



**BLACKSTONE VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
SIGNATURE EVENT**

HOME & COMMUNITY EXPO

BLACKSTONE VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
26TH ANNUAL
HOME & COMMUNITY EXPO

Event Information Packet for Exhibitors, Chowder
Competitors, Entertainment, Mascots & Volunteers

Saturday, March 14, 2026 | 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Northbridge High School
Field House
427 Linwood Ave
Whitinsville, MA

PRESENTING SPONSOR:

UNIBANK

WELCOME

Thank you for being part of the 26th Annual Blackstone Valley Chamber of Commerce Home & Community Expo! We are excited to welcome you and truly appreciate your participation in this community-focused event. This packet is designed to help ensure a smooth, successful, and enjoyable experience for all participants.

EXHIBITOR SET-UP, BREAKDOWN & GENERAL INFORMATION

Friday March 13 and Saturday 14 Set-Up:

Friday March 13, 2026 set up times: 3:30 PM – 6:00 PM

You may pull your vehicle up to the door of the Field House (the gym) to unload, and park there while completing set-up.

Saturday March 14, 2026 set up times: 7:00 AM – 9:00 AM

You may pull your vehicle up to the door of the Field House (the gym) to unload, and park there while completing set-up. Once you are done, please move your vehicle to Whitinsville Christian School (WCS). Shuttle service will begin at 8:30 AM.

- You do not need to notify us ahead of time when you will be setting up
- Volunteers will be available to assist with unloading.
- All exhibitors must be fully set up by 9:00 AM on Saturday. No exceptions.
- Doors open promptly at 10:00 AM and attendees will be lined up.
- Aisles must remain clear for safety and traffic flow.
- WiFi information will be available at the BVCC table.
- If electricity was not requested during registration, a \$50 on-site fee will apply. Due to floor plan limitations, last-minute electrical requests cannot be guaranteed.
- Booth numbers /Field House locations will be provided upon arrival.

Vehicle Displays:

- Indoor vehicle displays must be brought in on Friday at 10:00 AM. Outdoor vehicle displays must be in place by 9:00 AM Saturday. All exhibitor vehicles must be removed from the NHS parking lot by 9:00 AM.

Saturday Breakdown:

- All exhibitors must remain set up until 2:00 PM, Please do not pack up early.
- All exhibitors must be out of the building by 3:00 PM.
- BVCC volunteers will assist with loading as needed.

SHUTTLE TRANSPORTATION SPONSOR



ADDITIONAL EVENT INFORMATION

FRIENDLY BOOTH COMPETITION

We will be running a Friendly Booth Competition. Winners will receive framed certificates.

Award Categories:

- Best Non-Profit
- Best For-Profit
- Best Overall
- Most Creative

Winners will be announced around 1:15–1:30 PM.

ENTERTAINMENT & MASCOT INFORMATION

- All entertainment will take place in the Field House. Please refer to the event timeline for performance times.
- Please check in to the entertainment area upon arrival
- Mascots will change in the Music Room *do not use public restrooms or locker rooms*
- Locker rooms are available for changing via the Exhibitor Lounge for all other entertainers (dance, karate, etc.)
- Please leave valuables at home. BVCC is not responsible for items lost or stolen.
- Music must be loaded on an iPhone or Android device.
- BVCC will provide an emcee. Please report to the rear of the Field House upon arrival with music ready.
- Mascot Dance-Off will take place in the Field House in the designated entertainment area

ENTERTAINMENT SPONSOR



NEW! Autism WelcomingSM & Sensory Sensitive Room

For the first time, the Home and Community Expo will feature a dedicated Autism WelcomingSM Sensory Sensitive Room. This separate, quiet, and supportive space is designed for individuals who may feel overwhelmed by crowds, noise, or sensory stimulation.

What the Autism WelcomingSM & Sensory Sensitive Room Offers

- A separate, low-traffic entrance for those who prefer to avoid crowds
- A quiet, calming environment away from the busy exhibition floor
- Noise-reducing headphones available for rental on-site
- Access to fidgets, sensory tools, and calming activities
- A welcoming space where families can decompress, reset, and return to the expo at their own pace

Why It Matters

Sensory-friendly spaces help ensure that everyone, especially individuals living with autism and those with sensory sensitivities, can fully enjoy community events. By offering this dedicated room, the Expo is taking a meaningful step toward accessibility, inclusion, and community support.

Visit Us! Stop by the Autism WelcomingSM Sensory Sensitive Room during the Expo to learn more about:

- Autism Alliance resources and programs
- Partnership opportunities for Autism WelcomingSM businesses
- Meaningful ways to support the neurodiverse community

We're here to help create a more inclusive and supportive expo experience for everyone.

Interested in learning more about this? Advocates is offering a one hour training session for all EXPO exhibitors, entertainers and volunteers. You do not need to RSVP!

Wednesday March 4th 9:30-10:30, Virtual, Host: Penny Anderson
PAnderson@advocatesinc.org

Zoom Meeting ID: 935 7803 3878, Passcode: 365137

AUTISM WELCOMINGSM & SENSORY SENSITIVITY ROOM SPONSORS



CHOWDER COMPETITION INFORMATION

- Original recipes only. Ingredient lists required for allergy awareness.
- Each space includes one 6' table, two chairs, wastebasket, and table covering.
- People's Choice: 12:00–1:00 PM | Judges' Choice: approx. 12:45 PM
- Contestants must arrive by 11:00 AM, Service begins at noon (**NO EARLIER**) and winners announced at 1:15 PM.
- You may set up your booth on Friday, and you are welcome to exhibit at your booth the entire EXPO day.
- **PLEASE do not serve any product before noon!**
- Approximately 300 (3 oz) servings required.
- Chowder must be kept at temperature using chafing dishes only (no crockpots).
- Northbridge Board of Health will be onsite. Approved One-Day Food Permit and certifications required
- BVCC will provide cups, spoons, napkins, ballots, and pens.

CHOWDER FESTIVAL AND COMPETITION SPONSOR:



EXHIBITOR & VOLUNTEER HOSPITALITY HALLWAY:

- Complimentary coffee, water, and light snacks available throughout the day.
- Located in the hallway behind the BVCC tables at the head of the Field House.
- Additional concession food available from Simply Delicious Catering

EXHIBITOR & VOLUNTEER HOSPITALITY HALLWAY SPONSORS:



VOLUNTEERS

- Thank you for volunteering! Attire is comfortable and casual with comfortable shoes/sneakers. No ripped jeans/leggings. You may be loading or unloading vehicles, so please watch the weather forecast and be prepared for the day (jackets, gloves, rain gear, etc.)
- Upon arrival and departure for your shift, please check in at the Information Desk. Allow extra time for parking and shuttle transportation.
- National Honor Society volunteers must contact Liz O'Neil or Kristen Kearnan the day of the EXPO to sign paperwork.

TIMELINE OF EVENTS (SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

Friday, March 13, 2026

3:30–6:00 PM | Exhibitor Move-In

Saturday, March 14, 2026

7:00–9:00 AM | Exhibitor Move-In

8:30 AM | Shuttle Begins

10:00 AM | Doors Open

10:15–10:45 AM | Murphy Irish Step Dancers

10:45AM-11:15AM H & H Dance

11:15AM-12:15 AM Littleton Police K9 “Milo”, with Handler Brian Casey (Courtesy of: Massachusetts Vest-a-Dog, Inc.)

11:00 AM–12:00 PM | Booth Judging

12:00–1:00 PM | Chowder Festival

12:15 PM | Mascot Dance-Off & Awards

12:30–1:00 PM | Family Karate Center

1:00PM: What's Up with your Pup; Animal CPR Demo

1:15 PM | Chowder & Booth Winners Announced

2:00 PM | Event Ends

3:00 PM | Shuttle Ends

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SPONSORS!

PRESENTING SPONSOR

UniBank

TRANSPORTATION SPONSOR

Fidelity Bank

CHOWDER FESTIVAL SPONSOR

AllCare Medical Supply

ENTERTAINMENT SPONSOR

Koopman Lumber and Hardware

HOSPITALITY SPONSORS

Advocates

Open Sky Community Services

KIDZ KORNER SPONSOR

Precious Ones Childcare Center & Preschool

AUTISM WELCOMING AND SENORY SENTITIVITY ROOM SPONSOR

Autism Welcoming (Advocates)

MEDIA SPONSORS

Phil Smith Photography

WCRN

POT OF GOLD SPONSORS (alpha)

Advocates

Blackstone Valley Hub for Workforce Development

Country Bank

Embedded Counsel

Fidelity Bank

Happy Sloth Balloons

POT OF GOLD SPONSORS (alpha, cont'd)

Hear Joy Audiology

Homefield Credit Union

Koopman Lumber Co.

Medline

Milford Federal Bank

Open Sky Community Services

UniBank

Whitin Community Center

NON-PROFIT/SMALL BUSINESS TABLE SPONSORS

Concierge Physical Therapy (Sponsored: Northbridge 2026 Operation Graduation, Care Ministries, Massachusetts Vest-a-Dog, Inc. and Little Learners Virtual Academy)

Fidelity Bank (Sponsored: Friends of Northbridge Elders (FINE))

Infinity Events Co. (Sponsored: Blackstone Valley Emergency Shelter)

Jeannie Hebert (Sponsored: Dog Orphans)

Package Steel Systems (Sponsored: Whitinsville Social Library, Blackstone Valley Music & Performing Arts Collaborative)

UniBank (Sponsored: Willard House and Clock Museum)

A VERY SPECIAL THANKS TO 2026 EXPO CONTRIBUTORS:

All Points Limo

Andi the Clown

Autism Welcoming

Brickstone Kitchen

Family Karate

Grafton Job Corps.

H & H Dance Co.

Happy Sloth Balloons

Lawson Graphics

Massachusetts Vest-a-Dog, Inc.

Miss Worcester County

Murphy Academy of Irish Dance

Northbridge Fire and Police

Northbridge High School Mascot

Northbridge High School Facilities Team and Northbridge Public Schools

Officer Brian Casey and Littleton K-9 "Milo"

Elizabeth Reid-Eriksen (Entertainment Emcee)

MA State Police K-9

Puffins Restaurant

Phil Smith Photography

Simply Delicious Catering

Table Talk Pies

Tom Berkowitz Trucking

Town of Northbridge

Whitin Community Center Mascot

Whitinsville Christian School

What's Up With Your Pup?

Worcester Railers Mascot

Zipfel Media

2026 HOME & COMMUNITY EXPO COMMITTEE

Liz O'Neil, Chair, BVCC

Jeannie Hebert, BVCC

Kristen Kearnan, BVCC

Denise Kapulka, Simply Delicious Catering

Wendy Brown, UniBank

Craig Maxim, Advocates

Amakca Emery, Happy Sloth Balloons

Ashling Rowen, Infinity Events Co.

Mary Mackenzie, Infinity Events Co.

QUESTIONS OR ASSISTANCE (508)234-9090

Kristen Kearnan | kkearnan@blackstonevalley.org

Liz O'Neil | loneil@blackstonevalley.org