - children 8 and under are free.

Enjoy a Traditional Corned Beef Dinner and Live Music by THE GOOD LIVING BAND.

Proclaiming Hope through the Good News of Jesus Christ

Come to Christ Community Church of Blackstone to enjoy friendly fellowship and hear Pastor Joe Overly expound on the word of God. You will be encouraged, uplifted and challenged to live a Godly life. If you are unable to attend in person, please navigate to: Christ Community Church of Blackstone You Tube and join us as we live stream the service. Telecast begins at 9:25 a.m.

Notes from Pastor Joe:

Guided by Truth: Finding Direction Through the Bible

In a world filled with changing opinions and uncertain circumstances, many people are searching for something steady to guide their lives. The Bible has served for generations as a trusted source of wisdom, comfort, and direction. Its teachings call us to love our neighbors, forgive freely, act justly, and walk humbly with God. In times of hardship, its promises bring hope; in times of decision, its principles offer clarity. Those who choose to trust its message often discover not only moral guidance, but a deep sense of purpose and peace that carries them through life's challenges.

While people may look to many different sources for guidance, the Bible stands apart in its enduring message of God's love and faithfulness. It does not simply offer advice—it invites us into a relationship with the One who created us and knows us fully. Trusting the Bible is not about having all the answers at once, but about anchoring our lives to a truth that does not change. For anyone seeking direction, stability, and hope, opening its pages can be the first step toward a life grounded in lasting truth.

God Bless Pastor Joe Overly

Pastor Joe is available to meet by appointment.

Please phone or email:

Email: pastor.joe@cccob.org

Phone: 508-883-7885

Visit our website at <http://www.cccob.org> or our Facebook page at "Christ Community Church of Blackstone" to learn more about us!



Blackstone Enlightener March 2026 email:enlightener@blackstonema.com

Fundraiser



The FRIENDS will hold a fundraiser at Goodstuff Smokehouse, 97 Main Street, Blackstone on March 12th from 4:00p.m. to 9:00p.m.

A percentage of the sales from eat-in or take-out orders will benefit the Friends.

Present this AD at Goodstuff Smokehouse on March 12th and exchange it for one free raffle ticket with a chance to win \$50 worth of lottery tickets.

Join us and support the library!



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BMR High Happenings

Rock-Paper-Scissors

By Marissa Pedorella
BMR Correspondent

The school spirit continues at Blackstone-Millville Regional High School with the annual Ro-Sham-Bo Tournament.

A school-wide rock-paper-scissors contest was held on Feb 13. Every student and teacher starts with a beaded necklace. During passing time, students challenge their peers for their beads by playing rock-paper-scissors. The end of the day included an assembly, where those with beads remaining completed final battles. Senior Beatrice Korj was victorious in the end.

The winter sports at Blackstone-Millville Regional High School are coming to an end. The Boys and Girls Basketball teams both qualified for the Clark Tournament. The girls were seeded with the #8 spot with the boys seeded #6. Each squad lost their opening

round Clark Tourney games but each are looking forward to playoff games in the State Tournament.

On February 8, the indoor track team headed to the track at New Balance in Boston for the CMAC Small Schools Championship. The boys hockey co-op played their last game of the season against Bridgewater and the girls swimming co-op finished the post-season by traveling to Springfield College for Sectionals and MIT for States. Look back in the March edition for a final sports wrap up.

Musicians continue to perform as the annual Winter Home Show was held Feb. 21. Winter Guard and Winter Percussion gave outstanding performances at their winter events.

March will be a busy month at BMR. Eighth graders,

Freshmen and Sophomores will get their semi-formal dance as the "Spring Fling" will be held March 6 at the school. The annual Mr. BMR is scheduled for March 12.

The National Honor Society is holding the annual Empty Bowl Dinner on March 11 from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tickets will be sold by students or upon entry of the event. Every NHS member makes a handmade bowl out of clay, to be raffled off. There will also be a variety of soup, bread, and other snacks available. All proceeds go to the Blackstone Food Pantry.

The latest edition of the Pony Express, BMR's Official School Newspaper, will have more in-depth features on this and other BMR News. To view it, search "BMR Pony Express" on the Internet and click the latest issue.



Senior Bea Korj shows off all the beads she won during BMR's school-wide Rock-Paper-Scissors contest. (Photo by Mark Juba)



The Vietnam War Veterans Recognition Act of 2017 established the day as a national observance. Celebrated every March 29, Vietnam Veterans Day is a time for Americans to recognize and honor the courage, sacrifice, and service of those who fought in the Vietnam War. This day serves as a tribute to the men and women who endured incredible challenges both during and after their service, ensuring their contributions are never forgotten.

Many Vietnam veterans returned home to a divided nation and did not receive the recognition they deserved at the time. Vietnam Veterans Day serves as an opportunity to express gratitude for their bravery and resilience,

acknowledging their dedication and the hardships they faced both in combat and upon their return.

We salute the selfless service of Vietnam veterans across all branches of the military, including the Coast Guard, Air Force, Army, Navy, and Marine Corps. Across the country, communities commemorate this day with ceremonies, educational events, and moments of reflection, acknowledging the sacrifices made by Vietnam veterans and the lasting impact of their service.



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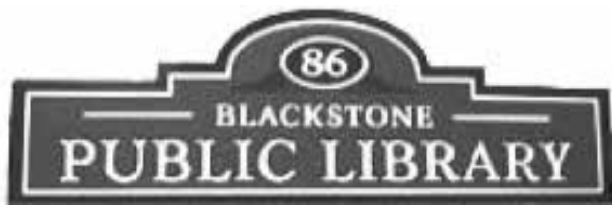
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Blackstone Enlightener March 2026 email:enlightener@blackstonema.com



Southwick's ZooMobile Visits Blackstone Library

by Tressy N. Collier

On Saturday, March 14 at 11 a.m., Southwick's Zoo presents "An Introduction to Animal Ecology". With the help of some live animal ambassadors, this program will explore topics such as: traits used to classify different animals into groups like birds, reptiles, and mammals; types of interactions between animal groups; how animals interact with their environment, and much more!

This event is for all ages, but children must be able to sit for the entire program. Registration is required. To register, please visit the library's events page at www.blackstonepubliclibrary.org or call 508-883-1931. This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library and is in memory of Nolan Campbell.

Annual Pajama Drive

The Blackstone Public Library has teamed up with the Boston Bruins to participate in their 18th Annual Pajama Drive to benefit DCF Kids and Cradles to Crayons. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) works with the Boston Bruins to coordinate library participation in the drive. The PJ Drive's goal is to collect 10,000 pairs of new pajamas for local children living in low-income and homeless situations.

The Boston Bruins PJ Drive runs from February 1 through March 15, 2026. The library will be collecting new pairs of pajamas for babies, children and teens. Most needed sizes include 12 – 18 mos., 18 – 24 mos., and 18/20, but all sizes including adult will be accepted. Pajamas can be dropped off in the Children's Room during normal business hours. The Blackstone Library's personal goal is to collect 200 pairs of new pajamas! Please contact Tressy Collier at 508-883-1931 or email tcollier@cwmares.org with any questions.

Adult Programs

Bon Voyage Forever!! Delvena Theatre Company. Saturday, March 21 at 2:00 pm. Bon Voyage Forever!! is an interactive comedy murder mystery set on a cruise ship. Audience members will become part of the story, working together to

solve the mystery. Registration is required. Register using the library's event page or call for more information. This program is sponsored by Dean Bank.

Creating an Emergency Folder for Your Loved Ones with Amy Azza. Tuesday, March 24 at 6:30 pm. Attorney Amy Azza will be presenting about exactly which documents you should put in an emergency folder and how to create a full legacy plan. Registration is required. Register using the library's event page or call for more information.

Help with Jenna Gouin: Monday, March 9 from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Thursday, March 26 from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm. Jenna Gouin will provide assistance with MassHealth, fuel assistance, Medicare and referrals to other community organizations. Registration is required. Call the Blackstone Public Library to register for a 30-minute time slot.

Photography Club: Tuesday, February 17 at 6:30 pm. Join other photographers to share ideas, tips, tricks.

Quilting Club: Thursday, March 26 from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Join other quilters to share ideas, tips, tricks, and do some quilting. This club is sponsored by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

Ongoing Book Groups

New members are always welcome. Books are available for pick up at the library.

Horror Book Club-Thursday, March 5 at 6:30 p.m. Contact Tressy Collier at tcollier@cwmares.org.

Evening Book Group-Tuesday, March 10 at 6:30 pm. Contact Renee Milliken at rmilliken@cwmares.org.

Senior Center Book Club Tuesday, March 17 at 11 a.m. Contact Ellen Goudreau at egoudreau@cwmares.org.

Afternoon Book Club: Tuesday, March 31 at 3:00 pm. Contact Donna Foster at dfoster@cwmares.org.

Adult Programs with Jean: Scrapbooking Thursday, March 5 at 5:00 PM Registration is required. Funded by the Friends of the Blackstone Library.

Adult Craft at the Library: Bunny Plaque Thursday, March 12 at 6:30 PM and Tuesday, March 17 at 1:00 PM Registration is required. Funded by LIG MEG.

The Senior Crafty Corner at the Library: Springtime Wreath Thursday, March 19 at 1:00 PM Participants 60 years of age or older. Registration required.

Visit the Blackstone Public Library website for additional programs and events.



by Lee Holfelder

Welcome March! Spring is in the air! Great news from Denise Daignault, President of the Friends of the Blackstone Library!

The Friends semi-annual fundraiser at Goodstuff Smokehouse on Main Street will take place on Thursday, March 12, 2026 from 4:00-9:00 pm. Bring the Friends' ad from the March edition of the Enlightener with you and receive a free raffle ticket for a chance to win one of two \$50 worth of lottery tickets raffle prizes.

The Friends next fundraiser will be held on Friday, April 10, 2026, 6:30-8:30 pm in the library meeting room. Get ready to connect with "the beyond" as the Friends welcome the gifted, intuitive, professional medium and energy practitioner, Pam Palano. Share in the experience as Pam connects members of the audience with their loved ones who have passed on. Admission is \$55 per person and limited to fifty seats.

Tickets will be available for purchase starting March 2, 2026 on the Friends website at <https://www.friendsoftheblackstonelibrary.com>.

Tickets can also be obtained at the Friends Ongoing Book Sale counter. Checks should be made payable to "Friends of the Blackstone Library" or "FOTBL". Attendance does not guarantee a personal reading. Secure your seat to embark on an enlightening journey of insight and connections.

As always, we thank our community for their support. The Friends next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, at 6:30 pm. New members are always welcome!

Blackstone Enlightener March 2026 email: enlightener@blackstonema.com



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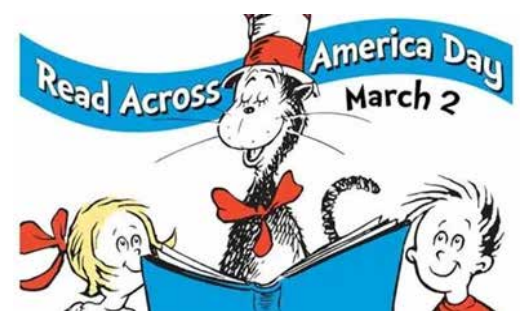
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National Read Across America Day

Celebrated every year on March 2nd, which is the birthday of American author Dr. Seuss, it's also known as Dr. Seuss Day. This is a day dedicated to encouraging children and young people to read, and motivating parents and teachers to help them do so. The day was created and is hosted annually by the National Education Association.

Adults and children everywhere can delight in reading Dr. Seuss' or other authors' books! "Some are old and some are new. Some are sad, and some are glad"! JUST READ!

Troop 1 Scouting Update

by Matt Catalano

It's been a great start to the year for Troop 1 Boys Scouts! On January 17th the Troop honored it's first Eagle Scout in over three years when James Walsh was cknowledged for his hard work and determination over the course of 11 years. For his Eagle Project, James installed information kiosk posts along the 5-mile loop trail at the George B Parker Wildlife Preserve in Coventry, RI. Local dignitaries, members of the community and close friends and family were on hand to celebrate the unique accomplishment.

The Troop then took on the frigid cold and spent a day at Buckhill in Burrville competing in the annual Klondike Derby. The boys took fist place in Shelter Building and did very well among their competitors. The boys spent that night at the Blackstone Valley Boys and Girls Club for some much-deserved time of fellowship and gaming. Big thanks to the BVBGC for hosting us!

Next up for the Troop will be some Ice Fishing and preparing for their spring hike/camping trip! Don't forget to come out in support at our Annual Pancake Breakfast on March 29th at Divine Mercy Parish!

Not to be outdone, the Cubs of Pack 3144 have been busy working toward their next ranks. They spent a night at the church in January and then competed in the Annual Pinewood Derby! Congrats to the winners and special thanks to the community members who participated!

The Cubs will be spending a day in the woods learning Scout skills such as fire building, first aid, knot tying, and cooking. Then, the Pack will see the most senior members Cross Over to their respective Troops. This will see 9 total Scouts graduate. Congrats to all of them!

If you want to see more of our adventures, follow us on Facebook @Pack3144BlackstoneMa and @Troop1Blackstone or learn more about Scouting at www.narragansettbsa.org

Scoutmaster Matt Catalano proudly presents Nolan Gabrielson the Pinewood Derby first place winner trophy. Submitted photo.



Bottom photo Scouts enjoying some snow time and the great outdoors.



Blackstone Enlightener March 2026 email:enlightener@blackstonema.com



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BMR High School Building Update

The Blackstone–Millville Regional School District (BMRSD) is partnering with the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) to explore the possibility of a new high school. A dedicated School Building Committee (SBC) is guiding the process, which is currently in the Preferred Schematic Design phase.

The Preferred Schematic Report was submitted to the MSBA on December 18, 2025. The MSBA is scheduled to review it at their February 25, 2026 Board meeting. If approved, the project will move into the Schematic Design phase — where the design, budget, and construction timeline are further refined. After that, the next step would be the communities voting in Fall 2026 to determine whether the project moves forward.

Join the Conversation Public Community Presentation: These monthly presentations are designed to share updates, answer questions, and hear community feedback.

The next meeting will be in late March. Location is in person at Blackstone Millville Regional High School. Or join us online via Livestream link: <https://vimeo.com/event/5708768?fl=so&fe=fs>.

All presentations are recorded and available at <http://www.bmrtd.net> School Building Committee Meetings: All meetings are held at the Frederick W. Hartnett Middle School, in the Media Center, unless otherwise virtually posted. All meetings begin at 5:00 PM. *All dates and times are subject to change.

Please check the District website for the most up-to-date information.

- March 11, 2026
- April 8, 2026
- May 13, 2026 UPCOMING DECISIONS
- Schematic Design Submission: June 2026
- Community Project Vote: Fall 2026

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

- Visit: <http://www.bmrtd.net>
- Facebook Group: BMRSD School Building Project
- Questions or comments?

Email us at admin-sbc@bmrtd.net
Stay tuned for next month's update!

Submitted by
The School Building Committee



Winter Parking Ban

Effective December 1, 2025 through March 31, 2026, the winter all-night parking ban is in effect.

Parking will be prohibited on all streets for a period no longer than one hour between the hours of 1:00 a.m. and 6:00 a.m., with the exceptions of the following streets listed below:

Parking will be allowed on the odd number side of Prospect St., First Ave., County St. and Old Mendon Street.

Parking will be allowed on the even numbered side of Rayner St., Washington St., Howard St. and Ives St.

However, if it snows during the night or there is a warning that we are expecting snow, all vehicle owners must make arrangements to move their vehicles off the roadways so they will not interfere with snow removal operations. If it snows and vehicles are not moved, they will be ticketed and towed at the owner's expense.

Blackstone Chief of Police Gilmore

Massachusetts Homestead Declaration: A Simple Filing That Protects Your Home

For most families in Blackstone, a home is their single largest asset. Yet many homeowners don't realize that Massachusetts' law allows them to protect up to \$1,000,000 of home equity—but only if they take the time to file a simple document called a Declaration of Homestead.

The Massachusetts Homestead Act protects the equity in your primary residence from most unsecured creditors including judgment creditors. Picture this: You're driving on an unfamiliar road and go through a stop sign by mistake. Worse yet, you hit a pedestrian and they pass away. Most people only have \$300,000 liability on their car insurance policy. The decedent's estate will get the \$300,000 and then the estate will come for your house. If you don't have a homestead, the decedent's estate will auction your home to the highest bidder and evict you. If you have a homestead, you keep your house.

In 2024, the Commonwealth enacted the "Affordable Homes Act," increasing the protection offered by a recorded homestead from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000. Anyone who had previously filed a homestead automatically received the increased protection without needing to re-file.

For elderly or disabled homeowners, the law allows personal exemptions to be stacked, meaning eligible residents can protect up to \$2,000,000 of equity in the same home.

Who can file? The law is flexible: sole owners, married couples, unmarried couples, life estate holders, and trustees of homes held in trust are all eligible to file so long as the home is or will be used as the homeowner's principal residence.

Homestead protection does not shield against mortgages, property tax liens, IRS or state tax liens, child support or spousal support, or mechanics' liens.

Filing is simple and inexpensive. You may want to discuss this with your attorney in order to take advantage of this excellent low-cost protection.

The author, Christopher J. Ryan, is an attorney at Ryan Law Office, 181 Main Street, Blackstone, MA 01504 – www.ryanlawoffice.com.

Could the Blizzard of '26 Top the Blizzard of '78?

Continued from page 1

non-snow records: peak wind gusts of 98 mph were recorded in Wellfleet, MA; between Sunday and Tuesday, carriers scrubbed more than 10,000 flights, making Hernando one of the most disruptive aviation events of the winter season. It was the worst single aviation disruption since the COVID-19 pandemic groundings of 2020; for the first time in 153 years of continuous publication—through two World Wars, the Great Depression, the blizzard of 1978, the September 11 attacks, and COVID-19—Tuesday marked the first time The Boston Globe suspended daily printing since its 1872 founding (aside from labor strikes).

But the Blizzard of 1978 became the standard by which all future snow events were measured. Those of you who didn't live here to experience it, or who weren't even born to experience those difficult days (or maybe you're a "blizzard baby"?), you now have this new 2026 blizzard standard to "compare". And how does it compare? Could the Blizzard of '26 surpass 78's? In terms of snowfall, yes. But by the storm's other effects, 1978's blizzard is still hard to top.

The 1978 storm's devastation was amplified by rudimentary weather forecasting and a lack of instant communication. Remember, the internet did not exist and there were no Smartphones. MassDOT got periodic updates from a teletype machine. There were no 24-hour cable news or app alerts. Information was often several hours old by the time it reached plow crews.

What made the '78 storm so devastating was the suddenness with which it

approached. Weather forecasts predicted a blizzard, but when morning came and there was no snow, skeptical New Englanders treated the workday like business as usual. People hadn't heard the latest forecasts, that the heaviest snow was beginning to fall up the coast and wouldn't stop for hours. Thousands of people couldn't make it home, buried in the swiftly falling snow. They abandoned their cars on streets and highways, further complicating matters when plows couldn't get through.

In '78, the storm lingered over the region for over a day and whipped the region with brutal hurricane-level winds, piling up the snow. The highways were shut down for a week, along with local driving bans. On Feb. 6-7, 1978, 30 inches of snow was reported in Woonsocket, which the state Department of Environmental Management considered the highest snowfall total, before February 23rd, 2026, of any 24 hours in Rhode Island.

In all, the 1978 blizzard caused about 100 deaths across the East Coast and over 4,500 people were injured, according to NOAA. Recovery efforts from the National Guard cost hundreds of millions in 1978 dollars.

The toll of fatalities and injuries attributable to the 2026 blizzard, so far, are at least 13 confirmed; 6 in NY, 2 each in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and RI and 1 in MA. Injuries are not yet known. Preliminary, estimated economic damages and losses are at \$34 billion to \$38 billion.

Though its social impact may never be topped, the Blizzard of '78 must now take a back seat to the Blizzard of 2026 in terms of the snowiest storm in RI history.

Massachusetts Loses Another Iconic Manufacturer as Cape Cod Potato Chips Leaves the State



Hyannis plant closure follows recent Manufacturer of the Year shutdown, underscoring worsening business climate

BOSTON — The Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance today warned that the closure of the Cape Cod Potato Chips plant in Hyannis is the latest sign that Beacon Hill’s economic policies are driving employers out of the Commonwealth.

Cape Cod Potato Chips parent company, Campbell’s, announced Thursday that it will shut down the Hyannis facility in April, eliminating 49 jobs and moving production to facilities in states including North Carolina, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. The plant has operated on Cape Cod for more than four decades and gave its name to one of Massachusetts’ most recognizable consumer brands.

Just one week ago, another Massachusetts manufacturer celebrated as “Manufacturer of the Year” announced it was shutting down its local operations. Now, an iconic homegrown brand will no longer be made in Massachusetts at all.

“Massachusetts cannot even keep Cape Cod potato chips in Cape Cod. When a company whose entire identity is tied to this state decides it no longer makes economic sense to operate here, that should set off alarm bells on Beacon Hill,” said Paul Diego Craney, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance.

Campbell’s stated the Hyannis plant now produces only 4 percent of Cape Cod branded products and no longer makes financial sense to maintain. Instead, production will move out of state, including to North Carolina, a state Massachusetts routinely loses employers to due to lower costs and a more competitive business climate.

“This is exactly what happens when politicians ignore competitiveness and pile on higher energy costs, higher taxes, and endless regulations. Other states are rolling out the welcome mat for manufacturers while Massachusetts leaders continue to pretend everything is fine,” noted Craney.

The closure adds to growing concerns that Massachusetts is becoming increasingly hostile to manufacturing and middle class jobs. Businesses face some of the highest electricity rates in the nation and a regulatory environment that favors political insiders over employers trying to stay afloat.

“Beacon Hill keeps talking about economic development while overseeing an economy that is quietly shrinking. These are not abstract numbers. These are real jobs, real families, and real communities paying the price for failed policy choices,” said Craney.

The Massachusetts Fiscal Alliance warned that without a serious shift in priorities, more companies will follow the same path.

“If lawmakers continue down this path, Massachusetts will keep losing the very employers that once made this state strong. It’s time for Beacon Hill to get serious about restoring our economic competitiveness by lowering the tax burden and repealing the net zero mandates that are causing energy prices to skyrocket,” closed Craney.

Rhode Island Governor Proposes Renewable Energy Mandate Delay to Protect Ratepayers

Fiscal Alliance Highlights a Delay in Climate Mandates Results in More Affordability for Ratepayers

BOSTON – Following Democratic Rhode Island Governor Dan McKee’s proposed delay of Rhode Island’s 100% renewable electricity mandates from 2033 to 2050 to ease pressure on ratepayers, the Fiscal Alliance Foundation is highlighting that a Democratic Governor in New England is acknowledging these NetZero mandates are having a negative economic impact for ratepayers.

The proposed 17-year delay is expected to generate hundreds of millions in savings for Rhode Island households and businesses and is part of a broader affordability initiative aimed at lowering energy costs by \$1 billion over five years. Gov. McKee has also ordered a review of alternative energy subsidies and net metering programs while requiring clearer disclosure of the ratepayer impacts of major energy mandates.

“Rhode Island is acknowledging what families across New England already know: government-driven climate mandates come with real costs and real consequences. Delaying unrealistic deadlines and reviewing costly programs is needed because these policies are not affordable. If Net Zero was affordable for ratepayers, it wouldn’t need to be delayed,” said Paul Diego Craney, Executive Director of the Fiscal Alliance Foundation.

Massachusetts residents continue to face some of the highest electricity costs in the nation, driven largely by onerous climate mandates, alternative energy subsidies, and infrastructure restrictions that limit access to reliable and affordable energy sources such as clean natural gas. Despite mounting affordability concerns, Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey’s administration has continued advancing policies tied to its Net Zero by 2050 mandate without disclosing any state estimates as to the long-term cost to ratepayers.

“It’s encouraging to see a neighboring state take a step to delay, with the stated purpose to bring more affordability. Our recent New England energy study showed that to go NetZero by 2050, it will cost the ratepayers \$815 billion dollars. That’s about \$2,000 per month for every person in New England. Until the mandate is repealed, higher energy costs will continue to loom over ratepayers. Our energy study showed the cost, but not a single New England Governor who champions NetZero has disclosed the cost for their ratepayers in their state to comply with the NetZero mandate,” continued Craney.

The Fiscal Alliance Foundation is urging Massachusetts policymakers to follow Rhode Island’s lead by acknowledging a delay in NetZero will result in affordability for ratepayers. The Fiscal Alliance Foundation is calling for a full repeal of the NetZero mandate.

“Energy policy should not price residents out of their homes or drive employers out of the state. Massachusetts should repeal this costly and disastrous climate policy now,” closed Craney.

The Fiscal Alliance Foundation is a non-partisan, non-profit organization whose mission is to promote individual liberty and a more fiscally responsible, transparent government for a better New England through education and legal assistance.

Thank you for supporting the Blackstone Millville Food Pantry!

Life Tributes

Everlasting Memories of Loved Ones



Paul Compton

Paul Richard Compton, 83, of Franklin died peacefully at his home on February 12.

Born October 12, 1942, in North Attleboro, the son of the late Melvin S. and Margaretta (Greene) Compton, Paul was raised in West Medway and moved to Franklin at age 15. He graduated from Franklin High School in 1960.

As a young boy, Paul survived a severe bout of meningitis during a local outbreak, spending weeks at Boston Floating Hospital. Those who knew him understood that resilience was part of who he was.

After high school, Paul founded C&W Horse Transport Company, hauling racehorses across the Northeast and to tracks in the South and West, and eventually overseas.

He made himself available when others were not, and that is how he earned the work. Paul later became owner and operator of Compton Sprinkler Company, installing fire protection systems for businesses and institutions throughout Southeast New England for many years.

If someone called, he came. That resilience, forged early in life, shaped the kind of worker he became. Day or night, if something needed attention, he pulled on his boots and went.

But being a hardworking and dependable business owner was only part of the story.

Paul carried an older kind of knowledge - practical, wide-ranging, and learned by do-

ing. He did not follow conventional paths; he figured out his own. At nineteen, attending a house auction on West Central Street, he purchased a structure slated for demolition to make way for Interstate 495 - for \$500 and without a clear plan. He found land, poured a foundation, and had the entire house moved half a mile. That first project led to several more historic relocations. Today, the neighborhood near Pond Street and Overlook Drive quietly bears his imprint; homes that appear centuries old arrived there by truck within the last few decades.

He restored antique kerosene and whale oil lamps, rebuilt hit-and-miss engines, ran printing presses, and hatched poultry and pigeons. He frequented flea markets and auctions, collected stamps, and eventually expanded into house cleanouts - efforts that usually brought profit even where others saw only "trash." He was known to pull over for any yard sale or scrap pile that caught his eye; he simply could not ignore useful things being thrown away.

His reverence for craftsmanship extended to larger projects. He restored the circa-1843 Arcade Building in Blackstone, Massachusetts - a granite block structure sometimes described as the town's first "shopping mall." For that work, he was recognized by the Blackstone Historical Society. He also served as a member of the Blackstone Revitalization Commission.

Though rooted in Franklin, he traveled widely across the United States, Europe, and the Near East, most recently visiting Poland. Much of what he built still stands. He would say there is always something worth saving.

Paul is survived by his sisters, Diane J. Compton and Melanie J. Compton of Franklin. He was the brother of the late David B. Compton and Todd J. Compton.

Services will be held at a later date in warmer weather.

Arrangements are under the care of the Ginley Funeral Home of Franklin (ginleyfuneralhomes.com).



The Shamrock is Ireland's National Symbol – or is it?

by Olivia O'Leary

We all think that the shamrock is Ireland's national symbol. But actually, the harp is Ireland's national (and political) emblem.

The harp is one of the oldest stringed instruments in Europe. Its presence in Irish legend predates written history, making it both a musical instrument and a mythic icon. It can be seen on manuscripts and Christian stone crosses, which date back to the 8th century. Medieval manuscripts, including the Book of Kells, depict angels playing harps, confirming its sacred importance.

Early Irish harps were smaller than modern versions, crafted from willow or oak with brass or bronze strings that produced a bell-like sound. They were played by plucking, often using the fingernails, to create music of haunting beauty. The design of the Irish harp that we see in most emblems and logos now is based on a 14th century design—one of the oldest surviving instruments, the Trinity College Harp, dates from the 14th or 15th century. It remains a national treasure, its intricate carvings and brass strings symbolizing both Ireland's craftsmanship and cultural history. If you ever visit Dublin, you can see it up close in the museum of Trinity College.

In ancient tales, harpers were not merely entertainers but keepers of folklore, poetry, and the spirit of the people. Harpers often studied for decades and were at the center of Gaelic social life. They were so valued that their nails, which were used to pluck the wire strings, were protected under early Irish law. Harpers held high social status, serving kings and chieftains as professional musicians and historians. The word "harp" became so closely tied to Ireland that foreigners referred to wandering Irish musicians simply as "harpers."

When Henry VIII declared himself King of Ireland in 1541 he made the harp the official national symbol of Ireland. As a result, the country's own unique currency was introduced featuring a harp topped with a crown. Representation of the harp became synonymous with Irish pride and hope, and eventually Irish nationalism.

Throughout the 1800s, the harp became associated with another well-known Irish entity – the Guinness Brewery, founded in 1759.

In 1862, Guinness began using the harp as a symbol and formally registered it as the Guinness trademark in 1876. So, when the Irish Free State was established in 1922, it had to flip Guinness' design in order to use the harp as a symbol of the new state. Over the years, this left-facing design was added to stamps, coins, passports, seals and official documents as the state asserted its independence.

There was a time in Ireland's history when there was a movement to get rid of the harp, but its music and all that it symbolizes still lives on. The harp, both as a musical instrument and as Ireland's national symbol plays an important part in its long, turbulent history. It remains Ireland's official national emblem—the only country in the world to feature a musical instrument as its state symbol.

As St. Patrick's Day approaches, there is no doubt that images of the Irish harp will be seen everywhere, singing its continued status as a timeless symbol of Ireland's identity.



Blackstone Enlightener March 2026 email:enlightener@blackstonema.com

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For information contact Ann at 508-883-6873

Blackstone Millville Food Pantry is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.

Blackstone's Window On The Past

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Scholar & Historian

This is the story of a man born in Blackstone that few have heard about. Albert J. Adams was born on May 22, 1845. His parents were James and Sylvia Adams. A few years after his birth the family moved to nearby Woonsocket. Albert's early life seems to have been uneventful.

When the Civil War began, he enlisted in Company 1 of the 9th Rhode Island Volunteers. He was nineteen at the time of his enlistment and served honorably until he mustered out on September 2, 1865.

For a few years after the war, Albert owned a farm in Rhode Island. In 1871 he moved to New York where he initially worked as a brakeman on the railroad. By 1880, Albert listed himself as "segar dealer" doing business at 23 West 38th Street in Manhattan.

Between the years of 1890 and 1895 he was a policy broker and was referred to as the "Policy King"



and in newspaper articles the "Meanest Man in New York"; he was actually an insurance policy broker.

In 1901 a policy campaign against organized crime raided Adams' headquarters. It was documented that Adams ran the numbers game in New York City. He was found guilty of illegal gambling operations and stock market manipulation in 1903. Albert was sentenced to serve his prison term in Sing Sing prison. When released in 1905, Albert said he had quit the rackets forever.

At the time of his imprisonment, his estimated worth was

15-million dollars. He held investments in New York City real estate, shares in a Mexican gold mine, and supposedly had millions more in various investments.

Adams and his wife, Isabella, had raised their six children at a fine home in Manhattan. Things started to go downhill for Adams after his release from prison. One son was arrested for trying to shoot him! Some of his investments were failing as was his health.

On October 1, 1906, Albert Adams was found shot to death in the apartment he kept at the Ansonia Hotel in the city. A staff member found him dead with a bullet to his head. Because of his recent financial losses, the police ruled his death a suicide. The New York City coroner had his doubts that Adams had committed suicide but his theory was never followed up and the case was closed.



Top photo Adrian Scott, author of the 1889 History of Blackstone. Photo donated by Jeanette Scott Day to the Blackstone Historical Museum. Bottom photo is of the Scott home at the Blackstone Mendon line.

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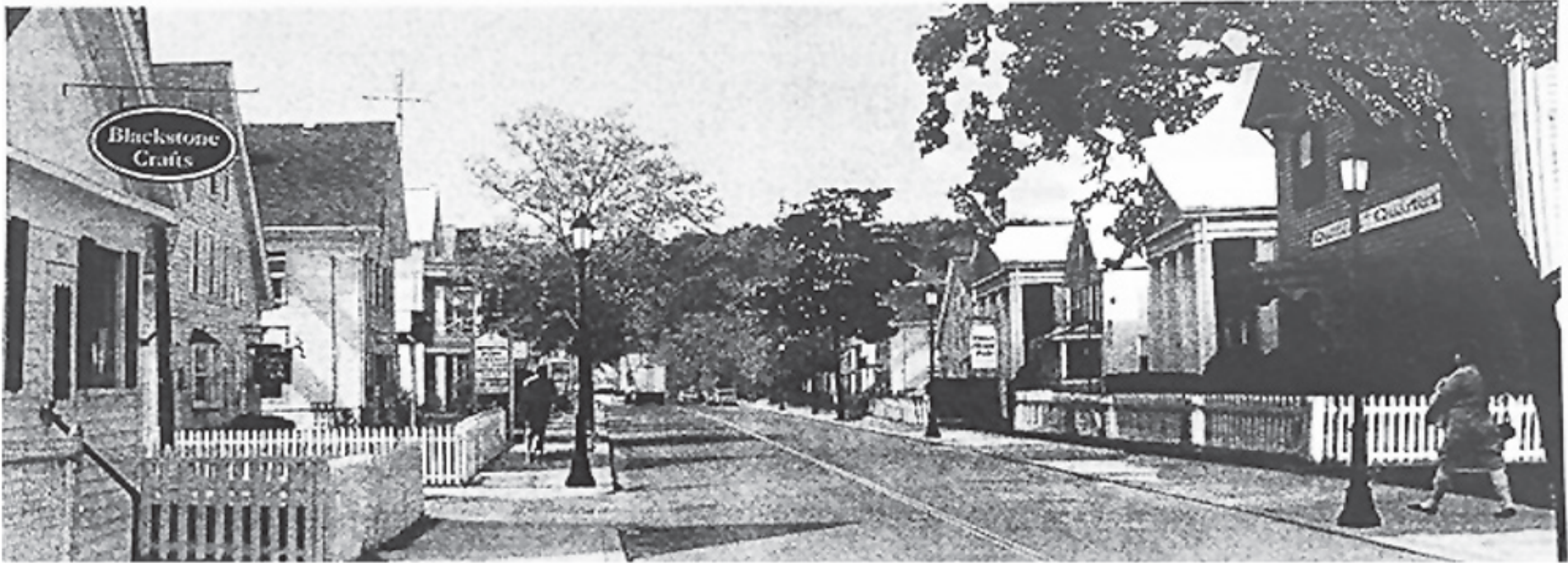
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