

# Haverhill train bridge work requires more detours

By MIKE LABELLA  
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HAVERHILL — Drivers who encountered a detour last week where the train bridge crosses Washington Street can expect more of the same as we approach winter.

Officials with MassDOT said roadway milling and paving scheduled to take place Nov. 2 and 3 will also require a similar detour directing drivers to seek alternate routes.

MassDOT spokeswoman Lisa Battiston said milling and paving will be limited to the general area under and around the bridge.

In 2014, the state approved spending \$100 million to rebuild the deteriorated downtown train bridge, a century-old span crossing the

Merrimack River that some local officials feared would eventually collapse. The project also includes repairs to the substructure for the bridge piers in the river, and rebuilding the Washington Street Bridge and the North Approach Bridge.

City and state officials have said the project will have an impact on commuters and some downtown businesses.

Railroad bridge construction that took place last week in that area made it more difficult to travel to and from the western end of downtown.

Police Capt. Stephen Doherty said the detour was in effect from Tuesday, Oct. 17, at 7 a.m., to Thursday, Oct. 19, at 7 p.m.

He said it wasn't the first time that a detour was set up



AMANDA SABGA/Staff file photo

Traffic was detoured in August 2016 as the MBTA makes repairs to the bridge over Washington Street at the Haverhill station. Drivers can expect more occasional detours as work continues until winter.

in that area.

"At other times, they've limited travel to one lane of traffic," he said.

Doherty said the MBTA's contractor had submitted a

detour plan to police, who had posted a traffic advisory on their Facebook page on Monday, Oct. 16. Police also issued a robo call warn-

ing residents of the detour.

He said to expect the same kinds of notifications about upcoming bridge construction work.

Battiston said that last week's detour was put in place to expedite painting operations, including touch-up, blasting and priming, applying a middle coat and top coat, and caulking, and that it affected the east track of the Washington Street Bridge, spans 10, 11, and 12.

She said the MBTA Project Team worked with the city to put this detour in place, in lieu of doing two to three single-lane closures under the bridge. Battiston said the contractor worked extended hours to minimize disturbances due to the detour.

Drivers heading west were detoured onto Moulton Way, then to Essex Street and onto High Street. When

drivers reach the top of the hill, they were directed to turn left onto Washington Street, then down the hill to the lights, where the Comeau Bridge meets River Street. Drivers heading east on River Street, or north on the Comeau Bridge, were asked to turn left up Washington Street, then down High Street to Essex Street.

Doherty said there was some driver confusion initially, but that traffic soon ran smoothly in that area.

Battiston said the length of roadway on Washington Street that will be impacted by milling and paving in November is approximately 180 feet and goes from Railroad Square, past Washington Avenue to the driveway of the parking garage for the apartment building at 170 Washington St.

## Elder Services gets grant from AARP Foundation

LAWRENCE — AARP Foundation has awarded a two year, \$370,806 grant to Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley to advance nutrition information and healthy food access across Massachusetts.

This national grant initiative is designed to help vulnerable older adults by addressing issues of food security, healthy eating behaviors and social isolation.

"For many low-income older adults, food security, housing security and financial security can be at risk as we age," said AARP Foundation President Lisa Marsh Ryerson. "AARP Foundation is proud to work with organizations committed to helping older adults live their best lives by connecting them with trustworthy resources in their own communities."

Under this grant, Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley will spread its evidence-informed nutrition intervention, Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults (HESL), to more than 2,000 low income older adults across the Commonwealth. HESL is aimed at addressing food access, knowledge and behavioral barriers to healthy eating. Funding will also allow for external evaluation of the program.

"Today, there are no evidence-based programs addressing nutrition behaviors and access issues for older adults in the community. This work will change that, paving the way for a sustainable and easily replicable model of overcoming healthy eating barriers for our most vulnerable populations," Elder Services CEO Joan Hatem-Roy said.

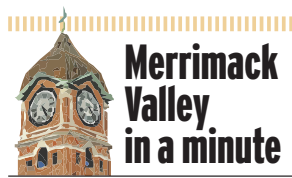
### Fall festival is Saturday

METHUEN — Come with a costume, stay for the fun.

The city of Methuen, the Recreation Department and the Methuen Youth Commission are hosting a Family Fall Festival on Saturday, Oct. 28, at Greycourt Park. The rain date is Sunday, Oct. 29.

Registration for the annual Halloween costume contest begins at noon, and the costume contest begins at 12:30 p.m. There will be prizes for each age group.

Contest winners will be announced at 1:30 p.m. At the same time, there will be "spooky story time" with Nevins Memorial Library.



Ongoing happenings at the festival include J & J pony rides and a fairy walk. Go to <https://thumbelin-fairycraft.wixsite.com/methuenfairywalk> to register your house. Food and drinks will be available.

A bus will bring participants to the top of the hill. Handicapped parking is also available.

The event is sponsored by the Methuen Exchange Club, the Methuen/Salem Rotary and Harrow's Chicken Pies.

### Hospital seeks bone marrow, blood donors

HAVERHILL — Holy Family Hospital in Haverhill will host a "Be The Match" marrow donor registry drive and an American Red Cross blood drive from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 5, in the first-floor auditorium.

The marrow donor registry drive is in partnership with the Flanagan family in honor of their daughter Allison "Alli" Flanagan. Flanagan, now a sophomore at Whittier Regional Vocational Technical High School, was diagnosed at age 8 with combined immune deficiency, and later confirmed to have Dock8, a genetic disorder of the immune system.

Those who wish to be part of the marrow donor registry will have their cheek swabbed.

Fees for the marrow donor registry drive are paid for by insurance or Michael's Fund, so please bring your health insurance card.

According to the Red Cross, those who plan to donate blood should eat iron-rich foods in the weeks prior to donation and hydrate the day of donation. All blood donors should bring an ID and a list of current medications.

Holy Family Hospital in Haverhill is located at 140 Lincoln Ave. For more information, email Jackie Mcloon at [BeTheMatch@RIBC.org](mailto:BeTheMatch@RIBC.org), call Jackie at 603-591-0854, or visit <http://www.BeTheMatch.org>. For more information about the Red Cross blood drive, visit <http://redcrossblood.org> or call 1-800-733-2767.

## Szostak family dedicates new scoreboard in standout Methuen High athlete's name

By KIERA BLESSING  
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METHUEN — A group of about 50 people gathered on Nicholson Stadium's lower field Monday afternoon to dedicate a new scoreboard recently installed in memory of Kathy Szostak, a high school sports standout and a graduate of the Class of 1979.

The Szostaks — a family "synonymous with Methuen High School athletics," according to Athletic Director Matthew Curran — donated the scoreboard with help of the community, especially the Methuen Athletic Improvement Committee.

When the committee pushed for the renovation of Nicholson Stadium and secured the second turf field, now referred to as a the "lower field," it was without a scoreboard. The Szostaks worked with the MAIC to secure the funding to make it a reality.

"They really were the guiding force behind getting it done, obviously through the funding; but also having Kathy Szostak's name up there, a graduate of Methuen High, is something that will leave a legacy for her family in her honor," Curran said.

Kathy Szostak was a stellar athlete in field hockey, basketball and softball while at Methuen High. She was named the most valuable player in all three sports, broke school records, and was the first Merrimack Valley Conference athlete — male or female — to secure a full athletic scholarship to college. While she was offered scholarships from Ohio State University to play either field hockey or softball, she opted for field hockey.

"Whatever she touched in sports, she was phenomenal at, basically," recalled Szostak's sister, Nancy Szostak Wright.

Szostak died of brain cancer at 32, seven years after she was first diagnosed. She and her mother, Peggy, are now both memorialized — Kathy through the scoreboard and her mother, known as "Ma," through a stone bench at the school, also dedicated on Monday.

"It took over two years to pull it together and everything, but it was all worth it," Szostak Wright said.

Fittingly, the scoreboard now looms over the turf field that hosts many of Methuen's field hockey games — the sport that put Szostak through college at Ohio State.

Aiding in the Szostaks endeavor to erect the



RYAN HUTTON/Staff photo

Family and friends of Kathy Szostak join her former co-workers and school officials for a group picture under the new scoreboard that looks over the lower turf field at Nicholson Stadium. The scoreboard was dedicated in memory of Szostak, a Methuen High Hall of Famer.

scoreboard were the Methuen Athletic Improvement Committee, its founder Steve Saba and board member Mike McDonnell, former Methuen coach Mimi Hyde, and her son Russell Stott, and

Curran. State Rep. Linda Dean Campbell, Mayor Stephen Zanni and Superintendent Judith Scannell were among the family, friends and coaches who gathered on the field for the event.

The Szostak family has also seen four inductees into the Methuen High School Athletic Hall of Fame and awarded 39 scholarships in Kathy's name over 22 years, totaling \$23,500.

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