Oh, pretty flowers, please stay! Anna Isabel Barralough, the 1½-year-old daughter of Jeff and Cheryl Barralough, waters some black-eyed Susans to help keep summer going a little bit longer. Fall officially arrives until Sept. 22. Check out more photos of great greenery in our Scene in Methuen photo feature on Page 36! MethuenLife photo by Barbie Kiberstis.
From the Editor

Honesty counts. Rev those engines!

BMW
We’re On Your Radar. Ask Any State Trooper.

Dodge
When Only a 200 mph Box Will Do.

Rolls-Royce
You Can’t Afford One. Ever.

Chevrolet
Chevelles, Impalas, Camaros, Corvettes. ‘Nuff Said.

Suzuki
We Build Cars Too?

Subaru
27 Million Lesbians Can’t be Wrong.

Chrysler
Just Pretend We’re Not Run by Fiat. Please.

Lexus
Outsnobbing Infinitus Daily.

Hummer
Who Doesn’t Love a Hummer?

Toyota
Airbags, schmairbags!

Ford
Ask Your Friendly Salesman - They’re Gone in 60 Seconds.

Mitsubishi
Yeah, We’re Owned by Nissan Now. Where.

Jeep
You Don’t Have to be a Redneck to Own One. But it Helps.

Volkswagen
Everyone Loves Us. Except the EPA.

Kia

Hyundai

Lincoln
The Automobile of Choice for Stoned Movie Stars Driving on Beaches.

Mazda
All Our Miatas Are Engineered for Ultra Light Loafers.

Saturn
Hey! Who Turned Out the Lights?

Volvo
We’re Boxy. We’re Safe. We’re Vanishing.

Mercedes-Benz
A Different Model for Every Day of the Year.

GMC
Pretty Trucks Are All We Build.

Tesla
Your Blank Check Gets Voltage with a Smile.

Honda
An Accord and Civic in Every Driveway.

Buick
Thanks, China for 82% of Our Sales.

Saab
We Tried. Really.

Ferrari
WTF Was That?!

Columbia Gas delivers lunch to firefighters

ON THE COVER
The driving force: Linda Soucy has fought — and fought hard — to make the Arlington Neighborhood a success story.

Baklava, sandwiches & a coffee station: Eli and Lina Merheb and their son Michael, 12, are the new owners of the former Robinchard Hardware in Methuen Square, which will house their Mediterranean market.

Livin’ the dream! Tenney student Ayva Aziz vacationed in Italy and traveled the stunning Amalfi coast by boat.

You’ve come a long way, baby! Big UFC winner Calvin and his dad James enjoy a little horseplay on the deck overlooking the family’s Merrimack Valley Golf Club.
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METHUEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS’ 2017-2018 PREVIEW

Schools’ new Family Resource Center offers direction, support

Plus drones program, Innovation Lab & online Gradebook await students

By Melissa Fili
MethuenLife Writer

Christine Castle – surrounded by Mr. Potato Head figures and building blocks in a cozy powder-blue play area – can help but bubble with excitement about Methuen Public Schools’ new Family Resource Center.

“It’s been such a busy summer! It’s wonderful to have a hub where families come for support and all of their questions answered,” said Castle, coordinator of the center located in the Central Administration Building, 10 Ditson Place.

Considered the “welcome center” for Methuen Public Schools’ families, this office – a longtime goal of Superintendent Judy Scannell is one-stop shopping” for parents.

School registration student testing, Title I reading services, academic information, residency services – everything now takes place under one roof.

Parents come see us first, then we provide the information and direct them (within the same building) to the services they need “Castle explained.

Preschool Kindergarten and first-grade registration and testing already took place here months ago – something previously done at each school. Parents could then gather info on after-school activities, buses, special-education services etc. on sight instead of making follow-up phone calls or traveling to another building to fill out forms. By the end of September, all students through grade 12 who register for school will do so at the Family Resource Center. Parents will be happy to know that the district’s paperwork can be streamlined and eventually all forms will be filled out online, either at home or via the center’s computer station. Methuen SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council) will also use the center to host its monthly workshops and provide child care.

The center’s play area is already proving to be a big hit.

Most parents bring multiple children when registering another child and it can be stressful for them,” Castle said. “We have lots of toys, donated by he s, to keep the children busy. It’s working out well for parents.”

The Methuen Public Schools’ website (MethuenK12 ma.us) is loaded with information on everything from bus routes, lunch menus and school-supply lists to t services grade specific curriculums and handbooks. While most Methuen students headed back class Aug. 29, kindergartners and preschoolers will have their first day Sept. 5 – so keep those tissues handy.

Superintendent Scannell recently posted on the website a long list of important dates and new initiatives awaiting students this year. Here are some highlights:

New faces: Students look forward to their daily lunch break and there’s a new director of School Nutrition Services. Danielle Collins takes over for Wayne Vepa, who retires this month after 14 years as Methuen’s nutrition guru (fiddleheads anyone?). Collins served as school nutrition director in Amherst, Mont Vernon and Sou eat Cooperative s hool districts in New Hampshire. At the Marsh School, Mary Jean Fawcett, a longtime and highly respected Methuen educator, is back behind the principal’s desk. Stephen Sierpina was named Windham (N.H.) High principal last June and Fawcett is out of retirement to lead the Marsh this year.

She taught at the Timony, was an executive principal at Comprehensive Grammar School and she retired as Timony’s principal eight years ago. She remained involved with the school district through her two terms as a School Committee member.

Facilities upgrades: Improvements were made at each school over the summer. Highlights include lighting upgrades in classrooms at CGS and Marsh, a new kindergarten class at the Tenney, auditorium renovations at Timony, and a new dehumidifier unit for the Methuen High ice rink as well as a new patio dining area for students outside

of the Ranger caf which is s ill in t e works.

Technology: Through Infinite Campus and the Parent/Student Portal MHS families a read schedules ad the one Gradebook, which allows live grade visibility. All K 8 e rt ars w ill be printed from Infinite Campus, and seventh and eighth-grade teacher will begin using the online Gradebook. Parents will be notified when grades become visible to parents midway through the school year. iPads were issued to MHS students last month.

Curriculum: Methuen High’s state-of-the-art Innovation Lab opens this fall providing opportunities in coding, engineering and robotics. MHS is also offering the first course of a three-course pathway for computer science.

Athletics: Basketball and track and field will be offered by MHS which is now an MIAA/SOMA Unified Champion School of the Merrimack/Cape Ann League. Unified is part of the Special Olympics movement. Also, athletic season passes (fall pass is $25 per adult) or yearly passes ($75 for adult, $20 for student) are now offered at https://statechamps.com/clients/methuenhigh/.

New after school programs starting in early 2018 Methuen Public Schools’ K-8 21st Century Program will expand its after-school programming to MHS students, thanks to $150,000 by the state Department of Education. Homework help, STEAM (Science Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) project-based learning, health and wellness education, etc., will serve a minimum of 40-plus ninth- and 10th-graders year-round. Elementary students can try a Lego Robotics program, and a drones program will be offered to elementary and high school students.

Methuen Public Schools Community Weekend includes the Oct. 6 homecoming football game at Nicholson Stadium, 7pm Oct. 7’s MHS Open House for fifth- through eighth-graders and their families from 1 to 3pm; and Oct. 8’s MHS 5K Run/Walk with a start time of 9:30am (details to be announced).

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From info on academics and WIC to everything in between, the new Family Resource Center is here to help.
KINDERGARTEN, HERE WE COME!

Giggles, games, lollipops and free books are a great way to calm those new-school jitters!

About 100 soon-to-be kindergartners converged at Nevins Memorial Library to celebrate the start of their formal education.

Last month’s fourth annual Kick Off to Kindergarten event included a reading of Joseph Slate’s book “Miss Binger and Gets Ready for Kindergarten” followed by outdoor activities in the library’s park.

Families enjoyed science tables focused on magnets and light-sensitive beads; a math-gear survey where kids used stickers to indicate how they’ll get to school; a skills game involving big spoons, Styrofoam snowballs and a collection bucket; and a snack station, among other things.

Participants included Methuen Public Schools’ Family Resource Center, Methuen SEPAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council), Greater Lawrence Community Action Council and Launch Trampoline Park. The Michael B. Christensen Community and Family Support Center provided a book to each child and was an event sponsor along with Methuen Public Schools and the library.

Kathy Moran Wallace, the library’s head of Children’s Services, said, “This is a wonderful turnout! It’s such a great day for the children and we couldn’t have done it without our library volunteers as well as volunteers from Northern Essex Community College’s Early Childhood Club.”

Kindergarten starts Sept. 5 in Methuen Public Schools.

METHUENLIFE ASKED:
“WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED ABOUT DOING IN KINDERGARTEN?”

“Taking the school bus!”
“Writing my name!”
“Using the computer!”
“Reading books!”
“Going outside!”

Noah Brady Joiner, who is headed to CGS
Amelia Campbell, who’s ready for Tenney
Anthony Almonte-Soriano, who gives kindergarten a thumbs-up
Paula Mancia, who can’t wait to get to the Tenney

“Eating!” and “Drinking!”
“Just playing!”
“Play time!”
“Playing in a big dollhouse!”

Lois Nadaloud, who is headed to the Timony. Big bro William will be a fifth-grader there & says when he was a kindergartner, he loved riding the bus.

Buddies Milo J. Doyle (left), who is Marsh-bound, and Jacob Quigley, who is off to Tenney, agree that they are excited for kindergarten lunches
Hailey Moore, who is excited about the Tenney. Big sis Mackenzie (now a second-grader) recalls that when she was in kindergarten, “I liked my teacher, Mrs. Knott, the best!”
Maylin Khael, who’s a tad nervous about going to the Marsh
Naomi Casiello, who’s off to the Timony

Visit www.MethuenLife.com
MAN’s heroine Soucy embraces retirement

Led effort to turn drug-, prostitute-infested area into true neighborhood

By Mark E. Vogler
MethuenLife Writer

It takes a special, selfless citizen to draw strength from personal adversity and make something great happen for the benefit of many.

People who know Linda Soucy say that her tenacity to fight for what’s right and a commitment to better her community is the real saga behind the major improvements in the Arlington Neighborhood.

Soucy, a resident of the city’s most-impoverished section for close to four decades, downplays the praise, saying she simply organized a community effort of citizens, politicians, developers, clergy, first responders, educators, government agencies, etc.

“There were a lot of people on the bus and I was just the driver,” Soucy said in an interview with MethuenLife from the third floor of the Lena Lahey Community Center – the Tenney Street home of Methuen Arlington Neighborhood Inc. (MAN Inc.), the nonprofit she helped found 25 years ago. “This was always about building partnerships. … Like they say, ‘It takes a village.’ And it took the commitment of many people to accomplish what we’ve done.”

Soucy, 60, recently stepped down from her leadership role with MAN and was honored with a surprise “retirement party” at Merrimack Valley Golf Course that was organized by the Police and Fire departments and drew close to 100 guests. Soucy, many agree, has made all the difference for her neighbors.

“The Arlington Neighborhood would not be as safe as it is today without the work of Linda Soucy,” said Police Chief Joe Solomon.

“She’s an icon in the community,” said Jack MacLeod of the Methuen Exchange Club, which works closely with MAN on many projects. “She’s somebody who’s gained a lot of respect for helping so many people over the years.”

“The Number One thing … people are proud to live here now,” Soucy said. “It used to be that you wouldn’t mention that you lived here because you were ashamed.”

‘The last straw’

Soucy grew up in Atkinson, N.H. At age 20 she married Norm Soucy and they lived a few years on Tenney Street, then moved to Kirk Street where they have been renting an apartment from the same landlord for 36 years.

In the early 1990s, Soucy recalled, the Arlington Neighborhood was overrun by crime, jobs were scarce, there were no programs for kids, and parents feared for their children’s safety.

In the early 1990s, Soucy recalled, the Arlington Neighborhood was overrun by crime, jobs were scarce, there were no programs for kids, and parents feared for their children’s safety.

See SOUCY, Page 7
Soucy, continued from page 6

“People in the neighborhood were just fed up with the lack of a quality of life. We had over 30 prostitutes and 30-plus drug houses. And you couldn’t even send your child out to play,” Soucy said. “There were punks who had nothing better to do than spin the wheels of their cars all night long so it was impossible to sleep. Things were pretty horrible.”

Then Soucy became a crime victim and decided she wasn’t going to take it anymore.

“The last straw for me was getting my car stolen out of my driveway,” Soucy recalled. A loud noise outside of her home disturbed her sleep at about 2:30 one morning. She looked out the window just in time to see her tan minivan speeding away.

“I woke up my husband. We hopped in the car and we found them in a parking lot off Park Street in Lawrence,” Soucy said. “I ran toward them yelling, ‘Hey that’s my car! I got the keys to it!’ shaking the keys. They just scattered. And I drove it home.”

She was so angry that she called for a special neighborhood meeting with the police and city officials.

“I went door-to-door, dropping flyers off at everyone’s house -- drug dealers and all,” Soucy said. “I knew there were some noisy people who were part of the criminal activity who would come to the meeting. It didn’t matter to me because we were putting them on notice.”

“That meeting – Jan. 23, 1992 - is one she remembers well, when more than 100 people showed up at a tiny building at 1 Broadway. Police Chief Bruce MacDougall sent Sgt. Joseph Solomon (now the police chief) to meet with the neighbors who were demanding help.

“(Solomon) was sent down to pacify us, but then he realized community policing was something needed here. And he went gang-ho and became a huge supporter,” Soucy said. “The Methuen Police Department has never missed a community meeting in 25 years.”

“I respected her tenacity and that led to community policing. It changed our whole outlook,” Solomon told MethuenLife. “That was a turning point for the Methuen Police Department. I give her credit for enlightening me.”

See LINDA, Page 8

A determined Soucy impressed Ways and Means Chair (now Speaker) Robert DeLeo during a meeting about 10 years ago, courtesy of state Rep. Campbell. Ever since, he has honored requests for MAN support in the state budget. Photo courtesy Linda Campbell

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THE LINDA FACTOR

By Mark E. Vogler MethuenLife Writer

Here’s a sample of what community leaders have to say about Linda Soucy’s impact on the Arlington Neighborhood and its people.

Police Chief Joe Solomon: ‘Linda Soucy was the original advocate for the Arlington Neighborhood and her advocacy led to changes in community policing and major improvements in that neighborhood. It took someone who was willing to stand up to drug dealers, prostitutes and gang members. The Arlington Neighborhood would not be as safe as it is today without the work of Linda Soucy.”

State Rep. Linda Dean Campbell: “Through her work with MAN Inc., she has given a lot of love, helping to provide a neighborhood where families can grow up and grow safely. And she personally has touched the lives of so many children -- hundreds of children. She’s leaving us a legacy to let people know that change can happen if they work together. It’s a wonderful story that should be told to inspire people to do wonderful things in their own neighborhoods.”

MAN Inc. Program Director Joan Mejia says that she is involved with the group 17 years ago as a Merrimack College student: “She’s very driven and very hard-nosed when it comes to accomplishing goals. She put a lot of effort and a lot of sweat and tears into helping to turn around the neighborhood. She has played a key role in the organization with her passion and commitment to helping people.”

Phil Lahey, anti-drug activist and former city councilor whose mother is the namesake of Lena Lahey Community Center: “Linda is the Arlington Neighborhood. It started with her many years ago and got the interest of the neighborhood. She has a passion for what she has accomplished and doesn’t seek recognition for what she does. I am proud to count her as one of my very good friends, someone you can count on to do the right thing.”

Methuen Exchange Club’s Jack MacLeod, who has worked closely with Soucy on many charitable projects over the years: “I think the world of her. What she means most to me is how you can take the underprivileged and people in poverty and give them something in life that can make a difference. Every December, we have a Christmas party for which we donate $1,500. Some of the kids wouldn’t get anything for Christmas so to see those kids get a gift is heartwarming. I call her The Energizer Bunny. That woman never stops in her efforts to help so many people. She’s truly one of a kind.”

Soucy shows off the school supplies and sneakers provided to 75 Arlington Neighborhood children to help them get a good start to a new school year. MethuenLife photo by Mark E. Vogler

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Meet George Maalouf –
the voice of Mahrajan

He fled war in Lebanon, but his music keeps
love of country & customs alive

By Yadira Betances Muldoon
MethuenLife Writer

When George Maalouf performs at the
Mahrajan Festival on Sept. 3, he will bring Lebanese musical
traditions which he learned while
growing up in the Middle Eastern
country.

“I love to sing songs of
my homeland because it brings
back so many memories,”
said Maalouf, 60, who lives in
Methuen. He sings in his native tongue
using traditional instruments, like the oud,
the nqa and the doumbeke. And while a
language barrier might prevent a listener from
knowing exactly what Maalouf is
singing about, it’s obvious from his strong
and emotional voice that he is passionate
about performing these songs.

He was born in Zahlé, the fourth largest
city in Lebanon, located east of Beirut.
At 13, he started singing at school during
holiday events and soon after began
composing.

Maalouf was in the conservatory in
Beirut when the civil war broke out in
Lebanon in 1980 and could not continue
his studies.

Growing up in war-torn Lebanon,
Maalouf used music to ease the
fears his countrymen felt and
bring a message of peace and
love. His experience during
the war inspired him to write
patriotic and religious songs.
Among the first ones was about
his hometown.

“I wanted people to know
how I felt. My music comes from my heart
and everything is connected to my feelings
which I can explain through music,”
Maalouf said.

As much as he loves his homeland, now
there is no place he’d rather live than
Methuen.

“I feel I belong here; it’s safe, secure,
peaceful and clean. I feel relaxed with
nature,” he said.

The George Maalouf Ensemble has
performed at the Mahrajan in Lawrence
as well as other festivals and concerts in
Chicago, Ohio, Colorado, Florida, New
Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode
Island, Maine and Vermont.

Maalouf said he enjoys performing in
the Mahrajan because it promotes culture.
The festival begins Labor Day and ends
Sept. 3 on the grounds of St. Anthony
Church, 145 Amesbury St., Lawrence. It
features folk dancing, homemade Lebanese
and American food, as well as free cooking
and dancing classes.
Cal Kattar’s underdog win leads to 4-fight UFC contract

By Steve Whipple
MethuenLife Writer

Despite the wounded rib and stitched and bandaged finger, Methuen native and mixed martial arts phenom Calvin Kattar, 29, was all smiles.

His family and friends threw him a celebratory party at the Kattar’s Merrimack Valley Golf Club a couple weeks after his first Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) victory — a third-round unanimous decision over Andre Fili in Anaheim, Calif., at the end of July.

“...It’s like being in the NFL... but I have a lot of work to do.”

~ Calvin Kattar, 29

The 5-foot-11-, 145-pound Kattar has since secured a four-fight contract and expects to be back in the ring in about four months at a yet-to-be-announced location and opponent. That should be plenty of time to heal the battle wounds from his debut UFC match.

In the first round while delivering a series of blows to his opponent, Kattar had the middle finger of his left hand sliced open from one of Fili’s teeth. The infected cut took four stitches to close up. And while he wasn’t so sure that it was broken, Kattar noted that a rib was causing substantial pain. Otherwise, all is well.

“It was wild,” said Kattar of the fight outcome. “I’m really happy to continue with the winning streak and that everyone could watch it on TV... it’s still kind of sinking in. I was the 3-1 underdog and Fili had just come off a win over the number 10 guy.

“I’m now trying to heal up and get back in shape. My last fight (before Fili) was 10 months ago.”

Kattar’s mixed martial arts (boxing, wrestling and martial arts) career record prior to UFC is 17-2-0.

His dad James has been there from the beginning.

“I remember the first time Calvin told me he was fighting (in 2007). He said it’s cage fighting,” said the elder Kattar. “I said, ‘What? You can’t even tap me out and I haven’t wrestled since I was 12.’ So we had a 2-minute match on the front lawn of Dr. Boes where we were doing an irrigation installation.”

“Mrs. Boes came to the front door and asked, ‘Is everything OK?’ We had each other in choke holds and he had me in a pretzel hold... but he couldn’t tap me out. He said that’s only because he couldn’t punch.”

Calvin Kattar, who now lives in Methuen to be closer to his main gym, said he will be busy training with cardio and shadow boxing now that he caught the attention of UFC people.

“I like being an underdog,” he said. “In fighting, UFC is the pinnacle of the sport. It’s like being in the NFL... but I have a lot of work to do.”

And he realizes the uncertainty of competing at this level.

“I got a text from my coach saying there’s an opportunity; I trained for only two weeks and lost 20 pounds and flew to California,” said Kattar. “To get to the UFC, there’s no rhyme or reason.”

For More Information:
Patricia Antoon, Assistant Director
Community Development Dept.
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Funding provided by the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development And the North Shore HOME Consortium.
LIBRARY’S ECLIPSE PARTY WAS 1 FOR THE BOOKS!

About 90 Nevins Library patrons were treated to a one-of-a-kind event at the Eclipse Viewing Party on the afternoon of Aug. 21. Not only did they enjoy viewing the live NASA feed, allowing them to see what was happening all over the country as the moon and the sun aligned, but some participants even re-enacted the eclipse itself in live action by donning earth, moon and sun boards and walking around each other to mimic the events unfolding high in the sky. The library’s telescope was available to try out and many patrons put themselves on the wait list to check it out (just like you would a book). There were snacks and crafts, but by far the most exciting event was happening outside while everyone was watching the sun and moon do their thing. All the folks were cooing and ahing over the course of an hour’s time as the eclipse took its course.

“It was really a great time and wonderful to see the families enjoy this experience together,” according to Kirsten Underwood, the library’s head of reference services.

The library’s telescope was a big hit for eclipse fans. Here, Dahlia McPhee takes a peek surrounded by (from left) library staffer Linda Yulee, Dahlia’s mom Dana, grandmother Janice Ouellette and Dahlia’s brother Donny.

Rotary’s bocce tourney benefits Senior Center

For the past four years, the Methuen Rotary Club has rolled bocce balls to support various local causes. But for next month’s fifth annual bocce tournament, taking aim at the little white pallino ball will specifically benefit Methuen seniors.

“(The Methuen Senior Activity Center) is such an awesome place,” noted Rotary board member, past president and tourney organizer Tim Frechet. “We wanted to do more where the help will go, and we host a Valentines Dance there and our Interact kids (a junior version of Rotary) from the high school are always there for the Adopt-a-Grandparent program. It’s a great organization.”

The event is set for Oct. 21 from 5 to 10 pm at the Methuen Sons of Italy, 459 Merrimack St. It’s open to the public. Price is $30 per person or $20 for a team of four, and fee includes dinner and entry fee. To sign up, contact Frechet at (978) 697-6760 or tfrechet@tsbawake24.com.

Methuen residents and business people have been involved with the local Rotary Club and helping our community since 1971. The club now meets at Jon Ryan’s Pub every Friday at noon. Info: Methuen-rotary.org.

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City’s 1st Little Free Library arrives at YMCA

The Methuen YMCA is the proud home of the city’s first registered Little Free Library. This global phenomenon encourages people to freely share books while creating a community of readers.

The Y’s Little Library - built in partnership with Methuen Exchange Club members, who designed it and purchased the materials, and Greater Lawrence Technical School students, who built it – is located outside the 129 Haverhill St., club. It was painted to resemble a red school house as a tribute to the building’s history as the former Stephen Barker School. Several sources in the community donated books to fill the library.

According to Anne Whalen, executive director of the Methuen YMCA, it’s a perfect addition to our Y, which is home to a range of programs - from preschool to afterschool to teen leadership - that promote youth development.

“This has been such a fun project,” Whalen said. “I’m excited about expanding our commitment to literacy with our families, the neighborhood and the Methuen community.”

A grand opening is set for Sept. 13 at 4pm at the YMCA (rain date: Sept. 14). Visitors are welcome to bring children’s books to give to the library.

Mann’s massive corn maze opens Sept. 2 at Riverside Farm

A-MAZE-ing!

The transformation at Mann Orchards’ Riverside Farm on Merrimack Street has been quick and dramatic. In the four months since brothers Matt and Josh Fitzgerald purchased the former Simone’s Riverside Farm property, greenhouses have been dismantled, the land has been cleared and new growth has taken place…especially CORN, and the timing couldn’t be better!

In celebration of Mann Orchards’ 140th anniversary, the community is invited to take a walk through Methuen’s first corn maze. When viewed from high above, this 7-acre network of twists and turns actually spells out “Mann Orchards, 140 Years.”

Mann’s Maze will be open Sept. 2 to 4 from 10am to 6pm and from Sept. 9 through Oct. 31 the hours will be 10am to 5pm Tuesday through Sunday (corn maze and other activities will be closed Monday). For the brave of heart, Flash Light Nights will be held Fridays and Saturdays starting Sept. 22 from 6 to 10pm. Guests can bring their own light or purchase one at the farm. Admission to the maze is $10 on weekdays, $14 on weekends, and $14 for Flash Light Night. Children under 2 are admitted free.

In addition to the corn maze, there will be family-friendly activities including pumpkin bowling, a petting zoo, water-pump races, a spider-web climber, giant chess and checkers, a bean bag toss, mini-hay maze, a giant coloring mural, a sandbox and more. Fall favorites such as kettle corn, cider, doughnuts, candy apples and Mann’s apple crisp will be sold.

For more info, visit mannororchards.com/riverside-farm or call (978) 683-0361.

Here’s an aerial shot of the 7-acre maze, created from an image of their Pleasant Valley Street store and the words, “Mann Orchards, 140 Years.” Courtesy photo
"Time matters, love matters, family matters, friends matter ..."

New salon unites charity work with wash, cut & blow dry

By Barbie Kiberstis
MethuenLife Writer

What matters most to you? That’s a big question, and sometimes one not easily answered. But longtime Methuen resident and new local business owner Patricia Gallagher is definitely learning, one haircut at a time.

Gallagher, a 30-year hairdressing industry veteran, is the co-owner and operator of Hair Matters (formerly Rapunzel’s) located at 238C Pleasant St. Her daughter Cearabrooke Gallagher, also a licensed hair stylist, is her business partner. While most salons operate their daily businesses in much the same manner, what Methuen will soon learn is that Patricia and her staff intend to set themselves apart with the generous and loving message behind her aptly-named salon ... she wants to make hair matter, she wants to give back. The Gallaghers aim to make a difference.

“My own sister received a liver donation ... how do you pay that kind of thing back?” queries Patricia. When her best friend Lymne’s daughter was taken far too young by cancer, Patricia struggled with the loss of an amazing young woman who would surely have made a difference in our world.

“Hollie was such a good person, always wanting to help other people. We have to do all that for her now, in her memory, because she can’t.”

Suddenly, the answer to how to accomplish these monumental tasks seemed simple: create a team built on friendships and family, take a trade she is passionate about and combine it with charitable efforts that will benefit and resonate with others, with proceeds from salon services being donated to the foundations associated with these experiences.

While the exact details of how long each fund-raiser cause will run are still in the works, her mission is clear, but will not be limited to strictly health and wellness interests. Patricia’s friendships and deep roots in Methuen have made her aware of local special-interest groups such as the Methuen High School cheerleaders where her son Hunter, a 2016 MHS graduate, found his passion for dance and a group of wonderful, welcoming friends. Patricia is also looking forward to contributing to the Methuen High Ranger Marching Band, helping with costs for band trips and their yearly scholarship foundation. And this is just a start.

“Time matters, love matters, family matters, friends matter,” and Patricia Gallagher is going to make sure Hair Matters is a part of it all.

Hair Matters co-owners Cearabrooke Gallagher and her mother Patricia Gallagher greet clients and friends with a smile.

Even with all of this charity work, Hair Matters’ prices are reasonable and specials are offered regularly (last month, back-to-school haircuts were $18, down from $25). Follow them on Facebook for the latest deals. For more information or questions about the good things going on at Hair Matters, to schedule an appointment or to become a part of the talented Hair Matters team by renting a station, call (978) 686-2163.

Methuen Museum of History opening!
The Methuen Historical Society’s grand opening of the Methuen Museum of History is Sept. 15, 16 and 17 at the Tenney Gate House, 37 Pleasant St. The project included a remodeling and renovation of the gate house with specific areas dedicated to the Edward Searles, David Newins and Charles Tenney – millionaires who gave so much to the city. Opening Night at the Museum is Sept. 15. The cocktail party begins at 7pm and provides a first look at the new exhibits and a guided tour. Tickets are $20 per person and available by calling (978) 683-2252. On Saturday, there will be a ribbon-cutting at 10am and guided tours will be available until 4pm. Tours will also be offered Sunday from 1 to 4pm. All are welcome and there is no charge for the tours. The remodeling, which cost about $40,000, was paid for by the Methuen Historical Society and a grant from the Edwin Castle Fund. The Methuen Festival of Trees also contributed. Visit MethuenHistoricalSociety.org for additional information.

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September, 2017 MethuenLife 13
IRISH COTTAGE SERVES UP SCHOOL SUPPLIES TO KIDS IN NEED

By Melissa Fili
MethuenLife Writer

More than 150 local school kids will start school off on the right foot, thanks to the generosity of customers and staffers at the Irish Cottage.

The restaurant and pub’s first attempt at a school-supply drive took off last month, courtesy of social media and word of mouth.

By Week 3, there were four large boxes of donations—everything from notebooks, folders and crayons to binders, glue sticks and even a zip-up leather carrying case.

“People are bringing in cases of (school supplies) and others are bringing in fully loaded backpacks, while some older customers aren’t sure what to buy so they just hand us cash to pick out the items,” said general manager Lisa Michaud, who organized the drive. She said staff members (some of whom work as teachers during the school year) were picking up items to donate on their way to work and GEMCORP of Lawrence donated 30 backpacks that were already filled to the gills.

The restaurant donated over 150 fully stocked backpacks to Methuen and Lawrence public schools.

“Methuen is very family-oriented and (customers) want to give,” said Michaud. “I’m very proud of this project and our staff. Hopefully this will help kids avoid being embarrassed and let them start off the school year in a positive way.”

BIRTHDAY BOY HELPS PEERS

Methuen’s Jackson Brady recently turned 11 years old and received a check as a birthday gift. Instead of thinking about what he could buy for himself, he told his mom Sharon, “Mommy, I want to give this money to someone who needs it. I want to help someone my age.”

The St. Michael’s School sixth-grader got the Methuen Public Schools’ supply list and headed to Target. “He picked everything out and put the bags together himself,” Sharon said. When word got out about what he had done, others wanted to contribute so they donated the backpacks to him. Last month, Jackson dropped off four fully-stocked backpacks to Comprehensive Grammar School.

Great job, Jackson! Courtesy photo

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Businesses & housing headed for downtown

By Steve Whipple
MethuenLife Writer

Out with hardware, in with hummus.

In a few months, a new 4,000-square-foot Mediterranean market will open at the former Robichaud Hardware at 45 Hampshire St. It’s one of several changes arriving in Methuen’s downtown area.

Eli and Lina Merheb purchased the property and the accompanying parking lot across the street June 2 for $530,000 and are investing an additional $200,000 or so in renovations. The purchase officially closes the book on Robichaud Hardware, which opened in 1922 (see sidebar).

The Merhebs currently operate Tobacco Empire in Salem, N.H., but their lease runs out in October and they will not renew.

“I love Methuen; I used to live on Pelham Street. It’s pure luck that I found this,” said Eli, who arrived in the United States from Lebanon in 1989. “It’s a goldmine; the Robichaud family put their heart and soul into the town, so I want this to be a landmark.”

In coming weeks, the yet-to-be-named market will be outfitted with new flooring and walls, central air conditioning, a handful of coolers, granite counter tops, coffee station and shelving which will be stocked with imported pita bread, hummus, tabouli, baklava, sandwiches, ice cream, fresh olives and other Mediterranean foods.

The market will occupy the first floor; the second and third floors and a full basement will remain vacant for now.

The building already received a new roof. In late August, the exterior was pressure-washed in preparation for a new coat of paint. Two large windows on each side of the front entrance will be re-activated and three light poles and LED lighting will illuminate the parking lot.

For Methuen Community Development Director Bill Buckley, the transformation is just what the city needs.

“We’re taking a property that’s under-utilized in the heart of the downtown and cleaning it up and making it a nice business for years to come,” said Buckley.

The Merhebs have three sons -- Christian, 20; Jonathon, 17; and Michael, 12.

They are totally invested in the new market, which will be open seven days a week from 9am to 7pm, said the patriarch.

“This is the American dream, our bread and butter,” he said. “I love America. You have to love this country and give back because it gives you so much.”

Oddfellows building sold

Two doors over from the new market, an other vacant building has been sold.

The Oddfellows Building at 7 Hamp- shire St., has been vacant since enduring a two-alarm fire and ensuing water damage in July 2015. An electrical fire on the fourth floor started in the Center for Performing Arts dance studio, which has since relocated across the street in the John Hancock Lodge.

Realtor Johan Lopez, the owner of Home Shop Properties in the Methuen Square, purchased the shuttered building from Rick Page and his sister Candi, whose home was destroyed by a fire at the corner of High Street and Broadway in mid-August.

“He plans to make the first floor commercial, with some really nice apartments in the upper floors,” said Buckley. “I think there will be 12 to 14 units, a mix of one- and two-bedroom units. It’s just what we wanted.”

From empty home to office building

The brown three-story house at 293 Broadway, at the corner of High Street (diagonally across the street from the fire-damaged home), is in need of repair. And it’s coming soon.

“That’s about to undergo a major renovation,” said Buckley. “It’s a beautiful property to get rehabbed.”

Located a few hundred yards south of Nevins Memorial Library, the Victorian-era home and garage have new owners: RMS Mortgage owners Don and Elaine Campbell bought the property and intend to relocate their business to the first floor and put four apartments above.

Robichaud’s: So long to a hands-on, 4-generation hardware business

For the better part of a century, locals bought their home-improvement equipment and supplies at the family-owned and operated Robichaud Hardware in Methuen Square.

In 1922, World War I veteran Francis X. Robichaud began selling paint and later - cement from the house he purchased at 1 Lowell St., Methuen, according to his grandson Frank Robidoux. (That site is now the small parking lot adjacent to Freeman Oil).

“Then it got bigger and bigger so he bought the property across the street, where the (hardware store) parking lot is now. The new store at 45 Hampshire St., was completed in 1958,” said Robidoux, 72.

Francis’ daughter Florence married Wilfred Robidoux, who took over operation of the new store. From there, Florence and Wilfred’s children – Frank, Rick, Bob and Karen -- operated the store in the heart of Methuen that sold everything from nuts and bolts to garden tools, plumbing supplies, lawn mowers and snow blowers, and all the instructions, lessons and service you needed.

“At its height we had 23 employees with health insurance, a salary and a Christmas bonus,” said Robidoux. “Then Home Depot came in and took some business away because they were the new guy. Then it bounced back ... and Lowe’s came along. It was a double whammy.”

The steady business called for the employment of the fourth generation of Robidoux.

“All the grandchildren worked there. My two kids, Rick’s two kids and Bob’s kids all learned a little about electrical, plumbing ... and started at the age of 14,” said Robidoux.

Frank and Rick left the business in 2003 to start a landscaping and snow-plowing business, Andover Tractor Works. Frank, 72, retired last year and Rick, 64, retired from Presentation of Mary Academy last month.

Bob’s wife Barbara closed the hardware store a couple years ago, but continued operating a small-engine repair shop and U-Haul rental at the rear of the building until shortly before the store was sold to the Merhebs.

~ Steve Whipple
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“We, as a family, see this as a public health issue. Our goal by donating the dispenser is to help spread awareness.”

~ Jim Weymouth, whose son Tyler, MHS Class of 2007, died after a battle with metastatic melanoma

Weymouth family brings melanoma awareness to Methuen

In his 35-plus years as an educator, head basketball coach and athletic director at Methuen High School, Jim Weymouth was known as a fiery competitor who stood up for and took action for the youth of Methuen.

In July 2014, Weymouth and his wife Joan felt the ultimate pain. Their son Tyler passed away at the age of 25 after a long and brave battle with metastatic melanoma, a disease that occurs when melanoma spreads to other sites of the body through the lymphatic system and/or blood vessels.

Weymouth retired from the Methuen school system last year and is now the athletic director at Matignon High School in Cambridge. He, Joan and son Andrew are still taking action for others while keeping Tyler’s strength and memory alive.

“We got involved with the Melanoma Foundation of New England (impactmelanoma.rfpox.org) shortly after Ty’s passing,” explains Weymouth. “For us it was a way to keep Tyler’s mission of helping others who face this awful disease.

“Tyler went through some groundbreaking treatments while being cared for at Mass General. He quickly decided from the moment of diagnosis to volunteer for his doctor’s case studies. He wanted to help in any way possible.”

The Weymouth family is doing the same by championing the cause of installing sunscreen dispensers at athletic and recreational facilities. They are donating three dispensers to be placed at the lower and upper fields at Nicholson Stadium and one at the Department of Public Works Yard in the coming weeks. The fifth will be placed at Forest Lake in 2018.

Says Weymouth, “We, as a family, see this as a public health issue. Our goal by donating the dispenser is to help spread awareness. Joan and I try to volunteer our time to many Impact Melanoma events. We do their annual walk in September, as well as sponsor and attend the gala. Joan and I have also volunteered at their annual golf tournament.”

Impact Melanoma’s mission is to spread the word about the dangers of overexposure to the sun. Sunscreen dispensers are prevalent throughout many communities including Boston where they were se фл the Boston Marathon and recent Tall Ships exhibition.

Andrew Weymouth started the non-profit Tyler Weymouth Memorial Foundation shortly after his brother’s passing. Says Jim, “For the past three years, Andrew has held the Tyathlon to raise money for the foundation. This event is a Cornhole Tournament.

“The idea behind the event was to honor some of the things that Tyler loved most.
Triathlete St. Onge fueled by big challenges & escape from arthritis

Last month, Methuen’s Rick St. Onge competed in his second Ironman Mont-Tremblant triathlon in Quebec, Canada. A 1988 Central Catholic graduate, St. Onge’s road to this most grueling of athletic events was winding indeed.

“I ran track at Central but had to stop my junior year because I was diagnosed with arthritis,” explains St. Onge, a Massachusetts probation officer by trade. “At that time, the medications that were available were not very effective. As the years have passed, the medications to treat arthritis have improved dramatically. What is most interesting is that my arthritis symptoms diminish when I am very active.”

Very active is an appropriate description for this tireless competitor. St. Onge began running two decades ago, and his goals expanded from there. He relates, “I did 5K races and half-marathons. About eight years ago I did a triathlon (run, bike, run) with a friend.

“I fell in love with the multi-sport event. I wasn’t a good swimmer, so I got a swim coach and eventually started doing sprint and Olympic distance triathlons (swim a half-mile, bike 15 miles, run 3 to 6 miles).”

St. Onge did sprints and Olympic distances for two years before progressing to Ironman events. He relates, “I started with half Ironman events (swim 1.2 miles, bike 56 miles, run 13.1 miles). “I then moved up to the full Ironman”

Competing in the Ironman Mont-Tremblant in Canada are (from left) MHS teacher Jim Peirce, Methuen resident Rick St. Onge and former Methuen resident Walter Soriano. Courtesy photo

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[Contact information for Joe Deschamps]

Blitz Bits

Congratulations to Sean Dorgan on being named the new MHS boys’ varsity soccer coach. Dorgan, a 2006 MHS grad, captained the Saints’ soccer team and was named MVC All-Conference. He also was an All-Conference captain at Nichols College. The former Lawrence High School head coach has been an assistant girls’ soccer coach last year and currently teaches health at Methuen High School. Fast-rising local sportscaster Cam Lavallee is the new sports director/anchor at ABC affiliate Channel 34 News in Binghamton, N.Y. Congratulations to Cam on the new gig. The 15th annual Ken Waldie Field Hockey Jamboree, named after the longtime supporter of Methuen athletics who was tragically killed during the 9/11 attacks, is Aug. 31 at Nicholson Stadium on both the Upper and Lower fields starting at 2:30 pm. Methuen plays on the Lower Field at 5 and 5:45 pm. At 4 pm, there will be a ceremony in honor of Ken Waldie.

John Molori is an author, columnist, and a 2011 inductee into the Methuen Athletic Hall of Fame. Facebook: John Molori. Twitter: @MoloriMedia. Email: moloriemail@gmail.com.
NATIONAL NIGHT OUT MEANS CHILLIN’ OUT FOR FIRST RESPONDERS & NEIGHBORS

Last month, Methuen’s first responders celebrated National Night Out by visiting a dozen participating neighborhoods and connecting with residents. Established in 1984, NNO (held the first Tuesday in August) promotes police and community partnerships helping neighbors feel safe and secure with each other, as well as getting to know police and fire personnel. Members of Methuen’s police and fire departments brought with them Sparky the Fire Dog, McGruff the Crime Dog and Chance from the Paw Patrol cartoon, a new favorite for young children.

MethuenLife photographer Nancy Reardon was once again invited to tag along with the Methuen Police Department. This year she accompanied Officer Tom Torrisi, dispatcher Karin Scott Leuer and K9 Officer Matt Mneskes.

Firefighter Susan Vallera, 16-month-old Alaja Santana and Sparky the Fire Dog take time for a quick National Night Out pic! Alaja is the granddaughter of Denise Mathieu, a resident of Mystic Street. MethuenLife photos by Nancy Reardon.

Residents of the Cedar Homes community on Pelham Street enjoyed the company of the members of the Methuen Police Department.

Methuen Village resident Emma Chahanovich delights in meeting up with Methuen police officers. Courtesy photo.

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Neighbors of Fox Run Lane gathered for this group photo before their festivities started.

Nothing like a bounce house to enjoy on Dewey Street!

Sometimes being a K9 officer means you have your own Meet and Greet with other pups. K9 Duke (right) is greeted with kisses from 6-month-old "Ben" Franklin and 3-month-old "Superman" Kal-El.

Officer Thomas Torrisi met up with Adam Araujo and Brendan Sullivan on Dewey Street.

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Soccer/classroom star wins VIP treatment & meets fave Revs player as Santander Scholar

By Melissa Fili  
MethuenLife Writer

Jordan Kim’s love of soccer and school has paid off . . . big time! The Marsh School sixth-grader was honored as one of this summer’s Santander Soccer Scholars for her academic dedication and achievements. Her prize was once-in-a-lifetime. Not only did she soak up a VIP Revs experience at Gillette Stadium, where the New England Revolution beat the LA Galaxy, but she got face time with her favorite player: midfielder Lee Nguyen.

“Meeting him was the best!” said Jordan, 11, who plays midfield or wide midfield for Seacoast United Soccer. “He even signed my shirt — it was a Lee Nguyen shirt — and we took pictures!”

“He’s her favorite because ‘he’s got really good foot skills and he’s a team player,’” she said.

Sharon Kim nominated her hard-working daughter for this opportunity. Jordan completed fifth grade with Scholar Honors, achieving above-standard scores in math, English language arts and science. For the last three years she has been a member of her grade’s Continental Math League. Because of her accomplishments she has been invited to take Advanced Math, a program in which she will complete three years of math in two years.

“I’m really proud of her. She worked really hard in school and was very successful,” said Sharon, who learned about the scholars program on the Revs’ website. “Her behavior and her grades are always great. We were very happy for her.”

Upon learning she was named a Santander Scholar, Jordan — who attended the Revs game with her mom, dad Seong and brother Briaedan, 9, who also plays for Seacoast — said it was “really cool to see (the players) warm up and be up close.” The Kim family stood on the sidelines and cheered on the Revolution as they entered the field.

Jordan has been playing soccer for six years and is starting her fourth season with Seacoast United. Last April, she traveled to Manchester, England, with her team where she trained with soccer legends from the Class of 1992 (many of whom played alongside soccer legend David Beckham). Despite missing five days of school due to this trip, Jordan completed all of her homework and maintained her high grades.

As she gets ready for sixth grade, numbers-loving Jordan told MethuenLife that she was most looking forward to being in Advanced Math.

“It’s my favorite subject,” she said.

So the Revs won the game she attended, she’s excited to start a challenging math class and soccer has brought her much happiness since she was just 5 years old.

“I like winning!” she laughed.

Jordan Kim of Methuen was honored by Santander Bank as a Santander Soccer Scholar for her hard work on the field and in the classroom during a recent New England Revolution match where she got to meet her favorite player - Revs midfielder Lee Nguyen.  
Courtesy photo

Triathlete continued from 19

Rick St. Onge belongs to TriFury, a local triathlete club. He trained and competed with Jim Peirce a Methuen High teacher, and Walter Soriano a former Methuen resident and fellow CHHS grad who now resides in Dracut.

Ironman Mont-Tremblant is a world-class event, including participants from over 50 countries with 1,900 total competitors and 40 professional triathletes. So, why does this Methuen athlete push himself to perform among the cream of the competitive crop?

St. Onge responds, “I do them because it keeps me fit and is a mental outlet from work. As a probation officer, I deal with societal problems on a daily basis, and it is a nice change.”

Like any athletic endeavor, St. Onge faces both physical and mental challenges. He explains, “You have to do the physical preparation, but a lot of things can go wrong in an event that can last up to 17 hours, therefore mental strength is almost as important.

“I never thought this was possible because my arthritis was so bad. At one point I could barely walk. It’s a great feeling to finish any race, but especially the Ironman.”
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- Oct. 7’s -- Methuen High School Open House for 5th through 8th graders and their families; 1 to 3pm
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MY AMAZING ADVENTURE!

The Sistine Chapel, a bronze pig & ping pong on the beach!

Italy is hot, filled with art & oh-so pretty

By Ayva Aziz
Tenney School fifth-grader

Hi, my name is Ayva. Do you want to know what I did in Italy?
The day we arrived in Rome, we got picked up from the airport and traveled to an apartment in Macro Simone, Italy, and got settled. After that my mom, Lisa S., Lisa B., Liv, Maddie, Sophia, Ronan, Jack and I went to the pool while Kevin, Tommy S., Tommy B. and Papa T. went golfing.
The second day the whole family (13 of us) went to Vatican City and got a tour of the Vatican. It was filled with so many statues, paintings and beautiful artworks. I saw the Sistine Chapel. My feet started to hurt and I got hungry because the tour was 3 hours long.
The third day, we took the subway train to Rome and took a tour of the Colosseum. We also did a tour of the Roman Forum, Spanish Steps, Trevi Fountain and the Pantheon. It was very hot that day. I kept cool by drinking water from the public fountains and wetting my cooling towel.
The fourth day, we drove to Pompeii and got to see Mount Vesuvius. Then we went to a hotel in the hills on the Amalfi coast named the Rialto. It had an elevator outside

that went underground, that took us to our rooms. The view was awesome! The pool was even better because it overlooked the coast. That night we ate the freshest pasta with sauce and I had some of mom’s pork. It was so good! The gelato was delish also. Not quite sure what they do different, but it is! Did I say the view of the Amalfi coast from the hotel was beautiful?!

The fifth day, we went on a beautiful boat ride along the Amalfi coast. It was awesome! We went swimming in caves and stopped at two different towns along the coast, Amalfi and Positano. The water was so nice and warm with small waves but very salty unlike Salisbury Beach.
The sixth day, we went to Tivoli, a small town in the hills outside of Rome. We saw many beautiful fountains and gardens. After that we went to the beach on the Roman coast. The water was so nice, I even went out deep. I got to play ping pong and lay under an umbrella on the beach. I got so hot I ran back into the water.

On the seventh day, my mom, Kevin and I went to Florence by train. It was

Soaking up history, savoring cuisine & walking in heroes’ footsteps

Dream trip to France c’est magnifique

By Jack Foreman
Presentation of Mary Academy junior

Ask any of my friends: I am a massive Francophile. I love all things French, from the food to the culture to the history - I just can’t help it. So you can imagine my excitement when I was offered the chance to visit my favorite place in the world for an eight-day trip of a lifetime. And now, I have the opportunity to share my experience with you.

My dad and I landed in Charles de Gaulle Airport and headed for our first destination: Bayou. We stopped to see artist Claude Monet’s hometown, the city of Giverny. I had my first French meal and let me just say, there’s a reason why chefs in cartoons are French. The French are incredible chefs; everywhere we stopped, the food was fantastic. In Bayou, we saw the famous tapestry. It’s amazing how it lasted this long. It’s over 1,000 years old and yet we still get to appreciate it today.

We reached Normandy (this part of the trip was very exciting about) early in the morning, before the tourists came and it was incredibly surreal to see that huge empty beach - where thousands of American soldiers lost their lives - and the monument. I walked out to the water and I could really put myself in the footsteps of the men who charged it, but even with it empty it was hard to picture all those men. We then went to visit Pointe du Hoc - an Army Ranger mission during the siege of Omaha. The Rangers had to shoot grappling nets to scale this massive cliff and, due to inclement weather, they didn’t get there under the cover of night. So the Rangers spent the whole morning scaling a 90-foot cliff, being shot at by Germans. But that wasn’t even the best part. Pointe du Hoc itself, where the German nest was, is a large open plain on the cliff. Or, it used to be. Now, it’s littered with massive craters, as small as 10 feet across and 15 feet deep, but some were as big as 20 feet across and 30 feet deep. At first I thought they were natural, until my dad and I found a sign that read, “Every crater was from an artillery shell.” Every single one! On top of that, there were concrete pillboxes everywhere - massive structures with 2-foot-thick walls. You’d think they were indestructible but most of them were completely destroyed. There was one pillbox in pristine condition sitting right next to what used to be a pristine pillbox, those thick walls cracked from the shelling.

See JACK, Page 25

Ayva was one of the 3.9 million yearly visitors to Rome’s Colosseum - built in 70 A.D. and the site of celebrations, sporting events and more.

When at the Trevi Fountain, it’s customary to throw in a coin for good luck.

Selfie at one of the oldest Catholic churches!

The gates of the Palais de Versailles

Selfie at Napoleon’s tomb!

A destroyed pillbox at Pointe du Hoc

See Ayva, Page 25
Kids take active roles at Marsh Corner Faith

At Marsh Corner Community Church, every Sunday has a different theme. On Aug. 28, it was dedicated to the youth.

While Senior Pastor George Stevens led the service, worship director Sarah Anderson had youngsters ages 8 to 17 participate in every aspect of the service.

Anderson came up with the idea as she saw more teenagers interested in joining the choir and band. While those children sang and played their instruments, Anderson incorporated others who had just joined the choir and band and those who were not musically inclined to be part of the service as well by greeting fellow parishioners and handing out bulletins as they came into the church, and running visual presentations.

“I wanted them to feel that they do belong and are part of the church,” Anderson said. “We wanted them to feel a sense of belonging and service and hopefully it will inspire them to continue as they grow older.”

Here are the youth who participated: Sam Karagiorgos, 17, lead vocalist and acoustic guitar; Lukas Karagiorgos, 14, piano; Charis Anderson, 13, keyboard; Vivian Yeaman, 16, keyboard; Hope Anderson, 9, vocalist; Harley Baker, 12, vocalist; Katherine Yeaman, 13, vocalist; Elise Anderson, 12, flute; Bethany Anderson, 10, violin; Ethan Baker, 13, computer technician; running visual presentation; Sofin Karagiorgos, 8, greeter and handing out bulletins; and Peter Yeaman, 11, usher.

Walks to benefit St. Vincent de Paul

St. Monica Church and St. Theresa, part of Our Lady of Good Counsel, are both hosting “Friends of the Poor” walks to benefit the St. Vincent de Paul Society in their parishes.

At St. Monica, the walk is Sept. 23 at 9 am. The walk at St. Theresa is Sept. 30 at 9:30 am. All donations benefit the St. Vincent de Paul Society which distributes bags of food, supermarket gift certificates and clothing vouchers and helps the needy pay for utilities and rent.

ALPHA delves into Christian faith

ALPHA, a series of talks exploring the Christian faith, starts Sept. 13 at 6pm at St. Lucy Parish Hall, 354 Merrimack St. Each session begins with a meal, short presentation and conversation on “Why Am I Here?” “Where Did I Come From?” “Where Am I Going?” and “Is There a God?”

The ALPHA program is for lifelong Catholics, those who have drifted from the faith and those who do not know who Christ is. It is free.

For more information, contact Karl Jackson, director of Faith Formation, at faithformation Stamina@gmail.com.

Centennial celebration

In honor of its 100th anniversary, St. Monica Parish is hosting a dinner dance at Lenzi's in Dracut on Oct. 28. More than 200 tickets have been sold already and there is a limited number left. They cost $50 and are available by calling Bill and Jane Shawcross at (978) 794-8661 or (978) 273-8830.

Happenings

DoubleTree Hotel, 123 Old River Road, Andover: World-renown Armenian singer Onnik Dinkjian performs Oct. 14, 7 pm to midnight. The performance also includes ond, clarinet, keyboard and drum. This is sponsored by the Armenian Friends of America to benefit Merrimack Valley Armenian churches, including the Arat Armenian Congregational Church of Salem.

N.H. Advance tickets only ($50 to $65) include buffet, coffee, dessert and dance. For tickets call (603) 560-3826 or (978) 683-9121.

First Church Congregational, 26 Pleasant St.: Homecoming Sunday is Sept. 10 during the 10am service followed by a barbecue.

Forest Street Union Church, 15 Forest St.: Rummage Sale, Sept. 16, 8am to noon. Rally Sunday Sept. 17 with worship at 10am and Christian Education BBQ to follow.

St. Andrew Episcopal, 90 Broadway: Game Night is Sept. 5, 6:30pm. Book Club to discuss “Maybe” by Anne Tyler is Sept. 27 at 6:30pm. The book examines the nature of guilt, the possibility of forgiveness and the meaning of the church of second chance. To request a book, contact Krista McLeod at (978) 975-8224.

St. Lucy, 254 Merrimack St: The Blessed Virgin Mary Sodality meets Sept. 10 after the 9:30am Mass. The Men’s Guild meets Sept. 24 after the 9:30am Mass in the church hall.

If you have a story idea for Methuen Faith columnist Yadira Betances Muldoon, please contact her at yadira63@aol.com.

Jack, continued from 24

You could put yourself in the shoes of both Joe Smith from New York, scaling this cliff desperate to get to the top while all your buddies fell to the sea around you, just as easily as you could be Klaus Werner, drafted from Berlin and scrambling through underground tunnels as everything blows up around you, when suddenly the tunnel you were about to run into isn’t there anymore. I would highly recommend visiting Pointe du Hoc.

On to the main event - Paris. What was really astonishing about France was the fact that it doesn’t get dark until about 11 at night. At 9:45pm, the sun is just starting to set and it’s 90 degrees out! We did our rounds visiting famous landmarks: the Eiffel Tower, the Arc de Triomph, the Tuileries, all the best places. My favorite stop was visiting the tomb of my personal favorite historical figure: Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon is buried in this massive cathedral-esque building. The tomb itself is a giant circular stone pit, with his enormous brownstone sarcophagus demanding all the attention in the room. It was incredible to be there, just standing there, while a man I idolized lay before me.

The next day, we visited museums. And yes, the Louvre IS as big as they say. We were in there for about 4 hours, and even then all we managed to see was the important stuff. I must say, the Mona Lisa was incredibly underwhelming. It’s only about the size of a poster board, and it was so swarmed with tourists I was content to just stand on my toes and get a decent picture.

We also visited the Palais de Versailles, which was two things - big and beautiful. We were in line for roughly an hour and a half (not exactly the highlight of the trip ...), but getting in was worth it. The palace itself and the gardens were gorgeous. We also got to see a room that absolutely made my day. You see, I’m friends with a lot of history buffs and they happen to be the kind of history buffs to make fun of France for being cowardly, surrendering ... you know how the stereotype goes. So imagine my excitement when I found a room about the size of two ballrooms that was jam packed with paintings and statues of great French military conquistadores and war heroes. I was ecstatic, and did more than my fair share of face-nibbling.

One funny story I have was when I went to search for the grave of Porfirio Diaz, a great exiled Mexican dictator who was buried in France. A friend asked me to find his tomb, so naturally my dad and I went to Montparnasse - a big cemetery with one map sign. To our dismay, we found out that we were on the opposite side of the cemetery as Porfirio Diaz. So, we made our way to the center and split up. I found a woman with a map, but I read it wrong and I ended up going in the OPPPOSITE direction, only to become lost. Again. I found a fellow there and this is how our conversation went; “Parlez-vous Francais ou Anglais? (Do you speak French or English?)” I asked.

“No,” said the man, simply. “Hablan Espanol?” (Do you speak Spanish?) I asked out of desperation.

“Si!” he said.

“Dende estan Porfirio Diaz?” I asked, and he proceeded to rattle on to me in Spanish while motioning with his hand. When I finally found Diaz, I was out of breath! Needless to say, probably the hardest dead guy in the world to find.

Overall, I had a fantastic time. It’s an incredible experience to be immersed in a country and culture you love, speaking as if you were a native, visiting all these sights most people just read about. By far one of the best things to happen to me. I hope you enjoyed this piece and one day you too can visit the incredible nation of the French. But for now, au revoir et vive la France!

Jack is the son of Sandra and Mike Foreman.

Ayva, continued from 24

very beautiful and very HOT! We saw the statue of David, a statue of Medusa and we walked on a beautiful bridge called the Ponte Vecchio. My favorite part of visiting Florence was finding a bronze pig fountain called the Porcellino. When we located the bronze pig fountain, we took a coin and rubbed the pig’s nose for luck and put the coin in its mouth and dropped it. If the coin fell into the fountain vent, it meant that you would come back to Italy again (YES, my coin fell in!).

On our last day we went to the airport to go home. I had to show my U.S. passport and check my bags and go through security checkpoints. I had my last Italian meal in the airport before boarding the plane for a long nine-hour flight home. I got to watch movies and listen to music on my own television screen at my seat.

Italy was a wonderful summer vacation! Hope you enjoyed my story.

Ayva Aziz, the daughter of Tracy Aziz and Rob Aziz, enjoys cooking.
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Tsongas tours state-of-the-art Methuen Family Health Center

In celebration of National Community Health Center Week – and fresh off her announcement that she won’t seek re-election after a decade representing Massachusetts – Congresswoman Niki Tsongas was in Methuen last month, learning about a new health-care option for some of the area’s neediest residents.

She visited the open house at the state-of-the-art Methuen Family Health Center and its pharmacy at 147 Pelham St. Both are overseen by Greater Lawrence Family Health Center and just opened this spring (May MethuenLife), following the growing clinic’s move from Holy Family Hospital. The open house was complete with face painting, life-size games and toys for children as well as an array of educational information on health care. Also on site was the new Mobile Health Center, fully equipped to provide care and services including immunizations, to those who are either unable to get to a doctor or facility or hesitate to seek medical care.

As Tsongas toured the 12,570-square-foot facility, Mobile Health Center and full-service pharmacy (which is open to the general public), she told company leaders that she was very impressed with the work of GLFHC. The Health Center accepts all insurances and those without insurance can sign up there.

Tsongas is the widow of Congressman Paul Tsongas, who died of cancer in 1997 at just 55 years old.
1-OF-A-KIND AUCTION ITEMS – EACH MADE WITH LOVE – BENEFIT SENIOR CENTER

Month-long silent auction supports repairs, activities

By Melissa Fili
MethuenLife Writer

For her latest labor of love, JoAnne Bryant combined two things that bring her joy: the Methuen Senior Activity Center and her talent for crocheting the softest blankets around.

“I worked for years and gave money to a lot of good causes. I can’t anymore, but I can do this,” she said, putting her fists together – index fingers extended – and working with imaginary crochet needles. “I spend a lot of time here and I have fun (making afghans), so I wanted to help.”

Bryant’s creation is one of the unique handmade items up for bid at a silent auction benefiting the Senior Center. For the second year, Nevins Library will host the event. But while last year’s fund-raiser ran for two weeks, this year’s auction will run nearly a month – from Sept. 18 to Oct. 16 – an effort to get those bids as high as possible.

“T’m ecstatic!” says auction organizer and artist Genevieve Marks, vice president of the center’s Board of Trustees, upon accepting a pretty cross-stitch Christmas piece. “It’s not only the talent of the people, but the generosity. The donors are taking time to create these special pieces that bring pleasure to other people. And working with the library staff has been wonderful.”

Money raised through the auction is essential. While the city budget supports the bustling non-profit center, that does not include repairs to the 33-year-old facility or the wide range of activities offered to the members – many of whom consider the Lowell Street center their second home. Every dollar raised will be put back into the center.

“This way we don’t have to charge full price for activities. We want everyone to participate,” said Corinne LaCharite, the center’s executive director. “The building always needs a repair – right now we have someone tweaking the air conditioning because that would be thousands to replace. Plus the auction is a wonderful way to showcase what so many of our members learn in the classes they take here.”

On any given summer day, the Methuen Senior Activity Center is buzzing with 250 or more people taking art classes, working out in the exercise room, socializing on the dance floor and enjoying their Meals on Wheels lunch.

And that’s a slow day!

So the next time you visit the library, check out the auction items and consider making a bid to help a place that is so special in the hearts of many senior citizens – such as Joanna Vistor, who donated a Patriots basket (with a handmade fleece Pats blanket) to the cause.

“In the corporate world, I worked 50 to 60 hours a week. Then suddenly I had nothing to do,” she explained. “I love this place. They’ve pulled me up by my boot straps!”

BID HIGH!

Bids will be accepted for these items from Sept. 18 to Oct. 16 at Nevins Library on the main floor. For up for bid, as of MethuenLife press time, are:

- Handmade fleece New England Patriots blanket which is part of a large basket filled with Patriots merchandise, donated by Joanne Victor.
- Quilted coverlet, measuring 45 inches by 62 inches, featuring a log cabin design by Irene Mordach.
- Handmade quilted brown and gold purse by Joyce Harris.
- Handmade quilt, measuring 40 inches by 62 inches, by Nellie DiStefano.
- Hand-crocheted red and black afghan measuring 80 inches by 45 inches by JoAnne Bryant.
- Color photograph of a silver-throated tanager (bird) by Jeffrey Martineau.
- Framed acrylic painting of a peaceful snow scene by Genevieve Marks.
- Color water lilies photo on canvas by Harvey Marks.
- Merry Christmas cross-stitch wall decoration by Pauline Hargreaves.

a bid to help a place that is so special in the hearts of many senior citizens – such as Joanna Vistor, who donated a Patriots basket (with a handmade fleece Pats blanket) to the cause.

“In the corporate world, I worked 50 to 60 hours a week. Then suddenly I had nothing to do,” she explained. “I love this place. They’ve pulled me up by my boot straps!”

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Condos on stunningly authentic 1905 Searles property seek residents

By Kim Whiting
SalemLife Writer

An air of scandal and mystery has surrounded Salem, N.H.’s Stillwater Manor since it was built by Methuen millionaire Edward F. Searles more than 100 years ago. Rumor, speculation and urban legend have inflated the mystery of the Pond Street property.

Sound like a place you’d want to call “home?”

Today, Stillwater Manor is a private residence divided into six condo units and two of them are currently available — one for rent and one for sale. Aesthetically, the property’s “bones” have changed very little since Searles — an interior designer — had it built, though inside the combination of old and new is breathtaking.

“It was originally built almost like a condo anyway,” said Tom Jacobson, who owns two of the units at 80 Pond St., built in 1905 just down the street from what is now the Methuen line. “Each door has a family name on it. They would have all lived in the home, with different wings for different family members … in-laws, etc., and then there was a central area for the servants.”

Real estate agent Ann McKillop of Berkshire Hathaway is tasked with selling the condo anyway,” said Tom Jacobson, who first imagines what the Searles family would do when it comes to a repair or upgrade

“Part of living here is buying into the philosophy of keeping the place as it was intended. Everything here I’ve had handmade or imported. There isn’t a stitch here from Home Depot …”

– Stillwater Manor condo owner Tom Jacobson, who first imagines what the Searles family would do when it comes to a repair or upgrade

History of Edward Searles

Edward F. Searles loved building castles, and had enough money to do so. Searles was born in Methuen in 1841. He grew up there, taking piano lessons and working in a cotton mill to help his mom financially. In the early 1860s, he left home to teach music in Maine. It is upon his return from Maine that he may have had his heart broken by his fiancée and his brother who got married in 1867. He left home again and earned a small fortune as an interior designer with a Boston firm. In 1875, Searles began using his savings and his experience to travel. When he returned, he got a job with Herter Brothers, a notable design firm in New York.

Searles began using his earnings and his eye for design to renovate his family’s Methuen home, then to build up the land around it, through the Oakside area south of East Street, then through High Field Farm toward the Salem border. He renamed the area Pine Lodge, and today that main home and surrounding acreage are owned by the sisters of Presentation of Mary. He also started buying parcels of land just over the New Hampshire border, eventually owning about 1,600 acres in Salem — a full 10 percent of Salem’s property at the time. Not all of Salem’s other residents were pleased with the arrangement, though most had to admit that he did provide employment for many local people and he donated a variety of buildings to the town, as well, which helped to quell any real protest.

But locals loved to talk about Searles. Some accounts refer to him as a committed bachelor throughout most of his life, another speculates about his sexual preferences, while yet another claims he was crushed when a beloved fiancée left him to marry his brother. In one place, he is referred to as a generous philanthropist and by another account, he is a greedy baron.

Rheumatic fever forced Searles to retire from Herter Brothers in 1881 and he traveled to the West Coast seeking relief from the illness. Seeing an opportunity to follow up with clients in that area, Herter Broth-
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Farm-to-Fork Dinner!
Classy Country Dining
Saturday, September 16 - 6 pm at the farm
255 Merrimack Street, Methuen

Executive Chef Fonzi will be catering a seven course dinner, complete with wine and beer, prepared with meat, vegetables, dairy and fruit from local farms.

$80 per adult person / $150 per couple
Reserve by Sept. 9

For tickets stop by the greenhouse to sign up cash, check or charge
Popular authors returning to library

By Krista I. McLeod
Nevins Library Director

We are kicking off September with TWO great author events! On Sept. 9, we welcome back local author Jo Piazza O’Mara at 11am. She will be talking about her second book set in Lawrence, titled “Songs in the Night.” This is a sequel to “Garden of Hope” and continues to follow the lives of the gregarious, fun-loving Agosti family. Then on Sept 13, we welcome the return of Hank Phillipe Ryan at 6:30pm. She will be talking about her latest Jane Ryland thriller, “Say No More.” Refreshments will be served at both events. Copies of the books will be available for purchase and signing. Please reserve your seat online through our calendar of events or by calling the Main Desk: (978) 686-4080 ext. 16.

Volunteer to be a literacy tutor

Come learn more about how you can make a difference in the life of an English language learner! Literacy Volunteers of Methuen provides free, confidential, student-centered, one-on-one tutoring for English speakers of other languages (ESOL). There are currently 60 prospective students on our waiting list, so the need for tutors is great! Training for new tutors begins Oct. 11. If you are interested in learning more about this program and how you can help, please join us for an orientation. Orientations will take place Sept. 23 from 10 to 11am, Sept. 27 from 7 to 8pm and Sept. 28th from 10 to 11am. To find out more, contact Kathleen Kenny at (978) 686-4080, ext. 32 or LitVolMeth@gmail.com.

Here Comes the Sun

Join us Sept. 18 at 7pm and learn all about the Science of Sunshine! Yes, we need to be concerned about skin cancer, but did you know more sun can be healthy? In this presentation, we will discuss ‘healthy’ doses of sun and the benefits of more sun exposure.

Our speaker is Mike Cross, Ph.D., department chair of Natural Sciences at Northern Essex Community College where he teaches chemistry and forensic science. We are pleased to present this program with the Northern Essex Community College Speakers Bureau, and it is funded by a grant through the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Fall brings Book Clubs

Don’t forget about all of our book clubs! We have book clubs for all ages, covering many interests and meeting at different times of the day. Here is a quick guide to Nevins Library Book Groups:

For adults BestSeller Book Club: Come join the Bestseller Book Club (formally the Romance Book Club) as we read through the Bestsellers you may have missed. We meet the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm, and every month we will have a different genre of Bestseller to read and discuss!

Stranger Than Fiction Book Club: This is a non-fiction book group that usually meets at the library on the second Monday of the month. We’ll read across all topics within nonfiction (ex. Biographies, True Crime, Travelogues) except for religion and politics. Some months we’ll be discussing a single title, while other months there will be a theme and a list of suggested books on that topic from which participants can choose.

Cookbook Club: Calling all cooks! Come join the Nevins Library’s Cookbook Book Club with Pat Graham. This group meets on the third Tuesday of each month. Check out a copy of the selected book or books at the Main Desk, pick a recipe and prepare it for the program. We’ll sample lots of good, interesting foods, talk about what worked, what didn’t and how to make it easier and healthier. We will also discuss restaurants we visited and critique them.

Thursday Evening Book Discussions: The library’s longest-running book group has been meeting for over 25 years. Fiction and non-fiction are read and discussed in themed series on the first Thursday of each month.

Wednesday Afternoon Book Group: This group meets regularly on the third Wednesday of the month at 1pm to discuss contemporary fiction. Refreshments are served, and new members are always welcome!

LGBTQ Book Group: This group is open to any adult (18+) who is interested in reading quality fiction, non-fiction and biography on LGBTQ topics and themes or by gay/lesbian authors. Meeting on the second Thursday of each month at 7pm.

Forever Young-ish Book Group: Brand-new book club! While teen fiction has a specific audience in mind, adults have come to love all that there is to read there. This is your chance to read and discuss teen fiction with like-minded adults. Whether you actively read teen fiction already, or are curious to dip your toes into the water, this is the group for you! We meet on the third Thursday of every month.

For teens Book Babbie: If you love to read and can’t wait to tell someone about your latest title, then come join us for Book Babbie. We’ll read a new book each month and talk all about it over a slice of hot pizza! Book Babbie meets on the first Thursday of every month and is open to teens in grades 7 to 12.

For kid Book Worms: For kids in second and third grade. This book group is for newly independent readers. Part of a short chapter book will be read aloud, followed by a brief discussion, and then an activity or craft related to the story. Everyone is encouraged to check out a copy of the book to finish at home Book Chatters: For kids in grades four to six. This book group focuses on a new selection each month. Call the Children’s Room at extension 26 to reserve a copy. Refreshments will be served.

Check out our Calendar of Events, our website, or ask any of our librarians for more information about any of our book groups!

September Book Sale

Our Fall Book Sale begins with a Preview Night on Friday, Sept. 22 from 5 to 8pm in the Great Hall. The entrance fee is $20 per person. The sale continues Sept. 23, 9am to 5pm and Sept. 24 from noon to 4pm. The weekend concludes with Bargain Day on Sept. 25 from 9am to 8pm when you can purchase a bag for $8 and fill it with as many book, DVD, CDs or puzzles as you wish. Make sure you mark your calendar so you don’t miss out! Proceeds from this sale benefit the purchase of museum passes, maintenance of the fish tank outside of the Children’s Department, summer reading programs and various services.

If anyone wishes to volunteer prior to the Book Sale or help out the weekend of the event, please contact Carla Friedrich at (978) 686-4080 ext. 33 or cfriedrich@nevinslibrary.org. Do note that donations of books, CDs, DVDs are accepted throughout the year. You can find the donation cart inside the main entrance of the Library near the Circulation Desk.

Notes from Children’s Dept.

The Children’s Department would like to thank all who participated in our Build

MAGICAL ENDING FOR SUMMER READERS

On Aug. 16, families packed Nevins Library’s Great Hall for the end-of-summer reading party where they were entertained by magician and juggler Scott Jameson. The show kept them laughing and, at times, perched at the edge of their seats. Umbrellas were plucked from thin air, basketballs were spun and juggled, the audience traveled through time and Jameson’s head seemed to rotate 360 degrees in a gear-cranked device without injury! A great time was had by all! Here, Gabby Bateman, 8, watches anxiously as Jameson’s anti-gravity table floats above her head! MethuenLife photos by Melissa Fili

See LIBRARY, Page 33
Cooking with Marcy & Friends

Remembering Bruce’s kindness & love of talking food!

Marcy Donohue

It is with Bruce Arnold’s memory in mind that I dedicate my September column. A longtime radio personality on WCCM, he was known as the “Voice of the Merrimack Valley.” He was a favorite to many listeners, especially in winter when he announced “No school!” to local schoolchildren. I got to know him as I was a frequent guest on his “Here’s Cooking at You” show and through my “Cooking with Marcy” radio show on that channel.

It is difficult to believe that he passed away two years ago on Sept. 19. Bruce was a great inspiration for many radio personalities. He was a kind and gentle man to all who called in to WCCM radio.

I remember our trip to Bermuda on the Norwegian Cruise Line when we had a tour of the galley where the staff cooked for 2,500 passengers. It was exciting, especially seeing it with Bruce and his wife Lenora. I still cherish the cookbook that was given to me by the executive chef.

Bruce was a friend to all who tuned in to his early morning programs. Love of family meant the world to him. Bruce Arnold left an echo of happy times and bright sunny days!

Bruce, may the merciful Lord Jesus bless you and welcome you with open arms!

Mac & Cheese

By Bruce Arnold, courtesy of "Taste of the Merrimack Valley"

2 cups milk
2 Tablespoons flour
1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
1 teaspoon butter, plus
3 Tablespoons, divided
6 ounces Velveeta cheese, divided
1 pound box elbow macaroni
1 cup bread crumbs
paprika

In a saucepan, stir milk, flour, garlic powder, 1 teaspoon butter, onion flakes and 1/4 of the Velveeta until completely melted. In a separate pan, cook pasta per directions on the box, rinse and drain. Put cooked pasta in casserole dish. Add cheese and milk sauce. Slice the remaining butter and stir in bread crumbs. Put bread-crumb mixture on top of remaining sliced cheese. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake at 325 degrees for 30 minutes.

Pork Chops with Apples & Stuffing

By Walter Andrews, who also hosted a WCCM cooking show

6 boneless pork loin chops, 1 inch thick
1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
1 8-oz. package Pepperidge Farm crushed stuffing mix
1 21-oz. can apple pie filling with cinnamon

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large skillet, brown pork chops in oil over medium-high heat. Meanwhile, prepare stuffing according to package directions. Spread pie filling into a greased 9x13x2-inch baking dish. Place pork chops on top, spoon stuffing over chops. Bake, covered, in preheated oven for 35 minutes. Uncover and bake 10 minutes or until a meat thermometer reads 160 degrees.

Pecan Apple Pie

By Marcy Donohue
Makes 2 pies

Filling:
1 cup sugar
1/3 cup flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon salt
12 apples, peeled and cut into bite-size pieces
2 pastry shells

Topping:
1 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup flour
1/2 cup oats
1/2 cup butter
1/2 cup pecans
1/2 cup caramel topping

Combine sugar, flour, cinnamon and salt. Add apples and pour into pastry shells. For topping combine brown sugar, flour and oats, and cut in the butter. Sprinkle over apples. Drizzle with caramel topping. Bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes.

Lifelong Methuen resident Marcy Donohue was a "foodie" long before it became popular! For 10 years, she hosted the "Cooking with Marcy Donohue" show on WCCM radio and she also published two cookbooks. Have a great recipe you’d like Marcy to consider including in an upcoming column? E-mail it to Melissa@MethuenLife.com.

Library, continued from 32

Roadhouse, AMC Theaters and Chipotle Mexican Grill.

Tech help: apps & eBooks

Register for these programs online at www.nevinslibrary.org under Calendar of Events or call the Reference Dept. at (978) 686-4080 ext. 12.

"Apps?" Sept. 23, 10am: Apps are for everyone! Bring your mobile device and prepare to try out the most useful, innovative, fun and educational apps for all ages. Remember your device's username or Apple ID and password.

"Borrowing Library eBooks" Sept. 25, 7pm. Did you know that you can get free e-books from the library on your smartphone? It's true! Whether you listen to audiobooks or read print, you can get free eBooks from Nevins, the Boston Public Library and more! Join us to learn all about this great feature and to download your first library book.

For an extensive list of Nevins Memorial Library happenings, check out www.nevinslibrary.org.

Searles, continued from 30

ers asked him to make visits while there. Searles was particularly taken with Mary Hopkins, the recent widow of a railroad tycoon, and her property on Nob Hill. The two developed a relationship and Searles was hired to build Hopkins a summer home in Great Barrington, Mass. The two married in 1887, when he was 45 and she was 67.

After a six-month honeymoon sailing the world, the newlyweds moved to their new property on World’s End Pond in Salem. According to history books, the pond got its name from Haverhill’s early settlers who were thwarted in their westward progress by the pond’s impassably muddy waters. Searles had an elaborate plan to divert water from the Spicket River to replenish the pond but was never able to buy the intervening property that would make this vision possible. Some say that is why he lost interest in the property, others say that it is because his wife died just four years after they married. Yet others say that it was just Searles’ way to move on as soon as construction was complete on a project. It is written that, were it not for a badly broken leg that kept him bed-ridden for nearly a year, Searles would have never actually lived in the 24-room Stillwater Manor at all. Before the last stone was in place, Searles was already turning his attention toward Windham, N.H., and his next big project.

Searles died in Methuen in 1920.

Much more information about Edward F. Searles and his properties can be found on Internet history sites and in books such as "Images of America: Town of Salem, N.H." by Douglas W. Seed and Katherine Khalife and "At the Edge of Megalopolis: History of Salem 1900-1974" by HCDJ Noyes.
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East councilor candidates fly solo into Sept. 19 primary

ADAM CHIOCCA
Greetings neighbor. Adam Chiocca here, ready to be your next East District City Councilor. It would be my pleasure to serve in this capacity. In short, I think that I would be an excellent steward for the city. I believe I have the right amount of care, concern, and knowledge to guide Methuen forward. I know that I will be a good representative for our residents and taxpayers. You need somebody who cares about this great place, and wants the best for Methuen. If you’re a smart adult, you’ve probably learned that you can’t spend more than you have. It is this kind of common sense thinking that has guided me, as a father and head of household. We need Methuen to also be financially sound and strong. My thoughtful approach includes keeping our current services, and improving where we can. I understand that for a city to function well, our departments and boards need to be kept efficient and productive. I hope to preserve the great things about Methuen, while managing our growth in sensible and smart ways, so that we see a strong, safe, vibrant Methuen in the future. I am a regular Methuen Dad who simply wants to keep us on a good path. I am trustworthy, dependable, straightforward and hard-working. Thanks for your vote.

DANIEL GRAYTON
Hello, My name is Daniel Grayton and I am running for East District City Councilor. I’m running to be a voice for responsible spending, smart growth and open and transparent government. In 2013 I had the honor of being elected to serve you, the taxpayers of Methuen, as your City Councilor-at-Large. While serving on the Council I was never afraid to speak up on your behalf when actions were taken that were not in the best interests of the residents of Methuen. I was proud to be a councilor not of the special interests or power brokers but of the people. There is still a lot we can accomplish in Methuen, from continuing to work towards a sustainable budget that lowers the tax rate to finding ways to jumpstart smart growth and make sure city hall is an open and transparent place where residents feel welcome and heard. Having advocated for these things as a City Councillor gives me the unique ability to be the candidate with the experience to lead from day one. If you want to know more about my campaign I’d welcome you to email me at DanielGrayton@gmail.com. I’d be happy to speak with you about my campaign and the issues that affect Methuen. Finally, and most importantly I’d be honored to have your vote on September 19th for East District City Councilor. It would be a privilege to once again have the opportunity to serve you at City Hall. Thank you.

SIDNEY HARRIS
As a third-generation Meth-uenite I’ve had the privilege of serving our community in many capacities: an advocate for the disabled in assuring an accessible community for over 30 years, a youth sports organizer for the Methuen Youth Hockey Association and Methuen West Little League. I represent and advocate for services and programs that benefit all the citizens. I have a history of challenging city hall to do what’s best for all who live in our community. I recently organized and challenged the city’s new trash proposal by utilizing it to maintain our current tax rates. Without new tax revenue coming into the city because of new developments, we must make plans to utilize it to maintain our current tax rates and help with infrastructure improvements, school expansions and most importantly continue to invest in public safety measures that benefit us as our community grows, I will not support measures that are not to the best interest of our community. I will be your advocate at city hall.

STEVE SABA
Hello Methuen.
My name is Steve Saba and I hope to become your next City Councilor in the East District. I was born and grew up in Methuen and along with my wife Cathy, we have raised our three children here. Over the past twenty-five years I have volunteered my time serving our community. I have been president of the Methuen Youth Basketball Association for the past 14 years, long after my own kids had left the program and was a founding member and current president of the Methuen Athletic Improvement Committee. The MAIC led the successful community effort to completely renovate Nicholson stadium. The improvements included making the entire facility ADA compliant, providing locker rooms and facilities for girls and installing two turf fields all of which has brought pride to our community. I have also worked hard to support our families and schools.
During my door to door travels I have found that like myself, most residents love Methuen. Many of our residents, however, do not feel represented or listened to by our elected officials. Our senior citizens in many cases feel that their concerns and voices are ignored, while being over taxed and getting little in return.
I am asking for your vote on September 19 so I can do exactly what I have been doing for the past 25 years. I would like to represent the citizens of Methuen and work to make the city that we love an even greater place for all. Thank you!

EUNICE ZEIGLER
I am a 2006 Methuen High School graduate with a Bachelor's in political science and Masters in Economic And Social Development of Regions from UMass Lowell. I currently serve as a Compliance Specialist/Grant Writer for the City of Lowell Housing Authority and prior to that, a Financial Compliance Manager for the City of Haverhill. As a candidate for Methuen City Council, I would lend my education and municipal finance experience towards the economic sustainability of the city. I seek to push for long term strategic planning for the city and look for ways to expand opportunities for residents.

Sing? Dance? Join ‘Home for Holidays’

In preparation for their 40th anniversary celebration, North Regional Theatre Workshop will present its annual “Home for the Holidays 2017.” This holiday favorite highlights Christmas classics and sounds of the season. Rehearsals are every Monday evening, beginning Sept. 11 and the production will be presented Dec. 1, 2 and 3. All singers, dancers and performers are welcome to join them for their first rehearsal at First Church Congregational, 26 Pleasant St., from 7 to 9:30pm. Info: (978) 683-3600.
Wet Spring Brings Flower & Veggie Bonanza!

Perhaps you’ve noticed you’ve been hauling the lawnmower out of the garage more frequently this summer, thanks in large part to a long, cool and rainy spring. Methuen residents and local gardeners are experiencing a banner year for growth, and not just lawns; Bumper crops have yards and gardens overflowing with veggies and flowers. A simple drive around the city offers a beautiful view of nature’s bounty and makes us all wish summer would last just a little bit longer.

More photos on page 37

Below: Peekaboo! Methuen Life’s very own photographer Nancy Reardon is also an accomplished flower gardener!

Julia Small, a student at the CGS, harvests some fresh vegetables from her mom Karen’s beautiful garden.

Leda Drouin proudly stands in the middle of her gorgeous perennial flower garden on Forest Street.

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Let’s talk current events!

“The Talk” is a new, twice-monthly program where people can meet others for a general conversation and to discuss current events with moderator Sheila Radulski-Lynch. Dates are Sept. 14 and 28, Oct. 12 and 26, Nov. 9 and 30, and Dec. 7 and 21. It runs from 10:30 to 11:30am.

Bid on our auction items!

Our silent auction fund-raiser will run from Sept. 18 to Oct. 16 at Nevins Memorial Library on Broadway, to support programs and activities at the Methuen Activity Center. Be sure to stop in at the library to bid on a selection of beautiful, hand-made items including knitted and crocheted items, paintings, photography and ceramics.

Funds are raised to support programs and activities at the Methuen Activity Center!

Flu shots

Flu season is right around the corner! Get your flu shot Thursday, Sept. 28 from 11 am to 1 pm at the center. This is sponsored by Neighborhood Health Mart and pre-registration is required! Stop by the office or call us at (978) 983-8825. Bring your Medicare Part B Card with you!

Bocce tourney

The Methuen Rotary Club of Methuen will host its 5th annual Charity Bocce Tournament at the Sons of Italy, 459 Merrimack St., on Oct. 21 from 5 to 10 pm. Price is $50 per person or $200 for a team of four. Proceeds will benefit the Methuen Senior Activity Center and the Adopt-A-Grandparent program! For more information, please contact Tim Frechette at (978) 697-6760.

Coming up

Sept. 4: Labor Day. Center closed.
Sept. 5: TRIAD Senior Safety Meeting, 10am. All welcome.
Sept. 8: Movie Matinee, 10 am. Free. Sponsored by Commonwealth Care.
Sept. 10: Coffee Time with Sid Harris, East District City Council candidate, 10:30 am.
Sept. 16: New England Rose Society Meeting, 10am. “Which roses did well, which didn’t and why?”
Sept. 17: Low Vision Support Group meeting, 9:30-11am.

Sept. 18: Coffee Time with Jessica Finocchiaro, at-large City Council candidate, 9-11am.
Sept. 19: Bean Bag Toss Game, 1 to 3pm. Free.
Sept. 20: Free Legal Clinic with attorney Karol Bisbee, 9 am. Appointment required (15-minute maximum).
Sept. 20: Methuen Veterans Director Tom Hargreaves’ monthly office hours, 10am.
Sept. 21: Foot Care Clinic, 1-3pm. By appointment. $25.
Sept. 21: Birthday Lunch, 11:30 am.
Sept. 22: Movie Matinee, 10am. Free.
Sept. 26: 45’s Tournament, 1 pm. All welcome.
Sept. 29: Low Vision Support Group, 9:30 to 11am.
Oct. 16-Nov. 20: “Powerful Tools for Caregivers,” a 6-week program offered by Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley Inc. Runs Mondays, 1-3pm. Topics will include Taking Care of You; Identifying and Reducing Stress; Communicating Feelings, Needs & Concerns; Communicating in Challenging Situations; Learning From Our Emotions; Mastering Caregiving Decisions. Register: Ashley, (978) 946-1220 or AEnglish@esav.org.

The Senior Center is located at 77 Lowell St. Hours are Monday through Thursday, 8 am to 4 pm and Friday, 8 am to 12:30 pm. Staff includes Executive Director Corinne LaCharite, Linda, Lynne and Sue. To view our entire newsletter, go to www.cityofmethuen.net and click Senior Center. For more information on activities, trips or functions, call (978) 983-8825.

CALENDAR

- “Live and Let Die: A Tribute to Paul McCartney”: Northern Essex Community College fund-raiser featuring this McCartney tribute band. Sept. 9, 7:30pm at the Collins Center for the Performing Arts, 100 Shawsheen Road in Andover. Open to public. $50. Proceeds support the NECC Foundation Endowment. Seating is reserved. Tickets: (978) 586-3870.
- Rummage sale: Sept. 9, 8am to noon at Forest Street Union Church, 15 Forest St., in the church’s Fellowship Hall. Gently used clothing and household items available.
- MSPCA’s Blue Jean Ball: On Sept. 16, the MSPCA at Nevins Farm will celebrate the 100th anniversary of the founding of Nevins Farm. Don your favorite denim attire – fancy or relaxed – and join them for a gala evening under the stars in the paddocks of Nevins Farm, as they celebrate a century of kindness and care for animals and raise much-needed funds for our future. General admission tickets are $250. www.mspca.org/bluejeanball.
- St. Monica Church’s Knights of Columbus Fall Plant Sale will take place after the 4pm Mass on Sept. 16 and after the 7:30am, 9:30am and 11:30am Masses on Sept. 17. All proceeds go towards the Knights of Columbus Scholarship Fund. 212 Lawrence St.
Methuen-strong Hatem-Roy leading Elder Services

By Melissa Fili
MethuenLife Writer

For 35 years she has dedicated herself to the well-being of seniors across the region, but Joan Hatem-Roy still has a sweet spot for Methuen. The woman who has spent her career protecting the physically and mentally vulnerable and leading the way in modern home care recently took over as CEO of Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley. It’s a pivotal position within a private, non-profit agency that thousands of seniors in 23 communities (and their families) depend on daily.

Hatem-Roy continues the work of Rosanne DiStefano who retired after 32 years at the helm of ESMV.

Hatem-Roy’s career in elder care began with her serving as Massachusetts’ first Protective Service worker and assembling a Crisis Intervention Team focused on areas like mental-health counseling, money management and suicide prevention. Later as director of Home Care, she led the crusade to get nurses and social worker to team up on cases allowing for new opportunities to work with health-care systems, community services and elder housing. Since 2010, Hatem-Roy served as the ESMV’s assistant director with a focus on health-care programs.

Get to know a bit about Joan Hatem-Roy and her new role, with this quick Q&A that she did for MethuenLife:

Q. Talk a bit about your Methuen connection.
A. I was born and bred in Methuen, and consider Methuen to still to be my home. My dad Albert owned Hatem Auto Body on Woodland Street and I lived on Francella Road. I was one of the first graduating classes (1978) to attend the new Methuen High School. I’m still best friends with many of my childhood friends and, even though we didn’t live in the “valley,” we consider ourselves some of the original Valley Girls! I moved out in 1990 when I got married but my parents, relatives and siblings remained there for many years after.

Q. What’s the biggest challenge facing Merrimack Valley elders today?
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Travel Talk
By Jim Keogh
MethuenLife Writer

Earlier this summer, I happily accompanied a group of clients on a deluxe five-day bus trip to Canada’s Atlantic Maritime provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

We boarded our luxury charter bus in Methuen. After a few rest breaks and a lunch stop in Bangor, Maine, we crossed the U.S./Canada border in St. Stephen, New Brunswick. From there, we continued to Saint John and checked into the Hilton hotel located downtown, on the Bay of Fundy waterfront. We met our local guide who would be with us throughout our stay in Canada. Before dinner, we enjoyed an orientation tour of the city, including a stop at the famous reversing rapids, where the Saint John River collides with the Bay of Fundy resulting in a natural phenomenon. At low tide, the river empties into the bay and about 12 hours later the bay’s tide rises, preserving the flow of the river and causing a series of wild rapids and whirlpools.

The next morning after breakfast, we checked out from the Hilton and made our way to Saint John’s other major attraction at Hopewell Rocks, the site of the world’s highest tides. Being low tide, we were able to walk along the ocean floor among immense rock formations. High tide if often more than 50 feet, making the Bay of Fundy tides one of the world’s greatest natural wonders. From New Brunswick, we traveled to the neighboring province of Nova Scotia. Again, we were treated to a driving tour to view the local highlights. Here we stayed two nights at the harbor front Marriott Hotel in the heart of downtown Halifax.

On the third day, we made a side trip to Peggy’s Cove, where we had breakfast. Peggy’s Cove is Nova Scotia’s most popular tourist attraction. It is a quaint picturesque fishing village with its iconic lighthouse, which is likely the most photographed lighthouse in Canada. However, during our morning visit, the skies opened up and we were subjected to a downpour there interfered with our opportunity to see Peggy’s Cove at its brightest and best.

We returned to Halifax for lunch and got ready for the highlight of our five-day trip: a performance of the Royal Nova Scotia International Tattoo. Making the event even more exciting: This was July 1, Canada’s 150th Birthday Celebration. The Tattoo is Halifax’s world’s largest annual outdoor event. It takes place the first week in July, with only seven performances. It was first held in 1979 to mark the Queen Mother’s visit to Canada and has been a yearly event ever since. What is the Tattoo? It is a three-hour, non-stop, fast-paced (no single act is longer than 6 minutes) extravaganza featuring bagpipe bands, highland dancers, military exercises, acrobatic acts, motorcycle stunts, gymnastics, modern song and dance numbers, choirs, orchestras … a little bit of everything! This year’s special Canada Day Tattoo highlighted performers from throughout Canada plus acts from the United States, Australia, Germany, Russia, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. At the end of the show, all 1,500 performers appeared together as bands played stirring musical anthems.

From Nova Scotia, we headed back to New Brunswick, stopping at the Anne Murray Centre in her hometown of Springhill, N.S. This “shrine” showcases the life and times of the internationally acclaimed singer with wall-to-wall displays of the many awards she has amassed during her 40-plus-year singing career. A streaming video highlights Anne’s Nova Scotia upbringing and musical career. The residents of Springhill are understandably proud of their favorite daughter!

We drove beyond Saint John this time in order to spend our final evening at one of Canada’s most luxurious resort hotels: The Algonquin in charming St. Andrews-by-the-Sea. This five-star property is owned by the province of New Brunswick and is operated by the Marriott Corporation. The Algonquin dates back to the early 1900s. Somehow the hotel succeeds in blending its historical essence with every modern sensibility. Dinner, a culinary experience, was served in the elegant Rotunda, a private dining room with three walls of windows overlooking the town’s magnificent, manicured gardens. It was the picture-perfect way to herald the celebration of our farewell evening in Canada.

After breakfast on Day Five, we visited FDR’s Campobello Island cottage before the final leg of our trip back to Methuen. Although there will never again be the opportunity to celebrate Canada’s 150th birthday on July 1, 2017, the Atlantic Provinces of Canada are worthy of your consideration if you’d like to travel to an international destination that is rich with natural beauty and cultural heritage. Just don’t forget your passport.

Jim Keogh is the president of Cosmopolitan Travel & Cruise Center, Methuen.

MethuenLife Advertising works!
For rates, call Sarah Lane, (603) 401-5490

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Cosmopolitan Travel & Cruise Center
262 Pleasant Street, Methuen
Tel (978) 686-2371
DINING OUT

Colosseum: Where authentic Italian & Caesar are king!

The Colosseum, with its authentic Italian food, has been around since 1987. During most of our visits, owner Annabole Todesca is greeting customers at his Breckenridge Plaza restaurant, 264 N. Broadway, in Salem, N.H. We feel that the presence of owners and chefs in the dining room adds to the overall dining experience. It speaks volumes in our books!

Our most recent visit was mid-week in August when we were happily seated in a cozy booth in the bar area. Even in the summer, the restaurant draws a crowd! We noticed several “regulars” seated near us. You could tell from the conversations that they look forward to the good food and laughter with the bartender Sal – along with incredible martinis.

On to the dining experience! With the menus came a list of specials. The special of the day that stood out for us was Arancini, one of our favorites! The dish had two garlic rice balls with a little bit of red sauce to dip, excellent taste and had just the right amount of filling. An addition to the specials list was Stuffed Razor Clams, which were in season. Other appetizer options include Stuffed Artichoke (Maria’s personal favorite), fried or insulated calamar, antipasto, Shrimp Frangese and stuffed mushrooms, to name a few. Most appetizers cost about $10 and offer generous portions.

If you love Caesar salads, The Colosseum arguably has the best in town! We treated ourselves to the table side Caesar salad ($18.95). It’s such a wonderful presentation as the staff prepares the salad right in front of you and you get to see precisely how the dressing is made. You can’t beat the freshness! The presentation is approximately 10 minutes long, but it only takes us about five minutes to eat the salad. Two thumbs-up from the Bonannos!

Dinner decisions can be very difficult, as the menu is extensive and every dish sounds fantastic. The entree portion of See DINING OUT, Page 43

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www.nevinslibrary.org
Dining Out, continued from page 42

the menu consists of a number of traditional Italian dishes from the Veal Saltimbocca (one of JB's favorites) to Veal or Chicken Parmesan. Most of the pasta is made in-house and can be prepared in all the traditional Italian ways: Bolognese, Carbonara, Alfredo, Marinara and the list goes on. We decided to stick with our favorites. JB went with the Veal Saltimbocca with delicious homemade fettuccini ($23.95), which included a generous amount of Parma Prosciutto and lots of mozzarella cheese! Maria went with the Carbonara with pancetta, prepared in the traditional manner with the yolk instead of too much creamy sauce... very authentic! Believe it or not, we both brought home doggy bags as the portions are quite large.

The dessert cart looked fabulous as it strolled by us several times, but unfortunately we were too stuffed to indulge!

If you have never dined at The Colosseum Restaurant, or even if you haven't been in a while, we urge you to visit in the near future. You will be pleasantly surprised and happy to have such great food offered locally!

The Colosseum Restaurant does a great job with keeping the public informed about its food and entertainment specials via social media, so check them out on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and their website (www.thecolosseumrestaurant.com).

Methuen residents Maria and Jonathan Bonanno share a passion for food and wine, and they dine throughout the region several times a month. They welcome feedback and restaurant suggestions at bonanno325@yahoo.com.
JROTC & Methuen Village residents join forces

Adopt a Veteran visits are a huge hit with teens, seniors

By Melissa Fili
MethuenLife Writer

Seeing someone in a military uniform and listening to stories of service, motivation and love of country can stir up a wide range of memories and emotions.

Methuen High’s JROTC visits have filled a special void for many residents at Methuen Village. Starting last spring, small groups of cadets visited the assisted-living facility twice a month to talk about their experiences, their service and their hopes for the future. The seniors reciprocated with their own conversations of service and patriotism. The connection was instant.

“The two generations really bonded just in their first visit!” noted Anne Lafortune, Methuen Village’s EnrichedLIFE director, of the Adopt a Veteran program.

“This has been an eye-opener and it’s very emotional,” said JROTC Sgt. Kaylie Demers. “One man stood up and wanted to salute us for everything we’ve done. It brought tears to our eyes. I’ve met women who were nurses who said how proud they were to serve and they see us as having the same aspirations.”

2017-2018 JROTC Battalion Commander Seth Pare says the project has been a hit with both teens and seniors, and he is excited to expand it this year.

“It’s one of the best new additions we have in our program. One of the first things we’ll look at this year is how it can grow,” said Pare, who last year coordinated the visits. “When I’d ask, ‘Who wants to go to Adopt a Veteran next week?’ I’d have 20 hands shoot up. People want to do this. … The veterans get a lot out of it and the kids get a lot out of it too.”

“I’m just so impressed with you kids,” said retired Haverhill District Court Judge Kevin Herlihy, a Methuen Village resident who attended several of the JROTC visits. “When I was your age – centuries ago – and I got up in front of people, I wouldn’t know what to say. Whether you’re going to be a doctor, teacher, no matter what you’ve got to learn to talk. You’re doing such a great job!”

“You all look older (than high school). It’s the good looks and the uniform!” noted resident Emma Chahanovich. “You kids today have a lot more advantages. I learned about life while growing up on a farm feeding chickens. It’s wonderful for you and I’m happy for you!”

MHS JROTC Cadet Sean Henrick, who came up with the idea to meet with local veterans, kneels while listening to a Methuen Village resident during an Adopt a Veteran visit.
Courtesy photo

During MethuenLife’s visit, students talked about JROTC “as a family” and the numerous challenging opportunities available – everything from Drill Team and Honor Guard to the Academic Team and Marksmanship.

Fondeur admitted being a shy kid who didn’t want to wear the military uniform or stand out, and at one point thought about leaving JROTC.

“But now I’m well-rounded and obviously no longer shy. I’m battalion commander, in National Honor Society, play field hockey. JROTC pushes you to be a better version of yourself,” said Fondeur, who led the 230 JROTC cadets during the 2016-2017 school year. She already completed Army basic training and is starting her freshman year at Hawaii Pacific University.

Pare notes that as the JROTC is the largest program at Methuen High, and with the positive feedback the program has received, he expects a full year of relationship-building between teens and seniors starting this fall.
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MethuenLife September, 2017

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Chang’s Taekwondo celebrates 15 years of mind, body connection

With high-flying kicks, the smashing of boards and the whirl of Nunchuks, Chang’s Taekwondo America celebrated its 15th anniversary.

Last month’s event – led by the studio’s owners and operators Grandmaster Young Soo Chang and Master Catherine Chang – included elite demonstrations by both masters and students, a free Taekwondo class, a huge bounce house, a ribbon-cutting and celebratory cake!

Taekwondo is a Korean unarmed martial art that connects mind and body. Chang’s is proud of its ability of combine the physical aspect of Taekwondo with life skills (courtesy, respect, discipline, self-esteem, etc.), resulting in students’ two-fold success.

Chang’s is located at 230 Pleasant St. Find out more about their classes and after-school activities at www.changstaekwondoamerica.com and on their Facebook page.

Salem Co-op’s Methuen branch welcomes new manager

Kelley Contarino has been named the retail branch manager, assistant vice president of Salem Co-operative Bank’s Methuen branch at 284 Merrimack St. She will oversee the daily operations of the branch, as well as provide coaching and training to her staff. Contarino brings with her more than nine years’ experience as a branch manager.

Sarah Rastello, senior vice president of retail banking for the bank, said, “Kelley brings with her a wealth of experience that will allow us to further enhance the level of customer satisfaction provided by the retail team. She is focused on building long term relationships with customers and going above and beyond to deliver a great banking experience. We are excited to have her on our team.”

MVPASAP: ‘The Miracle of Recovery’

If you have concerns about, or are dealing with, teen prescription drug abuse, please attend the Merrimack Valley Prevention and Substance Abuse Project’s fourth annual Community Forum. Set for Sept. 23 at the Greater Lawrence Technical School on River Road in Andover, the forum is part of this year’s theme of “To Be Aware is to Be Alive; The Miracle of Recovery.” From 4 to 6pm, representatives from over 30 resource tables will be on hand to offer information and guidance. From 6 to 8, the film “If Only,” courtesy of the Mark Wahlberg Youth Foundation and Millennium Health, will be shown to raise awareness about the dangers of teen prescription drug misuse and abuse. Then the Improbable Players will take the stage for prevention by educating the public about addiction and recovery through dramatic performances and theater workshops.

Info: (978) 886-2949.
MethuenLife September, 2017

NGO EARNS MERIT AWARD

The Middlesex Community College Foundation presented MCC student Nhi Ngo Dang Ngo of Methuen with an MCC Foundation Merit Award for Full-time Students for the 2016-17 academic year in a ceremony held on the Bedford campus. Originally from Vietnam, Ms. Ngo is currently enrolled in MCC's Computer Science Transfer Program and is a dedicated volunteer for the Merrimack Valley Food Bank. MCC Foundation Merit Awards recognize students who demonstrate academic excellence and exceptional promise. Ngo is shown with MCC President James C. Mabry.

The following Methuen students were named to The University of Vermont's Class of 2017, including Jeffrey A. Letourneau of Methuen, who was honored with the college's prestigious Crown and Shield Award. The award recognizes students who have distinguished themselves throughout their tenure at the college in the areas of leadership and community service. Award recipients have protected (shield) and furthered (crown) the interests of the student body and Assumption as a whole.

Roger Williams University is proud to announce that Erich Friedrich graduated cum laude with a B.S. in architecture in May as part of the Class of 2017. Marissa Dibiasio graduated from the University of San Diego on May 28, earning a bachelor's degree in Finance.

Lizmary Mota graduated from Southern Vermont College, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration-Healthcare Management. Courtney Brennan graduated from the University of Hartford, earning a radiologic technology student, received an Associate in Science from the University’s College of Education, Nursing and Health Professions.

Edward J. Rauso Jr. graduated from Colby College in Waterville, Maine, with a degree in economics. He is the son of Edward and Laurie Rauso.

These Methuen students earned academic honors in spring 2017. On the spring 2017 dean's list at Keene State College. Amanda Petrow are among the 1,245 students representing 21 states and 12 countries at its 2017 spring commencement ceremony. Twenty members of Assumption College's Class of 2017, including Jeffrey A. Letourneau of Methuen, were honored with the college's prestigious Crown and Shield Award. The award recognizes students who have distinguished themselves throughout their tenure at the college in the areas of leadership and community service. Award recipients have protected (shield) and furthered (crown) the interests of the student body and Assumption as a whole.

Elbridge M. Barlow 39; Daniel C. Bruch 39; Samuel S. Brown 39; Philip M. Fantozzi 39; John A. Fazio, Highest Honors; Ashley Braga, Honors; and Alivia M. Oliveira, Honors, are among the 1,245 students representing 21 states and 12 countries at its 2017 spring commencement ceremony. Twenty members of Assumption College's Class of 2017, including Jeffrey A. Letourneau of Methuen, were honored with the college's prestigious Crown and Shield Award. The award recognizes students who have distinguished themselves throughout their tenure at the college in the areas of leadership and community service. Award recipients have protected (shield) and furthered (crown) the interests of the student body and Assumption as a whole.

Switching gears, let’s talk about the importance of volunteering. According to a recent study, individuals who volunteer at least once a week have a 20% greater chance of living longer than those who don't. Volunteering not only benefits the community but also has a positive impact on the volunteer’s mental and physical health. It provides an opportunity to learn new skills, meet new people, and make a meaningful contribution to society.

As we celebrate the achievements of these outstanding Methuen students, let's also remember the importance of giving back. Whether through volunteering, donating, or simply spreading kindness, we can all make a difference in our community. After all, it’s the little acts of kindness that can create big impacts. So, let’s all aim to make the world a little brighter, one gesture at a time.
Faithful good-deed doer Fitzgerald wins Lifetime Achievement Award from Kiwanis

In addition to farmer, proud grandfather, Kubota tractor ambassador and owner of Methuen’s oldest business, add “Lifetime Achievement Award recipient” to Bill Fitzgerald’s titles.

The patriarch of Mann Orchards — celebrating its 140th anniversary — was recently honored by the Kiwanis Club of Greater Lawrence.

Joined by family members and close friends, Fitzgerald was presented with club’s Lifetime Achievement Award at its annual Community Service Awards Night at the Andover/North Andover YMCA.

The event was emceed by Eagle-Tribune Executive Sports Editor Bill Burt. The award was based on Fitzgerald’s steady contributions to the community that include supporting:

- Methuen High School band concerts.
- Relay for Life.
- Northeast Outreach Center of Haverhill.

“He’s being honored for constant engagement in the community. Here’s a big-time congratulations to Bill Fitzgerald,” said Burt.

Fitzgerald also organized fund-raisers for Methuen families that were directly impacted by the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

He received the Methuen Exchange Club’s Book of Golden Deeds award, was inducted into the Methuen High School Hall of Fame and is a member of Nevins Memorial Library’s Board of Directors.

“I was totally surprised,” said Fitzgerald. “It’s nice to be recognized, I guess. The Kiwanis have a great, diverse membership, so to receive something like this from such an organization is a big deal.”

In addition to the award from the Kiwanis, Fitzgerald and Linda Soucy (recipient of a Community Service Award) received citations presented by Jane Black of Congresswoman Niki Tsongas’ office, Dennis Marcello of Sen. Katy Ives’ office and Northern Essex Register of Deeds Paul Iannuccillo.

HERE’S TO THE BRUCE ARNOLD MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP!

Each Ticket Holder and a Guest Are Cordially Invited to Attend This Special Event!

Sept. 21, 6:30 to 8:30pm
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- DRAWING OF THE WINNING RAFFLE TICKETS (TOP PRIZE IS $7,500!)
- STORY SWAPPING ABOUT LEGENDARY WCCM DJ BRUCE ARNOLD

Special Guests -- Bruce’s Wife Lenora, “Sicilian Corner” co-host Mike Lomazzo and others!
‘Time’ flies at Ranger Band Camp!

The Methuen Ranger Marching Band takes the field at Nicholson Stadium, poised to perform this season’s program entitled “Time,” and it’s an early Wednesday morning in the middle of August.

“This Band Camp week helps us get a head start on the school year and come together as a group,” says Band Director Brian McGonagle, or “G,” as the kids call him. Each August, every member of the marching band and its staff commit to a full week to get the marching band up and running. Armed with plenty of water and sunscreen, the days spent working outside on the field are long and tiring, but necessary. McGonagle, who begins his second year as band director, has been with the music program since 2000.

“The band size has increased in numbers since last season, so it should be a great program this year,” he said, noting there are nearly 100 members.

With Methuen Ranger home football games quickly approaching, the band works tirelessly to prepare the halftime show that will also be performed during their competition season. Participating in six local marching band competitions, Methuen Ranger Marching Band is also honored to be hosting a NESBA competition this season Sept. 23 (time to be announced) at Nicholson Stadium.

Plans are in the works for the band to travel to and perform at Disney World later this school year, so fundraising will be a continued necessity. World-famous impersonators The Edwards Twins will perform at the Methuen High School Auditorium for a night Las Vegas-style fun and entertainment to kick off the fundraising season. Tickets start at $30 and will go fast, so visit www.mhsperformingartscenter.bpt.me to order yours!

Community support is always appreciated. For opportunities to volunteer or donate, you can contact Methuen Ranger Marching Band Parent Association President Lynne Kumm at president@methuenrangerband.org.

~ Barbie Kiberstis
What’s a teen band to do when both their lead singer and drummer can’t make a BIG SHOW in Boston?

Switch things up and go for it, of course! The Methuen YMCA Music Clubhouse was one of 16 clubhouses in the state set to take the stage at the Berklee Performance Center in Boston for the Music & Youth Clubhouse Showcase recently. But Methuen Music Clubhouse Director Joe Prieto said a series of unfortunate events, combined with good luck, worked in Methuen’s favor. Down two positions due to illness, band members took the initiative and changed their instrumentation to balance the band. The bassist switched to drums and the guitarist switched to bass. Lead singer Taina Rentas stepped in at the last minute, learning that she would have the unexpected opportunity to lead the band.

“We listened to the song on repeat in the van on the way down,” said Prieto. “When they took the stage they had never performed in that configuration before, so I can relate to the nerves they were feeling, but they got up there and did a great job! Very commendable.”

Methuen Music Clubhouse teens performed the song “Hitchin’ A Ride” by Green Day. Performers included Taina Rentas on vocals, Logan Lemoin on guitar, Sofia Martini on piano and backup vocals, Devin Ustaoglu on bass and Baran Ustaoglu on drums.

“It was one of the most exciting things I’ve ever done,” said lead singer Taina. “I’ve been in front of people before, in front of audiences. I’ve done music recitals, but nothing like this one.”

The band’s new line-up was such a success that some members were inspired to make a permanent change.

“That’s it! I’m switching to drums!” said former bassist Baran Ustaoglu.
around Methuen around Methuen around Methuen

Vegas impersonators raising $ for MHS Band

World-famous impersonators The Edwards Twins are coming to Methuen – and bringing the likes of Cher, Andrea Bocelli, Celine Dion and Barbra Streisand – to raise money for the Methuen High Ranger Band.

This show – made famous in Las Vegas – will be held Sept. 29 in the MHS Performing Arts Center. It will directly benefit the Methuen High School Ranger Band’s 2018 trip to Walt Disney World in Orlando, Fla. There will also be a 50/50 raffle, a basket raffle and a silent auction on the night of the performance.

Tickets, with prices starting at $30, may be purchased online at theedwardstwins.com or by phone at (978) 722-6040 ext. 2610.

Chiefs among 1st responders on runway

Talk about a fashion emergency!

Local first responders are about to hit the runway for Nevins Family of Services’ upcoming fifth annual Passion for Fashion Show. Methuen’s emergency personnel who’ll strut their stuff include Police Chief Joe Solomon, Fire Chief Tim Sheehy, Police Officer Billy Kannan and firefighters Jesse Kattar and Zack Tulley. And there will be plenty of non-emergency personnel strutting their stuff down that catwalk, too. MEOW!!!

The event will be Sept. 21 at 6pm at DiBurro’s in Haverhill. CBS’ chief investigative reporter Cheryl Fiandaca will host. Tickets are $50 and include appetizers, dinner and the show complete with “celebrity” models. Clothing is compliments of dresscode, Classis Couple, Gileeses, Dress Barn and CoCo Collection, and tuxedos are from EZ Way.

To purchase tickets, contact Lisa at (978) 682-7611 or lshea@hcnevins.org. Tickets can also be purchased through www.nevinspassionforfashion.eventbrite.com.

Proceeds benefit Nevins’ Alzheimer’s program.

New life for clothes, home goods

Pollard Funeral Home and Lazarus House are teaming up to help survivors re-purpose the clothing and home goods left behind by deceased loved ones. The Giving Second Life project (August MethuenLife) kicks off Sept. 10, noon to 3pm at the funeral home, 233 Lawrence St. Methuen police and firefighters will load good quality, gently used items into a Lazarus House-bound truck, where they will help the homeless and those living in poverty. The process will also assist grief-stricken survivors, who can be overwhelmed by what to do with these items. For more info, contact Pollard’s at (978) 687-7300.

Farm to Fork:
Nothin’ fresher!

Pleasant Valley Gardens’ next Farm to Fork dinner will be Sept. 16 at the farm on Merrimack Street. Executive Chef Fonzi will cater a seven-course dinner, complete with beer and wine, using meat, dairy vegetables and fruits from local farms. Tickets are $60 each or two for $150 and are available in the greenhouse at 255 Merrimack St. Reservations due by Sept. 9.

Leaf pickup returns

Fall leafyard waste pickup resumes Oct. 2 through Dec. 1 on your recycling weeks. Also, the Methuen Landfill will extend its hours on Saturdays to 8am to 1:45pm starting Oct. 2. Info: DPW, (978) 983-8545.

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Farmers Market continues to roll
The summer sun is fading, but the Methuen Farmers Market is still going strong! It continues to be held each Friday from 10am to 3pm at 254 Broadway, in a large lot next to the Methuen Federal Credit Union and will run through Oct. 27. It is co-hosted by Groundwork Lawrence and Holy Family Hospital. If you’d like to become a vendor (food or crafts), contact Rose Gonzalez at (978) 974-0770 ext. 7001.

FENG
2017 graduate Feng Chen accepts her ESOL Achievement certificate, with her young daughter by her side. Methuen-Life photo

Improve English, prep for GED
Do you want to take ESOL classes to improve your English language skills or Adult Basic Education (ABE) classes to prepare to pass the HISET or GED to obtain high school equivalency?
Fall registration at the Dr. Shirley Forrest Callan Methuen Adult Learning Center, 36 Boylston St., Methuen, runs Monday through Friday from 9am to 2pm throughout the school year. Here is the 2017-2018 class schedule:
Beginning ABE: Thursday and Friday, 8:30am to 12:30pm.
Intermediate ABE: Wednesday through Friday, 8:30am to 12:30pm.
Fast Track Math: Thursday and Friday, 12:30 to 2pm.
Beginning ESOL: Monday through Thursday, 8:30am to 12:30pm.
Intermediate ESOL: Monday through Wednesday, 8:30am to 12:30pm.
Advanced ESOL: Monday through Wednesday, 8:30am to 12:30pm.
Career Pathways for ESOL: Thursday and Friday, 8:30am to 12:30pm.
Distance Learning: Online coursework for dually enrolled ESOL learners.
All classes are free and funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Methuen Public Schools and the City of Methuen.

So much to do at Methuen Y!
Here is a list of upcoming programs and events at the Methuen YMCA:
Fall 1 Session Programs for ages 4 to 18, including
Music Clubhouse for ages 10 to 18. Free music education through small group lessons and drop-in hours, as well as, state-of-the-art instruments and recording equipment. Open Monday to Thursday, 3 to 7pm. Member/community free.
International Family Night for all ages, Wednesday, Sept 20, 6-7:30pm. Member/community free.
Open Mic Night for all ages, Thursday, Sept 21, 6-8pm. Performers must be between the ages of 10 and 18. Member/community free.
Kids Night Out for ages 5 to 12, Saturday, Sept 9, 5-8pm. Member $10, community $15.
Special Friends Dance for adults with disabilities 22 years and older, Friday, Sept 8, 6:30-8:30pm. Member/community $5.
CPR/AED Training for ages 14 plus, Thursday, Sept 21, 6:30 to 9:30pm. Member $75, Community $105. All programs and events are held at the Methuen YMCA, 128 Haverhill St, unless otherwise noted. Register in person or online at www.mymca.org. Info: (978) 683-5266. with logo
EXCHANGE WELCOMES NEW OFFICERS, BOARD MEMBERS

The Methuen Exchange Club recently installed new officers and welcomed new members. Shown are (from left) Jack MacLeod, treasurer and New England District Exchangee of the Year; immediate past president Carrie Lavallee; board member Bob Mundry; secretary Kerri Flemming; past board member Michael Jasinski; board member Kathy Jones; President-elect Linda Bueli; board member and New England District Exchangee of Year Brad Jones; Bill Baril of the Lawrence Exchange Club, a national and district Exchangee of the Year & club and national president; and President Jennifer Jones. Board members not present: Stephanie Charette, Mike Boute and Steve Arsenault. Club members take part in a variety of community service projects. Their next fund-raiser is the Arthur Hutton Mini-Golf Night at Jay-Gee’s on Oct. 19, 5-8pm. If you’d like to take part, contact MacLeod at (978) 314-5081. Photo courtesy of Jonny Morasse

St. Mary’s Cemetery and Chapel Mausoleum

Methuen’s Our Lady of Good Counsel chapel and mausoleum offers a wide selection of crypts and columbariums to meet your needs. There are single and double crypts, inside crypts and crypts along the exterior faces of the Mausoleum.

St. Mary-Immaculate Conception Cemetery
29 Barker St., Lawrence
For information call Jim Jacobs at 978-682-8181
Hours: M-F 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; Sat. 9-12
SCHOOL BRIEFS

PTO supply kits make shopping easy, charitable

School-supply shopping can be a real drag – not to mention time-consuming.

But this summer the Marsh School PTO offered a quick way to buy all of the requested items online, have them shipped to your home and help feed children in need.

For the first time, the PTO teamed up with School Toolbox (schooltoolbox.com) to assist lower-school families – although anyone can create an account and order supplies here.

“We’re doing it as a trial program for kindergarten to fourth grade to see how it works,” said Melissa Ansara-Burns, who is an events coordinator for the Marsh PTO and discovered the program at last year’s PTO Expo. “You sign up online and choose Marsh School. There are set-up boxes that include the complete supply list for that grade. You can buy the whole box or delete some items if you already have them and customize the contents.

“For every box we sell, (School Toolbox) donates one meal to hungry kids through the national group Feed My Starving Children (fmsc.org).”

Supply lists were sent home in June with Marsh students’ report cards. School Toolbox prices are $14.79 for the kindergarten box, $18.46 for first grade, $21.65 for second grade, $18.81 for third grade and $42.77 for fourth grade (includes stereo ear buds that students use in tech classes and with Chrome books).

For example, the kindergarten box includes a pair of 5-inch scissors, 14 Crayola crayons, 12 colored pencils, two washable Elmer glue sticks, one pack of four Expo markers, one Mead composition notebook, a two-pocket folder and a 12 pack of No. 2 pencils – the complete kindergarten supply list all delivered to your door.

“My daughter is going into sixth grade, but I’ll buy the fourth-grade box to help the charity and keep just supplies she needs,” said Ansara-Burns.

Any Methuen parent looking to participate could create an account and make purchases through the Marsh box listing.

“All money raised goes to the charity. (The Marsh PTO) has option to use it as a fund-raiser but we decided against it because it would raise prices for our families and we want to keep costs as low as possible,” said Ansara-Burns.

~ Melissa Fili

Piano talent off to Anna Maria

Delia Regan, who excelled in music and performing, graduated from the Academy of Notre Dame, Tyngsboro on June 3. Regan served as leader for the Guitar Ensemble, secretary of the Drama Guild and was active in A Cappella and Glee Club. She also participated in Mission & Ministry and was named Distinguished Senior for the month of March. At Baccalaureate, she received an academic excellence award for Piano III. During the commencement ceremony, she was honored with the Excellence in Music award.

Regan will be attending Anna Maria College in the fall.

Methuen’s free, reduced-cost lunch

Methuen Public Schools uses its website (www.methuen.k12.ma.us) to inform parents of the availability of the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. The eligibility criteria for the free and reduced-price meals is embedded in the meal application and instructions and are available by going to the MPS website and clicking Departments, then Food Services. You can also go to http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/2015-04786.pdf to see the entire chart.

Information will also be sent home with students in their “1st Day Packets” and given to all new students.

Families are notified if they qualify through the MA State Virtual Gateway and benefits will be extended to all children within the household. If it is determined that your child is eligible, please contact your child’s school.

MHS MAKES BEAUTIFUL MUSIC @ UMASS LOWELL

A talented group of Methuen High School students spent a music-filled week at the Mary Jo Leahey Symphonic Band Camp at UMass Lowell this summer. Music students from across the state participated in a wide variety of electives ranging from conducting and composing music to sound engineering, as well as evening symphony rehearsals. This program, now in its 21st season, culminates in a Finale Concert performance at UMass Lowell’s Durgin Concert Hall.

Shown are (front, from left) Michaela Kiberstis, Megan Bergeron, Amanda Karmelovicz; (back, from left) Frank Gallo, Melina Gable, staffer Eric Poster, Assistant Director Brian Folks of the Tenney School, staffer Paul Delabruere, Michael Hajjar and Shaylin Small.

Courtesy photo
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