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January 2024

## Menorah Lighting

The Sha'arei Shalom community held a menorah lighting last month in Montenegro Square, marking the annual Hanukkah celebration.

The synagogue purchased a menorah several years ago and have been hosting this community menorah lighting every year in Montenegro Square in Downtown Ashland.

Town Manager Michael Herbert conveyed his heartfelt appreciation for the annual Menorah Lighting organized by Temple Sha'arei Shalom. Through the town's social media channels, Herbert expressed gratitude to Rabbi Craig and President Carolyn Fertig for their efforts in orchestrating a remarkable program. He emphasized the Town of Ashland's continual enthusiasm for endorsing and actively participating in events that underscore and celebrate the rich cultural diversity within the community.

*Sha'arei Shalom is a small, member-driven community syna-*



**MENORAH**

*continued on page 4*



## Making Space For Everyone

*Former A.D., his wife, start nonprofit*

BY SUSAN MANNING  
STAFF WRITER

When former Ashland High School Athletic Director Stephen Marks, and his wife Jamie, were looking for summer camps for their 5-year-old son Lincoln, they found very few options.

The couple wanted Lincoln, who is non-verbal, diagnosed with autism, and has significant developmental delays, a camp that was fully inclusive.

"We are strong advocates and believe wholeheartedly in the benefits of fully inclusive programming and as we began searching for opportunities for Lincoln to attend summer camp with his brother and peers last summer, it became apparent that there were very few opportunities. The handful of opportunities that were available, came at a significant additional cost for families and many camps were



unprepared to support and navigate the experience for campers with disabilities," he said.

Rather than accept the fact that there were few options for Lincoln, the Marks took matters into their own hands.

"Earlier this year, we founded Linclusion, a nonprofit organization dedicated to facilitating the integration of children aged 3-15 with disabilities into traditional summer camps. The organization's mission and name

**SPACE**  
*continued on page 5*

**2024**  
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# Family-run Affordable Junk Removal takes the stress out of cleanups

By CHRISTIE VOGT  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Whether it's one old fridge in the garage or an entire home of unwanted goods, the team at Affordable Junk Removal offers a cost-efficient, stress-free approach to waste management. "You don't lift a finger," says owner Jason Schadler, who started the company along with his wife Christine in 2005.

The business offers same-day service for both residential and commercial clients across eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island. In addition to junk removal, the company rents 15-yard dumpsters.

As a family-owned and operated company, Schadler says Affordable Junk Removal has lower overhead costs and is more accessible than national competitors. "I answer my phone 24 hours a day," he says. "I was on vacation in Italy and Portugal, and I was still answering my phone on the beach. When you call us, you get me — not an automated machine!"

Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible, properly disposes of non-recyclables and resells many items at the Schadlers' secondhand store, Resellables. "We opened that store in Bellingham because we hated to see things thrown away," Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at



a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with

## Business spotlight

my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Ashland in particular, Schadler says they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the area. Prior to owning Affordable Junk Removal, Schadler was a chef at Stone's Public House, and he also has relatives in town. The Schadlers also sponsor Ashland's girls high school hockey team.

One of the best parts of his job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships with returning customers. "We are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the MetroWest area," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call 774-287-1133 or visit [affordablejunkremoval.com](http://affordablejunkremoval.com).

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Christine and Jason Schadler, shown here with their children and dog, started Affordable Junk Removal in 2005.

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**MENORAH**

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*gogue based in Ashland. Services are held twice a month throughout the year. More information can be found online at www.shaareishalom.org.*



# November 29, 2023 Special Town Meeting Recap

The Moderator, Adam Shuster, called the November 29, 2023 Special Town Meeting to order promptly at 7:00 PM. 84 voters were present.

**ARTICLE 1: Free Cash Transfer**

**SPONSOR: Town Manager/Finance Director**

That the Town vote to transfer from Free Cash the sum of \$25,000 to the General Stabilization Fund; the sum of \$515,594.40 to the OPEB Trust Fund; the sum of \$200,000 to the SPED Stabilization Fund, the sum of \$71,364.00 to account 01544-52450, and the sum of \$931,689.60 to the Capital Account.

**Article 1 Passed Unanimously**

**ARTICLE 2: Property Tax Exemptions**

**Sponsor: Board of Assessors/Select Board/Town Manager**

To see if the Town will vote to adjust (the exemption amount and eligibility factors) for the property tax exemption for senior citizens under MGL Chapter 59, Section 5 Clause 41C<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>, to be effective for exemptions granted for any fiscal year beginning July 1, 2023, or pass any vote or take any action relative thereto.

**Article 2 Passed Unanimously**

**ARTICLE 3: Senior Tax Work Off Program**

**Sponsor: Town Manager/Senior Center Director**

To see if the Town will affirm its acceptance of G.L. c. 59 sec. 5(K) to allow for the Select Board to establish a senior tax work off program and further that the Town adjust the exemption and; (1) allow an approved representative, for persons physically unable, to provide such services to the town; and (2) allowing the maximum reduction of the real property tax bill to be based on 125 volunteer service hours in a given tax year, rather than \$1,500.

**Article 3 Passed Unanimously**

**ARTICLE 4: Accept Donation of Land – 0 Fountain Street Sponsor: Town Manager**

To see if the Town will vote to accept as a gift, take, or otherwise acquire a parcel of land identified on the Assessor's Map 010 and Lot 0045 including +/-10,890 square feet, more or less with an address of 0 Fountain Street Rear, and to authorize the Select Board to take any other action or execute any documents necessary to effectuate the conveyance of same to the Town, or take any other action related thereto.

**Article 4 required a 2/3 vote. Article 4 Passed Unanimously**

**ARTICLE 5: Accept Easement, 107 High Street**

**Sponsor: Select Board/DPW**

To see if the Town will vote to accept as a gift, purchase or otherwise acquire, an Easement, as show on a plan entitled "Easement Exhibit Plan 107 High Street Ashland, MA prepared by GCG Associates, Inc and dated 9/8/23, and indicated as "15 Foot Access Easement" a copy of which is on file in the office of the Town Clerk and further that the Town shall appropriate funds sufficient to acquire same, or take any action related thereto.

**Article 5 required a 2/3 vote. The Moderator declared a 2/3 majority**

**ARTICLE 6: Authorize a Home Rule Petition to Increase the Liquor License**

**Sponsor: Select Board**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to file a Home Rule Petition to increase the number of alcohol licenses for on-premises consumption for the Town of Ashland by 16 additional licenses for alcohol, and further upon submittal the Select Board is hereby authorized to approve amendments to said petition which are within the scope of

this article, or take any other action relative thereto.

**Article 6 Passed by majority**

**ARTICLE 7: CPA Funding to Construct Dog Park Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee**

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate up to \$215,000 to enable the creation of the Ashland Dog Park on town property along Memorial Drive that will include parking, storage facilities, fencing and off leash exercise space for dogs and that to meet this appropriation, the sum of up to \$215,000 be transferred from the Open Space Account from the Community Preservation Fund balance, and with unexpended funds as of June 30, 2027 being returned to their funding source; or pass any vote or take any other action thereon..

**Article 7 Passed by majority**

**ARTICLE 8: Extend CPA funds for the Riverwalk Project**

**Sponsor: Community Preservation Committee**

To see if the Town will vote to extend the time by which funds need to be spent on the Riverwalk Trail Enhancement Project, which was authorized under Article 11 at the 2017 Annual Town Meeting to complete the design and construction of the Sudbury River Trail Riverwalk, until December 31, 2026, at which time any unexpended funds will be returned to their funding sources, or take any action relative thereto.

**Article 8 Passed Unanimously**

There was no further business and a motion was made and passed to dissolve Town Meeting. Town Meeting adjourned at 7:49 PM.

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**SPACE**

*continued from page 1*

is inspired by our amazing son Lincoln,” said Marks.

The organization integrates the children in camps, with the help of one-on-one aides at no cost to families.

**How it began**

“I stepped down from my dream job as the Ashland Athletic Director so that I could spend more time with my family and be available to help with both of our children; especially given all of the therapies and appointments that our younger son has.

“Additionally, our older son is beginning to play sports himself and now I can be available to coach/watch him. My wife was basically doing it all herself while I often worked 12-14 hour days, and was on call 24/7,” said Marks.

The couple runs the non-profit from their house in Ashland, but partnered with local existing camps.

“Our office is in our house in Ashland, however the camps we have partnered with for the first summer are in Framingham (Pilgrim Day Camp) and Ashland (Ashland rec center),” he said.

A couple is busy, raising funds to higher than necessary staffing, and any facilities needs to accommodate campers.

Marks said children with disabilities and their families will benefit from this nonprofit.

“The kids can experience the magic of summer camp with their peers in a fully inclusive setting. It also serves the camps and other campers as we fully believe that campers of all abilities benefit from being together,” he said.

“It was our experience where our idea would provide a platform for children with disabilities to be able to attend traditional summer camp while taking the financial burden off families began to form.

“We were fortunate to be able to hire a one-on-one aide for Lincoln and saw the absolute joy he had this past summer alongside friends, peers, and his brother, Logan. The feeling we would get when we would pull into camp and a group of campers would run over screaming “Lincoln is here!,” cannot be adequately captured in words. That is the magic of camp!

“We also experienced the financial hardship and stress that providing one-on-one support caused our family and can only imagine how others in similar situations felt. Lincoln was not

defined by or labeled as the “kid with special needs,” at camp, he was simply a member of his group. He participated in all of the activities with his cohort with his aide by his side, and we saw how powerful and meaningful this experience was for campers of all abilities,” said Marks.

**How it’s going**

Marks said the short term goal is to get kids signed up for the summer of 2024.

“Our goal for Linclusion is to provide the financial resources and partnerships with summer camps to support children with disabilities attending. We have secured partnerships with 2 camps already and after our soft launch on social media, have been approached by numerous others. We are aiming to send as many campers as possible to camp, free of financial obligations for added support services in the summer of 2024,” he said.

Down the line, he and his wife hope to push the brand out to several camps, offering the option for as many kids as possible to enjoy summer camp without barriers.

“We would like to have a successful model that can be taken and used at other future partner camps; the Linclusion brand. We want to be able to send unlimited numbers of campers to



a number of partner camps. We have been approached by camp directors in other states who have heard about us, and want to partner with us, so potentially expanding to other parts of the

country,” Marks said. For more information, visit: [www.linclusion.org](http://www.linclusion.org)

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# Open Letter from Town Manager Michael Herbert

Dear Residents and Community Members of Ashland,

As we stand at the threshold of a new year, it's important to take a moment to reflect on the incredible journey we have shared in 2023. This year has been a remarkable chapter in the story of our town, filled with significant achievements and successful collaborations.

We witnessed the completion and substantial progress of several pivotal projects, each symbolizing our commitment to community development and welfare. The new Public Safety Building stands as a testament to our dedication to safety and well-being. The completion of the new Mindess School marks a stride forward in nurturing our fu-

ture generations. Our Downtown Redesign project has rejuvenated the heart of Ashland, making it a vibrant and welcoming hub for all. The meticulous renovation of the Valentine Barn showcases our respect for history and heritage. Additionally, the significant strides we have made on the Pond Street project exemplify our continuous effort to improve and beautify our town.

The year 2024 brings with it a defined workload with a bit of uncertainty mixed in. Among other things, the poles downtown are scheduled to be removed this year, and more work on the Valentine property is scheduled to continue. We are also planning on constructing a long-awaited sidewalk on Route 135 between the Middle School and Frankland Road. Two very important plans are also scheduled to be finished or significant progress made during the year. Our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan will be completed in the spring and we expect a full year's worth of work on the extremely

important Comprehensive Plan.

However, the financial picture for the coming year is a bit hazy. The macroeconomic indicators are split between a robust 2024 or one that sees us enter into a recession. Of course, the old saying is that economists have predicted the last ten out of two recessions, so we will need to take a wait-and-see approach as the federal government and Federal Reserve navigate fiscal and monetary policy over the next several months to engineer a "soft landing" for the economy.

None of the work done in 2023 would have been possible without the continued support and partnership of many. While I can't thank everyone in this small letter, I do want to extend my gratitude to the Select Board for their leadership, guidance, and dedication to our town. Additionally, our Legislative Delegation, including Representative Jack Lewis and Senate President Karen Spilka, has been invaluable in bringing these projects to fruition.

In closing, I want to extend a special thanks to the incredible staff of Ashland. Your dedication and commitment to excellence have been the driving force behind our success. You consistently go above and beyond, delivering services and achieving goals that far exceed the expectations for a town of our size and budget.

Lastly, but most importantly, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to the volunteers and residents of Ashland. Your enthusiasm, participation, and love for our town are the soul of our community. It is your energy and spirit that make Ashland not just a place to live, but a place to call home.

As we look forward to the year ahead, let us carry this spirit of community and collaboration. Together, we can continue to build a town that we are all proud to be a part of. Here's to a bright and prosperous 2024!

*With sincere gratitude and best wishes,*

*Michael Herbert, Town Manager*

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# Should you invest ... or speculate?



Mark Freeman

## FINANCIAL FOCUS

You'll find some big differences between traditional and speculative investments — and knowing these differences can matter a great deal when you're trying to reach your financial goals.

To begin with, let's look at the basic types of traditional and speculative investments. Traditional investments are those with which you're probably already

familiar: stocks, bonds, mutual funds, government securities, certificates of deposit (CDs) and so on. Speculative investments include cryptocurrencies, foreign currencies and precious metals such as gold, silver and copper.

Now, consider these three components of investing and how they differ between traditional and speculative investments:

The first issue to consider is risk. When you own stocks or stock-based mutual funds, the value of your investments will fluctuate. And bond prices will also move up and down, largely in response to changing interest rates. However, owning an array of stocks — small-company, large-company, international, etc. — can help reduce the impact of volatility on your stock portfolio. And owning a mix of short- and long-term bonds can help you defend yourself somewhat against interest-rate movements. When interest rates fall, you'll still have your longer-term

bonds, which generally — but not always — pay higher rates than short-term ones. And when interest rates rise, you can redeem your maturing short-term bonds at potentially higher rates.

With speculative investments, though, price movements can be extreme as well as rapid. During their short history, cryptocurrencies in particular have shown astonishingly fast moves up and down, resulting in huge gains followed by equally huge, or bigger, losses. The risk factor for crypto is exacerbated by its being largely unregulated, unlike with stocks and bonds, whose transactions are overseen by well-established regulatory agencies. There just isn't much that investors can do to modulate the risk presented by crypto and some other speculative investments.

A second key difference between traditional and speculative investments is the time horizon involved. When you invest in stocks and other traditional investments, you ideally

should be in it for the long term — it's not a "get rich quick" strategy. But those who purchase speculative investments want, and expect, quick and sizable returns, despite the considerable risk involved.

A third difference between the two types of investments is the activity required by investors. When you're a long-term investor in traditional investments, you may not have to do all that much, once you've built a portfolio that's appropriate for your risk tolerance, goals and time horizon. After that point, it's mostly just a matter of monitoring your portfolio and making occasional moves — you're not constantly buying and selling, or at least you shouldn't be. But when you speculate in crypto or other instruments, you are constantly watching prices move — and then making your own moves in response. It's an activity that requires considerable attention and effort.

One final thought: Not all speculative instruments are

necessarily bad investments. Precious metals, for instance, are found in some traditional mutual funds, sometimes in the form of shares of mining companies. And even crypto may become more of a stable vehicle once additional regulation comes into play. But if you're investing for long-term goals, such as a comfortable retirement — rather than speculating for thrills and quick gains, which may disappear just as quickly — you may want to give careful thought to the types of investments you pursue.

If you would like to discuss your personal situation with a financial advisor contact:

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## Historical Society Hosts Show About RBG

The Ashland Historical Society is happy to welcome back performer Sheryl Faye.



She will be bringing American Justice Icon Ruth Bader Ginsburg to life. RBG was an American lawyer and jurist who served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1993 until her death in September 2020.

This show is an inspiring story of how RBG changed her life — and ours!

The show will be held at the Ashland historical society on Jan. 21, at 2 PM.



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BY GINA WOELFEL

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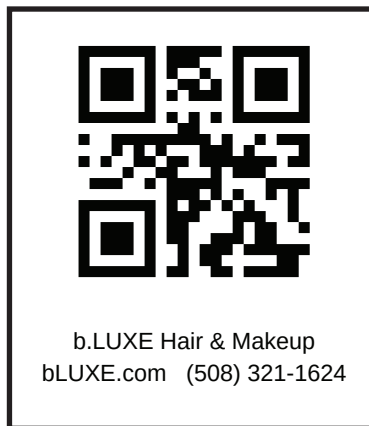
Clients often wait to book an appointment because they’re uncertain about their schedules or when their hair needs servicing. These are entirely valid reasons to delay booking. However, if you need a last-minute appointment, stylists often book out weeks in advance, and it can be challenging to find larger blocks of time for colors and cuts.

As much as we’d like to wave a magic wand and create your desired appointment, it may not be possible with your regular

hair stylist. But fret not! With our creative scheduling, we can slide you into our rotation with the same high-quality service, regardless of your last-minute booking.

At b.LUXE, our stylists are categorized into four levels: training stylists, junior stylists, stylists, and senior stylists. If you’re unable to book an appointment with your regular provider, there’s no need to worry. You can always choose to receive services from another stylist without feeling uncomfortable. In fact, we encourage it! We believe in working together as a team and never refer to clients as “mine” or “yours,” only “ours.” If you have to book with someone else or even a hairdresser who’s at a different level, our junior staff works under the supervision of our senior stylists. They’ll have all the details from your last visit, which we meticulously record every time you have your hair done. So, if you’re flexible with

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whose chair you sit in, we can easily fit you in.

b.LUXE offers the most comprehensive educational experience to graduates and students close to completing their cosmetology studies in Massachusetts. Every Monday, we provide hands-on education in



the salon to ensure that our assistants receive practical training to get them on the floor as soon as possible. Our experienced senior staff supervises the assistants and trains them in the most cutting-edge techniques in the industry. We believe in providing a complete beauty experience to our junior team members, which includes assisting our stylists with their scheduled clients. This symbiotic relationship expands our availability and allows our more experienced staff to get you into their chair while passing on their knowledge and skills to the assistants.

We can also offer you two separate appointments with two different stylists on the same day or, if needed, on two separate days. This flexibility is particularly helpful for important occasions when two mini-appointments are the perfect solution. We maintain an active waitlist and cancellation list that are updated daily, so it’s

essential that we have your most up-to-date contact information on file.

What we hope you take away from this month’s Beauty Beat is that with a little bit of communication and some flexibility, we can help you get your hair done and love how it looks!

We are delighted to share that our studio has had its most successful year to date in 2023, and we cannot wait to reveal what we have in store for you in next month’s Beauty Beat (It’s Galentine’s Day!!!) We owe our success to our amazing clients and readers who have always supported us, and we hope to give back to you even more in 2024!

Happy New Year!  
The b.LUXE Beauty Team

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## Overnight Parking Ban

The Town of Ashland’s winter parking ban began on Nov. 1 and ends March 31. During that time period: “It shall be unlawful for the driver of any vehicle, other than one acting in an emergency, to park said vehicle on any street for the period of time longer than one hour between the hours of 2 am - 6 am any day of the week.” Vehicles found in violation of the winter parking ban will be issued citations and/or towed at the owner’s expense.

For any inquiries about DPW’s winter operations, don’t hesitate



to reach out at dpw@ashland-mass.com or call 508-881-0120. Residents can find more information on the DPW webpage of the town’s website. Let’s work together to stay safe and prepared for winter weather in Ashland!



# Make Sure You're Set for the Season



Chris Hopkins

spring growth and can allow disease to take hold. It's time to get your yard pristine for the dormant season. Plus, with unwanted critters looking for winter nests, you need to keep the leaf piles to a minimum. Store yard furniture under cover or in the garage so your space is clear for snow and ice removal.

**2) Tree and shrub pruning** — Trees and shrubs represent a big financial investment. Protect that investment with regular maintenance. Broken or damaged branches are an obvious place to start, but trees require pruning every 1-2 years for proper structure and growth. And if your tree is within 10 feet of utility lines or from your house, it absolutely needs to be pruned regularly.

**3) Winter lawn care** — Yes, lawns are dormant right now, but that doesn't mean they couldn't benefit from some TLC. Keeping your lawn free from leaves and other yard debris discourages disease and pests when the weather starts to warm. And

less lawn debris keeps the grass dryer and prevents snow mold build-up. Plus some types of weeds: chickweed, henbit, and shepherd's purse, actually thrive in the cold and begin their germination in early winter.

**4) Protect plants & evergreens** — Want your evergreens to stay greener all year round? You need to protect them from New England's harsh winds and colder temperatures. If you have flower or vegetable beds protect the topsoil with mulch. Consider tying up small tree branches for extra support against heavy snow loads and covering plants with burlap to protect them from woodland creatures and winter burn.

**5) Check all sprinkler systems are winterized** — sprinkler heads and irrigation lines can freeze and burst if they aren't winterized.

**6) Gutter cleaning and pressure washing** — Our homes took a beating this summer. Gutters and siding need regular cleaning to prevent mold and mildew.

Plus, freezing winter months can turn debris into ice dams so act now to avoid costly repairs in the future.

**7) Celebrate the season** — chase away the winter chill with holiday lights and festive garlands. Hanging lights throughout your garden turns bare, leafless trees into magical wonders you can enjoy all year. Make sure you get help hanging anything on the higher branches.

Information provided by Chris Hopkins, Greenleaf Landscaping LLC — with 30 years' experience building everything from fire pits and pergolas to pools and outdoor kitchen/entertaining space Talk to Greenleaf today: 774-421-9570

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## LANDSCAPE INSIGHTS

Recent New England winters have become famous for their temperature fluctuations — but it's still good to have your outdoor space set for whatever Mother Nature brings.

Here are some tips:

**1) Yard clean up** — allowing leaves and yard waste to sit on lawns and flowerbeds inhibits

Want a spectacular outdoor space for spring — let's plan it now



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## Ashland Holiday Stroll & Comprehensive Plan Open House

What a day it was during this past month's Annual Holiday Stroll! The festive spirit was alive and well, and we couldn't be more grateful for the incredible turnout and community support that made these events truly special.



We had approximately 1000 people (maybe more) fill the streets and buildings downtown. On their very first day in business, SubZero Nitrogen Ice Cream kicked off their new venture serving up 243 cups of ice cream! The Bagel Table sold out of their delicious bagels! Cocoa and cider, along with delicious noodles were enjoyed and Santa was busy in the shed at The Corner Spot listening to the wishes of nearly 150 kids! This event marked some record sales numbers for many of our local businesses too.

Our Comprehensive Plan Open House was also extremely successful, with 159 stakeholders providing important input about what they like about Ashland today and more importantly what they would like to see in Ashland in the future. The Com-

prehensive Plan will serve as our blueprint for making future decisions so it is important to have resident and stakeholder input to make it a success. Many thanks to the Steering Committee members who volunteered to staff the open house as well as the Ashland Moms Club for providing fun activities for the kids.

Thank you to the 40+ local businesses that made this year's Stroll absolutely unforgettable. Their shops, filled with joy, treats, and holiday magic, were instrumental in creating lasting memories for everyone in town! The pop-up tables featured unique gifts that were a huge draw in bringing out the shoppers. We're thrilled to see our community come together to support our local businesses.

## Ashland DEI Survey

Shape Ashland's Future: Your Voice, Your Town, Your DEI Survey!

The Town of Ashland is excited to announce the launch of our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Survey. We invite every resident to be a catalyst for positive change. Your thoughts, ideas, and experiences matter in our journey towards a more inclusive and equitable Ashland. Take a quick, anonymous DEI survey and be a part of the transformation. You can complete the survey at <https://isuccess.typeform.com/Ashland>.

### Ashland Community DEI Survey

Welcome to Ashland's Community DEU Survey. As we strive for a diverse, equitable, inclusive and belonging community, your voice is essential.

### SCAN HERE FOR SURVEY

Thank you for being part of building a more inclusive Ashland



## Fr. Thomas Sullivan is the New Pastor at St. Cecilia's in Ashland

On September 15, Fr. Thomas Sullivan assumed his duties as the new pastor of St. Cecilia's Catholic parish in Ashland. He took over from Fr. Lawrence Tocci who served temporarily after the retirement of long-time pastor Fr. Richard Cornell. Fr. Sullivan, originally from Watertown, graduated from Boston College in 2000 with a degree in philosophy. He later entered St John's Seminary in Boston from which he was ordained in 2016.



Fr. Sullivan has served in two previous assignments in the Archdiocese of Boston. His first was as a parochial vicar at St. Catherine

of Siena parish in Norwood, followed most recently by assisting at the Natick Catholic Collaborative. His assignment at St. Cecilia is his first as the role of pastor.

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# If You Fail To Plan, You Are Planning To Fail.

Making New Year's resolutions to improve your financial wellness in 2024?

Do they look familiar to last year's?

As Ben Franklin repeatedly said, "If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail".

Let's help you start by recognizing questionable resolutions, including three destined for failure plus what should be considered for successful planning outcomes.

**Bad Resolution:** *Need to start buying "X" to grow my money.*

Before buying "X", how does fit into your investment strategy within your financial plan?

Over the last 4 years, crypto, I bonds, meme stocks and cash have had their shiny object moments with investors chasing.

If to start 2023 one moved their investment strategy to cash based on 2022 performance of stocks and bonds, well... past performance is no guarantee of future results.

Yes, interest rates rose, and one could find ~4-5% CD's. Yet, through December 15, 2023 on Year-To Date returns, several equity indices have significantly outpaced, and certain bond indices have done as well or better.

Recall as treasury yields fall in anticipation of Federal Reserve



Glenn Brown, CFP

action and/or economic outlook, bond funds and ETFs participate in this inverse relationship - interest rates fall, bond prices rise. When bond prices rise, this increases the value of bond funds/ETFs. Just like in 2022, when rates rose, value of bond funds/ETFs fell.

**Better Resolution:** *Need to save \_\_\_% and take \_\_\_ risk with investments to reach \_\_\_ goal.*

To truly build assets, you need to save a specific percentage each year, take opportunistic or measured (less) risks AND invest towards your established goal(s), not performance that occurred the year before or one market benchmark.

**Bad Resolution:** *Pay down debt.*  
Sounds important, but is it? It depends. Tax deductions, interest

rates, duration, fixed or variable, inflation, deflation, depreciation, and impact to your future cash flow ensure all debt is not equal.

**Better Resolution:** *Execute a debt reduction plan.*

Access all debt, then prioritize on high-interest debt, variable rates, and unsecured. If down to a 3% or lower mortgage, 2% auto loans, and a MassSave at 0%, then maintain required payments, reap benefits of low, fixed rates in an inflationary environment and allocate towards investments outpacing those rates over time.

An exception, if not at ~40% home equity ownership, can make a case to get there and open a HELOC. Beyond flexibility to access equity built and lower total interest paid, can eliminate the opportunity costs of a large cash position for the "what ifs" in life.

**Bad Resolution:** *Do more for my retirement.*

Buy a lottery ticket, as greater chance of success than this vague "lose weight" resolution tossed by January 10th.

**Better Resolution:** *How do I retire at 55 or semi-retire in 5 years.*

Now you're analyzing cash flows, balance sheet, contribution rates, investment allocations, taxation, work benefits, college funding, planning for the unexpected

and desired lifestyle with expenses in retirement. You'll establish a set of base facts, allowing to then create scenarios, see projections, reverse engineer action steps, and track goals within timelines.

Aggressive timelines create urgency, leading to actions that bring you closer the ultimate retirement accomplishment - choice.

Now ask yourself, are your resolutions the same as last year?

What different actions are you going to take to make a difference?

Know what Einstein said about doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

Maybe it's time to socialize your goals, set monthly action items to create fresh start mo-

ments and leverage an accountability partner (i.e. Certified Financial Planner) to make your 2024 resolutions happen.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

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## Knights Of Columbus Free-Throw Competition Jan. 30

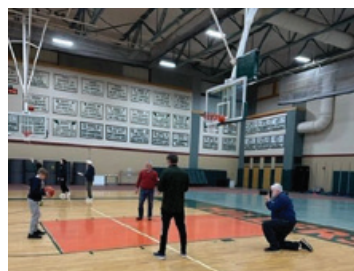
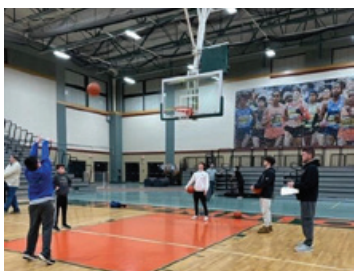
The annual Knights Of Columbus free-throw championship competition will be held on Tuesday, Jan. 30, at Hopkinton High School, after the Hopkinton/Ashland varsity boys' basketball game.

The game starts at 6:30pm and registration will begin at that time. Free throw competition will begin in the High School Gym after the game. All boys and girls ages 9-14 can participate regardless of disabilities!

The Knights of Columbus free-throw competition is an annual event sponsored by the Ashland/Hopkinton Council (Bishop Rice council #4822).

The event is open to all boys and girls aged 9 to 14 in the local communities.

Trophies will be presented to first- and second-place winners and a medal is awarded to the third-place winner in each age



category.

First place winners advance to the district finals.

The event brings the youth of the community together for a friendly competition and all can participate regardless of disabilities. Since 1972, The Knights of Columbus have sponsored a basketball free-throw competition for boys and girls between the ages of 9 and 14. The Knights of Columbus, founded in 1882, is an Organization of Roman Catholic men whose charter is to support both their parishes and commu-

nities. Based upon the founding principles of charity, unity, fraternity, and patriotism, the Knights of Columbus provide numerous services to their communities.

The Bishop Rice Council #4822 conducts numerous charity events in support of the parishes of St. John the Evangelist in Hopkinton and Saint Cecilia's in Ashland.

For more information, contact Joe Altman, 508-380-0163; joe.altman@verizon.net.

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# Senior Community Center Activities for January 2024:

## NEW PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES:

**Jan 1st - HAPPY NEW YEARS!!! CLOSED FOR THE HOLIDAY.**

**Jan 2nd at 11:30 - NEW!** First Annual NEW YEAR BRUNCH

We will toast the New Year with mock champagne and enjoy assorted muffins, french toast, bacon, fruit, coffee, tea, juice and more!

Limited Seating available Call to reserve your seat today! 508-881-0140 x1.

**Jan 3rd at 10:00 - Computer Class:** Using Camera Applications on your phone and computer

**Jan 4th at 9:00 - Free Breakfast** sponsored by Ashland Lions Club  
Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

**Jan 4th at 10:00 - COA Meeting**

**Jan 4th at 12:00 - FOACOA Meeting**

**Jan 8th at 12:00 - NEW!** Lunch with "Elvis Presley" "Elvis' Music & Life". Presented & performance by impersonator Robert Black.

Please use the payment box outside of the Main Office to Reserve. \$5 per person

**Jan 8th at 12:00 - Karen Spilka** Office Listening Hour

**Jan 9th at 10:45 - NEW!** "Home Safety & Falls Prevention" presented by Matt DeWaele from Right at Home

**Jan 11th at 10:30 - Downton Abbey Tea Party and Showing of 2nd Episode**

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

**Jan 12th at 10:00-12:00 - Legal Consultation** will be held via Telephone.

Call to make an appointment 508-881-0140 x1.

**Jan 15th - CLOSED IN OBSERVANCE OF MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY**

**Jan 16th at 11:30 - Lecture/Discussion** on Martin Luther King Jr., by Media Specialist and Professor Donna Halper

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

**Jan 17th at 10:00 - Town Manager's Coffee Hour**

**Jan 18th at 12:00-5:00 - NEW!** Red Cross Blood Drive in the Great Room.

**Jan 22nd at 10:30 - Hearing Aid Cleaning** with Hopkinton Audiology.

Call to reserve your seat at

508-881-0140 x1.

**Jan 22nd at 12:00 - NEW!** Lunch with Music Bingo, hosted by Victor Ng

Please use the payment box outside of the Main Office to Reserve. Note: cost now \$5 per person

**Jan 23rd at 11:00 - NEW!** Bring Your Favorite or Secret Family Recipe to Swap.

We will be putting together a bound Recipe book to keep in our Library.

**Jan 25th at 10:00 - Memory Cafe - with Music Performer Rick Ferreira**

**Jan 29th at 12:00 - Lunch and Trivia Contest**

Please use the payment box outside of the Main Office to Reserve. Note: cost now \$5 per person

### Weather Cancellation Policy:

The Senior Center will be closed on all holidays observed by Town Hall employees.

Activities and transportation may be cancelled due to inclement weather. The bus/van will not operate when weather causes school closings. Stay tuned to your local TV station for listings of school closings.

## WEEKLY PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

**\*Note: All classes are a suggested donation of \$4 per person \***

**Bingo - First and Third Tuesdays** of the month at 1 pm

**Bowling - Tuesdays** at Ryan's Amusement in Millis at 9 am

**Blood Pressure Clinic - Wednesdays** at 10:30 am

**Canasta - Mondays** at 1 pm

**Chair Yoga - Moved to Wednesdays** at 1 pm during January through the end of March

**NEW Chair Volleyballs at 1 pm on Tuesdays**

**NEW Chess Class on Mondays at 1:30 pm**

**Craft Day - Every other Friday, Jan. 5th and 19th, at 11 am**

**Cribbage - Thursdays** at 12:30 pm

**Exercise with Joni - Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays** at 9:30 am (No Exercise Class on Jan. 1st or 15th)

**Hearts - Wednesdays** at 1 pm (No Hearts on Jan. 1st or 15th)

**In Stitches "DROP IN" Knitting Group - Second and Fourth Tuesday** of the Month at 11 am

**Intermediate and Advanced Watercolor Class - Tuesdays & Wednesdays** at 9:30 am (no Wa-

tercolor Class during week of Jan. 1-5)

**Line Dancing with Lisa - Thursdays** at 12 pm (no Class on Jan. 18th)

**Mahjong - Fridays** at 9:30 am for Beginners and 10:30 am for regular play

**Parkinson Boxing - On hold** for now

**Parkinsons Support Group - 2nd Wednesday** of the Month at 1:30 pm

**NEW Pins and Needles Sewing Class - Every other Friday, Jan. 12th and 26th** at 9:00 am

**Pitch Card Game - Mondays** at 12:30 pm

**Scrabble - Thursdays** at 10 am

**Stress Reduction Class with Robin - Thursdays** at 1 pm

**Tai Chi with Robin - Wednesdays** at 11 am

**Veterans Office Hours - 2nd and 4th Wednesdays** of the Month from 9:00 - 11:30 am.

Call (508) 429-0629 to make an appointment

**Zumba Gold - Tuesdays** at 10 am

Schedule is subject to change. Please review Monthly Newsletter for final schedule.

# Illuminate Downtown Ashland



Illuminate Downtown Ashland shone as a vibrant celebration of arts and community.

Thanks to Annmarie's Dance Center for skillfully organizing the event. Gratitude to sponsors like Blush Bouquets, Needham Bank, The Corner Spot-Ashland, Ashland REIKI & Wellness Center, Ashland Historical Society, and the Federated Church of Ashland. Nonprofits Ashland Is United, A.R.E.A., ashlandequity, and the Ashland Business Association added to the festivities. Special mention to performers Drum Nomads, International String Trio, Joe Stillitano, The Boston Community Music Ensemble, Ashland High School Chorus, and the studio's performance company. Illuminate Downtown Ashland, led by Annmarie's Dance Center, showcased the town's arts scene, fostering community celebration.



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# Ashland Lions Club January 2024 Update



## Christmas Trees at the Farmers Market a huge success!

The Ashland Lions had a fantastic year selling Christmas trees and wreaths in our new location at the Ashland Farmers Market. The lot opened the day after Thanksgiving and wrapped up on Sunday, December 10th! We would like to thank the people of Ashland and surrounding towns who purchased their tree or wreath from the Ashland Lions tree lot to support a good cause, because 100% of the proceeds from selling trees and wreaths go to our local community and Mass Lions Eye Research Fund.

In addition to donating back to community organizations with the money we raise, this year we were also able to contribute to the Ashland community through experiences. Starting this year, the Ashland Lions were proud to support our town holiday lighting ceremony with hot cocoa and cookies. As a special feature this year, we also did a free meet-and-greet and photo for over 75 kids with Elsa from the Frozen movie series at the Farmers Market gazebo prior to the holiday lighting ceremony.

## Eyeglasses and Cellphone Collection

Eyeglasses and cellphone collection is a year-round project with collection of used prescription and nonprescription eyeglasses, sunglasses, hearing aids and cell phones. In the past year we have collected over 800 pairs of glasses!

Collection boxes are located at:  
Ashland Post Office  
Ashland Senior Center  
Old train station - Ashland  
Moody Optical - Ashland  
Middlesex Bank - Ashland  
Fayville, MA Post Office  
Studio Optics - Framingham  
Southborough Senior Center  
Southboro Post Office on Rt.85  
TJ's Food and Spirits  
The Residence at Valley Farm

## Happy New Year Ashland!

The Ashland Lions Club would like to thank the Ashland community for all its support again this past year. With your help we had a successful coat drive, golf tournament, successful meat raffles, a great golf ball drop, and a fantastic year selling Christmas trees. We hope to see and hear from you soon!

## New year, new opportunities

Why not make Lions Club Red your color for 2024 and participate in service to the community? If you're interested in becoming a member of the Ashland Lions, please reach out to us via email at [membership@ashlandlions.org](mailto:membership@ashlandlions.org) for details, or message us on Facebook! You can also find several Ashland Lions members at Honeydew on West Main Street most weekday mornings.



Willow Schare poses with Elsa at the Ashland Lions Christmas Tree Lot

The Ashland Lions are grateful to the Ashland High football team and Coach McKay for

their help unloading hundreds of trees upon arrival, and to Boy Scouts Troop 232 and Leos Club members who volunteered every weekend to sell trees and wreaths. A big thank you to our town manager Michael Herbert, and to Steve Mitchell from Ashland Farmers Market for making our new location possible. Most importantly, Ashland Lions thanks its members for their efforts with preparing the lot, covering every open shift, and cleaning up when everything was done. We hope to see you again next year!

## Coats for Kids and Families

Ashland Lions Club partnered with Anton's Cleaners for the Coats for Kids and Families Drive to collect warm winter coats for adults and children. Due to your generous donations, we were able to collect over 500 coats this season! Thanks to Focus on Fitness, Cleaner's Choice, Ashland Police and Fire departments, and the AHS Leos Club for setting up collection stations and supporting our coat drive!

## Ashland Lions Meat Raffles

Ashland Lions is continuing another great year of meat raffles! Our next one will be held on Saturday, January 6 at 12pm, at TJs Food and Spirits in Ashland, and continue the first Saturday of each month throughout the winter. As always there will be great food, fun people, and great meat to choose from. See you there!

## Stay up-to-date on Lions happenings

To see the latest status of our events, please visit our Ashland Lions Facebook page. Click the Like button and you will be automatically notified of changes or cancellations. While you're at it, be sure to follow Ashland Town News too!

King Lion Dan Mitchell  
Ashland Lions Club President

# Greater Ashland Lions Club

## Happy New Year!

Our annual Coat Drive is running until January 7th 2024. To date we have collected 197 warm winter coats for children and adults. For Pickup: contact Lion Debbi at 508.728.4912 or visit these sites for drop-off: Town Hall on Main Street or Shear Perfection on Homer Ave (across from the old train station).

We would like to thank those who purchased one of our Wreaths and/or Swags. These brightened the homes while monies raised benefited local and Lions Charities.

Once again, working with the Ashland Lions Club and the Ashland Schools we sponsored a Peace Poster Contest and a Speech Contest. There were 45 students who participated in the Peace Poster Contest. The Speech Contest was held on December 21st. Thank you to Spyglass Printing for the printing and donating the Certificate of Appreciations given to each of the students in the Peace Poster Contest.

Members of our club participated in the Community Center's Annual Holiday Program by being part of the waitstaff serving the meal.

During our December Dinner Meeting on December 7th we wrote out holiday cards for

elderly residents of senior living facilities. Our members collected money to purchase gift cards that will be given to teens in need.

Do you have any used eyeglasses hanging around? We'll take them! Please bring them to the Police Station (located in the Public Safety Building at 12 Union St), Market Basket (Pond Street / Rte.126), the VFW (at 311 Pleasant Street), or the Town Hall (Main Street).

Wanting to get involved in the community? We're a low-pressure group of service-oriented folks always looking for new members. If you'd like to learn more about the Lions and our club, please contact Lion Alexis at [cvarnie@hotmail.com](mailto:cvarnie@hotmail.com).

For more club information, please check us out on Facebook: Greater Ashland Lions Club. #weserve #kindnessmatters.

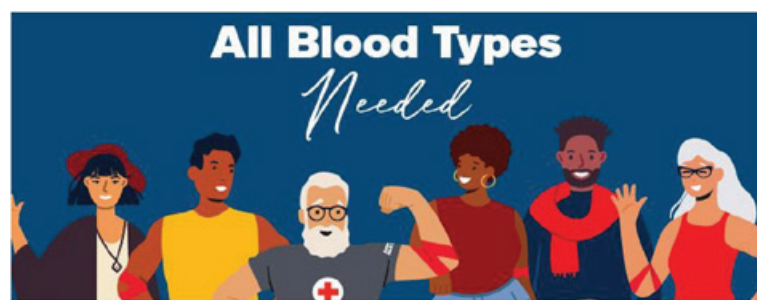
More January observances to warm you up during the cold days: January 15th remembering the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr., January 19th Popcorn Day and to hold all of the days together: January 31st is Scotch Tape Day!

We are the Lions in Purple. We Serve!

SUBMITTED: LION ROSALIE PORTER, 2ND VP

# Blood Drive

Please join us for a blood drive at Sponsored by MSM Blow Dry Bar on Thursday, Jan. 18, from noon to 5 p.m. Visit [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org) to schedule an appointment.



## Ashland Community Blood Drive

Sponsored by MSM Blow Dry Bar

### Ashland Senior Center

Great Room  
162 West Union Street  
Ashland, MA 01721

Thursday, January 18, 2024  
12:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Place your Real Estate Ad today!

Contact Susanne: 508-954-8148 [sue@sodellconsult.com](mailto:sue@sodellconsult.com)

# Winter Weatherization

## Winter Weatherization Guide:

As the chill sets in, it's crucial to winterize your home, and Mass Save is here to assist both homeowners and renters with free home energy audits and generous rebates for efficient upgrades.

- **Clean Your Gutters:**

With leaves falling, ensure your gutters are clear to prevent blockages that can impede rain or snow drainage.

- **Insulate Your Home:**

Proper insulation is key to staying warm. If you suspect your home lacks adequate insulation, take advantage of a free home energy audit for rebated insulation—saving you money on energy bills.

- **Upgrade to a Programmable Thermostat:**

Make your home more efficient and save money with a programmable thermostat.

Mass Save offers rebates for these smart devices.

- **Seal Windows and Doors:**

Prevent cold drafts by insulating windows and doors. Find insulation materials at hardware stores or online.

- **Insulate Water Pipes and Basement Ceiling:**

Easy DIY projects for homeowners—materials available at hardware stores.

- **Plan for Heating System Replacement:**

If your heating system is aging, plan for a replacement to avoid emergencies. Mass Save offers rebates and savings for fossil fuel-free systems.

- **Check and Change Filters for Central Heating:**

Maintain efficiency by regularly checking and changing filters.



### For Renters:

- **Window Weatherization:**

Use film to weatherize windows, keeping cold air out and warm air in.

- **Door Seals:**

Employ door snakes to prevent air leakage—keeping your space energy-efficient.

- **Collaborate with Your Landlord:**

Seek a no-cost energy assessment, and if upgrades are necessary, it can result in savings for both you and your landlord.

### Explore Resources:

Masssave.com

NEECO, a Mass Save provider offering free home energy audits.

Prepare for the winter ahead with these practical tips and resources to keep your home cozy and energy-efficient.

# Ashland Fire Dept. member Kirk Thomas one of 35 firefighters to graduate from Firefighting Academy

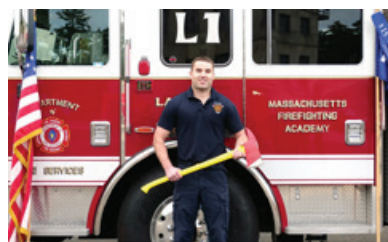
In November, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Director Jeffrey P. Winn announced the graduation of 35 firefighters from the 50-day Career Recruit Firefighting Training Program.

Among the graduates was Kirk Thomas of the Ashland Fire Dept.

“Massachusetts firefighters are on the frontlines protecting their communities every day, and today’s graduates are needed now more than ever,” said State Fire Marshal Davine. “The hundreds of hours of foundational training they’ve received will provide them with the physical, mental, and technical skills to perform their jobs effectively and safely.”

“Massachusetts Firefighting Academy instructors draw on decades of experience in the fire service to train new recruits,” said Director Winn. “Through consistent classroom instruction and practical exercises, today’s graduates have developed the tools they’ll need to work seamlessly with veteran firefighters in their home departments and in neighboring communities as mutual aid.”

The graduating firefighters of Class #315 represent the fire departments of Ashland, Attleboro, Beverly, Concord, Fitchburg, Harwich, Haverhill, Hopedale, Hopkinton,



Massachusetts Firefighting Academy  
Career Recruit Class #315 Graduation • November 1, 2023

Manchester-by-the-Sea, Marlborough, Methuen, Orleans, Revere, Seekonk, Tewksbury, and Weston.

### Basic Firefighter Skills

Students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions.

To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water supply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple-room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Career Recruit Program, all students have met the national standards of NFPA 1001, Standard for Fire Fighter Professional Qualifications, and are certified to the levels of Firefighter I/II and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operations by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications.

in a crashed vehicle. They test and maintain their equipment, including self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), hydrants, hoses, power tools, and apparatus.

### Today's Firefighters Do Much More than Fight Fires

Modern firefighters train for and respond to all types of hazards and emergencies. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies, ranging from the suspected presence of carbon monoxide to gas leaks to industrial chemical spills. They may be called to rescue a child who has fallen through the ice, an office worker stuck in an elevator, or a motorist trapped

at the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, recruits learn all these skills and more, including the latest science of fire behavior and suppression tactics, from certified fire instructors. They also receive training in public fire education, hazardous material incident mitigation, flammable liquids, stress management, and self-rescue techniques. The intensive, 10-week program involves classroom instruction, physical fitness training, firefighter skills training, and live firefighting practice.

The MFA provides recruit and in-service training for career, call, and volunteer firefighters at every level of experience, from recruit to chief officer, at campuses in Stow, Springfield, and Bridgewater.

SUBMITTED BY  
MASSACHUSETTS DEPT. OF FIRE SERVICES



# January 2024 at the Ashland Library

## New Years Day

**Closed on Monday,  
January 1st**

## MLK, Jr Day

**Closed on Monday,  
January 15th**

## Adult Winter Reading Challenge:

**Monday January 1 - Wednesday  
January 31, 2024**

We had so much fun with Adult Winter Reading last year that we had to do it again! Once again, read whatever you want during the month and count up the minutes. You can submit up to 1800 minutes (30 hours) worth of reading time. Each hour that you read gives you a raffle ticket to win fabulous prizes! Please read the following instructions carefully, as we are using a different form this year (no Beanstack!).

**Fill out the form daily, weekly, as you read, or at the end of the month!**

Please let us know how many minutes you've read from January 1st to January 31st, 2024 - up to 1800 minutes (30 hours)! The form will open on Monday, January 1st and close on Saturday, February 3rd so make sure to get your minutes in.

There will be prizes! For every hour you read, your name will be added to a raffle to win a prize, supplied by the Friends of the Ashland Library. The prizes will be:

\$50 gift card to Ashland Ale House

\$50 gift card to Erica's Ristorante

\$50 gift card to Blush Bouquets

\$50 gift card to Aesop's Fable

To choose: pick where you want TODAY's minutes to go towards. If you want to split them, fill out a 2nd form (ex. put in 1/2 of the minutes in the form and choose your ticket, and fill out a 2nd form with the other 1/2 and choose a different prize). Winners will be informed on Monday, Feb 5th.

And then, join us to celebrate with our Hot Chocolate Bar and Winter Reading Discussion on Wednesday, January 31st at 6:30pm. Registration for it will open on Jan 1, 2024.

## Adult:

### Virtual - Front Street Readers Book Club

Tuesday, January 2 @ 7pm

Read "State of Terror" by Louise Penny and Hillary Clinton.

### Virtual - Environmental Book Club

Wednesday, January 3 @ 6:30pm

Read "Silent Spring" by Rachel Carson

### HYBRID - Romance Book Club

Thursday, January 4 @ 6:30pm

Read an Outer Space Romance

### NEW (In-Person) - Friday Night Film Viewing

Friday, January 5 @ 7pm

Back by popular demand, Carolyn Bell brings IN PERSON film viewing to the Ashland Library (this in addition to her regularly scheduled virtual film discussions)! Join Carolyn in watching "Intouchables" a 2011 French buddy comedy-drama film

### Card Making with Jan Poppendieck

Monday, January 8 @ 6:30pm

Join Jan for this ever popular program! Learn some skills, make some cards and some friends!

### Virtual - American Politics at a Crossroads

Tuesday, January 9, 2024 @ 7pm

Today America faces a critical historical dilemma. The progressive/liberal governing synthesis that functioned since the end of World War II has for various reasons dissolved during the early decades of the 21st century. The result has been a pattern of political conflict and disruption accompanied by increasing civil strife and unrest. However, the current dilemma is not the first time America has endured such difficulties. Given that, what are the fundamental characteristics of a governing synthesis and what do the previous syntheses tell us about the shape of an emergent 21st governing synthesis?

### Virtual - Book Recs with Bookstagrammer Jody Blanchette aka @redreadreviews

Tuesday, January 9 @ 7pm

Not sure what to read next? Join Jody for 30 minutes of pure book recommendations - every

genre and interest! We're sure you'll find something to like from Jody's many enthusiastic reviews.

### Sending Sunshine: Community Letter Writing \*For All Ages

Wednesday, January 10 @ 5pm

Do you love letter writing or want to spend some family time doing this time honored tradition in service of senior citizens? Join us!

### Virtual - The Two Nerdy History Girls Ride Again!

Wednesday, January 10 @ 7pm

We, once again, have Loretta Chase and Susan Holloway Scott here to answer all of our burning questions. How do they find interesting tidbits of historical lore, which libraries of the world have they visited, and how do they avoid the inescapable "rabbit hole"? We can't wait for what we know is going to be a fascinating conversation between these two friends and researchers.

### Virtual - Introduction to Ornithology with Bill Gette: Introduction and Avian Systematics

Thursday, January 11 @ 1pm

Join us for this 5 part series all about Ornithology! During this PowerPoint lecture, Bill will teach you about the origin of birds, early concepts about life forms, innovations in thought, Darwin's influence, taxonomy (relationships among birds), and nomenclature (naming of birds). As one of our favorite speakers on the natural world, Bill will wow us with his knowledge and fantastic photographs!

### "Mean Girls" Movie Viewing

\*For Ages 16+

Thursday, January 11 @ 6pm

In preparation for our virtual discussion with author Jennifer Keishin Armstrong discussing "So Fetch The Making of Mean Girls (And Why We're Still So Obsessed with It)" on Monday, January 22nd at 7pm ET, we're getting together to watch this iconic film as a community! Join us for an evening with Lindsay Lohan, Rachel McAdams, Tina Fey and so many others that made us laugh and cringe. Can you believe it's been 20 years!?!?

### Learn About the Benefits of Reiki with Hannah Stein

Thursday, January 11 @ 6:30pm

Why learn about Reiki? Studies show that people use Reiki for relaxation, stress reduction, symptom, and pain relief, and to improve overall health and well-being. Studies also indicate that Reiki is effective in reducing or relieving a number of physical and psychological issues. Come learn how Reiki can enhance your well-being!

### Mystery Book Club

Friday, January 12 @ 12pm

NOTE NEW DAY AND TIME!

Read "The Maid" by Nita Prose

### Virtual - Friday Night Film

**Discussion: "Seven Samurai" Part 1 \*For Adults**

Friday, January 12 @ 7pm

Join in the discussion of Part 1 (the first two hours) of "Seven Samurai", one of the most thrilling movie epics of all time by famed director Akira Kurosawa.

### Cookbook Club: A Taste of Mexico

Saturday, January 13 @ 12pm

Cook from any recipe you find that has origins in Mexican cuisine

### Virtual - Author and Historian Helen Fry Discusses "Women in Intelligence"

Saturday, January 13 @ 2pm

If you are as fascinated by the untold stories of women's contributions to war efforts, please join author and historian, Helen Fry, as she discusses her latest book "Women in Intelligence: The Hidden History of Two World Wars". It is a ground-breaking history of women in British intelligence, revealing their pivotal role across the first half of the twentieth century.

### Virtual: Asian Art Series: Art Across Asia - Timeless Traditions: Expressions of the Divine in India Art with Mary Mead

Sunday, January 14 @ 2:30pm

Explore the vast panoply of South Asian art through the prism of four belief systems founded there: Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. Discover how for thousands of years the artists of India and its neighbors have beautifully depicted their impressions of their deities, and reflected their cultures.

### Virtual - Let's Get Cozy with Mystery Authors Allison Brook and Mia P. Manansala

Tuesday, January 16 @ 7pm

It's cold out there! Grab your hot beverage of choice and join us for a Q&A about cozy mysteries with Agatha Award nominee, Marilyn Levinson, who writes as Allison Brook; and award winning writer and book coach, Mia P. Manansala. Marilyn Levinson is the author of the Haunted Libraries series and Mia P. Manansala is the author of the Tita Rosie's Kitchen Mystery series. Bring your questions and cuddle up for a fun evening. Bio / Memoir Book Club

Wednesday, January 17 @ 11am

Read "Fly Girl" by Ann Hood

### Half-Past Crafts: Pom Pom Cardinals

Wednesday, January 17 @ 6:30pm

This month we are making pom pom cardinals that look great in a window or on a tree branch!

### Virtual: Ashland Adult Book Club

Wednesday, January 17 @ 6:30pm

Read "The Littlest Library" by Poppy Alexander

### Virtual - La Serenissima - A Sojourn in Venice with Bruce Magnuson

Wednesday, January 17 @ 7pm

Local photographer and art and history enthusiast, Bruce Magnuson, will explore the many facets of Venetian, history, art and architecture. Weaving local references to Venice with photographs from a recent trip, you'll come away with a greater appreciation for this complicated, captivating city.

### Virtual: Fierce Females: Women in Art with Jane Oneal

Wednesday, January 17 @ 7pm

This program examines the history of women in art in brief and then explores the lives, careers and works of several major women artists from the Renaissance to the twentieth century, including Artemisia Gentileschi and Mary Cassatt.



## LIBRARY

continued from page 16

**Virtual - Haunted Happenings with Jeff DePaoli: Alterian, Inc. with Founder Tony Gardner**

Thursday, January 18 @ 6:30pm

Alterian Inc. is a Los Angeles based studio specializing in the design and creation of animatronic and prosthetic makeup effects. Join Alterian Inc. Founder Tony Gardner, an American makeup designer, special effects designer and puppeteer, and Jeff DePaoli, Host of "That Halloween Podcast", as they talk all about the history, impact, and fun of this essential Hollywood Halloween staple.

**Virtual - Future Solar Eclipses**

Thursday, January 18 @ 7pm

This presentation will provide an overview of the nature of solar eclipses, helpful advice for seeing the April 8, 2024 event successfully, and a preview of solar eclipses worth seeing through 2028.

**Virtual: Demystify your Finances with Ariel Nathanson**

Thursday, January 18 @ 7pm

January is Financial Wellness month and we're ready for it! It is the perfect time to focus on the future and lay the foundation for financial success. Ariel Nathanson, the founder of Finance for Feminists, will be helping program participants expand their understanding of personal finance with practical advice and useful tools. Mindful spending, investment basics - and more - will be explored during this supportive, judgment-free dialogue about money.

**Saturday Knit and Crochet Club and Workshop: Knit an Adult-Sized Hat**

\*Ages 14 &amp; Up

Saturday, January 20 @ 2pm

Come join us this week at the Saturday Knit and Crochet Club to learn how to knit a cozy adult-sized hat!

**Card Crafting Makerspace**

Monday, January 22 @ 6:30pm

We'll supply the materials, you supply the creativity! Come create your own greeting cards using the library's extensive collection of stamps, inks, papers, punches, dies, embellishments, and embossing materials. Note: An experienced card crafter will be on hand to offer some tips for beginners but this is not an instructional class.

**Virtual - Author Jennifer Keishin Armstrong discusses "So Fetch The Making of Mean Girls (And Why We're Still So Obsessed with It)"**

Monday, January 22 @ 7pm

We are celebrating a book birthday! Jennifer's book, "So Fetch" just came out on Jan 16th and we can't wait to ask her all of the nitty gritty details of this totally fetch story of one of the most iconic teen comedies of all time, Mean Girls, in which she reveals how it happened, how it defined a generation, "like, invented" meme culture, and why it just won't go away. The book is filled with exclusive interviews from the director, cast, and crew - Lindsay Lohan, Rachel McAdams & Tina Fey (oh my!).

**Virtual - LGBTQ+ Book Club**

\*For 15-100

Monday, January 22 @ 7pm

Read "On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous" by Ocean Vuong

**Virtual - Celebrating a Book Birthday with Author Gabe Cole Novoa**

Tuesday, January 23 @ 7pm

We are celebrating the release of Gabe's book, "Most Ardently" with cake and conversation! This is a "Pride and Prejudice" Remix like you've never seen! We hope you can join us for what will be a fascinating and fun evening. It's BYOC (bring your own cake), though.

**Virtual - Another Look Inside the Hammond Castle Museum with Curatorial Director, John Leysath**

Wednesday, January 24 @ 1pm

We learned so much from John Leysath, curator at Hammond Castle Museum, back in October, we just had to have him back! This time he'll be digging even deeper into the life and inventions of the original owner, creator of the castle, and noted scientist John Hays Hammond Jr.

**Virtual - Friday Night Film**

Discussion: "Seven Samurai" Part 2 \*For Adults

Friday, January 26 @ 7pm

Join in the discussion of Part 2 of "Seven Samurai", one of the most thrilling movie epics of all time by famed director Akira Kurosawa.

**Virtual - Panel Discussion: The Challenges & Rewards of Being a Debut Author**

Monday, January 29 @ 7pm

We welcome authors Lauren J. A. Bear, Rita Chang-Eppig, and Nishita Parekh to our virtual stage. We'll be talking all about getting into publishing, the pit-

falls, challenges, and roadblocks as well as the excitement, fulfillment, and reader enthusiasm that makes it all worthwhile. Bring your questions as this will be in a Q&A format.

**Virtual - Q&A with author Daniel N. Warshawsky of his book "Food Waste, Food Insecurity, and the Globalization of Food Banks"**

Tuesday, January 30 @ 7pm

So many of us are passionate about finding ways to reduce food waste so we're thrilled to be hosting author and professor Daniel N. Warshawsky for a virtual discussion of his new book "Food Waste, Food Insecurity, and the Globalization of Food Banks".

**Hot Chocolate Bar and Winter Reading Discussion**

Wednesday, January 31 @ 6:00pm

Whether you've spent January participating in our Adult Winter Reading Challenge or you just love books and hot chocolate, join us for this special evening of relaxing, discussion, and hot cocoa! This program is for adults 18+ and does require registration (so we have plenty of HC to go around :).

**Adult Recurring:****Knit and Crochet Club**

Saturdays @ 2pm

Mondays @ 6pm

**ESL Conversation Group**

Mondays @ 6:30pm

**Children:****Special Event!****You're Invited! Retirement Party for Miss Lois**

Saturday, January 27 @ 10-2pm

Miss Lois, our longtime Director of Children's Services, is retiring on January 31st and we would like to give her a great send-off! Join us for cake and cookies as we remember all of the fun times we've had with Miss Lois. We'll be raising a glass (of cider :) to wish her well on her next adventure.

**Drop In Children's Cookie Decorating to Celebrate Miss Lois**

\*Ages 2-12

Saturday, January 27 @ 10-2pm

We're celebrating Miss Lois' retirement with cookies! Kids can drop in anytime during Miss Lois' retirement party to decorate a cookie or two. We'll have all of the materials, kids just have to bring their ingenuity.

**Baby Signs with Sheryl White**

Saturday, January 6 @ 10:30am

Learn how to reduce frustration and give your baby the ability to communicate before he or she can speak using baby signs. Learn and practice several signs. You will learn everything that you need to know to get started signing right away. Animal Adventures

Saturday, January 20 @ 10:30am

Come see and touch a variety of live animals. Admission to the program is free, but space is limited and this will be a popular program. Tickets will be available near the Children's Room beginning at 10:00 a.m. the day of the show.

**Stem Thursdays:**

10-Minute Creation Stations

\*For Ages 5-9

Thursday, January 4 @ 4pm

Kids will be given a mystery box filled with a variety of building materials. As the timer counts down, they will have 10 minutes to create something using only the materials in their own box. Everyone will have a chance to build with at least 5-6 different boxes.

**Lego Club**

\*Ages 5-9

Thursday, January 11 @ 4pm

Each child will be given a box filled with an assortment of Lego blocks to build a creation using only what's inside the box within the 45 minute time limit.

**Engineering Exploration**

\*For Ages 5-9

Thursday, January 18 @ 4pm

Cardboard Builder Set - Each participant will make their own cardboard construction set, with endless possibilities for creation!

**Lego Club**

\*Ages 5-9

Thursday, January 25 @ 4pm

Each child will be given a box filled with an assortment of Lego blocks to build a creation using only what's inside the box within the 45 minute time limit.

**Saturday Story Time**

\*For Ages 3 and up

Saturday, January 6 @ 10:30am

Saturday, January 13 @ 10:30am

Saturday, January 20 @ 10:30am

Come listen to Ryan read some of his favorite stories aloud!

Read to a Dog with Knives and Machete (yes, those really are the dogs' names!)

\*For kids who are reading on their own

Saturday, January 13 @ 1:30pm

Saturday, January 27 @ 1:30pm

Children with some reading ability will have the chance to read to one of our registered therapy dogs for 10 minutes.

Children with some reading ability will have the chance to read to one of our registered therapy dogs for 10 minutes.

**Children Recurring:****Project ABC Play, Learn, and Grow Group \*Ages 0 to 5**

Tuesdays at 11am

A structured program to help prepare children for socialization and a school experience.

Registration \*IS\* required for each session of this program

**PJ Story Time with Ryan (and his stuffed animals!)**

\*For Ages 3 and up

Tuesdays @ 5:30 pm Lapsit

For Infants & Toddlers and their Caregivers

Wednesdays @ 10:30am

**Friday Afternoon Story And Craft**

\*For Ages 4-7

Fridays @ 4:15pm

**Crafty Saturdays**

Drop in Crafting

Saturdays @ 10-3pm

**Teen:****Friends of the Ashland Public Library Donation Day & Mini Book Sale!**

Saturday, January 6 @ 10-1pm

Shop or Drop is the name of the game! Join us to buy gently used books, audiobooks, DVDs and games. You can also donate from your home shelves to make space for the "new". The Friends accept donations in the library parking lot. Friends volunteers will be available to assist donors during this time.

# Sports

## State Tournament – the Ultimate Goal

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Cam Antoniuk has advanced into the State Wrestling Tournament the past few years for Ashland.

Unfortunately, both times he found himself losing in the first round. As a sophomore he fell to Norton's Jason Winston in his first State appearance and last year Oisin Cullen of Wakefield ended his season.

Along with the other Ashland grapplers, Antoniuk finished second in the Division 3 Central State Tournament, five points behind the leader Tri-Country.

The Ashland resident didn't begin his wrestling career until he was in eighth grade. Prior to stepping onto the mat, he found himself participating in football, a sport he has played since the third grade.

"Cam is a two-sport athlete for Ashland. On the football field this past season, he was named to the Tri-Valley League All Star team as well as being the school's top passer and either the second or third best rusher, wrestling coach Peter Zacchilli said. "His competition level is so high on both the field and the mat; it sets him up to be an athlete. He's not that big, strong or a real phenomenal athlete, but he outcompetes everyone he goes up against."

The Clocker Coach went on to say that during Bellingham this year Cam, the Ashland quarterback, could find no one open and when the pocket broke down around him, he was forced to run. Run he did, causing six different Bellingham players to miss tackles as he scampered into the endzone for a touchdown.

"That Bellingham game was what he does – he wears his opponents down," Zacchilli said. "On the mat he'll grind for the full six minutes and when the time is up, there is no one that wants to be on the mat with him."

Antoniuk got involved with wrestling as he found that many people around him looked up to the sport and Coach Zacchilli convinced him to get on the mat and give the sport a try. Although it was an immediate love and connection for the sport, it was also very intimidating to the then young wrestler.

"It's not like football, you're on that mat all by yourself and everything is on you. Not only that, but everyone is focusing on just you and that puts a lot of pressure on you to do well," Antoniuk said. "The very first time I wrestled in a varsity match was definitely weird. I really don't remember anything about that first match or how I did; it was probably not that good."



"His intensity as well as his level of toughness began at the start of the match and continued right to the to the end," the Ashland Coach said. "It was not easy on the kids he was wrestling – Cam was non-stop and put forth a relentless pursuit on the mat. I can't wait to watch him perform this year."

Last year the then-junior was wrestling at 145 pounds, but he put on about 30 pounds to help him succeed in football which will put him in a great position to wrestle this season.

"Putting the weight on allowed me to perform better on the football field," Antoniuk said. "It was also really nice to be able to eat once the wrestling season ended last year."

The senior is looking for not only his team to win a State Tournament, but he also wants to capture a championship for himself in whatever weight class he happens to wrestle in this season. He feels that he has worked hard during the off-season once again and believe that it is absolutely possible.

"I have been playing football for a very long time and when I was younger, I'd have to say it was my top sport," he said. "But I think last year as a junior, wrestling took over that number one spot due to all the extra work that I have put into the sport; it's become a bigger part of my life."

Now all that is left to do is for Antoniuk to go out and wrestle the best to his ability and hopefully that will not only help his team to a State Title but will also allow him to stand atop that stand following the Championship match.

Following that inaugural season, the Ashland wrestler began staying after practice working harder while pushing himself to become a better wrestler. He also began to run to increase his stamina, which helped him tremendously with his energy throughout his matches.

"I believe that with all my hard work I had gotten an advantage on the mat. It keeps me going mentally as well as physically," he said. "During my first tournament, although I didn't come out on top, I did have the stamina to continue. My opposition would beat me up in the first period, but I seemed to be able to use my skill to comeback."

Last winter Antoniuk was more offensive minded on his feet and able to score points; his style was very tough for his opponents to keep up with him.

## Ashland Athletics Online Store

It is finally here! A one-stop shop where you can get all of your Clocker gear is launching today!

We have partnered with BSN, one of the country's largest athletic gear and equipment distributors to have our own Athletics store.

The 24-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week, 365 days-a-year permanent store is filled with anything and everything any fan would need to show their Clocker Pride!

From t-shirts to hoodies, winter coats to baby bibs, everything is 100% customizable, and each category has designs upon designs that can make your gear different from anyone else. The options are truly endless.

This new launch allows for a consistent brand identity for all of our sports while at the same time driving revenue that will be funneled right

back into Ashland Athletics, making it a win-win for all involved.

We also wanted to make sure there were price points for any family interested in purchasing and that constant sales take place, including the current sitewide 25% off sale.

No more waiting weeks for your order to arrive. Now, you can place the order, and the turnaround time is around ten days, and it is shipped straight to your home.

Share the link with friends and family and continue to help support Ashland Athletics: <https://sideline.bsnsports.com/schools/massachusetts/ashland/ashland-high-school>.

Go Clockers!

Kevin Anderson

Ashland Director of Athletics

# Real Estate Corner

## Ashland Recent Home Sales

Date	Ashland	Amount
12/15/2023	332 Trailside Way	\$434,000
12/12/2023	5 Winesap Way	\$975,000
12/08/2023	26 Braeburn Lane	\$650,000
12/05/2023	51 America Blvd	\$620,000
12/01/2023	40 Wadsworth Road	\$1.10 mil
12/01/2023	4 E Bluff Road	\$470,000
12/01/2023	55 Meeting House Path	\$460,000
11/30/2023	5 Irene Circle	\$875,000
11/30/2023	85 Leland Farm Road	\$429,900
11/30/2023	7 Belcher Circle	\$500,000
11/29/2023	87 Alden Street	\$779,900
11/30/2023	5 Irene Circle	\$875,000
11/30/2023	85 Leland Farm Road	\$429,900
11/30/2023	7 Belcher Circle	\$500,000
11/29/2023	87 Alden Street	\$779,900
11/28/2023	406 Chestnut Street	\$610,000
11/27/2023	55-57 Raymond Marchetti St	\$700,000
11/27/2023	176 Captain Eames Circle	\$440,000
11/21/2023	143 Prospect Street	\$550,000
11/20/2023	343 Cedar Street	\$760,000



The 4-bed, 3-bath, 2,837 square foot home at 40 Wadsworth Road in Ashland recently sold for \$1.10 million.  
Image credit: www.zillow.com  
Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages



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# The Importance of Home Inspections



Kim Foemmel

Your real estate agent can tell you things like how a house is priced in relation to “comps” (comparable properties) nearby, or which financing programs a house might qualify for. But a state-licensed home inspector is trained to find the things that might not be obvious to you or your real estate agent. Your home inspector will be able to find problems such as faulty wiring, foundation cracks, mold and more, so you won’t have any unwelcome surprises once you settle into your new house.

While a home inspector can’t diagnose or fix a problem, knowing there’s an issue gives you leverage to negotiate a lower price or ask the seller to pay for needed repairs, as well as make sure your new place is safe. For example, if your home inspector

finds a mildew-like substance in the attic, they typically would suggest contacting a mold specialist to investigate further. If the heating system isn’t working properly, they would advise calling in an HVAC specialist. Home inspections are a prime opportunity for buyers to perform due diligence before purchasing.

Home inspectors are required to objectively report on a checklist of items, including structural, safety and mechanical items. The inspection generally takes about two to four hours and is a great chance for buyers to learn more about their home, its systems and its equipment. The inspector will walk through the entire house and examine the foundation, roof, exterior walls and siding, windows and doors,

plumbing and electrical systems, HVAC system, fireplace and chimney, attic and basement, and major appliances.

Sellers also can opt for a pre-home inspection before putting their house on the market. For sellers who have the budget to fix any problems that crop up during an inspection, this helps ensure that the buyer’s inspection will go well and greatly decrease the possibility of the buyer backing out of the deal. A pre-home inspection also is an attractive option to buyers in markets with high demand or where multiple offers are expected, because it can help buyers feel more comfortable about waiving their own inspection to expedite the process. However, pre-home inspections aren’t right for all sellers. If a problem

is found, not fixed and reported to your real estate agent, the agent then is liable to disclose the problem to prospective buyers, which could affect the marketability of the property.

To find a Massachusetts-licensed home inspector, visit [nachi.org/certified-inspectors/browse/us/massachusetts](http://nachi.org/certified-inspectors/browse/us/massachusetts).

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Home inspections are an invaluable part of the home-buying process when you’re making a decision on one of the biggest investments in your life.

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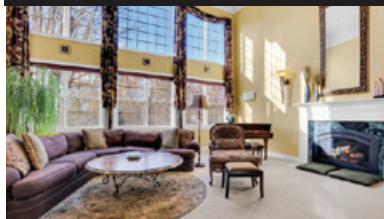
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