

## KP's 2023 Super Bowl Champs Are in An Elite Category

13-0 Warriors  
Compiled Dynamic  
Statistics

BY KEN HAMWEY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

As the years pass by and comparisons are made, one argument will invariably surface in Wrentham, Norfolk and Plainville, and it will focus on whether the 2023 King Philip football squad is the best in the program's history.

After the Warriors 42-14 triumph over Marshfield in the Division 2 Super Bowl, few, if any, would dispute that the 2023 edition had all the ingredients to be labeled "a team for the ages."

The top-seeded Warriors, who finished their season unbeaten at 13-0, dismantled the third-seeded Rams in every category imaginable. And, they dominated in all three phases of the game, thanks to experience, depth, a high football IQ and precision-like technique.

"They're really, really good



**A BANNER DAY: The King Philip football team celebrates its 42-14 victory over Marshfield that gave the Warriors their third Super Bowl championship in the program's history.** Photo courtesy of Joe Gianni.

on offense, defense and special teams," said Marshfield coach Chris Arouca. "When they had chances to make plays, they made them and we didn't. That's what it came down to. You can't leave plays on the field in a state-final game."

That's high praise from a classy coach whose squad faced KP on the big stage at Gillette Stadium last November.

But, how about Franklin High's Ian Bain, whose Panthers square off every Thanksgiving against the Warriors. His assessment after KP's lopsided victory in the Super Bowl is telling.

Very telling.

"That KP team is the best

**CHAMPS**

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## Gary Mirliss Memorial Blood Drive Set for Jan. 6

Annual Drive Marks 20 Years

BY GRACE ALLEN

It began as a way to honor the memory of a Norfolk husband and father and also give back to the hospitals that cared for him. Now, 20 years later, the blood drive started in Gary Mirliss' name is still going strong.

"We weren't even certain it would go two years," said Greg Mirliss, Gary's son. "It was just, let's do this and see where it goes. And we just kept going, because we love it."

Gary Mirliss passed away from leukemia in 2001 at age 50. In 2004, the family started the blood drive to thank the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute and Brigham and Women's Hospital, where Gary was treated. A few years later, Children's Hospital became a recipient of the drive, and this year, Massachusetts General Hospital is participating too.

In the past 20 years, the drive has collected over 2,000 units of blood, which has helped some



**The blood drive held in memory of Gary Mirliss marks 20 years this month.**

5,700 people. This year, Greg Mirliss hopes to collect 200 units more to mark the drive's 20th anniversary.

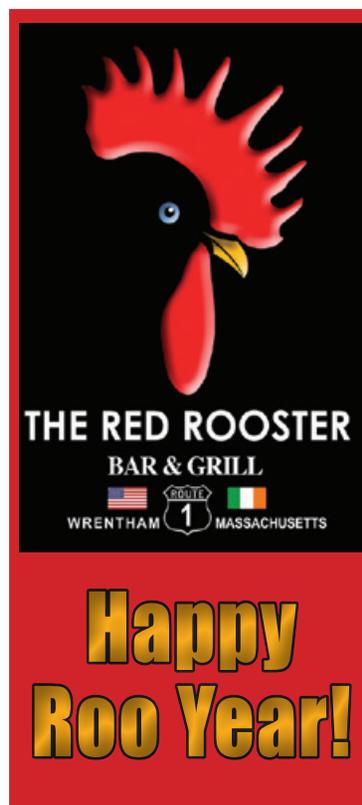
**MEMORIAL**

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**CHAMPS**

*continued from page 1*

in the state,” said Bain, who’s coached at Franklin for the last eight years and saw his forces bow to KP, 35-0, last Thanksgiving. “It’s by far the best KP team I’ve seen. They relied on a balanced attack, their football IQ is high, and they’re deep. There are no glaring weaknesses anywhere.”

Bain is also impressed with the way KP’s coach, Brian Lee, has built the program.

“He’s got a clear vision and understanding of what he wants,” Bain emphasized. “He lives in the community (Norfolk) and his son goes to school at KP. Also, there’s little turnover with his assistants. It’s a staff that’s been consistent. And, the players and the communities buy into football. The towns know what KP football stands for and the kids are excited to be KP Warriors.”

Lee, who’s been guiding the varsity for 19 years, was effusive in his praise of the Warriors, calling his 2023 contingent “my most talented team.” Lee also added that the current squad,

which gave the program its third Super Bowl crown, is “special.”

But, calling himself ‘the team dad,’ Lee said: “People love comparing teams but for me it’s difficult to choose a favorite child. They all hold a special place in my heart.”

The 51-year-old Lee points to his 2017 squad that beat Lincoln-Sudbury, 10-7, for the school’s second Super Bowl championship. “They were special, too, because they had to grind out two wins over a great Mansfield team to get to Gillette,” he emphasized. “That’s a different type of ‘special.’ That group showed how special it was by digging deep to find a way to win it all.”

Numbers, however, are revealing and usually tell a story. The stats that the 2023 team compiled are of epic proportions.

KP accumulated 447 yards of total offense (281 rushing and 166 passing) to only 203 for Marshfield. The Warriors’ high-powered attack led to 23 first downs to four for Marshfield.

KP trailed only once, 7-0, in the first quarter before taking a 21-14 lead at halftime. The second half was like a bloody knockout in boxing. Pro basketball fans would call it ‘garbage time,’ as KP dominated the final 24 minutes, outscoring Marshfield, 21-0.

KP’s 13-game season ended with the Warriors averaging 33.9 points per game and its defense allowed a meager 6.6 points a game. They went unbeaten, won the Hockomock League title and became state champs.

“Before the game, I told the players they had a chance to be talked about forever,” Lee noted. “The victory should ensure they’ll be talked about for a long



**ON THE MOVE: Tallan King ran for 92 yards and three touchdowns in King Philip’s rout of Marshfield in the Division 2 Super Bowl at Gillette Stadium.**  
*Photo courtesy of Jack McCreedy.*

time. Our team had no areas that opponents could exploit.”

The outcome was iced at the 9:45 mark of the third quarter on a 23-yard scoring run by sophomore running back Tallan King. Lee’s forces then proceeded to build an insurmountable advantage as quarterback Tommy McLeish hit Daniel Silveria for his second touchdown of the game to make it 35-14 at the 5:19 mark. King added his third touchdown of the game in the fourth quarter to make it 42-14 with less than eight minutes left.

Another reason to put the 2023 Warriors in an elite category is their margin of victory — 28 points. When KP downed Reading and Lincoln-Sudbury for its two other Bowl championships, the margin was the same in both victories — three points.

The Warriors’ six touchdowns against Marshfield — three rushing and three passing — featured King’s running and McLeish’s passing.

King finished with 92 yards and three TDs, running in sync with leading rusher Drew Laplante, who gained 134 yards on 23 attempts.

Lee lauded King, who boosted his stock for the next two seasons. “I love that kid,” Lee said. “He’s old-school tough. It’s nice to have a future with him. Laplante had been leading us most of the year.”

McLeish attempted 15 passes and completed 11 for 166 yards and three touchdowns. “I wish I could take credit for what Tommy McLeish adds to our program,” Lee said. “That’s all him. He’s an athlete, a winner and such a good leader. I felt that if he played well, we’d be fine.”

McLeish lauded his line and his receivers for providing the spark on offense. “The line was moving people all night,” McLeish said. “They were making holes and that opened the passing game. Mason Campbell, Danny Silveria, David Holland and everyone else in there were

making big-time catches.”

Junior Charlie Carroll caught a four-yard touchdown pass from Tor Maas on Marshfield’s opening drive and added another TD on a two-yard rush in the second stanza. But that was all the Rams’ offense — which had scored at least 50 points in its three playoff games — could generate.

“I spent some sleepless nights thinking about Marshfield’s offense,” Lee admitted. “They beat Catholic Memorial by scoring 52 points in the semifinal game. And, they scored first against us on their opening drive and battled back to tie the game at 14 apiece. I had some anxious moments.”

Lee praised two of his senior captains — linemen Sean King and Luke Danson — who suffered through KP’s two Super bowl losses to Catholic Memorial. “They weren’t afraid of subjecting themselves to another loss,” Lee said. “They were hungry for a win. They worked hard and were eager to end that losing streak. The 2023 team should be remembered for its resilience.”

KP advanced to the Super Bowl by defeating Diman Vocational, 41-10; Winchester, 31-3; and Barnstable, 41-21. “Some might say we were lucky with the matchups but I believe we were better than I thought we were,” Lee said.

KP’s triumph gave the football program a 3-3 record in Super Bowls. The three losses came twice against Catholic Memorial and to North Andover.

What’s important to consider about last November’s Super Bowl is that great teams are defined in various ways. Some are credited for their relentless defense, others for a prolific offense. In KP’s case, it’s defined by its all-around talent, its team-first approach, its leadership, its resilience and its trust in teammates and coaches.

There’ll be a time in the years ahead when a football team draws accolades for winning championships or for building a dynasty. And, that team will be praised — again and again and again.

But someone, perhaps an older fan, will remind those lavishing praise that: “Yeah, they’re a great squad but you should have seen the 2023 King Philip football team.”

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Published Monthly  
Mailed FREE  
to the Community of  
Norfolk/Wrentham  
Circulation: 8,473  
households and businesses

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Ad Deadline is the  
15th of each month.

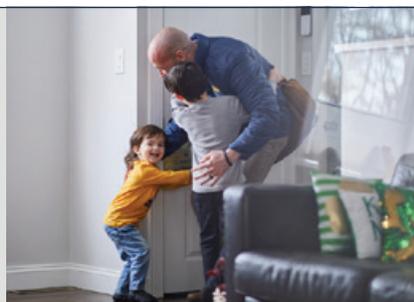
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"If we collect 200 units of blood, that will help 800 people," said Mirliss.

The drive is always held on the first Saturday of the new year. This year's drive will be held on January 6 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at King Philip Middle School, 18 King St., Norfolk.

Mirliss points out the blood drive is unlike other drives in a number of ways. A full breakfast or pizza lunch is served to donors, depending on the time of day, as well as an ice cream social in the afternoon.

New this year, Mirliss plans a Virgin Bloody Mary mix-off,

with several area restaurants participating in the contest. Blood donors will be able to vote for their favorite non-alcoholic version in several categories.

Donors will also receive free long sleeve t-shirts. Music is slated throughout the day.

But what really makes the drive different is that it serves as a reunion and party of sorts. Gary Mirliss' classmates from Milton High School's Class of 1969 always come, even those who can no longer donate blood. They stay for several hours catching up with each other, said Greg Mirliss.

"Other people do that as well," he said. "We have friends and relatives that come down from Vermont or up from Con-

necticut every year to participate. There are other people that come every year, and we've become friends with many of them, too. They learned about the drive, wanted to come and donate, but had no idea how fun it was. And now they keep coming because it's such a great experience."

Maureen Zuzevich, of Mass General Brigham and Dana Farber, is the Recruitment Program Manager for the Kraft Blood Donor Center and has worked with the Mirliss family since the first drive in 2004. The need for blood, especially Type O, is urgent right now, noted Zuzevich, emphasizing the importance of the annual drive.

"The amount of blood this drive brings in is very unusual," she said. "I run 20 to 25 drives a month, each bringing in about 45 units of blood. This is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, drives I do in a year. I am in awe of this family and what they do for the Boston hospitals year after year. They have never wavered in their commitment."

Even during the height of COVID, the drive continued. In 2021 and 2022, it was moved to Lake Pearl Luciano's, where organizers had the run of the whole facility so everyone could stay safely spaced apart.

Mirliss says the annual blood drive is a great way to start the new year, and something he knows his dad would be proud of.

"He'd love it," Mirliss said. "It's for a good cause but we're also having fun at the same time. This year, especially, we hope people are willing to come out, roll up their sleeves, and help us meet our goal because there's always a need for blood. There's no replacement for it on earth."

To make an appointment to donate blood at the 20th annual Gary Mirliss Memorial Blood Drive, visit [https://donor.kraft-familyblooddonorcenter.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/3371](https://donor.kraft-familyblooddonorcenter.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/3371). Appointments are recommended but walk-ins are welcome.

For more information, email [GM.Memorial.Drive@gmail.com](mailto:GM.Memorial.Drive@gmail.com).

## Navy Marathon Team Runs through Wrentham Center

*Tradition Part of Army-Navy Game held at Gillette Stadium*

BY GRACE ALLEN

The 124th edition of the iconic Army-Navy football game took place at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough on December 9. In front of more than 65,000 fans, the Army Black Knights defeated the Navy Midshipmen 17-11. Although they dropped this year's game, the Midshipmen still lead the series, 62-55-7.

Gillette became only the third stadium outside of the mid-Atlantic region to host the game,

and the first since 1930. Lying roughly half-way between Annapolis and West Point, Philadelphia has been the most common site for the game, hosting it a total of 90 times. But Philadelphia's next chance to play host won't come until 2027, as the next three years the game will be played in the mid-Atlantic cities of Baltimore, Washington, and then East Rutherford.

The contest is traditionally held in early December and has

become the culminating event of the college football season. Its importance in sports lies in the spirit of camaraderie and mutual respect between the two groups, reflecting the shared commitment to serve the nation and symbolizing the unity and solidarity of the United States armed forces.

The series, which started in 1890, has a rich history. The Army-Navy game was cancelled from 1894 through 1898, supposedly due to an argument between

an Army brigadier general and a Navy rear admiral that got so heated they almost dueled. The series was also cancelled during WWI but played through WWII. In the mid-1900s, the rivalry had a great impact on college football as both academies were national powers. Army claimed three consecutive national titles from 1944-1946.

Wrentham got to experience one of the traditions of the Army-Navy game first-hand last month. Every year since 1981,

the Navy marathon team has run the game ball to the site of the game. The 460-mile trek from Annapolis to Foxboro was the longest run they have had, and their course took them through Wrentham center early on game day. With a police escort and hundreds of town residents turning out to cheer them on, the team rolled through around 4:30 a.m. As they passed through, a mob of local runners joined in to accompany them on their last few miles to Gillette Stadium.



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# 12th Annual Franklin Turkey Trot Raises \$48,000 for the Franklin Food Pantry

*Thanksgiving Morning Tradition Enjoyed by More than 1,000 Participants*

The Franklin Food Pantry, which provides supplemental food assistance and programs, announces that a record-breaking \$48,000 was raised by more than 1,000 runners and 60 sponsors at the annual Turkey Trot held on Thanksgiving morning, Thursday, Nov. 23, 2023.

The fundraising supports programs and services that assist more than 1,300 individuals and families and surpasses last year's fundraising effort of \$37,000. Organized in conjunction with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Franklin, this is the twelfth year for the family-friendly fun run, which welcomed participants of all levels and abilities.

"Fundraising events like the Turkey Trot help provide the pantry with much-needed funds to purchase nutritious food and essential goods for neighbors in need," said Tina Powderly, Executive Director of the Franklin Food Pantry. "We are grateful to all who participated in this year's fun run and our wonderful sponsors who raised nearly \$18,000 to benefit the Franklin Food Pantry."

The Franklin Food Pantry is grateful for the following organizations and individuals who served as this year's race sponsors:

**Platinum Sponsors:** MyFM 101.3, LDS Church Franklin, Next9Up, Physician One, bLuxe, G&C Plumbing and Heating, Notturo Plumbing and Heating, Terrazza, Raillery Public House, Middlesex Bank.

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ily, Bergen Family, Normandin Family, Wicked Fitness Franklin, Sompally Family, and Sancher Family.

The Franklin Food Pantry thanks the following local businesses and partners who provided food for race day morning: BJ's Wholesale Club, Elizabeth's Bagels, Garelick Farms, Shaw's Supermarket, Stop & Shop Supermarket.

The Franklin Food Pantry thanks the following local business and partners who provided door prizes for the event: Franklin Honey, Allegra Marketing, Aubrey Greene Photography, Julie Arace Photography, Learning Express Toys, Showcase Dance Photography, Luna's Flower Shop, The Rome Restaurant, PT Color Market, Wicked Fitness, Target, Elizabeth's Bagels, K Cooks, 3 Restaurant, Mama Barba's Bake Shop, The Chateau, Fiori & Fern, Altitude Trampoline Park, Level 99, Muffin House, Kevin Holmes, Molly's Apothecary, Robert Wadley, and The Stott Family.

For more information on the Franklin Food Pantry, to receive food assistance, or to donate funds and food, please visit [www.franklinfoodpantry.org](http://www.franklinfoodpantry.org).

## About the Franklin Food Pantry, Inc.

The Franklin Food Pantry, Inc. offers supplemental food assistance and household necessities to more than 1,300 individuals per year. The Franklin Food Pantry is not funded by the town of Franklin. The pantry partners with several organizations including the Greater Boston Food Bank to achieve greater buying power and lower costs. Donations and grants fund food purchases, keep lights on, and put gas in the pantry truck. Programs include home delivery, a weekend backpack program for Franklin school children, mobile pantries, emergency food bags, and holiday meal packages. The pantry is located at 341 W. Central St. in Franklin, Massachusetts on Route 140. Visit [www.franklinfoodpantry.org](http://www.franklinfoodpantry.org) for more information.



Angel Cotter of Wrentham crosses the finish line at the 12th annual Franklin Turkey Trot to benefit the food pantry.



Jordan Heavy and Kristine Heavy of Medford run the Franklin Turkey Trot. Jordan placed 3rd in the Female 10-14 age bracket, and Kristine placed 3rd in the Female 50-59 age bracket.



From left, Cailin Lawlor, Maeve Lawlor, and Declan Lawlor of Wrentham get ready for the 12th Annual Franklin Turkey Trot to benefit the Franklin Food Pantry. Cailin won 1st place in the Female 15-19 age bracket.

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# Food Pantries Address Local Needs

By JOE STEWART

The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB) recently published its third annual statewide report analyzing food insecurity in Massachusetts. New analysis this year found that in 2022 one in three households in Massachusetts experienced child-level food insecurity; "... This means that a child was hungry, skipped a meal, or did not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food." Further, "... approximately 1.8 million adults reporting household food insecurity, or 33% of the state's population. Many people struggle with food insecurity chronically, with one in three individuals reporting running out of food or not having enough money to get more food every month."

The GBFB report is available online, <https://www.gbfb.org/what-we-do/data-research/>, and was created in collaboration with Mass General Brigham and supported by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) through a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant.

Diana Easty, longtime Wrentham resident and board member of the Wrentham Food Pantry, shared that needs have increased significantly year over year: in 2022, the pantry supported 25 families per week, while this year the pantry supports 45-50 families per week. For the holidays, more than 75 families registered for the Christmas meal distribution.

Easty noted that short term demand comes from people who find themselves between jobs, experiencing a health issue, or suddenly in temporary housing, any of which can lead to food insecurity. There are others who need help on a longer-term basis, most often due to ongoing health issues. This year, the Wrentham Food Pantry has partnered with Wrentham's Public Health Nurses to provide food to some shut ins.

Carolyn Sweeney, a Wrentham Food Pantry volunteer for more than 15 years, shared that she volunteers in part because as a child her parents struggled financially. Sweeney noted that the pantry sometimes has "extras" beyond the essential food, such as fresh produce and coupons for a Christmas tree.



A source of fresh produce is Wrentham's White Barn Farm, which regularly donates fresh produce to local food pantries, including the ones in Franklin, Plainville, and Wrentham. Chris Kantlehner, owner, noted that Massachusetts has put effort into making fresh local food available to everyone through programs such as EBT, HIP, and SNAP. The White Barn Farm is currently running a "Potato Promotion" to provide locally grown potatoes to the food pantry.

The Wrentham Lions Club donates Christmas trees to the Wrentham Food Pantry. Greg Stahl, past Lions Club president and current Christmas Tree chairman, noted that the Lions have donated trees since they began selling them twelve years ago. The Lions typically provide 10-12 trees every year to the pantry.

Similar services are provided by the Norfolk Food Pantry, which is located at Emmanuel Baptist Church (EBC), 63 Rockwood Road (Rt. 115). Volunteers operate the pantry under the direction of the EBC Mission Board. One volunteer, Dee, who asked that we not share her last name, noted that she began volunteering more than 25 years ago. Today, the pantry supports about 30 families per month, though fewer seniors than in years past. Currently, none of the families have babies so there's no need for donations of items such as formulae and diapers. Dee shared that despite Norfolk being a fairly wealthy town, families do need help from time to time.

To receive food, the pantry asks that you provide proof of Norfolk residency, like a driver's license, and that you pick up the food on Saturday mornings between 9:30 and 11:30 a.m.



Donations of non-perishable foods are accepted on Saturday mornings as well as Tuesday-Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Fresh vegetables are welcome, although please coordinate with the pantry ahead of time.

The Wrentham Food Pantry is located on the first floor of the Whiston House behind the Original Congregational Church at the corner of Routes 140 and 1A. The pantry is open every Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to noon. To receive food, present a piece of dated mail as proof of Wrentham residency, such as a utility bill or lease agreement that includes your name and address. In addition, a photo ID for each member of your family is required. If your family includes a child in school without a photo ID, a report card or something similar can be used as an ID.

Donations of non-perishable foods can be dropped off at Saint Mary's Church, the Original Congregational Church, Trinity Church, the Wrentham Public Library, and in the donation shed right next to the pantry. Donations of money are accepted online and via check.



Photos courtesy of Wrentham Food Pantry.

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# Charles River Chorale to Hold Open Rehearsals this Month

## New Members Welcome

The Charles River Chorale will begin rehearsals for its Spring 2024 season and is actively recruiting new members who are seeking a new community and musical opportunity. Anyone who enjoys singing is encouraged to come and join in the fun and experience of singing with a chorus.

The non-audition chorale group will begin open rehearsals on Tuesday, January 23 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ, 142 Exchange St., Millis. Two additional open re-

hearsals will take place on January 30 and February 6 to allow interested new members an opportunity to explore the chorale opportunity.

Under the leadership of director Ashley Nelson-Oneschuk, the Charles River Chorale is in its 40th year as a non-profit 501(c)3 chorale. Nelson-Oneschuk, a music professional in her 9th year with the Charles River Chorale, is also the choral director for Medway High School. Her goal for the chorale is "focused on cultivating a joyful community first, with excellent musical experiences as the vessel to achieve this."



Charles River Chorale members hail from many area communities, and they range in age from teenagers to octogenarians. The group typically holds winter and spring concerts, with the Spring 2024 concert

planned for Saturday, May 11 at 7 p.m. at Medway High School. The theme of the Spring 2024 concert is "Road Trip Across America." This program will feature music that spans time, place, and genre, assuring that both the chorus and audience will be in for a memorable musical journey.

The Charles River Chorale rehearses on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ in Millis. Membership dues for the non-profit organization support operating costs. There are no dues for high school students, and scholarships based on need are

available. There is also a separate children's choir for children in Grades 2 through 6.

For more information about the organization and the upcoming open rehearsals, visit <https://www.charlesriverchorale.com>. Those who are interested in joining the chorale for the start of the season on January 23 are asked to complete a short sign-up document via the attached QR code (or via this link: <https://forms.gle/6d5iNSvPUqqFx9ubA>).

Sponsorships and advertising opportunities are also available and very much appreciated.

# Joe Jencks to Perform at the Circle of Friends Coffeehouse

Joe Jencks returns to the Circle of Friends Coffeehouse in Franklin on Saturday, January 13 at 8 p.m.

Jencks is an international touring musician, award-winning songwriter, and celebrated vocalist known for his performances of musical beauty, social consciousness and spiritual exploration.

He has released fifteen CDs over a twenty-year musical career that includes his time as part of the Brother Sun trio. Merging conservatory training with his Irish roots and working-class upbringing, Jencks delivers engaged musical narratives filled with heart, soul, groove and grit.

Blending well-crafted instru-



mentals and vivid songwriting, Jencks serves it all up with a lyric baritone voice that has the edgy richness of a good sea-salt caramel.

Admission for this performance is \$25. Visit <https://circlefolk.org/> to purchase tickets or for more information.

The Circle of Friends Coffee-

house 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. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. Beverages and gourmet desserts are available.



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M.D.



Ann Dolloff  
M.D.



Afarin Greiger  
M.D.



Katherine Johnson  
M.D.



Elizabeth Konig  
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## Norfolk Lions Announce Winners of Tree Decorating Contest

Winners of the community tree decorating contest, held last month on Town Hill, were recently announced by the Norfolk Lions.

The 14 trees were lit on December 3 and votes were cast online and in person at the Norfolk Public Library.

- 1st place: The Wrentham Coop Bank – Norfolk Branch
- 2nd place: Return2Wild – Susan Siegel and Team
- 3rd place: Molly Maid – Jeremy and Jen Salah

Congratulations to all the winners, and thanks to all the other participants: Norfolk Fire Department; 1776 Financial; Norfolk Small Business Association; Lynne and Sue (Barbie); King Philip Leos (Merry Swiftmas); Project Kindness; Norfolk Auto; Norfolk Lions (Lions' Share); Flooring America; Norfolk Public Library (Book Dragon); and Girl Scout Troop 82367.



**Wrentham Coop Bank, Norfolk Branch, 1st place.**



**Return2Wild, 2nd place.**



**Molly Maid, 3rd place.**



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# College Application Decisions

This is the time of year when students start to hear back from their colleges. Congratulations to all the students who have received acceptances! Students are also receiving decisions where they have either been deferred, waitlisted, or denied, which is hard to not take personally, but think of it in this way, in 2023 UCLA received 145,900 applications and only accepted 12,780. So, focus on what can be done.

## If you are ACCEPTED:

- If you have been accepted at your Early Decision college, which is a binding agreement, your decision has been made. You will need to withdraw all other applications immediately.
- For Early Action, Regular Decision, and Rolling Admission acceptances, you do not need to commit immediately. Carefully weigh the pros and cons of each college before you make your final decision.
- May 1st is National Decision Day, the final day that you can submit a non-refundable deposit to a college (except for early decision and transfer students).

- Many universities grant early priority status in housing and roommate selection for students who commit early.

## If you are DEFERRED:

- A deferral means the college wants to review your application again with the regular decision pool of applicants. A deferral is not a rejection, and it does not mean there is something wrong with your application.
- There are generally 2 main reasons why a college issues a deferral. For some students, their senior year academic performance is critical in the college's decision, so 1st semester grades are needed. Second, the student falls in the middle of the pack academically and the college wants to compare the student's application to the overall applicant pool.
- The deferral letter will include the protocol for your next steps in the application process. The deferral letter may state that no further action is needed; however, some schools will allow

additional materials to be submitted, such as a new recommendation letter, an updated resume, test scores, or a Letter of Continued Interest (LOCI). When writing the LOCI be very college specific by citing exact reasons why you and XYZ University are a good match.

- Meet with your guidance counselor and ask for feedback. They often have good relationships with the college admission representatives and will be able to provide insight on how to best move forward.
- Finally, assess your current college list to determine if there are colleges on your list where you can already achieve your goals.

## If you are WAITLISTED:

- If you are waitlisted, you have met the college criteria for acceptance, but the college is limited in spaces.
- If you are still interested in the college, accept the college's waitlist offer.
- You can also email your college admissions representative and express your

interest in the college. Consider providing additional recommendation letters or any new academic achievements to support your application review.

- Consider: According to NACAC (National Association for College Admission Counseling) 20% of all students who chose to remain on waitlists were ultimately admitted.

## If you are DENIED:

- Give yourself time to grieve, especially if it was your dream school.
- You are still in the game. Review your college list and determine if you want to apply to additional colleges. Several colleges have Regular Decision deadlines on January 15, February 1 and 15. Additionally, ED II and EA II are options.
- Many schools would be thrilled to have you as a student, so review what college criteria are important to you and where you feel like you would genuinely fit in academically, socially, and financially. Collegeboard.org, Niche.com, and your high school's college platform are 3 useful resources to research additional colleges.



**Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants**

- Be certain that the new additions are balanced with likely and probable admit schools.

Remember, it is important to focus on what can be done, instead of dwelling on the "what ifs." The goal of the college process is to find and attend a college that is a right-fit for YOU where you will be happy- and with a little extra work you can accomplish this goal.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

College 101 Admissions Consultants LLC. Website: [www.mycollege101.com](http://www.mycollege101.com). Email: [tracy@mycollege101.com](mailto:tracy@mycollege101.com). Phone: (508) 380-3845.

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Your Money, Your Independence

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



Glenn Brown, CFP

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

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

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

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

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

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

ETFs fell.

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

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

**Bad Resolution:** *Pay down debt.*

Sounds important, but is it? It depends. Tax deductions, interest rates, duration, fixed or variable, inflation, deflation, depreciation, and impact to your future cash flow ensure all debt is not equal.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Now you're analyzing cash flows, balance sheet, contribution rates, investment allocations, taxation, work benefits, college funding, planning for the unexpected and desired lifestyle with expenses in retirement. You'll establish a set of base facts, allowing to then create scenarios, see projections, reverse engineer action steps, and track goals within timelines.

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

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

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

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

Maybe it's time to socialize your goals, set monthly action items to create fresh start moments and leverage an accountability partner (i.e. Certified Financial Planner) to make your 2024 resolutions happen.

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

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

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# Too Late for 2023 Tax Planning? Guess again.

2023 is done, so 2023 tax planning is done too, right? Guess again. Although it's true that most tax planning strategies are limited after December 31st, there is still a lot you can do to make the tax-filing season cheaper and easier.

## Maximize Your Retirement Contributions

If you haven't already funded your retirement account for 2023, you still have time. Contributions to a Traditional IRA (whether deductible or not) and to a Roth IRA are available until April 15th, 2024. If you are self-employed and have a Keogh or SEP-IRA, you have until October 15th, 2024 if you submit an extension of time to file your tax return. Not only will making a deductible contribution lower your tax bill, but your investment will compound tax deferred. There are specific requirements and limits for each type of account so check with a qualified tax advisor on your specific situation.

## Estimated Tax Payments

If you don't pay enough to the IRS during the year, you may be looking at a hefty tax bill come April. It is possible that you might even owe penalties and interest on top of the tax.



Jeffrey Schweitzer

You could avoid any 2023 fourth quarter penalties on underpayment of tax if you submit a payment by January 15th 2024. Try not to overpay the tax however, because the IRS does not pay you any interest on the borrowed money called your refund. It is your money so plan accordingly.

## Organization of Your Records

Having your records organized may not save tax dollars but will make your tax season less stressful. Start by keeping your prior year returns and tax documents in the same place. Collect all of your receipts and documents that may have piled up during the year (hopefully you already have a folder or file called "Taxes" to get you started). When your W2s, 1099s or other tax documents start arriving in

the mail, put them all in the same folder and group them together in like categories. When beginning to prepare your return, work off a checklist or worksheet so you don't overlook anything.

## Take Every Deduction You Are Entitled To

Oftentimes, taxpayers overlook deductions or decide not to take certain deductions because they feel too, they are being too aggressive. In order to minimize the amount of tax liability, take every deduction you are entitled to. If your qualified itemized deductions exceed your standard deduction, file with the higher amount. Some well-known items that you can itemize are home mortgage interest, real estate taxes and charitable deductions. Another lesser-known itemized deduction that you may be entitled to include is out of pocket medical expenses. If you are self-employed, make sure you write off all of your expenses and be prepared to back these with receipts. One of the items self-employed individuals may be eligible for is the Office-In-Home Deduction. If you conduct business exclusively out of your home office, you may be eligible.

## File & Pay On-Time

If you can't finish your re-

turn on time, make sure you file Form 4868 by April 15th, 2024. You will get automatic six-month extension of the filing deadline until October 15th, 2024. On the form, you need to make a reasonable estimate of your tax liability for 2023 and pay any balance due with your request. Requesting an extension in a timely manner is especially important if you end up owing tax to the IRS. If you file and pay late, the IRS can slap you with a late-filing penalty of 5 percent per month of the tax owed and a late-payment penalty of 0.5 percent a month of the tax due. The maximum late filing penalty is 25 percent, and the payment penalty tops out at 25 percent. By filing Form 4868, you stop the clock running on the costly late-filing penalty.

That doesn't mean you have to wait until April 15 to visit your tax preparer's office, though.

In fact, the earlier you can prepare and file your tax returns, the better off you are. First, a relatively new tax law still in effect, requires the IRS to hold refunds for a few weeks for some early filers who claim the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Additional Child Tax Credit. The IRS has to hold the entire refund, not just the portion associated with those credits, until at least February 15. Second, the

rise in identity theft is causing the IRS and state tax authorities to spend additional review time to protect against fraud. Additional safeguards will be set in place for the upcoming 2024 filing season. Knowing these two important things, you should get a head start on the process. Even though the refund may be delayed, you should still file early to get ahead of the possible identity theft.

## Seek Help, If You Need It

Low cost, affordable options to prepare and file your returns exist. If you are comfortable doing your own return, go for it. If you become uncomfortable or get in a jam, call a professional for added confidence and peace of mind.

Jeffrey Schweitzer can be found at Northeast Financial Strategies Inc (NFS) at Wampum Corner in Wrentham. NFS works with individuals and small businesses providing financial and estate planning, insurance, investments and also offers full-service accounting, bookkeeping, payroll, income tax preparation, and notary public services. For more information, stop by the office, call Jeffrey at 800-560-4NFS or visit online - www.nfsnet.com

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## Guest Column

# Maxed Out

By G. GREGORY TOOKER

The holiday season winds to a close. As the consumer population rose to the challenge of filling stockings to the brim, the

growing anxiety over debt continues to be worrisome. Many Americans are pressed to the economic breaking point these days, struggling to cope with the

now long-term impact of COVID-driven inflation.

The pandemic has wrought havoc with the consumer landscape, first by the government pumping, somewhat indiscriminately, billions into the economy to offset household income shrinkage. This led to the unrealistic expectation among some that such bailouts would become part of the landscape. The subsequent ogre of inflationary creep affecting the cost of essential household items has destroyed the efficiency of budgeting for many households. When your credit card is absorbing the impact of inflation-driven pricing, the nasty sucker punch of a 20% interest charge on the unpaid balance can be hard to take. While many corporations and businesses are enjoying healthy

profits, the spending power of the consumers on whom they depend for a continued stream of revenue is slowly diminishing to a point where the joy of the merchants will fade.

Lately, when the electorate has been asked how satisfied they are with the job the President is doing, the response has not been positive. The opinion expressed cites dissatisfaction with the economy. How can this be, with all of the economic indicators seemingly pointing in a positive direction? When the average American is having difficulty paying bills and maxing out credit cards, the Dow Jones doesn't amount to a hill of beans, except to the minor percent of the population enjoying the benefits of higher profit margins.

Much of the problem can be

attributed to the chronic overspending habits of the average American. We have traditionally saved significantly less of our income than those living in other parts of the world. The country's comparatively prosperous long-term economic performance breeds a sense of overconfidence, so this behavior is understandable. It will only be modified by reworking our educational system to teach younger Americans the fundamentals of wise budgeting. In the future, those stockings may not be quite as full as they have been, but we should all be grateful that the event which temporarily moved our country to its knees has been brought to heel for the moment.

Opinions expressed in the Guest Column do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.



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# Dean College Announces New Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

Dean College is pleased to announce Thomas Pistorino as Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer. Pistorino will oversee all financial operations and strategies to support the College's academic mission.

With over 30 years of experience in financial leadership roles in both the nonprofit and corporate sectors, Pistorino has deep knowledge of all aspects of higher education finance and administration. He joins Dean from CBIZ & MHM, LLC, where he created an advisory practice dedicated to improving financial operations of higher education clients throughout the northeast. Previously, Pistorino held chief financial officer positions with Lesley University and Regis Col-

lege. In those roles, he led innovative processes to both diversify revenue and reduce operating expenses.

"Tom is highly regarded for his expertise in transformative change, strategic planning, complex financial modeling, process improvement, enterprise risk management, and particularly around shared services and system implementation," said Mark D. Boyce, Chair of the Board of Trustees. "We are looking forward to working with him as he brings his perspective to Dean College."

Pistorino is replacing Kathleen McGuire who is retiring from a 30-year career at Dean College. During her time at the College, McGuire held a variety

of financial positions. Most recently serving as vice president of financial services and treasurer, she has led continuous improvements to Dean College's financial operations.

"I am grateful for Kathy's work during her transition toward retirement," added Dean College President Kenneth Elmore. "Tom will be able to hit the ground running with us in the new year, and his background will add immeasurably to the College's strategic operations."

Pistorino began his career as an accountant for a small computer company where he was responsible for implementing accounting applications for clients. This work led to a move to Canam Steel Corporation

in 1988, where he rose from regional controller to vice president and general manager for the northeast to vice president of business development for North America. Pistorino left Canam in 1995 and provided management consultant services through the Gerard Group. While at Gerard, he created growth strategies and technology solutions for clients across diverse industries. In 1997, Pistorino made the shift to higher education, joining Fisher College as its comptroller. While at Fisher, he helped drive the transformation of the school from a two-year women's college to a four-year co-educational university. In 2001, Pistorino joined Regis College and created a five-part strategy to move Regis from

an undergraduate women's college to a co-educational university. Pistorino became CFO of Lesley University in 2019, focusing on process reengineering and system integration. In early 2020, he successfully pivoted to ensure the college could overcome the challenges of the pandemic.

Pistorino will join the Dean College community in January 2024.

"I am grateful for the opportunity to join Dean College and for the trust placed in me by the Board of Trustees and the hiring committee," Pistorino said. "I am looking forward to working with President Kenneth Elmore and his leadership team and to becoming part of The Dean Difference."

## Candle with Care! December 11 Proclaimed Candle Safety Day

### Candle Fires Are Most Common in the Winter Holiday Season

As Massachusetts enters the time of year when candle fires are most common, Governor Maura T. Healey proclaimed December 11, 2023, to be Candle Safety Day and State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine is reminding residents to follow safety guidelines.

"There have been more than 1,000 candle fires in Massachusetts over the past 10 years," State Fire Marshal Davine said. "These fires caused 11 deaths, 191 injuries, and over \$35 million in losses. More of these fires started in December than in any other month, and especially on the days leading up to Christmas. If candles are part of your celebration or decoration, please use them carefully."

Candles are part of many holiday traditions this time of year, including Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa. As a result, candle fires tend to peak on December 25, and December and January accounted for

nearly 25% of all such incidents in the period from 2018 to 2022. State Fire Marshal Davine offered the following safety tips to reduce the risk of fire:

- No matter the season, have working smoke alarms on every level of your home. Check the manufacturing date printed on the back, replace alarms that are more than 10 years old, and test alarms every month to be sure you're protected.
- Place lit candles on sturdy, non-combustible saucers or candleholders. Keep anything that can burn at least one foot away on all sides.
- Always extinguish candles when you leave the room or go to sleep. Never leave a lit candle unattended.
- Keep candles out of reach of children and pets. Store matches and lighters up high where kids can't access them.

- Consider switching to battery-operated flameless candles.
- Flashlights are much safer than candles during a power outage. Keep batteries on hand for emergency use.

There were 115 candle fires in Massachusetts last year, and 92 took place in residential settings. The most common loca-

tion was the bedroom, followed by the living room, bathroom, and kitchen. One of these fires claimed the life of a 93-year-old Kingston woman with limited mobility, and another claimed the life of a 61-year-old Springfield resident whose home had no working smoke alarms.

Candle fires peaked in Massachusetts in 1999, with local fire departments reporting more

than 340 of them. Candle Safety Day was established the following year, designating the second Monday of December to promote awareness of the problem.

"Since that time, we've reduced candle fires by more than 65%," said State Fire Marshal Davine. "Let's continue to practice safe candle use, especially around the holidays."



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# January Program Highlights at the Norfolk Senior Center

RSVP to 508-528-4430 or register for programs in person at the Norfolk Senior Center, 28 Medway Branch Road. For a full list of activities, visit the Senior Center page on the town's website: norfolk.ma.us.

Thursday, January 11 at 10 a.m. **Library Meet & Greet** Meet Library Director Sarah Ward and learn about the Norfolk library and the special programs and services for seniors, including Stuffbrary (where you can borrow items), large print books, mobile printing, tech personal assistance, programs and much more. RSVP required.

Tuesday, January 16 from 11 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. **Downsize Your Stuff to Rightsize Your Life** We all have new year resolutions to declutter and organize, and possibly transition to a new home in the future. In this program, Erin of Dovetail Companies will teach you to address your belongings in manageable

bites with consideration for the emotions associated with the process, and ensuring you keep enough to maintain your current lifestyle. You will gain insight into resources available to you and how to maintain your rightsized home. \*Rightsizing Guide and resources will be provided. RSVP required.

Tuesday, January 16 at 2 p.m. **"All Booked Up" Book Club** A monthly book group facilitated by Norfolk Public Library Director Sarah Ward. We will be discussing "This Time Tomorrow" by Emma Straub. RSVP required.

Wednesday, January 17 from 10:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. **Trip to Gerry's Place Restaurant** Lunch prepared by Culinary Arts students at Tri-County Regional Vocational Tech High School in Franklin. Menu choices: Fish & Chips or Spaghetti and Meatballs, with a side salad and dessert. Cost: \$11.95 (pre-pay at the

Center). RSVP by December 5. Ride possible from the Center.

Thursday, January 18 from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. **Danforth Museum & Lunch Trip** Eat lunch at Pavilion, a new Framingham restaurant. Enjoy a 45-minute guided tour of the Danforth Art Museum in Framingham and then explore the exhibits on your own. RSVP by January 9 and pay \$12 for admission and the tour. A ride from the Center is possible. Space in COA van for first 8 people who request transport.

Thursday, January 18 at 2 p.m. **Veterans Meeting** Join our veterans group meeting, led by veteran Jim Schweitzer. Pizza served. RSVP required.

Friday, January 19 from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. **Soups, Chowders, Bisques, Chilis, & Stews--A Pre-Souper Bowl Party.** Join our party by learning about soups, chowders, bisques, chilis, and stews. Therapy Garden will

teach you how to make a variety of mild and medium-spiced soups, chilis and stews from ground beef, pork, chicken and more. Review different recipes. Master recipes for meat-based and vegetarian dishes. A soup sample will be provided along with crackers. Space limited. RSVP required.

Tuesday, January 23 from 12 to 2 p.m. **Strength & Balance Workshop with Lunch** Learn the importance of your core and more with David of APR Physical Therapy. You will learn how to improve your body strength, manage your pain, stay balanced, and prevent injuries to keep you healthy and active. You will also learn some simple exercises that you can perform at home to maintain core strength and balance. Enjoy a complimentary lunch of sandwiches & dessert. RSVP required.

Thursday, January 25 from 10 to 11 a.m. **Editing Photos**

**On iPhone/iPad** We will learn to edit our pictures in the Photo app. Kevin of KevTech will discuss cropping and resizing, adjusting colors and brightness, and other adjustments that can be made to our photos. Space limited. RSVP required.

Tuesday, January 30 from 10 to 11:30 a.m. **Introduction to Social Media** Not a day goes by when there isn't news about social media. Whether it is a tweet from a politician, headlines about Facebook or viral videos from YouTube, social media has become a regular part of our lives. Grace Buscher of GMB-Systems will provide an introduction to social media and top platforms, identify some of the benefits and help you navigate some of the challenges. Grace will also help you connect to the Senior Center's Facebook page. Space limited. RSVP required.



**LITERACY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

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## Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club Plans Next Gathering

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The Franklin Newcomers Club will host Owen Folsom, a financial advisor, at the club's next meeting, scheduled for Wednesday, February 7 at 7 p.m. The meeting will take place at Escape Into Fiction Book Store, 12 Main Street, Franklin.

Folsom will share his expertise on various topics, including long-

term care, 529 college funds, life insurance, and more.

The Franklin Newcomers Club is a multi-generational, member-driven organization. New faces and new ideas are always welcome. Residents of Franklin, or any surrounding town that doesn't have a Newcomers Club, are welcome. In

addition to bi-monthly meetings, the group holds fun and varied events to stay connected throughout the year.

For more information, visit <https://www.meetup.com/franklin-newcomers-friends/> and [www.facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersFriendsClub](https://www.facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersFriendsClub).

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# The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

## “Can you squeeze me in?” Sure we can!

BY GINA WOELFEL

Even though “squeeze” is not our preferred term at b.LUXE to describe how we work your appointment into our schedule; it is what we do. “Squeeze” may imply that your appointment is rushed or lacks attention to detail, but that’s never the case. We understand how important your hair is to your self-confidence and know that you want to look and feel your best.

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

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

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

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

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

We can also offer you two separate appointments with two different stylists on the same day or, if needed, on two separate days. This flexibility is particularly helpful for important occasions when two mini-appointments are the perfect solution. We maintain

an active waitlist and cancellation list that are updated daily, so it’s essential that we have your most up-to-date contact information on file.

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

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

Happy New Year!  
The b.LUXE Beauty Team

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# KPHS DECA Recognized for Thrive Level Chapter and Membership Campaigns

King Philip DECA was among 645 chapters that achieved Thrive Level recognition during the 2023-2024 school year and will be commended at DECA's International Career Development Conference (ICDC) held April 27- 30, 2024, in Anaheim, California.

Each fall, DECA offers four campaigns for chapters to complete as part of their program of leadership for the year. These campaigns are designed to grow membership engagement and build lasting partnerships within the school and local community.

Chapters that achieve Thrive Level receive a commemorative pennant, flag and plaque. The chapters also have an opportunity to participate in the International Career Development Conference. In order to receive Thrive Level recognition, the chapter completed two out of three chapter campaigns, including the community ser-

vice campaign, ethical leadership campaign and promotional campaign.

Alternatively, the chapter could have participated in the membership campaign, which challenged the chapter to attain two of three goals: recruit 20 professional members, recruit 20 alumni members or increase student membership by 20 more members from the previous school year.

The King Philip DECA campaign coordinator who contributed to the Thrive recognition is Lindsey Field with the assistance of her advisor, James Dow. The King Philip DECA chapter completed both the chapter and membership campaigns by adding to overall membership and participating in school and community wide events. "I am beyond proud of our membership for their dedication and commitment to community service and recruitment of additional members for our chapter," said Dow.

## About DECA Inc.

DECA is a career and technical student organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs with a career interest in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management. DECA enhances the preparation for college and careers

by providing co-curricular programs that integrate into classroom instruction, apply learning, connect to business and promote competition. DECA student members leverage their DECA experience to become academically prepared, community oriented, profession-

ally responsible, experienced leaders. DECA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit with nearly 250,000 members in 4,000 high school and college chapters in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and Germany.

For more information about DECA, visit [www.deca.org](http://www.deca.org).

Happy New Year!






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# Living Healthy

## The Cataract Surgery Center of Milford

### The Gold Standard for Surgical Eyecare

BY: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.  
MILFORD FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

The Milford-Franklin Eye Center - Cataract Surgery Center of Milford is pleased to announce our recertification by the American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities (QUADA). This accreditation authority sets the Gold Standard and certifies thousands of facilities worldwide. We received no deficiencies, achieved full compliance, and earned a perfect score.

An accreditation certification by QUADA provides peace of mind, indicating our surgery center's highest standards in patient safety, surgical results, infectious disease control, and healthcare quality. We take pride in our staff's success in navigating this extremely strict and tedious process.

Milford-Franklin Eye Center has been delivering excellent eye care to the community for four decades. With offices in Milford, Franklin, and Millis, along with our award-winning surgery center in Milford and a support staff of 60, we stand as the leading medical and surgical eye care center in the area and one of the major eye care centers in the State. We are also one of the rare ophthalmology practices to own and operate our surgical center, the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford. No longer do you need to travel miles and hours for cataract surgery! Our experienced eye physicians/surgeons, along with four optometrists, provide comprehensive and excellent eye care for the entire family.

Milford-Franklin Eye Center acknowledges that you have choices when it comes to eye

care. We set ourselves apart by focusing on excellent and advanced eye care and treating our patients as if each one is family. Our surgical results rival those of major centers in Boston, and we can prove it. We are deeply rooted in the community, most of us living here, and our primary focus is to serve the community. While some competing 'franchise' practices have a satellite office in the area with an occasional ophthalmologist, we are here full-time, five days a week, with an eye surgeon ready to see you in case of an emergency. Did you know that seeing a surgeon from a 'franchise' practice means you are outside their referral network and your expenses may be higher? We are local and in the network of your local primary care physicians. In case there is a surgical emergency after cataract surgery, we see you immediately. With other practices, you may

have to go to Boston to be seen. We are the only dedicated practice taking emergency call responsibilities at Milford Regional Hospital and have been doing the same for decades.

Our surgery center is Medicare-certified, State-licensed, and QUADA accredited. This center stands as a beacon of excellence in ophthalmic care, showcasing a state-of-the-art facility dedicated to restoring vision with precision and innovation. Equipped with cutting-edge technology and staffed by a team of highly skilled and experienced professionals, the center is at the forefront of cataract and glaucoma surgery. From advanced laser systems that enhance surgical accuracy to personalized treatment plans tailored to each patient's unique needs, the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford prioritizes both efficacy and patient comfort. The facility's commitment to staying abreast of the latest developments in the field ensures that individuals seeking cataract surgery receive the highest standard of care, making it a trusted destination for those looking to regain clarity of vision in a modern and sophisticated setting.

What about office-based cataract surgery? Some franchise practices are advocating for performing cataract surgery in their office. Unapproved by Medicare and major ophthalmology professional societies, this office-based surgery raises significant concerns about patient safety and the quality of care provided. Performing cataract surgery in an office setting may lack the rigorous standards and sterile environments maintained in dedicated surgical centers. The absence of dedicated anesthesia professionals and comprehensive medical support can compromise patient comfort and safety during surgery. Patients are advised to prioritize their well-being and consider established surgical centers with experienced medical teams and top-notch facilities to ensure optimal outcomes for cataract surgery. For instance, at the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford, a dedicated MD anesthesiologist is present full-time for all procedures, and your comfort

and safety are titrated by using an IV line, which is lacking in the office-based surgery model.

With the new year 2024, we are proud to continue to serve our communities as we did for four decades.

Dr. Roger Kaldawy is an experienced eye physician and surgeon. Dr. Kaldawy, trained at the University of Rochester and the University of Iowa. As Assistant Professor at Boston University, he directed the Cornea and External Disease program, influencing physicians worldwide. A pioneer in DSAEK corneal transplantation, he performed over 30,000 cataract surgeries, introducing advanced implants and bladeless laser assisted Femto cataract surgery at the Cataract and Laser Surgery Center of Milford, where he also serves as Medical Director.

Dr. Dan Liu earned her medical degree from Rutgers New Jersey Medical School in 2016. She was elected to the medical honor society, Alpha Omega Alpha. Completing her ophthalmology residency at Albany Medical Center, Dr. Liu received multiple accolades. She pursued fellowship training in Cornea, External Diseases, and Anterior Segment Surgery at Tufts Medical Center in Boston, Massachusetts. Dr. Liu specializes in Cataract surgery, ORA technology, Cornea transplants, and various eye disorders. She is affiliated with several medical associations.

Dr. Arroyo, our vitreoretinal specialist, earned his degrees from Amherst College, Yale, and Duke. With 20+ years of experience, he's published extensively and held leadership roles, including past president of the New England Ophthalmological Society.

Dr. Shalin Zia, O.D., a Purdue and Indiana University graduate, brings extensive private practice experience, excelling in routine eye care, contact lenses, and disease diagnosis.

Dr. Adams, a John Carroll University graduate, has advanced training in corneal pa-



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**EYES**

*continued on page 17*

# Living Healthy

## Cheers to Health in 2024!!!!

I like to think that Health is a lifestyle of good, healthy habits and choices that help one achieve their goals. That should include surrounding yourself with like minded people and loved ones that support your goals as well as taking the action steps that help you achieve and maintain your goals. To truly achieve health and mental clarity the signaling from your brain to your body must be working at 100% of your genetic potential. Any interference in your nerve system can change this signaling and your function begins to decline. Interference can be caused by trauma, pro-

cessed food, pesticides, household chemicals, pathogens (viruses, bacteria etc.) food preservatives and dyes and many more. Over time symptoms may appear. This is when NIS shines. Neurological Integrative systems turns the signaling back on between the brain and the body improving function and healing.

Through a three step process of removing the stressors, repairing the tissues and rebuilding the body an individual is given the opportunity to return to homeostasis and the symptoms resolve.

If you have been struggling with a chronic health issue that



Dr. Rochelle Bien & Dr. Michael Goldstein

is not resolving and are wondering if

NIS (Neurological Integrative Systems) can help you, give our office a call and we will be happy to speak with you. Dr Rochelle Bien and Dr Michael Goldstein can be reached at The Holistic Center at Bristol Square, 1426 Main Street, Walpole. CALL (508) 660-2722 and start your journey back to health.

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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 bluegrass 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. Alice sets out on a journey to understand her past.

The production stars NYC 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. Boston Conservatory Voice Professor Dan Callaway (*The Phantom of the Opera*) appears as Daddy Cane/Dr. Norquist. The cast also features Shenandoah Conservatory

Musical Theatre student Tzintli Cerda as Lucy, NYC's Brennan Stefanik as Daryl, and FPAC's Nick Paone as Mayor Dobbs, Kellie Stamp as Mama Murphy, Tim Ayres-Kerr as Daddy Murphy, and DJ Ormond as Stanford.

Rounding out the cast are Emiliano Morales (NYC), Gia Chessa (Dean College), Blas Cerda (Ballet Teatro del Espacio, The National Classical Dance Company of Mexico, Ohio Ballet), Xochitl Tejeda-Cerda (Mexico National Ballet, Ohio Ballet), Takaaki Matsumoto

(Boston), Julia Ormond (Dean College), Hannah Rezendes (Salve Regina University), and Lindsay Tomas (FPAC). Joining them are FPAC Student Apprentice performers from the Franklin School

for the Performing Arts Elena Baker, Hannah Connors, Devin Curley, Devin DeAngelis, and Mason Sanford.

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.

FPAC is an Actors' Equity Small Professional Theater com-

pany based at THE BLACK BOX in downtown Franklin. Ali Funkhouser, Robbie Rescigno, Kyle Dalsimer, and Dan Callaway are all members of Actors' Equity. Each season, FPAC produces musicals, plays, ballets, and more featuring Broadway stars, professional actors, local artists, and students of the arts. Follow 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.

### EYES

continued from page 16

thology, specialty contact lenses, ocular disease, and laser refractive surgery.

Dr. Purvi Patel, OD, a Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, brings teaching and leadership experience from the New England College of Optometry. Her clinical interests include diabetes, glaucoma, and community-based eye care.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center and The Cataract Surgery Center of Milford, our focus is on you, your vision, excellent surgical results without compromising your safety or comfort. You come first. We are available in your backyard and proud to offer world-class cataract surgery closer to home: Here in Milford! In a surgery center facility, not in an office. Our optical shop has its own dedicated lab and can cut and finish your glasses while you wait. All new patients receive

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# Sports

## KP Girls Volleyball Team Embraces Season of Giving

*Team Donates Pies to Local Food Pantries and Organizations*

The King Philip Regional Girls Volleyball Team has once again helped to spread the spirit of giving this season, donating pies to local food pantries and organizations ahead of the Thanksgiving holiday.

On Tuesday, October 24, the KP Girls Volleyball Team sorted 69 Lyman Orchards apple crumb pies to be delivered to the Wrentham Food Pantry, Norfolk Food Pantry, Plainville Food Pantry and Gilly's House.

"I would like to recognize the King Philip Girls Volleyball Team, which, for the third year in a row, has embraced the spirit of giving during the holidays through this fundraiser," said King Philip School Superintendent Rich Drolet. "We are proud to recognize these students for their commitment to helping those in need and serving the community in which they live."

As part of the fundraiser, the team set up an online fundraising page and all 43 players were given a link to share. Using the link, people could either purchase a pie for personal consumption or pur-



The KP Girls Volleyball Team sorted 69 Lyman Orchards apple crumb pies to be delivered to the Wrentham Food Pantry, Norfolk Food Pantry, Plainville Food Pantry and Gilly's House. (Photo Courtesy King Philip Regional School District)

chase a pie to be donated. A portion of the proceeds from all pies bought, either personal or for donation, went toward the King Philip Regional Girls Volleyball Team.

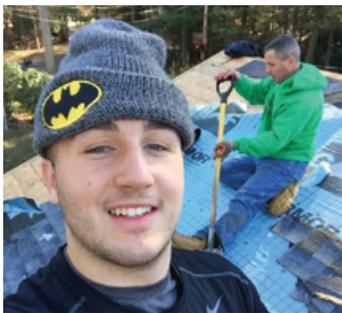
In total, the team sold 340 pies with 69 of them being donated to local charities.

Once the pies were delivered to the school on Oct. 24, the volleyball team organized pick-up times for those who purchased pies and also coordinated delivery times to bring donated pies to the local charities.

"Each year this fundraiser has served as a great way for our student-athletes to not only raise money for their program but also as a way for them to give to those who are less fortunate and embrace what it means to be a team player," said KPHS Principal Nicole Bottomley.

This is the third consecutive year that the volleyball team has partnered with MCM Fundraising to participate in the Lyman Orchards Pie Fundraiser. Each year, MCM Fundraising hosts online fundraising campaigns with donations benefiting local communities.

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# Sports

## KP Girls Hockey Team Aiming for Tourney Success

BY KEN HAMWEY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The King Philip girls hockey team is eager to end its early exits from the state tournament.

Two years ago, the Warriors were seeded third but lost in the first round to Norwell. Last year, Lincoln-Sudbury ended KP's post-season play when it downed the Warriors in its opening-round game.

Coach Ken Assad, who takes his team's schedule one game at a time, is also tired of the early eliminations.

"To go further in the tournament the team will need to get through the excitement and pressure the tournament offers, especially the first game," Assad said. "And, as a coaching staff, we need to prepare them better to get through these challenges.

"As a team, it's frustrating not to get past the first round but the schedule we set up is challenging and it'll prepare us for the post-season. We play at a high-level against our non-league opponents and we need to continue that level of play going into the tournament if we're to advance."

The Warriors have three objectives for the current campaign and it's not surprising that the words "qualify and go deep" are included. "We want to win the Hockomock League title, qualify and go deep in the tourney and get our younger players to buy in and contribute," Assad emphasized.

Team strengths can often indicate what type of season a team might have. In KP's case, 2023-24 just might provide a happier ending than the previous two years.

"We're young but we've got 14 players returning with experience," Assad said. "We've also got depth, a high hockey IQ, speed and quickness. We're strong and deep on defense and we've got balance on three lines."

KP's captains are all seniors and they're talented. They include center Kelly Holmes, forward Nikki McDonald, defenseman Mara Boldy and forward Ryley Ryan (assistant captain).

"Kelly was the leading scorer in the league last season with 34 goals and 18 assists," Assad said.



**Before taking the reins as King Philip's girls hockey coach, Ken Assad spent 12 years as an assistant for the Franklin High boys team.**

"She's got a high hockey IQ, sees the ice well and has great instincts. Nikki had 12 goals and 14 assists last year. She's got speed and she's determined to get to the open areas in front of the net. Mara had 3 goals and 8 assists. She's tenacious and moves the puck effectively. Ryley was injured last year, missing half the season. She's strong in the corners, has net presence, is aggressive and is a team-first player."

The captains have different leadership styles. "Kelly leads by example, Nikki and Mara communicate well and lead by example, and Ryley is vocal but also supportive," Assad noted.

KP's goaltending chores will be handled by sophomore Kiki Lynch with junior Kaitlyn Parrish serving in a back-up role. Lynch played five games on the varsity as an eight-grader and had a goals-against average of 0.91 and a save percentage of 96.

"Kiki is back after a year at Beaver Country Day," Assad said. "She's quick, covers the net well, and is instinctive. She'll be a leader on the back end. Kaitlyn was the starting goalie for the field hockey team and likely will get playing time."

Four sophomores Assad will be counting on are forward Katie McGann, defensemen Lydia Maxwell and Grace Lehan-Allen, and forward-center Cam O'Shea.

"Katie had 7 goals and an assist last year, scoring goals in big moments," Assad offered. "Her scoring should increase. Lydia had a goal and 8 assists last year. She's a strong skater who has



**King Philip's captains are, from left, Ryley Ryan, Mara Boldy, Kelly Holmes and Nikki McDonald.**

a physical net presence. She's adept at moving the puck out of the defensive zone. Grace had five assists last year. She's aggressive, moves the puck quickly and is stingy around the net. Cam has a high hockey IQ, is a good back-checker, and knows how to get to her position."

Six freshmen who've got experience and are improving include forwards Ella Morgan, Erin Steck, Rylan McKillop, Tayla McDuff and Molly Murphy, and defenseman Calleigh Brady.

"Ella (3 goals, 6 assists) has a knack to be in position," Assad said. "She's got a high hockey IQ and an ability to score. Erin is a hard-working left wing who has a good grasp of the game. Rylan scored a goal in the tourney against Lincoln-Sudbury and will continue to improve. Tayla has speed, is smart in the corners and can pass well. Molly is steady and will be a contributor. Calleigh played as an eight-grader and is battle-tested."

Five eighth-graders who'll get ice time are defensemen Caitlyn McManus and Laney O'Shea, and forwards Tess Dangelo, Hadley Borst and Brooke Haltom. "They're hard-workers, have a good hockey IQ, are coachable and will get playing time as the season moves along," Assad said.

Winning the league crown will require strong efforts against de-

KP's assistant coaches are Tim Langevin (offense) and Cam Curley (defense). "They work hard, know the game and are supportive," Assad said.

Assad's coaching background is not only lengthy, but also impressive. He first coached in Franklin's youth league and later served for 12 years as a junior-varsity and varsity assistant at Franklin High. He also coaches club hockey and helps with Franklin's summer league teams.

In 1983, it was Assad's overtime goal that broke a 4-4 tie against Falmouth and gave Franklin High its first state championship. In 2016, as an assistant to Chris Spillane, he experienced another state crown when Franklin defeated St. Mary's of Lynn.

Assad relies on a coaching philosophy that emphasizes winning, reaching one's potential and having fun. "If our players are reaching their potential and enjoying their athletic endeavor, then winning will follow," he said. "And, the life lessons I hope they learn are becoming quality teammates and leaders, overcoming adversity, and developing relationships."

KP's on-ice style is all about being consistent on defense, forechecking and goal-tending. That's a formula for a lengthy stay in the state tourney.

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# Real Estate Corner

## 2023 Toys for Tots

We want to thank you for your continued generosity! Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Page Realty has graciously collected donations for Toys For Tots since 1997 and we will continue to support the efforts to help fulfill the Christmas dreams of the nation's neediest children.

For 75 years, the United States Marine Corps has been collecting toys for children and started the Toys for Tots charitable organization.

Thank you again for a successful year!



### About Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Page Realty

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices Page Realty is a full-service real estate company specializing in residential sales since 1963. The company has two offices in Medway and Medfield, and dominant market share in the MetroWest area.



Medway office donations

For more information, please visit [www.bhhsPagerealty.com](http://www.bhhsPagerealty.com)

### About Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices

Berkshire Hathaway HomeServices is one of the world's fastest-growing residential real



Medfield office donations

estate brokerage franchise networks, with more than 50,000 real estate professionals, nearly 1,500 offices throughout the U.S., Canada, Europe and the Middle East, and more than \$119 billion in real estate sales

volume. The network, among the few organizations entrusted to use the world-renowned Berkshire Hathaway name, brings to the real estate market a definitive mark of trust, integrity, stability and longevity.

## Upcoming Events at the First Universalist Society

The First Universalist Society (FUSF) in Franklin is planning three special events in January and February. FUSF is located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin. For more information about these events or about FUSE, email [info@fusf.org](mailto:info@fusf.org) or call 508-528-5348. FUSF is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation.

### Jigsaw Puzzle Tournament and Sale

Friday, January 19 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. OR

Saturday, January 20 from 10 a.m. to Noon

**Team Tournament:** Enter your team to puzzle against other teams in a friendly and fun competition on either Friday night or Saturday morning. Each team receives the same 500-piece puzzle and races to finish first. Prizes given for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place. Cost

is \$10/person for teams of up to four people and your team goes home with the completed puzzle. Team registration and puzzle tournament rules can be found at [FUSF.org](http://FUSF.org). For questions call Vicki at 508-654-6740. Cash, check or electronic payment accepted.

**Puzzle Sale:** Hundreds of Jigsaw puzzles will also be for sale both Friday and Saturday. You do not need to enter a tournament to shop. Most puzzles are priced between \$3 and \$5. Some are brand new! Be sure to stock up for all those puzzlers in your life (or yourself). Cash, check or electronic payment accepted.

### Live Music and CD Release by Second Son Band

Brian Cousins, guitarist and singer for the Upton, MA-based group Second Son, is releasing his third album, "Dissonance."

A CD release party will be held on January 27 from 7 to 9 p.m. at the First Universalist Society.

Cousins says, "With this Dissonance album I really tried to bring my many musical influences together into a coherent musical cycle which explores the challenges of this moment in time. And of course, I had to have a couple of love songs, just because."

Tickets are \$10 per person/\$25 max per family. Treats will be available for sale. Cash, checks or electronic payment accepted.

**About Second Son:** Formed in mid-2023, Second Son's songs range from folk and folk-rock to more Americana and singer/songwriter styles. Second Son consists of Brian Cousins (guitar, vocals), Stirling Noel Cousins (bass, vocals), Brian J. Podesta (piano, keyboards) and Carl Roberts (percussion, harmonica, vocals). Second Son's live performances are energetic, interactive, funny and personal. Since their founding, Second Son has been playing throughout eastern Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire.

### Movies with A Meaning - Celebrate Groundhog Day

Join us for our first "Movies with a Meaning" event on Feb-

ruary 2 at 7 p.m. The movie "Groundhog Day" demonstrates that if we lived long enough, all of us would eventually choose to live more morally. In "Groundhog Day," we learn that there's no point worrying about the past or future. We should worry

most about the present and how we treat other people in the moment. Come for the comedy and stay for the discussion. Snacks provided. Please RSVP to [davegerlits@gmail.com](mailto:davegerlits@gmail.com) if you plan to attend. Admission is free.

## January Special Services at the First Universalist Society

The First Universalist Society (FUSF) in Franklin will hold two special services this month. FUSF is located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin. For more information about either service or about FUSE, contact them at [info@fusf.org](mailto:info@fusf.org) or call 508-528-5348. FUSF is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation.

### What We Say Matters: A Timely Conversation Exploring the Power of Words to Shape Others

and a Person's Own Behavior  
Dr. Drew Bogner, President Emeritus of Molloy University, and a lay member of the First Universalist Society in Franklin, will speak on January 7 at 10 a.m. about the power of words and phrases to shape the behavior of others and ourselves. He will incorporate the research of

Dr. Masuru Emoto on the impact of negative and positive words and share conversations he has had on this topic with individuals ranging from Buddhist monks to Paul Rusesabagina of Hotel Rwanda. In the second part of the service, Dr. Bogner will focus on how what we say to ourselves can influence how we experience the world. This includes how we can respond to caustic, hateful, and demeaning language that others use.

### Joe Jencks Leads MLK Service

Joe Jencks, international touring musician, award-winning songwriter and celebrated vocalist, will lead the service on January 14 at 10 a.m. as we celebrate the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. All are invited to join us this morning.

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# Real Estate Corner



## Electric Youth 2024 to Debut at THE BLACK BOX

Electric Youth 2024 will debut at THE BLACK BOX on January 12 at 7:30pm. The 2024 group of talented young singers and dancers includes Devin DeAngelis, Finley Doherty, Anya Fox, Ashley Pepin, Hannah Connors, Macie Hoben, Mason Sanford, Ella Roth, Elena Baker, Devin Curley, Liam Nolan-Hayun, Katherine LeBlanc, Ani Corkran, and Hailey Hulbig. Electric Youth is scheduled to tour again this summer bringing timeless hits and non-stop entertainment to venues across Europe.

Electric Youth delivers high-energy, fully choreographed performances of classic rock, contemporary pop, Broadway, and country hits for audiences of all ages. The American touring ensemble of talented singer-dancers, ages 14-18, is backed by the eight-piece Boston Show Band — world class musicians who've worked with music legends Tony Bennett, Aretha Franklin, Dizzy Gillespie, B.B. King, Diana Ross, The Temptations, Van Morrison and more. Electric Youth is trained at the Franklin School for the Performing Arts. The group has toured Europe performing in such renowned venues as Vienna's Konzerthaus, Musikverein and Schonbrunn Palace; Sanremo's Ariston Theatre; England's Arundel Festival; Disneyland Paris; and professional theatres in Bristol, London and Windsor.

EY has also headlined Fourth of July shows for U.S. troops stationed in Italy at Camp Ederle, Camp Darby, and Aviano Air Force Base. The ensemble has performed on Royal Caribbean's Oasis of the Seas, on WBZ Radio, and at Fenway Park, Gillette Stadium, the Smithsonian Museum Theater, the United Nations and the U.S. Embassy in Vienna. Electric Youth has released six albums, including 2014's *Power Chord*, available on iTunes. EY has recorded and released three a cappella singles arranged and edited by Jim Hogan of a cappella sensation T.3 (available on all streaming platforms).

Collectively, the members of Electric Youth 2024 have performed with Broadway stars, sung the National Anthem for Boston sports teams, been selected to perform at "Broadway Sessions" in NYC, worked with choreographers from *So You Think You Can Dance*, and more. Alumni of Electric Youth have gone on to appear on Broadway, in national and international tours, television, regional theater, feature film, professional dance companies, cruise ships, and more.

Tickets for the January 12 Debut show are available at [www.theblackboxonline.com](http://www.theblackboxonline.com) or by calling the box office at 508-528-3370. You can follow Electric Youth on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.



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## Norfolk, Wrentham Students Among Tri-County Scholarship Winners

Fifty-nine members of the Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School Class of 2024 recently were notified that they are recipients of the John and Abigail Adams Scholarship. The award provides tuition assistance to those attending four and two-year Massachusetts colleges and universities.

Noah Renner of Norfolk was a recipient of the scholarship, and from Wrentham, Molly McDermott, Hailey McLeod, Callie Schweitzer were also recipients.

Adams Scholarship eligibility is determined by MCAS performance. Nearly 27% of the Class of 2024 received the honor, meaning in Grade 10 they attained “advanced” performance in at least one of the three major



categories (English Language Arts, Math, STEM: Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics or Technology/Engineering). In addition, the recipients must have attained proficient status in the remaining two assessments.

“The entire Tri-County community is proud of these students for attaining this prestigious honor,” Superintendent Dr. Karen Maguire said. “It is a testament not only to them and

their hard work but to our faculty and staff for putting them in a position to succeed.”

Since its founding in 1977, the mission of Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School is to provide an excellent comprehensive technical and academic education to regional high school students. State-of-the-art technical skills and knowledge are enriched and complemented by a solid founda-

tion of academic skills. Creative and cooperative partnerships between area employers and staff at Tri-County guarantee the continued growth and development of programs designed to prepare graduates for careers in the twenty-first century. The school services the communities of Franklin, Medfield, Medway, Millis, Norfolk, North Attleboro, Plainville, Seekonk, Sherborn, Walpole and Wrentham.

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## Norfolk County Housing Market Remains Steady in November 2023

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O’Donnell reported that Norfolk County recordings for November 2023 show indicators of less real estate activity. However, one real estate activity on a steady trend compared to November 2022 recordings was an increase in the number of deeds recorded.

“Despite the challenges posed by limited inventory and higher interest rates, the Norfolk County housing market has managed to maintain steady activity,” stated Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P.

O’Donnell. “Notwithstanding a slight dip in the number of recordings this month, the housing market in Norfolk County remains resilient, with steady demand from buyers and stable property values.”

The Registry of Deeds recorded 8,587 documents in November 2023. This was 5% less than in November 2022 and a 7% decrease compared to October 2023.

Register O’Donnell noted, “Higher mortgage interest rates have an impact on the number of mortgages and deeds re-

corded at the Registry. Higher interest rates affect seasoned homebuyers’ eagerness to refinance, which means fewer mortgages. It also affects a homeowner’s willingness to sell, which results in fewer homes on the market that can be bought. Higher interest rates also impact a buyer’s ability to find a potential home within their budget.”

The total number of deeds recorded for November 2023, which reflects both commercial

### HOUSING MARKET

*continued on page 23*

# Real Estate Corner

## HOUSING MARKET

*continued from page 22*

and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 1,266, up 3% from November 2022 but down 3% from October.

The slight increase in the total number of deeds this month compared to last year shows that despite difficult market conditions and a housing market that has been slow for over a year, Norfolk County and its communities remains a desirable place to both live and work in, said Register O'Donnell.

The average sale price of commercial and residential properties for November 2023 was \$959,272, a 1% decrease compared to November 2022 and a decrease of 1% from October 2023. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is down, decreasing 2% from last year but showed less than a 1% change from last month.

“For the second month in a row, prices have remained close

compared to last year’s property values, and compared to 2021, costs are down 36% and down 8% from 2020,” stated Register O'Donnell. “While prices have come down compared to previous years, high interest rates, relative to what they were in 2020 and 2021, make it difficult for homebuyers in general, but especially for first-time homebuyers looking to purchase property.”

For the month of November, lending activity overall continued to decline from last year. A total of 1,175 mortgages were recorded, which is 13% less than last year but 1% more than last month.

According to O'Donnell, “Those who locked in lower interest rates in 2020 and 2021 are less inclined to refinance at current mortgage interest rates, and buyers looking for new property may be hesitant to take on a new mortgage with average interest rates still above 7%. These are some of the factors that have resulted in decreased mortgage recordings.”

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