

Milford Youth U14 Cheer Team wins 2nd Place at Nationals



The Milford Youth Football & Cheer (MYFC) U14 Cheer Team represented Milford at the AYFC National Cheer Competition held in Kissimmee, FL, on Dec. 6-10.

The hard-working team earned a second-place finish amongst the best of the best in the AYFC tournament. The team had to place either first, second or third place at

three qualifying competitions throughout the fall to be able to compete at the AYFC Na-

CHEER TEAM
continued on page 6

Santa visits Cornerstone



Cornerstone at Milford celebrated with residents, associates, and family at this year's Holiday Party! Santa was there to add to the festivities. Courtesy photo

SANTA
continued on page 12

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Community dinners have big Milford following

Monthly dinners held in Holliston



Each month, the Christ the King Lutheran Church in Holliston holds a free community dinner each month for anyone interested in a good home-cooked meal and/or fellowship. *Courtesy photo*

By Theresa Knapp

Each month, the Christ the King Lutheran Church in Holliston hosts a community dinner at no cost for anyone who would like to attend.

“We started last March and about 35 people attended,” said Dale Hava, Vice President of the Congregation, noting they now have approximately 60 guests

**The next
Community Dinner
is Saturday, Jan. 20,
at 7 p.m.
at Christ the King
Lutheran Church,
600 Central St.
Holliston**

COMMUNITY DINNERS

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A group of Milford residents at the December community dinner in Holliston. *Courtesy photo*

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Shrewsbury - Coming Soon!

Vietnam Trail Network renowned throughout Northeast

Non-profit purchased private land in 2003 to use for preservation, challenging trails

By Linda Chuss

The Vietnam trail network, with hundreds of acres in Milford, might be better known by people around the Northeast than by Milford residents. Mountain biking trails there stand out as being feature-laden for advanced technical challenges while also supporting all biking levels and other recreational uses.

The New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) fostered Vietnam's development and remains instrumental in proudly maintaining it. "People drive for hours to ride here," said Kevin Keenan, Chair of the property's Land Management Committee. "It's on their bucket list. The lore is out there."

Keenan explained how the trail network got its name.

"The name came from Vietnam vets. When they returned from the war, they would ride their dirt bikes in there. They would cut the brush down below handlebar height and the low brush reminded them of the forests in Vietnam." Today, dirt bikes and most other motorized vehicles are not allowed at Vietnam. E-bikes are allowed at the Milford areas, including the land owned by NEMBA, but not on the Holliston and Hopkinton areas.

One of the many unique aspects of Vietnam is that a 46-acre strategic parcel "was the first piece of land bought by

"Everything in the network is walkable, you can go around anything gnarly you don't want to try."

- Kevin Keenan of the New England Mountain Bike Association, and chair of its Land Management Committee



Mountain biker Kevin Keenan tackling some rocks at the local trail network known as Vietnam. Courtesy photo by John Goeller



Members of the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) volunteer to maintain and add trails in the Vietnam network. Courtesy photo by Kevin Keenan

a non-profit mountain biking association," Keenan said. "November 2023 was the 20-year anniversary of that purchase. Everyone pulled together to secure the resources so everyone can use it. We wanted it so we could provide challenging trails and protect the land." The other landowners are the towns of Milford, Holliston, and Hopkinton, as well as businesses and private citizens.

Many people enjoy the trails for scenic walks, trail running, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing through the woods, and more moderate mountain bik-

ing.

"The north side trails on the Holliston and Hopkinton conservation land are not scary," explained Keenan. "Everything in the network is walkable, you can go around anything gnarly you don't want to try."

For safety, NEMBA encourages bikers to pay attention to who is around them. The organization also promotes respect for the land and landowners. They maintain the trails and create new ones, holding volunteer-run workdays Sunday mornings in November and at other times throughout the year.

Trails are free for the public to use. Because the Vietnam network is extensive, getting lost is very possible. A good way to help prevent that is with an app like TrailForks. Alternatively, online maps can be downloaded to a cellphone or printed to take along. By going with someone familiar with the trails, newcomers will have a better experience.

One good place to start is at the New Trail, accessible from Adams Street in Holliston, just south of Marshall Street which has a parking lot at the trailhead. There are popular beginner loops of one to two miles or

more, and much more difficult trails like "Burial Bypass" and "Do You Feel Lucky?"

NEMBA is comprised of 35 regional chapters, with Vietnam being part of the Blackstone Valley chapter. The chapter organizes group rides, workdays, and other events. They recently produced a thrilling video of the Vietnam experience: youtube.com/watch?v=sFTjecz8b10.

For more information, follow the chapter on Facebook (Blackstone Valley NEMBA Group) or Instagram (blackstone_valley_nemba), or visit the NEMBA website, nemba.org.

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Stacy Middle School Second Trimester Honor Roll

Stacy Middle School Principal, Mrs. Caridad Lopez has announced Stacy Middle School's Honor Roll for Trimester One.

PRINCIPAL'S LIST

Grade 6

Albert, Alexandra; Alves, Benjamin; Ateawung, Myra; Baker, Kaydence; Ballard, Evan; Brothers, Michelle; Bullock, Nola; Caccin, Luigi; Carvalho, Kamilla; Cincotta, Regina; Connerney, Carter; Consigli, Rita; Cunningham, Brooke; DiGiallonardo, Brandon; Dunham, Arya; Earl, Kendall; Falk, Liam; Falk, Nolan; Fallon, Shawn; Fonseca, Mason; Fries, Noah; Gelmini, Samson; Gross, Camden; Guillaume, Christian; Healey, Brandon; Iacovelli, Grace; Jaboin, Jordan; LeBlanc, Landon; Lefter, Jayden; Liatsos, William; Lima, David; Lucas, Ryder; Macchi, Emma; Mandrik, Cora; McGrath, Logan; Merrill, Colton; Metodiev, Georgi; Mutegyeki, Neria; Naugler, Abigail; Nnyanzi, John; Oliveira, Alice; O'Toole, Emmett; Perez, Rafael; Powers, Alexandra; Purtell, Melanie; Quickmire, Nicholas; Reynolds, Tristan; Roderick, Cooper; Sanampudi, Vikrant; Sobers, Aria; Stokes, Madison; Valenca, Marley; Villa, Mey; Walker, Jack; Wallace, Ellie; Walthers, Audrey; Webster, Samuel

Grade 7

Aboalanin, Rami; Acquafresca, Aleah; Barbosa, Gabriella; Bertoni, Jessica; Blackmar, Luke; Brown, Jonathan; Cales, Mila; Capuzziello, Dante; Corbin, Jeffrey; Donelan, Sean; Duchi Quizhpilema, John; Flanagan, Brian; Guikema, Emelia;

Harbachuck, Lily; Hausmann, William; Held, Colin; Holland, Margaret; Hughes, Lily; Kandi, Anand Ananya; Kearnan, Meghan; Knapp, Ella; La-Tour, Cameron; Loja-Mendez, Chase; Martinelli, Dominic; McDavitt, Adrian; Moreira Ocampo, Hellen; Murphy, Isabella; Naves, Grace; Oliveira, Beatriz; O'Mensah, Danique; Persico, Tessa; Prevelige, Leah; Richard, Benjamin; Ridolfi, Michael; Saad, Samarah; Stachowski, Sam; Sullivan, Isabella; Turner, Olivia; Vazquez, Emma; Vereker, Grant; Wright, Reagan; Wright, Riley

Grade 8

Abbiuso, Brian; Allen, Ainsley; Alvarez Posada, Yulianet; Ateawung, Matthew; Boccia, Brayden; Brown, Andrew; Buckley, Aubrey; Casey, McKenna; Charczenko, Maya; Croeber, Kailyn; Curley, Allison; Dahmer, Zachary; Day, John; DeOliveira, Pedro; DeTore, Gabriella; DeTore, Jady; DiGiando, Samuel; Dos Reis, Yasmim; Doyon, Khryss; Ettahiri, Sami; Ferreira, Gabriella; Golla, Rupinika; Gomes, Davi; Grabau, Jennifer; Grucelski, Brooklyn; Hough, Amelia; Luchini, Talia; Macchi, Avery; MacKenzie, Katelyn; Michalewski, Emma; Miles, Cody; Miller, Giovanna; Murphy, Keira; Nosek, Gabriella; Parke, Hannah; Pinto, Gabriella; Pires, Emali; Renaud, Gianna; Rizzo, Luke; Saguay, Bryan; Shannon, Gage; Silva, Caleb; Soares, Sabrina; Stacey, Camille; Stokes, Brooke; Sweeney, Grace; Sweeney, Rosemary; Underwood, Evan; Usher, Annabel; Villalobos, Alani;

Voss-Leal, Brian; Wild, Lilli; Williams, Lauren; Zicherman, Cameron

HONORABLE MENTION

Grade 6

Alsheikh, Jannah; Altamirano, Lukas; Ballard, Bryn; Beals, Danny; Bruschi, Arthur; Bush, Layla; Callery, Christa; Campos, Alicia; Canenguez Alfaro, Roberto; Cermenon Alarcon, Luis; Cruz Morales, Zabryna; Daluz, Kendrick; Damata, Antonia; De Oliveira, Melissa; De Oliveira, Sophia; Demosthene, Jean Clivenson; Dias, Emanuel; Dupre, Kylie; Dwarampudi, Visishta; Fagone, Elyse; Fenneuff, Samantha; Ferreira, Sarah; Files, Kaylee; Garay, Judah; Geoffroy, Cali; Ghansah, Kendall; Gkalios, Demos; Gomes, Matheus; Gonzalez Caraballo, Daniela; Howland, Finnegan; Hukanovic, Mirza; Keenan, Makayla; Kocherha, Illia; Long, Sophia; Mancina, Destinee; Maria, Jariel; Mastroianni, Vincent; McGovern, Kennedy; McNeil, Keagan; Mojica, Solenn; Muniz, Kalib; Nealon, Ava; Pabon, Carmella;aguay Cela, Zaima; Pereira, Luisa; Perez Sauca, Lesly; Repella, Nicholas; Roderick, Logan; Ross, Addison, Silva Hughes, Isabella; Silva, Paula; Simonds, Mac; Tomas, Aiden; Toussaint, Jaylen; Underwood, Lily; Valentin, Nicholas; Wisa, Giovanni

Grade 7

Asong, Rose; Atherton, Ryan; Auger, Annie; Barrientos, Leah; Bourassa, Marcella; Bukenya, Nicholas; Calabraro, Anthony; Castro Tacuri, Felipe; Cela Caguana, Kevin; Cloherty, Shea-

mus; Connors, Reese; da Costa, Luiza; Da Cunha, Leticia; Da Silva, Mellany; D'Amico, Olivia; David, Winchelle; De Faria, Miguel; De Souza, Gabriel; De Souza, Geovanna; Dias, Julio Cesar; Duchi Yupa, Shyrley; Ferreira, Madelynn; Jordan, Connor; Karlin, Evan; Lefter, Anela; Maki, Cameron; Marin, Sophia; Marques, Jacob; Mauricio, Jordyn; Michel, Isabella; Mowry, Liam; Nashawaty, Kaylyn; Oliveira, Melissa; Padilla Munoz, ebastian; Pellegrini, Santino; Prescott, Kiela; Puri, Grayson; Rodriguez, Aliyah; Sainvilus, Juniece; Santomenna, Mia; Scher, Melissa; Silva, Ellen Kathleen; Theresias, Esdras; Tint, Soe; Viera, Claire; Vootla, Aakash

Grade 8

Alemnkia, Favour; Andrade, Daniel; Arquillano, Wiel Jehuven; Ballard, Reese; Carlos, Esther; Castro, Ilda; Cela Chuqui, Jomaira; Coelho, Isabella; Correa, Iyanna; Daniels, Anthony; De Oliveira, Yasmin; Furnari, Matteo; Geoffroy, Cody; Gomes, Ana Luisa; Hally, Ethan; Haser, Michael; Holland, Patrick; Johnson, Hunter; Kedski, Hailley; Kerr, Nathaniel; Kivior, Kevin; KokEnnen, Aiden; Loscerbo, Vincent; Machado, Gustavo; Mack, Jayden; Martins, Lucas; Maza, Sabrina; Oliveira, Jordan; Parker, Jacob; Pasqualetti, Logan; Pimentel, Isabela; Powers, Victoria; Prates, Kaylla; Raney, Riley; Sana-guaray Moyon, Jhover; Senna, Juliana; Smith, Ethan; Strafello, Kevin; Tabares Restrepo, Melanie; Teixeira, Kalebe; Webster, Nathan; Yupangui Castro, Jan-neth

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Start moving toward retirement security



Mark Freeman

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It's not as well-known as Halloween, but National Retirement Security week happens every October — the third week, to be precise — and while it doesn't involve ghosts and goblins, it does deal with something even more frightening: the risk of not being able to enjoy a comfortable retirement. Through various events, this occasion highlights ideas about building retirement security. What steps can you take?

Here are some suggestions:

- **Don't underestimate your longevity.** Consider this: 65-year-old men can expect to live another 20 years, while 65-year-old women can anticipate almost 22 more years, according to the Society of Actuaries. And these figures are just averages, meaning you could well exceed these ages, perhaps by many years. So, in thinking about how much money you'll need as a retiree, be aware that you could spend two, or even three, decades in retirement.
- **Don't underestimate health care costs.** When you retire, some of your expenses — such as transportation, wardrobe and other costs associated with your career — will drop. Others will not and may even increase. Health care is a prime example: Many people assume that Medicare or their Medicare Advantage plan will take care of virtually all their health care costs in retirement, but that's not

the case. Generally speaking, you could plan on spending \$4,500 to \$6,500 per year on health care costs during retirement, excluding the large expenses connected with long-term care. Your actual costs could be higher or lower, depending on your health, prescription drugs and supplemental insurance coverage, but make sure you plan for sizable health care costs in your projected retirement budget.

- **Contribute as much as you can afford to your retirement plans.** Try to put in as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan and try to increase your contributions whenever your salary goes up. You may also be eligible to contribute to a traditional or Roth IRA, which offers tax benefits and a wide variety of investment options. (Contributions to a Roth IRA may be limited based on your income.) Once you reach retire-

ment, you can still make some moves that could help boost your financial security:

- **Maintain an appropriate investment mix.** When you retire, you might be tempted to shift most of your portfolio into highly conservative investments to “lock in” gains and avoid being over-exposed to market volatility that could cause short-term losses. Yet, even in retirement, you should still own some growth-oriented investments that can potentially help keep you ahead of inflation. In fact, it's important to periodically rebalance your investments back to your preferred mix to avoid taking too much or too little risk, so you may want to consult with a financial advisor.
- **Identify a suitable withdrawal rate.** You don't want to take out so much from your portfolio each year that you run the risk of outliving your money. So, you'll

want to determine an annual withdrawal rate that can reduce this danger. A common withdrawal rate to start retirement is 4%, but your own rate should be based on several factors: your age, size of portfolio, other sources of income and so on.

It can be challenging to make all the moves necessary to help achieve retirement security — but it's worth the effort.

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

Mark Freeman
Edward Jones Financial Advisor
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In December, Stephen Lewis shared a poster exhibit on the Struggle for Women's Equality at the Milford Town Library. Over the course of his career as a labor activist, Lewis has amassed a poster collection in the thousands from all over the world on a variety of social justice themes. The exhibit was made possible by a grant from the Milford Cultural Council.

CHEER TEAM

continued from page 1

tional Cheer Competition. The MYFC U14 Cheer Team is comprised of 20 athletes aged ages 12-13 years old. They are led by a team of four dedicated coaches and three cheer demonstrators.

"This group of young athletes exudes perseverance. They put in the work as a team. They looked after one another as a team. It was truly a gift to witness such hard work and dedication." said Coach Tatiana Braz

The team had to fundraise to offset the cost of traveling to Florida to compete and had a very short window of time to raise the funds needed.

"The good old fashioned hometown support was most definitely present during our fundraising efforts. We as a team couldn't have been more excited to represent Milford and were truly grateful for all the support!" said Coach Deanna Acquafresca.

MYFC U14 Cheer Team

- Aleah Acquafresca
- Rose Asong
- Annie Auger
- Savannah Beals

- Gwen Boisvert
- Maddie Bournazian
- Bella Coelho
- Meagan Curley
- Juliana Damata
- Kayla Dias
- Natalia Jordan
- Allie Maietta
- Abby Naugler
- Nathielli Oliveira
- Vanessa Perez
- Gianna Petruska
- Sydney Redden
- Camille Stacy
- Addison Tetreault
- Nalah Wokoun

MYFC U14 Cheer Coaches

- Deanna Acquafresca
- Jennifer Bournazian
- Molly Auger
- Tatiana Braz

MYFC Cheer Demonstrators

- Maddie Hamilton
- Patty Fernandes
- Julia Fontes

Milford Youth Football & Cheer is a 501(c)(3) non-profit youth athletic organization run 100% by volunteers. Our goal is to encourage and increase youth participation in football and cheerleading, with a focus on building character, self-confidence, and good sportsmanship in our athletes.

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Milford Regional's Mélange gala raises \$1.2 million in 'crucial funds'

Milford Regional Medical Center's Mélange 2023 Gala and Live Auction raised a record-breaking \$1.2 million to support the "highest priority needs of the medical center."

The November fundraiser was held at The Park Sports Center in Milford and at-

tended by approximately 400 Milford area business and community leaders, sponsors, friends and supporters of the hospital.

For more information on the event, visit foundation.milfordregional.org/getinvolved/specialevents/melange/

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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

EYES

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MILFORD - FRANKLIN EYE CENTER





Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.



Jorge G. Arroyo, M.D.



Dan Liu, M.D.



Michael R. Adams, O.D.



Shalin Zia, O.D.



Donald L. Conn, O.D.



Dr. Purvi Patel, O.D.

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Kindergarten Registration Packet Pick Up scheduled for Feb. 5

Families can pick up packets for the 2024-2025 School Year

The Kindergarten 2024 Registration Packet Pick Up is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 5, 2024, at Milford High School Cafeteria, 31 West Fountain St., Milford (at the rear of the school). In the event of snow, the alternate date is Tuesday, Feb. 6. The pick-up time is from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Parents

or guardians are required to complete the first page of the packet during the pick-up. For households where languages other than English are spoken, a future language screening appointment will be scheduled, and Portuguese and Spanish interpreters will be available.

About Milford Public Schools

The Milford Public School District provides an equitable learning environment that empowers all students, faculty, and staff to achieve their short and long-term goals and prepares each individual in the school community to adapt to the challenges of change in an increasingly complex world.

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EYES

continued from page 7

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 experi-

ence, 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 pathology, 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 a free pair of select glasses. We offer after-hours, same-day emergency appointments and Saturday appointments. We have great management focused on quality customer care. Four decades serving our communities and going strong. In 2024, we remain dedicated to the best in eye medicine and surgery closer to home.

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COMMUNITY DINNERS

continued from page 2

each month. “We attribute the growth to word of mouth from those who attend and increased publicity that we generate... We are seeing many repeat diners and often they bring new people with them.”

Hava, who lives in Milford, says the event is open to anyone from any town. He notes that some people come from as far away as New Bedford, and nearly half of the dinner guests

live in Milford.

“We have a large following from Milford, many of whom go to the Milford Senior Center on a regular basis. We also draw quite a few people from Holliston, Medway and Millis. Most of the people are senior citizens, but we have a growing number of younger families who come on a regular basis; this past month we had four or five young children and their parents.”

The home-cooked meals are prepared by members of the congregation. The menu varies

monthly but always includes “all the fixings” and dessert.

Hava says the dinners are for everyone interested in a good meal. The gatherings are not religious-related and are merely hosted in the church’s “fabulous space that lends itself nicely to events like this” since the hall can seat up to 160 people.

Hava says, “It is an opportunity for people to get out for an evening, enjoy a good meal and meet new friends. There are many folks out there who can use a good meal and we hope to provide that on a regular basis.”

Central One Federal Credit Union donates \$15,000 to charitable organizations

At the beginning of December, Central One employees and their guests came together for a special casino-themed holiday party. This year's celebration was about more than enjoying the holiday together; it was also about giving back. At night's end, attendees cashed in their casino chips for raffle tickets, with fifteen winners choosing a worthy 501(c)(3) organization to receive a donation of \$1,000 on

Central One's behalf. Central One is delighted to announce the charities that winners selected to receive a monetary donation from Central One:

- Ahimsa Animal Rescue
- American Diabetes Association
- American Parkinson Disease Association
- Bay Path Humane Society
- Loaves & Fishes/Friendship Trays

- Massachusetts Breast Cancer Coalition
- North Quabbin Animal Control Shelter
- Polar Bears International
- Project New Hope, Inc.
- The Shine Initiative
- St. Jude Children's Research Hospital
- Veterans Inc.
- Why Me & Sherry's House
- Worcester Animal Rescue League

Recent Home Sales

Date	Milford	Amount
12/27/2023	27 Country Club Lane #B	\$367,500
12/21/2023	1 Sunnyside Lane	\$435,000
12/15/2023	9 Grant Street	\$375,000
12/15/2023	42 Purchase Street	\$430,000
12/15/2023	392 Central Street	\$775,000
12/14/2023	7 Ariel Circle	\$670,000
12/14/2023	17-17A Governors Way	\$496,500
12/13/2023	38 Beaver Street	\$710,000
12/08/2023	36 Depot Street	\$445,000
12/08/2023	15 Aris Way	\$405,000
12/07/2023	4 Harvard Drive	\$490,000
12/06/2023	24 Ravenna Street	\$410,000
12/06/2023	156 Walden Way	\$680,000
12/04/2023	26 Purchase Street	\$630,000
11/30/2023	59 Purchase Street	\$570,000
11/30/2023	24 Harding Street	\$505,000
11/30/2023	73 Congress Street	\$545,000
11/28/2023	12 W Maple Street	\$175,000

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Milford Free Press



A 3-bed, 1-bath, 1,176 sf house at 9 Grant Street in Milford recently sold for \$375,000. Image credit www.zillow.com



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

By *Christie Vogt*
Contributing Writer

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

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

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

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



away," Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Busi-

Business spotlight

ness is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Milford, the Schadlers have been residents for over 20 years. Their four kids have gone



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

to Milford schools. In addition to living in town, they are proud investors in the community. They sponsor and coach several sports teams, volunteer at the schools, and own both commercial and residential properties.

One of the best parts of his job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships

with returning customers. "We are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the MetroWest area," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call 774-287-1133 or visit affordable-junkremoval.com.

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SANTA

continued from page 1

Cornerstone at Milford celebrated with residents, associates, and family at this year's Holiday Party! Santa was there to add to the festivities. Courtesy photos



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Attend an all-ages rock concert in town to benefit childhood cancer research

By Linda Chuss

The public is invited to a rock concert at the Milford High School auditorium on Jan. 19 at 7 p.m. Proceeds from the event will go to the Ty Louis Campbell Foundation, a 501(c)(3) charity that funds the development of safer and less toxic treatments for childhood cancer.

Performers for the show are the Rockin' for a Reason band, made up of local middle and high school students who auditioned to be part of it, and Milford's Joe B. band. Tickets are \$10.

In 2012, the parents of Ty Campbell, of Carmel, NY, established the foundation after Campbell died from cancer at age five as a result of his treatment's side effects. Along with raising funds, the foundation aims to remind parents to enjoy fun times with their children

and focus less on the stresses of everyday parenting. Fundraisers like Rockin' for a Reason reflect that spirit.

Jennifer Massaro Derocher of Upton is the concert organizer.

"Ty's dad, Louie, and I were childhood friends," she said. "We had lost touch, but when I heard about Ty's fight with cancer, I reached out to help. I've been a member of the foundation's board of directors since its inception.

"Our first Rockin' for a Reason concert was in 2013 at Nipmuc High School in Upton and we've had at least one every year since. This is our second benefit concert in Milford."

This Rockin' for a Reason band consists of 22 students from Milford, Nipmuc, Miscoe Hill, and Blackstone Valley Technical schools. On the show's lineup are classic favorites

like The B-52's "Love Shack" and "I'm Shipping up to Boston" by the Dropkick Murphys.

The Joe B. band performs in the area, with a recent show at the Southwick Zoo's Winter Wonderland. Former band member Carlie Gonzalez was diagnosed with cancer in 2018, making the Rockin' for a Reason benefit especially meaningful to the group.

"It's a fun event, and by coming, people can feel good about contributing to an important cause," Derocher said. According to the foundation, only one in five children diagnosed with cancer will lead a healthy and full life. Through fundraising, the foundation's intent is that children diagnosed with cancer have the opportunity to lead longer lives, without the disease and debilitating side effects of today's treatments.

"At the October Nipmuc



concert, we raised over \$8,000," said Derocher. "Our goal for this school year is \$25,000. Over the years, Rockin' for a Reason has contributed over \$100,000 to the foundation. People can help by attending this concert, being an event sponsor, and

making monetary donations." Tickets for the show can be purchased at the door. To become a sponsor, contact Derocher at jderocher@superty.org. Donations can be made online at givebutter.com/rockinforareason2023.

Milford students earn Trimester 1 honor roll at Tri-County

FRANKLIN – Some 455 students, just shy of 50% of the total student body, of Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School attained High Honor Roll or Honor Roll status as Trimester 1 grades were recently released.

For students to make the High Honor Roll they must have A's in each of their academic offerings. Students qualifying for the regular Honor Roll must have A's and B's in all of

their academic subjects.

The following students made the High or Regular Honor Roll for the first trimester of the 2023-24 academic year.

- Grade 9 - Honors
Milford - Jonathan Ferrante
- Grade 10 - Honors
Milford - Max Guaman
- Grade 11 - Honors
Milford - Kailyn Gibson
- Grade 12 - Honors
Milford - Destiny Carroll

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Pet of the Month: Charlie



Charlie is the king of all he surveys! His favorite spot is a tall treehouse condo in the center of the room where he can watch the other cats playing. You see this 5-year-old tuxedo cat was surrendered with a large group of cats and we think he enjoys his alone time. From up on his favorite perch, he is also certain to get some love from all the volunteers. If he doesn't get noticed right

away, he will let out a little chirp to remind you that he is there. Charlie is happy to play with toys with you for a little while or to be brushed occasionally. But mostly he likes to watch over his kingdom and bask in the attention of his loyal subjects!

For more information on Charlie or the other cats at the Milford Humane Society, please visit www.milfordhumane.org/

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SCHOOLS

Milford School Highlights

District

During the 2023-2024 school year, the Milford Public School District is developing the next Milford Public School District Strategic Plan, as well as the 2024 Student Opportunity Act Three-year Plan. There will be numerous and varied opportunities throughout the year, including surveys, focus groups, interviews, and committees, for school community members to share their hopes, dreams, and needs. The district will reach out to the school community frequently to come together to share diverse perspectives as part of the strategic planning process. The district believes that every Milford community member has unique assets and viewpoints necessary to drive the strategic planning process.

The strategic planning process will draw from a number of sources including the current strategic plan, the equity audit in partnership with Center for Leadership and Educational Equity (CLEE), the reimagining high school project in partnership with the Barr Foundation, school improvement plans, the portrait of a graduate, long range facilities plan, and departmental plans. The Milford Public Schools will draw from these sources and your feedback to develop the next plan.

Recently we have asked for input for both the Equity Audit and the Reimagining High School Project. The district will provide additional opportunities for participation soon. If you have any questions about the strategic planning process, please email Dr. Consigli, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment, at cconsigli@milfordma.com.

The Kindergarten 2024 Registration Packet Pick Up is scheduled for Monday, Feb. 5, 2024, at Milford High School Cafeteria, located at 31 West Fountain Street, Milford, MA (at the rear of the school). In the event of snow, the alternative date is Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024. The pick-up time is from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Parents or guardians are required to complete the first page of the packet during the

pick-up. For households where languages other than English are spoken, a future language screening appointment will be scheduled, and Portuguese and Spanish interpreters will be available.

Save the Date:

1/1-New Year's Day - No

School-School Offices Closed

1/2-School Resumes

1/4-School Committee Meeting

1/12-Early Release K-12-PreK

Closed-School Offices Open

1/15-Martin Luther King Day-

School Closed-School Offices

Closed

1/18-School Committee Meeting

DMH Behavioral Health

Hotline

The Department of Mental Health has launched a new Behavioral Health Help Line that people can call or text at 833-773-2445. The helpline can help individuals and families navigate the behavioral health system and access treatment, including mobile crisis services. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in more than 200 languages. For more information, please see the FAQ. Anyone with questions or concerns about the helpline can email the helpline director at Mio.Tamanaha@mass.gov.

Spanish:

El Departamento de Salud Mental ha lanzado una nueva línea, Behavioral Health Help Line (Línea de Ayuda de Salud Mental) a la que se puede llamar o enviar un mensaje de texto al 833-773-2445. Está disponible 24 horas al día, siete días a la semana en más de 200 idiomas. La línea de ayuda puede ayudar a personas y familias a navegar por el sistema de salud del comportamiento y acceder a tratamiento, incluyendo servicios móviles de crisis. Para más información, consulte FAQ (preguntas frecuentes). Cualquier persona que tenga preguntas o dudas sobre la línea de ayuda puede enviar un correo electrónico al director de la línea de ayuda a Mio.Tamanaha@mass.gov.

Portuguese:

O Departamento de Saúde Mental lançou uma nova Behavioral Health Helpline (Linha de Ajuda de Saúde Comportamen-

tal) em que as pessoas podem ligar ou enviar mensagens de texto para 833-773-2445. Ela está disponível 24 horas por dia, sete dias por semana, em mais de 200 idiomas. A linha de ajuda pode ajudar indivíduos e famílias a navegar o sistema de saúde comportamental e acessar tratamentos, incluindo o serviço de crise com atendimento pelo celular. Para mais informações, consulte o FAQ (perguntas frequentes). Qualquer pessoa com dúvidas ou perguntas sobre a linha de ajuda pode enviar um e-mail ao diretor da linha de ajuda em Mio.Tamanaha@mass.gov.

Milford High School

Milford High School Students recognized as AP Scholars and AP Scholars with Distinction.

Advanced Placement (AP) courses represent a rigorous academic curriculum for high school students seeking a college-level educational experience. These courses cater to individuals who demonstrate academic preparedness and a proactive motivation to engage with advanced coursework. Culminating in the AP Exams conducted after each course, these assessments serve as a comprehensive measure of students' mastery of collegiate material. Students who score three or greater on an AP exam often attain college credits, which may facilitate placement into more advanced courses within a collegiate setting. With great pride, the Milford School Community extends our congratulations to the distinguished Milford High School students who have earned the prestigious AP Scholar Award, a testament to their dedication and scholarly achievements in pursuing academic excellence.

Student Name/Scholar Award
Blackwell; Liam B./AP Scholar
Colonetti; Vinicius G./AP Scholar
with Honor

Consigli; Louis F./AP Scholar

DiGiando; Andrew S./AP

Scholar with Distinction

Dutcher; Domenic J./AP Scholar

Gomes; Arthur G./AP Scholar

MILFORD SCHOOLS

continued on page 16

Milford Town Library Calendar of Events

80 Spruce Street, Milford • 508-473-2145 • MilfordTownLibrary.org • HOURS: Mon. – Thurs. 9-9 • Fri. 9-6 • Sat. 9-5 • Sun. CLOSED

By Reference Department

Holiday Hours

The library will be closed on Monday, January 15 in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.

AARP Tax Aide Program

The AARP Tax Aide Program returns again this year to help seniors and low-income individuals file their income tax returns for free.

We'll begin making appointments in mid to late January. Trained volunteer preparers will be able to complete returns for the tax years 2023, 2022, and 2021.

Please note however, that separate appointments are required for each tax year.

Tax Forms

Both federal and state tax forms will be available in the library entrance (between the double doors) as soon as they arrive from the IRS and the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. Please note that these forms are often not sent until late January or even early February to accommodate changes.

Libia Goncalves:

Featured Artist

During January local artist Libia Goncalves will exhibit her artwork behind the Reference Desk. Originally from Columbia, Libia worked as a medical technologist for many years and is currently pursuing a second Bachelor's degree in art from Worcester State University. A member Blackstone Valley Art-

ists' Association (BVAA), Libia is a highly accomplished painter in watercolor, oil and acrylics and has taught in her home studio and also at the library and demonstrated her craft on Milford TV. Libia tells us that, "Painting used to be a hobby, now it is my passion, my obsession, it has become a necessity."

Stamp Collection:

Bob Szymanski

Another exhibit happening in January is a stamp collection courtesy of Milford resident Bob Szymanski which can be found in the adult display case. Bob's been a serious collector for decades and has previously exhibited at the library. A great deal of history, thought and design can be found through Philately, the collection and

study of postage stamps.

ESL Drop in Classes

Free Drop in ESL classes return on Tuesday, January 16, 2024. The regular class schedule is Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 - 8 p.m.

A entrega gratuita nas aulas de ESL retorna na terça-feira, 16 de janeiro de 2024. O horário normal das aulas é às terças e quintas-feiras, 7pm-8pm.

Las clases gratuitas de ESL regresan el martes 16 de enero de 2024. El horario de clases regular es los martes y jueves de 7pm-8pm.

Center Book Group

The Center Book Group will meet on Tuesday, January 16 at 10 a.m. at the Milford Senior Center to discuss *Wintering: The*

Power of Rest and Retreat in Difficult Times by Samantha May.

This meditative volume looks at the ways human beings can process grief, illness or other life changes in a manner that is more nuanced than attempting to power through without taking time to rest and reflect.

To reserve a copy or to learn more about the Center Book Group, please call the Information Desk at 508-473-2145, ext. 219 or email Anne at aberard@milfordtownlibrary.org.

Coming soon:

Virtual Program: An Evening with Romance Authors Ali Hazelwood, Nikki Payne and Denise Williams. Monday, February 26 at 7 p.m.



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SCHOOLS

MILFORD SCHOOLS

continued from page 14

Hann; Dawson R./AP Scholar
Howes; Shane/AP Scholar
Lawrence; Nathan D./AP Scholar
with Honor

Leite; Sarah A./AP Scholar with
Honor

Liatsos; Elizabeth M./AP Scholar
Maddock; Benjamin Q./AP
Scholar

Raval; Vedi N./AP Scholar
Sutherland; Elsie E./AP Scholar
with Honor

Wengal; Sarah J./AP Scholar with
Honor

Williams; Maeve E./AP Scholar
with Honor

Zheng; Yu Xin/AP Scholar

Scholar Award Key:

AP Scholar: *Granted to students who receive scores of 3 or higher on three or more AP Exams*

AP Scholar with Honor: *Granted to students who receive an average score of at least 3.25 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on four or more of these exams*

AP Scholar with Distinction: *Granted to students who receive an*

average score of at least 3.5 on all AP Exams taken, and scores of 3 or higher on five or more of these exams

Milford High School

Theater Workshop's production of CLUE was held in the MHS auditorium on Dec. 9 and Dec. 10. Cast and Crew wish to thank the Milford Public School community for their ongoing support.

Stacy Middle School

Stacy Middle School is excited to highlight some middle-level club activities students can engage in within their school community. The SMS Dance Team and SMS Wrestling Team allow students to explore interests and team sports as aspiring athletes. Budding chefs find their place in the Cooking Club, and tech enthusiasts unite in the competitive world of Esports. The French Club opens doors to language and cultural exploration, while the Science Club sparks scientific curiosity through hands-on experiments. Social bonds are strengthened in the Circle of Friends, and aspiring journalists contribute

to the school narrative in the Newspaper club. Prioritizing mental health, the Minds Matter Club provides a supportive space for meaningful discussions and activities for the school. Stacy Middle School's diverse club offerings ensure students can explore their passions and cultivate a sense of belonging within the school community. Participating in club activities is a great way to make friends and learn new things. Please get in touch with the main office if you have questions about any of the club offerings at SMS and how to get your child involved.

Woodland Elementary School (WES)

Principal Kearnan is pleased to announce Woodland's next Principal's Council recognition for this school year. Teachers nominate students from their classes that exemplify certain values that are important at Woodland. WES wants to recognize and celebrate students that demonstrate positive behaviors consistently in class, in school, and in the community.

Please join the Woodland School Community in celebrating students that have earned and deserve this nomination.

The third Council of the year has been nominated by their teachers for showing Helpfulness. Students selected for this council always lend a hand to their teachers, classmates, and peers.. Not only do these students help when they are asked, but they look to help others on their own! Woodland Elementary School appreciates the extra hands and the support these friends offer. Please joining the WES community in welcoming the following students:

Helpfulness Grade 3: Andrew Bien, Harper Brown, Aylla Da Silva, Gabriella Pereira, Luke Peterson, Dagelsy Romero Orbe, Rocio Apugglon Chafra, Emanuely de Oliveira, Lillian Chiccarelli, Melissa Dalla Dea, Dacia Biello, Victor Silva, Aliyah Jones, Valentina De Oliveira, Samuel Scher, Wesley Karp

Helpfulness Grade 4: Joseph Buchan, Logan Barros,

Amelia Maki, Juliet Consigli, Trinity Freeman, Alexis Myers, Agatha Nazario, Isabella Chagnon, Isabella Fournier, Aiyanna McDoulett, Matthew Rocano Villavicencio, Julianna Pereira, Kaliana Silva, Nicoly Rodrigues, Victoria Dos Santos, Joao Varela

Helpfulness Grade 5:

Genesis Taipe Peralta, Olivia Molinari, Jarrell Bigelow, Davi Rossetti, Kailiy Altamirano Magallan, Selina Cales, Natalia De Oliveira, Elizabeth Jorge, Isabella Gachau, Ana Clara Pereira, Olivia Barbosa, Harper Allegrezza, Kindra Tacuri Castro, Camilly Do Nascimento, Yasmin Viana, Melissa Monforte, Clare Kearnan

PTO Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. unless otherwise posted.

Memorial Elementary School

Red and white glitter, green paint and pine cones were the base for a wonderful Craft and

MILFORD SCHOOLS

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SCHOOLS

MILFORD SCHOOLS

continued from page 16

Cocoa family event at Memorial Elementary School. On Dec. 2, the cafeteria tables were lined with red and white table clothes in preparation for student and family creativity. Students worked together with family members to create holiday crafts for the upcoming season and enjoyed a hot cup of cocoa while meeting their peers' family members. Memorial elementary school wishes to thank the PTO for organizing this family event.

PTO Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. unless otherwise posted.

Brookside Elementary School

Brookside Elementary School is setting and attaining math goals. Fifty-nine percent of grade one and grade two classrooms met their Fall STMath percent progress challenge. Students celebrated with a Jiji dance party.

PTO Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. unless otherwise posted.

Shining Star Early Childhood Center (SSECC)

The Pumpernickel Puppets will be visiting Shining Start Early Childhood Center at the beginning of January. The Pumpernickel Puppets offer a funny, interactive, engaging, and colorful adaptation of classic folk and fairy tales. Students will also learn about the behind-the-scenes activities and how the puppet handlers bring their puppets alive.

Families joined their child's classroom on a designated day during the week of Dec. 13 for a family engagement activity. Students, staff, and families worked together to decorate gingerbread houses, making connections to shapes, spatial awareness, and math. Families also enjoyed the

progression of the Winter Door Decorating activity taking place within the SSECC.

PTO Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month unless otherwise posted.

Milford Family & Community Network CFCE (MFCN CFCE):

Information on the MFCN CFCE Playgroups: All playgroups are FREE and intended for children from birth to 5 years old with their parent/caregiver(s), unless otherwise specified. Below, you will find the playgroup registration information. MFCN encourages any family member (moms, dads, grandparents, etc.) to attend! There will be a variety of groups, both in the morning and afternoon. Placement is chosen by lottery, attendance is not required. There will be two sessions of playgroups per year. Session I runs from late September through January and Session II runs from late January through May.

Spring Playgroup Registration – Registration for

the Spring Session in Milford and Hopedale will be taking place daily from Monday, Jan. 8 through Thursday, Jan. 11, and Tuesday, Jan. 16 through Wednesday, Jan. 17 from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Milford Family & Community Network Office, (located inside the Sacred Heart Parish Center). Lottery will take place on Thursday, Jan. 18, 2024. Registration forms will be available in the office and/or online on our website so you can print and have it ready. Please bring your registration form in person to the office during the dates/times listed above. If there are extenuating circumstances, feel free to call the main office to discuss options.

For more information on MFCN CFCE programs, visit <https://www.milfordpublicschools.com/milfordfcn>, email familynetwork@milfordma.com or call 508-277-4981. You can also find and follow us on Facebook at "Milford Family & Community Network CFCE".

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SPORTS

Milford Boys' Hoops turning back clock

Scarlet Hawks will bring old-school style to floor

By Chris Villani

Milford's boys' basketball team has a new coach and a new style this winter.

The Scarlet Hawks are looking to succeed with a style that is new to the program but should be familiar to longtime basketball fans.

"I coached back in the day, I played back in the day, and we want to bring back a tough, physical, old school mentality," said first-year head coach Dana Olson.

"We are going to play the game a little cleaner, a little tougher, and a little smarter," Olson said. "We are going to run good half-court sets and different stuff than they have been running. It's going to take some time, but the buy-in is good, and we will get there."

Olson takes over a Milford team that is deep and experienced. Junior swingman Andrew Rivera is an all-league player and a strong all-around talent.

Milford also returns sophomore CJ Farrell, who started for the Hawks as a freshman, one of many underclassmen who will play a big role this winter.

"When you look at the makeup of our team, it's about 95% underclassmen," Olson said. "The future bodes well, but we live in a society where you need to win and win now."

Senior Jake Soares is one senior who does see significant playing time and Olson praised his play through the early part of the season. Milford will also depend on Luca Testa, a 6-foot-2 forward who Olson is looking to develop into a more complete player.

"He's always been a shooter, but we are working hard to get him to play better defense and hit the offensive and defensive boards," Olson said. "We are creating basketball players. We don't want a kid who is just a shooter or just a defender or just a rebounder. We want them to



New MHS basketball coach Dana Olson calls in a play during a recent game. Photo courtesy of Milford Athletic Director Peter Boucher

be able to do multiple things to help us win."

Tyler Ballard and Ryan Franklin are two more players who add depth for MHS in the post and who are consistently getting better.

The Scarlet Hawks' promise was on display early in the sea-

son with wins over Foxboro and Hopkinton and a strong showing against Sharon, a top-10 team in the state.

"We outplayed [Sharon] in the third and fourth quarters and, right after the game, I said the difference is the culture," Olson said. "They have played

in that system for a long time, and we are in the process of building our culture."

"We are not going to snap our fingers and beat the top teams until we are completely locked in," Olson added. "But we are heading in that direction."

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SPORTS

Milford Girls' Hoops looks to compete in Hock

Scarlet Hawks bring athletic group to floor under new coach

By Chris Villani

The Milford High girls' basketball team did not have to wait long this season to face some tough tests. The Scarlet Hawks, playing under new head coach Austin Costa, took on three teams that posted a combined record of 59-7 the year before.

"It was a doozy of a first week for us, but we bounced back from that," Costa said.

Milford scored a couple of wins early in the year in what Costa hopes will set the stage for a strong season.

"We are definitely trying to become a little more competitive in the Hockomock League," Costa said. "Looking at the scores last year, we want to keep the game a little bit closer against some of those powerhouse teams and start closing things out against the teams that are comparable to us."

Senior Khatrina Leger has been a leading scorer for MHS through the early part of the season, including a 14-point, 15-rebound effort against Sharon. Fellow seniors Erin Michelson and Maeve Driscoll have also provided strong leadership. Driscoll downed a three pointer at the buzzer to send Milford to overtime in an early game against Grafton.

"That was an exciting moment for the team," Costa said.

The coach described Michelson as a "poised leader."

"She gets us into the offense, she slows the game down, and she is always doing the right thing," Costa said.

T.J. Downing is a strong perimeter player for the Scarlet Hawks and will be counted on to drain big shots. Katelyn Kearnan is one of Milford's top defensive players and among its most versatile.

"She always covers the other team's best player," Costa said. "And she can play the two through the five, depending on the matchups and what we need that day."

Costa said the Hawks are hoping to play in transition this season and get up and down the floor quickly.

"We want to get some organized chaos out there," he said. "I think it's less so about my personal style and what fits with the girls that we have. This team is long, athletic, and they can give teams some problems."

Costa said he wants to see his team continue to play with confidence and shoot the ball when it gets the opportunity.

"That should put us in a position to compete for the playoffs," Costa said.



Milford girls' basketball hopes to be all smiles while competing in the Hockomock League. Photo courtesy of Milford Athletic Director Peter Boucher



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tour the school, to
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faculty and to learn
about OLV!**



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