

Piper the police poodle, Milford's newest paw patrol

By Scott Calzolaio

It's learned at a young age; when a service dog is at work, do not pet them. Unless, of course, they're wearing a vest with big, capital letters that says, "PLEASE PET ME." Milford Police's new therapy dog, Piper, knows the invitation is irresistible, and sports that welcoming vest everywhere she goes.

As of December, Piper, a hypoallergenic standard poodle with a fluffy hairdo, officially became Milford Police's first comfort animal. Her duty is less to protect and serve, but more to bring smiles, and of course give kisses.

"The purpose of Piper is to kind of reset the mind a little bit in bad situations," said her handler, Sargent Paul Pinto, in an interview. "In addition to releasing those chemicals that animal lovers feel."

When Pinto was a school resource officer (SRO) a few years ago, he came up with



Milford Police Sergeant Paul Pinto walks Piper around the room at Countryside. Courtesy photo

the idea for Milford after seeing other SROs with their therapy dogs.

"I thought it was a great thing to have in place as far as barriers between the police and children, and building trust," he said. "So, I started doing some research."

The purpose of having a pup like Piper on paw patrol, he said, is exactly that - to deescalate tense situations, provide emotional relief, and to do pawisitive community

PIPER

continued on page 11

Milford High School Senior Recipient of Governor's Citation

Milford High School Senior Arthur Gomes, a distinguished scholar, athlete, and musician, has received a commendation from the Massachusetts Governor for his exceptional academic achievements, sports, instrumental music, community service, and state assessments. In recognition of his outstanding accomplishments, Arthur has also been awarded a prestigious four-year fully funded QuestBridge National College Match Scholarship to attend Middlebury College in Vermont. This scholarship not only underscores his commitment to academic excellence but also highlights his active involvement in the community.

Arthur's diverse range of achievements includes:

- Serving as a Captain and valuable member of the MHS Varsity Volleyball team.
- Contributing to the school's band as a skilled saxophonist.
- Participating in the Volleyball



Courtesy photo

club.

Notably, he secured first place for the Jazz Band in the Central district and earned the title of an AP Scholar. His dedication to community engagement is further demonstrated through his role as a student buddy and recipient

GOVERNOR'S CITATION

continued on page 12

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2024 Milford election intentions

The following candidates have returned papers and are running for the following town positions:

- Marco Bon Tempo, Board of Library Trustees, 3 YRS
- Johnna L. O'Loughlin, Board of Library Trustees, 3 YRS
- Joshua M. Lioce, Board of Assessors, 3 YRS
- Loriann M. Braza, Board of Health, 3 YRS
- Charles Skaff, Board of Health, 3 YRS
- Diana M. Haynes, Board of Health, 3 YRS
- Patrick G Holland, Housing Authority, 5 YRS
- Joseph P. Arcudi, Park Commissioner, 3 YRS
- Joseph Calagione, Planning Board, 5 YRS
- Matthew Zacchilli, School Committee, 3 YRS
- Christopher Wilson, School Committee, 3 YRS
- Gregory Allegrezza, School Committee, 3 YRS
- Meghan Hornberger, School Committee, 3 YRS
- Paul Mazzuchelli, Select Board, 3 YRS
- Rudolph Lioce III, Sewer Commissioner, 3 YRS
- Nicholas Valorie, Town Meeting Member P1, 3 YRS
- Michael D. Barney, Town Meeting Member P2, 3 YRS
- True T. Davis, Town Meeting Member P2, 3 YRS
- Andrew Lizotte, Town Meeting Member P8 3, YRS
- Marco Bon Tempo, Town Meeting Member P8, 3 YRS
- Charles Skaff, Trustee Vernon Grove, 3 YRS
- Michael Lenza, Trustee Vernon Grove, 3 YRS
- Paul A. Boisclair, Trustee Vernon Grove, 1 YR
- Jason Vaz, Trustee Vernon Grove, 1 YR
- Jamie Luchini, Water Commissioner, 3 YRS

The Milford Annual Town Election will take place on April 2. For more information (including a vote by mail application), visit www.milfordma.gov/town-clerk/pages/elections

Milford burning season now through May 1, permit required

The disposal of brush, cane, driftwood, and forestry debris (excluding grass, hay, leaves, and stumps) is permitted each year from Jan. 15 through May 1.

All such open burning shall be conducted:

1. On land proximate to the place of generation
2. At a location greater than 75 feet from any dwelling
3. Between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.



No such open burning shall apply to commercial or institutional land clearing for nonagricultural purposes.

A permit must first be obtained from the Milford Fire Department at 1 Spruce Street or 21 Birch Street. There is no fee.

A permit holder must call 508-473-1213 after 8 a.m. to activate the permit. Open burning is allowed if air quality and other factors are determined suitable. For example, permission will not be granted during windy conditions, regardless of air quality.

Source: www.milfordma.gov

An Alzheimer's support group at Cornerstone at Milford

On March 12, 6 p.m. join us at Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living and Memory Support Community on 11 Birch Street, Milford.

This group for caregivers meets in person. Dealing with Alzheimer's disease and related

dementia isn't easy, so it is helpful to share your concerns and personal experiences with others who completely understand what you're going through. You will also learn about proven strategies to help you better care for your family member.

This month's guest speaker is Amanda Falcone from Spot On Therapy.

Call 508-473-0035 to RSVP or contact Director of Compass Programming Jenn Hozempa at jhozempa@cornerstonemilford.com for more information.



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Mural design selected for Fitness Court at Milford Town Park

By Linda Chuss

This summer, renovations will be completed at Milford Town Park, including a Fitness Court that features a 32-foot-long mural designed specifically for the town. In January, artists submitted designs for consideration, and in February, the Milford Cultural Council selected Carol Abram's entry, "Fitness for All."

Geri Eddins, the Cultural Council chair, said, "Carol's design is colorful, vibrant, and energetic. It shows the story of wellness and fitness in Milford, and reflects not only the mural's immediate location, but also the town's history, community, and identity. There were 23 entries, including quite a few from Milford. We were overwhelmed with the broad range and diversity of the designs and talent."

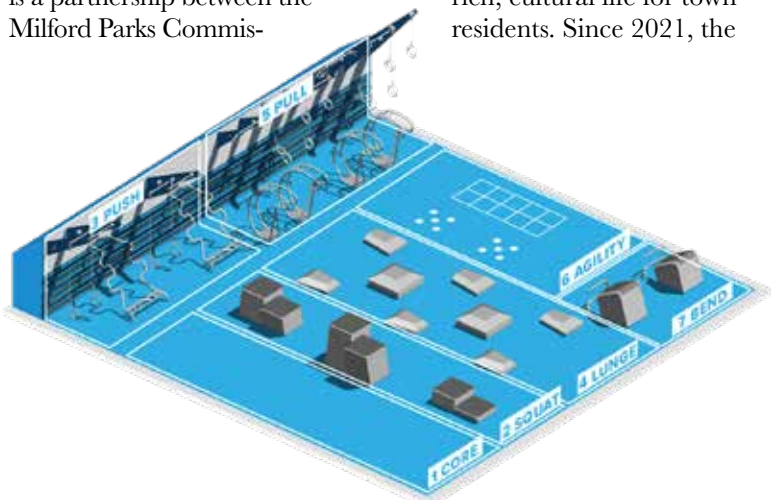
This Fitness Court project is a partnership between the Milford Parks Commis-

sion, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, and the National Fitness Campaign. The campaign provides access to healthy infrastructure to fight the rise of physical inactivity by making world-class fitness free. Jim Asam, Milford's Parks and Recreation Administrator, applied for community grants through the program to install the Fitness Court. The Fitness Court allows an outdoor, full-body, circuit-training workout, as users rotate through seven zones in seven minutes. Through the campaign, 500 Fitness Courts have been installed around the country.

An optional feature is adding a custom mural to the Fitness Court wall, and Asam, believing a mural would enrich the project, invited the Cultural Council to spearhead that aspect. The council sponsors events and programs like the mural design, to foster a rich, cultural life for town residents. Since 2021, the



Carol Abrams, whose design was selected for the Fitness Court mural at Milford Town Park, is shown with one of her recent installations. Photo courtesy of Carol Abrams



The Fitness Court will be installed at Milford Town Park in the summer, with the custom mural on the back side of the wall. Courtesy photo

council, in conjunction with the Parks and Highway Departments, has led an "Art in the Parks" initiative, installing creatively painted picnic tables and trash barrels at various locations around Milford, as well as hand-crafted game boards at Louisa Lake.

Regarding this Milford mural project, Abrams, a fine-art painter from Sharon, called

it "an exciting challenge. It presented the perfect opportunity to apply my technical design skills along with my artist's perspective." Abrams has a BFA from Syracuse University, along with experience in graphic design and multiple art mediums. Most recently, she has been painting with pastels and oils, primarily creating scenes from nature. At her website, Caro-

lAbram.com, she describes her style as "loose, impressionist."

Prior to its installation in Milford, the mural design will be digitally printed on high-quality, anti-graffiti, laminated vinyl and applied to the Fitness Court wall. Once all components in the Town Park renovation are completed, a celebration will be held, where the mural can be seen.

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Milford's nod to Ireland, a look at Irish monuments



The Irish Round Tower, St. Mary's Cemetery, Cedar St., Milford. Source: Milford Historical Commission

In honor of Saint Patrick's Day, the patron saint of Ireland, the Milford Historical Commission highlights two of the town's most prominent Irish monuments.

The Irish Round Tower in St. Mary's Cemetery

Fr. Patrick Cuddihy, a Franciscan Priest from Tipperary, was sent here to be Pastor of St. Mary's Parish in 1857, where he remained until his death in

1898. He missed his homeland, so he decided to build an Irish Round Tower over here, circa 1895. The

Milford granite tower stands 75 feet high and 16 feet wide. It is the only one in America.

Tessie M. Drown wrote a poem that has these sentences: "And he loved Milford also:

THEIR-HROUND TOWER By Tessie M. Drown

Father Cuddihy was homesick, Homesick as a man could be For that 'little bit of Heaven That fell into the sea."

He missed the green, green hillsides And the blue lakes of Killarney, Missed the grand old river Shannon And the castle walls of Blarney.

The love he bore old Erin Had a warmth and depth and glow. An intensity of feeling Only Irish hearts can know.

And he loved Milford also: But memories were so dear. He wished a bit of Ireland Could be planted over here.

Now he could not bring a mountain And he could not bring a lake. And a fairy or a banshee Would be very hard to take.

So when he thought of round towers, At once was born a plan That was big and bold and daring, Like the spirit of this man.

"I will build an Irish Round Tower. I will plan its height and girth. It shall be of Milford granite, Freshly quarried from the earth.

"I will build it like the pattern Of the towers over there. I, myself, will choose the workers. As I choose each stone, with care.

"In St. Mary's Cemetery It shall silent vigil keep, As it stands for generations Watchirig over them that sleep."

Milford mothers, when your children. In the quiet bedtime hour. Beg of you to tell a story, Tell them of this Irish Tower.

Tell them of the priest who built it. Help them understand the man That could carry out a project Like the Irish-Hound-Tower plan.

Show them how his heart was blended With the granite that they see, That the Tower is a symbol Of Father Cuddihy ..

MONUMENTS

continued on page 6

Poem entitled "THEIR-HROUND TOWER" by Tessie M. Drown refers to "Milford granite." Source: Milford Historical Commission

Advertisement for 'The Bark ARK' pet groomer. Features a dog and a pug, '2022 Quest for the Best' and '2023 Quest for the Best' award medals, and text: 'YOUR HOMETOWN PET GROOMER', 'Dog & Cat Grooming Services', 'The Bark ARK', 'Family Owned & Operated For Over 50 Years!', 'COUNTRY HILLS PLAZA, MENDON • 508-473-4744'.

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MONUMENTS

continued from page 4

but memories were so dear, he wished a bit of Ireland could be planted over here.” “In St. Mary’s cemetery it shall silent vigil keep, as it stands for generations watching over them that sleep.”

Irish Memorial to The Great Hunger

The Friends of Old St. Mary’s Cemetery erected the “An Gorta Mor” monument, which is Gaelic for “The Great Hunger” to honor the original Irish settlers who are buried here. The stone is Celtic Green Granite from Barre, Vermont. Local artist, Mary Ohannesian, drew the images that are etched in the polished stone. The story of the “coffin ships” is on the back of the monument.

On Memorial Day, May 30, 2011, Mass was celebrated at the Irish Round Tower by Fr. Daniel Mulcahy, Jr, followed by a procession to bless the new monument. Barbara Minnehan, Lyn Lovell, Paul Curran and State Sen. Richard Moore, spoke on the history of Irish



Irish memorial to The Great Hunger, the potato famine, Old Cemetery, Hamilton St., Milford. Source: Milford Historical Commission

immigrants arriving in America and the struggles endured as a result of the potato famine of 1845-49 in Ireland.

Many of the tombstones located here mark the graves of Irish-born soldiers who joined the Union Regiments in the Civil War.

This monument is located in the Old Cemetery on Hamilton Street, which is a one-way street, but it is an easy walk from St. Mary’s Cemetery on Cedar Street.

Submitted by Anne Lamontagne with the Milford Historical Commission

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How can women bridge the retirement gap?



Mark Freeman

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March 8 is International Women's Day, a day for celebrating all the accomplishments of women around the globe. But many women still need to make up ground in one key area: retirement security.

Women's challenges in achieving a secure retirement are due to several factors, including these:

- **Pay gap** – It's smaller than it once was, but a wage gap still exists between men and women. In fact, women earn,

on average, about 82 cents for every dollar that men earn, according to the Census Bureau. And even though this gap narrows considerably at higher educational levels, it's still a source of concern. Women who earn less than men will likely contribute less to 401(k) plans and will ultimately see smaller Social Security checks.

- **Longer lives** – At age 65, women live, on average, about 20 more years, compared to almost 17 for men, according to the Social Security Administration. Those extra years mean extra expenses.
- **Caregiving responsibilities** – Traditionally, women have done much of the caregiving for young children and older parents. And while this caregiving is done with love, it also comes with financial sacrifice. Consider this: The average employment-related costs for mothers providing unpaid care is nearly \$300,000 over a lifetime, according to the

U.S. Department of Labor — which translates to a reduction of 15% of lifetime earnings. Furthermore, time away from the workforce results in fewer contributions to 401(k) and other employer-sponsored retirement plans.

Ultimately, these issues can leave women with a retirement security deficit. Here are some moves that can help close this gap:

- **Contribute as much as possible to retirement plans.** Try to contribute as much as you can afford to your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. Your earnings can grow tax deferred and your contributions can lower your taxable income. (With a Roth 401(k), contributions aren't deductible, but earnings and withdrawals are tax free, provided you meet certain conditions.) At a minimum, contribute enough to earn your employer's matching contribution, if one is offered, and try to boost your contri-

butions whenever your salary goes up. If you don't have access to a 401(k), but you have earned income, you can contribute to an IRA. Even if you don't have earned income, but you have a spouse who does, you might be eligible to contribute to a spousal IRA.

- **Maximize Social Security benefits.** You can start taking Social Security at 62, but your monthly checks will be much bigger if you can afford to wait until your full retirement age, which will be around 66½. If you are married, you may want to coordinate your benefits with those of your spouse — in some cases, it makes sense for the spouse with the lower benefits to claim first, based on their earnings record, and apply for spousal benefits later, when the spouse with higher benefits begins to collect.
- **Build an emergency fund.** Try to build an emergency fund containing up to six months' worth of living ex-

penses, with the money kept in a liquid account. Having this fund available will help protect you from having to dip into your retirement accounts for large, unexpected costs, such as a major home or car repair.

It's unfortunate, but women still must travel a more difficult road than men to reach retirement security. But making the right moves can help ease the journey.

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

Mark Freeman
Edward Jones Financial Advisor
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- Volunteer Youth sports coach
 - Former member Mass Baseball umpire association
- Community member on the Milford Police Chief Selection Committee

"I hope you will consider voting for me for School Committee on Tuesday, April 2."

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'Acceptance of All Religions' mural painted as part of Girl Scouts Silver Award

Ella Knapp and Mila Cales paint 10' by 10' mural at First UUC of Milford



Ella Knapp and Mila Cales completed their Girl Scouts Silver Award, the highest award for Cadettes (grades 6-9), by painting an "Acceptance of All Religions" mural at the First Unitarian Universalist Church of Milford (23 Pine St). The mural promotes the seven Uni-

tarian Universalist Principles grounded in the humanistic teachings of the world's religions that embrace diversity and inclusion. This 10 foot by 10 foot mural is prominently located above the pulpit of the main congregation space for all to enjoy.

Pictured (L to R) Ella Knapp and Mila Cales standing in front of their mural at the unveiling on Feb. 25, 2024. Courtesy photos

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Milford Fire Department receives grant for safety equipment

In February, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced \$5 million in awards to 321 Massachusetts fire departments through the state's Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant program.

"Every single day, firefighters across Massachusetts put themselves in harm's way to protect their communities," said Governor Maura Healey. "They deserve our thanks and our support. The Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant program is just one way we can express our appreciation for that selfless dedication."

As part of the reimbursement grant program, Milford received \$25,000.

Fire departments across Massachusetts were invited to apply to the Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant program, which

provides reimbursement on purchases of 135 different types of eligible equipment. Eligible items include hoses and nozzles, turnout gear, ballistic protective equipment, gear washers and dryers, thermal imaging cameras, hand tools and extrication equipment, communications resources, hazardous gas meters, and more. In many cases, the purchase of this equipment will help departments attain compliance with Occupational Safety & Health Administration or National Fire Protection Association safety standards. This is the fourth year that funding has been awarded through the program.

"The Firefighter Safety Equipment Grants are an investment in the health and safety of Massachusetts firefighters," said State Fire Marshal Jon

Davine. "The flexibility of the program is especially valuable because it allows each department to make purchases based on their specific needs and resources. It has become a vital part of the way the Massachusetts fire service prepares for the constantly evolving threats in the world around us."

"Firefighters who have the proper protective gear and contemporary rescue tools are much better able to protect themselves and the residents they serve," said Hyannis Fire Chief Peter Burke, President of the Fire Chiefs' Association of Massachusetts. "These grant awards will have immeasurable impacts on public safety in Massachusetts for years to come."

For a full list of recipients, visit bit.ly/FirefighterSafetyEquipGrants2024

Recent Home Sales

Date	Milford	Amount
02/23/2024	7 Dilla St.	\$340,000
02/23/2024	4 Walker Ave.	\$744,850
02/22/2024	44 Jionzo Rd.	\$445,000
02/15/2024	10 Violet Cir.	\$665,000
02/09/2024	36 Madden Ave.	\$505,000
02/09/2024	3 Plain St.	\$366,000
02/07/2024	10 Shadowbrook Ln. #68	\$230,000
02/06/2024	49 Village Cir.	\$535,000
02/05/2024	9 Reagan Rd.	\$555,000
02/05/2024	32 Hamilton Ave.	\$825,000
01/31/2024	2 Walker Ave.	\$743,804
01/31/2024	3 Moschilli Cir.	\$650,000
01/31/2024	49 Field Pond Rd.	\$832,000
01/30/2024	11 Shadowbrook Ln. #8	\$300,000

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



A 4-bed, 3-bath, 2,174 sf house at 9 Reagan Road in Milford recently sold for \$555,000. Image credit www.zillow.com

Bishop Feehan announces Second Quarter Honor Roll 2023-2024

ATTLEBORO - Bishop Feehan Vice Principal for Academics Charlotte Lourenco is proud to announce the Honor Roll students for the second quarter. Those students include Joyce Abdelshahid, grade 9, of Milford, who received Second Honors.

Honor Roll is a recognition of high-performing students based on the student's overall average in any given quarter,

regardless of the levels of their classes. Bishop Feehan has three levels of Honor Roll. First Honors is awarded to students whose overall average in that quarter is grade 93.00 or higher; Second Honors is grade 90.00 or higher; and Third Honors is 85.00 or higher, with no individual grade below 80.

For the entire honor roll, visit www.bishopfeehan.com/apps/news/article/1885477

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PIPER

continued from page 1

outreach.

The big fluffy head, lolling tongue, and constantly wagging tail are all part of the very serious work Piper is doing on a daily basis. Licking away tears or sitting still for a long hug have already been a few small, but infinitely impactful, ways Piper has aided Milford Police in tense situations.

So, with a goal in mind, Pinto reached out to his old friend, retired Milford Police K9 handler and owner of Alpha Dog K9 in Medway, Christina Taddei, for some advice on how to get started.

Taddei moved things along financially, by agreeing to donate a puppy, but only if she found the perfect fit for the job.

Then along came Piper.

“The mother of this litter is absolutely fearless,” Taddei said in an interview. “Piper was one of the most outgoing puppies in the litter. She was willing to try anything I put in front of her.”

When raising Piper and her littermates, Taddei would expose them to new textures, sounds, toys, and situations to gauge their reactions before deciding whether or not they might make a good fit.

“This whole litter was up for just about anything,” she said. “I had a lot of service dog candidates from that litter.”



Ninfa Marelli, a resident at Countryside Healthcare of Milford, gives Piper pats during a visit in February. Courtesy photo



Meet Piper the poodle, Milford Police's first therapy dog. Courtesy photo

Good genetics play a big part in finding a good service dog, but it's also part luck, Taddei said.

“It's pretty uncommon,” she said, when asked how often she sees a dog with Piper's calm temperament and friendly disposition. “She is exactly what I was looking for when I started this breeding program for service dog candidates.”

Taddei sang Piper's praises and gave Pinto a lot of credit for the expert training he's done as well.

“He's done everything exactly the way it should have been done,” she said. “He treats her very well.”

Pinto received Piper when she was eight-weeks old and has been training and working with

her since.

“I dedicated a lot of my own personal time to training Piper,” he said. “She has a great disposition, very calm, and she has fantastic energy with the kids.”

He and Piper plan to be around town often at schools, events, and wherever needed, so be sure to give this very good girl a well-deserved scratch behind the ears, and thank her for her service to the Town of Milford.



Countryside resident Pearl Messana gets a chance to love on Piper. Courtesy photo

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- 35 years of Public Health experience with the VNA
- Lifelong resident of Milford, Class of 1973
- Married to David, with 2 children and 4 grandchildren

Paid for by Committee to Elect Diana Haynes

Milford Cultural Council awards grants for 2024

The Milford Cultural Council (MCC) recently awarded nearly \$20,000 in grants to 25 applicants for programming in the arts, humanities, and sciences.

This year's grants will help fund a wide variety of events for residents of all ages, including musical performances, poetry readings, visual arts instruction and exhibits, and the "Combating Hate and Prejudice" lecture by Holocaust survivor Janet Applefield at Milford High School. Grant funds were also awarded to several town events and projects, including the Christmas Tree Lighting, Welcome Santa

Parade, and the Fourth of July Parade. In addition, the council awarded grants to provide support for upcoming performances by the Claffin Hill Symphony Orchestra, Greater Milford Community Chorus, Milford Performing Arts Center, and Birch Alley Brass. Opportunities for science programming are being supported at the Discovery Museum in Acton and the Christa McAuliffe Center for Integrated Science Learning at Framingham State.

"It is a privilege to have the opportunity to award grant funds to support cultural programming in Milford. Residents

can look forward to a diverse array of projects and events that bring art, music, theatre, science, and historical appreciation to our community. There is something for everyone in this year's schedule," says MCC Chairperson Geri Eddins.

A complete list of the recently awarded grants is available at bit.ly/MilfordC-Cawards2024.

The MCC is part of a network of 329 Local Cultural Councils serving all 351 cities and towns in the Commonwealth. The LCC Program is the largest grassroots cultural funding network in the nation, supporting thousands of com-

munity-based projects in the arts, sciences, and humanities every year. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, which then allocates funds to each community.


The MCC will seek applications again in the fall. For guidelines and complete information on the MCC, please visit MilfordMa.gov/milford-cultural-council. Applications and more information about the Local Cultural Council Program are available at MassCulturalCouncil.org. Applications will be due in mid-October 2024.

The Milford Cultural Council


seeks to promote excellence, inclusion, education, and diversity in the arts, humanities, and sciences to foster a rich cultural life for all Milford residents, thereby contributing to the vitality of our community and economy. The council welcomes ideas, recommendations, and feedback regarding programs and events funded or sponsored by the council. Interested Milford residents are encouraged to attend meetings, which are held every third Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. typically in Room 14 of Town Hall. Learn more online at: MilfordMA.gov/milford-cultural-council.



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GOVERNOR'S CITATION

continued from page 1

of the Student Achievement Award by the DESE, recognizing high-achieving students across the Commonwealth.

Among his numerous accolades, Arthur stands out as one of the select recipients of the QuestBridge scholarship, an accomplishment considering the highly competitive pool of over 20,800 participants. Additionally, he has been honored with the National Hispanic Recognition Award by the College Board.

In a momentous event scheduled for January 31, 2024, at 12:45 p.m., joined by MHS Principal Josh Otlin, Associate Principal William Chaplin, and Guidance Counselor Claudia Tamsky, parents, Joao Gomes and Juliana De Oliveira, Christopher Wilson, School Committee Chair, Kevin McIntyre, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools, Craig

A. Consigli, Ed.D, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment, Arthur will be presented with the Governor's Citation by Santiago Mourao, Consul General of Brazil in Boston, Julio Cesar de Jesus, Deputy Consul and Head of the Trade Section of the Consulate of Brazil in Boston, Selectboard Chairman Paul A. Mazzuchelli and member Michael K. Walsh will present Arthur with citations from the House of Representatives on behalf of State Representative Brian Murray and a citation from the Selectboard.

Following the formal ceremony, Arthur is slated to address his peers in Milford High School's Teacher Resource Center, sharing insights on navigating success in school, particularly during the senior year. This recognition marks a significant milestone in Arthur's academic journey within the Milford Public School community, showcasing his dedication to personal growth and community impact.



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Pet of the Month: River



At only two years old, River found herself without a family.

This beautiful grey girl with brilliant white trim on both ears took a while to acclimate to life at the shelter. Now she is eager for attention but waits patiently for you to notice her. She loves to be brushed

and petted, and she will roll over for belly rubs. River doesn't seem interested in the other cats in the room and doesn't yet venture out of her space.

Based solely on her behavior at the shelter, we feel she would be happy to be the only pet in a quiet home, but she may

also enjoy a home with other pets that allow her to have her space.

Beautiful River is waiting patiently for a home of her own.

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



The Milford Free Press is currently seeking freelance writers who live in the area and are interested in writing for our publication. If interested, please send a résumé and writing sample to editor@milfordfreepress.com

Xaverian Brothers High School announces Second Quarter Honor Roll

Milford student achieves honor roll

Dr. Jacob Conca, Head of School at Xaverian Brothers High School, is pleased to announce that the following students have been named to the honor roll for the second marking period of the 2023-2024 school year.

James Marjani, grade 10, achieved Ryken Honors.

The Xaverian Brothers High School honor roll has three designation levels: Ryken Honors (all marks are A- or above), First Honors (all marks are B or above), and Second Honors (all marks are B- or above).

Source: Facebook @Xaverian Brothers High School

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Endorsement FOR GREG ALLEGREZZA

Candidate For The Milford School Committee

To the Residents of the Town of Milford:

My name is Francis Anderson and my son-in-law Gregory Allegrezza is a candidate for a seat on the Milford School Committee.

I've known Greg for many years both as a family friend and now family member. I can attest to his determination, knowledge, and commitment to our town both as a dad and taxpayer. His beliefs are highlighted in sound curriculum principles where options for students of all levels and abilities are made available. Teachers are the key!

An expanding school population may result in the addition of a new school, renovations, school construction, and reorganization. A person with Greg's background as an engineer will provide a

sound base of experience and knowledge during this process. Such decisions will result in a course of action that will have a major impact on the children of our community.

Greg's background as a dad and taxpayer will be very helpful in determining a positive and cost effective course of action. His promise is to provide a clear avenue of communication with all residents while reaching out to hear related concerns of his constituents whenever called upon.

As a former teacher and administrator in the town of Milford both my wife Suzanne and I fully endorse and support the candidacy of Greg Allegrezza for a seat on the Milford School Committee. Please consider casting one of your votes for him on Tuesday, April 2. Thank You.

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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

AARP Tax Aide Program

Lots of appointments are still available through the AARP Tax Aide Program which help seniors and low to moderate income individuals file their income tax returns for free. Appointments are available on Saturday mornings and afternoons through March 30, 2024. A few Wednesday evening appointments are also available.

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.

To schedule an appointment, please call the Information Desk at 508-473-2145 ext. 219.

Tax Forms

Both federal and state tax forms are available in the library entrance (between the double doors). Additional forms and schedules can be found at www.irs.gov/forms-instructions for federal taxes and <https://www.mass.gov/topics/taxes> for state taxes

Free Concert: The Softer Side of Celtic

The Friends of the Milford Town Library invite you to join Irish musician Jeff Snow for a free concert on Monday, March 11 at 7 p.m. in the Granite & Quarry Rooms.

The Softer Side of Celtic combines the music, stories and a wee bit of history from Scotland, Ireland and England. The audience is encouraged to participate! There will be singing, laughing, clapping and perhaps a bit of foot stomping. Questions and input from the audience are encouraged and become part of the event.

This 90-minute concert includes music on the guitar, bouzouki and autoharp. Jeff Snow grew up as the son of a drummer in a Bagpipe band and in a home where older Celtic songs were the everyday sounds and his love of the genre has deepened over the years, performing all over the Northeast.

Tickets are not required and all ages are welcome to attend this event.

Flower Box Arrangement Workshop

Sarah DeSantes will lead a workshop on creating fresh flower box centerpieces on Thursday, March 28 at 7 p.m. in the Granite and Quarry Rooms. These beautiful centerpieces would be a perfect complement to any Easter table. Registration is required as space is limited. A materials fee is \$10 for members/\$15 non-members. Call 508-473-2145 ext. 219 or email: reference@milfordtownlibrary.org to reserve your spot. This event is sponsored by the Friends of the Milford Town Library.

Poetry Reading with Jeff Tandon

The Friends of the Milford Town Library invite you to celebrate National Poetry Month with a reading by poet Jason Tandon of Wednesday, April 3 at 7 p.m. Tandon is the author of five books of poetry, including *This Far North*, *The Actual World*, *Quality of Life*, and *Give over the Heckler* and *Everyone Gets Hurt*, winner of the St. Lawrence Book Award

from Black Lawrence Press. His poems have appeared in *Ploughshares*, *Prairie Schooner*, *The Southern Review*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Beloit Poetry Journal*, and *Barrow Street*, among others. He earned his B.A. and M.A. from Middlebury College, and his M.F.A. from the University of New Hampshire. Since 2008, he has taught in the Arts and Sciences Writing Program at Boston University.

ESL Drop in Classes

Free Drop in ESL classes for adults are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7 - 8 p.m. in the ESL Classroom on the lower level.

An intermediate class has also been added on Thursdays from 6 - 7 p.m.

As aulas de ESL gratuitas para adultos são realizadas às terças e quintas-feiras, 7pm-8pm na sala de aula de ESL no nível inferior.

Uma aula intermediária também foi adicionada às quintas-feiras, 6pm-7pm.

Las clases gratuitas de ESL para adultos se llevan a cabo los martes y jueves de 7 pm a 8 pm en el aula de ESL en el nivel inferior.

También se agregó una clase intermedia los jueves de 6pm-7pm.

Citizenship Classes

The library no longer offers citizenship preparation classes. However, librarians are happy to refer individuals to other area resources as well as the uscis.gov website which includes comprehensive study materials.

Center Book Group

The Center Book Group

will meet on Tuesday, March 19 at 10 a.m. at the Milford Senior Center to discuss *Think Again: The Power of Knowing What You Don't Know* by Adam Grant.

Grant, a Wharton professor and bestselling author of *Originals* and *Give and Take*, encourages readers to undertake a process of "re-thinking" and questioning of long held beliefs and biases to make positive changes in our personal and work lives.

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.

Memory Kits Available

The library has a number of memory kits available that contain an assortment of books, games, and objects that spark connection for those with memory issues.

Themes include Baseball, Handyman, Space and Ocean. The handyman kit for example includes a magnetic tool board, wooden plank building kit and conversation cards. The kits can be borrowed for three weeks

Coming Soon:

- Friends Spring Book Sale, Friday, April 26 and Saturday, April 27

- How to Kill Your Lawn with Mark Richardson, Tuesday, April 30 at 7 p.m.

- Johnny Cash Stories and Songs with Matt York, Saturday, May 18 at 1 p.m.

- The Beatles:1964 with Steve Minichiello, Wednesday, May 22 at 7 p.m.



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Boating Safety Certification Courses

The United States Coast Guard Auxiliary Tri-State Flotilla, Massachusetts will be instructing four upcoming boating safety classes in Milford. It is time to get your family's boating knowledge and skills ready for the 2024 boating season. There is a special offer available to our students on this year's spring courses, see below.

Boat America Course - for MA, RI, or CT Certification

Two Saturday courses offered: March 16, and April 27 at Milford High School 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This is a one-day course developed to provide the skills and confidence needed to explore the coast and inland waters by boat. Basic knowledge and skills are needed to have safe and enjoyable boating experiences. This course is perfect for families that have just purchased any type of boat or are planning to in the future, and for the boater keeping up with changes to boating regulations and laws.

Basic marlinespike seamanship (knots etc.) will also be included. Successful completion of the course will certify any minor, from 12 to 16 years of age, to operate a powerboat, including a Personal Water Craft / Jet Ski (for 16 and 17-year-old operators), on all Massachusetts waters; in conjunction with the Mass. Environmental Police. Adults completing the course will get a Mass. certification that may be required in the future. Approved by NASBLA it will also cover the requirements to operate a vessel in most other states and many countries where boating safety education is mandatory including RI and CT.

Most boating insurance companies offer a discount on premiums for successful completion of this course.

Suddenly in Command Course - For anyone boating

Two Wednesday evening courses offered: March 20, and April 30 at Milford High School 6:30 to 9 p.m.

Imagine you are out on the water when the boat's captain somehow is incapacitated or falls overboard and cannot swim back to the boat. Are you prepared to take basic actions to get help, stop or start the engine and take the helm? A little knowledge could save lives and make you feel more comfortable boating when you are not generally at the helm. Misfortunes can and do happen while on that fishing, diving, adventure, or party charter. Being out on your own boat with that significant other at the helm, or going out on a friends' pontoon boat, or as a personal watercraft passenger can also turn to horror if the skipper is suddenly out of commission. This is a boating safety primer for those not generally at the helm but would like to know what to do, to be better prepared.

Milford High School courses offered at 31 West Fountain Street, Milford, MA.



Registration is managed through the Milford Community School Use Program, Adult Programs, at <https://milford-communityproerarn.activityree.com> or Laura Farrell 508-478-1119 email lfarrell@milfordma.com; keeping in mind that availability is limited.

The registration deadline is six days prior to course, Participants 16 years old and under must be accompanied, in person, by a registered parent/

guardian.

For additional USCGAux. information: phil.uscgaux@verizon.net or 508-478-3778.

Special Offer For Tri-State Students

When you register for the Boat America Course with your spouse, immediate family member, or significant other, you can both register in our Suddenly in Command class, scheduled the following Wednesday, FOR FREE!

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Clafin Hill Symphony explodes into New Year with triumphant concerts – Announces season finale program change

The Clafin Hill Symphony Orchestra – the Central Massachusetts region's fully professional, world-class resident orchestra – resumed concertizing in January and February after the Holiday break – with several amazing and epic concerts!

The CHSO produces an entire season of professional symphony concerts at its beautiful and acoustically perfect Milford Town Hall Grand Ballroom, a Jazz Series at the Sorrento in Milford, and a chamber music series at Apple Tree Arts in Grafton. All three series resumed with truly outstanding performances and record audience attendances, and the orchestra is poised to continue

the concert season into the end of April with five more concerts scheduled at the three CHSO venues.

The Homefield CHSO Jazz Series continues on Saturday, Feb. 24, at 7:30 p.m. at the Sorrento Restaurant, 143 Central Street in Milford. The resident "Homegrown Jazz Trio," consisting of Stephen Chaplin, Piano; Greg Chaplin, Bass; and Bob Tamagni, Drums, will be joined by Jazz Guitarist Mark White.

Wayne Sermon, Guitarist for Imagine Dragons touted White's talent when he wrote, "As a student of Mark's for many years, I found his knowledge of the instrument unparalleled."

All the musicians have taught

and/or studied at the Berklee School of Music in Boston and have performed with many of the greatest names in Jazz nationwide. The series continues the tradition of excellent jazz performance in Milford that has its roots in the 1950s when Milford Native Henry "Boots" Mussulli starred as the lead alto saxophonist with the Stan Kenton Orchestra and brought numerous jazz greats back to his hometown to perform with him. The series will conclude on Saturday, March 23. Tickets are available at www.clafinhill.org

The Clafin Hill Symphony season continues on Saturday, March 9, at 7:30 p.m. at the Milford Town Hall Grand Ballroom, 52 Main Street in

Milford.

This concert – entitled "Latin Salsa Buffet" – features guest classical guitarist David McClelland in a program inspired by music and flavors of Spain, Cuba, Mexico, and Italy in works by Gershwin, Rimsky-Korsakov, Copland, Castelnuovo-Tedesco and Marques.

"The Clafin Hill Symphony was founded in 2000 with a mission to create a musical, cultural venue for the region's finest professional musicians – many of whom came to our country from all over the world to study in the great music schools in Boston, became citizens, now make their homes in our region and teach in our public and private schools," said Paul Surapine, Founding Executive and Artistic Director. "We seek to build a NEW audience for the greatest musical heritage of the past 300-plus years by creating programming that is "familiar" and expands the audience's musical "palate." Centered in Milford, CHSO has an exponentially growing audience base from communities throughout the Central Massachusetts region – many of whom never experienced the power and sublime beauty of great music being created right before their eyes!"

The Clafin Hill Chamber Music Series at Apple Tree Arts in Grafton will conclude on Saturday, April 6, at 7:30 p.m. in

the Apple Tree Arts Great Hall at 1 Grafton Common. This concert will feature musicians of the CHSO's impressive string section in "Glorious String Serenade Night."

The CHSO Season Finale will be on Saturday, April 27. The orchestra has just announced a program change for that concert. Originally scheduled to present "Concert Opera Heritage" – a performance of two famous Italian operas – the orchestra will instead perform a "Symphony Movie Pops Night" with music of many of the greatest and most popular movie film scores – including music of John Williams and many of the other great film composers of the past 50 years.

All tickets to all CHSO concerts can be purchased online at www.clafinhill.org. Patrons can call the CHSO office at 508-478-5924 with any questions.

The Clafin Hill Symphony Orchestra, located in Milford, MA, is a powerful regional musical force. Through passionate performances presented by masterful musicians, the CHSO plays a leading role in the cultural enrichment and vitality of Central Massachusetts and MetroWest communities. The CHSO sponsors a remarkable outreach program that helps youth perfect their musical talents and build long-lasting appreciation for music.

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iStent Inject and Microgoniomy for Glaucoma

By Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.
Milford Franklin Eye Center

What is glaucoma and how is it treated?

Glaucoma is a chronic disease defined by characteristic optic nerve damage. It is a multi-factorial disease with over 300 different anatomic variations and affects over 40,000,000 people worldwide. Glaucoma is a slowly progressive and irreversible disease and, in most cases, causes a painless loss of eyesight. It is, in short, “the silent sneak thief of sight”. The damage to the optic nerve is commonly caused by a fluid imbalance, or pressure, in the eye, as well as possible alterations in the blood flow to the optic nerve. It is well established that lowering the intraocular pressure can slow the process of optic nerve damage. The degree of pressure lowering necessary to prevent optic nerve damage is individualized for each person and each optic nerve. The greater the optic nerve damage,

the lower the intraocular pressure is needed to achieve stability and prevent further optic nerve damage and further visual field loss.

If glaucoma is left untreated you may experience vision loss and eventual blindness. Treatment strategies for glaucoma are individualized to achieve the greatest lowering of the intraocular pressure with the least amount of risk to the individual’s eyesight and well-being. Commonly, in the United States, topical medications are used as a first line of treatment. In many situations, multiple medications are tried to achieve the desired pressure level. Unfortunately, there can be difficulties with compliance, cost and side effects with many of these medications and laser therapy is commonly substituted as a first line of therapy.

What is the iStent® trabecular micro-bypass stent?

Minimally invasive glaucoma surgical procedures, so-called

MIGS involve alterations of the drainage area that are performed inside the eye. The iStent® trabecular micro-bypass stent is a surgical therapy for patients who have mild to moderate open angle glaucoma and have been tried possibly on topical medications or laser therapy. It is designed to improve the aqueous outflow to better lower the intraocular pressure and reduce the need for medications. The iStent® is the smallest medical device approved by the FDA to date. It is placed in the eye into the drainage area, so-called Schlemm’s Canal through the trabecular meshwork. The iStent® is an elective procedure. The iStent® is potentially beneficial in helping to reduce the number of glaucoma medications and drops needed to control this condition.

What is microgoniomy surgery?

Microgoniomy surgery (using the iAccess trabecular trephine device from Glaukos)



is another type of MIGS. This procedure provides control of the eye pressure at lower risk than more traditional glaucoma surgeries. It alters the eye’s drainage system to lower the eye pressure and reduce the need for medications. Microgoniomy can be done standalone or combined with iStents during cataract surgery in a tissue sparing fashion to improve resistance to outflow in glaucoma. This tissue-sparing procedure can help lower the pressure even more compared to implanting iStent alone. During this procedure and ophthalmologist (Eye MD/ surgeon) will make 3 trephination cuts in a part of the

eye’s drainage system called the trabecular meshwork. This will allow fluid to leave the eye much easier.

Benefits (how the surgery can help)

The goal of the iStent and microgoniomy surgery is to lower your eye pressure and help preserve vision. It will not bring back vision already lost from glaucoma. After implantation, many patients are able to better control their eye pressure with fewer medications.

Risks

As with any surgery, there are risks with the iStent and microgoniomy procedure. The surgery may not lower the eye pressure or control the glaucoma even when it is properly performed. In addition, sometimes there can be complications that do not appear in the early post operative period but

GLAUCOMA

continued on page 21





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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. 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. If you are interested in participating in the process, please reach out to Melissa Bullock at mbullock@milfordma.com. 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, or Dr. McIntyre, Superintendent of Schools, at kmcintyre@milfordma.com.

On February 13, 2024, Lisa Kingkade, the Social Emotional Director for the district, collaborated with district Social Workers, Anita Amante and Talita Rodovalho, to partner and present alongside the Mass Partnership for Youth and Bos-

ton Children's Hospital to facilitate a hybrid conference focused on supporting recently arrived immigrant students and their families. The team of dedicated Milford educators shared valuable insights, best practices, and effective structures for warmly welcoming and addressing the needs of immigrant and refugee students and their families.

Save the Date:

3/1: Annie Jr: Stacy Middle School Performing Arts Department, 7 p.m.

3/2: Annie Jr: Stacy Middle School Performing Arts Department, 3 p.m.

3/2: Annie Jr: Stacy Middle School Performing Arts Department, 7 p.m.

3/15: Seussical: Milford High

School Theatre Workshop, 7 p.m.

3/16: Seussical: Milford High School Theatre Workshop, 7 p.m.

3/17: Seussical: Milford High School Theatre Workshop, 2 p.m.

3/29: Good Friday-No School-School Offices Closed

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 Comportamental) 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

A select group of Milford High School students are in the midst of participating in a Spanish Exchange Program to Almeria, Spain. Students began their experience on February 16 and are scheduled to return on March 1. The students will be staying with Host Families and visiting the high school with their Host peers. Students were accompanied to Spain by Heidi McKinney and Lilia Vazquez, World Language Teachers.

Congratulations to Academic Decathlon for their excellent showing at the Regional Competition held the weekend of February 3. The team captured 16 medals and awards, plus the opportunity to move on to this year's State Competition! Sasha Matovu (three 5th place awards), Elsie Sutherland (5th place award), Violet Tran (1 silver, 1 bronze, two 4th and two 5th place awards), Selina Zheng (2 Gold medals), Yu Xin Zheng (1 silver, 1 bronze, 4th and 5th place awards). Yu Xin Zheng also earned a 5th place overall place in all Regional events. Well done team and good luck with Nationals!

The Science Olympiad team for a strong finish at 1/30/24 Medway meet.

Congratulations to the following students:

- 1) Violet Tran and Maggy Zou for their 3rd place finish in Forestry
- 2) Catie Delaney and Julia Webster for a 2nd place finish in Scrambler
- 3) Elise Sutherland and Selina Zheng for a 3rd place finish in Fermi Questions
- 4) Eli DeBarros and Robbie King for a 2nd place finish in-



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SCHOOLS

MILFORD SCHOOLS

continued from page 18

Fermi Questions

5) Connor Brooks and Ben Maddock for a 1st place finish in Chemistry Lab

And a belated congratulations to Jason Comisky and Avi Mahanta for a 3rd place finish in Air Trajectory at the Milford meet in December. Great job, Science Olympians.

Stacy Middle School

On Wednesday, Feb. 14, Caridad Lopez, Principal, Daniel Cote, Social Studies Teacher, and Alissa Holland, Instructional Coach, took center stage with other state colleagues as featured speakers during an Idea Exchange at a legislative briefing held at the State House. The SMS team seized the opportunity to showcase their impactful contributions to the Massachusetts Consortium for Innovative Education Assessment (MCIEA) and the Education Commonwealth Project (ECP). They discussed the innovative ways they are integrating high-quality alternatives to the MCAS into their curriculum, thereby offering a comprehensive approach to assessing students' learning outcomes and overall school quality.

Woodland Elementary School (WES)

Principal Kearnan is pleased to announce the fifth Council of the year nominated by their teachers for showing inclusivity. These students are the glue of WES classrooms. They help to make others feel welcomed and part of the team. They look beyond differences and find the things that connect us. They see the value added by opening our hearts and minds to others. The WES school community appreciates their inclusive mindset and how it makes Woodland a welcoming space.

Inclusivity Grade 3: Sophia Morais, Reese Macchi, Sadie Pinsonneault, Julianna Carpenter, Nickoletta Pirperis, Mirella De Faria, Amy Sarmiento, Davi Soares, Avalina Zacchilli, Lucas Goncalves, Peyton Proia, Antonio Allegrezza, Nathaly Dutan, Evelyn Carlin, Alicia Cordeiro, Declan MacAlpine

Inclusivity Grade 4: Maria Clara Costa, Sofia Gelmini, Emma Meacham, Luca Albanese, Emery Larson, Liam Cunningham, Ivanna Mulegyeki, Maribel Chuma Caguana, Rita Rizk, Bianca Moreira, Liam Martin, Jacson Clavijo Castro, Alicia Alvarenga, Savana Fonseca, Declan West, Maria Pio

Inclusivity Grade 5: Seth Karlin, Angelyn McLaughlin, Lais Teles, Jaden Williams, Amelia Merrill, Caleb Pierre Philippe, John Pesantez, Yedxier Soto Colon, Rafael Zocoli, Emanuel Nogueira, Davi Maia, Kaden Bendas, Livia Pereira, Jack Alulema Castro, Enzo Machado, Joseph Evers, Alanna DeMoura

Memorial Elementary School (MES)

In the lively month of February, despite its short length, Memorial Elementary School embraced a whirlwind of learning and enjoyment. Students commemorated the 100th day of school, with both kindergarten and first-grade classes celebrating the milestone. Meanwhile, the second-grade students took the festivities a step further, marking the "101 Days of School" with an enchanting 101 Dalmatian-themed celebration.

Memorial Elementary School partnered with the new restaurant in town, Railtrail. Students in second grade wrote poems about love to be included in their heart shaped pizza promotion for the month.

Memorial will host a Family Reading Night, "Leap Into Reading" at the end of February. Community volunteers and staff members will read stories to families and then families will share milk and cookies at the end of the evening.

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

Brookside Elementary School (BES)

Brookside held a Make and Take Crafting Fair on Saturday, Jan 27. Over 150 families attended the event. Students connected with peers and their families, and had the opportunity to make new friends. Brookside Elementary School wishes to thank all of the families that

were able to attend for making the evening a memorable one.

Brookside Elementary School's first and second-grade students marked the 100th Day of School by engaging in a variety of activities centered around the number 100. The celebration included a 100-word challenge, incorporating 10 nouns, 10 verbs, 10 colors, 10 math words, 10 adjectives, 10 proper nouns, 10 words starting with 's,' 10 science words, 10 classroom-related words, and 10 personal favorite words. Additionally, the students participated in a "If I had 100 dollars" writing activity, tackled 100 math facts involving addition and subtraction within 20, explored their aspirations with a "Before I turn 100 I want to" writing prompt, and crafted a special 100th day of school poem. The day was filled with creative and educational endeavors to commemorate the 100th day milestone.

PTO meeting is the first Tuesday of each month starting at 7 p.m.

Shining Star Early Childhood Center (SSECC)

At Shining Star Early Childhood Center (SSECC), the days of February 1 and 2 were marked by a special initiative as high school students, dedicated to dental awareness, visited the center. This collaborative effort aimed to instill good oral care habits from an early age.

Looking ahead, SSECC has exciting plans for a family engagement night scheduled for March 13, titled "Popcorn and Pajamas." This event promises a welcoming atmosphere as families come together, to enjoy popcorn and engage in various activities, fostering a sense of community within the SSECC school community.

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

Milford Family & Community Network CFCE (MFCN CFCE):

The Family Fun & Disabilities Awareness Fair is seeking


exhibitors for the 26th Annual Family Fun & Disabilities Awareness Fair which will take place on Saturday, March 2, from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. in the Milford High School Cafeteria. If your business, agency or program serves families from the prenatal stage through adolescence. Tables are free, but space is limited. For more information on this resource fair, please call 508-277-4981, or email: familynetwork@milfordma.com by Feb. 12.

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. 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 MFCN CFCE on Facebook at "Milford Family & Community Network CFCE".

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- Maintaining services to all of our students despite the reduction in projected State Aid.
- Progressing though the current phase to undertake a Milford High School Renovation/ Replacement.
- Examining policy changes to determine if they add to the quality of the education.
- Developing additional vocational/ trade programs to help broaden the opportunities of ALL of our students.

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- Question the accepted regulations and rules and ask if they contribute to the improvement of the education system.
- Think outside the box to find solutions.
- Collaborate and reach consensus with others, while always remaining true to my beliefs and values.
- Ask the tough questions and be a strong voice on the issues in our schools today.

"I hope you will consider voting for me for School Committee on Tuesday, April 2."

PAID FOR BY GREG ALLEGREZZA

SPORTS

MHS swim teams excel despite small rosters

Both the boys and girls posted winning records

By Chris Villani

The Milford High swimming program came into the 2023-2024 season with only 20 athletes, 11 boys and nine girls. But the small rosters did not keep the Scarlet Hawks from success in the pool, with the boys finishing the season 6-1 and the girls posting their first winning record in several seasons with a 4-3 mark.

“It was a very successful year for us,” said head coach Dave Chaplin.

Swim meets are often won with depth, something MHS did not have this year. For the girls to win more meets than they lost with only nine swimmers in the pool was an incredible feat.

“It was mentally challenging,” Chaplin said. “The girls knew what they had to do. To win the meets they did, they almost had to swim perfectly each time, and they did it.”



The Milford High girls swim team posted a winning record this season, despite having a smaller roster than the competition. Courtesy photo

Sarah Wengel served as the girls’ team captain and Chaplin

described her as the “consummate leader.”

A sprint freestyler, Wengel often competed against the top swimmers in the Hockomock League.

“She always held her own, and she won many races,” Chaplin said.

Bridget Howland added points for Milford in the distance events and freshman McKenzie Roy made an impact in her first season.

“She didn’t stop smiling,” Chaplin said of the freshman.

“She is a breath of fresh air.”

Samanda DaSilva and Carmella Costa were two more contributors who, like Roy, came through the Milford Community Use Stingray program.

The boys were led by captain Oscar Khoury, a senior who Chaplin said “did yeoman’s work” and established himself

SWIM TEAMS

continued on page 21

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SPORTS

SWIM TEAMS

continued from page 20

as the leader of an otherwise young team.

A trio of juniors, Aaron McIsaac, Ben Pezza, and Corey Rattray, stood out for the Hawks all winter and joined with sophomore Ethan Fielder to break school records in both the 200 and 400 freestyle relay events. Lucca Ramos, Connor Hayes, and Owen Enright were among the swimmers who also became key cogs for MHS at various points this winter.

The boys placed second in the Hockomock's Kelley Rex Division and fourth overall in the league meet. Their only dual meet loss came against Attleboro, the team that won both the league and South Sectional championships. Chaplin said he was pleased to see both teams turn in stellar performances at the league meet, which was hosted at Milford High.

"We have kids who are dedicated to that meet and it paid



The boys relay team of Ethan Fielder, Aaron McIsaac, Ben Pezza, and Corey Rattray broke two school records this winter. *Courtesy photo*

off," he said. "We had 100 percent of our kids swim their best

times of the year at the most opportune moment."

GLAUCOMA

continued from page 17

may develop days, months or years later. Further treatment or surgery to treat those complications may be needed. As with any intraocular surgery, there may be loss of vision, blindness, loss of the eye, as well as bleeding, infection and injury to the eye or nearby body parts.

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SPORTS

Relays lead MHS Boys' Track to success

Scarlet Hawks posted best season in years



The 4x200 relay on the podium after a second-place finish at the D2 state championships. Aloiyeh Okhipo, Taylor Feliciano, Shawn Pierce, and Jarrett Brown broke the school record this year, running 1:32.1. Photo courtesy Peter Boucher

By Chris Villani

Milford High's boys' winter track program put together one of its largest and most successful teams in recent memory, as the Scarlet Hawks posted a winning dual meet season and saw two of its relay teams rank among the state's best.

"The boys had a fantastic season," said head coach Dan Gordon. "It was probably the best they have been in four years."

Both the 4x200 and 4x400 relay teams earned second-place finishes at the Division II

state meet. For the 4x200 relay - consisting of Aloiyeh Okhipo, Taylor Feliciano, Shawn Pierce, and Jarrett Brown - it was the culmination of a stellar season that included setting a new school record in the event.

"Without a doubt, our sprint crew has been carrying the team all season long," Gordon said. "They are our strongest group, and they are our deepest group."

Senior Ben Parson, a team captain, set a new school record in the 300-meter dash and scored in every single meet in

that event. He was also a regular point scorer in the 55-meter dash and placed eighth in that event during the Hockomock League meet despite it not being his strongest event and despite suffering an injury at the end of the regular season. Parson was healthier for the interdivisional Meet of Champions and finished 20th in the state.

"We were very happy to see him finish the season strong," Gordon said. "He is a huge part of why we have experienced so much success. He is a great captain and a great

leader."

The 4x400 relay team consisted of John Arruda, Sean Mairs, Nick Simas, and Feliciano, and greatly exceeded expectations at the state meet. Seeded fifth, the quartet ended up on the podium with their second-place finish.

Gordon praised the season Feliciano put together, noting that he was "right there" with Parson during every meet. It was also a breakout campaign for Okhipo, the coach said.

"He was certainly our most improved athlete," Gordon

said. "He started running the hurdles indoors last year and he dropped a few seconds off of his time and finished fourth at the D2 meet. He was also our best high jumper, he added about six inches to his high jump."

More good news for Milford: the entire 4x200 team is slated to return along with a number of strong athletes who performed well this winter.

"We had a whole stable of guys," Gordon said. "We have a lot of guys who have made this team a lot better."



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SPORTS

Costa shines in state wrestling meet

BVT junior from Milford is state finalist in 2024



Ella Costa (left) on the podium after her runner up performance at the Division II state wrestling championship. Courtesy photo

By Chris Villani

Ella Costa got into wrestling when she was in middle school, watching her older brother compete in the sport.

“I thought it was cool, and I wanted to be like him,” Costa said. “So, I joined the wrestling team in middle school as well.”

The Milford resident and Blackstone Valley Tech junior

put together a strong postseason that included advancing to the Division II state finals and a top-10 finish in the all-state meet.

“I felt like I improved a lot compared to last year’s season,” Costa said. “I definitely exceeded my own expectations. I didn’t expect to do as well as I did in the girls’ state and all-

state tournaments.”
Costa, 17, wrestled against boys throughout the regular season. She said she struggled at times, but the competition helped her improve a great deal by the end of the year.

“I got more comfortable and more in-depth with my knowledge and skills,” Costa said, adding that she was pleased to peak at the right time of the year.

“I felt pretty good about the way I performed, though I wish I did better at all states,” she said. “The second day was a lot more difficult, because I had wrestled a lot more by that day.”

While Costa was pleased with the second-place finish, it did leave her hungry to try to take the top spot next winter.

“I would love to get a banner at my high school, and at Bellingham where we co-op,” she said.

Costa said the fact that she is a wrestler catches some people by surprise.

“It’s definitely a big shock factor,” she said. “People don’t think of it as a main sport that people play in general, and on top of that, a girl wrestling, it’s a surprise, but my friends are all supportive.”

Costa said some of her

friends were “a little confused at first, but they come to my meets and they always cheer me on.”

In addition to wrestling, Costa also competes in cross country and track and field at Valley Tech, sports she hopes will help her improve her cardio fitness. She also plans to

join a wrestling club, practicing a few days per week over the summer. Costa has hopes to wrestle in college, and said she will spend the next year looking at potential women’s programs in the area.

“I really love to wrestle,” Costa said, “and I would love to wrestle in college.”

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 550 ONE OWNER VEHICLES IN STOCK!	2020 CHEVY EQUINOX LS AS LOW AS \$60/WK #124040R • ALLOYS, AWD, TURBO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$35,490 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977	2022 KIA FORTE LXS AS LOW AS \$67/WK #TP3495 • 29/39 MPG CITY/HWY NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$29,220 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$21,877	2020 FORD F-150 XLT 4x4 AS LOW AS \$117/WK #C16346 • SUPERCREW, TURBO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$49,950 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,977	2020 FORD EXPLORER 4x4 AS LOW AS \$92/WK #P16574L • XLT, LEATHER, TURBO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$45,765 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$28,977	2021 JEEP WRANGLER 4x4 AS LOW AS \$103/WK #D13786R • UNLIMITED SAHARA, CPO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$49,810 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$31,977	
	2020 JEEP RENEGADE AS LOW AS \$57/WK #D13825R • ALLOYS, LATITUDE, 4X4 NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$29,265 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$18,977	2021 TOYOTA TACOMA 4x4 AS LOW AS \$99/WK #TP3300 • SR TRIM, CPO, DBL CAB NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$53,605 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977	2021 DODGE DURANGO GT AS LOW AS \$101/WK #D13804R • ALLOYS, AWD, 3.6L NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$43,595 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$31,477	2022 GENESIS GV70 2.5T AS LOW AS \$144/WK #23182A • SUNROOF, NAV, LEATHER NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$56,070 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$43,577	2020 TOYOTA CAMRY LE AS LOW AS \$74/WK #45530KK • LANE DEPARTURE, FWD NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$38,625 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977	2020 CHEVY SILVERADO 4x4 AS LOW AS \$115/WK #45893CTP • CUSTOM, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$54,160 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,377
	2022 CHEVY TRAX LT AWD AS LOW AS \$60/WK #45482 • TURBO, PREMIUM AUDIO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$27,565 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977	2023 TOYOTA TUNDRA 4x4 AS LOW AS \$179/WK #TP3493 • SR5, ALLOYS, 3K MILES NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$58,405 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$53,677	2020 JEEP CHEROKEE 4x4 AS LOW AS \$64/WK #D13785R • LATITUDE, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,400 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977	2021 HYUNDAI TUCSON SUV AS LOW AS \$67/WK #P16527L • AWD, ALLOYS, VALUE NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$36,750 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$21,977	2021 TOYOTA COROLLA LE AS LOW AS \$60/WK #TP3217 • 30/38 CITY/HIGHWAY MPG NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$24,569 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977	2020 CHEVY TRAVERSE AS LOW AS \$85/WK #45756 • AWD, LT TRIM, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$39,995 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977
	2020 FORD EDGE TITANIUM AS LOW AS \$81/WK #P16529R • SUNROOF, NAV, LEATHER NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$40,395 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$25,977	2022 VW PASSAT 2.0T AS LOW AS \$70/WK #TP3512 • SUNROOF, TURBO, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$29,550 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,677	2020 LINCOLN CORSAIR SUV AS LOW AS \$96/WK #P16737L • SUNROOF, NAV, LEATHER NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$38,745 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$29,977	2022 FORD BRONCO 4x4 AS LOW AS \$85/WK #P16650L • SPORT BIG BEND NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$38,995 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977	2021 SUBARU FORESTER AS LOW AS \$78/WK #TP3104H • SPORT, SUNROOF NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,695 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977	2022 LEXUS UX 250h SUV AS LOW AS \$106/WK #TP3465 • SUNROOF, HEATED SEATS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$38,950 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$32,977
	2021 CHEVY COLORADO AS LOW AS \$92/WK #45395R • LT TRIM, 4X4, 8" LCD, V6 NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$39,160 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$28,977	2021 HONDA ACCORD LX AS LOW AS \$67/WK #123-673L • 30/38 MPG CITY/HWY NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,190 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$21,977	2022 BUICK ENCORE AWD AS LOW AS \$78/WK #45881 • PREFERRED, 9K MILES NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,225 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977	2021 MAZDA MAZDA CX-5 AS LOW AS \$71/WK #P16540R • SUNROOF, LEATHER NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$29,899 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977	2023 SUBARU CROSSTREK AS LOW AS \$85/WK #D13815 • HEATED SEATS, SUNROOF NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,795 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977	2020 FORD FUSION SE AS LOW AS \$60/WK #P16502 • 23/34 MPG CITY/HWY NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$25,710 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977
2021 CHEVY COLORADO AS LOW AS \$92/WK #45395R • LT TRIM, 4X4, 8" LCD, V6 NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$39,160 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$28,977	2020 NISSAN ALTIMA 2.5 S AS LOW AS \$53/WK #TP2920 • APPLE CARPLAY, 8" LCD NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$29,595 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$17,977					

WHY PAY THE DIFFERENCE IF YOU CAN'T TELL THE DIFFERENCE?
BAD CREDIT? DON'T SWEAT IT!
We finance your future - not your past.
WE WORK WITH OVER 60 BANKS AND CREDIT UNIONS TO GET YOU THE LOWEST RATE POSSIBLE!



Mike Penner
General Manager

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