

Colrain man wins county EMT of the Year award

Kevin Worden II grew up in a family of firefighters

By DIANE BRONCACCIO
Recorder Staff

COLRAIN — Fellow emergency responders wanted to surprise Kevin Worden II with his EMT of the Year Award from the Franklin County Emergency Medical Technicians Association, but their plan was foiled when an ambulance call came during the meeting assembled for the presentation.

Worden heard the call and immediately headed for the ambulance, says Robert Manners, president of the Franklin County EMT Association.

"We told him, 'You don't need to go this time; someone else will take it' — because there was a room full of EMTs willing to go," said Manners. But Worden kept going for the ambulance. Finally, the others had to tell him he needed to stay for the meeting, to accept an award.

"We had to pull him off the ambulance," Manners joked. "He's from a family of dedicated EMTs. His whole family has been involved for decades."

Worden, 30, has been an emergency medical technician and Colrain firefighter since he was 19.

Worden said that he had no plans of becoming an EMT, until a friend, who was taking the training, talked him into it.

When Worden was growing up, there wasn't a formal "junior firefighter" program at the station, but

both of Worden's parents were firefighters. Worden is now a lieutenant in the department, and his father, also named Kevin Worden, is deputy chief. His mother is an EMT and firefighter. Worden's grandfather was also a firefighter.

And now — when Worden isn't on call for Colrain — he works full-time for MedCare Emergency Health Inc. ambulance service.

"I nominated Kevin for his dedication," said David Zamojski of South County EMS. "He is one of those of the younger generation who has stepped up to the plate. His care is extraordinary. He's compassionate, understanding. And whenever they want him to do something in Colrain, he's always there. He's a caring young man who takes his responsibility beyond his role."

According to Manners, Worden

was nominated for his "ongoing commitment to emergency service and continued involvement, going to calls, day-in day-out, as well as providing service for MedCare."

"He's a low key, behind-the-scenes, everyday hero that continually does his job, putting others' welfare above his own," Manners says of Worden. "He's just one of the good guys that does his job. He wouldn't have sought the recognition. He just does what he does."

Manners said Worden is following in the tradition of many dedicated EMTs who've received the award. And the award isn't given out every year, he remarked. To be nominated, "You've got to have the drive, the commitment, the history of consistent EMS work," he said. "We look at the whole picture, rather than at an isolated event."



RECORDER STAFF/DIANE BRONCACCIO
Kevin Worden II received the EMT of the Year Award.



RECORDER STAFF/PAUL FRANZ
Erving Elementary School librarian Jane Urban holds a map as student Eben Gordon points to where a past resident of Erving lived. He read the census report about that family at the Erving Senior Center on Tuesday.

Erving event connects youth to local history

By MIRANDA DAVIS
Recorder Staff

ERVING — As third-grader Jaylice Gary stood in front of her classmates at the Erving Senior Center, she read the details of the life of an Erving woman whose experiences are far different than her own. The woman lived in Erving long ago, and had a husband, children and connections to the mills that used to provide most of the employment in the region.

Jaylice's presentation one was of several made to Erving

Elementary students, Erving seniors and other residents was part of a grant project the school has been coordinating since January.

The students read census data from the late 1800s, found records of area residents and located where they lived on old maps of the town. They pieced together information about previous residents' lives and pinpointed where they had lived.

Through a program coordinated by the school's library and a Massachusetts Cultural Council grant, the

classes worked with local historian Sara Campbell over five sessions where they studied census records, toured the historical commission and town hall and learned about what life in Erving looked like in years past.

The presentations on Tuesday by the first-, third- and fourth-graders served as a way to cap off the project and show what they've learned about local history in the process.

The first-grade class also spent time at the senior cen-

ter interviewing seniors about what their childhoods were like in Erving and the area.

Paula Betters, the director of the senior center, said the activity served the students and the seniors beyond the educational aspect. She said the kids really responded to the seniors stories.

"They had so much fun ... some of the ladies were crying, some of the students were so moved," she said,

SEE ERVING B4

Warwick to host chorus ensemble fundraiser July 29

Concert to benefit American Civil Liberties Union

By SHELBY ASHLINE
Recorder Staff

WARWICK — When Mandy Oliver participated in the "Jam for Justice," a March concert fundraiser in Florence for the American Civil Liberties Union, she began to consider how she could bring the same model to Franklin County.

"It definitely inspired me," she said. "I'd love to do my own rendition of this idea."

The concert involved community members, including Oliver and her wife Kimberly Rose, coming together to sing, an idea which raised over \$700 for the ACLU, Oliver said.

By a stroke of serendipity, soon thereafter Denyse Abruzzese Dar, a member of the Warwick Recreation Committee, approached Oliver about forming a community ensemble. It would be the first time Oliver, who is a fine arts instructor at Pioneer Valley Regional School, would work with the Warwick Recreation Committee.

The coupling of ideas resulted in a chorus concert on Saturday, July 29. Leading up to the concert, there will be 10 rehearsals, directed by Oliver on Wednesdays and Thursdays, starting June 28. All proceeds from the concert will benefit the ACLU.

"I love to get people together, and making music for good causes," she said. "I'm hoping this is something I could continue to do for the community outside of my work with the school."

Oliver said she's compiling a collection of music for participants to sing, but the songs will be uplifting.

"It's going to be songs of empowerment and solidarity. That's kind of the overall theme," she said. "That just felt like a positive, tangible project to focus on ... Let's come together and find peace and compassion."

Rehearsals, from 6 to 8:30 p.m. will be at Warwick Town Hall on Wednesdays and Pioneer on Thursdays. Oliver said her goal is to have at least 20 people involved, and at least match the amount of money raised for the ACLU through "Jam for Justice."

The cost to register for the program is \$60 for adults, \$40 for seniors and \$25 for children ages 10 and up, a fee which Oliver said will help pay the band who will play music during the concert and several rehearsals. The location of the July 29 concert will most likely be at Warwick Town Hall at 7 p.m.

To register, go online to bit.ly/2sp00Ev. To contact Oliver to arrange payment, email CommunityChorusPV@gmail.com or bring payment on the first day of rehearsal.

Reach Shelby Ashline at: sashline@recorder.com 413-772-0261, ext. 257

Greenfield Criterium bike race taking off on town streets Sunday

Recorder Staff

GREENFIELD — The Greenfield Criterium will return for a second year in a row Sunday.

Riding on last year's success, the bicycle race will kick off an "omnium" competition of five events over the course of eight days, known collectively as New England Crit Week. With the first stop of New England Crit Week taking place in Greenfield, the day will culminate in the crowning of the series' individual and team leaders for elite men and women.

The Criterium is hosted by B2C2 Cycling, a Boston-based team, in collaboration with the Greenfield Recreation Department. The race begins at 9 a.m. with the amateur

event and concludes with the elite women's and elite men's races at 1:45 and 3 p.m., respectively. Course closures will begin at 8 a.m. and roads will re-open to traffic at 4 p.m. No parking will be allowed on those roads during the race.

Criterium racing is an all-American style of bicycle racing involving laps of a short, technical course. The Greenfield Criterium will travel clockwise around Church, High and Main streets before making the final turn for the finish line on Franklin Street. At just about one kilometer and with four 90-degree turns, the race represents a classic criterium course set against the backdrop of downtown Greenfield.

Police and course marshals will



A scene from the last year's Greenfield Criterium, June 19, 2016.

be stationed around the course and at all intersections throughout the race day to help direct vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Vehicles will be allowed onto the course on a limited

basis for residents during the race.

A temporary parking ban will be in effect for the entire course, including portions of Main Street, Franklin Street, Church Street and High

Street. The course will remain open for pedestrians and spectators who should use caution when entering the roadway and follow the instructions of police and course marshals throughout the day.

The Greenfield Criterium hopes to build on last year's momentum. With the support of local businesses, including Greenfield Coffee, race staff are hoping the event will become a staple of the summer event schedule in town. With a free, introductory racing clinic for newcomers to the sport in addition to high-caliber, competitive racing later in the day, the race seeks to promote athletic development, good sportsmanship and camaraderie for bike racers of all levels.

Greenfield summer meals program begins June 26

By JOSHUA SOLOMON
Recorder Staff

GREENFIELD — The annual summer meals program will be offered across town as an effort to help feed kids 18 and under, while promoting healthy habits.

The "Eat 4 Free" program, run through Greenfield Public Schools, will begin June 26 at six different sites and will

run through Aug. 18.

Kids will be able to get free meals Monday through Friday, every workday of the summer aside from July 4. Free breakfast will run from 8 to 9 a.m. and free lunch will go from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The sites in Greenfield include the YMCA, Greenfield Gardens, Oak Courts, Greenfield High School, Leyden

Woods and the Green River Swimming and Recreation Area. The program will not run on July 4.

In addition to these sites, kids can also get free lunch at the Greenfield Farmers Market from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays, running from July 1 to Aug. 12.

Special to this year, there will be several incentives for kids to eat breakfast through

the program, including the chance to win a bicycle.

There will be three bicycles, plus helmets, that will be given away this year — two of them are 20-inch bikes and the other is a 24-inch mountain bike.

Particularly encouraged at Greenfield Gardens, Oak Courts and Leyden Woods, kids who get breakfast through the summer meals

program will be given a raffle ticket. Naturally the more tickets a child gets, the greater the chance of winning one of the bikes, or other prizes like a Frisbee.

Jessica Wilson, the community outreach coordinator for the Greenfield Summer Meals Program, reminisced about getting her first bike when growing up in the county and the value of it.

"They have a universal appeal," Wilson said. "They're great for summer and most of

fall. It offer kids a couple of other benefits, one is exercise and the other is the opportunity to be outside as much as possible."

Wilson also noted the importance a bike can play in transportation, which at large, continues to be a concern for some Franklin County residents.

"We really do have a need in Greenfield, and in Franklin County in general, for people to be able to get around at a very low cost," Wilson said.