

Senior Scope

A newspaper serving the communities of **Acushnet ■ Dartmouth ■ Fairhaven ■ Gosnold ■ Marion ■ Mattapoisett ■ New Bedford ■ Rochester**

Vol. 6, Issue 1 Published by Coastline Elderly Services, Inc. October 2023

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‘A friendly face is always welcome’

Ombudsman volunteers bring support and connection to nursing home residents

An ombudsman, by definition, is someone who investigates complaints and mediates fair settlements between two parties, according to the online version of the American Heritage Dictionary.

Yet, while the description fits those in Coastline’s Ombudsmen program — people who mediate disputes between nursing home residents and administrators — volunteers in the program say it’s more accurate to say they are a friendly face who listen to residents, get to know them, and then, when asked, help solve the problems and issues that come up during daily life in a nursing home.

Amy DiPietro, Dartmouth Council on Aging director and a Coastline Ombudsman volunteer, for example, says her volunteer role goes beyond resident advocacy.

“Residents are just happy to see somebody from the outside world,” she said. “I’ll pop in, knock on doors, say hello, and chat with some of the



Ombudsman volunteer Howie Galitsky and Director Anna Dougherty (l-r) walk with residents at Hathaway Manor in New Bedford.

residents in the hallways and activity rooms.”

“A friendly face is always welcome,” she added.

Volunteer Howie Galitsky describes his ombudsman role by telling the story of a man he saw alone in his room every time he visited the New Bedford nursing home he’d been assigned to. The resident was 100 years old and nearly deaf and blind, so Galitsky struggled to connect or learn about any issues he might be having. That bothered him, he said. So, he went to Ombudsman Program Director Anna Dougherty and requested a pocket talker – a hearing assistance device that amplifies the voice.

“He just sat there all day,” Galitsky said about the resident. “Anna let me borrow one of those machines and I brought it to him and we had conver-

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Contributors join author Dawn Blake-Souza (far right) for a presentation at the New Bedford Public Library in September including (l-r) Paul Souza, Susan Pawlak-Seaman, Priscilla Pacheco Demers.

Daring to dream: Stories of immigrant families told in new book

Dawn Blake-Souza thinks she may have struck a nerve with her last book.

After publishing a detailed personal history of her family’s heritage and journey from Cape Verde to the U.S. last year, the New Bedford author discovered just how many people want to do the same thing for their own families, but don’t know how to make it happen.

So she did what she does best. She reached out to a few families and created a new book that tells family histories and, at the same time, gives a wider audience a model of the varied ways these stories can be written.

“When I published the last book last year about my Cape Verdean family,” Blake-Souza said. “I had a response from lots and lots of people who indicated that they were interested in telling their family stories. So I started speak-

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Disability: Part of the Equity Equation

By Delia De Mello
Social Security

People with disabilities play an important role in a diverse and inclusive workforce. We would like to tell you about Amy and her path to financial independence through work.

Amy has a developmental disability that affects her speech, learning, and social interactions. When she was ready to find a path to financial independence through work, Amy turned to her State Vocational Rehabilitation agency for help. Amy’s VR counselor told her about Social Security’s Ticket to Work Program.

The Ticket Program supports career development for people with disabilities who want to work. Adults ages 18 through 64 who receive Social Security disability benefits or Supplemental Security Income qualify for this free and voluntary program. Through the Ticket Program, service providers offer free employment support services.

Amy had questions about how employment could affect her benefits. Her State VR counselor connected her with Full Circle Employment Solutions, an Employment Network with benefits counselors on staff who explained how working might affect her disability benefits. Amy’s benefits counselor also told her about Work Incentives which makes it easier for adults with disabilities to

enhance their job skills and gain work experience. They do so while receiving Medicaid or Medicare and Social Security benefits or SSI payments.

With a better understanding of these supports, Amy was ready to explore her employment options. She pursued an internship with Project SEARCH, a training program for young adults with developmental disabilities. Through Project SEARCH, Amy landed an internship that led to a permanent position with her local government.

Amy earned her way to financial independence and no longer receives SSI. Now, she’s a union member, receives benefits through her job, and enjoys the security and stability that come with full-time employment. She’s grateful for the support she received through the Ticket Program and looks forward to building the future she always hoped for.

“This job makes me feel needed and welcomed,” she says. “I have learned about what motivates me and how to keep going, even when things get hard.”

To learn more, visit choosework.ssa.gov. or call the Ticket to Work Help Line at 1-866-968-7842 or 1-866-833-2967 (TTY), Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and ask for a list of service providers. Also learn more by registering for a free, online Work Incentives webinar at choosework.ssa.gov/wise.

From the Editor

I had an opportunity to visit a New Bedford nursing home recently to observe a fun, creative activity they’ve had success with.

Staff at Hathaway Manor came up with the idea of playing Rock ‘n’ Roll music through the home while residents leave their rooms and walk, dance, or wheel to the music.

I had been told that a handful of people usually go outside to walk, but, perhaps due to the gorgeous summer weather the afternoon I was there, the stream of residents and staff coming out the door was continuous.

Soon the pathways were crowded with people walking in groups, forcing those in wheelchairs, or pushing them, to carefully negotiate oncoming pedestrian traffic on the paved walkway.

Outside, Johnny Cash’s voice could no longer be heard and only the birds chirped. But people swayed and bopped anyway. They smiled and waved at the camera and called me back if I didn’t get their photo.

There was a party atmosphere to the experience.

It reminded me of times past in downtown New Bedford when people came out to be seen – promenading along Purchase or

Union streets, enjoying the company and conversation of the people they came with and the ones they met along the way.

It was beautiful to see in a nursing home where we often think of older residents being isolated or stuck in their rooms.


I learned about the daily Rock ‘n’ Roll walk through my conversations with Anna Dougherty, director of Coastline’s Ombudsman program, and Howie Galitsky a program volunteer. (See story, page one.)

Anna praised the activity as an out-of-the-box solution for changing care requirements. She spoke about the need for nursing homes to lift out of traditional ways of doing business and to be creative in meeting new ways of being, new expectations, and new technology.


I don’t know a lot about Hathaway Manor as this was my first visit there. But if their operation captures the same spirit of community and fun that this walk did, they are headed in the right direction.



Beth Perdue

**Coastline**
508-999-6400

Mass Options 844-422-6277
massoptions.org 844-422-MASS

**SHINE Counselors**
in the Greater New Bedford Area

Acushnet Council on Aging 59 ½ S. Main St. Acushnet	508-998-0280	Jennifer Ledo
Dartmouth Council on Aging 628 Dartmouth St., Dartmouth	508-999-4717	Virginia Walega Matthew Dansereau
Fairhaven Council on Aging 229 Huttleston Ave, Fairhaven	508-979-4029	Dianne Perkins Carolyn Dantoni Jean Silver
GNB Community Health Center 874 Purchase Street, New Bedford	508-992-6553 x147	Derek Mendes
Immigrants’ Assistance Center 58 Crapo St., New Bedford	508-996-8113	Lucy Oliveira Delia Moreira
Marion Council on Aging 465 Mill Street, Marion	508-748-3570	Connie Heacox
Mattapoisett Council on Aging 17 Barstow Street, Mattapoisett	508-758-4110	Connie Heacox
New Bedford Council on Aging 181 Hillman St. (for New Bedford residents only)	508-284-2608 508-991-6160	Natasha Franco Nora Rose
PACE, Inc. 166 William St., New Bedford	508-999-9920	Freda St. Marie-Johnson
Rochester Council on Aging 67 Dexter Lane, Rochester	508-763-8723	Jan Cote
Southcoast Health 200 Mill Road, Suite 109, Fairhaven	508-758-3781	Denise Dupuis



Senior Scope

Published by Coastline Elderly Services, Inc. with
Title III funds from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs

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For further information on advertising rates,
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Senior Scope at Coastline
863 Belleville Ave.
New Bedford, MA 02745

To our readers: We are able to publish the Senior Scope newspaper through the support of grant funders, such as the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs, our advertisers and donors. As the publisher, Coastline is not responsible for the content of third party advertising.


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Most recent COVID-19 vaccines are available now

The updated COVID-19 vaccine is available for children and adults, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention announced recently.

Updated COVID-19 vaccines are expected to be available from providers before Oct. 1 and availability will continue to increase in the coming weeks, the CDC said.

The CDC has said it recom-

mends that people get the 2023 updated vaccine and said it “more closely targets the XBB lineage of the Omicron variant and could restore protection against severe COVID-19 that may have decreased over time.”

“We anticipate the updated vaccines will be better at fighting currently circulating variants,” the CDC said on its website.

To find a location near you, visit

the online site at <https://www.vaccines.gov/search/> or contact your health care provider or local health department.

If you have insurance, check with your selected vaccination site or your insurer to confirm that the site is in network.

The CDC’s Bridge Access Program offers COVID-19 vaccines at no cost for adults 18 years and older without health

insurance and adults whose health insurance does not provide zero-cost coverage for COVID-19 vaccines. COVID-19 vaccines through this program are available at select local healthcare providers, local health centers, and pharmacies.

If you need help finding a COVID vaccination site, call 1-800-232-0233 (TTY 1-888-720-7489).

Ombudsmen continued...

sations. It was really nice. I learned he had 12 medals from World War II...I learned so much about this man.”

At its heart, the Ombudsman program at Coastline exists to support the dignity and empowerment of the long-term care resident to live quality lives. Volunteers are crucial to that mission, Dougherty, the program’s director for the past three years, said.

As program volunteers, DiPietro and Galitsky are assigned to one or two specific local nursing homes where they can form relationships with residents and staff members.

Volunteers receive training and become certified by the state Ombudsman office, part of the Executive Office of Elder Affairs. They volunteer at least an hour a week for two weeks a month and are recertified every two years.

When she visits, DiPietro identifies herself as an ombudsman and tells residents she’s available to talk if they have any concerns. One woman, for example, told her she was having trouble sleeping and asked for help.

“She was concerned she was being woken up in the middle of the night to be given her meds,” DiPietro said.

When DiPietro inquired, she got support from the unit manager, who put visible notes on the resident’s door and room saying, ‘Please don’t wake me up.’

It can seem obvious, DiPietro noted, but staff tasked with giving medications on a set schedule, may not be aware of the disruption they’re causing. Likewise, she said, a resident who speaks up for themselves can be written down as irritable or disruptive, causing staff to be less receptive to their requests.

“But for me,” she said, “I’m coming in with fresh eyes and I can help.”

What volunteers and Dougherty emphasize is that residents have the right to make decisions about their needs and preferences. Not every conflict is resolved to everyone’s satisfaction, but the persistent attention of an ombudsman volunteer helps.

The program is also overseen and backed at the state level by the state ombudsman office which sets staffing and administrative policies that are consistent with state and federal laws. The relationship isn’t designed to be adversarial, but can help cut through layers of administration to solve a problem.

“We’re a reminder for residents that they do have rights,” Dougherty said.

Facilities take their input seriously, DiPietro added, knowing that the program must report back to state.

“Residents just want some control



“When you know that you’re advocating for somebody who may not have a loud enough voice of their own, (advocating) comes pretty naturally.”

—Amy DiPietro
Ombudsman Volunteer

over how they’re going to live their lives,” she said.

Nursing homes also have internal mechanisms to support residents’ rights including Resident Councils, led by and made up of residents, whose meeting minutes are filed by the nursing home and can become part the state’s annual review.

Councils give residents “an opportunity to voice what they’ve been experiencing and come up with the change they’d like to see, like new activities,” Dougherty said.

“We always remind (residents) that if they have any concerns, we can address them but that there is a Resident Council too,” she said, suggesting that sometimes an issue is better addressed by the council. “We always want them to participate if they’re able to because they may not be the only one who is having those issues and it also gives them a time to meet other residents.”

Nursing homes also hold regular presentations to remind residents of their rights and hold individual care plan meetings with each resident, where daily routines such as meal or shower times can be tailored to a resident’s needs. The Ombudsman Program steps in when a resident request isn’t met or gets lost in a busy environment. Requests must always come directly from residents, although legal guardians or activated health care agents can stand in for a resident who is unable to communicate.

One woman, for example, simply wanted a cupholder for her wheelchair



Hathaway Manor residents enjoy a daily afternoon promenade outdoors on this sunny day. Indoors, rock music plays through the building with many requests for Johnny Cash songs, according to John Fredette, home administrator. The activity is one example of the ways nursing homes are rethinking activities and care as the needs of aging populations shift.

which Galitsky helped make happen.

Another woman had been placed on a pureed diet but wanted to eat solid foods again.

“I asked her, ‘Do you want me to address it?’ and she said yes,” Galitsky said. “So I went back to my (nursing home) contact person and she had someone check with the doctor and they said yes, she didn’t have to eat (pureed food) anymore.”

What volunteers emphasize...is that residents have the right to make decisions about their needs and preferences. Not every conflict is resolved to everyone’s satisfaction, but the persistent attention of an ombudsman volunteer helps.

Galitsky is always looking for ways to get to know residents better. One opening topic is his age, he said. At 83, he often gets asked how long he’s been in the nursing home by people who

think he’s a fellow resident.

“Oh, I’ve been here about a year,” he answers casually, intentionally misinterpreting the question as asking how long he’s been a volunteer at the home.

“I’m not lying,” he says with a grin.

As a retired aging professional, who worked for Bristol Elders in Fall River for 25 years, Galitsky understands more than most how important his role is to resident well-being. That still doesn’t mean he’s there to police anyone, he said.

“I can look at it from both standpoints,” he said, referring to staff and residents. “I am there to bring joy to people and to be available, and if I have a problem, I’m going to call my supervisor.”

DiPietro too said she refers the more difficult situations to Dougherty. It’s why the role is a good one, she said, for anyone who cares about people.

“Neither of us like conflict, but when you know that you’re advocating for somebody who may not have a loud enough voice of their own, it comes pretty naturally,” she said, speaking of herself and Galitsky. “Anyone with empathy could do this.”

Update

Manjiro Festival is Oct. 7

The 18th John Manjiro Festival will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Oct. 7 in the historic center of the town of Fairhaven, in and around Centre and Walnut streets. This Japanese-American festival celebrates the first Japanese person to live in America, Manjiro Nakahama, and the subsequent sister city relationship between the town of Fairhaven, where Manjiro lived, and Tosashimizu, Japan. The free event will include Japanese and American music and food, martial arts demonstrations, taiko drummers, flower arranging, raffles, food and craft booths, a tea ceremony, and more. Admission to the bus tour of the Manjiro Trail, Captain Whitfield’s house, and the Old Stone School House will also be free during the festival. The Manjiro Festival is sponsored by the Whitfield-Manjiro Friendship Society.

Learn to use your phone or computer better

Coastline is continuing its series of technology classes throughout 2023. Beginner and intermediate classes are available as well as iPhone and Android cell phone classes. Choose the class that’s right for you. All classes take place at Coastline’s location at 863 Belleville Ave., New Bedford. Contact Roshalene at 508-742-9160 to register and for more information including dates and times of individual classes.

Call Mass211 to connect

Mass 211 exists to serve the community with an anonymous confidential telephone service ready to answer your questions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days per year. Mass 211 calls are answered by specialists who will connect you to the help you need. Trained specialists can assist with almost any challenge including transportation, housing food, utility bills, mental health concerns, care options, substance use concerns and more. Mass211 is the nonprofit, statewide information and referral line for health & human services. If you need assistance dial 2-1-1 from a landline/cell phone in Massachusetts to find programs near you. Translation is available in 150-plus languages.

Nationwide Emergency Alert Test

A national test of the emergency alert system will be sent to every consumer cellphone at approximately 2:20 p.m. on Oct. 4. A second test will be sent to televisions and radios at about the same time, according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency. FEMA, in coordination with the Federal Communications Commission will conduct the nationwide test. This will be the third nationwide test, but the second test to all cellular devices. The test message will display in either English or in Spanish, depending on the language settings of the wireless handset. It will be the seventh national test to radios and televisions. The test is happening because federal emergency management coordinators need to make sure the national alert system is still an effective way to warn Americans about emergencies, natural catastrophes, attacks and accidents at the national level.

Aging in Place Interactive Health Fair to be held

An Interactive Health Fair focused on Aging in Place will be held Saturday Oct. 28 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. in New Bedford. Staying in your home doesn’t have to be scary, say organizers. The pre-Halloween fair is designed to help with multiple resources including a balance and mobility demonstration, aging simulation, and information on eye health, concierge services and more. The free event will take place outdoors at 375 Rockdale Ave., New Bedford.

Plant a tree in New Bedford

The City of New Bedford is reminding residents of its Adopt-a-Tree program, which invites residents to make a \$150 contribution to the city to support the planting of a tree by the Department of Public Infrastructure. The resident may select the species of their choice from a pre-approved list of tree types which DPI then plants per the resident’s direction. So far, the city has planted 780 trees under this initiative. In total, 4,554 trees have been planted since 2014. Any resident interested in the Adopt-A-Tree Program may contact DPI at (508) 979- 1550.

Evening of Mystery at RJD

The Rotch-Jones-Duff House & Garden Museum presents Mystery at the Mansion: The Curse on Thursday, Oct. 19, and Friday, Oct. 20, from 6-9 p.m. under the heated tent in the museum garden. The museum has planned a playful evening of participatory historic fiction where party guests follow clues to break a curse that has been cast on the house, garden, and all who have entered the property. Local actor Ian Vincent from The Collective will emcee the evening. In its fifth year, Mystery at the Mansion is a social mixer with a game-like twist. The evening features a chance drawing, food and drink and plenty of time to socialize in between clue-finding. A Tier One ticket includes a light dinner and cash bar for \$60. A Tier Two ticket includes a light dinner with a full bar for \$90. Tickets may be purchased at rjdmuseum.org or by calling Hillary Fortin at 508-997-1401.

Buried in Treasures meetings

The Buried in Treasures Support Group will meet from 9:30 – 11:45 a.m. on upcoming Saturdays - Oct. 7, Oct. 21, Nov. 4 and Nov. 18 at the Acushnet Senior Center, 59 ½ S. Main St., Acushnet. Both new and returning members are welcome! Join this free support group to learn how to live a life less cluttered. Learn about hoarding, acquiring, and decluttering in a safe and supportive group environment. Do you or someone you know struggle with living among too much “stuff”? Join in by calling Brittany Botelho at 508-961-3136, emailing bdejesus88@yahoo.com, or just dropping in. The group is sponsored by the New Bedford Fresh Start Program in collaboration with the Acushnet Senior Center.

Open Discussion Support Group

Change can be hard. The Open Discussion Support Group through EMHOT – the Elder Mental Health Outreach Team – can help. Led by Tony Rose, EMHOT case manager, the support group is held twice a month at the Acushnet Council on Aging through the end of the year. Monthly meetings are at 10 a.m. Oct. 7, Nov. 4, and Dec. 30 and 4:30 p.m. Oct. 19, Nov. 16 and Dec. 7. Funded by the MA Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Veterans Day Lunch is Nov. 3

In honor of Veterans Day in November, a Veterans Day Lunch will be held at Rachel’s Lakeside in Dartmouth at 11:30 a.m. on Nov. 3. Dartmouth veterans are welcome to attend and can call 508-999-4717 to make a reservation. Widows of veterans are also welcome to attend. For more information on the lunch, call Maria Connor at 508-636-6453. The lunch is sponsored by Rep. Chris Markey and the Dartmouth Friends of the Elderly. Rachel’s Lakeside is located at 950 State Road, Dartmouth.

Lecture on 1778 British raid in New Bedford area

A free lecture on the devastating British raid on New Bedford, Fairhaven, and Dartmouth in 1778 will be held at 2 p.m. Oct. 15 at the Fort Taber Military Museum in New Bedford. After the British closed Boston Harbor, much needed supplies for the American rebels came through the area, and the British landed 4,000 troops at Clark’s Cove in retaliation. The talk will be given by Jonathan Lane, chairman of the Revolution 250 Consortium of Massachusetts. The event is co-sponsored by the Dartmouth Preservation Heritage Trust and the Fort Taber-Fort Rodman Military Museum. Parking is available at the Museum; there is no charge for attending. After the lecture, the museum will be open for attendees to be able to examine the many Revolutionary War artifacts. Any questions can be directed to Diane Gilbert at the Dartmouth Heritage Preservation Trust at d.m.gilbert51@gmail.com.

Drop off food waste

New Bedford is encouraging residents to participate in its Food Waste Drop-Off Program by giving out collection bins and a chance to win a \$50 grocery gift card. Ten different New Bedford residents who drop off food waste at the Recycling Center between Oct. 9 and Dec. 15 will be selected to win a gift card. The \$500 in gift cards is provided by the Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District. Acceptable drop-offs include all unpackaged food e.g., fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy, breads, grains, baked goods, as well as bones, shells, peels, eggshells, coffee grounds, and BPI certified compostable bags. Unacceptable items include plastic bags, cleaning chemicals, diapers, glass, pet waste, aluminum foil, plastic wrap, plates, cups, utensils, recycling, trash, and yard waste. One hundred kitchen bins are available to New Bedford residents while supplies last. Each 2-gallon bin contains a roll of BPI certified compostable bags and informational flyers. If you don’t have a kitchen bin you can put food in any container, such as a bowl or bucket. Shake the food waste into a designated food waste cart at the Recycling Center. Since the City of New Bedford’s Food Waste Drop-Off Program started in June 2022, nearly two tons of food waste have been collected. While that is significant, there is a lot more food waste that can be diverted from the landfill. For more information, call the Greater New Bedford Regional Refuse Management District at (508) 979-1493, or email Marissa@gnbrmrdistrict.org.

Your Health

Re-discover the kitchen for better nutritional health

By Ashley Weber M.D.
Director of Women's Health
Greater New Bedford Community Health Center

One of my favorite things to collect are cookbooks. I have some that are from famous chefs, ones that can be found in many American kitchens and some that focus on specific cuisines. I even have one from a theme park.

I noticed one day that the older the cookbook, the bigger the focus on nutrition.

Cookbooks published before 1950 often have whole chapters about good nutrition and its importance located right in front. The recipes themselves also contain information about serving sizes and other nutrition facts.

When I talk with my patients about their diet, I usually ask three questions. Where do you get your food? What foods are you eating? How much of each food are you eating?

Often my suggestions target one of these three questions: Do you eat a lot at restaurants? Do you eat fresh produce? What size plates do you use? Each question deserves a thorough discussion.

Most of us get our food from a variety of places, from fast food chains, corner stores, restaurants,



supermarkets and sometimes our own gardens.

Food from restaurants is designed to be delicious and easily produced. The chefs there are more interested in consistent flavor, and may use more salt and fat than we would cooking at home. Eating at restaurants is fine once in a while, but the food is not particularly nutritious.

Food bought at the grocery store is likely to have higher value, especially if it is on the edges of the market as opposed to the aisles. These foods have shorter shelf lives and are often more expensive, but will have more fiber, protein and vitamins.

I grew up in the era of the food pyramid, and then Michelle Obama's My Plate was introduced in 2012. Both focus on what foods we are eating. They encourage a good variety of all food groups.

Many of my patients do not get enough fresh produce. It is expensive, often has to be prepared, and spoils quickly. It also has the high-



est nutrition.

If it is expensive, often stores have bulk produce that is cheaper and look for sales. Try to buy what is in season.

Canned and frozen produce also have good nutritional value. If you are short on time, invest in some tupperware and prepare enough for the week. When I have too much food that is going to spoil, I often will cook it and freeze it, for later use.

Some patients say "I don't like vegetables." I have about 20 cookbooks with fantastic recipes for non-vegetable fans. The internet has plenty of recipes as well. You don't have to like it all, but you can find something you DO like.

My final thought is on the amount.

Stop and think for a minute how much you eat for each meal and

then imagine the reaction if you put that in front of your great-great grandmother.

Our nutritional needs are the same.

How big are the plates you use for dinner? I absolutely encourage everyone to eat enough and what they like, but make sure you are filling up on something healthy.

"When I talk with my patients about their diet, I usually ask ... Where do you get your food? What foods are you eating? How much of each food are you eating?"

I encourage each of you to re-discover the kitchen. Think about what nutrients your body might want to work at its best. Find a recipe that sparks your interest, pull out your apron and make yourself a nutritious, delicious gift.

Ashley Weber is the Director of Women's Health at the Greater New Bedford Community Health Center. She received her degree from the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine and did her residency at Brown University. She is Board certified in Internal Medicine.

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Commonwealth Care Alliance® Massachusetts (PPO) brings together a community of local support to help you get the most out of your health plan. This is Medicare that's comprehensive and coordinated.

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MASSACHUSETTS

CCA Medicare Preferred (PPO) and CCA Medicare Value (PPO) are health plans with a Medicare contract. Enrollment depends on contract renewal.

MassHealth support staff coming to New Bedford

MassHealth is expected to recheck the eligibility of 2.3 million Massachusetts residents this year which means if you have MassHealth now, the renewal process will likely affect you. New Bedford adults age 65 and older can get direct assistance completing the application process from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Oct. 25 at Coastline Elderly Services when MassHealth support staff will be on site to meet one-on-one with those who sign up. To get the most out of your personalized support session, MassHealth recommends having these documents with you when you arrive: your blue envelope with renewal information; a form of identification; social security number; and proof of income,

assets and insurance. If you'd like to bring someone with you, you'll be asked to fill out and sign a Permission to Share Information (PSI) or Authorized Representative Designation (ARD) form at your appointment. The forms allow staff to share eligibility information with the persons listed on them. If you've already reapplied and lost coverage, you can still make an appointment. You'll have 90 days to contact MassHealth and get your coverage reinstated. You can also call MassHealth directly at (800) 841-2900, TDD/TTY: 711. Generally, members over age 65 can request three months of retroactive coverage. Call 508-999-6400, extension 496 to schedule a meeting time and learn more.

O pessoal de apoio do MassHealth chega a New Bedford

Prevê-se que o MassHealth volte a verificar a elegibilidade de 2,3 milhões de residentes de Massachusetts este ano, o que significa que se já tem o MassHealth, o processo de renovação irá provavelmente afetá-lo a si. Os cidadãos de New Bedford com 65 anos ou mais podem obter assistência direta para concluir o processo de candidatura, das 9h00 às 14h00, no dia 25 de outubro, nos Coastline Elderly Services, quando o pessoal de apoio do MassHealth estiver no local para se encontrar individualmente com os inscritos. Para tirar o máximo partido da sua sessão de apoio personalizado, o MassHealth recomenda que tenha estes documentos consigo quando chegar: o seu envelope azul com informações sobre a renovação, um documento de identificação, o número de segurança social e um comprovativo de rendimentos,

património e seguro. Se quiser levar alguém consigo, ser-lhe-á pedido que preencha e assine um formulário de Permissão para Partilha de Informações (PSI) ou de Designação de um Representante Autorizado (ARD) na sua consulta. Os formulários permitem ao pessoal partilhar as informações de elegibilidade com as pessoas neles indicadas. Se já se candidatou novamente e perdeu a cobertura, ainda pode marcar uma consulta. Terá 90 dias para contactar o MassHealth e obter a readmissão da sua cobertura. Também pode contactar diretamente o MassHealth através do número (800) 841-2900, TDD/TTY: 711. De um modo geral, os membros com mais de 65 anos podem solicitar três meses de cobertura retroativa. Ligue para o 5089996400, extensão 496, para marcar uma reunião e saber mais.

El personal de apoyo de MassHealth llega a New Bedford

Se espera que este año, MassHealth vuelva a comprobar la elegibilidad de 2,3 millones de residentes de Massachusetts, lo que significa que, si usted tiene MassHealth ahora, el proceso de renovación probablemente le afectará. Los adultos mayores de 65 años de New Bedford pueden obtener asistencia directa para completar el proceso de solicitud de 9 a.m. a 2 p.m. el 25 de octubre en Coastline Elderly Services cuando el personal de apoyo

de MassHealth estará en el lugar para reunirse individualmente con aquellos que se registren. Para aprovechar al máximo su sesión de apoyo personalizado, MassHealth recomienda tener los siguientes documentos cuando llegue: el sobre azul con la información de renovación; una forma de identificación; número de seguro social; y prueba de ingresos, bienes y seguro. Si quiere que alguien lo acompañe

se le pedirá completar y firmar un formulario de Permiso para Compartir Información (PSI, por su sigla en inglés) o de Designación de Representante Autorizado (ARD, por su sigla en inglés) en su cita. Los formularios permiten al personal compartir requisitos de información con las personas que figuran en ellos. Si ya ha vuelto a solicitar cobertura y la perdió, todavía puede hacer una cita. Tendrá 90 días para llamara MassHealth y que le restablezcan la cobertura.

También puede comunicarse con MassHealth llamando directamente al (800) 841-2900, TDD/TTY: 711. En general, los miembros mayores de 65 años pueden pedir tres meses de cobertura retroactiva. Llame al 508-999-6400, extensión 496 para programar una hora de reunión y obtener más información.

Translations provided by: Southcoast Health

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commitment to seniors in our community.
For ticket information, call Ashley
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Or visit www.CoastlineNB.org.

WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

October is National Physical Therapy Month

By Nanci Winterhalter
I am so excited! I get to share a wee story. Too much Masterpiece Theater, anyone?

Upon graduating from college, I took my first professional job with the Multiple Sclerosis Society. I worked in a tiny, local office on Long Island and I had a terrific boss, Terri. She basically hired me as a fundraiser but found that my strength was in fielding calls from people living with MS who were looking for resources, especially physical therapy.

You might think, no surprise there. But this was over 35 years ago, when PT was not as widely accessible as it is today. Consequently, I knew very little about it and decided to do some research.

I went to a local outpatient PT clinic and volunteered 40 hours. Those 40 hours changed my life. I loved everything about the field. From the direct, one-on-one contact, the team collaboration, the problem solving, the dance between the patient and the therapist to the science and the art of being a good clinician.

A year later with my student loans in hand, I moved to Manhattan to attend graduate school and become a physical therapist. To this day, it is likely the best deci-

“In case you don’t know, physical therapists are movement experts who can help you improve the quality of your life through hands-on care, patient education and prescribed movement.”

sion I have ever made. It has enriched my life in ways I could not have imagined. I have worked with people at some of the most challenging times in their lives. My patients inspired me, taught me about patience, humility, compassion, and resilience. If I helped my patients half as much as they taught me about life, then I would be a happy woman.

Why am I sharing this with you? Because October is National PT month, so I get to write about what I love!

In case you don’t know, physical therapists are movement experts who can help you improve the quality of your life through hands-on care, patient education and prescribed movement.

Alongside other health care professionals, physical therapists can help you manage your health. Addressing areas such as mobility, managing pain and chronic



disease, recovering from and preventing injury, before or after surgery, therapists can help you develop strategies and treatment plans to achieve your wellness goals.

Working with people of all ages and abilities, physical therapists provide care that is specific for your body and lifestyle.

We all know that regular physical activity can benefit us in many ways but there are barriers that sometimes prevent us from moving forward. PT’s help design physical activity plans that address your needs, challenges and goals so you can cross those

barriers.

PT professionals can practice as a generalist or specialize in a specific area. They can also pursue certification in 10 specialties including: cardiovascular and pulmonary, clinical electrophysiology, geriatrics, neurology, oncology, orthopedics, pediatrics, sports, women’s health, and wound management. What a vocation!

To learn more about physical therapy and how it can help you, check out: choosePT.com.

Nanci Winterhalter, MSPT, is a certified yoga teacher and yoga therapist.

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Estate Planning is still important for those who are aging solo

What you need to know

By Attorney Michelle D. Beneski, Managing Partner, CELA, LLM in Taxation

Surprenant & Beneski

Often, we say that estate planning is about thinking about your family, but what if you don't have family? Solo agers are a demographic that, although unique, is not uncommon. More and more we are seeing a widow or a widower, divorced, never married or an only child who has no siblings or children of their own or are estranged from their extended families. What then?

Estate planning can also be about those friends who become family. Chances are that your best friend would not want you to go this alone. How about a niece or nephew? Or a cousin that is more like a sister? Do it for them and for yourself, too.

If you are a solo ager, you are already independent and are used to making decisions. Estate planning shouldn't be any different.

One of the things to help is to assemble a team for yourself. Choose only people who have your best interests at heart, who understand you and your priorities and will follow your wishes. Your team can include a friend, extended family, your doctor, your financial planner and your estate planning attorney. All should be on the same book and page with you and with each other.

You need people who will make tough decisions and will honor your wishes. Being a personal representative is daunting, so make sure you choose someone who can do it.

The best way to do all this is to have a plan in place for your estate. The way to start it is with foundational documents from an elder law and estate planning attorney. These documents are something that everyone over the age of 18

should have in place.

Other documents to consider:

Trusts: Protect assets while alive and minimize taxes after you have passed. Trusts reduce tax burdens and avoid probate.

Long Term Care Insurance Policy: This is important if you are single and have no one to care for you. With this, you can afford to age in place at your home or move into assisted living.

Pre-Paid Burial Plans: It is nice to know that those final details are prepared for.

The key to ensuring that you are prepared is to start planning sooner rather than later.

Answering the following questions can help you develop a structure for a plan that evolves with you as you grow older:

- Ask yourself "what matters most" to you.
- What type of setting do you want to live in?
- Consider finding a life care manager who will be an advocate and advise you on the best medical care and lifestyle options to meet your personal goals.
- Have a health care proxy in place.
- Working with your physician, complete a MOLST (Medical Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) to make your medical choices known.
- Have a financial plan in place should you need additional resources to pay for an in-home caregiver.
- Do you have adequate medical insurance, and are you aware of resources available to you if your financial resources are limited?
- Do you have a trusted person to be your power of attorney to address financial or legal issues?

Solo agers have a lot to consider but you don't have to do it alone. Contacting an elder law and estate planning attorney to help guide you is a great start. You will be glad that you did!

Trivia

FOR YOUR ENTERTAINMENT – KIM CAMARA

- 1.) What is the most popular Halloween candy?
A.) Candy Corn B.) Milky Way
C.) Reese's Peanut Butter Cup D.) Skittles
- 2.) How much candy corn was produced in 2022?
A.) 35 million pounds B.) 25 million pounds
C.) 20 million pounds D.) 11 million pounds
- 3.) What vegetable is used for celebrations the night before Halloween?
A.) Lettuce B.) Cabbage C.) Pumpkin D.) Eggplant
- 4.) What famous magician died on Halloween?
A.) Siegfried Fischbacher B.) Roy Horn
C.) David Copperfield D.) Harry Houdini
- 5.) When was halloween first celebrated in the US?
A.) 1820's B.) 1840's C.) 1920's D.) 1920's
- 6.) What is the commercially MOST successful horror movie of all time?
A.) It B.) House on Haunted Hill
C.) Halloween III D.) Carrie
- 7.) What was first used to make jack-o-lanterns before pumpkins?
A.) Watermelons B.) Potatoes C.) Canteloupe D.) Summer Squash
- 8.) What candy was distributed to soldiers during the Korean conflict?
A.) 3 Musketeers B.) Zagnut
C.) Charleston Chews D.) Tootsie Rolls
- 9.) How many calories in the average trick or treaters stash?
A.) 10,000 B.) 11,000 C.) 15,000 D.) 20,000
- 10.) In what American state is it illegal to dress up like a nun or priest?
A.) New Jersey B.) New York C.) Maine D.) Alabama

Bonus Fill-in-the-Blank: What serial killer inspired the Texas chainsaw massacre, Psycho & Silence of the Lambs?

[Answers listed on page 11]

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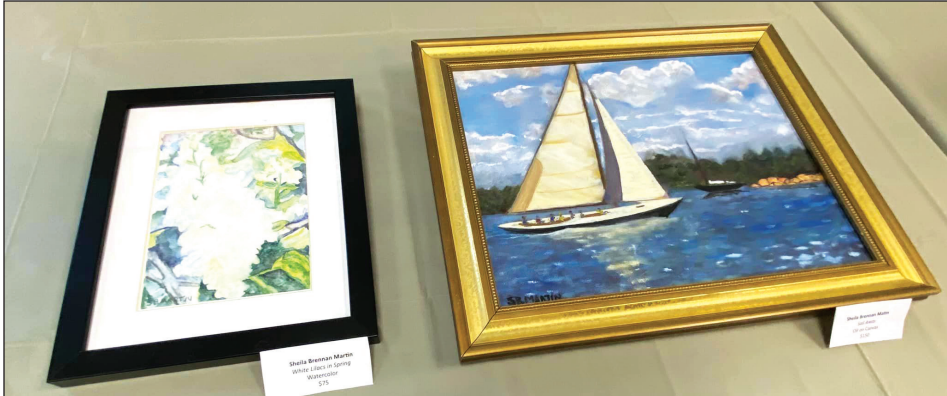
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Rochester COA's Art Show was a big hit in August, drawing talented artists and viewers to the event.



Talent abounds at Rochester Art Show

An abundance of artistic talent was on display at the Rochester Council on Aging's Art Show on Aug. 24, so much so that there was a tie selected for the show's first place winner.

About two-dozen artists participated in the show which was sponsored by the Friends of the Rochester Senior Center. Competition was fierce with first place ribbons going

to Betty Beaulieu and Lynette Torres. Second place was awarded to Bee Bettencourt and Bob Francis took home third place.

A variety of genres, mediums and styles from local artists were included in the show. Three pieces of art were also on display, courtesy of the Joseph H. Plumb Memorial Library which loaned the art to the Senior Center for the show.



The road to recovery due to a serious medical condition can be a lengthy process that is seldom easy. But there is help along the way. **Vibra Hospitals** are here to provide the specialized care you need right when you need it.

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Important information on health insurance for members 65 and older

If you have MassHealth, you will need to renew your coverage this year.

If you are 65 years or older, we are here to help! Support staff will be at **Coastline Elderly Services** on **Wednesday, October 25th** to help you complete the renewal.

Make a reservation now to get help!

863 Belleville Ave.
New Bedford, MA 02745

10/25/23, 9:00AM – 2:00PM

Reservations are required – secure your spot!
Call Coastline @ 508-999-6400, ext. 496

You will need to renew your coverage this year.

What to expect:

- 1-on-1 session with support staff
- To get the most out of your personalized support session, here are **helpful documents** to bring with you:
 - ✓ Your blue envelope (if you have it)
 - ✓ Form of Identification
 - ✓ Social security number
 - ✓ Proof of Income, assets, & insurance

Look out for MassHealth's renewal blue envelope

Informações importantes sobre o plano de saúde de membros de 65 anos ou mais

Membros do MassHealth precisam renovar sua cobertura este ano.

Se você tem 65 anos ou mais, estamos aqui para ajudá-lo! A equipe de apoio estará no(a) **Coastline Elderly Services** no dia **25 de Outubro** para ajudá-lo no processo de renovação.

Reserve já o seu horário para receber ajuda!

863 Belleville Ave.
New Bedford, MA 02745

25 de Outubro, 9:00AM – 2:00PM

É necessário fazer reserva. Garanta já o seu lugar!
Entre em contato com Coastline @ 508-999-6400, ext 496

Você precisa renovar sua cobertura este ano.

O que esperar:

- Sessões individuais com a equipe de apoio
- Para aproveitar ao máximo a sessão de suporte personalizado, pode ser útil trazer os seguintes **documentos**:
 - ✓ Seu envelope azul (se tiver)
 - ✓ Forma de identificação
 - ✓ Número do seguro social
 - ✓ Comprovante de renda, bens e seguro

Fique atento(a) ao envelope azul de renovação do MassHealth

Información importante sobre el seguro de salud para afiliados mayores de 65 años

Si tiene MassHealth, debe renovar su cobertura este año.

Si tiene 65 años o más, ¡estamos aquí para ayudarle! El personal de apoyo estará en **Coastline Elderly Services** el día **25 de Octubre** para ayudarle a completar su renovación.

¡Reserve su cita ahora para recibir asistencia!

863 Belleville Ave.
New Bedford, MA 02745

25 de Octubre, 9:00AM – 2:00PM

Se requiere hacer reservación: ¡reserve su cita!
Llame a Coastline @ 508-999-6400, ext 496

Usted debe renovar su cobertura este año.

Qué esperar:

- Sesión personalizada con el personal de apoyo
- Para aprovechar al máximo su sesión de apoyo personalizado, estos son algunos **documentos útiles** que debe llevar:
 - ✓ Su sobre azul (si lo tiene)
 - ✓ Documento de identidad
 - ✓ Número de Seguro Social (SSN)
 - ✓ Comprobante de ingresos, bienes y seguros

Esté atento a recibir un sobre azul con su renovación de MassHealth

Pumpkinpalooza: 1 p.m. on October 28. Join us for an afternoon of fun! Show off your artistic talent and help create a lighted pumpkin display at the Community Center for all to enjoy on Halloween weekend. We will provide pumpkins and carving tools or you can bring your own carved pumpkin to add to the display. There will be music, refreshments, games, face painting, petting zoo & balloon animals. Pre-registraon is required for a pumpkin, call 508-748-3570.

Fire Prevention & Disaster Preparedness: 1 p.m. on Oct. 16. Members of Marion Fire, Marion EMS and the Board of Health will be discussing fire prevention along with disaster/emergency preparedness, escape plans, home safely, evacuation procedures and emergency preparedness kit supplies to help you and your pets stay safe. Bring your concerns and questions.

Cannabis 101: 1 p.m. on Oct. 20. Holly and Michele are “Nurses with a Mission.” They will be on hand to provide educaon and history of cannabis in the United States and demystify the root of the current stigma. They will address cannabis and healthcare as well as the background of cannabis criminalizaon.

The LGBTQ+ Senior Supper Club: 5-7 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 11 at the Marion COA. Join us for food, drink & great conversation! Please call 508-748-3570 so we know to expect you.

Walking Group: Joining a walking group is one of the best ways to start and maintain a healthy walking habit. This type of physical acvity will help to prevent and postpone chronic disease, and to build healthy bodies and minds. So, join us on Wednesdays at 11:15 a.m. to walk on the path at the Center.

Hiking with Sippican Land Trust: 2 p.m. on October 23. Osprey Marsh is a 19.8 acre parcel of upland woods, wetlands and marshland offering spectacular water views of Planting Island Cove. A volunteer from the Trust will lead a walk on The Osprey Marsh Accessible Boardwalk, an 1,800’ wooden boardwalk and stone dust pathway with a prominent viewing platform whose design allows all levels of ability to participate, whether you

Mattapoisett COA

For more information, call the Mattapoisett Council on Aging at 508-758-4110 or go to mattapoisett.net/council-aging. The center is located at 17 Barstow St., Mattapoisett, MA 02739.

Halloween Party: Oct. 31. Doors open at 11:30 a.m. with lunch at noon. Reservations required starting Oct. 2. Space is limited. The Gravestone Girls will speak at 1 p.m. “Welcome to the Graveyard!” is a 90-minute illustrated ‘virtual tour’ chronicling cemetery art, history and symbolism. Lunch is vegetable lasagna, Caesar salad, and dinner roll. \$7.

Historical Women: Lunch & Show—Amelia Earhart, Oct. 17th, at 11:30 a.m. (Doors open at 11 a.m.) at the Congregational Church (enter on Mechanic Street.)

Sheryl Faye presents a historical performance of Amelia Earhart, a pioneer in aviation. Amalia begins to consider a career in medicine, however, when she pays a pilot \$1 to take her up for a short “hop” in his plane that idea “flies out the window.” From then on, the science of aviation becomes her passion. Registration required by Oct. 13. RSVP: 508-758-4110RSVP: 508-758-4110; Cost is \$5.

Dyer Maker Studio® presents “Dyeing to Wear It”®: 9 a.m. to noon, October 10. Cost: \$5. This class will focus on the design and function of the classic silk scarf. Each design will be its own unique and beautiful piece of wearable art made entirely by you. Each color is hand crafted from natural, raw materials and extracted without the use of harmful chemicals.

Art for Your Mind: Join local art historian, Jill Sanford, for an enjoyable hour seeing things in new ways. The Renaissance, Italy’s Finest, offers an opportunity to experience the works of Da Vinci, Michelangelo, Raphael, and other masters of the Italian High Renaissance. We’ll learn about why they were important, how they worked, and how their accomplishments forever changed the world of art on Oct. 4 at 12:30p.m.

Trips: Oct. 5 Heritage State Park; van leaves park & ride at 10 a.m. \$5 for van; Oct. 12 Canalside Restaurant; van leaves park & ride at 11 a.m. \$5 for van; Oct. 19 Wrentham Outlets; van leaves at 9:15 a.m. \$5 for van; and Nov. 2 Boston Symphony Orchestra; van leaves park & ride at 6:30 a.m. \$10 for van/ and admission at door.

Movie & Pizza: 12:15 p.m. Oct. 25. The original *Book Club* centered on four older women who have all attended a weekly book club together for 40 years. The highly anticipated sequel, *Book Club 2: The Next Chapter* follows our four best friends as they take their book club to Italy for the fun girls’ trip they never had. Pizza \$1/slice. Prepay and registration required.

The DIY Divas: “Picture This” Nov. 3, at 10 a.m. Cost: \$10 (Sign-ups start 10/2) Create your very own seaside mosaic using shells, beach-themed objects, epoxy resin, and upcycled picture frames. Create it Friday and take it home Monday.

New Bedford COA

For updates and assistance, contact the New Bedford Council on Aging at 508-991-6250. All are welcome. Brooklawn Senior Center is located at 1997 Acushnet Ave. and Rosemary S. Tierney Senior Center is located at 553 Brock Ave., both in New Bedford.

Adult Social Day: Now at Buttonwood Park. Contact the New Bedford COA for more information at 508-991-6250.

Strength & Conditioning: With Larry, Mondays from 12:30-1:30 p.m. at Brooklawn.

Bingo: Tuesdays & Thursdays from 12-2pm. at Brooklawn.

Zumba with Pati: Mondays 10-11 a.m. at Tierney.

Chair Yoga with Sue: Tuesdays from 10-11a.m. at Tierney

Chair Yoga with Sue: Wednesdays from 10-11 a.m. at Brooklawn.

Rochester COA

For more information, call 508-763-8723. The Rochester Council on Aging is located at 67 Dexter Lane, Rochester, MA 02770. Visit the website at townofrochestermass.com/council-aging. Facebook: facebook.com/Rochester, Mass.

October Trips: Typically \$5, \$10 or \$20 for the van ride. Residents get a discounted rate. You are responsible for purchasing tickets to enter venues. Direct any trip questions to Ann Soares at 508-763-8723, ext. 201. Oct. 26 Frugal Fannies. Depart COA at 9:30 a.m. and return at 4 p.m. For trips, if you are able, park in the 2nd (overflow) parking lot. Call 508-763-8723 or visit the front desk to sign-up and pay at the front desk.

Health Fair: 10 a.m.-1 p.m. at the COA.

Brain Builder: Need some ideas, advice, tips & tricks on how to improve your memory? Join this Brain Builder class from 1-2 p.m. Oct. 12 and Oct. 26.

Halloween Party: Join us for our Halloween luncheon on Oct. 16. Chefs will be the Cambras and the Daniels. Cost is \$10. The menu will be posted on the Bulletin Board and breakfast tables when it is available. Costume contest will include cash prizes.

Flu Shots: For seniors (65+) available at the Rochester Senior Center on Oct. 10 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pre-registration is encouraged. Walk-ins will be available from 12-1 if there are doses remaining. Regular flu vaccines will be available at the Joseph H Plumb Library on Oct. 16 from 4-7 p.m. Pre-registration is encouraged. Walk-ins will be available from 6-7 if there are doses remaining. To register for a flu vaccine on either date, please email the Public Health Nurse at cdolan@townofrochester.com.

Operation Christmas Child: On Nov. 1, COA is holding its shoebox packing get together from 9 a.m. to noon in the big room at the COA. Come join us and help us ready a simple shoebox Christmas gift that will be delivered to needy children here in the U.S. and around the world. For more information speak with Carol or Mike and Sheila Danie.

Dementia Directory
www.alzconnected.org

In-Person Groups

Alzheimer’s Support Group: Every other Tuesday, 2:45 to 4 p.m. Held at the Dartmouth COA. Group is for caregivers and their care partners. Please contact Carolyn Greany at 508-304-4587.

Caregivers Support Group: First Thursday of the month from 1 to 2 p.m. Held at Fairhaven COA at 508-979-4029.

Caregiver Group: First and Third Tuesdays 10 a.m. at the Rochester COA. Come join us and find out more. Register with Carol at 508-763-8723.

Family Caregiver Support Group: Every first Thursday of the month from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Meets at the Dartmouth Council on Aging. Open to any caregiver, regardless of illness of person cared for. Call Stephanie Gibson at Coastline at 774-510-5209.

Virtual Support Groups

Family Caregiver Support Group: Virtual Meetings are held the third Thursday of the month from 10:30 a.m. to noon. Call Stephanie Gibson at Coastline at 774-510-5209.

Additional Options: Call the Alzheimer’s Association at 800-272-3900 or visit www.alzconnected.org.

LGBTQIA+ Bereavement Support Group: An 8-week free online support group for LGBTQIA+ meets via Zoom from Nov. 1 to January 3 on Tuesdays from 6-7:30 p.m. Email Lisa Krinsky at lkrinsky@fenwayhealth.org if interested.

October 2023 Trivia Quiz Answers

1. C | 2. A | 3. B | 4. D | 5. B
6. A | 7. B | 8. D | 9. B | 10. D

Bonus Answer: Edward Gein (The Butcher of Plainfield)

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Community

The Way Things Were



General Dwight D. Eisenhower in New Bedford

General Dwight D. “Ike” Eisenhower greets an enthusiastic crowd along Union Street in New Bedford, October 1952, one month before the presidential election that he won to become the nation’s 34th president.

South Coast Rail will test trains at high speed

The MBTA will be testing and commissioning Commuter Rail trains to and from Middleborough, East Taunton, Freetown, Fall River, and New Bedford for the first time in decades, the Mass Department of Transportation said in a September South Coast Rail update.

The test trains will travel the rail corridor, reaching speeds of up to 80 mph, much faster than previous freight trains at 25 mph, the department warned.

For those reasons MassDOT is reminding people of safety concerns regarding railways and fast-moving trains.

“We want to remind everyone who lives by, drives, works, or crosses railroad tracks to prepare for high-speed trains to be a frequent sight in the region. It’s important to remember that only trains should be on the right-of-way. It is illegal and life-threatening to walk on or along the tracks,” MassDOT said in its update.

The startup of South Coast Rail service represents great opportunities and benefits for the region, presenting new issues requiring education and caution, MassDOT noted. Anyone seeking more information on safety can request a presentation by emailing SouthCoastRail@dot.state.ma.us with “Safety First” in the subject line.

Book release continued...

ing at different events and I had a presentation I created of how to get started telling your stories.”

That led to connecting with individuals who had begun researching their family history and had documentation and notes but didn’t know how to pull it all together.

Blake-Souza was at the New Bedford Public Library in September to celebrate the launch of the resulting book, called “With Little More Than Dreams: Stories of Four Immigrant Families in America.” In it, she works with four immigrant families to trace their lineages, describe cultural traditions, and tell stories important to who they are.

“You don’t have to give people the right to say yay or nay, but I felt it was important. And I wanted it told in the way that (families) felt comfortable with.”

—Dawn Blake-Souza
New Bedford Author

The book became a collaboration between Blake-Souza and the families: husband and wife Dario and Sylvia Miranda’s German-Mexican heritage; Priscilla Pacheco Demers’ Azorean family; Susan Pawlak-Seaman’s Polish-Austrian heritage; and the Cape Verdean history of Blake-Souza’s late husband as researched by his son Paul Souza with consulting assistance from Richard Souza,

another family member.

“A lot of people like Priscilla and Dario and Sylvia, wanted help to tell their stories. They had a lot of stories, but they didn’t know how to go about telling their stories,” she said.

“I (also) reached out to people I knew because I wanted to try to get as diverse a group as possible.”

Each person contributed research and documentation from the past as well as personal memories and passed-on stories from family members. In Priscilla Pacheco Demers’ case, Blake-Souza received a binder full of well-researched dates and documents that Demers had worked on for 17 years.

“She had wonderful documentation,” said Blake-Souza.

Pawlak-Seaman’s history was included very close to how the writer contributed it, Blake-Souza said, adding that the journalist and former editor for The Standard-Times also helped edit the book.

“Her story was a little different,” Blake-Souza said. “She couldn’t go back as far but what she did have was very interesting cultural traditions and stories.”

Each family contributor was given full editorial control, a commitment Blake-Souza felt was important when telling other people’s stories. You have to get it right, she said, which made the process more difficult than when she was telling her own family history in her previous book.

“When I did my own it was much easier,” said Blake-Souza. “Doing other people’s families was more difficult because you



Susan Pawlak-Seaman tells the audience about her family’s journey to the U.S.

want to make sure you get it right so you have to keep going back and asking them...It was a lot more involvement.”

“You don’t have to give people the right to say yay or nay, but I felt it was important. And I wanted it told in the way that they felt comfortable with,” she added.

Blake-Souza started the process by giving families an “extensive questionnaire” Questions included ‘What holidays do you remember?’ and ‘Did you have any family traditions questions about religion’ and many others.

“I used that as a starting point,” she said, from which she used documentation and her own research to fill in the stories.

The process, though complex,

was important, she said.

Feedback from Blake-Souza’s first book showed her that family histories don’t just benefit family members. Families gain by hearing about their heritage and having a lasting reminder of it, but so too did many Cape Verdean families scattered around the world who connected with the traditions and culture and, while reading Blake-Souza’s family tales, found themselves remembering their own.

“With Little More than Dreams” is available through usual book channels including Barnes and Noble and Amazon. Blake-Souza is also selling the book directly and giving buyers her discounted price.

Anyone interested in purchasing a copy can email the author at dblakesouza@gmail.com.