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May 2024

Court rules Hopedale can file new complaint to assert right of first refusal for forestland at 364 West Street

By Theresa Knapp

On April 1, the Select Board provided an update regarding current litigation on 364 Main Street.

Select Board Chair Glenda Hazard noted there had been some developments in the previous week. She read a prepared three-minute statement.

“On March 25, 2024, Judge Rubin of the Massachusetts Land Court, ruled that the town can file a new complaint to assert the right of first refusal to buy the forestland at 364 West Street. Judge Rubin’s decision is publicly available and attached at the end of this update which will be posted.** Judge Rubin’s decision in favor of the town follows a favorable decision from the Massachusetts Appeals Court in Reilly vs. Town of Hopedale which is also publicly available.

“The Appeals Court decision followed rulings by Judge Goodwin in the Massachusetts



Since 2020, the property at 364 West Street has been the subject of litigation between the Town of Hopedale and the Grafton and Upton Railroad which has cleared a portion of the property. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp

Superior Court who wrote, in part, that the Grafton Upton Railroad engaged in a ‘flagrant violation of state law to obtain nominal control of 364 West Street.’

“As a result of Judge Rubin’s

WEST STREET

continued on page 2

Hopedale Eclipse Viewing Party 2024

On April 8, the Town of Hopedale hosted a solar eclipse viewing party on the Community House lawn where the Bancroft Memorial Library distributed 354 pairs of solar glasses and offered authentic moon pies as a special treat for the participants. In addition, a clarinetist named “Sam,” who is a member of the Blackstone Valley Community Concert Band, provided an impromptu musical accompaniment to the eclipse that had captured the nation’s interest. Courtesy photos



Left: Library staff members Katie Sheehan and Laura Brilliant-Giangrande were able to find authentic vanilla and chocolate moon pies for the event. Laura is pictured here with her daughter Bella. Right: Bancroft Memorial Library Trustee Frederick Oldfield, III



Clarinetist “Sam,” a member of the Blackstone Valley Community Concert Band, entertained guests during the eclipse



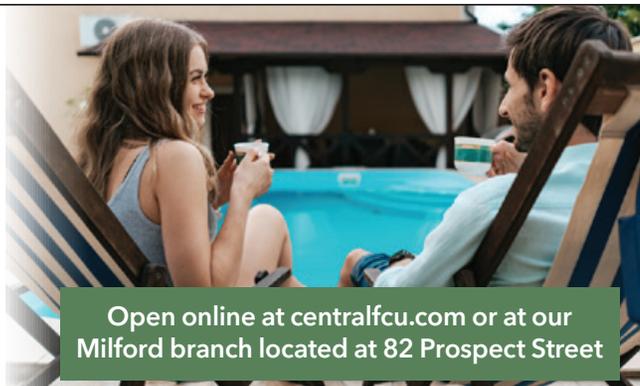
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WEST STREET

continued from page 1

decision, the town will file an amended complaint against the Grafton Upton Railroad in Land Court. That amended complaint will include, among other things, the following: That the town has the right of first refusal under Chapter 61 to buy the forestland at 364 West Street; that because of the Railroad's needless destruction of the forestland, the town should pay less than the original price; thirdly, [sic] that the Railroad must pay the town for other damages to the town and the forestland in amounts to be determined at trial.

"Once the town files this amended complaint, a copy of it will be made immediately available to the public. The town is confident in its legal positions and feels it has meritorious claims. The town remains open to favorable resolution of this case on terms that remedy the harms already done to the Town of Hopedale and that protect the town from any harms in the future.

"We understand that the legal issues in this case, and the associated cases, are complex and at times confusing. Significant misunderstandings about the case have circulated

in Hopedale so if any residents have questions about this litigation, please reach out to the Board [or] Town Administrator Mitch Ruscitti, who can respond accordingly. Because of the ongoing litigation, the Select Board must protect confidentiality and attorney-client privilege and so we cannot comment about our views on the case while it is pending.

"The Board will continue to provide updates as quickly and as fully as possible including making filings public as soon as they are filed."

After reading the statement, Hazard acknowledged the board could not answer many questions but hoped the update was "helpful and gives you an idea of the direction" the case was moving.

"It may sometimes seem that there should be a lot going on but, in fact, the court process is slow and there are great gaps of time in which nothing is going on but this is certainly not the case recently so this update would be a result of those recent proceedings."

**Editor's note: The document was not posted with the board packet but can be obtained by contacting the Select Board office.

Town Hall building conditions discussed

By THERESA KNAPP

Hopedale Town Hall was built in 1886 and was soon after deeded to the town by the Draper family to serve as a community building. Today, the "Richardsonian Romanesque" building has numerous issues that were discussed by the Select Board at its April 8 meeting.

Town Administrator Mitch Ruscitti noted there are environmental concerns with the building, it does not have an elevator and is not ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act] compliant, the heat malfunctions in the winter causing town offices to close, and the list goes on.

Ruscitti said the town should consider how to move forward. He said options could be renovating the current building to which many residents have a personal attachment; leasing or purchasing additional space as had been considered by previous town officials; or building a new building which he believes could be \$10 to \$12 million "to renovate this building for its current use."

Select Board Chair Glenda Hazard acknowledged she was one such resident who has a personal attachment to the building.

Select Board member Scott Savage said he could not support the idea of a new building because of the town's fiscal priorities, and suggested the town



The Hopedale Town Hall building was constructed in 1876 by the Draper family and was deeded to the town for community use the next year. Today, it has several building issues that need to be addressed. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp

look at moving offices a few at a time into a new space. He would also support leasing but would prefer the town own any new space.

Select Board member Bernie Stock said, "We have a lot of distinctions in the Town of Hopedale, and this building has to be the top of the list. Hopedale has never built a Town Hall. This is not a Town Hall. It was never intended to be a Town Hall. It didn't open as a Town Hall. My dentist used to be on the other side of that wall; my barber was in where the assessors are; there was a library in the next one; the Post Office was over here; this wasn't a Town Hall."

Stock, who previously served

as Hopedale Town Administrator, continued, "It's got all kinds of problems in here. When I was here back in '74, we built the bathrooms downstairs, those were the jail cells. I hate the expression 'putting lipstick on a pig' but this thing is what this is. Our problem is, financially, we're not in a position to build a new town hall...Let me tell you, this building is a disaster and the only way it's going to work for somebody is if they take it right down to the studs."

Hazard told Ruscitti the board was "willing to hear all options" and he will gather information to share with the board.

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April vacation culminates with 'Swiftie Saturday' (Hopedale's Version)

By THERESA KNAPP

Are you ready for it? Hopedale was channeling its inner Taylor Swift on April 20 as part of "Swiftie Saturday," a two-hour event of Tay-Tay-themed fun devoted to the worldwide sensation and the fans who love her ("Swifties").

There was no need to survive a Ticketmaster fiasco to attend this T-Swift gathering at the Bancroft Memorial Library. The program was orchestrated by library staff member Katie Sheehan - the event was open to everyone, and the crowd went wild for it.

Sheehan knows the devil's in the details, and she had them all covered. There was magic in the air, it was like a fairytale - she had transformed much of the library in a way we'll never forget.

Fans knew they were in trouble when they walked in and saw Taylor's music videos on the big screen and heard her hits play-play-play from the speakers. They were taken by the view of numerous activity stations, games, a gorgeous photo booth (created by Amy Catalogna of the Friends of the Library) with a near-life-size TS cutout, gift baskets, and much more.

Sparks were flying as fans played games (like "Bad Blood Bowling" for the exes), went on a scavenger hunt to find clues to solve a puzzle, and enjoyed a library-wide Easter egg hunt - the star is known to drop "Easter eggs" into her songs, offering secret meanings for die-hard fans to discover and interpret.

"They really nailed the theme," said Angela Lombardi of Milford who attended the event with her extended family (from Hopedale). While they all enjoyed the "Calm [Down] Coloring Pages" table, Lombardi said, "We couldn't get tickets to



Melanie Small, 5, of Hopedale is one of Taylor's biggest fans. While she was hanging out working on a diamond art cat - and wearing her pink heart glasses bejeweled with "Swiftie" - her mom Lauren said, "Melanie is a fan of Taylor Swift and we were in the library and learned about the program."

Other activities included Three in a Row dice, making bejeweled microphones, bookmarks, keychains, and more. The event is one these fans will never forget, and that's no lie.

Editor's note: If some of this story doesn't quite make sense, shake it off and ask a Swiftie to decipher

Clockwise from left: Julie Cameron, 7, of Hopedale, creating a "TS" friendship bracelet. Her LOVE shirt was appropriate since Taylor Swift encourages the Swifties to love one another (and not be mean). Melanie Small, 5, of Hopedale (with her mother Lauren), is wearing the bejeweled Swiftie glasses she made at the event; Lauren Marcob of Hopedale holding Aria Marcob, 2; Lia Marcob, 8; Nicole Lombardi of Milford holding Lyla Lombardi, 2; Taylee Lombardi, 5; Angela Lombardi; Lily Lipresti of Upton, 10; Genevieve Cloutier of Upton, 10. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp

the concert, so this is the next best thing." She was wearing a punny t-shirt that said, "It's me. Hi. I'm the bride. It's me" - a nod to Swift's hit "Anti-Hero," and her niece was wearing an Eras Tour sweatshirt. We know those shirts will never go out of style.

Julie Cameron, 7, of Hopedale was working on a "TS" friendship bracelet like the ones she swapped at a recent Taylor Swift concert. Her mother Rachel explained, "We couldn't get into the concert at Gillette but we stood outside, so we heard her but we didn't see her. There were lots of other Swifties there with us, it was a lot of fun!"

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Hopedale Town Administrator scores high on performance evaluation

Mitch Ruscitti took the position in May 2023

By THERESA KNAPP

At its meeting on April 1, the Hopedale Select Board reviewed its performance evaluation of Town Administrator Mitchell Ruscitti who started his position in May of 2023.

Ruscitti's evaluation covered his first nine months in office and was completed in March.

Scoring was based on 51 data points in the following 10 categories: Personal Characteristics, Professionalism, Board Support/

Relations, Public Relations/Communications, Community Leadership, Organizational Leadership, Personnel Management, Financial Management, Town Operations & Infrastructure, Planning and Organization.

The rating scale was 5 (outstanding) to 1 (unsatisfactory). Ruscitti's rating from Glenda Hazard was 4.3, Scott Savage was 4.0, and Bernie Stock was 3.5.

Select Board Chair Glenda Hazard said, "I appreciate that

your first year in Hopedale is not easy in that we have a lot of big and complicated issues going on." She said she appreciated him "continuing us on the financial path that we had said we wanted to go and finding some creative ways to help us accomplish things that we didn't know we could accomplish, like the firetruck."

Select Board member Bernie Stock said, "I've been more than pleased with Mitchell's performance," and said his rating of

3.5 would have been higher but they had not gone through a full budget cycle at the time of the evaluation.

Stock said he has been impressed with Ruscitti's communication, personnel hires, open-door policy, and ability to get things done such as the Bathroom repairs and the BVT Summit.

Stock said one of the things that makes the Town Administrator's job difficult is "the lack of media support" which Ruscitti acknowledged has "been difficult."

Select Board member Scott Savage, who was elected to the board just days before Ruscitti was appointed in May 2023, said his first year on the board was likely made easier by Ruscitti's own experience as a select board member in another community.

Savage said, "Mitch came on at a pretty challenging point in Hopedale where there were a lot

of things going on that are going to be significant to the future of Hopedale, and he's trying to juggle them all at the same time and I think he's done a great job of it." Adding, "I think Hopedale's in a much better spot today than they would have been if we had selected anybody else."

Ruscitti said, "I'm just very grateful, also obviously very grateful for my wife and two daughters who are very supportive." And in a memo to the board, addressing the evaluation results, he said, "The past nine months serving as the Town Administrator for the Town of Hopedale has been a wonderful experience and honor; I appreciate the Board's confidence in my ability and performance on the job."

To read the full memo, visit www.hopedale-ma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlij711/f/agendas/ta_review_packet_3-27-24_1final.pdf

Hopedale Annual Town Meeting will be held on May 21

Hopedale's Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday,

May 21, at 7 p.m. in the Hopedale Junior-Senior High School Dennett Auditorium.

As of press time, the warrant

had not been posted but can now be found at www.hopedale-ma.gov/home/news/warrant-open-annual-town-meeting.

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New Community Health Worker Position Provides Invaluable Support

The Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health was created as a collaborative effort among local Boards of Health in eight nearby communities, including Blackstone, Douglas, Hopedale, Mendon, Millville, Northbridge, Upton and Uxbridge. The many lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic only strengthened the bonds between these towns leading to the realization that more support was needed to effectively address the socioeconomic complexities of the most vulnerable populations.

The Town of Northbridge, in collaboration with the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, received the State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) Grant from the Office of Local and Regional Health which allowed for the long-awaited Community Health Worker position to

be created. The Community Health Worker position is meant to be a crucial role within these eight communities, with a focus on increasing access to mental health resources; coordinating community-based initiatives that are age friendly; providing targeted resources for healthy aging; and, acting as a liaison for research and support. "As the position evolves, this list will likely expand, especially given that the needs of each town truly differ," says the new Community Health Worker, Jenna Gouin. In addition, the Community Health Worker position will work closely with local police and fire departments, as well as Senior Centers. "The key to success here will certainly be ongoing collaboration and open communication. I am excited to work alongside these remarkable individuals and to make a difference in these communities."

Gouin has over ten years of experience in health and social services and has a wealth of experience in navigating complex situations that these vulnerable populations face daily. She received her undergraduate degree from Worcester State University and her dual Master's degrees from Nichols College. Gouin also has strong ties to several of these communities, which really show her level of in-

vestment and dedication. "We are beyond thrilled to have her and are so excited she is finally here. She has already hit the ground running," says Jeanne Gniadek, Northbridge Board of Health Administrator.

In addition to the Community Health Worker position, the Town of Northbridge also hired two Regional Health Inspectors with the funding from

the SAPHE grant. These individuals will be supporting the local Health Agents with routine health inspections of food establishments, public schools, and other entities to ensure compliance with state and local health regulations.

If you need Jenna's assistance, she can be reached by calling 508-825-6862 or emailing jgouin@northbridgema.org

Walking The Walk

Hopedale Resident Participating In Jimmy Fund Walk

Hopedale resident, Heather Jacob, registered for the Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai after she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

In January of 2023, Heather was diagnosed with early-stage hormone positive breast cancer. She knew immediately that she wanted to get her care at Dana-Farber and began treatment at the Dana-Farber Milford outpost. "The doctors and nurses actually listened to what was going on with me," Heather describes. "They really made a very scary time for me and my family bearable."

As part of Heather's treatment plan, she was told to walk. She says the Hopedale Parklands kept her mind calm during a time of feeling fear. Now, Heather is cancer-free and looks forward to her first-time walking in the Jimmy Fund Walk. She walks to express her admiration for the excellent care she received at Dana Farber and so others don't have to go through what her and her family experienced.

"With the right tools, we all can win against cancer. I want my daughter to not have to worry about me having a recurrence,

and I certainly don't want her to have to worry about herself getting cancer, as her chances are higher now," said Heather.

The 2024 Jimmy Fund Walk will take place on Sunday, October 6, and raises funds to support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at the nation's premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Whether participating for themselves, loved ones, neighbors, or co-workers, each walker shares a common purpose: to defy cancer and support breakthroughs that will benefit cancer patients around the world.

Participants have the flexibility to choose from four distance options: 5K walk (from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute); 10K walk (from Newton); Half Marathon walk (from Wellesley); Marathon walk (from Hopkinton). Walkers can participate virtually, as well.

The Jimmy Fund Walk has raised more than \$176 million for Dana-Farber Cancer in its 35-year history, raising a record-breaking \$9.4 million in 2023. To register for the Walk (#JimmyFundWalk) or to support a walker, visit www.JimmyFundWalk.org or call (866) 531-9255.

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Spring Cleaning is Greener with Affordable Junk Removal

There are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Maybe walking through your basement has gotten difficult or there is no more room in the attic? Perhaps you are planning to move, and you need to declutter before your open house?

Figuring out who to call can be challenging. If you contact one of the big haulers, they route you to a phone center where they've never even heard of your town, plus their pricing seems vague and full of extra fees. No wonder you've let the stuff pile up—it's too much of a hassle to get rid of it!

Or you can call Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business with deep community roots take care of everything.

Jay Schadler started his business in 2005. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years

rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with eight trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate cleanouts. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting.

Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled above-ground pools, hauled away ancient hot tubs, taken down old fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll clean out an entire house. And they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

Not everything ends up in a landfill—not if Jay can help it. He first tries to either recycle or

Business spotlight

donate items. Only after he tries to repurpose items do they end up at the transfer station.

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard dumpster for a week and chucking up to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates that tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway special where they'll take away a truckload of your unwanted things if you pile it up. Or if you don't want to lift a finger, then you can point at the items, and the team will fill up their truck and haul away your unwanted things. However you do it, you're left with more space and more peace of mind.

Jay and his team beat the big



waste haulers on both price and customer service. When you call Affordable Junk Removal, you aren't connected to an anonymous call center. Your phone call goes right to Jay.

And speaking of pricing, Jay is upfront about it. His website shows the truck sizes and prices, so you can save time knowing your costs before you call for an appointment. There aren't any hidden costs or surprise fees with Affordable Junk Removal.

Affordable Junk Removal is fully licensed and fully insured, and they'll treat your property with care and respect.

They also have a thriving commercial business, working with contractors and roofers to clear away debris and keep the

job site clean. They can even handle commercial and residential emergencies with same-day service.

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

Contact Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business take care of everything for you. Call Jay Schadler at (774) 287-1133 or visit us online at www.affordablejunkremoval.com.

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Girl Scouts Team Up With Thanks To Yanks, Send Cookies To Deployed Soldiers

Pictured left to right are Kathryn Walker, Payton Fasulo, Michael Shain of Thanks To Yanks and Lillyanne Straight, the Brownies are from Troop 65217 Milford, they are donating cookies to Thanks To Yanks to be sent to those deployed.

Thanks To Yanks is a local

charity that serves those who



serve in the military and the families that love and support them.

Girl Scout cookies to those deployed has become a tradition for the charity says Shain and he adds that local residents are very generous in our support of those who serve. For more information like them on Facebook.

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Remembering Steve

BY CHLOE ZHANG

"Life is short. Take a picture, Print it." - Steve Bassignani

On March 21, 2024, Steve Bassignani passed away after a long and tough battle with pancreatic cancer.

Steve was truly a major part of the community and had a place in the hearts of many, he always made it a point to make every student feel included. He never failed to put a smile on students' faces and capture memories that will be cherished forever. "Bass" had always made it a point to include every student, whether it was in the form of photographing the after-school sports, or even taking pictures of students throughout the day. As all of us in the community share this grief, the students and staff of Hopedale shared their favorite quotes and memories of Steve as a way to honor his memories.

"Steve was the man that taught me almost everything about taking pictures. Steve and I would go game to game taking pictures of sports and both sharing them on facebook. When it came to photography I looked up to him and counted on him to show me the way. If it wasn't short I wouldn't realize that Life is short. Take a picture. PRINT IT!"

"Not a quote but a memory. Back in my seventh grade year, there were a lot of random fire alarms. It got to the point where I was constantly feeling like I saw the light flash. The next year, on the first day of school, I saw a flash out of the corner of my eye. I turned and saw Steve Bass's smiling face. This happened so many times during 8th grade that now I think of Steve whenever I see a flash of light. Miss you and love you Steve."

"This isn't a quote but one of my favorite memories of Steve was back in 8th grade. It was my first tennis game at BMR and Steve showed up to take photos of the team. I remember talking and joking with Steve and my teammates the whole time. It was one of the highlights of my season and I'll never forget the way the team picture he took of us brought out everyone's personalities." -Holly R.

"Steve never failed to make me smile! He lit up the room as soon as we saw he was our sun and filled the room with laughs. I am very grateful to have been so close with Steve and will forever miss him."

"Steve never let me give up on myself. From field hockey to cross country and track, it was always "Go, girl!". He knew how to make everyone feel special and I hope we returned the favor and made him feel special when he was fighting."

"I didn't know him much but he was a sweet and happy person and meant a lot to Hopedale. I thank him for his impact and all of the memories he captured."

"I'll always be watching kiddo"

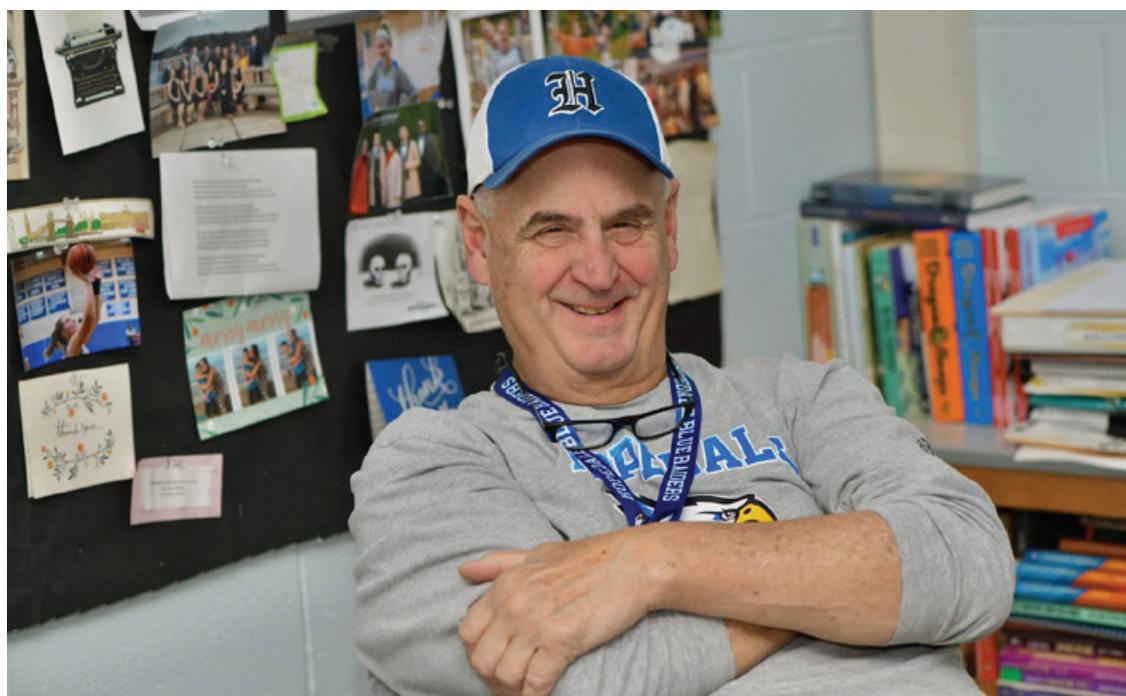
"Steve always put a smile on my face when he called me 'kid',



and he always made me feel better even when I was having a bad day. I will forever miss him and he will always be in my heart." - Chloe W.

"No matter what, Steve always made my day at school... even if he was scolding me after a tough game and telling me that "if you guys keep playing like that you can kiss a trophy goodbye". While it breaks my heart that I'll never get to yell "STEEVE!!" in the halls again, I am so grateful for those memories!!"

"Steve always made me laugh, whether with his compliments or his humorous observations about the kids, himself, us teachers, or whatever popped into his mind. He took a picture of me that is still my profile photo for my school account, and I smile remembering his gift for making



ordinary moments lighter and brighter. I miss his joyful, child-like enthusiasm and his dedication to helping students see

because he could have conversations with anybody about anything and really be interested. He was really a great man, and Hopedale will miss him."

"Steve always brought a light into any room and made everybody smile."

"Steve's presence brought life to the classroom. His smile and energy were without a doubt contagious."

"I remember when we were told in seventh grade that Steve was substituting in our class, none of us knew who he was. He immediately grew on all of us, as he made us laugh and was down to Earth. We all left smiling, saying "I really liked that Steve guy!"

"Steve was always willing to talk about travel, parenthood, sports, whatever was the hot topic of the moment, you name it. He was also eager to lend a comforting word of encouragement or a joke when you were feeling down, and many people were made to feel lighter in

heart after speaking with him. I remember talking to him about his trip to Alaska, and him trying to capture the moment while also trying to stay present and in the moment. How hard it was to live through a lens, and the importance of printing the picture so you can afterwards recapture that moment, again and again. He was always so wise, and treated everyone as if their story was important to him, that they mattered to him and to the community."

While Steve is no longer with us, his spirit and memories are always going to stay with us. Steve brought smiles to all the faces of Hopedale, and our memories of him will continue to carry his legacy. During these hard times, if any students are struggling with the loss of Steve, Hopedale Jr. Sr. High School's guidance department is always available to talk. Let's all remember Steve by the joy he brought to all of us. Rest in peace Steve Bassignani.

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Senior Corner

Join us for an important Seminar on Legal Issues for Seniors

Elder law Attorney Paula Nedder, will review and explain the critical documents every senior needs in order to protect their health, homes, and finances.

Thurs. May 23, 2024
11:00 am - Presentation

(BBQ Chicken) 12:00 pm - Lunch - \$3.00

Sign-up required for both events by 5/20.

Hopedale Senior Center - (508)634-2208.

Last Call for interest in Mindful Eating Classes

Mindful Eating requires no specific diet! You will find a new way to look at food and eating. Whether you are looking to heal your body or reduce weight, this is a safe, nonjudgmental space that just might change your life. 6 class series. 8 participants are needed to hold the class. Robin Natanel is the instructor of this series.

Call the Hopedale Senior Center at (508)634-2208 to register your interest so we can schedule these classes in the coming months.

Changes to the Medicare Savings Program

As of March 1, 2024, the Medicare Savings Program no longer has an asset limit!

You may now qualify to have Medicare pay your Part B premium (which is deducted from your monthly Social Security check). Maximum monthly income limits are as follows:

\$2,824/month for Individuals

\$3,833/month for Couples

Since the asset limit has been eliminated, many people will be eligible to receive a savings. There is an easy ap-

plication process. The Senior Center will help you apply or answer any questions.

Home Modification Loan Program

The (HMLP) is a state-funded loan program that provides financing to homeowners and small landlords for accessibility renovations to keep a household member with a disability or an older adult in their own home.

This is not a home repair program. Projects funded include ramps, lifts, bathroom and kitchen adaptations, sensory integration spaces, fenc-

ing and more.

Loans range from \$1,000 to \$50,000 (0% interest).

Repayment happens when the property is transferred or sold. The program has very generous annual income guidelines.

Applications can be obtained by calling (978)630-6725 or online at: cedac.org/hmlp

This program truly offers a avenue for older people to remain more independent by improving their ability to function more easily at home.

Please call the Hopedale Senior Center at (508)634-2208 for assistance or additional information.

MAY 2024 - HOPEDALE SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES (508)634-2208

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
		1 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	2 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi	3 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
6 8:30 am – 9:30 am Daily Grind 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	7 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 9:00 am Grocery Shopping 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance Errand Van Available 	8 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am No Meditation 12:30 pm No Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	9 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi Errand Van Available 	10 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
13 8:30 am – 9:30 am Daily Grind 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Lunch at Senior Center 12:00 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	14 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance	15 9:30 am Nurse Clinic 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	16 9:00 am Volunteer Breakfast By Invitation 10:00 am Knitters' Group 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi 1:00 pm COA Meeting	17 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
20 8:30 am – 9:30 am Daily Grind 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	21 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 9:00 am Grocery Shopping 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance Errand Van Available 	22 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	23 10:00 am Watercolor Class 11:00 am Attorney Paula Nedder Important Legal Issues for Seniors 12:00 pm Lunch 1:00 pm Tai Chi Errand Van Available 	24 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
27 CLOSED 	28 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 9:30 am Grocery Shopping 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance	29 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 1:00 pm Cribbage	30 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi	31 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Senior Center closes

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 demonstrates 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 Plan-Dynamic, 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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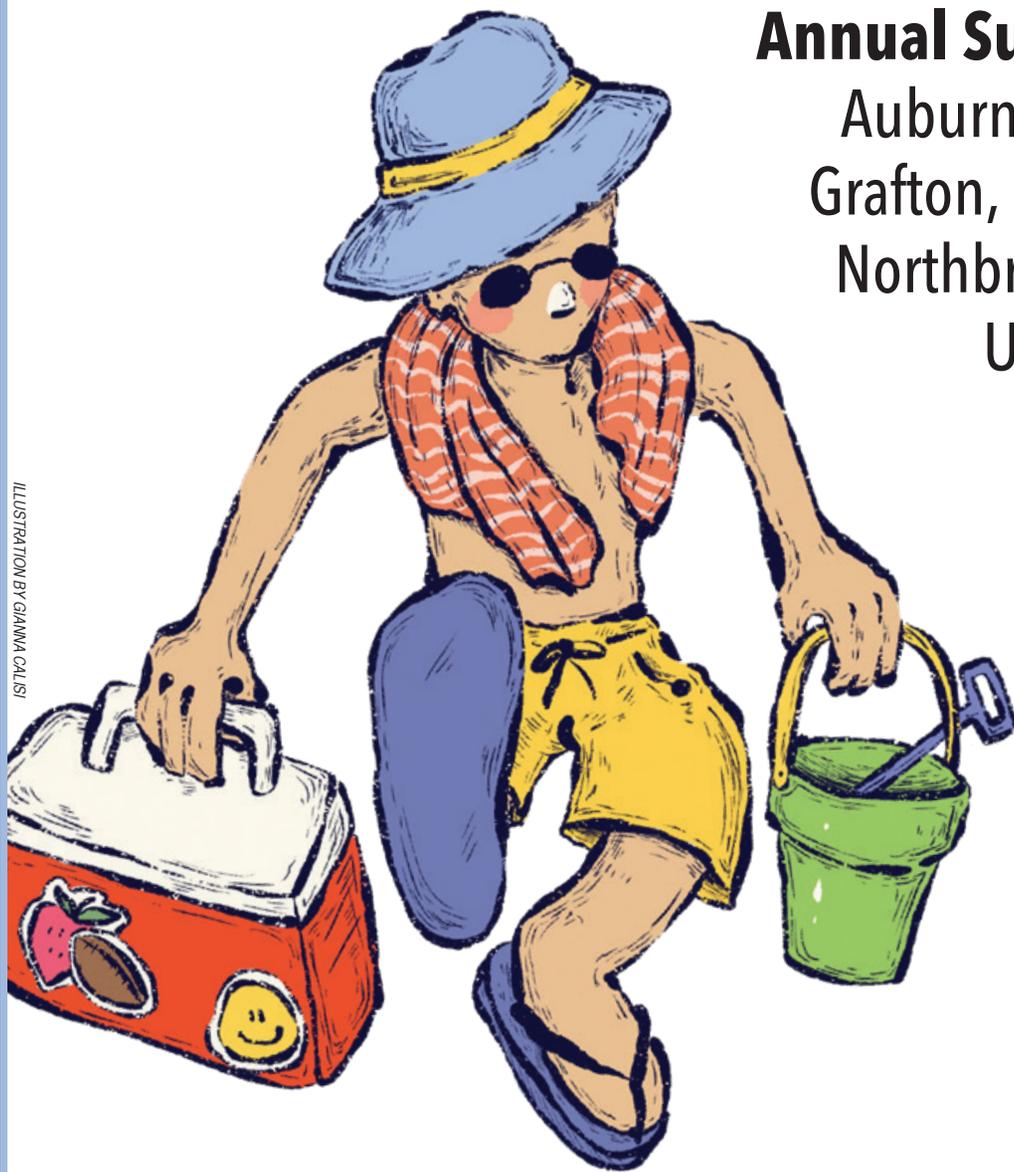
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Bancroft Memorial Library

50 Hopedale Street, Hopedale
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(508) 634-2209
tperry@cwmars.org

up online on the Library website under Calendar of Events.
ALL AGES!

Library News

The Library will be closed on Saturday, May 25th and Monday, May 27th for the Memorial Day holiday weekend

Helen Symonds Book Group - Wednesday, May 1st at 1:00pm
The group will meet in the Library Program Room to discuss *West with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge. "Few true friends have I known and two were giraffes..." Woodrow Wilson Nickel, age 105, feels his life ebbing away. But when he learns giraffes are going extinct, he finds himself recalling the unforgettable experience he cannot take to his grave. It's 1938 and the Great Depression lingers, Hitler is threatening Europe, and world-weary Americans long for wonder. They find it in two giraffes who miraculously survive a hurricane while crossing the Atlantic. What follows is a twelve-day road trip in a custom truck to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego Zoo. Part adventure, part historical saga, and part coming-of-age love story, *West with Giraffes* explores what it means to be changed by the grace of animals, the kindness of strangers, the passing of time, and a story told before it's too late" - adapted from CWMARS catalog

Community Conversations Wednesday, May 1st at 6:30pm

Community Conversations will meet to discuss guns in our society. If you are interested in joining the conversation, please sign up at the Circulation Desk or online on the Library website under Calendar of Events.

Save The Date: Garden Stepping Stones - Saturday, June 15th from 9:30am - 1:00pm

Stop by the Library with friends and family to create a personalized garden stepping stone to keep or give as a gift. All materials will be provided. Registration for time slots is encouraged. To register for this free program, please stop by the Library, call (508) 634-2209, or sign

News from The Friends of the Hopedale Library

Surviving to Thriving Workshop with Pam Formosa - Wednesday, May 15th at 6:30 pm
Are you anxious, exhausted, and overwhelmed? Frustrated and scattered? Join us as Pam Formosa of the Brain Fit Academy helps us feel better! Learn how to notice and target your stress response and take your control back. Come learn simple yet powerful brain-organizing movement-based tools that create calm, clarity, hope, and resilience. As our "Agent for Change", Pam will kick start a journey of self-discovery and self-improvement to feel better, find your purpose, and thrive. To register for this free program, please stop by the Library, call (508) 634-2209, or sign up online on the Library website under Calendar of Events.

Maker Mondays

Monday, May 20th at 6:00pm
We will be learning about Kulina Folk Art and scrunch painting a silk scarf with Garine. No experience needed! We will discuss colors and how to blend them in a successful manner using a permanent, high chroma, highly transparent liquid fabric paint. Learn the step-by-step "tie dye style" creative process; every participant will go home with a beautiful and wearable scarf!

Free Seed Library!
Stop by the Bancroft Memorial Library and get free seeds from our Seed Library. There is no limit! If you don't need a full packet, smaller envelopes are available. Take what you need! Special thanks to Burpee & Co., Baker Seed Company, Floret Flowers, Hudson Valley Seed Company, High Mowing Organic Seeds, and New England Seed.

FlowerPower.org Fundraiser

Please support The Friends of the Hopedale Library by shopping our FlowerPower.org fundraiser through 5/15! You can order flowers, bulbs, and other plants online and have orders shipped directly to you.



The Friends of the Hopedale Library earns 50% which goes right back to the Library. Shop at <http://hopedalelibrary.fpfundraising.com>.

Ongoing Book Sale

Support the Friends of the Hopedale Library any time the Library is open by shopping the Ongoing Book Sale, located downstairs just outside of the Program Room. All monies raised pay for expenses not covered by the Library budget.

Book and Puzzle Collection Dates: The Friends will be accepting donations on Monday, May 6th and Monday, May 13th from 4 pm - 7 pm. Adult hardcover books must be published within the last 5 years and paperbacks within the past 10 years. Children's books and puzzles in good condition will also be accepted. No textbooks, cookbooks or gardening books please!

About the Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Hopedale Library, founded in 1983, is an active volunteer, non-profit organization with a town-wide membership and a representative executive board. We work with the Library staff and the Trustees to support the Library in providing funds for equipment, materials, and programs not covered by the Library's regular operating budget. The Friends of the

Hopedale Library meets the second Wednesday of the month, September through June at 6:30 pm. New members and ideas are always welcome. You can sign up through our membership flyer in this newspaper!

Friends of the Library Fundraiser

Stay tuned for information about an upcoming fundraiser at Christiano Pizza, located at 60 Hopedale Street.

News from the Marjorie Hattersley Children's Room

Registration is encouraged but not required for all events. Please visit our website to register online under Calendar of Events.

Rhyme Time - Ages 2 - 4 years: Tuesdays 5/7, 14, 21, 28 at 10:00am

Toddler Tunes - Ages 1 - 3: Tuesdays 5/7, 14, 21, 28 at 11:00am

Teen Advisory - Grades 6 - 12: Wednesday 5/1 at 5pm
Share pizza and play video games! Registration required.

Alpha-nauts! - Ages 4 - 6: Thursdays 5/2, 9, 16, 23, 30 at 10am
Registration required.

Busy Babies - Ages 0 - 18 mos: Thursdays 5/2, 9, 16, 23, 30 at 11am

Book Cubs - Grades 2 - 3: Wednesday 5/8 at 4pm
Registration required.

Teen Book Club: Book Buffet - Grades 6-12: Mon-

day 5/20 from 6-7pm
Enjoy some treats as we talk about our favorite books and add to your mini book library!

Coming Soon: Summer Reading 2024!

Registration for our Summer Reading Program starts June 1st and officially kicks off on Monday June 24th! Miss Laura will be visiting classrooms at the Bright Beginnings Preschool and Memorial Elementary School to share information about the Summer Reading Program.

Desserts and Discussions - Wednesday May 22nd at 6:00pm

Presented by the Milford Family & Community Network, this fun night is a participant led discussion only for parents/caregivers to connect with others. To register, call (508) 277-4981. The Milford Family & Community Network is a Coordinated Family Community Engagement grant funded by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care and awarded to Milford Public Schools.

For updates throughout the month, Friend us on Facebook and sign up at www.wowbrary.org to discover the Library's newest books, movies and music. Our webpage is <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/bancroft-memorial-library>.

Living Healthy

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 cata-

ract 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 nonexistent, 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 environment. 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

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EYES

continued from page 12

can potentially compromise patient safety and satisfaction.

Lack of Approval by Professional Societies:

Cataract surgery in an office setting is not covered by 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.

For more details, see our ad on page 12.

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Town officials attempt to negotiate healthcare split with town employees, currently at impasse

Town currently pays 80%, proposes decrease to 73% for HMO, 65% for PPO and retirees

By THERESA KNAPP

For months, the Town of Hopedale has been trying to negotiate with its public employees to change the healthcare split rate the town pays from its current 80% to 73% for an HMO and 65% for a PPO and all retirement plans.

Town officials have proposed the decrease due to skyrocketing health insurance costs as well as

the town's continued financial issues.

In a memo to the Select Board on April 18, Town Administrator Mitch Ruscitti said the proposed split – where the town pays the majority of the healthcare premium, and the employee covers the rest – is “in line with the 38 other comparable communities identified in our region.”

Ruscitti said his office gath-

ered information from all towns in Worcester and Norfolk counties, with a population of 10,000 or less, and “found Hopedale to be the only community of the 39 that offers the 80/20 split.”

At an April meeting of the Select Board, some town employees in the audience said Hopedale should be proud that it pays 80%, not trying to decrease it to meet other towns' contributions.

In his memo, Ruscitti said the negotiations had reached an impasse after its latest offer was presented, and rejected, on April 10. “At that same meeting, without having shared the offer with employees, the PEC [Public Employees Committee] group voted an impasse in negotiations and, through the Massachusetts Teachers Association have filed arbitration.”

To see the full memo, visit @HopedaleTownAdministrator on Facebook (document posted April 23) or bit.ly/Hopedale-HealthcareApril2024.

Hopedale town election is May 14



Hopedale's annual town election will take place on Tuesday, May 14.

The following elected offices will appear on the ballot:

- Select Board (3 year term)
- Glenda A. Hazard *
- Nicole G. Small
- Board of Health (3 yrs)
- Jason MacDonald *
- Housing Authority (5 yrs)
- Karlene A. Alger *
- Library Trustee (3 yrs)
- Christine S. Seaver *
- Park Commission (3 yrs)
- Michael Costanza
- Planning Board (5 yrs)
- Christopher Chase *
- Road Commissioner (3 yrs)
- Justin Bruce Paulson
- School Committee (3 yrs)
- Kaitlin Federico *
- School Committee (3 yrs)
- Alysia K Butler *

- Town Moderator (3 yrs)
- Eugene N. Phillips *
- Water & Sewer Commissioner (3 yrs)
- Edward J. Burt *
- * Incumbent

The last day to register to vote in the Annual Town Election is Sat., May 4, 2024, at 5 p.m. You may register at the Town Clerk's Office or online at www.sec.state.ma.us/ovr/

The last day to request mail-in ballot (absentee or early) is Tues., May 7, 2024, at 5 p.m.

For more information, visit www.hopedale-ma.gov/home/news/may-14-2024-annual-town-election

IMAGE:
Source: www.hopedale-ma.gov

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Sports

Softball Team Wants DVC to Themselves

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Last spring the Hopedale softball team put together a great regular season going 13-6, while earning themselves a 13 seed in the State Tournament.

After taking out McCann Tech 9-2 the Blue Raiders fell in a heartbreaker, 5-4, to number four seed Tahanto. In addition to securing a position in the post-season, Hopedale also found themselves having an impressive Dual Valley Conference (DVC) record. By going 8-1, the Blue Raiders were named league co-champions with Nipmuc, but Hopedale is looking for more this season.

number one goal is always to win the DVC; sharing it with Nipmuc we were proud, but we want to take it all to ourselves this year.”

With the expectations of exceeding last year’s performance, Casey and his Blue Raiders will have to go about doing it without 6 seniors, 5 of whom were starters. According to the Coach, it will be sort of a reloading year, but the team has a lot of young talent and a good group of seniors and upperclassmen who can get them over the mountain.

Hopedale will be led on the field by senior co-captains Kelsey Evans and Lizzie Brytowski. Evans will hunker down at the hot corner in the field



“Getting to the Round of 16 was nice, but we want to go beyond that this year. We want to get a better seed this year in the State Tournament,” Hopedale Coach Jim Casey said. “Our

but will use her powerful bat in the middle of the Blue Raiders lineup. The senior has a lot of RBI potential.

While Evans will be swinging a dangerous bat at the plate,

Brytowski will be Casey’s number one pitcher. The senior hurler was the DVC’s pitcher of the year last spring and will primarily find herself in the circle once again for Hopedale this season. The senior pitcher can also make contact with the ball when at the plate, batting in the number three spot. Last year she led the team in just about every offensive category.

After striking out 100 batters last year, Brytowski took her total Ks to 375 for her career and is looking to top the 500 mark this spring, something that the Hopedale Coach is definite that she’ll accomplish this year.

Senior Tori Miranda will play second base and at the plate she is a slap hitter giving the Blue Raiders a dangerous leadoff hitter.

“Her on base percentage is fantastic; she’ll do whatever she needs to do to get on base,” Casey said. “Once there she is capable of stealing a base and leading this team.”

In the outfield Hopedale has two juniors in Maddie DiMaio, who will lock down one of the corners, while Mackenzie Reynolds will patrol centerfield and will also bat in the middle of the Blue Raiders lineup. Casey

noted that Reynolds is an outstanding centerfielder who can cover a lot of ground with her speed.

Another junior will be Layden MacDonald, who will be the mainstay behind the plate for Hopedale this spring. Last year as a sophomore MacDonald found herself in right field for Casey, but she is transitioning nicely to catcher. The junior is a contact hitter with an aggressive bat, but she can also lay down a bunt to get on base if needed.

In being a young team, Hopedale will also employ five sophomores with only one having any starting varsity experience. Shortstop Mia Casey will be the only sophomore who has started a game for the Blue Raiders on the varsity level. The other four all found themselves playing for the junior varsity team last spring. Olivia Barroso will play one of the corners in the outfield, while also seeing action as the team’s back-up pitcher. Delaney Vaillette has speed and is a talented hitter who will also see time in the outfield and is the Blue Raiders back-up catcher. Hannah Gallerani will also be in contention for an outfield position and

may see some time in the infield, while Phoebe Carroll will be at first base.

Freshman Layla Huntly will share time with Carroll at first and should find her way into the middle of the batting lineup batting fourth or fifth.

After losing five starters from last year’s squad, Casey knows that his team is on the younger side and will see seven new position starters this spring but is not worried about the girls going out and doing their jobs on the field.

“Potentially with Lizzie (in the circle) being one of the best pitchers in the area we’ll have a good chance,” the Coach said. “We have a lot of energetic talent this year; the junior bats and senior leadership will take us where we need to go and the varsity newcomers are helping to build the varsity program.”

Casey sees this year’s team as one of the best groups that he’s had; they’re all hard workers putting out positive vibes while being really good athletes to get the team moving in the right direction. If they can continue to put forth their best effort throughout the year, they should once again earn a spot in the State Tournament where they can make some noise.

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 7p.m. at the Medway High School Auditorium. Doors open at 6:30 p.m. Please visit 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 and Holliston resident,

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!



Memorial Day Parade and Ceremonies

Hopedale, MA

Monday May 27, 2024

Parade Step-off from Hopedale High School

Parking Lot at 8:00 am.

Ceremonies at:

- Village Cemetery in Hopedale
- Griffin-Dennett Apartments on Hopedale St.
- South St. Cemetery on Plain St.
(participants drive to this location)

*Event will be held rain or shine.

Real Estate Corner

Recent Home Sales

Date	Hopedale	Amount
04/12/2024	216 Laurelwood Dr.	\$385,000
04/12/2024	44 Laurelwood Dr.	\$418,000
04/11/2024	54 Freedom St.	\$615,000
04/10/2024	30 Hill St.	\$339,000
04/08/2024	166 Hopedale St.	\$495,000
04/08/2024	6 Laurelwood Dr.	\$376,000
03/29/2024	5 Charlesgate Rd.	\$480,000
03/25/2024	169 Dutcher St.	\$451,000
03/21/2024	85 Laurelwood Dr.	\$420,000

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages



The 3-bed, 2-bath, 1,680 square foot house at 54 Freedom Street in Hopedale recently sold for \$615,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com

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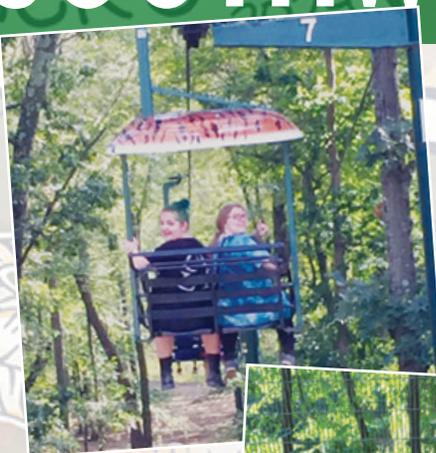
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Winners will be announced in our Summer Guide - Coming in June!



Scan to Enter

By entering this contest, you are providing consent for Southwick's Zoo and Our Town Publishing (the publishers of The Yankee Xpress/Blackstone Valley Xpress, Free Press and the newspapers of Local Town Pages) to use your photo(s) for print, digital and social media purposes, and allowing Southwick's Zoo and Our Town Publishing to contact you via email for this promotion or upcoming promotions. Only one winner per household. Cannot be an employee or family member of Southwick's Zoo or Our Town Publishing to win.

