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May 2024

Bellingham Community Garden's New Manager – Scott Rice

By DAVID DUNBAR

Ahhh... springtime! Spectacular sunrises, surprising weather, butterflies, birds, magical flowers and colorful blooms. It's the time of new beginnings.

And, so it is at the Bellingham Community Garden.

Scott Rice is the new garden manager, taking over from Micky DeFosses, who resigned months ago. She is remembered for, among other things, taking the garden from a weed patch to a flourishing collection of garden plots and installing a greenhouse and storage shed.

"Two years ago," recalls Rice, "I drove by the garden and saw weeds that were six feet high! I decided to come to the garden to see if I could make a difference."

The spring growing season is underway, and there are about 10 plots (10 feet by 20 feet) that are still available. \$40 per plot; two for \$70. You may



Garden Manager Scott Rice sits at a table he constructed for use in the Bellingham Community Garden. The Garden is open. Let the planting begin!

not see magical flowers, but there are obvious signs of new life in the garden.

"It's a fun place to come, not only to grow vegetables but to make friends... sit down and talk," according to Rice. He has posted on the greenhouse door a listing of quick-growing vegetables including radish, baby carrots, turnips, beans, spinach, lettuce, green onions, and kale. They take three to eight weeks.

Barbara Weddeke is going into her third year as a plot holder. "I like the exercise," she says, "it's fun and I like the social aspect." Weddeke gives away much of what she grows, including bags of fresh vegetables that she delivers to the Senior Center.

Are you thinking about getting a plot? "Try it," offers Weddeke, "you'll learn a

GARDEN

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Annual Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail 5K May 18th

13th Annual Road Race and Walk Begins at 9 a.m.

By ANGIE FITTON

If you're looking for something fun, physical and fulfilling to do on Saturday, May 18th, take a ride or walk to 210 Grove Street in Franklin for the 13th Annual FBRTC 5K Road Race and Walk. A good time will be had by all, and there will be refreshments and even a raffle!

The Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail Committee (FBRTC), along with the Tri-Valley Front Runners (TVFR), is once again hosting this 5K in order to showcase how much the rail trail has to offer. For years they have been working to develop the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) and soon it will be one unbroken trail from Franklin through Douglas to the Connecticut line.

The SNETT is popular for many reasons, one of which is it's open and available 365 days a year. The FBRTC has worked hard over the years to make it a usable resource for Massachusetts residents. They have resurfaced the track to crushed stone instead of dirt so there's no wash-out and no one requires waders when it's raining. Because of this change, the weather doesn't inhibit your ability to walk, run or bike the path as much as prior to the enhancement.

The Rail Trail Committee is all about promoting and being an asset to the community. Not only are they working on the 5K, but they are also advocating for changes to the industrial

TRAIL

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GARDEN

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lot, and creating fresh food will make you feel good.” Time for new beginnings. Maybe you will even see some butterflies!

“What we’re looking for,” explains interim Town Manager Denis Fraine, “is a good group of about two dozen who can participate in the garden. The Town takes care of all the basic maintenance and irrigation, soil, and fencing.”

The Town owns the garden land, which is about an acre and is located on Center Street at the SNETT. It also collects the

plot fees and maintains a garden budget. Fraine adds that “there are plans in the works for a Farmers Market this summer and, perhaps, a second one in the fall.”

Across the U.S., there are approximately 8,600 farmers markets each year according to the USDA. What’s the difference between a farmer and a gardener? Google provides this insightful explanation: “A farmer farms a farm and a gardener gardens in a garden.” Glad you asked?

For more (and even useful) information about gardening in the garden, contact Scott Rice at (617) 877-0585 or email scottie6@comcast.net

Bellingham Garden Club of MA to Hold Seedling Sale May 11th at Library

The Bellingham Garden Club’s 3rd Annual Plant Sale is coming up on Saturday, May 11th from 10 a.m. – 12 noon at the Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone Street, Bellingham. Open to the public! Purchase beautiful herbs, veggie, and floral plants for their garden. Find plant sale information and the latest Garden Tea Talk Episodes” on our website: bellinghamgardenclubofma.com



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From the Town Clerk.....

Special Town Meeting

There will be a Special Town Meeting held on May 1st at 7:30 p.m. in the Auditorium of the Bellingham High School. This citizen-generated Special Town Meeting will consist of one article which reads as follows:

ARTICLE 1. To see if the Town will vote to amend its Zoning Bylaws as follows: 1. To add the following definition to the provisions of Section 240-32 Warehouse: A building or facility with the primary function is to provide for the commercial storage and/or distribution of a wide variety of merchandise, good and/or other products. This shall include those facilities designed to store products in preparation for shipping and where those products are generally not made available for retail sale at the facility. Warehouses shall include those facilities for short or long term storage, and, in this manner shall also include fulfillment or "last mile" facilities for the short term storage and distribution of items made available through online or other similar sales. The storage or parking of tractor-trailers, trucks or trailers used in moving goods to or from Warehouses is also included within this definition. The term Warehouses shall not include retail self-storage facilities where members of the public can lease portions of a building for storage of household or personal goods or other items not intended for distribution or sale. 2. To amend Section 240-31, the Use of Regulation table, by changing "Yes" to "No" for Warehouses in the industrial Zone, thereby making Warehouses a prohibited use in all zoning districts within the Town of Bellingham.

(By: Steve Goyette, 58 Box Pond Road, Bellingham, MA 02019) The Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing concerning this Article on April 25th and will offer their recommendation at Town Meeting.

Annual Town Election

Bellingham's Annual Town Election will take place on June 4, 2024 as prescribed by amended Town Bylaw. Polling will take place at the Bellingham High School Gymnasium from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. Absentee balloting will be available for those who are unavailable to vote on June 4th. You may apply for an absentee ballot by contacting the Town Clerk's Office (TownClerk@bellinghamma.org or (508) 657-2830 or online from the Town Clerk's page at bellinghamma.org.

Candidates are as follows:

Selectmen (3 years) - Choose (2)

- Jennifer Altomonte
- Michael Connor (I)
- Donald Martinis
- Gary Reichert
- Selectmen (2 years) – Choose (1)
- David Cutler
- Ann Odabashian (I)

Planning Board (3 years) – Choose (2)

- Stephen Goyette
- Brain Salisbury (I)
- Library Trustee (3 years) – Choose (2)
- Kimberly O'Neal
- Lynn Scornavacca

School Committee (3 years) – Choose (2)

- Courtney Cartier
- Erik Ormberg (I)

Housing Authority (5 years) – Choose (2)

- Linda Cartier (I)
- Christopher Remillard (I)

Also, there will be a Candidates' Forum at the Bellingham Senior Center on May 14, 2024 from 9:30 until 11 a.m.

All are welcome to attend.

PAID POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

Don Martinis

Candidate for Select Board

Why did I decide to return to the Select Board?

- To hire a new Town Administrator.
- To slow runaway growth.
- To keep taxes affordable.
- To spend judiciously.

The Select Board was divided in its attempt to hire a new Town Administrator, and my experience hiring capable business leaders will be an asset in that search process. During my previous nine years on the Select Board, I played a crucial role in hiring our current Police Chief, Fire Chief, DPW Director, and Veterans Services Agent.

The town should explore three areas of expansion — a new fire station in south Bellingham, increased affordable housing for senior citizens, and additional playground facilities for children.



All commercial or residential growth must be planned, purposeful, and beneficial. We also must maintain a favorable tax rate and be conscientious about future spending.

My vision for Bellingham is not just a dream but a tangible goal. I aim to foster a thriving environment where safety, diversity, and vibrancy are the norms for residents and businesses. I am committed to working tirelessly to make this vision a reality. I believe

in the power of citizens' voices and the need for leaders who can drive necessary improvements, ensuring our town is a safe, diverse, and vibrant place to live, work, and play. I also prioritize providing high-quality education for our youth, as they are the future of our thriving community.

I will serve by rising above politicians who pressure leaders to hire unqualified personnel for personal gain. Bellingham needs an experienced, trustworthy, and independent leader.

My commitment to Bellingham is not a mere political promise but a lifelong dedication. As a resident for 39 years, a husband, and a father of four children who proudly graduated from Bellingham High School, my life has been deeply intertwined with the service of Bellingham's residents and children. This profound connection to our community fuels my unwavering commitment to its betterment.

As a Selectman, I have always made it a point to be accessible to residents and ready to listen to their concerns. My previous nine years on the Select Board were a testament to my dedication to improving Bellingham. I am driven to return and provide responsible government to a community I deeply care about and have called home for almost four decades.

Sincerely,
Don Martinis

Paid for by Committee to Elect Don Martinis

TRAIL

continued from page 1

track in Franklin. If things go as planned, folks will be able to ride the train into the heart of Franklin, get out and get to the state forest off of Grove Street without ever having to use a vehicle. And with all the sidewalks going up on Grove Street, this makes for even safer foot travel. This will make being in nature even more accessible than ever!

The FBRTC is an all-volunteer committee. "These volunteers are really top notch," states committee member Cliff Winters. "If I was in charge of a volunteer committee outside of this one, I would head hunt them personally," he continues emphatically. Winters is also a Teaching Pastor at the New England Chapel in Franklin, as well as a Professor. He goes on to explain that the 5K isn't the only event held on the Rail Trail. They also have things such as Story Walks where you can bring your kids for exercise and a story. They also put up a trail camera last year and discovered the trail is used by 75,000 people annually.

For anyone interested in joining the 5K, Registration the day of begins at 7:30 a.m. The race itself begins at 9 a.m. You can

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also get more information and sign up at www.tri-valleyfront-runners.com or www.franklin-bellinghamrailtrail.org.

For those that want to be involved but cannot walk or run the 5K, The FBRTC is also looking for volunteers. They need people to help with

parking, greeting and giving directions, the raffle tent, registration/bib pick-up/check-in, road crew, water stop/turn around spot and timing/start/finish/results/awards. If you wish to volunteer, the link for this is at www.franklinbellinghamrailtrail.org.

Bellingham Lions 2024 Spring Golf Classic

This year's Bellingham Lions Spring Golf Classic will be held at Blissful Meadows Golf Club, 801 Chocolog Road, Uxbridge, MA 01569 on Monday June 10, 2024 with a Shotgun Start at 8 a.m. Visit us on our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/BellinghamMALions/>. We also have a registration page <https://bellingham-lions-golf-tournament.perfectgolfevent.com/>. All proceeds go to two

scholarships to 2024 high school graduating seniors who reside in Bellingham and to charities within our community, nationally and internationally. Any questions, or for further information, you can email us at BellinghamMALions@outlook.com or contact Elena Rosemere at erosemere@mindspring.com. We are looking for players, sponsors and raffle item.

Bellingham Student among Those Honored by Stonehill for Academic Excellence

Stonehill College held its annual Academic Excellence Recognition Breakfast at the Sally Blair Ames Sports Complex last month. It marks the signature event for the College in recognition of National Student-Athlete Day as administrators, faculty and athletic staff presented St. Thomas Aquinas medals to the Skyhawks with the highest cumulative grade point average on their respective teams through the fall 2023 semester and have

completed at least one year at the College.

Among those earning St. Thomas Aquinas Medals was Ryan Douglas (Bellingham, Massachusetts/Xaverian Brothers), Junior, Baseball

Stonehill currently offers 23 varsity intercollegiate athletic programs currently in transition to NCAA Division I status as members of the Northeast Conference.

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Bellingham PrideFest Slated for June 29th

By DAVID DUNBAR

PrideFest will return for a second year at the Town Common in Bellingham on Saturday, June 29, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. In its debut last year, more than 800 people attended and enjoyed the works of some 60 vendors.

“We’ve already passed last year’s vendor numbers,” explains PrideFest Planning Committee chair Josie Dutil. More than 80 vendors and sponsors have already signed up.

“This family-friendly event,” says Dutil, who is also Executive Director of the Senior Center, “will feature artisans, crafters, vendors, fresh food, information, and activities. We’re hoping to bring together different generations of the LGBTQ+ community and friends of the community.”

“I’m very excited about year two of PrideFest,” says State Representative Mike Soter. “It’s great to see this event growing bigger and better. I’m thrilled to be a sponsor again, and I’m looking forward to seeing everyone at PrideFest.”

Last year at PrideFest, Gertrude Fowler displayed and sold books that she had made into purses. “It was fun,” she smiles. Fowler, 81, has sold items at other fairs for years, “but PrideFest has a much better process for vendors... there was a huge amount of help... it was a very good experience.”

“I didn’t know what to expect,” recalls Eva Gamache of the Bellingham Elder Service Group, “when I arrived at the Town Common last year.” But the people were “all very friendly... it was a great day... and I’m looking forward to this year’s event.”

“There are few things in life that bring various generations

together like the overwhelming desire for equal human rights,” says Dutil. “This effort has brought together high school students, elders of the LGBTQ+ community and allies like nothing else I’ve witnessed at the Senior Center.”

Some of the things you can see/buy include handmade greeting cards, unique jewelry, painted beach stones, sewn and crocheted items, art and photography, antiques, pine needle baskets, and caricature portraits. Oh, and Brew Biscuits.

Branch manager Niki Barrett, of sponsor Middlesex Savings Bank, is thrilled to be a part of the event, noting, “We understand the importance of empowering and enriching the lives in our community. Through events like PrideFest, we’re committed to fostering inclusivity, promoting well-being, and creating a vibrant, supportive environment for members in our communities.”

Paola Echeverry, a former Outreach Coordinator for the Senior Center, shares her daughter’s account of her time at PrideFest last year, “My daughter was running around the town common, enjoying the food and crafts booths, riding the kids’ train, and running through the maze of people gathering for the day. I see her joy and wisdom when, after answering her question about the reasons behind the event, she just said “Oh ok”, and kept moving at the speed of light, smiling.”

Echeverry continues, “Her nonchalant reaction to the richness that comes from differences and the purpose of the celebration of LGBT voices, rights, and courage made a memorable day. By the end of the event, I left with the reassuring feeling that



More than 800 people showed up at PrideFest last year, and here are five of them (from left, Jennifer Altomonte, Bernadette Rivard, Josie Dutil, Terri Graham, and Sue Grady). It will be held at the Town Common (again this year) on Saturday, June 29, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m.

the world my kid will live in has hope, and that this life, despite the pain, is worth it.”

Volunteers are needed for the event. If you can help, please contact Josie Dutil at (508) 966-0398 or email jdutil@bellingshama.org Please “like” and follow the PrideFest Facebook page: Be You Bellingham.



The PrideFest logo was created last year in a design competition at Bellingham High School. Of all the entries, this one was the winner and its creator is Gwen Todd.

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2. Ryan is an energetic elementary schooler who loves riding his bike. One day, Ryan’s bike is stolen. Would his bike be covered for theft even though his parents are the named insureds on the homeowner policy?
3. Brooks and Katie buy an oversand permit for Cape Cod this summer. While off-roading on the sand, they hit another car. Would their auto insurance cover the claim even though they weren’t on a roadway?

Answers:
1. Yes – most home insurance companies cover liability for boats with engines up to 49 HP.
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3. Yes

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Municipal Spotlight

153rd Memorial Day Ceremony Scheduled for May 19

By KEN HAMWEY,
BULLETIN STAFF WRITER

Bellingham's 153rd Memorial Day ceremony will be held on Sunday, May 19, starting with a parade that will begin at 1 p.m. at the Memorial School.

Both the parade and the ceremony at the Town Common will focus on the holiday's theme — Bellingham's fallen heroes and their Gold Star families. Gold Star families are those that have lost a family member in combat.

Denis Fraine, currently Bellingham's interim Town Administrator, will serve as Grand Marshal. Fraine, who rose to the rank of captain in the Air Force.

"Having participated in Bellingham's Memorial Day Parade for more than 30 years it's a great honor to be asked to serve as Grand Marshal in the parade," Fraine said. "Bellingham has a great tradition of recognizing its veterans. Memorial Day sets aside a moment to

reflect on those young men and women from Bellingham and throughout the country who answered the nation's call and paid the ultimate sacrifice. The day has tremendous meaning, and Bellingham's observances always reflect the importance of the day."

Other speakers include Major Travis Bowser (U.S. Marine Corps Ret.), who will deliver the keynote address; Paul Peterson (Air Force); and Thomas Berardi. Peterson and Berardi are Gold Star family members.

The parade route will start at the Memorial School and continue along Route 126 to Bellingham center. Jim Hastings, the chairman of the Memorial and Veterans Day Committee, is requesting that parade participants refrain from parking at the school's lot. "It will help if people are dropped off, so there'll be room for parade participants to line up and form the marching order," he said.

Those marching in the parade include the Army and Marine Color Guards, the Bellingham High School Band, the Bellingham Memorial School Band, the Blackstone-Millville Middle School Band, the Assabet Valley Marine Corps Junior ROTC, the Henry Knox Color Guard, State Police Pipe and Drum Band, military vehicles from the Plymouth area, the Old Colony Bagpipe Band, the Douglas High School Band, the Silver Dolphin Drill Team of Groton, Conn., the Colonial Navy Fife and Drum Corps of Fall River, the Bellingham Historical Commission, members of Bellingham's Police and Fire Departments, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Bellingham High student-athletes, Thanks to Yanks, and Milford veterans.

Floats in the parade will represent the Grand Marshal, Gold Star families, the Bellingham DPW, Vietnam veterans of Rhode Island, Milford veterans, the Bellingham Women of Today, the Bellingham Senior Center, the Bellingham VFW and its Auxiliary. Other floats

include the Huey Gun Ship and military vehicles provided by the Bellingham Historical Commission. A dozen classic cars also will be in the parade.

The Gold Star families' float will be accompanied by Bellingham High art department students. They constructed signs honoring Bellingham servicemen who were killed in action during World War I, World War II, Korea and Vietnam. The signs replicate the Memorial Square signs throughout town.

The ceremony at the common will begin at 2 p.m. with a wreath-laying to honor Bellingham servicemen who made the ultimate sacrifice from the Civil War to the Vietnam War. A prayer will be offered at the War Memorial near the Route 140 entrance.

An invocation will start the program at the gazebo followed by the National Anthem (sung by Joe and Robbie Oliver), and the Pledge of Allegiance. A reading of the Gettysburg Address will follow the pledge.

Hastings, who was awarded a Purple Heart for his service in Vietnam, will deliver opening remarks that will focus on the solemn nature of the holiday.

"Memorial Day is a time to pause and honor the memory of our servicemen and women for protecting us," Hastings said. "If it weren't for those who made the ultimate sacrifice, we'd be living in a different type of United States. They're the ones who've enabled us to enjoy the freedoms we have today."

The keynote speaker will also emphasize the significance of Memorial Day.

Major Bowser, originally from Lexington, Tenn., enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1995. He received three degrees when he graduated from the University of Houston in 1996 before he received his commission in the Marine Corps. As an officer, he was assigned to 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, Camp Pendleton, Calif.; 3D Assault Amphibian Battalion, Camp Pendleton, Calif.; and Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, Calif., where he graduated with an MBA in 2012. He was then assigned to Marine Corps Logistics Command and Marine Corps System Command, Albany, Ga.



Major Travis Bowser (U.S. Marine Corps Ret.) will deliver the keynote address at Bellingham's Memorial Day observation

During his career, Major Bowser participated in exercises in the Baltic and in South Korea, and had combat deployments to Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Khanjar, and to Iraq as part of Operation Inherent Resolve. The 47-year-old is currently the senior Marine instructor at Assabet Valley Regional Technical High School's Marine Corps Junior Reserve Officers' Training Program. His awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Service Medal, three Navy/Marine Corps Commendation Medals, five Navy/Marine Corps Achievement Medals, and three Marine Corps Good Conduct Medals.

The 190-year-old bell at the nearby First Baptist Church will toll after Nick Mobilia reads the names of Bellingham veterans who passed away during the last year. Bellingham High students will then read the names of all Bellingham residents who made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of their country during through Vietnam. The Old Colony Bagpipe Band will perform, followed by a rifle volley, *Taps* and a closing prayer.

"The purpose of the holiday is to honor the memory of all servicemen and women who gave their lives while serving their country and their community," Hastings emphasized. "It's a solemn time to remember their sacrifices."

At the conclusion of ceremony, transportation to the Memorial School will be provided by Vendetti Bus Company, which will be located across from the Town Common.

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Elect Stephen Goyette for Planning Board on June 4th!

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Voting is on June 4th at the High School from 7am-8pm



Dear Bellingham Residents,

Join me in the fight for a better Bellingham!

Every election is critical, especially at the local level. As a devoted member of the Bellingham community, I've witnessed our town's evolution firsthand. While growth is inevitable, how we steer that growth rests squarely on the shoulders of our local government.

North Bellingham is experiencing a surge in industrial development, with warehouses sprouting up at an alarming rate. Industrial progress is important, as evidenced by Forge Industrial Park in Franklin. They understood the significance of keeping these facilities separate from residential areas. Regrettably, Bellingham has not followed suit, attempting to cram warehouses along side our neighborhoods.

This short-sighted approach has led to numerous issues: lower home values, increased pollution, safety hazards, and worsening traffic congestion, to name a few. Despite our vocal opposition, the status quo persists.

Let's be clear: developers have rights, but so do we, the residents. No project should trample on our rights or compromise our quality of life.

The facts are undeniable. Bellingham's mishandling of development has resulted in some of the lowest home values in eastern Massachusetts. It's no coincidence that areas with lower home values often experience higher crime rates. Franklin, for instance, ranks as the 7th safest community in the state, while Bellingham falls to 178th. Additionally, their home values average a staggering \$176,000 more than ours. We can achieve responsible development without sacrificing our community's well-being. I'm not here to impede progress; I'm here to ensure it benefits everyone. Other towns have proven this, and Bellingham can too.

On June 4th, I humbly ask for your vote. Together, let's forge a Bellingham that flourishes for generations to come.

Sincerely,
Stephen Goyette



Paid for by Candidate Stephen Goyette

The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

We're Celebrating This May! Awards, Moms & You!

By GINA WOELFEL

We're proud to announce that b.LUXE has received its second honor from Salon Today Official and named a top honoree in this year's prestigious SALON TODAY 200 Awards. This industry recognition is a testament to our team's collective efforts, dedication and customer loyalty.

Now in its 27th year, Salon Today is a national publication that gathers data to establish vital salon business benchmarks. It recognizes owners and their teams for their business acumen and creates a forum for sharing proven business strategies.

This is our second win with Salon Today. In 2021, we were recognized as one of the top 20 salons in the US in their "SALONS OF THE YEAR" competition, held post-pandemic as a check-in to measure the beauty industry's response and recovery from COVID-19.

To be recognized in this year's competition, a salon or spa must demonstrate several best practices that propelled the business's overall trajectory. As winners in the 2024 SALON TODAY 200 "GROWTH" category, we grew our company remarkably between 2022 and 2023. This success is a testament to our unwavering commitment to excellence and continuous improvements, ensuring that we always deliver the best to our clients, whose trust and support have been the cornerstone of our success.

This accomplishment would not have been possible without our community, our team, and the support of our fabulous clients. Your unwavering loyalty has made us the most lucky, appreciative, badass group of women in the beauty business!

But what does this recognition mean for you, and why is this your sign to make us your new salon?

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Your Money, Your Independence

Empower New Graduates with Gifts of Independence



Glenn Brown, CFP

With graduation season approaching, many friends and family members seek meaningful ways to celebrate the achievement.

While traditional gifts are always appreciated, consider something with lasting value that can help launch graduates towards financial independence.

Aside from cash or gift cards, here are some thoughtful financial gift ideas and tips to empower high school and college graduates as they embark on their next chapter.

Investment Account. Open a brokerage account in their name and purchase one or two foundational low-cost index exchange-traded funds (ETFs). Even better, establish small automatic monthly contributions from their and your checking accounts. Even at \$25-\$50 a month, it's a consistent reminder that demon-

strates the value of saving, compounding, and choosing to invest over time.

Furthermore, encourage graduates to explore different investment options and asset classes in these taxable investment accounts. And if they make investment mistakes, good. It is better to do it at a young age with less money and responsibilities than in their mid-40's, with a family and inside their retirement accounts.

Parental IRA Contributions. Parents can contribute to their child's Individual Retirement Account (IRA) up to the child's earned income. Consider Roth IRA and its unique advantages including being funded with after-tax dollars, meaning withdrawals in retirement are tax-free. This can be incredibly beneficial for young graduates, as their income and tax rates are likely lower now than they will be in the future. By starting a Roth IRA early, graduates can maximize their tax-free growth potential over the long term.

Financial Literacy Books. Equip graduates with essential financial knowledge by gifting them books on personal finance and investing. Consider *The Total Money Makeover* by Dave Ramsey, *Poor Charlie's Almanack* by Charles Munger and Peter Kaufman or *The Millionaire Next Door* by Thomas Stanley and William Danko.

I wish I'd read *Millionaire* in my 20's, instead of early 30's, as it provides insights into the habits and behaviors of wealthy individuals, offering valuable lessons on living below one's means, budgeting, and accumulating wealth.

Financial Planning and Investing Tools. Don't let Tik Tok or free "you-are-the-product" apps be their source of financial knowledge. Consider gifting a subscription to a financial planning app that can help track spending, set savings goals, and create budgets. These tools provide valuable insights into their financial habits and empower them to make informed decisions about their money and avoid unnecessary debt.

And for those who want to invest beyond their low-cost index ETFs, consider *Investor's Business Daily* or gift a year access to Seeking Alpha Premium.

Financial Advisory Services. Last year a client set up two Zoom meetings for their son, a college graduate moving to North Carolina. For the first meeting, the four of us met on an agenda mom and dad wanted covered. For the next meeting, the parents bowed out, leaving the agenda and conversation up to their son. This worked well, as he was much more engaged and has stayed connected by sending questions as they arise and sharing updates.

Entrepreneurial Resources.

If the graduate has ambitions of starting their own business, even a side hustle, consider gifting business books, online courses, or membership to entrepreneurial communities. As a parent, consider the legal benefits ensuring a Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) is established by paying for the initial state registration.

Building an Emergency Fund.

Encourage graduates to establish an emergency fund by contributing to it yourself. Life is unpredictable, and having savings set aside for unexpected expenses can provide peace of mind and prevent them from going into debt during emergencies.

Graduates who receive these gifts will not only appreciate the

gesture but also benefit from the financial stability they provide as they navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

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

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

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An Educational Tour of Quebec City – BFCCPS says Oui!

By JENNIFER RUSSO

It has been a tradition for the seventh-grade students at Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School to go on a field trip as a class to Quebec City in April. Taking classes in the French language during their tenure at the school, students are given the opportunity to be immersed in a French speaking culture and learn more about its history. Unfortunately, when the COVID epidemic broke out in

2020, there was a pause put on the travel.

For the first time since then, the school was able to bring back the trip, with about 80 students, loaded onto two tour buses to make the 4-day journey to Quebec recently, along with some of the teachers, nurses, and volunteer parent chaperones.

All attendees on the trip were treated to a wonderfully organized tour through Jumpstreet, that included walking tours,

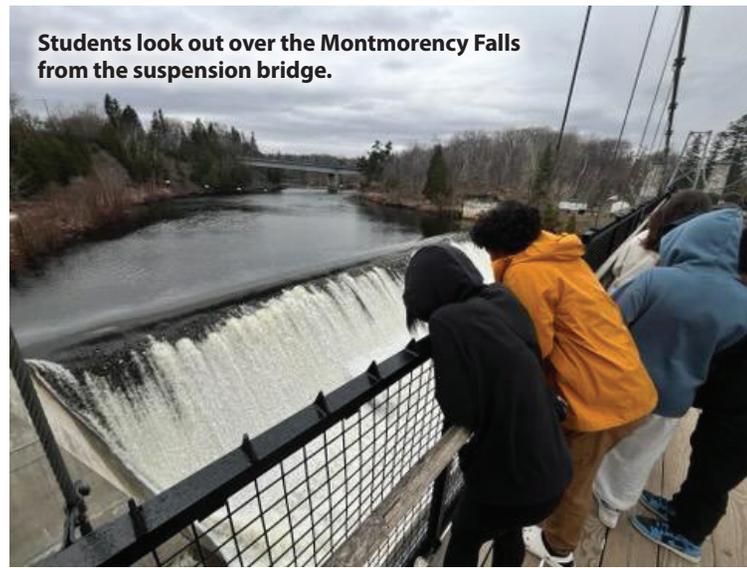
where guides told the students about major historical events and buildings. They went on a visit to Montmorency Falls and crossed the bridge at its peak, had an immersive learning about the battles on the Plains of Abraham, walked along the beautiful exterior of the Parliament Building, and went to the top of an observatory, where they had an entire view of the city.

There were visits to the Civilization Museum, the Shrine of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupre, the indigenous reservation of Wendake and the Village Huron, and a traditional Sugar Shack where they enjoyed a 17th century meal and made their own maple butter and candy. They took a ferry ride across the Saint Lawrence River, competed in a scavenger hunt, and had time to explore Old Quebec for lunch and souvenirs.

“It was amazing to watch our students venture outside of their comfort zone to embrace the unique opportunities a trip to a foreign country provides,” shared



BFCCPS 7th graders pose in front of the Chateau Frontenac, the most photographed hotel in the world.



Students look out over the Montmorency Falls from the suspension bridge.



Students make their way through Old Quebec in a walking tour.



BFCCPS 7th grade students learn about how maple syrup is made from Jean-Paul Tardif, whose family has been in the business for 12 generations.

Storm Drains are NOT for Dumping!

Have you ever wondered what happens to the water flowing down a storm drain after a storm? Stormwater, the runoff water after it rains or snows, flows from parking lots and streets into storm drains so that the pavement won't be flooded. Underground pipes then channel the stormwater directly to the nearest waterway, usually with little or no treatment. So whatever flows down a storm drain comes out in a nearby waterway, such as a wetland, stream, pond, or the ocean.

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- Participate in a neighborhood cleanup or storm drain marking project.



For more information, visit our community's website or go to www.stormwatermatters.org.

Christopher Heater, Director of Co-Curricular Education.

While the seventh graders took this trip, the eighth graders also ventured to Washington D.C. to learn more about American History.

To learn more about Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter School, visit their website at www.bfccps.org

BVT's Bayer Fund-Sponsored Team Wins at FIRST Robotics Competition

Team 61 - The Intimidators Earns Judges' Award

The Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) robotics team is a proud grant recipient. Bayer Fund, a philanthropic arm of Bayer, awarded a one-time \$3,000 grant to Team 61, The Intimidators, to enhance their science, engineering, and team-building skills through participation in the FIRST Robotics competitions.

"As a Bayer Fund grant recipient, Team 61 is using the funds to participate in FIRST Robotics educational programs and competitions," said Robotics Team Advisor Michael Norton. "I am proud of our team of students who recently participated in the

2024 NE FIRST Western NE District Event in Springfield, MA, and took home the Judges' Award."

The Judges' Award is a team attribute award that recognizes a team's success in developing strong partnerships with their community, recruiting members, fundraising, and outreach efforts to spread FIRST's mission. During the competition, the judging panel may decide that a team's unique effort, performance, or dynamics merits this recognition.

"The FIRST Robotics program helps provide the necessary skills for young students to become STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math)

leaders," said Bayer Fund President Al Mitchell. "Bayer Fund is proud to provide grants to student teams to encourage their development into future scien-

tists, engineers, and computer programmers."

Bayer Fund has contributed over \$34 million to STEM outreach efforts. The nonprofit

continues to sponsor FIRST Robotics teams as part of its intentional support of programs that improve STEM education.



BVT's Team 61, The Intimidators, a Bayer Fund-sponsored team, earned the Judges Award.

Pictured (left to right): Soumith Madadi, Landon Gibson, Brandon McGovern, Dylan Ryan, Bruin Guilbert, Emily Muniz, Karis Torku, Brandon Spiller, Noah LeFave, and Benjamin Hicks.

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The Truth about Cataract Surgery Performed in an Office: A Cautionary Tale

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

Cataract surgery is a common, safe, and highly successful procedure traditionally performed in hospital settings or specialized ambulatory surgical centers (ASCs). However, some considerations including greed and financial bias have led some surgeons to advocate for performing cataract surgeries in office-based settings. This is while there is plenty of availability for performing the same surgery in the safety and comfort of an ASC just a few minutes from these surgeons' offices. There are inherent risks and considerations that patients must be aware of before undergoing such procedures outside of a hospital environment or an ASC. If they ask you to have your cataract surgery in their office, think again.

Lack of Emergency Resources:

One of the primary concerns associated with cataract surgery

in an office setting is the potential lack of immediate access to emergency medical resources. Unlike hospitals or surgical centers, where anesthesia emergency teams and specialized equipment are readily available, office-based facilities may not have the same level of preparedness to handle unforeseen complications during surgery. In fact, those offices have no anesthesia presence at all. In the event of a medical emergency such as sudden changes in vital signs or cardiac arrest, delays in accessing emergency care could have serious consequences for the patient's health and well-being. Although it may sound hard to believe, those office surgeons want to call 911 if you have a medical emergency while you are having your cataract surgery. And good luck if the emergency crew is too busy or inaccessible!

Infection Control Challenges:

Maintaining strict infection control measures is essential in any surgical setting to minimize

the risk of postoperative infections. However, office-based facilities may face challenges in upholding the same standards of sterility as hospital operating rooms or ASCs. Factors such as limited space, inadequate ventilation, and insufficient sterilization equipment could compromise the cleanliness of the surgical environment, increasing the likelihood of surgical site infections and other complications. Furthermore, an ASC performing thousands of cataract surgeries every year has way more infection control personnel and training compared to an office performing the same surgery occasionally.

Lack of Anesthesia Monitoring:

Another critical aspect of cataract surgery is the administration of anesthesia to ensure patient comfort and safety during the procedure. While local anesthesia is commonly used for cataract surgery, monitoring the patient's response to anesthesia is crucial to prevent



adverse reactions or complications. In office-based settings, the availability of trained anesthesia personnel and monitoring equipment may be limited and often inexistent, potentially putting patients at risk of anesthesia-related complications such as respiratory depression or allergic reactions.

Lack of Anesthetic Titration:

Sedation titration allows for the adjustment of sedation levels during the procedure, thereby mitigating the risk of patient awareness during the surgery. Titration involves the ability to administer varying levels of anesthesia, as deemed appropriate. When your surgery is in an office, you will have no IV and no ability to titrate the anesthetics. They give you some sedatives by mouth before you go to the OR. That's it. The absence of the capability to titrate anesthesia in the office poses a significant risk. You may not be able to hold still for safe surgery. You may remember the entire experience afterward. This, in turn, can cause you significant traumatic stress because of this experience.

Limited Surgical Expertise in an Office:

Cataract surgery requires precision and expertise to achieve optimal outcomes and minimize the risk of complications. Surgeons who perform these procedures in hospital settings or ASCs often have extensive training and experience in ophthalmic surgery, backed by the resources and infrastructure of a specialized surgical environ-

ment. In contrast, office-based setting may not have the same level of track record or access to advanced surgical techniques and equipment. In fact, the entire state of Massachusetts has only 2 offices performing cataract surgery in the office. Compare this to hundreds of well-equipped ASCs and hospitals performing this surgery successfully for decades.

Patient Selection and Follow-Up Challenges:

Proper patient selection and thorough preoperative evaluation are crucial to identifying individuals who are suitable candidates for cataract surgery and assessing their risk factors for complications. Additionally, postoperative care and follow-up are essential for monitoring the patient's recovery and addressing any concerns or complications that may arise. In office-based settings, there may be limitations in conducting comprehensive preoperative assessments and providing adequate follow-up care. Even if this selection is perfectly planned and the patient is deemed "low risk for office-based surgery", unforeseen surprises can happen when no emergency services exist. This can potentially compromise patient safety and satisfaction.

Lack of Approval by Professional Societies:

Cataract surgery in an office setting is not covered by

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EYES

continued from page 12

Medicare and not approved by all major ophthalmology professional societies. In fact, the American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery refuse to approve office-based surgery, citing concerns about patient safety.

Legal and Ethical Considerations:

The decision to perform cataract surgery in an office setting raises important legal and ethical considerations for both patients and healthcare providers. Patients must be fully informed about the potential risks and limitations of office-based surgery, as well as their rights to alternative treatment options and access to emergency care. The surgeon's choices to perform the surgery in an office based on financial bias should be clearly explained to the patient, more so when a safe surgery center exists and is available minutes away, and when the surgeons are charging patients fees for this office-based surgery.

In conclusion, office-based cataract surgery is not without its risks and limitations. Patients considering this option should carefully weigh the potential benefits and drawbacks. If your surgeon recommends you have cataract surgery in an office, you are advised to seek a second opinion to make an informed decision. At the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford, a dedicated MD anesthesiologist is present full-time for all procedures, no exception, and your comfort and safety are titrated by using an IV line, which is lacking in the office-based surgery model. You come first. We are available in your backyard and proud to offer world-class cataract surgery closer to home: Here in Milford! In an accredited and licensed surgery center facility, not in an office. Four decades serving our communities and going strong.

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Liudmila Geyer of Bellingham Honored with Steinway & Sons Top Teacher Award

Liudmila Geyer, a distinguished piano educator based in Bellingham, has been honored with the prestigious Steinway & Sons Top Teacher Award for 2023. The Steinway Top Teacher Award is a formal recognition by Steinway & Sons that commends a music educator's passion, artistry, and dedication to students. This annual award is given to piano teachers for outstanding instruction and leadership in music educa-

tion, and for demonstrating an unceasing commitment to their students, helping them fulfill their highest potential as musicians and pianists. To be eligible for the Steinway and Sons Top Teacher Award Program, music teachers must teach acoustic piano in an exemplary fashion.

Mrs. Geyer was nominated for the award by M. Steinert & Sons of Newton, MA, the world's oldest independent Steinway & Sons piano dealer.

Brendan Murphy, President of M. Steinert & Sons, said, "We are proud to work with some of the finest piano teachers in the region and pleased that Liudmila has been recognized for her contribution to the regional piano community."

In addition to her private teaching at the Steinert Piano Academy in Newton, Liudmila also teaches at the Encore Music Academy in Franklin.



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BWOT 1st Annual Quarter Auction Vendor Event

Event Friday, May 3RD Seeks Vendors and Crafters

The Bellingham Women of Today (BWOT) are looking for crafters and vendors for our 1st Annual Quarter Auction, to take place Friday, May 3rd, from 7-9:30 p.m. at the Bellingham Sportsman's Club. This event is a fundraiser for our scholar-

ship fund and other charities supported by the Bellingham Women of Today. If you are interested in joining us for the evening or for more information, please reach out to us via our email @ BellinghamWomenOfToday@Gmail.com .

For more information or questions, please email BWOT at: bellinghamwomentoday@gmail.com or reach out to us on Facebook

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Franklin Husband and Wife Teach Dance for a Good Cause

Dance4Dreams Benefits Boston Children's Hospital

With Spring in full bloom, Kevin and Anna Balcom are teaching dance to benefit Boston Children's Hospital. Dance4Dreams, an 8-week introductory West Coast Swing dance Series. The course began in April, but is accepting students anytime through June 4th at the Franklin Elks Lodge located at 1077 Pond Street, Franklin, MA 02038. 100% of proceeds will benefit Boston Children's Hospital.

Anna Balcom and Kevin Balcom have been dancing collectively for over 40 years. Anna, a Franklin resident, dances Classical, Contemporary Ballet, Salsa, Latin Ballroom, Modern Jive, and West Coast Swing. Kevin, a lifelong MA resident, started his dance journey in Country Line Dancing,

and rapidly became exposed to many other styles, with a competitive and educational focus on West Coast Swing. This event combines their passion for dance with their deep appreciation for Boston Children's Hospital.

Anna encourages all to join, "whether you are a beginner or an expert, swing on over for a good cause!"

Ages 16+ are welcome. No prior dance experience or partner required. \$15/person per class. Cash preferred. No advance registration required.

For inquires or questions, contact Anna Balcom at (508) 808-4675 or visit www.dance4dreams.com.



Register of Deeds O'Donnell to Hold Office Hours in Franklin May 7th

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell and his outreach team will hold office hours Tuesday, May 7th, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Franklin Town Hall in the Council Chambers as part of his ongoing efforts to bring the Registry of Deeds directly to the residents of Norfolk County.

By offering office hours in Franklin, the Register aims to make it more convenient for resi-

dents to access and inquire about real property records. This initiative reflects the Register's commitment to providing efficient and accessible services to the citizens of Norfolk County.

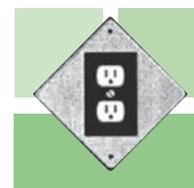
Registry staff are able to provide local residents with certified copies of land documents, such as deeds and mortgage discharges. They can also bring original land documents for residents back to the Registry for recording.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is located at 649 High St., Dedham. Find them at www.norfolkdeeds.org, on Facebook, and on Twitter. Reach them at (781) 461-6101 or registerodonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.

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Party for The Pantry Raises \$19,000 for Franklin Food Pantry

The Franklin Food Pantry, which provides supplemental food assistance and programs in Franklin, Massachusetts, is grateful to be the recipient of the Party for The Pantry fundraising event organized by Ray Auger and Bill Donovan. The ticketed party, which took place on Friday, March 29, 2024, at GlenPhamer Distillery in Franklin raised more than \$19,000 to benefit The Pantry. The evening's entertainment included music from The Pub

Kings, South Street Six, and J.P. Royer, a silent auction, and numerous raffle prizes.

Sponsors for the event included: Allegra Marketing Print Mail, Coastal Closets New England, Colonial Fence Co., Core Chiropractic & Physical Therapy, Eagle Stainless Steel, Element-Tree House, Franklin LGBTQ Alliance, Franklin Matters, Tim Rice Photo, UpFront Guitars, J.M. Aldrich, The Baur Family, The Chouinard Family, The

Gendreau Family, and Laura and Kyle Juszcyszyn.

"Coming together for a night of music, fun, and friendship is a great way to bring awareness to a growing need and support those experiencing hunger," said Ray Auger, co-organizer of Party for The Pantry. "The Franklin Food Pantry positively impacts thousands of lives, and we love giving back to this organization that assists so many."

Independent fundraising events are an essential operating revenue source for The Pantry. Funds raised allow The Pantry to purchase food and personal care items, offer programs and services, and support daily operations.

"We are extremely grateful to Ray Auger and Bill Donovan for organizing this year's amazing Party for The Pantry, and the event sponsors, raffle donors, and attendees for their generosity and support," said Tina Powderly, Executive Director, Franklin Food Pantry. "The proceeds from this year's Party for The Pantry will go directly to feeding people, make a difference in the fight against food insecurity, and help strengthen our community."

The Franklin Food Pantry is located at 341 W. Central St. in Franklin, MA on Route 140. Please visit www.franklinfoodpantry.org for more information.



Photo by Tim Rice Photo.

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Water Use Restriction Back in Place

In Bellingham, the MassDEP required 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. restriction will be reinstated in the spring of 2024, on or about May 1st.

BVT Students Earn 94 SkillsUSA Medals at District V Competition

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) students put the systems voc-tech mission on full display. During the first of three SkillsUSA competitions, students test their vocational-technical competency by competing with other trained career and technical education students from six vocational high schools. On March 13th, 227 BVT students competed in the annual SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Competition with outstanding outcomes.

The competition allows students to demonstrate their voca-

tional-technical education, skills, and knowledge with SkillsUSA employment and trade tests. Successfully demonstrating their knowledge in their career technical area of study, employability skills, and safety. Student competitors from BVT proudly claimed 36 gold, 27 silver, 31 bronze medals and swept 9 categories.

68 students will advance from districts to compete amongst the most talented vocational-technical students in the Commonwealth at the SkillsUSA Massachusetts State competition held at BVT in late April. An additional 43 students will go

directly to the state competition, and 13 student delegates will represent BVT. The complete list of medalists is available at www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa.

BVT students from Bellingham who earned medals at the SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Leadership Conference follow:

Silver: Charlie Leighton, Major Appliance Technology; Kiele Sarnie, Carpentry; Lucien Stenehjem, Robotics & Automation Tech; and Tan Tran, Restaurant Service.

Bronze: Pyper Bourre, Health Knowledge Bowl; and Matthew Skarin, Welding.

Bellingham Youth Baseball Offers Memorial Scholarship

The BYBI Nicholas Penza Memorial Scholarship is again being offered for Bellingham (MA) High School seniors.

Nick Penza (BHS '15) participated in the Bellingham Youth Baseball Inc. program until his untimely death in February 2016. Nick was not only passionate about baseball, but he was also passionate about being a supportive teammate. Fans could

hear his loud encouragement for his teammates as they went up to bat or on the field. No matter which way the game went, he was a bright light and made the game fun.

Nick was also a member of the Bellingham High School baseball team, notably the 2014 State Championship team. He is remembered for being a good baseball player; but, even more

so, being a good teammate.

From Danielle Penza, Nick's mom: "Nick started with the BYBI at the young age of five, and by nine- years- old he knew baseball was his soul. For Nick, it wasn't all about playing the game, but about the camaraderie and his love for team spirit. He gave his heart and soul into everything he did. Being in BYBI wasn't just about base-

ball, it was his home away from home. It was about being at the baseball fields, feeling the love and support from his coaches, teammates and everyone on the board at BYBI who helped shape Nick in to the outstanding player, loyal and devoted teammate and friend everyone knew, loved and respected."

Open to Bellingham High School students who played in any four seasons with BYBI (doesn't have to be consecutive). At least two scholarships of \$1,000 each will be awarded. Additional fundraising may increase this amount.

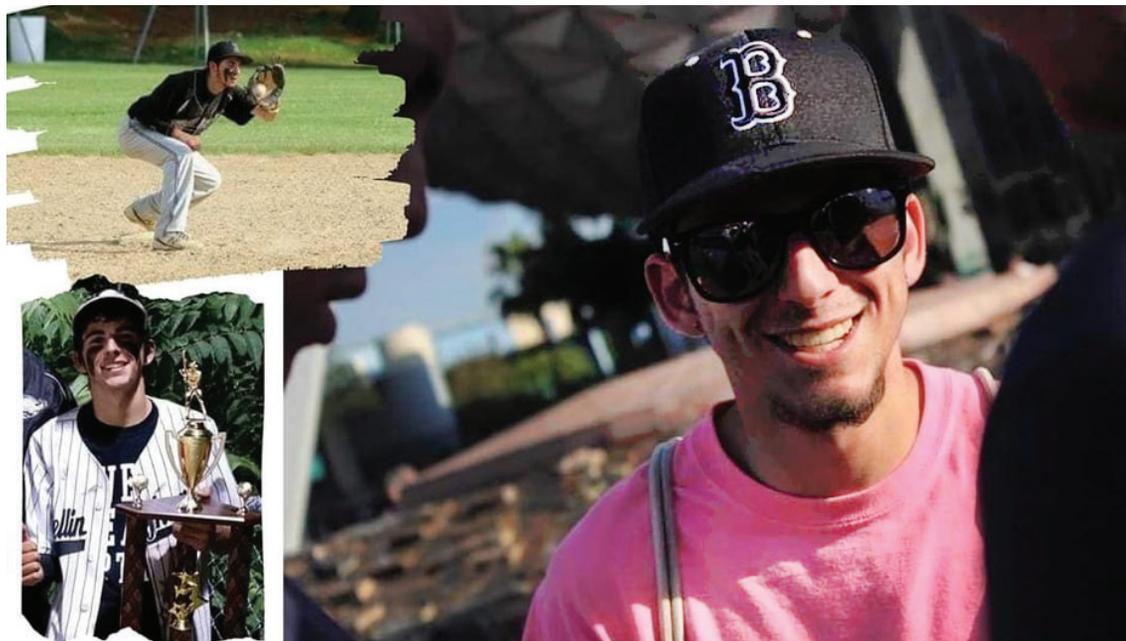
For BHS seniors who want to apply for the scholarship, check the high school guidance office

or download the application and instructions at <https://www.bellinghamyouthbaseball.com/penzascholarship>. Deadline for all materials is May 11, 2024.

Donations are also being accepted for the scholarships. If you are interested in donating please make out your check to BYBI and send to BYBI, PO Box 4, Bellingham MA 02019.

#bellinghamyouthbaseball #BYBI #baseballlife #baseball #BYBIFamily

Bellingham Youth Baseball Association Opening Day Ceremonies will take place on May 4th at 9 a.m. at Tuttle Field, Bellingham. (Public advised to get there 8:30 a.m. for prompt 9 a.m. start)



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Bellingham Public Library News & Events for May

For updates about library programs and services, please see the library website, www.bellinghamlibrary.org. Click on the red alert banner on the top of the page for details.

Additional details about library programs are available on the library calendar at <https://bit.ly/3xMECCt>

May Hours

Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m.

Friday & Saturday 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Closed Monday May 27th for the Memorial Day Holiday

Highlighted Programs

I am Autistic, I am Fantastic - The Musical - Saturday, May 4th at 11 a.m.

Presented by the MUSIC Dance.edu youth performing arts company. Using musical instruments, creative movement, poetry, and problem-solving activities, this presentation will inspire, uplift, and educate autistic children, families, and the community at-large. In 1970, the Autism Society launched a nationwide effort to promote autism awareness and assure that all affected are able to achieve the highest quality of life. The musical selections in the presentation are inspirational, they include contemporary jazz songs, 70's music, soft rock, hip hop, and selections from popular Broadway musicals.

This program is supported by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Saturday Family Fun - Saturday, May 11th at 11 a.m.

Join us for a story and craft with local author Emily Malaquias! We'll be reading her picture book "Said The New Mom" followed by a family craft to celebrate someone special in your life. As a Bellingham mom, Emily wrote "Said The New Mom" as a baby book with a twist - short phrases and colorful pictures for children, but with a story that has a message

for new mothers that parents can connect with!

Her book will also be featured in our Story Walk at the Bellingham Town Common through May. For families - No registration required.

Bellingham Garden Club Plant Sale - Saturday, May 11th from 10 a.m. to noon

Smartphone Photography Series - 5 consecutive Tuesdays from 6-7:30 p.m., starting May 7th

The classes will help you to understand how to use your smartphone photography, how to create great images on your phone, what editing apps to use, and how to share and print your images. Join Steve as we go over how to find and use essential controls on your phone, along with the best free and low-cost tools for editing and image management. Please register for each class separately. Registration is necessary as space is limited. These classes are made possible by financial support from the Friends of the Bellingham Library.

Metal Stamping for Teens - Wednesday, May 8th at 2:45 p.m.

Learn to hammer initials or a word onto metal. Make a friendship tag, pendant or keychain. Everyone will take home a wonderful creation. Drop in! This class is funded by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

Virtual Do Your Art Workshop - Wednesday, May 15th at 6:30 p.m.

Get ready to unleash your creative potential in this fun and interactive online event! Join us for a unique experience filled with inspiration and innovation! During this workshop you will explore different creative techniques, experiment with new ideas, and collaborate with fellow participants. Whether you're a seasoned artist or just looking to try something new,

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LIBRARY

continued on page 19



Joanna Shares Her Hope with LoSA

Joanna, from Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center, was the guest speaker at the April meeting of the Ladies of St. Anne. Abundant Hope has been a trusted source of educational, medical, and material resources since 2009. Located in Attleboro, Mass., they serve women and families in over 40 surrounding communities with grace, honesty, and love. They are the first

step for women in an unplanned pregnancy to consider their choices and receive accurate information from Board-certified and licensed medical staff.

Joanna spoke of the FREE support and services offered, including the Diaper Bank which provides baby clothing, diapers and wipes, formula, baby food, blankets, etc. What a joy it is for a mother to choose new cute baby

clothes for her baby!

Since Abundant Hope is wholly sustained by the support of the church community and individuals, all donations are most gratefully accepted.

Pictured the clothing donated by the members of the LoSA. Several cases of diapers were also donated. In addition, the Sodality voted to contribute \$400 to AHPRC.

Coming Up at the Bellingham Senior Center

The Bellingham Senior Center is located at 40 Blackstone St., Bellingham. Reach them at (508) 966-0398 or visit www.bellinghamma.org.

Quilling: Presented by our Quilling Queen, aka Helen Whiting. It's an art form that involves the use of strips of paper that are rolled, shaped, and glued together to create decorative designs. \$10 per person; helps pay for supplies. 9 a.m. until noon on Friday, May 10. Call ahead to reserve your spot!

Nutrition Check up: Tuesday, May 28, at 11:30 a.m. to learn what contributes to malnutrition, its consequences and what to do about it. This session will include a three-question quiz to check your own nutrition status. Led by Tara Hammes, RD of the Massachusetts Councils on Aging, this lively session will share resources and ideas for next steps. Please call ahead.

Saturday Coffee at the VFW: On the last Saturday of each month, from 9-11 a.m., visit the Bellingham VFW on South Main Street for free coffee and assorted goodies including bagels.

Ladies' Tea Party: Mark your calendars for Tuesday, May 7, at 1 p.m.! Enjoy tea sandwiches, hors d'oeuvres, petite delicacies, and some of the fanciest hats you've ever seen! (Oh, and there'll be surprise entertainment as well.) Bring a hat! New, old, store-bought, whatever. Bring your favorite teacup or use one of ours. And bring a friend! Reserve by May 1. \$5 per person.

Coffee & Conversation: Join us every Tuesday for a popular free-wheeling discussion beginning at 9:30 a.m. Special this month: Meet the Candidates on Tuesday, May 14, at 9:30 a.m.

Health Fair: The Senior Center's Third Annual Health Fair will be on Friday, May 3, from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. It's free and it's where you can get answers to your health questions. Be among the first 150 people to sign up and get a FREE lunch! Call now: (508) 966-0398.

Spiritual Book Club: This month, on May 14th, they'll be reading and discussing *The Book of Joy* by Dalai Lama and Desmond Tutu. Contact Josie Dutil at (508) 966-0398 or email jdutil@bellinghamma.org for mor information.

Entertainment: May 10th, one-act play about Mrs. F. Scott Fitzgerald at 1 p.m.; May 17th singer/pianist Patrick Dur at 11:30 a.m.

2024 Pride Fest: The second annual Pride Festival will be held at the Town Common on Saturday, June 29, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Josie Dutil, chair of the Bellingham Pride Fest Committee, is also the Director of the Senior Center, and you can reach her by calling (508) 966-0398. And you can visit the Facebook page, Be You Bellingham, for more information.

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Bellingham Firefighter among 21 Local Graduates from Firefighting Academy



Graduates of Class #BW29 Represent 16 Massachusetts Fire Departments

Bridgewater - State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy leadership today announced the graduation of 21 firefighters from the 50-day Career Recruit Firefighting Training Program, including Corey Rafter, of the Bellingham Fire Department.

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

“Massachusetts Firefighting Academy instructors draw on

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

The graduating firefighters of Class #BW29 represent the fire departments of Bellingham, Brewster, Bridgewater, Canton, Fairhaven, Lakeville, Norwell, Norwood, Provincetown, Rockland, Sandwich, Scituate, Wellfleet, Westport, Wrentham, and Yarmouth.

Annual Sat. Night Live in Bellingham to Benefit Oliva Fund

Annual Saturday Night Live in Bellingham will present Blast from the Past: Legends Show and Dinner Dance featuring impersonators performing the songs of Madonna, James Brown, Cher, Tina Turner, Steve Perry, Prince and Lionel Richie, as well as Jeffery

Thomas featuring the Ultimate Band on Friday, May 10th and Saturday, May 11th.

All proceeds from this event will benefit The Oliva Fund for Cancer Care at Milford Regional’s Dana Farber Cancer Center.

Tickets are available at Velace Bridal, Bellingham, at

(508) 966-0091 or by contacting Tony Khouri at (508) 380-5709.

DIVORCE SUMMONS BY PUBLICATION AND MAILING

DOCKET NUMBER: WO24D0423DR

Tracey M. Sherlock vs. Paul J. Sherlock. Commonwealth of Massachusetts Trial Court, Probate and Family Court Department, 225 Main Street, Worcester, MA 01608, 508-831-2000. TO: Paul J. Sherlock, Defendant: The Plaintiff, Tracey M. Sherlock, has filed a Complaint for Divorce requesting that the Court grant a divorce for irretrievable breakdown. The Complaint is on file at the Court. An Automatic Restraining Order has been entered in this matter preventing you from taking any action which would negatively impact the current financial status of either party. SEE Supplemental Probate Court Rule 411. You are hereby SUMMONED and required to serve upon: Diana Sladen, Esq., Sladen & Costigan, PLLC, 2 Maple Avenue, Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, 01545, your answer, if any, on or before 07/10/2024. If you fail to do so, the Court will proceed to the hearing and adjudication of this action. You are also required to file a copy of your answer, if any, in the office of the Register of this Court.

WITNESS: Hon. Leilah A. Keamy, FIRST JUSTICE, DATE ISSUED: 04/11/2024,

Stephanie K. Fattman, Register of Probate.

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Call for Artists!

Town of Franklin Massachusetts Dept. of Arts, Culture & the Creative Economy Relaunches 'Call for Artists' for Public Sculpture Park

Calling all artists and creatives! The Town of Franklin Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy Department is excited to announce the opening wave of our Spring 2024 'Call to Artists' for the Franklin Sculpture Park.

This exhibiting opportunity aims to transform our town's public space into vibrant expressions of art, showcasing the talent and creativity of local artists. Whether you're an established artist or emerging talent, we invite you to be part of this exciting opportunity.

Selected artworks will become integral parts of our town's cultural landscape, enriching the lives of residents and visitors alike. This is a chance to leave a lasting impact on the community and contribute to its cultural vibrancy.

Artists interested in submitting their work can find more

information and access the application process on the website [FranklinCulture.org]. The submission deadline is [June 1st, 2024 at 9 p.m.].

Join us in making Franklin a canvas of creativity! For inquiries or further information, please contact Cory Shea, Director of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy.

About The Town of Franklin Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy Department: The arts and culture sector plays a vital role in enriching the fabric of the Franklin community as we strive to build a vibrant and inclusive municipality. Investing in arts and culture initiatives is essential for driving economic development, strengthening social cohesion, and nurturing a sense of identity among community members.

Exsultet! Presents 'You Are The One'

Sweet romantic harmony will fill the air at Exsultet's spring concert series. Exsultet!, a premier women's chorus comprised of women from the local area, will perform "You Are The One" on Saturday, May 4, 2024 at 7 p.m. at First Congregational Church, 725 Washington Street, Holliston, MA. Relive the excitement of dating and finding "The One" with our concert of Broadway and movie hits! Travel

Over the Rainbow and through the Seasons of Love while enjoying familiar songs from past and present.

Founded in 2013, Exsultet! A Celebration of Voices is an auditioned women's chamber ensemble combining great music and poetry to inspire audiences with adventurous and innovative concerts. Exsultet's mission is to give women an opportunity to join together to make music, to

showcase the works of up and coming composers and arrangers, to feature the talents of local musicians and actors, and to combine performance and advocacy by focusing on important community issues and partnering with other local organizations.

For more information visit www.exsultet.us. (Performances are not suitable for children under 5.)

Charles River Chorale to Perform at Medway High School

The Charles River Chorale and the Charles River Children's Choir are excited to present their Spring Concert on Saturday, May 11 at 7 p.m. at the Medway High School Auditorium. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Please visit our website at www.charlesriverchorale.com for details or use the attached QR code.

The theme of this season's concert is *Road Trip Across America*. The concert will feature music that spans time, place and genre

as we embark on a cross-country road trip that takes the audience into the Appalachians, down into the Mississippi Delta, out to the plains and back up to NYC.

Under the leadership of director Ashley Nelson-Oneschuk, the Charles River Chorale is in its 40th year as a non-profit 501(c)3 chorale. Membership has sprung back from an all-time pandemic-related low in the 2020-2021 season and the chorale now finds itself at an all-time high membership level. Along with the younger children's choir, the chorale is excited and grateful to be back on stage stronger than ever to present their music to the greater community. We hope you

can join us, fasten your seatbelts, roll down the windows and enjoy an incredible variety of pieces representing US history from the 1700s through the 20th century!



www.charlesriverchorale.com/ticket

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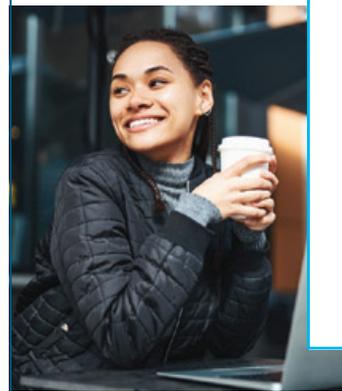
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St. Vincent de Paul Clothing Drive June 1st & 2nd at St. Blaise

The Society of Saint Vincent de Paul will be having a clothing drive the weekend of June 1st and 2nd in the parking lot of St. Blaise Parish, 1158 South Main St., Bellingham. The donation trailer will be parked at the back of the St. Blaise parking lot. The trailer will be open for donations 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday (6/1) and 8 a.m. to 12 noon on Sunday (6/2). We will accept all clean usable clothing and shoes bagged and boxed. We cannot accept furniture, household appliances, or bric-a-brac.

This is one of the conferences main fund raisers and all

proceeds are used locally to assist Bellingham residents regardless of faith. Assistance is provided for heating, gas, electrical bills, rent and other necessities. Approximately 68 families were given assistance throughout the year last year totaling over \$48,000.

So start your spring cleaning now and gather up your no longer wanted but still usable items and help our neighbors in need. If you know of any Bellingham resident who is struggling and could use some assistance call the St. Blaise rectory (508)-966-1258, ext #6.

Tri-County Regional Chamber Golf Tournament May 8th

Join us for a swingin' good time at the Tri-County Regional Chamber Golf Tournament at Shining Rock Golf Club in Northbridge, Mass. on Wednesday, May 8th, at 12 p.m. Tee off with us for a day of fun on the green. Why not elevate your brand's visibility by sponsoring this event...and putt your business in the spotlight!"

Sponsorships are still available and donations for the raffle or putting contest are still gratefully accepted. Reach out to Sherri at sherri@tricitychamberma.org. For more information, visit

<https://www.tricitychamberma.org/golf-tournament>

BVT's Moonlight Program in Practical Nursing to Host Child Safety Fair on May 4th

THE BVT PRACTICAL NURSING STUDENTS PRESENT...

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MAY 4, 2024

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 LOCATION: BLACKSTONE VALLEY TECH ANNEX ROOM
 65 PLEASANT ST, UPTON, MA 01568

cational for your children. It's a free event that will be held on Saturday, May 4th, from 9:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School located at 65 Pleasant Street in Upton.

The Child Safety Fair will feature an interactive vehicle display which includes an Upton police cruiser to explore if the weather cooperates. The Practical Nursing students will be in the cafe annex sharing information with parents through engaging presentations on bicycle, car/booster seat, fire, backyard/playground, and water safety. The event also includes fun activities that will engage children and help them learn about safety.

The PN students are excited to meet you and give back to the community by providing helpful information about keeping children safe. If you or someone you know is interested in pursuing a new and exciting career, one of the Moonlight Programs at Blackstone Valley Tech might be a great fit. To learn more about these programs, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/moonlightprograms.

If you have young children who are in preschool or early school age, then you might want to mark your calendar and save

the date. The Moonlight Program in Practical Nursing is presenting a Child Safety Fair that promises to be fun and edu-

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Register O'Donnell Promotes Massachusetts Homestead Act

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell today reminded homeowners about the importance of filing for Homestead Protection.

In 2023 there were 9,693 declarations of Homestead filed at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, 14% less than in 2022.

"If you own a home, and it is your primary residence, you have an automatic homestead exemption of \$125,000. However, if you file a Declaration of Homestead at the Registry of Deeds, the exemption increases to \$500,000. The Homestead Law provides a homeowner with limited protection against the forced sale of their primary residence to satisfy unsecured debt up to \$500,000 if they have filed. This is especially important when you consider that for most of us, a home is our

most valuable asset. Consumers should take steps to protect that asset," noted Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell.

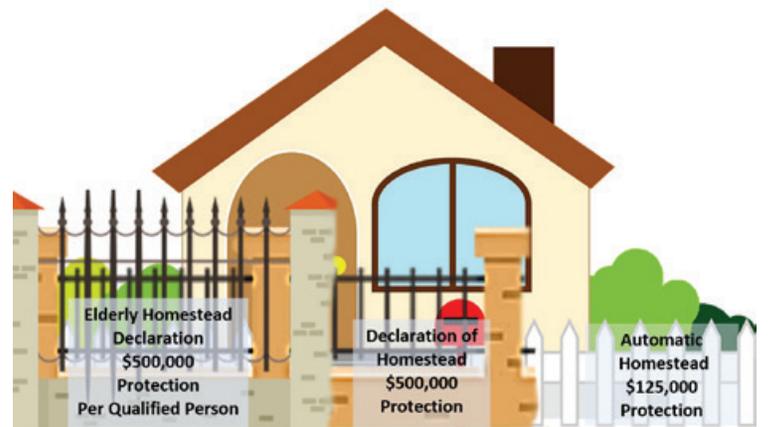
Another feature of the Homestead Law is the allowance for the filing of an Elderly Homestead Declaration, which defines an elder as a person who is 62 years of age or older and provides protection of \$500,000 for each qualified person.

The Register further noted, "In March of 2011, the Homestead Law was updated so that a valid Homestead is not terminated when refinancing a mortgage. Other changes that took place back in 2011 state that a Homestead can provide protections for a primary home even if it is held in a trust. The definition of a primary residence was also expanded to include a

manufactured or mobile home."

A Declaration of Homestead also protects the sale proceeds if the home is sold for up to one year after the date of the sale or on the date when a new home is purchased with the proceeds, whichever comes first. Additionally, if the home is damaged by a fire, for example, the insurance proceeds are protected for two years after the date of the fire or on the date when the home is reconstructed or a new home is purchased, whichever is earlier.

While the Homestead Statute provides important protections for homeowners, it is important to note that certain debts are exempt from protection under the Homestead Act. These include federal, state, and local tax liens, as well as mortgages contracted for the purchase of a primary home and nursing home liens.



Most other mortgages, debts, and encumbrances existing prior to the filing of the Declaration of Homestead, along with probate court executions for spousal and child support, are also not covered under the Homestead Protection Statute.

Declarations of Homestead are recorded at the Registry of Deeds for a state-imposed fee of \$36. Additional information about the Homestead Law and the forms are available at no cost by going to the Registry's website at www.norfolkdeeds.org.

Register O'Donnell concluded, "I want to reiterate that a Homestead provides limited protection against the forced sale of a homeowner's primary residence to satisfy unsecured debt up to \$500,000. While the debt is still owed, homeowners can have peace of mind knowing that with a Declaration of Homestead recorded at the Registry of Deeds, their primary residence cannot be forcibly sold to satisfy some debts."

This Old Thing?

An Antique Appraisal Adventure with Jim Johnston

Sunday, May 5, 2024 from 1-5 p.m.

Franklin Historical Museum

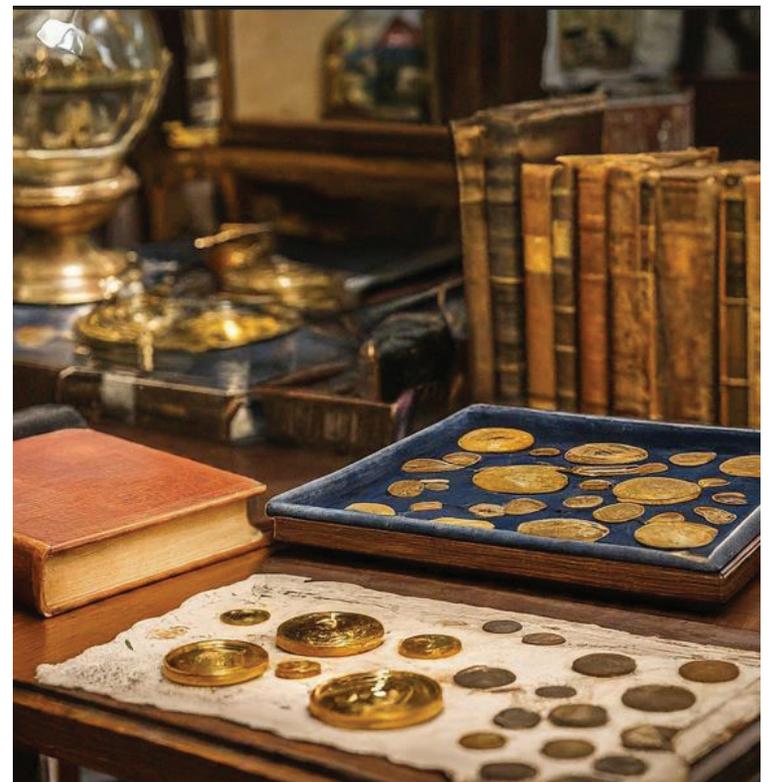
80 West Central Street, Franklin

Who hasn't been intrigued by something old... and who hasn't stopped to wonder, 'what's it worth?' On Sunday, May 5, 2024 from 1-5 p.m. local expert, James C. "Jim" Johnston, will dazzle and inform the audience and those seeking knowledge about family heirlooms and garage sale finds alike with *An Antique Appraisal Adventure with Jim Johnston*.

Johnston, who has been in the antique and appraisal business for more than six decades, has a nearly limitless store of knowledge about all things old, with particular emphasis on

Americana, Porcelain, Glass, Rare Books, Coins, Stamps and Pottery. His appraisals often come with the kind of fascinating context and anecdotes that make him – a lifelong educator and author -- much sought after, whether to please an auditorium audience or for the evaluation of a private collection.

Appraisals are 'on-the-spot' and oral and are \$5 for the first appraisal and \$3 for additional items, up to an event maximum of three items and \$11. The event sponsored by the Friends of the Franklin Historical Museum, a 501(c) 3 non-profit that



raises funds to benefit the Historical Museum. All proceeds benefit the museum.

The Friends can accept cash or check. There will also be an option to "watch at home" via Google Meets. To learn about payment options, how to participate virtually, or to reserve a contact alan.r.earls@gmail.com. Handicapped Access Available.

Mr. Johnston will preface the appraisal-day program with a

discussion of what constitutes "Value", or more appropriately "Range of Value", when appraising an item of any sort. He will also discuss various factors reflected in an evaluation such as: the sociological factors, condition issues, rarity, and Adam Smith's Rule of Supply and Demand as it effects the value of art, antiques, and collectibles in any time period. He will also discuss "Purpose" of evaluation such as: probate, inheritance,

divorce, and insurance, as well as insurance evaluation and replacement value, with the idea of choosing a fearless appraiser with experience in dealing with insurance companies, and with "Court Experience" and experience in delivering "Expert Testimony."

Mr. Johnston performs written appraisals by arrangement, starting at \$125.

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Bellingham Fire Shares Info. on Proposed Budget Override to Fund Increased Department Staffing

Chief William Miller has issued the following statement to provide information about the proposed override of Proposition 2 1/2 to fund increased staffing for the Bellingham Fire Department.

Voters are being asked to consider a \$750,000 override on Tuesday, June 4, to add six paramedics to the department to meet the Town's increasing requests for services.

The Bellingham Fire Department is an all-hazards fire rescue agency providing emergency medical, fire suppression, technical rescue and hazard mitigation through fire prevention and community risk reduction efforts.

The Fire Department operates from two active stations, at 1 Wrentham Road (Station 1) and 28 Blackstone Road (Station 2 - Headquarters), providing service to residents, businesses, and visitors across 19 square miles.

Bellingham's population has grown from 14,877 in 1990 to more than 17,500 in 2023. Call for service growth has aver-

aged 4.95 percent per year from 2013-present. This trend indicates calls for service will grow from 3,100 in 2023 to almost 4,000 calls in 2028, or from 8.5 calls per day to 10.8 calls per day.

Mutual aid requests from the department have increased significantly from 2013-2023 with a 38% increase in call volume, 56% of which calls have relied on mutual aid from neighboring towns. Use of mutual aid, an essential component of local emergency services, can result in a delayed response as the aid is coming from a neighboring community. Further, such reliance on mutual aid demonstrates that the Bellingham Fire Department is struggling to meet its obligations to the community as currently staffed.

The Department seeks to increase staffing to allow a dedicated paramedic ambulance with two paramedics per shift to operate out of the Blackstone Street Station. This additional staffing would enable the Fire Department to concurrently staff two fire suppression units.

The Department hopes to increase staffing to allow a dedicated paramedic ambulance to operate out of the Blackstone Street Station. Staffing should be such that the town has, in the near future, the ability to staff one dedicated paramedic-level ambulance with two paramedics per shift. This would enable the Fire Department to concurrently staff two fire suppression units.

The impact of the override is projected to increase taxes to \$76.44 per year (or \$19.11 per quarter) for the owner of a median single-family home valued at \$424,679.

The Bellingham Fire Department shares the following answers to Frequently Asked Questions:

What is a Proposition 2 1/2 Override?

Proposition 2 1/2 is a state law that caps the amount of money each community can increase property taxes each year. Voters at Town Meeting and at an election must be asked permission to permanently increase

that cap.

Why is the Town of Bellingham seeking an override?

The Town of Bellingham is seeking an override of Proposition 2 1/2 to fund the addition of six paramedics for the Bellingham Fire Department.

Why is this important for the Bellingham Fire Department?

Increased staffing will allow for a dedicated ALS ambulance from the Blackstone Street station.

This would enable the department to staff one dedicated paramedic-level ambulance with two paramedics per shift and concurrently one three-person staffed engine out of the Blackstone Street station and one crossed-staffed ambulance/engine out of the South station.

What does a "YES" vote mean?

A "YES" vote approves the tax increase to hire six additional paramedics to staff shifts.

What does a "NO" vote mean?

A "NO" vote means that the Department will maintain current staffing levels. As call volume continues to increase, it is likely that the Department will need to rely more heavily on mutual aid, ultimately resulting in delayed response times.

How does this impact Bellingham residents?

Mutual aid requests from the Fire Department have increased significantly from 2013-2023 with a 38% increase in call volume, 56% of which have relied on mutual aid to combat that increase.

This data shows the number of times per year that the Fire Department has been unable to provide emergency services in response to a call for service and having to rely on mutual aid, thus resulting in a delayed response as the unit is coming from a neighboring community.

For any further questions, please contact Chief Miller at (508) 657-2735.

Call for Walkers!

Register for the 36th Annual Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk

Registration is now open for the 2024 Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai. Scheduled for Sunday, October 6, funds raised from the Jimmy Fund Walk support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at the nation's premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Due to ongoing construction in Copley Square, the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line location has been moved to the Boston Common for 2024.

One Walk, Four Distances, For All Cancers

The Jimmy Fund Walk is the only organized walk permitted on the famed Boston Marathon® course, and participants have the flexibility to choose from four distance options:

- 5K Walk (from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute's Longwood Medical Campus)
- 10K Walk (from Newton)
- Half Marathon Walk (from Wellesley)
- Marathon Walk (from Hopkinton)

Whatever route walkers choose, participants will be treated to refueling stations with refreshments throughout the course. Poster-sized photographs of patients – Jimmy Fund Walk Heroes – are displayed along the course as inspiration. Walkers can participate virtually, as well.

All routes will conclude at the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line Powered by Schneider Electric at Boston Common, by the corner of Charles and Beacon Street. The finish line will include a cele-

bration with food, entertainment, and more. Public transportation is encouraged.

The Jimmy Fund Walk has raised more than \$176 million for Dana-Farber in its 35-year history, raising a record-breaking \$9.4 million in 2023. Funds raised from the Jimmy Fund Walk support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at the nation's premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The Boston Athletic Association has supported the Jimmy Fund Walk since 1989, and Hyundai has been the presenting sponsor for more than 20 years.

Register as an individual walker, team member, or start a team!

Volunteers are needed to cheer on participants, serve snacks, distribute T-shirts, and more, at the four start locations, along the course, and at the 2024 Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line Powered by Schneider Electric, located in the Boston Common. Register to volunteer today!

To register for the Walk (#JimmyFundWalk) or to support a walker, visit www.JimmyFundWalk.org or call (866) 531-9255. Registrants can enter the promo

code NEWS for \$5 off the registration fee. All registered walkers will receive a bib, medal, and a Jimmy Fund Walk T-shirt.



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Sports

BHS Boys' Lacrosse Team Aims for a Formidable Season

By KEN HAMWEY,
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

Steve Linehan, who's in his eighth year as Bellingham High's boys' lacrosse coach, is confident that this will be the season his Blackhawks justify the hard work that has gone into building a competitive program.

"Our goals are to finish the season with a .500 or better record and return to the state tournament," Linehan said. "Injuries and suspensions derailed us from competing in the playoffs last year after qualifying in 2022 when we lost in the first round to Nantucket."

When Bellingham faced Nantucket, it was the Blackhawks' second tourney berth in the 13-year history of the program.

At the *Bulletin's* deadline, Linehan's forces were off to a good start, posting a 3-2 record.

The current Blackhawks' contingent has the most veteran

players that Linehan has had during his tenure. There are 40 players on the roster with 31 returning from last year's varsity and jayvee teams.

"We're led by returning captains Josh Davis (senior) and Brady Carroll (junior), and first-year captain Ryan Austin (junior). "Carroll, a midfielder, and Austin, an attackman, shared the team lead for goals (29) last year as sophomores," Linehan noted. "Carroll was a Tri Valley League all-star last year. Davis, who's committed to play at Nichols College, is a four-year varsity midfielder who's a strong two-way player on offense and defense."

After five matches, Austin leads the team in scoring with 17 goals and 5 assists and Carroll is second with 8 goals and 6 assists.

Jack Baker, who has committed to play at UMass-Boston, is another four-year veteran who competes on the faceoff circle.



Bellingham coach Steve Linehan with his captains, from left, Josh Davis, Ryan Austin, and Brady Carroll.

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"Jack has grown to be one of the top faceoff specialists in the TVL, earning honorable mention honors last year," Linehan said. "Senior goaltender Patrick Flannery made 224 saves last year, an average of 12.4 per game. We're also counting on strong contributions on offense by seniors Nate Foley and James Cardin, and sophomore Kyle Connors."

Last season's top defensemen — junior Aiden Smith and senior Owen McGilvray — should continue to be prime assets on the Blackhawks' back line. Max Walker, who did not play last year, is back and Linehan calls him "one of the top defensive players that our program has had." Another plus for the defense, according to Linehan, are short-stick defensive midfielders Corey Perkins (senior) and Gabe Egan (junior).

"The off-season and our pre-season conditioning efforts led us to believe that we may get considerable contributions from a transfer goalie — junior Thiago Oliveira — and junior midfielders Charlie Eldridge, Carter Lelievre, and Max Henchey."

Linehan has some freshman who have promise and potential. They include attackman Charlie Baker, midfielder Bryson Nicholson, and defenseman Hayden Davis. "They've all started and are strongly contributing to our success," he said.

Linehan's staff will include first-year jayvee coach/varsity assistant Quinton Champagne and fourth-year volunteer assistant Cade Linehan. "Quinton has extensive athletic experience, playing club-level lacrosse for many years as well as high school lacrosse and basketball at Bridgewater-Raynham before playing basketball at Bridgewater State University," Linehan said.

Linehan, who started the youth program in Bellingham in 2013 and played lacrosse at St. Michael's College in Vermont, relies on a coaching philosophy that focuses on "building a healthy competitive atmosphere whereby student-athletes will achieve success through skill development, determination and individual accountability on the field, in the classroom and in our community."

Linehan also said that he hopes lacrosse teaches his players "the spirit of being successful each day in practice to help build towards successful game days."

"Our players must be ready to practice diligently," he said. "We strive to achieve the perfect practice level each day and we know that harder work in practice will make game days more enjoyable."

Another objective Linehan believes can be reached is finishing near the top of the TVL's Small Division.

"Our increased level of skill in our program, our favorable non-league schedule and the increased 'balance of power' in the TVL Small Division make all our goals attainable," he added. "Dover-Sherborn is traditionally the top team in the Small Division with Medway, Norton and Dedham also in the division with us. We have our sights on first or second place in the Small Division this season."

Sports

Six-time Captain Mantegani's Perspective a Big Plus in Athletics, Academics

By KEN HAMWEY,
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

Zach Mantegani will soon be wrapping up his athletic career at Bellingham High, then look forward to playing volleyball and soccer at Lasell University where he'll bring the same positive attributes that he's relied on as a three-sport athlete for the Blackhawks.

Mantegani's achievements at BHS in athletics are impressive. His accomplishments on the academic front are also impressive — he was a National Honor Society selection as a junior and has a current GPA of 3.99.

What makes the 18-year-old native of Bellingham tick as a student-athlete are his team-first approach, his leadership, and a desire to keep learning and improving his skills.

The 5-foot-8, 145-pound Mantegani has played three years of soccer and four years of wrestling and volleyball. He's been a six-time captain (once in soccer, twice in wrestling and three times in volleyball), and, he's been a three-time all-star in volleyball — once in the Tri Valley League, once by the *Milford News* and he was chosen twice to the Mass. Volleyball Coaches Association All-District Team.

Statistics don't always tell the story, but Mantegani's junior year numbers reflect his willingness to compete intensely. He had 126 kills, 43 aces and 255 digs. His hitting percentage was .191 (.200 is considered top-notch) and his serve percentage was 89.4.

So far this season, BHS has a 3-2 record and Mantegani's stats include 58 kills, 14 aces and 52 digs.

Listening to Mantegani discuss his goals for his final season and hearing why being a captain is important reveal what makes him a relentless competitor.

"My goals for volleyball are for our team to improve over last year's 16-4 record," he said. "I also want to see us compete for the TVL championship and not only qualify for the state tourney, but also to win a match, go deep,



Zach Mantegani soars high to register a kill for Bellingham High's volleyball team.

and get to the final round."

For the last two seasons, the boys' squad has been in the playoffs, but it lost, 3-0, to Holyoke in 2022 and lost again by a 3-0 margin in 2023 to Ludlow."

Mantegani relishes leadership, and he's answered the bell to be a captain six times.

"I enjoy leading by example, especially in volleyball," he said. "I like explaining how to handle a specific situation. I try to be communicative and vocal and I also strive to be supportive. I like helping younger kids with their footwork in volleyball."

Mantegani was a defender in soccer and wrestled at 144 pounds in his final year on the mat. Volleyball, however, is his favorite sport, and he's versatile, able to play right-side hitter and also setter. Competing for his father isn't a picnic like some might think, and it can be challenging when outside forces offer opinions.

"I never make it easy on Zach," said Steve Mantegani, who's in his sixth year as the

boys' coach and guided the girls' team to the state final last year. "Zach has a variety of strengths that are important. He's got an incredible work ethic, and he's all about improving his skills. He's a consistent server and a smart hitter who can jump and block. He's got a high volleyball IQ, is athletic, has good technique and relies on speed and quickness."

Zach Mantegani does well blocking out noise, and he knows how to filter distractions.

"My teammates know I'm a team-first player," Mantegani said, "and that's been an objective of mine in all three sports. I compete to improve and to help our team. The main thing is we're here to play volleyball."

A big fan of volleyball because "it's fast-paced," Mantegani also likes it because he says it requires different skills for different positions. "The keys for success are athleticism because it's fast-paced," he emphasized. "Good reflexes because the ball moves fast, and discipline be-

cause that's what makes a player better."

Mantegani's top thrill in volleyball came in the Mass. Volleyball Coaches Association round-robin tourney as a sophomore. "I was the shortest hitter but I got a kill against an all-star who had committed to play for UCLA," Mantegani said. "He was taller, could jump higher and he had long arms but I outmaneuvered him by positioning the hit out of his reach."

Teammates know that Mantegani is a captain who competes intensely, and he's quick to recognize a strong competitor.

Two contributors he admires are sophomores Thomas Crandall (outside hitter) and Aiden Gibbs (setter).

"Thomas is a phenomenal passer and a great server who has a high volleyball IQ," Mantegani noted. "Aiden is the quarterback of our team. He's got good hands, and he's a very consistent server."

After graduation, Mantegani will attend Lasell University in Newton, where he plans on majoring in sports management. He's planning on playing soccer and volleyball. "My career goal is to someday be a general manager of a pro sports team," he offered.

Mantegani's competitive philosophy defines him. "When I compete, I strive to surpass my limits and reach my full potential," he said. "Winning is always a priority. And, I've learned valuable life lessons in sports. Some are how to be a good leader, to show compassion, to overcome adversity and be resilient."

Mantegani's versatile career is approaching the finish line at BHS, and his thoughts on that are bittersweet.

"I've learned a lot about culture in sports, and academics have taught me how to be well-rounded in various subjects and how to manage time," he said. "College is right around the corner and that's exciting. But, I'm going to miss the relationships I've made."

His advice to incoming freshmen? "I'd tell them that making mistakes is part of improving and you should never stop learning," he said.

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Mass Fire Tracks Lithium-Ion Battery Fires, Gives Safety Advice

The Massachusetts Department of Fire Services' new tool for tracking lithium-ion battery fires has helped to identify 50 such incidents in the past six months, more than double the annual average detected by a national fire data reporting system, said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine.

The Department of Fire Services launched its Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Investigative Checklist on Oct. 13, 2023. It immediately went into use by the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office, and local fire departments were urged to adopt it as well. Developed by the DFS Fire Safety Division, the checklist can be used by fire investigators to gather basic information about fires in which lithium-ion batteries played a part. That information is then entered into a database to identify patterns and trends.

"We knew anecdotally that lithium-ion batteries were involved in more fires than the ex-

isting data suggested," said State Fire Marshal Davine. "In just the past six months, investigators using this simple checklist have revealed many more incidents than we've seen in prior years."

"Investigators using the Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Checklist are getting us better data faster," said State Fire Marshal Davine. "The tool is helpful, but the people using it are the key to its success."

From 2019 to 2023, an average of 19.4 lithium-ion battery fires per year were reported to MFIRS – less than half the number identified by investigators using the checklist over the past six months. The increase since last fall could be due to the growing number of consumer devices powered by these batteries, increased attention by local fire investigators, or other factors, State Fire Marshal Davine said. For example, fires that started with another item but impinged upon a battery-powered device, causing it to go into thermal runaway, might not be

categorized as a battery fire in MFIRS or NFIRS.

Lithium-ion battery fires were reported in 38 cities and towns. Nine of the fires involved micro-mobility devices such as battery-powered scooters, e-bikes, and hoverboards, making them the most commonly involved in fires, according to the data. Eight fires involved laptops and another eight involved cell phones, tablets, or similar devices. Power tools were involved in six fires. The device's charging status could be determined in 41 of the 50 fires: surprisingly, 56% of these devices were not charging at the time of the incident.

Lithium-ion batteries power everything from small devices like e-cigarettes and smartphones to scooters, e-bikes, and electric vehicles. If they are overcharged, overheated, or abused, they can fail rapidly and without warning. A lithium-ion battery that goes into thermal runaway will erupt in an explosion of toxic gases and flames that will ignite nearby furnishings. Water and traditional

fire extinguishers are significantly less effective against lithium-ion battery fires.

State Fire Marshal Davine offered the following safety tips for preventing lithium-ion battery fires:

- Be sure you have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home.
- Use only the original equipment manufacturer's batteries and charging equipment. Aftermarket or generic batteries and chargers may be cheaper but are more likely to pose a burn, fire, or explosion hazard.
- Store scooters and e-bikes outdoors if possible. If you must store them indoors, keep them and their batteries clear of doors, windows, and stairways.
- Charge the battery directly from a wall outlet, not an extension cord or power strip. Place it on a hard and stable surface, not a bed, couch, or pillow.

• Charge only one battery or device at a time and unplug it when it's fully charged. Don't allow a charged battery to continue charging.

• If you notice changes to the battery or the device, including damage, an unusual odor, a change in color, too much heat, change in shape, leaking, smoking, or not keeping a charge, stop using it right away.

• If and when it's time to dispose of the battery, don't put it in the trash. Lithium-ion batteries should be recycled, and you can find a location to take them at <https://www.call2recycle.org/locator/>.

Residents can learn more about lithium-ion battery safety at the Department of Fire Services' Lithium-Ion Battery Safety web page.

Library Resource of the Month – Museum Passes

The Bellingham Public Library offers passes that provide discounted or free admission to a number of area museums and attractions! These passes are funded by the generosity of the Friends of the Bellingham Library and the following local businesses: Charles River Bank; NCK Bellingham; Jennifer DeLuca – Realtor, Berkshire Hathaway Page Realty; Middlesex Savings Bank; Mass Renewables; Owen Financial Services; Bellingham Business Association.

Passes can be reserved in advance by Bellingham residents, 18 years or older, and members of the Friends of the Bellingham Library with a library card in good standing. Reservations can be made online, in person, or by phone by Bellingham residents with a valid library card (any fines must be under \$10). Residents of other towns who are members of the Friends of the Bellingham Library must call or visit in person to reserve passes. Non-residents who are not members of the Friends of the Bellingham Library may borrow passes on the day they wish to visit, provided the desired pass is available and they have a valid library card.

Currently the library has discount passes to the following area attractions:

Outdoor Activities

- Massachusetts State Parks Pass – Go to Mass.gov/DCR for a full listing of locations.
- New England Botanic Garden at Tower Hill, Boylston, MA
- Blithewold Mansion and Gardens, Bristol, RI
- Southwick's Zoo, Mendon, MA *Discounted tickets are available for purchase at the library for \$25 each, cash only, limit 4 per person, for Bellingham residents and Friends of the Library members only.
- Zoo New England – Valid for Franklin Park Zoo in Boston or Stone Zoo in Stoneham, MA

Indoor Activities

- Museum of Science, Boston, MA
- EcoTarium Science Museum, Worcester, MA
- New England Aquarium, Boston, MA
- USS Constitution Museum, Charlestown, MA
- Hall of Fame at Patriot Place, Foxborough, MA
- Massachusetts State Police Museum & Learning Center, Whitinsville, MA

For more information and to reserve a pass, go to the library's website at www.bellinghamlibrary.org and click on the link for Museum Passes.

The Seven New Unitarian Universalist Values

May 19, 2024 10 a.m.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin 262 Chestnut Street Franklin

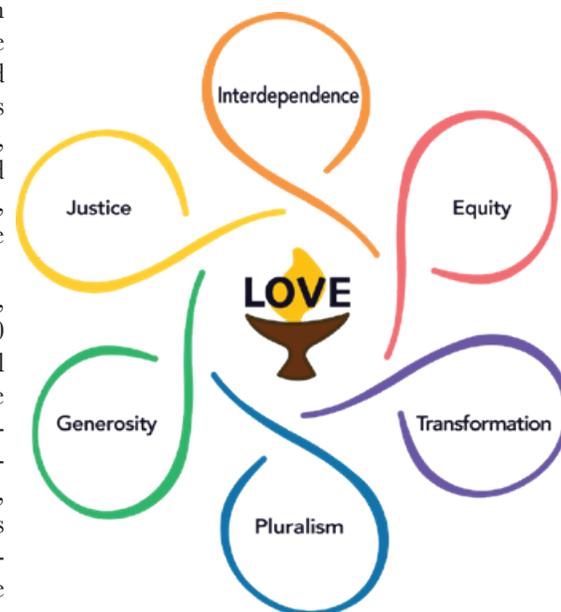
In June 2024, at the UU General Assembly, the UU Association of Congregations will be voting to replace our current UU Principles with seven new values. This is an exciting time of change and growth!

So what exactly are these new UU values? Where did they come from and why change from our old UU principles now? Together, let's take a broad look at the what, the why, and the how.

On May 19, 2024 this 10:00 am service will be led by the FUSF Worship Committee Co-Chairs, Mary Dennis and Louise Marcoux. We hope

you join us.

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



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Calendar

May 1

Virtual Author Talk, Genius, Power & Deception on the Eve of WW1 – Author Talk with Douglas Brunt, 3 p.m., presented by Bellingham Public Library, visit <https://libraryc.org/bellinghamma>.

Connecting Women Leaders Women in Business Pop-Up Shop, 5-7 p.m., The Willows at Medway 44 Willow Pond Circle | Medway MA

Second Annual SAFE Coalition Gala, Lakeview Pavilion, dinner, live auction, speakers, keynote speaker Rob Ninkovich. <https://www.safecoalitionma.org/gala-tickets>

May 3

Bellingham Women of Today 1st Annual Quarter Auction, 7-9:30 p.m., Bellingham Sportsmen's Club, 360 Lake St., Bellingham

Health Fair, Bellingham Senior Center, 10 a.m. – 1 p.m., 40 Blackstone St., Bellingham

Adults Only Casino Night, 7:30-11 p.m., Franklin Elks Lodge #2136, Franklin, MA, fundraiser for Clyde Brown Home School Association, Millis, \$75 pp includes dinner, dancing, gaming chips, raffles, prizes, bit.ly/CFBCasinoNight

May 4

Bellingham Youth Baseball Association Opening Day Ceremonies, 9 a.m., (public advised to get there 8:30 a.m. for prompt 9 a.m. start), Tuttle Field, Bellingham

I am Autistic, I am Fantastic – The Musical, 11 a.m., presented by MUSIC Dance, edu youth performing arts company, Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, supported by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency

May 5

This Old Thing? An Antique Appraisal Adventure with Jim Johnston, 1-5 p.m., Franklin Historical Museum, 80 West Central Street, Franklin, Appraisals are 'on-the-spot' and oral and are \$5 for the first appraisal and \$3 for additional items, up to an event maximum of three items and \$11.

May 6

Book Discussion Group, 6:30 p.m., Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., *The Reading List*, by Sara Nisha Adams

May 8

Virtual Author Talk, Murder Mystery, Family Story, and Love Story – Author Talk with Nina Simon, 7 p.m., presented by Bellingham Public Library, visit <https://libraryc.org/bellinghamma>.

Metal Stamping for Teens, 2:45 p.m., Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, learn to hammer initials or a word onto metal. Make a friendship tag, pendant or keychain. Drop

in! Funded by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council, a local agency, supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

May 9

PULSE Young Professionals Coffee & Connections, BINGO Networking, 9:30 - 10:30 a.m. Cote's Kitchen, 3 Farm Street | Upton, Members: Free, Future Members: \$10, <https://www.tricountychamberma.org/events#!event/2024/5/9/pulse-coffee-conenctions>

May 11

Bellingham Garden Club of MA plant sale, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m., Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham

Saturday Family Fun, 11 a.m., Bellingham Public Library 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, includes crafts and story with author Emily Malaquias

Charles River Chorale and the Charles River Children's Choir present their Spring Concert, Road Trip across America, 7 p.m. Medway High School Auditorium. Doors open 6:30 p.m. www.charlesriverchorale.com

May 14

Bellingham Candidate's Forum, 9:30 a.m., Bellingham Senior Center, 40 Blackstone St., Bellingham

Writing Group for Adults, 6:30 p.m., Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham

May 15

BBA State of the State Meeting, 6-8 p.m., Arigna Irish Pub, 799 S. Main St. Bellingham, \$25, rsvp sgrady67@comcast.net by May 13

May 18

Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail Committee & Tri-Valley Event Runners 5K, 9 a.m., Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail head on Grove St., Franklin, <https://www.franklinbellinghamrailtrail.org/2024/02/19/1165/>

May 19

Bellingham Memorial Day Observance, parade to begin at 1 p.m. at Memorial School to Bellingham Town Common, ceremony at 2 p.m.

The Seven New Unitarian Universalist Values, 10 a.m., The First Universalist Society in Franklin, 262 Chestnut St., Franklin

May 23

9th Annual Empty Bowls Dinner, 6-8 p.m., Franklin High School Cafeteria, 218 Oak St., Franklin, Online tickets \$22 adults; \$12 for students/children 18 years old and younger. Prices increase to \$25/\$15 respectively at the door the day of the event. <https://tinyurl.com/9thEmptyBowls>

TABS Matter: Shriners' Year of Impact in 2024

So far in 2024, the Shriners have made a significant impact by assisting 28 children through their TABS program. The program, which collects aluminum tabs from cans, receives immense support from individuals, organizations, like local Masonic Lodge and companies such as Medway Oil and owner Jeffrey Mushnick, a 20+ year Shriner as well as his brothers and cousins.

The Shriners' efforts translated into tangible help, with \$426,000 spent on the medical needs of these children. One of the key initiatives is the collection of tabs at Medway Oil, located at 37 Broad St in Medway, MA, aiming to fill five 55-gallon drums!!

The Aleppo Transportation Fund, a crucial arm of the Shriners, also had a remarkable year, assisting hospitals with the cost of transporting patients. Approvals were granted for various cases, including a 3-year-old boy from



Guatemala with severe flame burns, a 1-year-old from Mexico with extensive burn injuries, and two siblings from Mexico injured in a house explosion.

In addition to these cases, Aleppo approved funding for sponsorships, covering costs like food, air transportation, ground transportation, lodging, visas, passports, and miscellaneous expenses for patients requiring repetitive treatments.

The fund also supported patients requiring surgery and specialized medical care, includ-

ing a 7-year-old boy from the Dominican Republic needing elbow surgery in Philadelphia, an 8-year-old boy from Colombia needing three orthopedic surgeries, and an 11-year-old girl from Ecuador requiring a below-knee amputation and fitting with a prosthesis.

The Aleppo Nobility's successful fundraising efforts allowed for substantial donations to both the Boston and Springfield hospitals, further enhancing their impact in the community. Overall, well over \$500,000 was approved in funding, highlighting the significant contributions of the Shriners and their supporters in making a difference in the lives of children in need.

To drop off your collected TABS and support The Aleppo Transportation Fund, please visit your local drop off site: Medway Oil, 37 Broad St., Medway MA. To learn more about The Aleppo Transportation Fund, please see:

The Aleppo Shriners Children's Transportation Fund Travels - Nobles - Aleppo Shriners.)

Drink more, SAVE TABS, it's for the Kids!!

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BBA State of the State Meeting May 15th

When: May 15, 2024

Where: Arigna Irish Pub, 799 S. Main St., Bellingham

Time: 6-8 p.m. Cost: \$25

Member RSVP: By May 13th to sgrady67@comcast.net.

At press time, State Representative Mike Soter and Senator Becca Raush had been invited to attend.

MWP's New Endorsement and Re-Endorsement Applications Open for 2024 Elections

The MWPC PAC is a non-partisan, pro-choice organization dedicated to helping build gender parity in government. The women we endorse prioritize empowering other women and dismantling systems of oppression. Through our endorsement, we aim to help elect these women to build representative governance by identifying leaders who will act with care, urgency, and competence. Please support our efforts to sustain and build female power in our Massachusetts government by donating below.

Applications will close at 11:59pm on May 10th. If you are running for re-election and have been endorsed by the MWPC PAC before, please fill out the re-endorsement application. If you have not previously been endorsed by the MWPC PAC or are running for a new seat, please fill out the new endorsement application.

For more information on applying for endorsement or re-endorsement, visit <https://mwpc.org>.

Connecting Women Leaders

Women in Business Pop-Up Shop

Ladies, get ready to indulge in an evening of shopping and splendor at our Spring Pop-Up Shopping Soiree!

Join us to support and celebrate local women-owned businesses.

Open to all women, this event

is the perfect opportunity to mingle, network, and find unique items from a fabulous array of vendors. Whether you're updating your wardrobe, searching for home decor, or looking for that perfect gift, you'll find it all here!

No cost to attend, simply enjoy browsing with a drink in hand from our cash bar and treat yourself to some fabulous food.

Don't miss out on this exclusive shopping experience. Come support, shop, and celebrate with us!

Thank you to our host: The Willows at Medway

Wednesday, May 1st, 5-7 p.m., The Willows at Medway, 44 Willow Pond Circle, Medway. No charge to attend.



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Available Property Inventory Tries to Catch Up

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reports that Norfolk County recordings in March 2024 show a decrease in the total number of documents recorded, which includes a decrease in property sales and mortgage recordings compared to March 2023. This decrease can be attributed to a variety of factors, including high competition, high property prices, and a limited inventory of available property.

The Registry of Deeds recorded 7,664 documents in March 2024. This was 10% less than in March 2023, but a 13% increase compared to February 2024.

"The number of deed recordings and mortgage recordings are significant contributors to overall real estate activity, and whenever either or both of these numbers decline, there will be a substantial decrease in the total

number of recordings," stated Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell.

For the month of March, lending activity also showed a decrease compared to the same month a year ago. A total of 1087 mortgages were recorded in March 2024, down 15% from March 2023 but up 19% from last month.

"The decreasing trend in mortgage recordings has significantly slowed, but total recordings are still lower than last year, likely because those who locked in lower mortgage interest rates in 2020 and 2021 are less likely to refinance at current rates and some may be holding out for lower mortgage interest rates, predicted for later this year," stated O'Donnell.

The average sale price of commercial and residential properties for March 2024 rose to \$1,043,639, an 18% increase

compared to March 2023 and an increase of 5% from February 2024. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is up, increasing 8% from last year and up 36% from last month.

O'Donnell noted, "With a limited supply of available properties on the market, any increase in demand is likely to cause an increase in the average property sales price even with the increase in listing moving into the home buying season."

Follow the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds on Facebook (facebook.com/norfolkdeeds), Twitter, and Instagram (@norfolkdeeds). The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds (www.norfolkdeeds.org) is located at 649 High St., Dedham. Contact them at (781) 461-6101 or registerodonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.



Franklin Art Welcomes Painter Dianne Panarelli Miller

On May 1, 2024, the Franklin Art Association will welcome painter Dianne Panarelli Miller as its guest. Panarelli Miller will do a landscape demonstration. The meeting, which will take place at 6:30 p.m., will be held at the Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin.



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