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December 2023

## Franklin Celebrates Acquisition of 200 Acres of Open Space for Town

By J.D. O'GARA

On Friday, October 27th, the town of Franklin celebrated its acquisition of the over 200 acres of open space, through Community Preservation Act funds, at the site of the most recent 115-acre purchase, Schmidt's Farm, a parcel on Prospect Street which, with the additional purchase of 15 acres of abutting acreage from the Dalzell family, totals 130 acres. This land is not yet ready to be open to the public, with extensive work needed to make it accessible and repair the barn on the property, but Town governance expressed optimism at its future value as a treasured recreation space. Earlier this year, the town also purchased the 70-acre Maple Hill property, closer to the center of town between Lincoln and Maple Streets, with CPA funds.

Town Council Chair Tom Mercer opened the event, welcoming Town Counsellor Mel-



The purchase of Schmidt's Farm officially brought the total open space acquired in the past year by Franklin's Community Preservation Act Funds to 200 acres. The town celebrated this milestone on October 27th.

nie Hamblen, who said she was thrilled CPA funds were used "again to protect and preserve this irreplaceable farmland for generations to come. And I am proud of the work we've been able to accomplish since the CPA adoption and generate additional open space, connecting our nature trails for wildlife and

residents alike. I look forward to seeing the vision for these parcels come to fruition."

Town Administrator Jamie Hellen, followed, saying, "This is pretty much the greatest day a town administrator can have.

**CELEBRATES**  
*continued on page 2*



On Wednesday, November 15th, Massachusetts Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Lauren Jones (second from right) and Rep. Jeff Roy, (left) met with apprentices (shown) at Tegra Medical, an international medical device manufacturer, at its Franklin location. The state was celebrating Massachusetts Apprenticeship Week (Nov. 12-18) and has invested \$3.5 million so far in FY24 to connect individuals to registered apprenticeship.

## Growing Skilled Labor a State and Local Goal

### Local Chamber Launches Skilled Trade Program; MA Pushes Apprenticeship

By J.D. O'GARA

"Learn a skill. You'll never go wrong if you learn a skill."

That's advice to students from Laura O'Callaghan, President, and

CEO of the Tri-County Regional Chamber. She points out that local employers are feeling an acute

**APPRENTICESHIP**  
*continued on page 2*

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Although the house at the parcel known as Schmidt's Farm will be demolished, town officials hope to find a way to preserve this barn for future use.

**CELEBRATES**

*continued from page 1*

I think I speak for elected officials, it really doesn't get better than this. I'm sure we can take a lot of credit, but all of you voted for this, and a couple years later we're seeing that return on investment. This caps three ribbon cuttings we've had this year for the first slate of (CPA) projects." Hellen talked about how the CPA was created because communities struggled to pay for

these projects, and he thanked members of the Community Preservation Committee in addition to town voters.

Hellen explained a bit about some of the work to be done at Schmidt's Farm, noting the house in front would be demolished, but that the barn has potential to be used as an educational tool, once it undergoes extensive repair. The parcel, as well as the Maple Hill parcel, needs to have a management program in place per CPA requirements, and the town will work with Metacomet and other stakeholders to establish one. While about half of the land will be preserved for hiking trails, the town will investigate agricultural use of the other portions, considering the site for an additional community garden.

**APPRENTICESHIP**

*continued from page 1*

need for skilled workers.

"We get so many calls all the time from members. They're desperate, they're crying out for help, and they're mostly in the skilled trades industry," says O'Callaghan. The Chamber just this year created the Maximum Impact Foundation - a 501(c)(3) non-profit. Its mission: to support local businesses and programs that foster business growth and entrepreneurship through educational initiatives, training scholarships, and grants.

O'Callaghan refers to Mass.gov figures that show a decline in skilled trades.

"At this point in Massachusetts alone, for every three skilled trade businesses that retire, there's literally only one that's coming in," says O'Callaghan, who explains her office's research at Mass.gov showed a staggering decline in construction license renewals in the state, from 57,000 just a few years ago to 39,000 this year.

"We recognize the profound effect that local businesses and skilled tradespeople have on our community's development," said O'Callaghan, in the new foundation's sponsorship letter, "We also see the challenges that individuals face when pursuing careers in the mechanical, building & service trades. Due to the increasing cost of education, licensing, tools, and essential training, many aspiring tradespeople find it increasingly difficult to break into these industries.

The Maximum Impact Foundation is holding a Live & Silent Auction Fundraiser to raise money toward its goals on Saturday, December 9th. Dueling for a Cause will take place at 6 p.m. at the

Milford Portuguese Club, 119 Prospect Heights in Milford. The night will entail a family style dinner catered by Savini's Pomodoro, music from the Flying Ivories dueling pianos, dancing and over 100 auction items. Visit <https://www.maximumimpactfoundation.org/> for more information.

Speaking to the need for skilled workers, the Healey-Driscoll Administration kicked off Massachusetts Apprenticeship Week (November 12-18), in conjunction with the 9th anniversary of National Apprenticeship Week. The administration hosted a weeklong series of events across the state to highlight the Registered Apprenticeship Program as a key resource for employers to address workforce shortages and encourage residents to pursue apprenticeship pathways in sectors like construction and building trades, life sciences, health and human services, early education, advanced manufacturing, and other industries.

"The Registered Apprenticeship Program is instrumental to providing residents with the hands-on training and hard skills that lead to a long-lasting, family sustaining careers, while meeting the workforce needs of our state's employers," said Governor Maura Healey. "Our investments in Registered Apprenticeships will make the program more accessible to populations that have been underrepresented in the workforce and provides employers with tax credits to expand Registered Apprenticeships in all industries across the state."

Currently, 88 percent of apprentices are in the building and construction industry.

Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development Lauren Jones and Rep. Jeff Roy took a trip to Franklin's Tegra Medical during Massachusetts Apprenticeship Week to meet the company's apprentices and learn about the career path enabled by Tegra's apprenticeship program.

"Registered Apprenticeship is a vital tool in the state's toolbox to help solve the workforce shortages in industries like construction and the building trades, healthcare, advanced manufacturing, cybersecurity, finance, and more," said Jones. "To maintain Massachusetts' com-

petitive edge, we need to invest in our people—both existing workers and untapped talent—and Registered Apprenticeship is a proven, effective model to build the skilled talent that employers need."

Roy noted that international companies like Tegra and Plansee, both with sites in Franklin, have taken it upon themselves to invest in training and apprenticeship programs in order to build the workforce they need.

While visiting Tegra Medical, which manufactures medical devices, Jones said Apprenticeship Week served to "help celebrate apprenticeship programs, both within the building trades and construction, but also in new and expanded areas like we're celebrating here today at Tegra medical. It's an opportunity to provide technical training and on-the-job training and clear a pathway for individuals to gain industry-recognized credentials, and certainly a path for a meaningful career."

The Healey-Driscoll Administration's FY24 budget invests \$4 million to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion for the state's construction and building trades and to expand registered apprenticeship in expansion industries. So far in FY24, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development has invested \$3.5 million overall to connect 740 individuals to registered apprenticeship.

For more information about the Commonwealth's apprenticeship program, visit <https://www.mass.gov/topics/apprenticeships>.



In the hopes of increasing the ease of getting workers into trades, the Tri-County Regional Chamber created the Maximum Impact Foundation this year. This month, it will hold its first fundraiser.

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# Greater Milford Community Chorus Brings Joy this Season

By JENNIFER RUSSO

The Greater Milford Community Chorus (GMCC), a group of talented singers from Milford and surrounding towns, is excited to celebrate the holiday season this month with festive songs for all to enjoy. From well-known song medleys sure to get you singing along, to traditional pieces like the Wexford Carol, some classic Hannukah songs, and more contemporary pieces like “Welcome Christmas” from Dr. Seuss’ charming movie, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, the performance is great for all ages and sure to delight attendees and evoke the spirit of the upcoming holidays.



Concluding its Golden Jubilee year and celebrating 50 years of singing for the community, the GMCC offers both a Spring show and a Winter show annually, each centered around a theme – this upcoming concert

is themed around the song Joyful, Joyful – an adaptation of Beethoven’s composition, Ode to Joy, featuring the words of a poem written by Henry J. van Dyke, published in 1911. Religious themes aside, the song is

about welcoming light into our hearts, a feeling that the chorus hopes the audience will leave with as they head into the rest of their December celebrations.

“Joyful is just how we want our audience to feel when they head out after our performance. Our members each bring various and individual strengths to the group and our music is really all about bringing people together. After months of challenging work, we all look forward to joining our community for an evening or afternoon of peace and joy,” shares Susan Surapine, GMCC President.

“It’s great to see our audience members celebrating along with us - their friends, family, and

neighbors – as we sing for them. It’s all about that beautiful connection with everyone through music.”

The GMCC, under the direction of Mark Schiappucci, will perform at Milford Town Hall on Saturday, December 2nd at 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday, December 3rd at 1:30 p.m.. Tickets are \$12 at the door and children ten and under are welcome for free. There will be exciting raffle baskets to win, and refreshments served. Additionally, the group will be performing with the Clafin Hill Symphony Orchestra for their Holiday Pops concert on Saturday, December 9th at 7:30 p.m.

# Museum Archivist Improves Access to Collection

By LYN MACLEAN

Last Spring, the Town of Franklin hired Rowan Lowell as a full-time Archivist for the Franklin Historical Museum. A perfect fit for this position, she is completing a master’s degree in library and information science with a concentration in Archive Management at Simmons University.

The Archivist will work with Museum Committee members to support the global vision for the museum. The main responsibilities of this role are to collect, preserve, and make available

collections that consist of manuscripts, photographs, personal correspondence, cultural artifacts, and mixed media representing the town.

Future objectives focus on organizing and cataloging items and establishing policies and procedures all to make items more easily accessible to patrons for research. The museum is also investigating using archiving equipment to digitize these items and expand storage.

Lowell will continue to collaborate with Dean College, which also has an archive. The

museum and college compare resources with each other, and the museum hosts the college’s history department to allow students to showcase independent projects. Continuing with the education connection, the Archivist role will work to strengthen connections with the local Elementary schools by offering an in-person learning experience. Youth clubs such as Scout troops and any other groups interested are welcome for a close-to-home museum experience.

The archivist has access to many items not on display, and

when asked what she finds most interesting, Rowan said she admired the lithographs and maps of downtown Franklin. She also enjoys reading different personal journals. In fact, the museum has about two dozen diaries that record life over 20 years. These diaries provide a glimpse into how life was in Franklin in the late 1800’s and early 1900’s, uncovering how people’s lives have changed over the years, and how they may be similar to today.

Museum archives also tell the story of prominent local families such as the Thayer and Ray fam-

ilies, and businesses such as the Ray Cotton Mills, American Felt Company from the early 1900s, Clark Cutler McDermott, and even a straw hat factory.

You can support the Archivist efforts at the Franklin Historical Museum. When cleaning out your closets or assisting in family moves, be on the lookout for any “All about Franklin” items that you may wish to donate and permanently preserve for future generations.



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# The Santa Foundation Is Looking for a New Home



By J.D. O'GARA

The Santa Foundation is looking for a new home. The nonprofit is looking for a bigger space, as it continues to provide gifts and support for any family in need in Franklin, Bellingham, Norfolk, Wrentham, Medway, and Millis, among other towns. Their focus – families in need due to a health crisis or financial hardship. The organization, which works with local food pantries, the Salvation Army, St. Vincent de Paul, and local housing authorities, assisted 567 families last year. So far, in 2023, the Santa Foundation has assisted 465 families (at press time) and is already well on its way to again helping over 500 families.

For 37 years, the main sponsor, and headquarters of the Santa Foundation, was Sullivan Associates, Inc., a small office located in a residential area at 1 Joy Street in Franklin. On May 31, Sullivan Associates officially closed its business, while the Santa Foundation, run entirely by volunteers, continues to operate on the premises. The Santa Foundation is now dependent on its corporate sponsors to cover overhead costs, while 100% of individual donations go to families in need.

“The SF team, still going strong at 38th years, is very tight on space,” says Dick Timmons, President of the Santa Foundation, now retired from Sullivan Associates. “We love our address but feel that we must relocate during 2024 in order to grow and help more families in need. The Santa Foundation will operate out of the 1 Joy Street location until a suitable new home can be found. We are looking for between 2,000 and 2,500 square feet, with a small office space. If anyone has the space available, please contact us. We would like to discuss the opportunity.”

The Santa Foundation has added four new directors this year who will help keep the organization going beyond 2024: Joe Formosa (owner of iLove-Kickboxing), Pam Formosa (owner of Brain Fit Academy), Mike Polenski (social worker, Commonwealth of Massachusetts), and Manisone Bounsavath (Assistant Branch Manager of Middlesex Bank).



Jan Prentice, left, longtime volunteer for the Santa Foundation, and Richard Timmons, President of the Santa Foundation, in the tightly packed storage space at the organization's current location, 1 Joy Street. The foundation is seeking a larger space to accommodate gift donations and to allow larger numbers of volunteers to help with distribution.

Volunteers that work at the Santa Foundation are still operating. In 2022, nine part-time volunteers, most notably Jan Prentice, Lia Thomas, Dick Tomaino, and Patty Toney, put in over 2,000 hours fulfilling holiday hopes for those in need, including four homeless shelters and two children's homes. Younger volunteers Patrick Timmons and Karina Thomas helped maintain the website and assist with annual fundraisers and the well-loved November calendar raffle.

This year places the need for assistance as high as ever. Timmons points out that the best gifts for most recipients are gift cards, and Prentice adds that, in particular, the organization can always use gifts for teenagers.

“Gift cards to Walmart, Target and local food chains are gifts that allow families to get a gift but also go shopping for clothes and food as needed,” says Timmons. The Santa Foundation places giving trees at the following locations, with tags created from Christmas wish lists that generous neighbors are encouraged to take and fulfill:

- Franklin Police Department, 911 Panther Way, Franklin
- Grove Street Auto, 79 Grove Street, Franklin
- James Roadside Café, 850 Franklin St., Wrentham
- King Street Café, 390 King St., Franklin
- Medway Police Department, 315 Village St., Franklin
- Middlesex Bank, 1000 Franklin Village Drive, Franklin

- Norfolk Credit Union, 194 Main St., Norfolk
- Norfolk Fire Department, 117 Main St, Norfolk
- Postal Center, 279 E Central Street, Franklin
- Postal Center, 9 Medway Rd., Ste. C, Milford
- Postal Center, 14 Milliston Rd., Millis

“The Santa Foundation not only provides families with gifts during the holiday season, but also helps families in need throughout the year. We have paid rent, utilities, and expenses for daily necessities as needed,” says Timmons. In addition to delivering 17,010 gifts (valued at \$340,200) in 2022, with the foundation purchasing \$12,767 of that total, the Santa Foundation also assisted needy neighbors with \$6,413 in rent and \$1,827 in family support.

“We will never say no to a legitimate request for assistance from a verified local family in need, not just at Christmastime, but throughout the year,” Timmons said, adding, “The Santa Foundation wishes everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays, and Happy healthy New Year.”

Timmons points out that the Santa Foundation could not operate without its sponsors, and a complete list is available on its website, [www.sfjoy.org](http://www.sfjoy.org). The Santa Foundation can also be found on Facebook. To reach them you can also call (508) 528-4715 or email [hello@sfjoy.org](mailto:hello@sfjoy.org).



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# FISH of Franklin Celebrates 50 years of Service.

On October 18th, 2023, FISH of Franklin celebrated 50 years of dedicated service to the Franklin community, by providing essential transportation services to those unable to drive themselves to medical appointments.

The event was held at Dean College, which catered a delicious meal. The blessing was given by Rev. Doreen Oughton, a member of our Board of Directors and Pastor of the Franklin Federated Church. We were honored by Dottie Goddard, who attended as one of the founding members of FISH. Many of our members have been with FISH for over 40 years.

There were speeches given by previous volunteers and our past president, recognizing our volunteers, and thanking those who had traveled from out of state to attend this amazing celebration. The election for new members of the Board of Directors and Slate of Officers was announced and is as follows:

President: Terry Robbins Vice President: Dee Romsey Secretary: Joanne Solomon Treasurer: Mary Ann McCarthy Assistant Treasurer: Sandy Hunter

Our outgoing President, Barbara Steele, who served FISH for over 12 years, was presented with an engraved crystal bowl as a token of her years of service, commitment, and dedication to FISH.

FISH of Franklin has been able to provide these services thanks to the dedication of our compassionate volunteers. If you are 21 years of age or older and can commit to one day a month to host the telephone line or drive a client to their appointment, please call FISH of Franklin at (508)528-2121. Leave a message, and one of our dedicated volunteers will get back to you.

Even a single day of your time can make a profound difference in the lives of those who need your help the most. Together, we can strengthen the bonds of community, one ride at a time.

# Franklin Elks Host Veterans Luncheon



The Franklin Elks Lodge #2136 on Pond Street was the site of this year's annual Veteran's Day Luncheon, with a packed house for keynote speaker Major Travis Bowser, U.S. Marine Corps (Ret.), shown.

This month, the Veterans Monthly Coffee Social will take place on Dec. 6th at 10 a.m.

On December 7th at 6 p.m., the Franklin Veterans Services Office will partner with Lauren Turner and the nonprofit Warrior Within Yoga Project to offer a free pilot program for yoga classes for Veterans and First Responders from Franklin and surrounding towns. Also, this month, the Army-Navy game will take place at Gillette

Stadium on December 9th, and the American Legion Post 75 will host a watch party. There will also be a watch party at Patriot Place at Helix eSports. For information, contact the Veterans Services Office at (508) 613-1315. [www.warriorwithinyoga.org/schedule](http://www.warriorwithinyoga.org/schedule)



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# New First-Year Program Allows Students to Spend First Year of College Abroad

## Dean College and CIEE Join Forces to Offer Unique Experience for Graduating High School Seniors

Dean College is pleased to announce a new partnership with the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) on an innovative new program: First Year Abroad (FYA). Launching in fall 2024, FYA offers recent high school graduates the opportunity to begin their undergraduate studies with a transformative study abroad experience during their first semester or academic year of college.

Unlike students in a gap year program, FYA participants are enrolled as first-year college students on track to complete their college degree within four years. Rather than waiting until junior year to study abroad, FYA students begin their undergraduate career with a life-changing international experience, developing the capacity to thrive on any campus, in any culture, or in any career.

With over 75 years of experience and educational hubs lo-

cated in more than 28 countries around the world, CIEE has a proven track record of helping students explore new cultures, learn new skills, and achieve their academic goals. Dean College is pleased to partner with CIEE as the Academic Home and School of Record for First Year Abroad.

"It is clear that Dean College and CIEE share similar values – a focus on the student and their success, as well as high academic quality," said Scott Sibley, vice president of academic affairs at Dean College.

"This will be a wonderful opportunity for students to explore the world as they explore college."

Students on CIEE's First Year Abroad program earn college credit during a 12-week semester, taking intro-level classes offered in a wide range of subject areas – including arts, humanities, social sciences, STEM, business, and world languages. Students may

study at one of CIEE's 14 FYA locations for the duration of the 12-week program, or they may design their own program, studying in one location in the fall and another in the spring, or spending six-week academic blocks in multiple locations.

"The wide-ranging offerings will allow for a breadth of study that builds a solid general education framework for further exploration," said Sibley. "First Year Abroad will allow students to see the world around them, and their place in it, in new ways."

Semester programs are offered in Barcelona, Buenos Aires, Kyoto, Monteverde, Prague, Rabat, and Seville. Semester programs allow immersion in up to four courses at once, including those with labs or language classes.

Six-week academic block programs are offered in Berlin, Copenhagen, Dublin, London, Paris, Rome, and Sydney. In a 12-week semester, students can combine six-week academic blocks to study in two different locations or they can spend two six-week academic blocks in a single location. Block courses

are 3 or 4 credits, contain requisite contact hours and content, and count for the same credit as if they were spread out over a traditional semester. This allows for more intense study of fewer subjects at once.

FYA students benefit from on-site support provided by international education professionals with best-in-class health, safety, and security training. The program also offers academic tutoring and First Year Workshops, which focus on valuable life skills such as time and money management, resilience and self-care, goal-setting, problem-solving, and interpersonal communication. Activities and excursions organized by CIEE immerse FYA participants in the local culture as they build friendships with college peers.

"CIEE First Year Abroad offers a unique opportunity for students to begin college with a well-supported global experience that fosters personal and academic growth and lays the groundwork for a successful undergraduate career," said James P. Pellow, president and CEO of CIEE. "This program is for

any student who wants to see the world and enrich their global perspective right at the outset of their college journey."

"CIEE works with more than 400 high schools and 1,000 university partners annually to engage students in global learning experiences. So, we know very well that the first year of college plays a crucial role in a student's academic retention," said Alexandra Wood, vice president of global ventures at CIEE. "We are enthusiastic about collaborating with high school guidance counselors, college advisors, global education offices, and college admissions offices, to establish First Year Abroad as a pathway to college success."

For more information about CIEE's First Year Abroad program, please visit [www.ciee.org/fya](http://www.ciee.org/fya). For more information about Dean College, visit [www.dean.edu](http://www.dean.edu).

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Your Money, Your Independence

# The Clash against the Magnificent Seven



Glenn Brown, CFP

Never before has the S&P 500 been this top-heavy.

The seven largest companies by market capitalization (Apple, Microsoft, Amazon, Alphabet, Nvidia, Meta, and Tesla) comprise more than 29% of the S&P 500 index. These companies dubbed the “Magnificent Seven” have performed very well in 2023.

### The Only Band (of stocks) That Matters?

A November 14th Goldman Sachs report shared that the Magnificent Seven have gained 71% this year while the other 493 stocks in the S&P 500 have gained just 6%.

Given market cap distribution, which allows larger stocks

to contribute more to the index’s movements, the S&P 500 has gained +19% this year.

Thus, if one owns the other 493 stocks but not the Magnificent Seven, they’re trailing the S&P 500 Index by ~13%.

### “Di-worse-ification”?!

As for other asset classes YTD through 11/14:

+9.1% - MSCI EAFE (International) Index.

+7.5% - Gold.

+5.1% - Dow Jones Industrial Average (Apple, Microsoft are components).

+5.0% - MSCI Emerging Markets Index.

+3.4% - U.S. Small Cap (Russell 2000) Index.

+0.4% - U.S. Aggregate Bond Index.

-0.6% - Morningstar U.S. Real Estate Index.

What of dividend stocks? Vanguard’s Dividend Appreciation +7.9% trails S&P 500 Index by ~11% even though its largest holdings Apple and Microsoft are ~9%. It can’t own other Magnificent Seven stocks because they don’t pay dividends (yet).

Before asking, what about NASDAQ 100’s +34.6%? Understand, Magnificent Seven are 44% of that index’s 100 stocks.

### Death or Glory.

Yes, Magnificent Seven 2023 returns are eye-popping, but let’s review 2022 then add together for net total return (not average) from 01/01/22 -11/14/23.

Apple: **2022 -26%**; 2023 +45%; Net +7%

Microsoft: **‘22 -28%**; ‘23 +56%; Net +12%

Amazon: **‘22 -50%**; ‘23 +74; Net -13%

Alphabet: **‘22 -39%**; ‘23 +51%; Net -8%

Nvidia: **‘22 -51%**; ‘23 +240%; Net +69%

Meta: **‘22 -64%**; ‘23 +179%; Net 0%

Tesla: **‘22 -65%**; ‘23 +93%; Net -32%

Still, since 2018 the Magnificent Seven have outpaced the S&P 500 and Nasdaq 100. Not the first time a concentrated group of tech stocks outperformed 5 years to sit near the top of S&P 500.

### The Four Horsemen.

In the late 90s, Dell, Cisco Systems, Intel and Microsoft were deemed The Four Horsemen.

To end 1999, the Top 10 S&P 500 Index holdings were - Microsoft, General Electric, Cisco, ExxonMobil, Wal-Mart, Intel,

Lucent, IBM, America Online and Citigroup. Notice 7 out of Top 10 were technology. Dell was #18, between Nortel Networks and MCI Worldcom.

A “What Happened To...?” article should be done, but understand from 2000-2009, aka “The Lost Decade”, the S&P 500 Index lost -9%. The best performing Four Horseman, Microsoft, had a -36% decline for 2000s.

### Diversification and Equal-Weight at Work.

If S&P 500 was negative for the 2000s, so was everything else. Right?

Nope.

Per indices cited previously, Gold returned +274%, U.S. REITs +162%, Emerging Markets +154%, U.S. Bonds +85%, U.S. Small Caps +44%, and International stocks was +12%.

Additionally, the Equal-Weight S&P 500 Index was +65% for the 2000s.

An equal-weight index is when all components are weighted equally. In today’s terms, a Mag-

nificent Seven stock impacts the same as Lululemon, Hubbell and Blackstone, all recently added to S&P 500 Index.

### Should I Stay or Should I Go?

This isn’t to say sell this or buy that, as everyone’s situation is different with goals, taxes, risk tolerance and timelines. It’s to help educate, understand what you own and why you own it.

You should go to your CFP for your customized recommendations.

*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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# Franklin Police Christmas Toy Drive

The Franklin Police Department will be collecting new and unwrapped toys until December 17th this year. Drop-off will be the lobby of the Franklin Police Department, 911 Panther Way, Franklin. For more information, email arosa@franklinma.gov.



# Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School Accepting Applications

The Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School (BFCCPS), located in Franklin, Massachusetts, has begun accepting applications for the upcoming 2024-2025 school year. BFCCPS is a regional public charter school for students in Kindergarten through Grade Eight. Founded in 1995, BFCCPS is one of the oldest and most successful charter schools in the state of Massachusetts.

Siblings of currently enrolled students will have priority enrollment status; thereafter applicants from communities in the school's district will have a chance at securing a spot for their child through the annual enrollment lottery to be held on February 26, 2024. Applicants from outside of the region (who reside within the state of Massachusetts) will be eligible for enrollment should additional spaces remain after all sibling and regional applicants have been placed.

For the 2024-2025 school year 100 spaces will be offered for Kindergarten and students at all other grade levels will receive a waiting list number. Offers for Grades One through Eight would be contingent upon currently enrolled students electing not to return next year.

The school provides a well-rounded, rigorous academic program designed to educate the whole child providing courses in art,



music, languages, technology, and physical education. In addition to our core academic and co-curricular classes, students in Grade Six through Eight participate in weekly Classical Enrichment Courses and start Latin studies in Grade Six. Middle schoolers are also eligible to participate in our Spring Musical. Students in Grades 5-8 also have the opportunity to participate in overnight field trips each spring.

Round trip bus transportation is available with bus stops currently in Bellingham, Blackstone, Franklin, Norfolk, Mendon, Medway, Milford, Millis, Walpole, and Wrentham.

BFCCPS alumni continue to excel during their attendance at local public high schools

as well as independent high schools.

Please visit the school's website at [www.bfccps.org](http://www.bfccps.org) for enrollment details, including applications. Enrollment information sessions and building tours will be held on January 20th and February 3 from 10am to noon. Please note that the enrollment period will come to a close on February 14, 2024 at 4 p.m.

If you'd like to learn more about the educational mission of the school or have enrollment related questions please contact the school's Communication Coordinator, Joanne Basile at [jbasile@bfccps.org](mailto:jbasile@bfccps.org) or (508) 541-3434 x104.

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# Town Breaks Ground on Beaver Street Sewer Interceptor Replacement Project

On November 9th, the Town of Franklin kicked off the Beaver Street Sewer Interceptor Replacement Project at the Franklin Recreation Center located at 275 Beaver Street.

Town Council Chair, Tom Mercer, welcomed everyone to the groundbreaking and declared “the rehabilitation and realignment of the Beaver Street Interceptor will provide the most cost-effective, long-term solution to the Interceptor’s capacity and structural deficiencies, and will improve accessibility, operational and maintenance challenges as well as environmental impacts for the Town”.

The Beaver Street Interceptor has been in continuous service for 108 years and is considered Franklin’s most critical sewer asset, conveying almost 70 percent of the Town’s sewage with an average daily sewage flow of approximately 1.5 million gallons per day through the pipeline. Other than routine maintenance, no improvements to the interceptor have been made since its original construction in 1914.

According to Franklin’s Department of Public Works Director, Robert Cantoreggi, extensive manhole inspections and cleaning and closed-circuit television inspection of the pipes were last completed in 2013 and 2014. Results of these investigations showed signs of increasing deterioration and worsening conditions of the pipes and manholes, most notably increased tuberculation, cracks, manhole and pipeline infiltration, and root intrusion.

“Due to its age, the risk and consequence of failure, environmental impacts, and the percentage of the Town’s sewer flows conveyed by the interceptor it is imperative we undertake this project and keep Franklin flow-

ing,” stated Cantoreggi.

Liz Taglieri, Executive Director of the Charles River Pollution Control District, recognized the Town’s proactive efforts toward infrastructure and safety. “Seeing the Town of Franklin invest in such a critical piece of its sewer infrastructure demonstrates just how much the Town values its responsibility to safely and effectively collect and transport the wastewater, ensuring the health and safety of not only the Town of Franklin, but also its neighboring communities.”

This project will cost more than \$33 million, funding the Town was able to secure through the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) Division of Municipal Services and State Revolving Fund (SRF) low-interest loan and principal forgiveness program. This program assists cities and towns to improve drinking water, stormwater and wastewater facilities and infrastructure to comply with federal and state quality requirements. Commissioner Bonnie Heiple of MassDEP was present for the groundbreaking ceremony.

The climate crisis has brought significantly increased rainfall and storm impacts that can overwhelm infrastructure that was designed for a different time,” said Commissioner Heiple. “We are pleased to help bring this important project to fruition, as it will have tangible benefits to both public health and the environment.”

The Rehabilitation and Realignment of the Beaver Street Interceptor will improve environmental impacts, access, maintenance, and sanitary sewer overflows. The interceptor includes 59 manholes and approximately 2.3 miles of pipe, extending from the intersection



of Cottage Street and Union Street to the easement behind Pond Street, near the Interstate 495/Route 140 interchange, where it discharges to the Mine Brook Interceptor. The projects consists of re-routing a portion of the existing interceptor, rehabilitating 6,100 linear feet of cured-in-place pipe lining, replacing 2,600 linear feet of the interceptor, upsizing of portions of the interceptor, installing 6,000 linear feet of new force main and gravity sewers, abandonment of 5,000 linear feet of the interceptor, and the construction of one new pump station and its associated force mains.

The extensive interceptor project is anticipated to take about 30 months to complete, ending in the summer of 2026.

For more information on the project, please visit the Department of Public Works website at <https://www.franklinma.gov/water-sewer-division/pages/beaver-street-interceptor>.

## Winter Wonderland at Franklin Senior Center December 14th

The Friends of Franklin Elders and the Franklin Senior Center will present Winter Wonderland, a community holiday light even, on Thursday, December 14th, from 4:30-7 p.m.

Come out for an evening of holiday cheer to see a display of beautifully decorated Holiday Trees and décor while enjoying live entertainment, hot cocoa and cookies, and a visit from

Santa and Mrs. Claus! Fun for the whole family!

The event will take place at the Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin.

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# College Merit Scholarships

*Merit scholarships are more accessible than you think!*

## True or False?

- Merit scholarships are only awarded to students who have financial need. FALSE.
- Merit scholarships are only awarded to students who have straight A's. FALSE.
- Merit scholarships are only awarded to Division I athletes. FALSE.
- Merit scholarships are offered at Ivy League colleges. FALSE.

These are just a few of the many misconceptions about merit scholarships. In reality, a wide range of students are eligible for merit scholarships- not just a select few. And, with the cost of higher education increasing each year, scholarships are becoming an essential way to help fund a college education. It is important to know the facts.

## What's True?

- Merit scholarships are a type of financial aid that is not awarded based on the family's financial need but determined by the student's

demonstrated academic and/or personal achievement during their high school years. Merit scholarships are often awarded based on a student's grade point average, standardized test scores, extracurricular activities, community service, leadership, work, major, or unique talents.

- Many colleges offer merit scholarships to attract students that include athletes, artists, musicians, leaders, and community service volunteers. College Alumni Associations may also offer merit to students who live in a specific geographical area, excel in a certain subject, or have demonstrated all-around commitment to their high school. Awards are often given to encourage diversity, participation in certain majors, and increase enrollment for out-of- state students. To take advantage of merit awards, families should carefully research each college website for merit award opportunities.

- Colleges are the largest resource for merit scholarships. It is a common practice for colleges to automatically award merit scholarships upon a student's acceptance if the student meets the academic requirements. Although some colleges may require a separate application, interview, supplemental essay, audition review, or portfolio review to award the student a merit scholarship. It is important to understand the merit process for each college - research the college website!
- A student is more likely to earn a merit scholarship at a school where they would be considered a top student in the applicant pool, such as a "likely" school versus a "reach" school. A college that is considered a "likely" for a student could open the door for the student to be admitted into the college's Honors program which could result in a larger merit scholarship.

- Though the great majority of colleges offer merit scholarships, there are several colleges that do not. The Ivy League schools, along with many of the top selective schools, generously meet full-financial need, but do not offer academic merit. Review the admission and financial aid webpage for each college to determine the merit opportunities.
- The Net Price Calculator (NPC), available on all college websites, allows families to input the family's financials to determine an estimate of their need-based financial aid. Several of the private colleges allow families to input both the student's academic profile and family financials which will then provide an estimate of their need-based financial aid and merit scholarships that the student may receive.
- Researching non-need based merit scholarships and need-based financial aid should begin early in the admissions process so that families can have a realistic view of the colleges that will align with the family's financial college budget. Searching and



**Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants**

applying for scholarships does not need to be difficult. Here are 7 great options for finding scholarships: Going Merry, Fastweb, Scholarship.com, Chegg Scholarships, The College Board Big-Future, and the individual college websites. The high school's Guidance Counseling office is also a good resource for local scholarship opportunities.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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## FPAC to present Steve Martin & Edie Brickell's *Bright Star*

The Franklin Performing Arts Company (FPAC) is excited to present the musical *Bright Star* January 5-7 at THE BLACK BOX.

Featuring the Tony-nominated score by Steve Martin and Edie Brickell, Broadway's *Bright Star* tells a sweeping tale of love and redemption set against the rich backdrop of the American South in the 1920s and '40s. When literary editor Alice Murphy meets a young soldier just home from World War II, he awakens her longing for the child she once lost. Haunted by their unique connection, Alice sets out on a journey to understand her past—and what she finds has the power to transform both of their lives.

With beautiful Bluegrass melodies and powerfully moving characters, the story unfolds as a rich tapestry of deep emotion.

An uplifting theatrical journey that holds audiences tightly in its grasp, *Bright Star* is as refreshingly genuine as it is daringly hopeful. Directed by FPAC Artistic Director Raye Lynn Mercer, with music direction by Hallie Wetzell, and choreography by Hannah Rezendes.

The production stars New York City actors Ali Funkhouser as Alice Murphy, Robbie Rescigno as Jimmy Ray, Kyle Dalsimer as Billy Cane, and University of Tampa Musical Theatre Junior Kelsey Breslin as Margo.

FPAC is an Actors' Equity Small Professional Theater company based at THE BLACK BOX in downtown Franklin. Each season, FPAC produces musicals, plays, ballets, and more featuring Broadway stars, professional actors, local artists, and students of the arts. Follow



**TOP ROW L to R: Ali Funkhouser, Robbie Rescigno, BOTTOM ROW L to R: Kyle Dalsimer, Kelsey Breslin**

Franklin Performing Arts Company and THE BLACK BOX on Facebook and Instagram for updates on programming.

Tickets for FPAC's *Bright Star* and other shows are available at FPAConline.com or by calling the box office at (508) 528-3370.

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# Proposals for Cultural Initiatives Sought through December 12th

The Franklin Cultural District Committee (FCDC) has received a Cultural District Investment Grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council for fiscal year 2024. The FCDC is reaching out to FCD Partners for funding proposals for cultural initiatives planned in the District. Please select the following links for additional information:

FY24 FCD Funding Request Form (<https://tinyurl.com/FY-2024FCDFundingReqform>)

MCC Credit & Publicity Requirements (<https://tinyurl.com/MCC-Credit-Publicity-Req>)

Reimbursement Request Form (<https://tinyurl.com/227dp35u>)

If you have a project/initiative that will benefit and promote culture in our community and want to request some funding, please complete the Funding Request Form and return it by December 12, 2023, to:

Bryan Taberner, Director of Planning and Community Development, [btaberner@franklinma.gov](mailto:btaberner@franklinma.gov)

The FCDC will discuss the proposals at its meeting on Thursday, December 14 at 7 p.m. scheduled to be held in-person at Franklin TV, 23 Hutchinson Street, Franklin.

All funds awarded need to be spent by June 30, 2024.

# Franklin Garden Club Decorates Holiday Wreaths & Arrangements to Sell



The Franklin Garden Club will sell decorated holiday wreaths and cemetery arrangements on Saturday, December 2, from 9:30 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Daddario's Hardware Store, 528 West Central Street, Franklin, MA. The sales will benefit several different club activities. In addition, holiday fresh floral arrangements will be sold on Instagram and Facebook beginning December 16. The Franklin Garden Club Instagram handle is @franklingardenclubma. Payment

for all purchases can be made with cash, check, credit card or Venmo.

"We are very excited to offer area residents the opportunity to purchase beautiful holiday wreaths and arrangements created by members of the Franklin Garden Club," say Club Co-Presidents Pat Donnelly and Mary Anne Dean, "This will help those who may not have the time to decorate their own wreaths or make arrangements, while also assisting the Club. All proceeds

will benefit Garden Club activities, including the Club scholarship, pine tree seedling program for elementary school students, some of the Franklin Common and library plantings, and education programs open to the public.

The Franklin Garden Club is a member of the Garden Club Federation of Massachusetts.

# Toy Trains and Christmas the Focus of December 2nd Sunday Speaker Series

Toy Trains and Christmas — From Lionel to Thomas the Tank Engine

For well over 100 years, toy trains have been synonymous with Christmas. On December 10th, at the Franklin Historical Museum, Commission member, Scott Mason, will discuss this



phenomenon in a presentation

that will focus on why and how this came to be and will be sure to

bring back holiday memories for all attendees.

The doors open at 1 p.m., and the presentation will begin at 1:15 p.m. Admission is always free. Please consider donating a non-perishable item for the Franklin Food Pantry when visiting the Museum this season.



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# The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

## The Beauty in Kindness

BY GINA WOELFEL

There is a commonly held belief that kindness is like snow in that it can beautify everything it touches. Despite the harshness of New England winters, a certain peacefulness and serenity envelop us when a fresh layer of snow blankets the landscape. This magical stillness beckons us to slow down and appreciate the beauty of the present moment.

As the holiday season approaches, it's easy to get distracted by the endless shopping and sale announcements, which can take us away from the true spirit of this time of year. Our message to you is to slow down and step away from the hustle and bustle. Plan your shopping ahead of time, wrap and store your gifts early, and use the extra time to do what you love. By simplifying your routine, you can focus on what truly matters this holiday season - spending quality time with the ones you love.

This year, we've organized a special event with our co-workers to take a break from our busy schedules and celebrate the end of the year. The b.LUXE Team is hitting



the roller rink for a Grinch-themed, old-school skating party, complete with ugly sweaters! We're fortunate to have a team of women who support and care for each other, and we look forward to celebrating this relationship. Skating the night away together will be an unforgettable evening.

Our team is deeply committed to giving back to the community, especially during the holiday season. Our responsibility is to positively impact the community; we're proud to do our part. This month, we supported The Franklin Food Pantry with donations and an afternoon packing holiday gift baskets. We also sponsored The Medway Village Food Pantry Toy Drive with gifts for children ages 13-17. Recently, we had the pleasure of hosting the Franklin Senior Center at our studio, where we treated them to a day of beauty. It was a fantastic experience and one

### Holiday Gift Card Specials

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# Dean College Announces Exciting Growth in Life Science and Health Programs

## New Initiatives Supported by a \$600K Grant from Massachusetts Life Sciences Center (MLSC)

Thanks to a \$600K grant from the MLSC, Dean College is excited to introduce new, advanced scientific equipment to support students and new offerings in the sciences. By growing our programs, the College will be able to support the increasing demand for well-trained lab technicians and research assistants in the local life sciences industry, particularly from low-income and under-represented groups, as well as additional opportunities in manufacturing, project management and sales.

“This is an exciting time for the sciences at Dean,” said Scott Sibley, vice president of academic affairs. “This grant and the new equipment will provide Dean students with important skills that will enhance their laboratory experiences and allow for signature work.”

The MLSC grant will enable Dean to invest in new equipment and modernized lab space, which will allow for students to experience more real-world applications in the classroom. It will also ensure the science offerings at Dean remain competitive and relevant to the current life sciences landscape and prepare students to join the workforce in a variety of roles.

New equipment being introduced for student use includes spectrophotometers, a high-performance liquid chromatograph, tissue culture equipment, and virtual reality software for anatomy and physiology. The College will also be able to upgrade core pieces of equipment, such as fume hoods, that will enable it to offer organic chemistry and other pre-med requirements to better prepare students for medi-

cal school and other life science careers that require a chemistry background.

Both the equipment and the grant will also support the growth of new programs recently introduced at Dean, including pre-physician assistant and pre-physical therapy tracks in biology, pre-athletic training and pre-physical therapy tracks in exercise science, and a new minor in public health.

The College’s new tracks in pre-physical assistant, pre-physical therapy and pre-athletic training were developed to address increased student demand and better prepare students to pursue advanced degrees and certifications in these fields. The new minor in public health aims to explore the intersection of science and policy and appeal to students interested in health-related careers.

“Our new programs build on our solid foundation and will provide students with new options for exploration and career opportunities,” said Sibley. “All of these programs keep our excellent teaching and mentorship at the core, part of what we call The Dean Difference.”

These expanded STEM and life science offerings are part of continued growth at Dean. The College has also recently introduced more hybrid and online classes, minors in cybersecurity and neuroscience, and expanded study away options to enhance the baccalaureate experience and provide more opportunities for students.

For more information, visit [www.dean.edu](http://www.dean.edu).

# Ballet Franklin at FSPA Continues Enrollment in Pre-Professional Ballet Program

Ballet Franklin, the ballet conservatory at the Franklin School for the Performing Arts, is continuing to welcome new students in the new year.

Under the direction of Cheryl Madeux, Ballet Franklin offers the highest quality of classical ballet education and training in the area. They also provide their dancers with a wide variety of performance opportunities for all ages and levels interested in the study of classical ballet. Ballet Franklin graduates and students have been accepted to some of the most prestigious trainee, college, and summer ballet programs available.

The scope of the curriculum provides unparalleled opportunities for dancers to pursue programs tailored to their interests, abilities, and needs. From beginner students seeking to establish a solid foundation in classical ballet technique, to advanced dancers focused on refining artistry, musicality, and performance qualities, all will find a home to train, grow, and develop at Ballet Franklin.

Ballet Franklin Director and Instructor Cheryl Madeux, a Connecticut native, received her training at the Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts under the



direction of Sharon Dante and Donna Bonasera. She has enjoyed a long professional career, dancing with such venerable companies as the Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and principal dancer with the Hartford Ballet under the direction of Kirk Peterson. Madeux performed extensively throughout the United States and Europe and has been coached by such ballet luminaries as Igor Youskevitch and Eleanor D’Antuono.

Every student is encouraged to audition for FPAC Holiday Productions’ *The Nutcracker*, which is performed with

a professional orchestra and special guest artists, such as Boston Ballet Principals Erica Cornejo and Paulo Arrais and Soloists Dalay Parrondo and Bradley Schlagheck. Conservatory dancers have the extra opportunity to participate in Ballet Franklin’s Spring Ballet Production as well as audition for FSPA ensembles and dance company opportunities offered throughout the year. The programs are designed to expand knowledge of the classics and explore contemporary ballet and original works by faculty or guest artists. Past Spring Ballet productions have included *Alice in Wonderland*, Prokofiev’s *Cinderella Suite*, *Coppelia*, *Graduation Ball*, Tchaikovsky’s *Swan Lake*, Prokofiev’s *Peter and the Wolf*, *Les Patineurs*, and Britten’s *Young Person’s Guide to the Orchestra*. Repertory Concerts include classical and contemporary original works.

The Franklin School for the Performing Arts invites the community to stop by 38 Main Street to tour the facilities, observe classes, speak with faculty and staff, and learn more about all FSPA programs in music, dance, and drama, whether for recreational enjoyment or serious study

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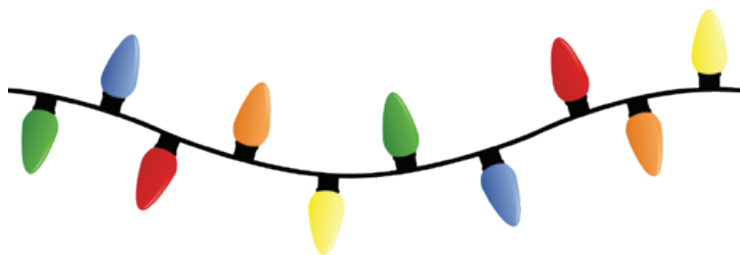
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# Living Healthy

## What is this bump on my eyelid?

### Causes and treatment of chalazion

By: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.

tion and its management.

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A chalazion, commonly known as a sty, is a small, painless lump that forms on the eyelid due to a blocked meibomian gland. This obstruction leads to the accumulation of oil and subsequent swelling. Although generally harmless, a chalazion can cause discomfort and aesthetic concerns. In this article, we will explore the multifaceted aspects of chalazion, including its origins, the potential role of Demodex mites, and whether a connection exists between a chalazion and domestic pets. Furthermore, we will delve into the significance of Xdemvy in the treatment of Demodex blepharitis, offering readers a thorough understanding of this very common ocular condi-

#### Origins of Chalazion

A chalazion primarily stems from the occlusion of meibomian glands, responsible for secreting oils that lubricate the eyes. Several factors contribute to this occlusion, including:

- 1-Hypersecretion of Sebum: Excessive oil production can lead to the thickening of the sebum, hindering its proper flow from the gland.
- 2-Bacterial Infections: Infections can incite inflammation and glandular obstruction, culminating in the formation of a chalazion.
- 3-Demodex Mite Influence: Demodex mites, micro-

scopic organisms that inhabit hair follicles, including those on the eyelids, have been suggested to play a role in chalazion development. Studies indicate that an overpopulation of these mites may contribute to meibomian gland blockage, though further research is needed to establish a conclusive link.

#### The Role of Demodex Mites in Chalazion Development

Demodex mites, tiny arachnids that naturally inhabit human skin and hair follicles, are commonly found in the eyelid area and in particular on the eyelashes. While their presence is considered normal in some cases, an excess of Demodex mites could potentially contribute to meibomian gland blockage, lead-



ing to the formation of a chalazion. Demodex mites infestation has been found in 50% of children with chalazion compared to no mites in healthy controls. This mite was also associated with recurrent and multiple chalazion. Ongoing research aims to elucidate the precise relationship between Demodex mites and chalazion, seeking to determine their significance as a contributing factor to the condition.

#### Chalazion and Pets

Although owning cats or dogs is not directly linked to chalazion, it is important to note that Demodex mites are also prevalent in pets. Consequently, individuals who have close contact with pets, especially those that share sleeping spaces or maintain frequent physical proximity, may face a potential of Demodex mite transmission. It is crucial to emphasize that chalazion is not

an inevitable consequence of pet ownership. Many factors enter in the equation including the owner immune system strength.

#### The Significance of Xdemvy in Demodex Blepharitis Treatment

Xdemvy, a topical medication, plays a pivotal role in the treatment of Demodex blepharitis, a condition characterized by an overpopulation of Demodex mites on the eyelids. This innovative formulation contains targeted ingredients designed to effectively combat Demodex mites, alleviating symptoms and facilitating recovery. Xdemvy has demonstrated remarkable efficacy in clinical trials, making it a valuable addition to the arsenal of treatments for Demodex-related ocular conditions.

EYES

*continued on page 17*



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# The Delcarte Conservation Program – An Open Space Jewel for Franklin

By SYDNEY KEANE

If you've lived in or visited Franklin over the past 23 years, it's likely that you've spent a fair weather day enjoying the DelCarte Open Space Area. This 136-acre swath of land was donated to the town by Ernest DelCarte after his passing in October 2000. Known to many as the Franklin Reservoir, this now conservation land includes two ponds, a boat launch, a playground, and several trails protected from development. As such, several species of plants, mammals, and fish thrive in this vast ecosystem; however, this

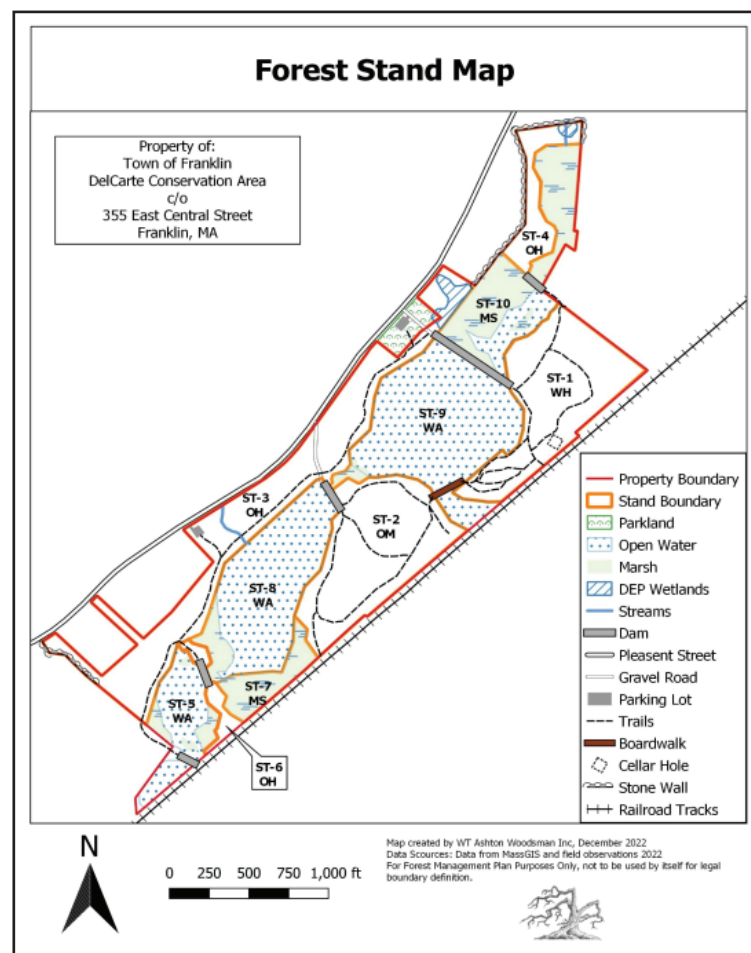
includes a number of invasive species like variable milfoil and water chestnut.

To truly take the best care of this conservation land, the Franklin Conservation Commission and the Franklin Conservation Dept. has taken on a number of initiatives, most notably an ecological and management 2016 study on the ponds. This lengthy study was released in early 2016 and included an assessment of the various species and resources in the area with maps and a nutrient budget. The study also gets into a number of approaches to both short-term and long-term habi-

tat improvement for increasing the biodiversity in the Delcarte Open Space Area. This included one project through which the Franklin Conservation Commission worked in tandem with BETA Engineering, the Environmental Protection Agency, and wetlands scientists to determine the best approach for handling invasive vegetation with herbicides. Highly competitive plants like these limit a diverse ecosystem by reducing resources available to other species, in this case, other plants with roots on the bottom of the ponds.

The ponds are a major focus of conservation with the species that make up the wetlands being of major interest to the 2016 study, but the greater DelCarte Open Space Area as a whole offers connection to countless land and aquatic species alike in thriving, protected ecosystems with little human interference. This is also part of what makes this space ideal for visitors looking to be immersed within nature, so long as they abide by the rule of leaving the area as they found it.

For recreational purposes, there are a number of options for visitors such as fishing, boating, birding, and jogging; the main expectation of visitors being they do not disrupt the nature living around them. An online guide available through the Town of Franklin website offers an overview of the entire area including its three trails: the Triangle Trail, the Circle Trail, and the Square Trail. The guide also includes a description of several birds, plants, and animals that



## EYES

*continued from page 16*

### Comprehensive Treatment Options

**Warm Compresses:** Applying a warm compress to the affected eyelid for intervals of 10-15 minutes, several times a day, serves to soften the blockage and facilitate natural drainage. This simple yet effective technique can significantly alleviate discomfort.

**Eyelid Massages:** After applying a warm compress, gently massaging the eyelid in a circular motion can further aid in releasing the obstructed oil and hasten the resolution of the chalazion.

**Antibiotic Ointments or Drops:** In instances where bacterial infection is suspected, a healthcare provider may prescribe topical antibiotics to combat the infection and expedite the healing process.

**Xdemvy Application:** In cases of Demodex-related ocular conditions, Xdemvy serves as a highly effective treatment option, targeting Demodex mites directly and aiding in their elimination.

**Steroid Injections:** For more persistent or severe chalazion, your ophthalmologist may administer a steroid injection to mitigate inflammation and hasten resolution.

**Surgical Drainage:** In cases where other treatments prove ineffective, a minor surgical procedure may be performed to create a small incision for drainage. This option is reserved for particularly stubborn or large chalazion.

## Conclusion

Chalazion, while generally benign, can be an uncomfortable and visually noticeable condition. Understanding the potential causes, including factors such as Demodex mites, and discerning the potential connection with pets, can aid individuals in effectively managing this ocular ailment. Incorporating innovative treatments like Xdemvy in the management of Demodex-related ocular conditions adds a powerful tool to the healthcare provider's armamentarium. Should one suspect the presence of a chalazion or Demodex-related blepharitis, seeking consultation with your eyecare provider is paramount for accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment. With 2 full-time external disease specialists on staff, 7 ophthalmologists and optometrists, 3 locations including a surgery center in Milford, our eye centers offer state-of-the-art equipment to diagnose and treat eye problems, including chalazion. We have published research papers and lectured to other physicians on the subject. We are now a referral center for difficult cases of ocular surface disease, chalazion and ocular rosacea. We continue our mission to provide world class eye care for the entire family.

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inhabit the space, indicating which are invasive and offering brief descriptions of each.

Since opening to the public, the open space area has been under constant care from the Conservation Commission of Franklin looking to add improvements for both the public and the native species alike. Some of these projects have included the building of the playground and the addition of a boat launch for people looking to take canoes on the pond. Along with the trails, boating in the ponds is a great way for visitors to become fully immersed

in the nature around them without disrupting the balance of the surrounding ecosystem.

Located at Pleasant Street and Greystone Road in Franklin, the DelCarte Conservation Area is worth the visit whether you grew up going there or have never been before. When times are hectic and pollution is affecting the daily lives of people in both urban and rural areas, we are lucky to have a sanctuary so nearby to go to breathe in fresh air and connect with nature from a respectful distance.

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# Calendar

## December 1

**Dean College, Franklin Public Schools, and Franklin Public Library** present *"Diary of a Dreamer,"* by Fatima Wojohat, artistic collaboration with dance, music, poetry, and visual art, 3-5 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

## December 2

**Christmas Fair, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.,** St. John's Episcopal Church, 237 Pleasant St., Franklin, Gift Baskets, Silent Auction, **Handcrafted items, Raffle, Cookie Walk, Wreaths and Greenery, Snack Bar (508) 528-2387,** Facebook: St John's Episcopal Church, www.stjohnsfranklinma.org

**Franklin Garden Club Holiday Wreath and Arrangement Sale, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.** at Daddario's Hardware Store, 528 West Central Street, Franklin, MA. Holiday fresh floral arrangements will also be sold on Facebook and Instagram beginning December 16. On Instagram: @franklingardenclubma.

**Downtown Franklin (circa 1932) Model Railway Exhibit** opens at Franklin Historical Museum, 80 West Central St., Franklin, Exhibit available to view during museum hours, Saturdays 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., Sundays 1-4 p.m., through early January. Free admission, please consider bringing donation for Franklin Food Pantry.

**Ellis Paul, with special guest Grace Morrison, 8 p.m.,** Circle of Friends Coffeehouse, 262 Chestnut St., Franklin, MA, doors open 7:30 p.m., \$25, smoke- and alcohol-free, desserts available. www.circlefolk.org

**Greater Milford Community Chorus Holiday Concert, 7:30 p.m.,** Milford Town Hall, \$12 at the door; children ten and under are welcome for free. There will be exciting raffle baskets to win, and refreshments served.

**Revolutionary Snake Ensemble, with special guest Brian Roche, 8 p.m.,** Niagara Firehouse, 8 Exchange St., Millis, MA, doors open at 7:30 p.m., refreshments available, sponsored by Middlesex Savings Bank, supported by Millis Cultural Council, local state agency. Tickets at Eventbrite or email niagaracoffeehaus@gmail.com

## December 3

**Santa and Mrs. Claus at Franklin Police Department Greater Milford Community Chorus Holiday Concert, 1:30 p.m.,** Milford Town Hall, \$12 at

the door; children ten and under are welcome for free. There will be exciting raffle baskets to win, and refreshments served.

## December 5

**Baking Demo and Discussion with Chef Erin Jeanne McDowell (Virtual Program), 7 p.m.,** Franklin Public Library, register on library's calendar of events.

## December 8

**SAFE Coalition Jack Frost Jubilee, 4-8 p.m.,** Proctor Mansion, 36 Common St., Wrentham, MA, includes Santa, reindeer, stories, sweet treats, \$20 adults, kids free, www.safecoalitionma.org/jubilee

**Santa Claus Pizza Party, Franklin Recreation Program, 5:30-7 p.m.,** Franklin Recreation Gymnasium, 275 Beaver St., Franklin, https://franklinma.myrec.com to register.

**Giant Menorah Lighting at Gilly's House, 6:30 p.m.,** 1022 West St., Wrentham, Chanukah donuts, hot apple cider, chocolate gelt, lively Chanukah music, free raffle

**Franklin Library Book Sale, 1-5 p.m.,** Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, All books are just one dollar!

## December 9

**Holiday Cookie Walk, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m.,** First Universalist Society in Franklin, 262 Chestnut St., Franklin, choose treats from over 30 bakers, cookies \$10/lb., containers provided.

**Franklin Library Book Sale, 9 a.m. to 12 Noon,** Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, All books are just one dollar!

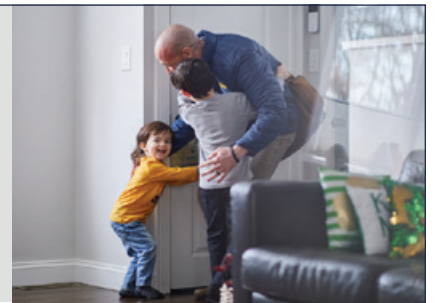
**Exsultet! holiday concert "Listening to the Snow," 7 p.m.** First Congregational Church, 725 Washington Street, Holliston, MA, tickets \$20; students & seniors (65+) \$15; children 12 and under free at www.exsultet.us or call Stacey at (508) 395-5600.

**Holiday Pop, 7:30-10 p.m.,** presented by the Claflin Hill Symphony Orchestra, Milford Town Hall, 52 Main St., Milford. Come celebrate winter's magic with the CHSO and Greater Milford Community Chorus where The Grand Ballroom is transformed into a winter wonderland! The warm sounds of the holidays will fill the hall with festive seasonal favorites, including a holiday sing-along and a visit from jolly ol' St. Nick! https://www.claflinhill.org/symphony-series/symphony

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## December 10

**Toy Trains and Christmas, 1:15 p.m.,** Scott Mason presents in Second Sunday Speaker Series at Franklin Historical Museum, 80 West Central St., Franklin, doors open 1 p.m. Free admission, please consider bringing donation for Franklin Food Pantry

**Joy to the World, Celebrations around the Globe, 2 p.m.,** presented by Charles River Chorale, Medway High School Auditorium, 88 Summer St., Medway, Tickets \$20 adults, \$15 students and seniors, https://www.charlesriverchorale.com/tickets

**Exsultet! holiday concert "Listening to the Snow," 2 p.m.,** Allin Congregational Church, 683 High Street, Dedham, MA, tickets \$20; students & seniors (65+) \$15; children 12 and under free at www.exsultet.us or call Stacey at (508) 395-5600.

## December 11

**All that Glitters is Gold: The Art of Gustav Klimt, 7 p.m.,** Hybrid Program through Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, join in person or register on the library's *Calendar of Events*

## December 13

**Franklin Newcomers & Friends Annual Yankee Swap, 7 p.m.,** Escape Into Fiction, 12 Main St., Franklin, Bring a wrapped gift (\$20 limit) and get one in return. Refreshments from Birchwood. Open to residents of Franklin or surrounding towns without a newcomer's club. https://www.meetup.com/Franklin-Newcomers-Friends https://www.facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersCraftFair/

## December 14

**Friends of Franklin Elders and Franklin Senior Center present Winter Wonderland: a**

**Community Holiday Light Event, 4:30-7 p.m.,** 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin, Come out for an evening of holiday cheer to see a display of beautifully decorated Holiday Trees and décor while enjoying Live Entertainment, Hot Cocoa & Cookies, and a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus! Fun for the whole family! For further details, call (508) 520-4945

**Forget the Fruitcake: Edible Gift Ideas, 6 p.m.,** Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin,

*Live event with samples, For Samples Register on Library's Calendar of Events*

## December 15

**GlenPharmer Distillery presents Martin and Kelly for a Holiday Concert and Dinner.** Ticketed Event. Visit https://glenpharmer.com for more information.

**Holliston Dancing Arts Center presents The Nutcracker, Norwood Theatre.** Student matinee tickets available for groups 12/15. For more info. see https://norwoodstage.com/the-nutcracker-2023

## December 16

**GlenPharmer Distillery presents Martin and Kelly for a Holiday Concert and Dinner.** 860 West Central St., Franklin, Ticketed Event. Visit https://glenpharmer.com for more information.

**Holliston Dancing Arts Center presents The Nutcracker, Norwood Theatre.** For more info. see https://norwoodstage.com/the-nutcracker-2023

## December 17

**Holliston Dancing Arts Center presents The Nutcracker, Norwood Theatre.** For more info. see https://norwoodstage.com/the-nutcracker-2023

## December 23

**Holiday Jazz, 2 p.m.,** Free concert from The RENAISSANCE V BRASS QUINTET led by Al Testa, Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

## December 26

**Scott Martell Magic Show! 10:30 a.m.,** Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, great for ages 4-12

## December 27

**Music at the Blissful Concert! 10:30 a.m.,** Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, music for children and their grownups

## December 28

**Interactive Puppet Storytime! 10:30 a.m.,** Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, 30-minute program followed by puppet free play session for kids.

## December 29

**Noon Year's Eve Party! 11 a.m.,** Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

Let's sendoff 2023 in style! Join us for an end of the year bash as we ring in 2024 early! We'll have snacks, games, and a super new year's celebration! See you there!

## December 31

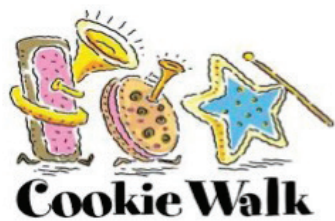
**FUSF New Year's Labrynth Walk, 5-7 p.m.,** 262 Chestnut St., Franklin

**Light Up Franklin, 6 p.m.** start to light your candle luminaries, purchase them by December 15th https://givebutter.com/FYyxyE, pick up 12/17, 2-4 p.m. and 12/27, 1-3 p.m. at Franklin Historical Museum, 80 West Central St., Franklin, benefits Franklin Boy Scout troop 126, with a portion to Franklin Food Pantry and Franklin Historical Society

# FUSF to Hold Holiday Cookie Walk

December 9, 2023 - 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) will hold their first annual "Holiday Cookie Walk" on Saturday, December 9, 2023 from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. Come and stroll through the festively decorated Meetinghouse at 262 Chestnut St, Franklin, as you select from a delicious assortment of homemade treats provided by more than 30 bakers. You are sure to find the perfect confections for your holiday table, a hostess gift, or your next



party. Cookies will be available for sale by pound. Containers, decorated with your choice of holiday sticker, will be provided. Make this event part of your holiday fun!

## Not just for Newcomers . . .

Come join your Franklin friends and neighbors at the Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club annual Holiday Yankee Swap. Join us Wednesday, December 13th, 7 p.m. at Escape Into Fiction, 12 Main Street, Downtown Franklin. The night will include our Holiday-themed trivia contest and our Yankee Swap. Bring a wrapped gift (\$20 limit) and get one in return. Prizes are awarded to trivia winners, and we'll be serving refreshments from Birchwood.

We are a multi-generational, member-driven organization and are always excited to welcome new faces and new ideas. Residents of Franklin, or any surrounding town that doesn't have a Newcomers Club, are welcome to join us.

In addition to our bi-monthly meetings, we hold fun and varied events to stay connected throughout the year. Upcoming meetings will be held in February and April. For more information: <https://www.meetup.com/Franklin-Newcomers-Friends> <https://www.facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersCraftFair/>



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## Families Share the Stage in *Humbug!*

When the curtain rises on "*Humbug!*," a contemporary musical adaptation of Charles Dickens' "*A Christmas Carol*," presented by FPAC Holiday Productions, several local families will share the stage.

The FPAC original features sets of parents and their children, siblings, and friends that are like family as part of a large ensemble cast of over 100 professional artists, community performers and students of the arts.

"Live theater creates a space where we can come together and have a collective experience," says Mireille Eastman, mother of two "*Humbug!*" student cast members Ameline and Emmett Eastman. She has previously also performed in the production along with her husband, Charley Eastman, and all three of their children. "We are incredibly grateful for the opportunity to be involved in '*Humbug!*' as a family. Sharing our passion for live theater with our children has brought us all closer together."

The show also features mother/daughter pairs Kylie and

**Business  
spotlight**

Edna Bodiya, Kim and Baree Frigon, Lindsay and Lila Hartman, Kristin and Polly Palson, and Robin and Zoey Tucker. Siblings Christopher and Owen Charles, Katie and Helena Cornwell, Jenna and Anna Cusano, Julia and DJ Ormond, Brodie and Devin DeAngelis, Aida and Julian DiChiara, Kayla and Macie Hoben, Liam and Grayson Kerrigan, Matthew and Shane Packard, and Charlotte and Katherine Weldon all perform together as well as married couples Tim and Liz Ayres-Kerr and Greg Leach and Michele Webster.

Youth development in the arts is a special focus of FPAC, founded in 1991 by Artistic Director Raye Lynn Mercer. Productions provide ongoing opportunities for families to connect through the arts, with multiple generations sharing rehearsals and time on stage together.

A family favorite since debuting as part of FPAC's 2008-09 season, "*Humbug!*" is conceived, written and directed by Franklin's Nick Paone, who also stars as Scrooge. The musical features Dickens' familiar characters and story, but re-imagines the classic tale in contemporary America for a modern audience with updated references to current events and pop culture. The storyline is supported by musical hits of many genres with live accompaniment by a 10-piece band of professional musicians.

"*Humbug!*" will be performed on Saturday, Dec. 16 at 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday, Dec. 17, at 2 p.m. at the Franklin High School auditorium.

Raye Lynn Mercer co-directs the production, with musical direction by Hallie Wetzell and choreography by Kellie Stamp, Mercer, and Paone. Tickets are available at [www.FPAConline.com](http://www.FPAConline.com), or at (508) 528-3370. Remaining tickets will be sold at the door.

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## Get a Head Start on the Holiday at St. John's Christmas Fair

Get a head start on your holiday shopping at St. John's Episcopal Church Christmas Fair on Saturday, Dec. 2nd from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 237 Pleasant Street, Franklin.

You will find lots of gift cards from popular restaurants and stores. Browse among many silent auction and raffle items. There's something for everyone among the gift baskets like sports; spa, health and wellness; food and wine; coffees and teas; games



Shown is a volunteer from last year's Christmas Fair at St. John's. Join them this year for more fun!

and toys; pet items. For those who appreciate unique items handmade with love, you'll find decorative holiday greenery, scarves, mittens, hats and blankets. Pick out your favorite treats like cookies, fudge and other baked goods at the Cookie Walk. Food and drinks will be served during the fair.

For more information: Call (508) 528-2387, Facebook at St. John's Episcopal Church, or visit [www.stjohnsfranklinma.org](http://www.stjohnsfranklinma.org).

## Sports

# Seniors Looking to Go Out on Top

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The Franklin boys' basketball team finished 18-1 last winter enroute to capturing the Hockomock League Championship. Unfortunately, the Panthers, who were awarded the number three seed in the Division 1 State Tournament, quickly found themselves packing their bags and heading home for the year. After destroying Weymouth 62-49, the boys of Franklin were upset in the second round by 14th seed Brockton, 56-47.

"We had ourselves a pretty good season last year; things just didn't go our way in the tournament," Franklin Coach CJ Neely said. "We lost four seniors, three of them were starters, but honestly, coming into this season, we have a strong senior class, and I believe we can go back-to-back in the league."

One of the biggest reasons that Neely is so high on this year's season is the return of co-captain and Hockomock League MVP, Sean O'Leary. The senior has already committed to playing basketball on the collegiate level with Bates College in Lewiston, Maine. The Panther Coach likes the fact that O'Leary is a versatile athlete that he can use in so many different ways on the court.

"He can post up or shoot the three. He plays a lot with his back to the net and has a great put back shot," the Franklin Coach said. "If a bigger guy is covering him, he can dribble past him, while if he's up against someone smaller and move them inside to get to the net,"

In addition to being named the league MVP during his junior campaign, O'Leary is on track to record his 1,000 point for the Panthers this season. Being one that averages just under 20 points a game, the task should be a rather easy one. According to the Coach, O'Leary didn't see all that much time on the court as a freshman because of COVID. Otherwise, his number would be much higher.

Another senior returning to join O'Leary will be Hansy Jacques, who has worked extremely hard this past off-sea-



**With strong senior players at the helm, Franklin High boys' basketball coach CJ Nealey has high hopes for the season. Shown, co-captain Sean O'Leary makes a play.** Photo used courtesy of Kirsten O'Leary

son and should also be able to put up some good numbers as Franklin looks to take home the league title once again. Having been the 6th or 7th person off the bench last year, Jacques was able to log a good number of minutes for the Panthers. Last winter, his numbers were not all that impressive, averaging about 7 points per game, but Neely is looking for him to double those numbers this winter. The Coach would be totally surprised if Jacques doesn't score between 13 and 16 points per contest this year.

"Hansy also has a good chance to be recruited and play on the next level. So far, he has not decided where he would like to play," Neely said. "He's a long athlete that plays above the rim and can shoot from the outside. He is also very quick and can slash to the net."

Having O'Leary and Jacques gives the Panthers two talented individuals that should give Franklin the opportunity to do a lot of good on the court this season.

The other co-captain, Andrew O'Neill, will most likely spot up on the wing. He is a great defensive player for the Panthers and will get the ball moving in the right direction.

"He can shoot the ball and facilitate," the Coach said. "He really doesn't get the publicity he deserves; he does a lot of the dirty work for the team and is the engine that keeps the team running."

The final senior starter will be point guard Bradley Herdon. Like the other three starters, he, too, is a soccer player for Franklin and should once again play a lot of minutes this season at the point guard position.

Neely noted that Herdon is one of the best passers on the squad and can put a ton of pressure on the opposition when trying to bring the ball down the court. In addition to being a gnat flying around the opposition, he is a great defender all around and can rebound with the best of them. He is a crafty individual that gets the ball moving.

Rounding out the senior class is Ryan Wilson and Andrew Benoit. Benoit came off the end of the bench last year but could find himself as the first player off it this season. He is one that knows his job and is a big strong player that can shoot the ball.

Junior Caden Sullivan looks to be the team's final starter this coming season. Last winter the then sophomore had a bad bone infection, and although Neely thought that he would start, he unfortunately sat out for two-thirds of the year.

"He is a high-volume scorer, but he never looked like himself last year," the Coach said. "I am really looking forward to seeing what he can do this year in his return now that he's healthy."

Despite not getting past the second round of the State Tournament last year, Neely's goal this year is to continue to play at the level they did last year. The Coach doesn't want to get ahead of themselves but is looking to repeat as the Hock Champions once again, while making a strong run through the tournament this upcoming campaign.

"A lot of the guys have been playing together during the off-season, so there will be a lot of hope and excitement once the season begins," Neely said. "We want to reestablish ourselves as the team to beat, but this is an entirely new year where everyone is 0-0 right now. This current team hasn't done anything yet."

Having worked together to get ready for the season, the Franklin players should be ready to hit the ground running enroute to picking up where they left off, taking home another Hockomock League Title and then, hopefully, going further into the Division 1 Tournament than they did last season.

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# Light Up Franklin 2023 Set for New Year's Eve

## Luminaries to Be Lit at 6 p.m. December 31st for 3rd Year

Boy Scouts of America Troop 126 has begun a tradition in Franklin. For the third year, on Saturday, December 31st, Franklin will be transformed into a beautiful winter community, and you can join in! Come together and join in celebrating this New Year's Eve by lining our neighborhoods with candle luminaries! Proceeds from the sale of luminaries will benefit BSA Troop 126, the Franklin Food Pantry, and the Franklin Historical Society.

"It's pretty popular now, and a few of the neighborhoods have started doing it," says Jaya Vijayaraghavan, volunteer for the troop. "This year, we also reached out to our local businesses to offer incentives to the Scouts for meeting sales targets, with grand prizes awarded."

The fundraiser, she explains, helps pay for the BSA Troop 126's monthly campouts as well as a bigger trip for older boys to the Philmont camp. "Basically, it pays for the campouts, and if we have additional money, we take the scouts locally to different activities like bowling and trampoline parks," says Vijayaraghavan. The boys also have weekly troop

meetings and do community service work, and funds raised also pays for snacks and pizza during those activities.

Following are instructions if you would like to participate in lighting up Franklin on New Year's Eve and supporting these scouts:

### BSA Troop 126 Luminary Kits – Order Your Kit by December 15th

Each \$12 Kit contains supplies for 10 luminaries:

10 white bags, 10 votive candles, sand, and instructions  
#LightUpFranklin



### Two Ways to Participate & Order Your Luminary Kits

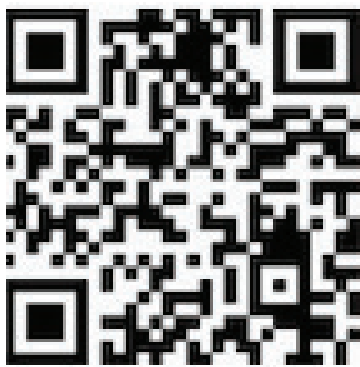
1. Use QR code
2. Fill out the form below and mail or drop off to: Troop 126 BSA c/o Jayapabha Vijayaraghavan, 34 Palomino Drive, Franklin, MA 02038

### Pick Up Dates & Times at the Franklin Historical Museum, 80 West Central St, Franklin

Sunday, December 17th, 2 p.m.-4 p.m. & Wednesday, December 27th 1 p.m.-3 p.m.

**Questions?** Email Troop-126fundraising@gmail.com -- Thank you for your support!

 		BSA Troop 126 Luminary Kits (Circle Choice)	
<b>Name:</b>		Pick Up*	Delivery (in Franklin +\$3)
<b>Address:</b>		1 Kit	\$12
<b>Email:</b>		2 Kits	\$24
<b>Phone:</b>		3 Kits	\$36
		4 Kits	\$48
		5 Kits	\$60



## Franklin Knights to Hold Christmas Card Drive

The Knights of Columbus (Sacred Heart Council, Franklin MA) will hold its annual Christmas Fundraiser at St. Mary Church in Franklin, for those "in need." All proceeds will benefit the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. The Knights will have a table set up outside the church after Mass on Saturday, December 10th and Sunday, December 11th. They will be selling Stop & Shop gift cards (5% of sale benefits St. Vincent).

In recognition of significant need, we encourage you to donate one or more of the gift cards you purchased (100% of donated cards benefit St. Vincent) by dropping a purchased gift card into the Donation Box.

**ONLINE GIVING OPTION:** <https://kofc1847.org/food-card-drive-donations>. (Donations accepted until December 15th.)

Thank you in advance for your continued compassion and charity for those less fortunate!

## The First Universalist Society in Franklin New Year's Eve Labyrinth Walk December 31, 2023, 5-7 p.m.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) will host a New Year's Eve Labyrinth Walk on Sunday, December 31st, from 5 - 7pm. This annual, free, event offers an opportunity to experience both an outdoor labyrinth in our pine grove, and a candlelit labyrinth in our sanctuary. Finger labyrinths will be available for people who want to experience the labyrinth but have mobility issues.



Labyrinths are found throughout the world with the oldest dating back thousands of years. In contemporary use, labyrinths provide an opportunity for personal reflection, spiritual practice, or the reduction of stress. Labyrinths are located in both public and private settings and vary in style. The FUSF outdoor labyrinth is a Classical Labyrinth, while our indoor labyrinth is a Chartres Labyrinth.

Please allow at least 30 minutes to walk the indoor labyrinth. It should take slightly less time to walk the outdoor one. Socks

are required for the indoor walk. Booties that cover footwear will be provided for those who need shoes to walk.

Call Judy at (508) 769-6664 for more information about the New Year's Labyrinth event. In the event of a storm, or unsafe driving conditions, the walk will be canceled, and a notice will be posted to the FUSF Facebook page.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin. For more information about either event or FUSE, please contact us at [info@fusf.org](mailto:info@fusf.org) or call (508) 528-5348. FUSF is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation.

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# Save Money in Franklin by Finding Home Energy Waste!

Do you know where the energy hogs in your home are? Did you know that the Franklin Public Library, in addition to lending books and media, also lends things? Their library of items includes an electrical power monitor named "Kill A Watt." The Kill A Watt power monitor is a small, portable device which can plug into a power outlet and then monitors the electric power usage of anything which is plugged into it.



"I use a dehumidifier in my basement. Because it uses a compressor, it uses significant electricity while running. I found this out by borrowing a Kill A Watt Monitor from the Franklin Public Library," writes David Rittenhouse, of Franklin, on the EnergizeFranklin.org website:

You can use Kill A Watt to find out your real-time usage when the unit is on, or use the KWH or killawatt hour button

to see how much energy is used over time. The library lets you borrow this device for 3 weeks.

Once he replaced his 20+ year-old humidifier, Rittenhouse began to see savings.

For more information on this and other energy-saving ideas, please visit [EnergizeFranklin.org](http://EnergizeFranklin.org)!

# Food Elves to Visit Franklin Neighborhoods this Holiday Season

Franklin area middle and high school students are volunteering to support The Franklin Food Pantry's annual Food Elves Campaign. Beginning in early December, Food Elves will visit neighborhoods throughout Franklin to solicit monetary donations to support The Pantry's services and programs. Franklin residents can expect to receive a purple Franklin Food Pantry donation envelope and collection instructions from their neighborhood Food Elf following the Thanksgiving holiday. Residents who do not receive a visit from a Franklin Food Elf by December 8 are encouraged to donate online or mail donations to 341 W. Central Street, Franklin, MA.



**Franklin Food Elves Maeva Donohue (L) and Julie Bond (R) volunteer for the 18th annual Franklin Food Elves Campaign.**

"The Food Elves Campaign was launched in 2005, and thanks to the dedication and volunteerism of hundreds of young

adults and the generosity of Franklin residents, the program has grown into The Pantry's largest fundraiser of the year," said



Tina Powderly, Executive Director, Franklin Food Pantry.

The Food Elves Campaign provides valuable opportunities for youth to volunteer.

For more information about the Franklin Food Elves Campaign or additional volunteer opportunities for young people, please visit [www.franklinfoodpantry.org](http://www.franklinfoodpantry.org).

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**Shrewsbury - Coming Soon!**

## Circle of Friends Again Welcomes Ellis Paul

Award winning performer Ellis Paul returns to the Circle of Friends Coffeehouse in Franklin on Saturday, December 2nd accompanied by Radoslav Lorković on keys. He doesn't just write songs; he's a guitar-carrying reporter who covers the human condition and details the hopes, loves, losses of those he observes, turning their stories into luminous pieces of music that get under your skin and into your bloodstream. And much like the artists who have influenced him, including his greatest inspiration, Woody Guthrie, Paul weaves deeply personal experiences with social issues and renders them provocative works that are as timely as they are timeless. His new album "55" touches on the necessity of gratitude in a difficult era of the pandemic and divided political stances. <https://www.ellispaul.com/>

Special guest Grace Morrison will open the show. Born and raised on the shores of Cape



Cod, Grace's unique brand of "saltwater country" has established her as a confident, refreshing voice in country-pop. <https://www.gracemorrison.com/>

The Circle of Friends Coffeehouse is a non-profit organization affiliated with Franklin's First Universalist Society. Concerts are presented in a smoke free and alcohol free environment at the Society's handicapped accessible Meetinghouse, 262 Chestnut St. in Franklin, and begin at 8 p.m.; doors open at 7:30 p.m. Beverages and gourmet desserts will be available. Visit <https://circlefolk.org/> for ticket information.

## Franklin Food Pantry Needs Community Support this Holiday Season

### Demand for Food Assistance & Programs Increasing as Winter Months Approach

In recent months, The Franklin Food Pantry, which provides supplemental food assistance and programs in Franklin, has experienced a sharp increase in demand for food and services including weekend backpack meals for school children, holiday meal kits, and health and wellness items. By supporting The Pantry this holiday season, Franklin residents can make a lasting, positive impact in their immediate community.

"The holiday season can be a time of tremendous stress for individuals and families experiencing food insecurity. By coming together, we can provide hunger relief that lasts throughout the new year," said Tina Powderly, Executive Director, Franklin Food Pantry.



### How to support the Franklin Food Pantry:

**Donate** – Make a monetary donation and help provide food and goods to the more than 1,300 individuals and families who rely on The Pantry annually. Recurring monthly donations are also available, and be sure to check if your employer has a matching program. Click [HERE](https://form-renderer-app.donorperfect.io/give/franklin-food-pantry/giving-tuesday-2022-copy) to donate.

**Organize a Food or Fund Drive** using The Pantry's online tool-kit. Collected food and funds will help The Pantry provide assistance throughout the season and into the new year. Click [HERE](https://www.franklinfoodpantry.org/get-involved/food-and-fund-drives/) (<https://www.franklinfoodpantry.org/get-involved/food-and-fund-drives/>) to learn more.

**Volunteer** – The Franklin Food Pantry has flexible volunteer options to meet almost everyone's desire to help. To volunteer, complete the online application and a volunteer coordinator will be in contact. Please note that availability for new Pantry volunteers will begin after the holiday season. For more information, click [HERE](https://www.franklinfoodpantry.org/get-involved/volunteer/franklin-food-elves/). (<https://www.franklinfoodpantry.org/get-involved/volunteer/franklin-food-elves/>)

For more information, visit [www.franklinfoodpantry.org](http://www.franklinfoodpantry.org).

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# Downtown Franklin's Model Railway Returns

Revisit Downtown Franklin circa 1932 Railroad exhibit again this December at the Franklin Historical Museum.

Model train fans, historians and children of all ages will marvel at the detail presented in the exhibit again this year. Historical Commission Member and model railway enthusiast, Scott Mason, has added to last year's spectacular diorama. The new addition, expanding on the original model of the train station and coal house, reaches further East along the tracks from the station and concentrates on the Thomson Press Building and the New Haven Locomotive Roundhouse. Recreated in minute detail, both buildings and surrounding scenery are laid out in perfect proportion.

Both buildings, originally built circa 1880, are created in exquisite detail in model railway HO Scale, 1.87, (3.5 mm to 1 foot).



The Thomson Press Building, originally built as the Snow, Bassett & Co Straw Hat Mfg and later known as the Goulding Manufacturing building, employed generations of Franklin Mill workers. The Roundhouse was built with funds from the Hayward Family. Mr. Hayward had so many millworkers traveling to Franklin by train that he knew a locomotive roundhouse would be essential to keep the trains running during the harsh winter months. Trains moved forward and backward across their East/West routes. In the winter months, train operations were shut down if the weather

became too intense. By building the roundhouse, the trains could be turned around, and travel in a forward direction along their routes. The roundhouse ensured Mr. Hayward's and many other mill owners' employees could make the trip to Franklin, and to work, year-round.

If you saw the exhibit last year, you won't want to miss 'round 2'. And if by chance you missed last year's inaugural debut, you'll want to visit and experience the awe of this tremendous display.

The exhibit opens Saturday, December 2nd and runs through the month of December and early January. The museum is open weekends 10 a.m.-1 p.m. on Saturdays and 1-4 p.m. on Sundays. Admission is always Free. When visiting the museum this holiday season, please consider donating a non-perishable item for the Franklin Food Pantry.

# Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Announces 2023 Toys for Tots Drive

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell is sponsoring the Registry's 16th annual U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots drive.

"The Registry of Deeds is proud to partner with the United States Marine Corps Reserve to help deliver a happy Christmas to children this holiday season," said Register O'Donnell. "This act of kindness can help spread joy and make a positive impact on those in need. Those engaging in this selfless act can know that they are part of what makes this time of year so special and hopefully inspire others to do the same."

Donations of new toys and games for toddlers and children up to age 10 can be brought directly to the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds building at 649 High St. in Dedham, through Friday, December 8th,



at 10 a.m. A marked donation bin will be set up in the lobby, which is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

The U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program operates in more than 800 cities and towns throughout all 50 states.

## Real Estate Corner

<p><b>Eileen Mason</b> 508-330-4234 emason4234@gmail.com</p> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; background-color: #e91e63; color: white; font-size: small;"> <p>"Eileen was wonderful to work with and I would definitely recommend her to family and friends. She is extremely knowledgeable and helped us find our home in a very competitive market." ~Tim &amp; Julie</p> </div>	<p>8 Rolling Ridge Road Franklin \$500,000</p> <p><b>FOR SALE</b></p> <p>Susan Morrison</p>	<p>5 Catherine Avenue Franklin</p> <p><b>SOLD!</b></p> <p>Eileen Mason</p>	<p>13 Magnolia Drive Franklin</p> <p><b>SOLD!</b></p> <p>Susan Morrison</p>	<p>117 Cottage Street Franklin</p> <p><b>SOLD!</b></p> <p>Eileen Mason</p>	<p><b>Susan Morrison</b> 617-686-8178 susan.morrison1@comcast.net</p> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 5px; background-color: #e91e63; color: white; font-size: small;"> <p>"I highly recommend Susan Morrison for your realtor needs. As a seller, I found Susan exceptional in her expertise to sell our home. She thoroughly explained every step of the process and was available to us whenever we had questions." ~Julie L.</p> </div>
	<p>368 Partridge Street Franklin</p> <p><b>UAG</b></p> <p>Eileen Mason</p>	<p>6 Michelles Way Franklin</p> <p><b>SOLD!</b> <small>Buyer's Agent</small></p> <p>Susan Morrison</p>	<p>1063 West Street Wrentham</p> <p><b>SOLD!</b></p> <p>Eileen Mason</p>	<p>3 Maria Avenue Bourne</p> <p><b>SOLD!</b> <small>Buyer's Agent</small></p> <p>Susan Morrison</p>	

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# Real Estate Corner



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 James.Hanewich@bankfive.com  
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## Metrowest Visitors Bureau Announces New Executive Director

The MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau (MBVB) is pleased to announce the appointment of Stacey David as their new Executive Director. Ms. David most recently served as Deputy Director of the Bureau, and previously served as a Board member for the organization, representing the arts and culture sector.

“We are so excited to have Stacey David as the new ED at the Visitors Bureau,” the MBVB Board of Directors said in a statement. “Stacey is such a strong leader and has already shown how she plans to positively impact the organization’s effectiveness, visibility, and ability to promote the local area as a tourist destination. We are excited to watch her guide the Bureau to success by providing clear direction, building a strong team, and

adapting to the evolving landscape of tourism.”

The MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau promotes travel and tourism throughout the 19 towns of the MetroWest region, which includes Ashland, Bellingham, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopedale, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Medway, Milford, Millis, Natick, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Wayland, and Westborough. Affiliated with the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism (MOTT), the MBVB conducts a number of marketing and advertising campaigns each year to draw both domestic and international visitors into the region, as well as enticing tour groups and meeting planners to consider MetroWest as a destination. The Bureau’s

membership includes hotels, restaurants, area attractions, arts and cultural organizations, and retail establishments, all of which are promoted through the annual Visitors Guide and marketing campaigns.

“I am delighted to take over the helm of the Visitors Bureau,” Ms. David said, “and look forward to continuing the great work we started this year. We are continuing to expand our marketing and advertising programs, which include both ads and editorial coverage in Yankee magazine, *Down East*, *Rhode Island Monthly*, *New Hampshire magazine*, and *Connecticut magazine*, all of which highlight the amazing things to see and do in MetroWest. We launched a beautiful new Visitors Guide this summer, which can be found on our website as well as

in visitor information booths all over New England. In conjunction with our partner tourism councils, we are working on a huge PR campaign as well as a digital marketing campaign. We have expanded our website, and will continue to do so, and hope that both residents and visitors see us as a resource for exploring MetroWest.”

Now that businesses are starting to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Bureau has once again offered paid memberships that include a variety of benefits.

“We see ourselves as a partner to our members who can provide a wide variety of marketing and promotional assistance at a fraction of the cost were they to undertake the same campaigns on their own. Our members can

participate in co-op advertising programs and other initiatives with very little investment on their part, either financially or through human resources. We love having engaged members because there are so many ways we can promote them.”

Residents and visitors can access the Bureau’s regional events calendar, attraction listings, and the Visitors Guide online at [www.metrowestvisitors.org](http://www.metrowestvisitors.org). Businesses interested in more information on the Bureau, membership, and current marketing initiatives should email Stacey David at [sdavid@metrowestvisitors.org](mailto:sdavid@metrowestvisitors.org). The Metrowest Visitors Bureau can also be found on social media: Facebook: [www.facebook.com/VisitMetroWest](http://www.facebook.com/VisitMetroWest); Instagram: [www.instagram.com/visitmetrowest](http://www.instagram.com/visitmetrowest)

## Exsultet! Celebrates the Holiday Season

Exsultet! invites you to celebrate the festive sounds of music during the upcoming holiday season! Exsultet! will perform a holiday concert entitled “Listening to the Snow” on Saturday,

December 9, 2023 at 7 p.m. at First Congregational Church, 725 Washington Street, Holliston, MA and on Sunday, December 10, 2023 at 2 p.m. at Allin Congregational Church, 683

High Street, Dedham, MA. This performance is a celebration of sacred song, familiar jingles and winter cheer. We invite you to take a break from the hustle and bustle of this busy time of

year to fill your soul with gladness and find quiet moments for contemplation. Old favorites like O Come All Ye Faithful will resound with upbeat classics like Joy to the World.

Let the music of the season fill your heart and soothe your soul!

General admission tickets are \$20; students and seniors (65+) are \$15; and children 12 and under are free. Performances are not suitable for children under age 5. Tickets can be purchased starting November 1, 2023 through our website ([www.exsultet.us](http://www.exsultet.us)) or by calling Stacey Balardini at (508) 395-5600.

Founded in 2013, Exsultet! A Celebration of Voices is an auditioned women’s chamber ensemble combining great music



and poetry to inspire audiences with adventurous and innovative concerts.

Exsultet’s mission is to give women an opportunity to join together to make music, to showcase the works of up-and-coming composers and arrangers, to feature the talents of local musicians and actors, and to combine performance and advocacy by focusing on important community issues and partnering with other local organizations. For more details, please visit [www.exsultet.us](http://www.exsultet.us).

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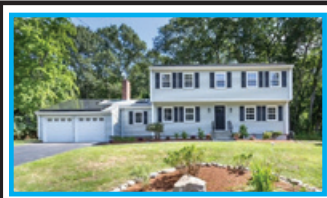
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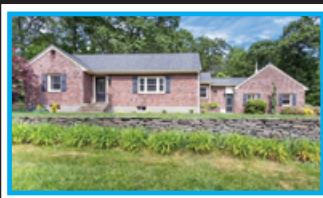
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Lorraine is doing her annual sponsoring of a Giving Tree for The Santa Foundation. Please consider helping local families by selecting a Tag or Tags for a child. Visit her office @RE/MAX Executive Realty 308 West Central Street, Franklin or for Contactless options Call or email Lorraine direct.

**Lorrainekuney@gmail.com or 508-380-9938.** Return your **new, unwrapped** contributions by December 18th. The gifts will be distributed after December 20th by The Santa Foundation volunteers.

*Wishing Everyone Joy and Peace this Holiday Season!*



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