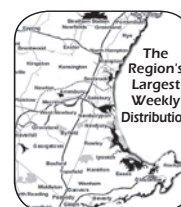


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Wednesday, June 5, 2024 - Vol. 20, No. 32

FREE

Honoring Black Mariners of Newburyport

By Stewart Lytle, Reporter

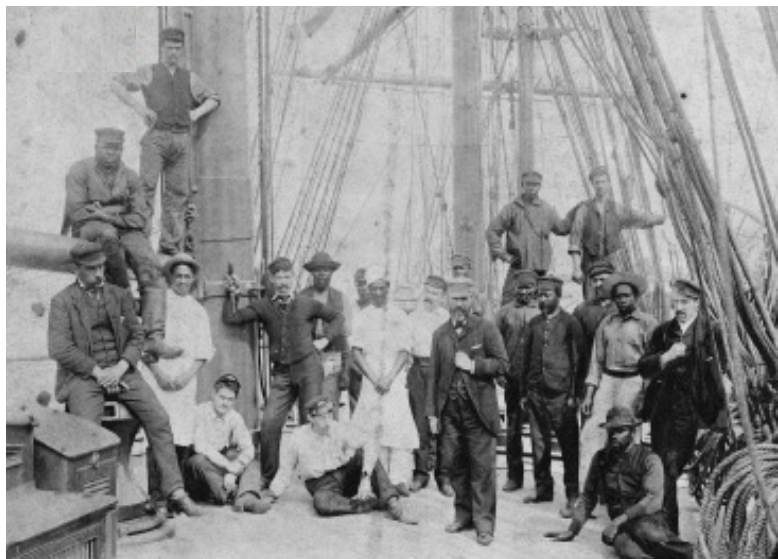


Photo provided by the City of Newburyport

Photo that will be on the interpretative sign

NEWBURYPORT – Much has been written about the maritime history of this city, but little attention has been given until recently to the shipbuilders and seamen with black skin.

The Newburyport Black Lives Initiative and the city of Newburyport are changing that.

This week the historic Custom House Maritime Museum has asked one of the leaders of the initiative, senior city planner Geordie Vining, to speak about the role black men played in the city's maritime industry at its First Friday lecture.

The city is also installing next month an interpretative panel that describes the role black seaman and workers played in the maritime industry that was so crucial to the economic development of this city.

The panel, near the southeast corner of the embayment on the waterfront in the new Market Landing Park on the Merrimack River, will read: "Seafaring was one of the main occupations for Black men in Newburyport and the rest of New England during the

19th century. Sailors on merchant vessels, fishing ships, whalers, and warships faced great hardship and danger, and Black sailors faced significantly more risks than their white crewmates."

Vining's lecture, "Expanding the Spotlight: Black Mariners during the Age of Sail," will be at 6:30 p.m. Friday, June 7. Members may attend for free, guests for \$10. It will last about 45 minutes with a 15-minute question and answer session.

According to the interpretative panel, "Estimates are that nearly one in five American sailors was Black in the 18th and 19th centuries. During the American Civil War, one in four U.S. Navy sailors was Black."

In her brochures describing the Newburyport Black Heritage Trail, local historian Ghlee Woodworth has devoted much of the space to "Soldiers, Sailors, and Guinea Village" residents. Here are a few individual seaman she highlights:

During the Revolutionary War, a blackseaman, Commander John Lee, worked

Continued on page 3

Topsfield Movie Night Is Back

By Ava Moeckel, Reporter



Image provided by Topsfield Fair

TOPSFIELD - Come to the Topsfield Fair for a Movie Night on Thursday, June 27 at the Arena on the fairgrounds.

Featuring the movie Encanto that tells the story of a Colombian teenage girl that has to face the frustration of being the only member of her family without magical powers.

Doors open at 5:30 p.m. and the movie starts at 6:30 p.m.

The film, popcorn and parking are all provided free. Food trucks will be available on-site for extra snacks.

Even though the event is free, signing up is necessary to make sure everyone can be accommodated and to keep guests informed of any changes or cancellations.

Make sure to bring your own beach chair, seat, or blanket since seating on the bleachers is limited in the Arena. However, there is plenty of space for everyone on the Arena floor as well.

An adult guardian needs to be there, and playing with balls is not permitted in the Arena.

The 206th Topsfield Fair with exhibits, concerts and contests will open at 4 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 4.

Register at <https://www.topsfieldfair.org/event/topsfield-fair-movie-night>.

Classified Ads
Page 7

St. George's Classical Academy Opening in Boxford

By Stewart Lytle, Reporter

REGIONAL – If you are planning where your children should attend school next fall, a new private school has opened for students in kindergarten through fifth grade at the First Church Congregational in Boxford.

Called the St. George's Classical Academy, the school is unlike any other in the region. It plans to offer five, multi-age classes that blend education instruction with the study of ancient Christianity.

Juliana Schneider Joyce, who has been in public education for 20 years and most recently was the principal of a Hamilton elementary school, will head the school, along with her astrophysicist husband, Dr. Colin James Joyce, a professor at the University of New Hampshire.

"This has been my dream for 10 years," Juliana Joyce said.

Her husband, Colin, who is literally a rocket scientist, having worked on several NASA projects, will be the school's treasurer and is helping develop the school's curriculum. Juliana will also be the art teacher.

They are joined by Father Matthew Lavita, who began teaching in Peabody, has served as an Army officer, followed by 20 years as a state trooper. An arms expert, Lavita now runs the MIT shooting center.

St. George's promises to provide a rigorous and joyful classical approach to forming a whole person in each student. "With an emphasis on cultivating wisdom and virtue in young hearts and minds, our students are challenged to think critically, write beautifully, speak eloquently and pursue an integrated life in service of God, family and community," the school's web site states.



Photo by Stewart Lytle

Juliana Schneider Joyce and Dr. Colin James Joyce in front of their new school

Tuition is \$16,000 per year for grades one through five. The fee for kindergarten is \$11,000 for five half days, \$9,000 for three days and \$7,000 for two days.

The school is accepting applications for tuition assistance.

The Joyces, who met at the Orthodox Church of St. John the Russian in Ipswich, where they live, are passionate about the curriculum they are building that stresses truth and understanding. They married in January.

"St. George Classical Academy is rooted in the riches of the Orthodox Church and committed to sharing the beauty and traditions of the ancient faith with students of all faith backgrounds," the school's Statement of Faith says.

"Though we come from different Christian churches and traditions, every member of our faculty, staff and leadership is a practicing Christian firmly committed to the basic tenets of Christianity as outlined in the Nicene Creed and grounded in Holy Scripture," the academy's literature states.

Continued on page 3

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How to Submit Letters to the Editor



Marc Maravalli, B.S., R.Ph.
Publisher/Editor, The Town Common

Letters to the Editor provide a useful way of communicating concerns, issues, or suggestions to all members of the community. The Town Common encourages all citizens to submit letters concerning issues of interest and concern to the local community. Letters selected for publication may be edited for length and clarity. Some letters may serve as a catalyst for other articles or coverage, and community leaders and agencies will be offered an opportunity to respond to letters concerning their areas of responsibility. All letters must be signed and include a daytime telephone number. Letters may be submitted to:

The Editor
c/o The Town Common
77 Wethersfield St.
Rowley, MA 01969
or preferably via e-mail to:
editor@thetowncommon.com.

The Town Common deadline is 5pm Wednesday (except when a federal holiday necessitates an earlier deadline).

The Town Common serves the communities of the Upper North Shore of Mass. & Coastal New Hampshire and welcomes your participation. Send your Organization or Group Notices, Birth or Engagement Announcements, Photos, Articles and Letters to the Editor, by mail, phone, or e-mail to: 77 Wethersfield St., Rowley, MA 01969 Phone: 978-432-9669 E-mail: news@thetowncommon.com

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In loving memory of
Liz Ichizawa, '04-05 Reporter (1956 - 2005)
Jim Wilson, '20-22 Publisher/Editor (1954-2022)

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION NOTICE OF A VIRTUAL PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL MEETING Project File No. 608029

A Live Virtual Public Informational Meeting will be hosted on the MassDOT website below to present the design for the proposed Intersection Improvements at the Intersection of Route 1 and Merrimac Street project in **Newburyport, MA.**

WHEN: 6:00PM, Thursday, June 13th, 2024

PURPOSE: The purpose of this meeting is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed **Improvements at the Intersection of Route 1 and Merrimac Street.** All views and comments submitted in response to the meeting will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The purpose of this project is for the installation of two traffic signal systems on Merrimac Street at the Route 1 on and off-ramps in Newburyport, MA. The project limits extend along Merrimac Street from Strong Street to Market Street and to Pleasant Street to the south. The Project shall improve the functionality of the Route 1 ramps at Merrimac Street by incorporating adequate sight distance, roadway micro resurfacing and restriping, inclusion of complete street elements including ADA accessibility, pedestrian curb ramps and bicycle accommodations, pavement markings and signage, and associated utility adjustments. Work on the minor streets will be limited to approach work unless drainage or utility elements require further improvements or adjustments.

This meeting is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT's Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the meeting, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the meeting.

This meeting will be hosted, or a cancellation announcement posted, on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER



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| 6 Thu | | | 12:05 | 8.0 | 5:57 | -0.7 | 6:02 | 0.5 | 5:03 | 8:20 | ☾ |
| 7 Fri | 12:15 | 9.7 | 12:54 | 7.9 | 6:46 | -0.7 | 6:50 | 0.6 | 5:03 | 8:21 | ☾ |
| 8 Sat | 1:03 | 9.5 | 1:41 | 7.8 | 7:33 | -0.5 | 7:38 | 0.8 | 5:03 | 8:21 | ☾ |
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Newburyport Adult and Community Education announces online registration for Summer Classes.

Newburyport Adult and Community Education announces that online registration is now open for summer classes. Classes will run between July 8th and August 12th. Eight classes are being offered and include Introduction to Archery, Fungi Exploration Along the Ghost Trail, Decluttering your Digital Photos, Writing Workshop, Japanese Bookbinding, Slow Flow Yoga, Make Your Own Seaglass Earrings Workshop, and Tarot Cards. Have some fun, ignite your curiosity, get creative, clean up that cell phone, or simply take a break from the crazy days of summer with some relaxing yoga!

To see the full schedule and to register online, visit newburyportadulthood.org. Classes are available to anyone in the Greater Newburyport region and southern New Hampshire, ages 15+. Classes are limited in size and can fill up quickly.

NACE is also accepting class proposals for our Fall semester. If you are interested in teaching a course, please contact Patty St. John at pstjohn@newburyport.k12.ma.us for consideration. Proposals are due no later than June 21st.

Newburyport Adult and Community Education (NACE) is a fully self-supporting program. Our budget is funded primarily from course fees. Additional funding is made available from grants and individual donors. We operate under the auspices of the Newburyport Public School system but we receive no tax dollars.

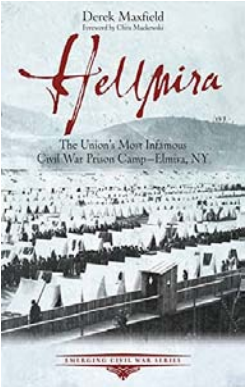
For more information, contact Patty St. John, Director at 978-465-1257.

Civil War Roundtable of the Merrimack

This month's meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 12, from 7:30 to 9:30 PM at the Hilton Senior Center, 43 Lafayette Road Salisbury, MA

We will be joined this month by author Derek D. Maxfield who will give a presentation on his book "Hellmira: The Union's Most Infamous Civil War Prison Camp-Emira, NY." (Emerging Civil War Series). Elmira was one of the most inhumane prison camps in the North and a sad example of the brutal conditions prisoners on both sides of the conflict endured. The author will have copies of the book available for purchase and signing.

This meeting is free and open to all with an interest in the American Civil War.



Happy to Chat bench donated to Rowley Public Library

The Rowley Library has recently installed a new Happy To Chat Bench, donated by the Ipswich-Rowley Rotary. The idea is that anyone sitting on this bench, located by the side entranceway to the Library, would be happy to engage in conversation with anyone else who happens by. The donation, along with others installed at the Ipswich Public Library and elementary schools in the two towns, were inspired by the recent Surgeon General's Advisory on Social Connection, and the declaration that Loneliness could be a public health concern in our society*.

People are encouraged to make connections at their library!

The Rowley Library is located at 141 Main St. in Rowley.

*<https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-social-connection-advisory.pdf>



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Correction

Regarding last week's article 'Local

St. George's

Continued from page 1

Bible study, the Joyces said, will not be relegated to an hour a week. "Students are nurtured in a classical, Christian environment rich with traditions incorporated from the ancient apostolic faith," the literature about the school states. "Scripture, lives of the saints, hymns, prayer, icons and Church history are woven throughout the curriculum.

The school approaches the humanities and classical literature seeking eternal truths and the sciences asking what humans ought to do, rather than what they can do.

The school's website cites scripture: "If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," John 8:31-32.

The curriculum will be built on seven liberal arts – grammar, logic, rhetoric, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music.

"They are called liberal because one who has mastered them is free to pursue knowledge in any context on their own," the school's literature explains.

The school curriculum will help students with self-assessment, teaching patience and even learning to clean up after themselves. "We will teach the students to be good people," Colin said.

Juliana, who has studied at the Center for Independent Research on Classical Education, promises parents, whom she meets daily, "We will meet the students where they are," she said.

The Joyces believe that their low-technology curriculum should teach students how to learn.

They plan to give back to the community and are looking forward to getting to know the Boxford community, although Boxford was not their first choice for the school.

And the church, which had hosted the now-closed Boxford Academy, initially turned down their proposal.

They had looked at properties in Hamilton, Beverly Farms and Ipswich before finding the educational wing of the Boxford church.

After initially being turned down, the Joyces approached the church again and were accepted.

"The congregation has been very generous," Juliana said. The location is perfect for attracting students in families throughout the North Shore, she said.

The Joyces expect to grow her school here, adding a grade a year.

Juliana said she considered calling the school St. Nicholas Classical Academy after the early Christian bishop of Greek descent during the time of the Roman Empire. Nicholas was the patron saint of children and students, as well as sailors, merchants,

archers and repentant thieves.

But she feared the academy might be nicknamed St. Nick's, the Christmas school. Instead, she chose to name the academy after St. George, an early martyr for Christianity.

One version of the St. George story is that as a Roman soldier he refused to renounce his Christian faith and was beheaded. The more famous version is that he slew a dragon that was devouring villagers in Libya. The king of the village gave him great riches, but George donated them to the poor.

The villagers were so amazed they became Christians.

Black Mariners

Continued from page 1

for John and Nathaniel Tracy who built ships on the central waterfront. Owners of privateers, warships to capture the enemy, the Tracys chose Lee, a 40-year-old, 5-foot-4 inch man with black skin, to command the Schooner Hawke. A year later, he commanded the Brig Fancy, the Brig Tom in 1779 and the Ship Grand Monarch in 1781.

When the Brig Fancy was captured in August of 1777, Lee and his crew were jailed in the Mill Prison in England where Newburyport resident Charles Herbert, who was also an inmate, wrote in his diary of their imprisonment and eventual escape to Spain.

John and William Osborne, who lived at 34 Ocean St., were seamen during the Civil War. William served on the steam engine gunboat, USS South Carolina, that as part of the Gulf Blockading Squadron, captured 16 Confederate schooners.

His brother, John Osborne served on the USS sloop-of-war Brooklyn, which participated in the Union Blockade of the Confederate States and attacked Confederate forts and other installations on the Mississippi River. He joined the USS Richmond and was part of the squadron in the Battle of Mobile Bay, AL. Military records describe seaman Osborne as a 5-foot, 4-inch mulatto.

In 1865, the ship Montana, built by John Currier, Jr., in Newburyport, set sail with an entirely black crew, recruited from Boston and New Bedford. Only the officers and apprentices were white, according to the Newburyport

Herald. The Montana sailed to New Orleans with a stop in Mobile, which showed the captain with the Civil War over did not fear the crew being kidnapped.

The Montana then sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to Liverpool, England, around Africa to Calcutta, India, and back to Boston. The captain sent a telegram noting that he and his crew had accomplished the "shortest passage ever made by a sailing vessel" between Liverpool and Calcutta, a journey of more than 8,600 nautical miles, in 85 days.

Of particular concern for black mariners who traveled to southern ports before emancipation was the possibility they would be captured and jailed under state-enacted Negro Seamen Acts. Vining's lecture will feature a discussion of the Negro Seaman Acts, which gave white southerners the right to kidnap black seaman.

In what is called the "Reverse Underground Railroad," thousands of black sailors were imprisoned and sometimes sold into slavery. The Negro Seaman Acts required the captain to pay fees to get his black seaman out of jail. If the ship left without the captain paying, the seaman could be jailed indefinitely or sold.

Despite protests from northern states and foreign countries, the Negro Seaman Acts persisted throughout the Ante Bellum era. An estimated 10,000 black seamen were imprisoned under these laws.

In 1863, the Newburyport-built merchant ship Sonora was sailing with an all-Black crew and white Newburyport officers when a Confederate privateer called the Alabama attacked her off the coast of Malaysia. In reports published in the History of the Marine Society of Newburyport, the captain and first mate described how the privateer not only plundered and burned the ship, but, using racial slurs, cast the officers and Black sailors adrift in small boats rather than landing them safely on shore.

They traveled 80 miles to the port of Malacca as reported by a Black sailor named Charles S.

The city is planning a ribbon cutting for the new waterfront park and the bulkhead repair on June 17. The sign maker will install a temporary digital print panel on stanchions next week.

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Great Beach Reads All Summer Long

NEWBURYPORT - Looking for great "beach reads" for the summer? The new Friends' Beach Reads cart at the Newburyport Public Library is stocked with paperbacks for your reading pleasure. All paperbacks are \$2 each with a 2 book per day limit.

If you have friends and family visiting from out of town, invite them to pick up an enjoyable book or two during their visit. No library card is required to purchase a book from the Friends' cart. The Friends' Beach Reads cart will be restocked throughout the summer.

The Friends of the Library also fund the popular Museum Pass program, providing discount passes to a diverse group of local and Boston area museums appealing to children, historians, artists, and nature lovers. This popular program runs year-round and is especially ideal when planning your summer activities for the whole family!

Passes are available to all MVLC library card holders and may be reserved up to 30 days in advance on the Newburyport Public Library website newburyportpl.org, by phone or in-person at the Newburyport Public Library.

The Friends of the Library (FOL) is a separate volunteer run non-profit organization providing supplementary funding for selected library materials, programs, and activities, over and above annual funding from the City of Newburyport. The Friends of the Newburyport Public Library is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Contributions are tax deductible.

Hillside Rest Home celebrating 60th Anniversary

AMESBURY - Hillside Rest Home, located at 29 Hillside Avenue, is celebrating its' 60th Anniversary this year.

The colonial revival home, which was originally the home of a local carriage maker, was converted to a rest home in 1964 by a local family who were 3rd generation caregivers dating back to 1925.

In 2022, members of that family searched for another family to continue their legacy of caring for women in need. They found one in May.

Samina Kashif and her husband toured the facility and knew instantly that they wanted to be a part of this well-run home. "As soon as we saw Hillside, we wanted to be a part of it." Samina serves as the home's Administrator.

Samina continued. "It's very rewarding to provide these women with a safe, comfortable and loving place to live. The staff is wonderful. They take great care of our residents and make sure everyone gets a lot of personal attention every day. It's like we're one big happy family. In fact, one of our residents has been living here for 29 years."

Hillside Rest Home will host an Open House Anniversary Celebration on September 12th.



Samina Kashif is the owner and Administrator of Hillside Rest Home in Amesbury.

Salisbury Awarded Grant to Enhance Oil Spill Prevention and Response Capabilities

SALISBURY – The Healey-Driscoll Administration today announced that more than \$691,000 in grants have been awarded to nine municipalities, three non-profit community groups, and two private organizations as part of the Marine Oil Spill Prevention and Response Act (MOSPRA) Grant Program. The MOSPRA Program, administered by Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), was established following the 2003 Bouchard oil spill in Buzzard's Bay to protect the Massachusetts coastline from contamination through spill prevention and response efforts. Grant awards may be used to purchase equipment, conduct marine oil spill response training, provide navigational aids, and other activities to reduce the likelihood of a marine oil spill and better prepare municipal and state agencies for spill response.

"Marine oil spills pose a threat to the health of our coastline, both to humans and habitat alike. Responding to a spill quickly and effectively is key to reducing its impacts," said MassDEP Commissioner Bonnie Heiple. "This funding will bolster the capabilities and resources of communities and emergency responders to prevent and mitigate oil releases up and down the Massachusetts coast."

The local grant recipient is: Salisbury Fire Department – \$14,233

The Town of Salisbury will use this funding to purchase a drone unit and associated equipment, software, and training to aid in the prevention, and response to, marine oil and/or hazardous material spill incidents within the waters of the Merrimack River or Atlantic Ocean. The drone will be used as a shared resource with the fire departments of Salisbury, Amesbury, Newburyport, Newbury, West Newbury, and Merrimack. Personnel from each agency will be trained as operators, and the drone will be available to any community.

More information on the 2024 MOSPRA Grant Program is available on MassDEP's website.



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Health & Wellness



By J. PETER ST. CLAIR, DMD

I have had a few patients ask recently about the order of oral hygiene activities. Does it matter if you brush or floss first, and should this be done before or after breakfast? Based on available research, it seems opinion matters as much as scientific facts.

A spokesman for the American Dental Association and a professor of restorative dentistry at the University of California, Los Angeles, recommends flossing first. His rationale? Get the unpleasant task out of the way to avoid the temptation to not do it. "Let's face human nature, if you're going to skip one, which one will you skip?"

By contrast, a professor of oral health sciences at the University of Washington in Seattle, advises her patients to brush with a fluoride toothpaste, then floss. She says that way your mouth will be awash with fluoride as you are maneuvering the floss.

So, what's my opinion? I was taught and have always maintained that flossing before brushing is better. The rationale behind this

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FLOSS FIRST OR BRUSH FIRST?

is that plaque and other debris is dislodged during the act of flossing allowing toothpaste and the mechanical action of brushing to better penetrate the different surfaces of the tooth. Does it really matter? I don't think so.

Have you heard your dental hygienist or dentist tell you to floss to prevent cavities between your teeth? Based on research, the main reason for flossing is not for prevention of cavities. Rather, flossing's main benefit is stimulation of tissue to reduce gum inflammation known as gingivitis. Gingivitis can lead to more advanced gum disease and things like bad breath. That is why I believe that regular use of a water pik and an electric toothbrush is most ideal.

A review of 12 randomized controlled trials found that people who brushed and flossed regularly had less gum bleeding than the brush-only camp. No surprises there. There have been no studies, that I am aware of, reporting a reduction in cavities from flossing. Of course, these are difficult studies to conduct. There are many factors that contribute to decay occurring between the teeth.

There are also different schools of thought whether to brush and floss before or after breakfast. I don't know about you, but I cannot eat or drink anything (especially orange juice) after I brush my teeth. So, although you might expect the solution to be brushing after breakfast, there is some risk with that.

If you eat or drink something sugary or acidic—like the fruits, juices, and other breakfast foods many of us eat in the morning—the mouth is in an acidic environment for at least 30 minutes after consumption. These acids weaken tooth enamel, and brushing too soon can cause damage to the enamel. If you know you're going to eat or drink something very acidic ahead of time, you may want to brush your teeth first.

Alternatively, you can wait 30 minutes after you eat for your saliva to neutralize the pH of your mouth. Or, re-balance your oral pH right away with an alkaline mouth rinse and then brush. In the end, it depends a little on what you eat. Take stock of what you're eating for breakfast and judge when you should brush based on its sugar or acid content.

Everyone, well...almost everyone, can stand some improvement with their oral hygiene. Many dental problems are completely avoidable with excellent home care, which is in your control. Ask your dentist or hygienist how to improve your home care. Strive for constant improvement.

Dr. St. Clair maintains a private dental practice in Rowley dedicated to health-centered family dentistry. He has a special interest in treating snoring, sleep apnea and TMJ problems. If there are certain topics you would like to see written about or questions you have please email them to him at jpstclair@stclairdmd.com



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