

Town of Franklin Hangs First Pride Flag



Members of the Franklin community celebrate the first LGBTQ+ Pride Flag hanging at the Franklin Municipal Building.

On Saturday, June 1st, 2024, the Town of Franklin welcomed its first Pride flag, celebrating Pride Month and the inclusion of its citizens who identify as LGBTQ+. A small celebration was held on the occasion, including speakers and entertainment by Electric Youth and a booth with lots of Pride swag.

Aidan Doherty, District Director for Sen. Becca Rausch, noted the event allowed the

town of Franklin to “move forward and celebrate the (sic) whole and authentic selves and to enjoy and support the love offered in your community and its allies.” Doherty was followed by Rep. Jeff Roy, who also offered his enthusiastic support of the town’s LGBTQ+ community.

This flag represents the vibrant spectrum of human identity and experience. Each color tells a story. Each stripe speaks

to the resilience, courage, and love for millions of people who have fought and continue to fight for the right to live authentically and openly. Our presence here today is a testament to the progress we have made, yet it also is a reminder of the work that remains.” Roy went on to refer to some of the specific acts of civil disobedience,

FLAG

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Franklin’s Dean College Commuter Rail Stop was previously inaccessible to people using wheelchairs, but members of the Franklin community, including the Franklin Disability Commission, brought the issue to the attention of the MBTA. Keolis Commuter Services recently made improvements that enhance access for all.

Franklin Station Renovates to Enhance Disability Access

By MADDIE MIGA

This year, a major change has been made to the Dean College Commuter Rail Stop on the Franklin line. The rail station now

features a ramp that allows for easier access to the train platform.

RAIL STATION

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FLAG

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including Stonewall, that led to a greater sense of acceptance. He went on, "Raising this flag today is an act of defiance against intolerance. It is a celebration of the beautiful diversity that makes our community strong, but most importantly, it is a beacon of hope for those who still struggle to find acceptance and love."

Following Roy, Town Council member Ted Cormier-Ledger spoke.

"This has been a work of progress for a long time...not just the work that went into the last year to get it actually approved by at the Council so that it could fly here at town hall but really this has been going on for years.

When my husband and I decided to move to Franklin and bring our boys to raise them here, the conversation was very much, where can we go and be accepted,



Jen and Evelyn Rossing happily raise Franklin's first Pride flag.

where can we go and the boys can have a great life, where can we go and truly be part of a community? And Franklin has done that for us ... Have there been



some struggles along the way? Yes. Have they mimicked the struggles that people have on the national level? Yes. And we have to overcome those. We have to work as a community to address those and be better. When people come at me with hateful speech or bigotry or prejudice, I try to meet them where they're at. I try to say, can we get together for coffee? Can we talk about this? Because there's hate in your heart, but I'd like to see if maybe you

can see the world from where I am. And that's not always easy. This isn't easy. Because, at the end of the day, all people on the LGBTQ spectrum want is to be loved, to be accepted, to be welcomed, to live their lives. It's really that simple. We want to be able to marry. We want to be able to have our children. We want to be able to run for public office. The amount of people that told me that Franklin would never elect an openly gay leader to

Town Council, well, here I am, despite when I first ran and unfortunately got a death threat for daring to be running in this town, and that first race I didn't win ...and I was really happy to win that first time, certainly happy to win the second time. Thank you to Counselor Frongillo, Counselor Hamblen, Counselor Sheridan, the members of the School Committee, and really thank you to Chairman Tom Mercer. It takes bold leadership, Tom, to be able to say what can we do to make Franklin better, so thank you..." On the Pride Flag itself, Cormier said it shows, "Franklin is open. Frank is affirming. Franklin is loving, and that, no matter who you are, you have a place in our town. That's what these symbols do. Symbols are powerful ... we need that up as a symbol to show everyone that we don't accept hatred and intolerance here. We are a no-place-for-hate community..."

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For more information, visit bellforge.org/events.

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Family-Run Affordable Junk Removal Takes the Stress Out of Cleanups

By CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

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

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

As a family-owned and operated company, Schadler says Affordable Junk Removal has lower overhead costs and is more accessible than national competitors. "I answer my phone 24 hours a day," he says. "I was on vacation in Italy and Portugal, and I was still answering my phone on the beach. When you



call us, you get me — not an automated machine!"

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

Business spotlight

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company



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



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with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with

my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Franklin in particular, Schadler says they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the area. The Schadlers' oldest daughter lives in Franklin, and their kids attended softball camp and learned how to skate in town. Prior to starting Affordable Junk Removal, Christine worked for years in Franklin as well.

One of the best parts of his job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships with returning customers. "We are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the MetroWest area," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call (774) 287-1133 or visit affordablejunkremoval.com.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

RAIL STATION

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In doing so, those behind the update hope that this will allow the station to be more easily accessible for those with disabilities.

Keolis Commuter Services is responsible for operating the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority's (MBTA) fourteen commuter rail lines. These stations can be found in both the Greater Boston region and Rhode Island. When asked about Keolis's plan to improve disability access at these stops, the company stated that they "will be constructing accessible, freestanding mini-high platforms at several stations across our network. The design process for the platforms at Franklin Station, as well as Walpole, West Medford, and Wellesley Square Stations has been completed. We expect construction to be complete in early 2025, increasing network accessibility for our passengers." In doing so, Keolis hopes that this project will reflect their "commitment to ensuring access to the Commuter Rail for everyone."

One group that helped make this change possible was the

Franklin Commission on Persons with Disabilities. This organization works to advocate for Franklin residents with disabilities, as well as educate others on different disabilities and issues. Mary O'Neill, Chair of this Commission, says that one way she and her fellow members are continuing to support those with disabilities is by "touring the recreation areas in town, making sure that they're up to code and handicapped accessible."

The lack of disability access was first brought to the Commission's attention by a member of the Franklin community. O'Neill recounts how she and her fellow members "acted on this immediately" by sending letters to Philip Eng, the General Manager and CEO of the MBTA. After visiting the Dean College Commuter Rail Stop and getting to see its changes for the first time, O'Neill was extremely pleased with its turnout. She states that this station "is a Boston route. People enjoy going into the city, so it should be handicapped accessible. That's the bottom line."

To the left of the rail station, Keolis has installed a ramp that makes it easier to go to and from the platform. The ramp is lo-

cated to the left of the train station and is conveniently placed right next to the station's handicapped parking spots. O'Neill spoke about how she knew some Franklin residents who felt challenged by the lack of disability access prior to the train station's renovations. However, these updates will hopefully make the station more easily accessible for all passengers.

While the Commission was successful in making changes around disability access at the rail station, these members are continuing to advocate for accessibility rights. O'Neill believes that a recurring issue that those with disabilities face is centered around handicap parking. Non-disabled drivers parking in handicap spots has been a problem for years. Though trying to find a parking spot can be challenging at times, O'Neill advises that "if you don't walk a mile in someone else's shoes, you don't know what other people go through." She believes that this issue is due to a "lack of education," and that "it's wise to teach children when they're young" what handicapped signs represent and their significance.

Advocating for better disability access at the Dean College Commuter Rail Stop is just one way that the Commission on Persons with Disabilities has been helping their community. O'Neill and her fellow members have also made the town of Franklin more inclusive and accommodating through their annual Disability Expos. O'Neill shared how these events have helped educate "anybody who wants information on different disabilities," such as mobility aids, mental health advocates, and autism-related organizations.

In 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was passed. The law prohibits any sort of discrimination against those who are disabled, including transportation and public accommodations. O'Neill has been a citizen of the Franklin community since 1986 and is "happy and proud" of the improvements that have been made around disability access since first moving here. This new change at the Dean College Commuter Rail Stop is just one way that the Franklin community is continuing to improve and grow.

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Waves of Change

SMILE MASS Works to Make Beach and Recreation Experiences Accessible for All

By JENNIFER RUSSO

As we go about our daily lives, many things become routine. We get up, get in our cars and drive to work. We drop the kids off at school and sports activities or take them to playgrounds to enjoy some swing time on a sunny day. And when summer arrives, we load our things up and drive to the beach or go on a little family time away down on Cape Cod, Maine, or Rhode Island.

As a native New Englander, the beach has always been a part of my summer. We are fortunate to live in a coastal state, where we have tons of options for cooling off in the ocean. For some though, getting down to the beach isn't as simple as that. In

fact, many of these things aren't very easy at all.

For families who have a member who is in a wheelchair, beaches are often inaccessible. The wheels don't go through the sand, the bathrooms are too small to fit and/or change in, and wheelchair users can't get into the water without someone carrying them through the beach and into the ocean. Rental properties are usually not equipped for all the needs of the family, so it can be challenging to find something that is truly adaptive.

Lotte Diomedes, President and Co-Founder of SMILE Mass, was experiencing this firsthand. Her son has been in a wheelchair his entire life and requires assistance from others for that and



A family has a wonderful beach day thanks to one of the floating wheelchairs provided by SMILE Mass

other challenges he faces daily. She and her family found it almost impossible to enjoy something as seemingly effortless as a day on the beach.

"The world is simply not set up for kids like my son," says Lotte. "Now, I could sit there and complain and cry about it, or I could do something to change that. I chose to act. So, I started with creating a fundraiser for a completely universal playground in my hometown of Sudbury and everything blossomed from there. (That effort is underway at Stallbrook Elementary in Bellingham, too, see www.ourplayability.com)

"In 2009, Susan Brown and I created SMILE Mass with the mission of enabling families who are raising loved ones with different abilities to be active, enjoy recreation and relaxation time, and create happy memories. We strive for true inclusion."

When the pandemic turned the world on its head in 2020, they launched Club SMILE Mass, which offered programs online like storytelling and music therapy and then small group or individual sessions for swimming and gym time, working with contracted coaches. That program grew exponentially and now serves almost eighty clients.

In addition to wellness programs like this, SMILE also provides floating wheelchairs to local beaches so children and adults with disabilities can experience the beach like anyone else would. These specially designed chairs can move through sand and float

in the water without tipping, allowing those who cannot walk to get down to the ocean and cool off. It can also lay down flat to allow for easy changing of clothing. To date, SMILE has donated chairs to over 100 beaches across New England.

Towns can request floating wheelchairs, but there are some criteria that need to be met. There needs to be available locked storage, handicapped parking, running water to rinse the chairs, and lifeguards or staff available to immediately provide a chair to a family asking to use it.

"Imagine having a family of 4 kids and one is in a wheelchair," says Lotte. "You don't want a situation where they get there and there isn't a floating chair readily available – it could derail the whole day to have to wait for one to arrive."

"Additionally, the chairs need to be maintained. Towns need to create an annual budget line item (minimum of \$75) to help support the maintenance schedule and upkeep," Lotte shares.

For a completely inclusive beach vacation experience, Lotte also purchased and renovated a condominium unit in Truro, MA that is available to be rented. The accessible beachfront home can sleep six people and has a fully equipped kitchen, extra space in the floorplan, widened doorways, roll-in shower, adjustable bed, ramp access and a deck. A floating wheelchair is provided as well.



Lotte Diomedes and her son Nicholas participate on the SMILE Mass team at the Falmouth Road Race.

Lotte plans to continue creating more and more meaningful ways to normalize accessibility. Currently, they are looking at a Framingham property that would enable them to have an in-house space that people can "go from 0 to 99" in – to use for their wellness and educational programs, large get-together's, accessible trails to walk and wheel on, and to be a true community hub.

"I won't be here forever. My goal is to do as much as I can, for as long as I can, in order to create a better and more inclusive world, and hopefully inspire others to stand up and fight for this community, because right now people do not get all the services they need," Lotte shares.

"Inclusion is so much more than just doing the right thing. Access equals independence for people with physical challenges. Just because someone needs support doesn't mean they should just accept less or even the bare minimum. This is about quality of life – EVERY life. I believe that everything is possible if you change your mindset and make it happen."

A list of accessible beaches in Massachusetts can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/accessible-beaches-and-pools>, however please note that just because a beach is listed as "accessible" does NOT mean it has a beach wheelchair. It may just have a mat to wheel out to the water line or a sand chair. For a list of beaches where SMILE Mass has provided chairs, information about the accessible beach house, adaptive equipment rental, and to see the other inclusive services they provide, visit their website at www.smilemass.org.




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Senior Center a Resource to Area Residents with Disabilities

July, Disability Pride Month, Marks 44th Anniversary of ADA

BY ANGIE FITTON

Unbeknownst to many, July is Disability Pride Month. July 26th marks the anniversary of the creation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990.

Also unbeknownst to most, there are Disability Supports offered at the Franklin Senior Center. This level of support is for everyone; it is not something that is determined by age.

For those individuals with mild to moderate dementia or Alzheimer's disease, there is a Supportive Day Program offered. There is also a monthly Memory Cafe held on the third Wednesday of each month. Caretakers, not just individuals with dementia, are invited to these cafes and refreshments are served. Many connections are made in the Memory Cafe, and it is a great place for people to realize they are not alone in their struggles with this disability.

"At Home Hearing Healthcare" partners with the senior center for monthly hearing clinics. During such clinics, the participants can have their hearing checked and get their hearing aids cleaned and inspected to be sure they are in proper working condition.

Attorney Michael Doherty of Doherty, Dugan, Cannon, Raymond & Weil, P.C. volunteers his time with folks in need of legal advice. At the senior center, he provides a half hour free of charge, where he can answer simple questions or point you in the right direction depending upon the issue at hand. "It's a good starting space, but nothing will ever be signed during this half hour," explains Director Sarah Amaral.

The Social Services Coordinator for the town, Raeleen Gallivan, is based in the senior center. If you need help with anything assistance-related,

from applying for food stamps to finding out how to navigate the housing crisis, contact or visit the senior center for a consult with Raeleen.

A support group for individuals with vision problems is also in place at the senior center on the second Tuesday of every month. The first Thursday of every month is a low-vision one on one support group. On the last two Tuesdays of each month there is also an audio book club.

Fitness is key to everyone's health, and the senior center is more accessible for disabled individuals. "We keep people with disabilities in mind at all times," states Amaral. "Anyone who needs certain accommodations can go to the senior center to ask for help." The facility is also known to go above and beyond when it comes to following ADA requirements.

Another great service offered by the senior center is the medical closet. It is open to the entire community and consists of devices to help those with walking assistance needed, such as canes, wheelchairs and walkers. They

carry items for incontinence, commodes and shower chairs, along with grabber tools for getting things that are out of your reach. Everything in this closet is offered free of charge.

The senior center also offers senior-specific mental health care. "We know that mental health is just as important as physical health," emphasizes Amaral. The mental health group helps with depression, anxiety, mindfulness and sometimes offers massages and outside-of-the-box therapy like drum circles. Along the lines of mental health, the senior center also offers a bereavement group, where individuals have made life-long connections with others who can empathize.

By the end of July, the senior center will have obtained a 14-passenger handicapped accessible van that will be able to be used in conjunction with GATRA, a bussing system available to those with disabilities or over the age of 60. GATRA offers complimentary rides to and from the senior center.

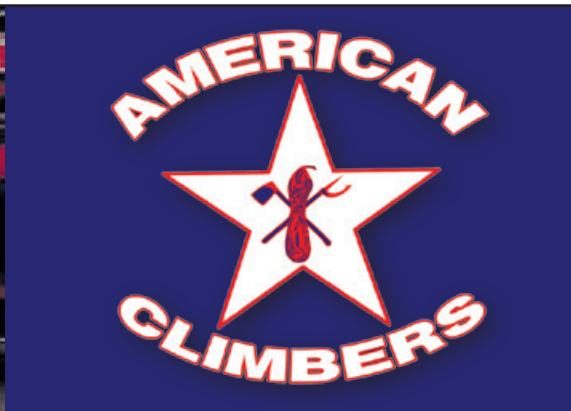
If you'd like to find out more information on what the senior center offers for persons with disabilities, please contact them at (508) 520-4945 or visit them at 10 Daniel McCahill Street in Franklin. You can also visit the website at www.franklinma.gov.

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At press time, the following was the schedule:

Wednesday, July 3

- 6-10 p.m.: Rides and food booths open
- 6-7 p.m.: Smoke n Whiskey
- 7:30-10 p.m.: Backyard Swagger

Thursday, July 4

- 12-10 p.m.: Rides & food booths open, Megapass 12-10, Ride wristbands 12-5
- 12-1 p.m.: Matt Zajac
- 1:15-2:30 p.m.: Jamie Barrett
- 3-4 p.m.: Ken Freeman & The Sunset Brothers
- 4:30-6pm: Jesse Liam Band
- 7-10 p.m.: Neon Lighthouse

Friday, July 5

- 2-10 p.m.: Rides and food booths open, Megapass 2-10, Ride wristbands 2-6
- 2-3 p.m.: Padula Trio Plus One
- 2:30-3:30 p.m.: Two Guys Who Like Sharks
- 4:30-6 p.m.: Attleboro School of Rock
- 7-10 p.m.: Neon Wave

Saturday, July 6

- 12-10 p.m.: Rides and food booths open, Megapass 12-10 p.m., Ride wristbands 12-5
- 4th Annual Mike Crandall Franklin Blues Festival:
 - 12-1:15 p.m.: Junior Krauss & The Shakes
 - 1:45-3 p.m.: Neal & The Vipers
 - 3:30-4:45 p.m.: Professor Harp
 - 5:15-6:30 p.m.: Mike Crandall Tribute Band
 - 7-8:15 p.m.: Bruce Katz
 - 8:45-10 p.m.: Delta Generators
 - 10 p.m.: FIREWORKS / FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL

Sunday, July 7

- 12-6 p.m.: Rides and food booths open, Ride wristbands 12-5
- 12-1:30 p.m.: Zajac Brothers Band
- 2-3:30 p.m.: Brandt Taylor Band
- 4-6 p.m.: Gary Hoey

In addition to the entertainment, local nonprofit groups will be operating food booths for the celebration.

From its start, this event is 100% funded by donations, and sponsors and volunteers are still sought for the festival, which drew 10,000 in 2023. For updated information, visit the event website at www.franklin4th.com.



THE BLACK BOX Sings... Concert Series Returns Under the Stars This Summer

THE BLACK BOX, the region's premier music, theater, and event venue, is thrilled to bring back THE BLACK BOX Sings... Concert Series outside under the stars this summer. Modeled after the popular cabaret series "54 Sings" at 54 Below in NYC, THE BLACK BOX continues THE BLACK BOX Sings... Series this June and August. The series celebrates the music of musicals, composers, and artists sung by Franklin Performing Arts Company favorites. Table seating and general seating are available. In case of inclement weather, the event will be moved inside.

On August 3rd at 7 p.m., THE BLACK BOX Sings... FROZEN. TBB will present a concert celebrating the music of the highest-grossing animated film of all time: Disney's Frozen. The concert will feature a narrated telling of Elsa and Anna's story with live performances of the film's songs as well as new music written for the Broadway production. Enjoy the memorable songs of

Kristen and Robert Lopez in concert outside at THE BLACK BOX!

THE BLACK BOX Sings... TAYLOR SWIFT on August 11th at 7 p.m. A cast of Franklin Performing Arts Company favorites will pay tribute to the most-streamed artist on Spotify: Grammy Award-winner Taylor Swift.

Closing out the 2024 series will be the return of THE BLACK BOX Sings... WICKED on August 17th at 8 p.m. Pianist Austin Davy from the Wicked tour accompanies an FPAC all-star cast featuring Katie Gray, Ali Funkhouser, Nick Paone, Hallie Wetzell, and Tim Ayres-Kerr. Join THE BLACK BOX for a celebration of the music of WICKED and the story of the Witches of Oz.

Tickets and more information are available at THEBLACKBOXonline.com or by calling the box office at (508) 528-3370. THE BLACK BOX is located at 15 W. Central Street in downtown Franklin, MA.



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Summer, Summer, Summertime - Time To Sit Back and... Experience Spend



Glenn Brown, CFP

come from shared experiences and personal adventures.

Why experience spending?

Beyond the concept of having greater value for experiences versus things, studies find people misjudge what purchases will make them happy, how happy they will feel, and how long that happiness lasts.

Spending money on experiences creates more and longer-lasting happiness than spending on material goods, which people are more prone to comparisons and buyer's remorse. Also, objects tend to deteriorate with time, while experiences can create lasting memories and become part of your identity.

The challenges of getting advice to spend money.

The financial industry, in particular investment management and financial planning, places too little emphasis on helping clients spend money for today's experiences.

There are various reasons as to why. Advisors paid solely by % of Assets Under Management don't want assets taken out, as it results in them earning less. For financial planners, it's easier (and safer) to model goals 15-20 years out, whereas spending now makes analysis harder to balance future outcomes. Furthermore, clients see the impact of recommendations immediately and can judge accordingly.

Recall your age 21 summer? Mine had DJ Jazzy Jeff and Fresh Prince's "Summertime" as a soundtrack. Days spent gathering with friends at backyard BBQ's, a pool or restaurant patios in Portsmouth, then 6 nights a week "working" as a DJ in various clubs on Hampton Beach.

When we reminisce about our past, we recall experiences. Examine further, you'll likely realize the small windows of opportunity to enjoy them. For example, two years later I'd be in Florida, working for a minor league baseball team and able to see just one of those friends.

Life is constantly evolving, and moments once passed cannot be relived. Embracing experience spending encourages individuals to seize opportunities to enjoy life while they can. It shifts focus from material wealth to emotional wealth — the happiness, satisfaction, and memories that

Timing of experiences is critical.

Consider the family vacation to Disney, it is a different shared experience for all going when kids are 6 & 8 versus late teens.

Or the HS senior and family trip you've been meaning to do. What's their availability (and desire) once in college to go on a family trip with mom and dad? That window's closing.

It's not limited to just travel.

Saving up for a big purchase is admirable. But in terms of your happiness, is this the best way to allocate finite resources? For many, happiness is more closely aligned to the frequency and variations as opposed to intensity.

Ask yourself if you'd be happier with a few big-ticket items, such as a luxury car, or rather indulge frequently in small purchases, such as cooking clubs, memberships, kid's activities, and spa days?

Financial considerations.

While experience spending prioritizes moments over materialism, it also requires mindful financial planning of your resources. Budgeting involves al-

locating funds for activities that align with personal values and goals. It encourages responsible spending by focusing on the long-term benefits of enriching experiences while balancing your financial stability and security.

For instance, imagine parents trying to make up for lost time, now wanting to take the family on a luxury vacation. Sure, they could choose to do that. But would it have been better to have done prudent financial planning all those years of sacrifice by assessing current financial health, setting a realistic budget, and exploring cost-effective alternatives that still deliver a memorable experience? Furthermore, this approach removes the build-up of unrealistic expectations and places the focus on making memories together.

I hope you enjoy your "summer, summer, summertime" and may you have "time to sit back and unwind" together.

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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Everyone Deserves Access to All Things Fresh Air and Nature!

By LYN MACLEAN

Welcome summertime, a perfect time to embrace all things outdoors! As we celebrate the anniversary of the American Disabilities Act, below is an at-a-glance list of local outdoor recreational spaces highlighting some of the accessibility features offered. Local towns have worked hard to incorporate various accessible features to ensure everyone of all abilities can enjoy the local town parks and trails. In addition, we share what steps some towns are taking to ensure continued ADA enhancements are implemented

moving forward.

Ryan Jette the Director of Recreation for the Town of Franklin, cited that in 2023 a self-evaluation plan was added to their Open Space & Recreation plan that is hoped to be released this summer. During this self-evaluation, the group used the AAB (Architectural Access Board) guidelines to evaluate compliance with their spaces. This board is a reputable benchmark that establishes public facility regulations to ensure the safety and accessibility of all persons with disabilities.

In 2024, Franklin established an Accessibility working group

that meets on the 1st Thursday of every month. The group's mission is to complete a comprehensive Accessibility study. The scope of work will meticulously evaluate every park and recreational space in Franklin to determine what ADA enhancements are needed.

At a minimum, the study will solidify the groundwork to prioritize ongoing ADA enhancement objectives while evaluating funding opportunities in this challenging economic climate.

Some examples of possible future enhancements: (But not limited to)

- Adding van accessibility parking spots
- Ground surface enhancements
- Restroom grab bars, motion-sensor soap, paper towel dispensers, and motion faucets
- Paved picnic table access
- Enhanced signage

The chart below has minimal hiking trails mentioned. The hiking trails within Franklin present numerous challenges in providing all-abilities access. Wetlands, steep slopes, and rugged terrain

all pose extreme limitations. The Mass Audubon's Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, which neighbors Franklin, has done a remarkable job providing numerous all-abilities features in a trail environment. The Sanctuary has incorporated mobility, auditory, and visual enhancements to offer an exceptional adaptable outdoor nature experience.

Keep the list below in mind this summer and let's get outside! Take advantage of what is offered and understand that all towns are working tirelessly to make all outside spaces further improved and adaptable for all residents.

FRANKLIN, MA		
PARK	ADDRESS	ADA ACCESSIBLE FEATURES
Beaver Pond Park	450 Beaver Street	• Turf shock pad, wheelchair accessible
Dacy's Community Field	700 Lincoln Street	• Adaptive swings, paved walkway to ramp access
DelCarte	459 Pleasant Street	• Accessible picnic tables, adaptive swings, ground surface is wood fiber so an all-field wheelchair may be needed
Fletchers Field	51 Peck Street	• Adaptive swings, rubber ground surface
King Street Memorial Park	740 King Street	• Adaptive swings, poured in place rubber ground surface
Nason Street Tot Lot Park	22 Nason Street	• Adaptive swings, poured in place rubber ground surface
Other mentions: Community Garden Sculpture Park	736 King Street Panther Way	• 1 Lower accessible garden bed is available by reservation • Handicap parking space, resting benches, paved ground surface, sculptures displayed at various viewing heights
HIKING or BIKE TRAILS		
SNETT -Southern New England Trunkline Trail	234 Grove Street	• Hard-packed gravel surface can be used with all-terrain wheelchairs
BELLINGHAM, MA		
PARK	ADDRESS	ADA ACCESSIBLE FEATURES
Silver Lake	95 Cross Street	• Mobi sand mat providing wheelchair access directly to the lake • Splash pad • Adaptive swings at the playground • Paved ground surface around the playground providing direct wheelchair access, the playground itself is wood chips • Handicap parking
NORFOLK, MA		
PARK	ADDRESS	ADA ACCESSIBLE FEATURES
Mass Audubon's Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary	108 North Street	• 1/3mile All-person sensory Trail: includes post & rope trail for visually impaired • Interpretive trail guides in large print or Braille • Wide wheelchair-accessible trail • Bench resting points • Freedom Chairs (All-terrain wheelchair) • Seat Canes • Hands-free binoculars • Large Print Field Guides or audio guides • Rollator (Walker) • Audio Tours, audio player available on loan • ADA Restrooms • Sensory Friendly Days when Sanctuary is closed to the public • Crushed stone mix ground cover, not paved Note: Contact the Nature Center to: • Make reservations for any equipment • Identify ground conditions on the day of your visit. Water, mud, and other factors could impact mobility effectiveness during certain climate conditions

Concerts on the Common Continues this Summer

By MADDIE MIGA

One of Franklin's most popular summer events is making an appearance again this month. Concerts on the Common has become an annual tradition that includes live music, food trucks, and movie nights.

The concerts, which will take place at the Franklin Town Common, are scheduled to begin in June and will continue up until August. Below are the concert dates coming up for this year, as well as what bands and movies will be featured:

July 12

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Mike Tarara
 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Reminiscent
 8:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m., Movie: Back to the Future

July 19

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Marc Berger
 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Strumdawgs

July 26

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., It's a J Thing
 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Frank Padula Band

August 2

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., David Rak
 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Electric Youth
 8:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m., Movie: Wonka

August 9

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., KENDO
 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Paradise Flyer

August 16

3:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m., Matt Zajak
 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m., Pub Kings
 8:30 p.m. - 10:30 p.m., Movie: Super Mario Bros.

Franklin's Recreation Director, Ryan Jette, is one of the many people who help make Concerts on the Common possible. When asked about what goes into planning this yearly event, Jette said that they "start in January by selecting a broad range of music that will entertain the residents of Franklin. We collect a list of bands and listen to their music and gather feedback from other towns/agencies that have hosted those bands."

In order to decide what music is played at the concerts, Jette stated that they "review all the bands that apply to play in the summer and internally between the Program Coordinator, Sean Fitzpatrick, Deputy Director, Kim Carney, and myself."

In addition to organizing what music is played, Jette and his team "also select movies which are shown immediately after the concerts." The films for this summer include Back to the Future on July 12, Wonka on August 2, and Super Mario Bros. on August 16.

During Concerts on the Common, the Recreation Department has also scheduled Food Trucks on the Common. Different food trucks will be featured each night, allowing guests to be able to enjoy a variety of foods. When asked how the concerts, movie nights, and food trucks are all funded, Jette mentioned that "the Recreation Department funds the cost of the bands, movie license fees and inflatable movie screen through our fiscal year operational budget."

While Concerts on the Common is one of the town's biggest summer events, Franklin also has concerts scheduled throughout the fall. Listed below are the dates for some future concerts that will take place at the Friday Franklin Farmers Market on the Town Common:



August 23

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Heather Deary

August 30

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Beni Brosch

September 6

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Alex Cohen



Shown are "It's a J Thing" and "The Reminiscent" performing on Franklin Town Common. Both bands will return for this year's Wednesday night Concerts on the Common, presented by Franklin Recreation. Photos used courtesy of Franklin Recreation Department.

September 13

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., David Penza

September 20

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Sioo

September 27

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Heath Nisbett

October 4

3:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m., Dom DeBaggis

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First Franklin Porchfest Draws Community

The weather was glorious and the townsfolk relaxed for Franklin's first Porchfest, which drew over 40 bands to front porches all over town. Shown, Cabana Knights stir a rhythm on Marvin Street, the Metrowest Symphony Ensemble perform some tunes at Franklin Historical Museum, and Critical Mass creates some harmony on Main Street.



School of Traveling Fish Changes Colors for 2024



Some of the student artists from Parmenter Elementary pose with their silliest faces in front of their fish.



June welcomed a new year's edition of the School of Traveling Fish at the Franklin Sculpture Park on Panther Way, this

year painted by young artists at Parmenter Elementary School. Local artist Amy Adams, who coordinated the effort with art teacher Sarah Pelletier at the school, thanked the students, teachers and towns, noting she was pleased to enlist carpentry teacher Jeremy Barstow's class at Tri-County Regional Technical Vocational High School to create the new fish this year.

Jamal Adams emceed the event.

Noel DiBona Announces Candidacy for Norfolk County Register of Deeds

Current Quincy Councilor At-Large Noel DiBona officially announces his candidacy to run for Norfolk County Register of Deeds. DiBona has been a Quincy Councilor At-

Large since 2016 and served as Council President in 2022 and 2023. DiBona was first elected to the Quincy School Committee in 2013.

Hopkinton Center for the Arts Announces Summer Concerts 2024

Friday and Saturday nights through July, from 6:30-8 p.m., HCA brings incredible bands to get you on your feet and dancing, and our outdoor amphitheater at 98 Hayden Rowe St., Hopkinton, provides the perfect backdrop!

- July 5th: Scott Brown & the Diplomats
- July 6th: One Dime Band
- July 12th: The Chris Fitz Band
- July 13th: Walk That Blues
- July 19th: Willie J. Laws
- July 20th: Marc Berger
- July 26: Fat City Band (Ashland Town Day)
- July 27: Racky Thomas Band (Dell Employee Day)

To make the arts more accessible to all, these concerts are on a pay-what-you-can basis. Please reserve your tickets at www.hopartscenter.org.



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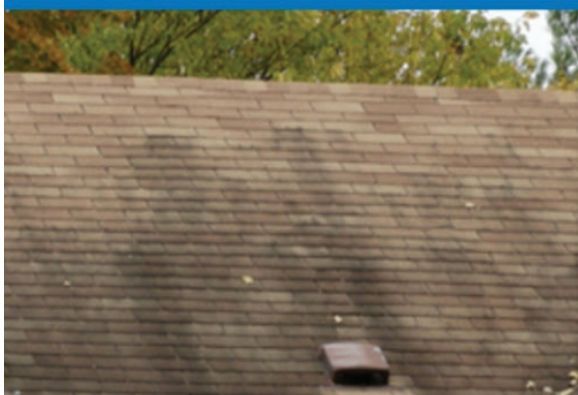





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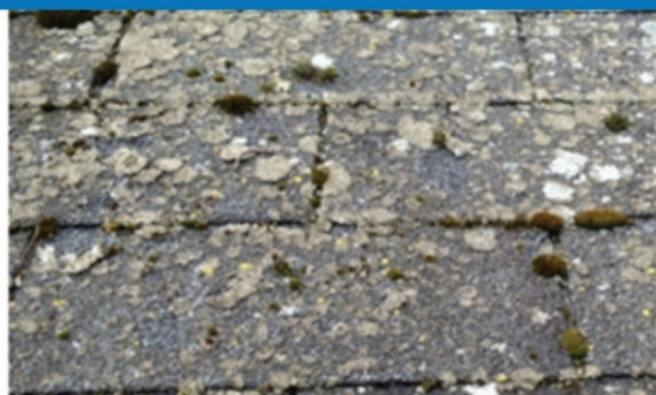
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Sun Shines on Franklin Downtown Partnership's 2024 Strawberry Stroll

Good weather prevailed (finally!) for the Franklin Downtown Partnership's annual Strawberry Stroll. Many local groups and vendors participated, and many Franklin residents and neighbors enjoyed strawberry shortcake, served up outside Dean Bank. Here are some photos from the event.



The Franklin Lions booth promoted the charitable group's fifth annual 4th of July fundraiser, Light Up Franklin, in which Franklin residents purchase and display (in person and on Facebook) paper lanterns supplied by Lions members. Those who want to participate must hurry, contact Lion Haley Kane at haley6902@gmail.com to purchase your set of three lanterns for \$15. Proceeds go to Lions charities.



Members of the crowd enjoyed playing with the robots at the Sense & Sound Robotics booth. Find out about them at <https://sites.google.com/view/senseandsoundrobotics>.



Organized lovable chaos! These Franklin pups and their owners quickly moved to pose for the pic. Want to bring your dog to the dog park? Learn more at https://www.franklinma.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif10036/f/uploads/dog_park.pdf or find the Facebook page!



The Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail Committee members shown here were happy to have had a successful 5K this year. Visit their website at www.franklinbellinghamrailtrail.org.

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Dick Hynes, Judy Hynes, and John Milot represented Franklin's American Legion.

STRAWBERRY STROLL

continued on next page



Meg Hagen and Erin Gallagher are excited for their anticipated November 1st opening of the new permanent home for the Franklin Children's museum. Find out more at www.franklinchildrensmuseum.org.



The Franklin Art Association displayed some of their work. They'll be looking for a new place to display their work now that Escape Into Fiction has closed its doors, and its gallery. On a break for summer, meetings will resume at the Senior Center starting Wednesday, September 6th, at 6:30 p.m.



We'd guess only a few locals might not know that Victor Pisini, shown in his shoe store, is also a skilled artist. He'll be showing his work at the Old Sculpin Gallery, in Edgartown, Martha's Vineyard from July 6-12th.



Did you know the Friends of Franklin Elders helps fund programs, services and equipment at the Senior Center that's not paid for by government? Learn more at their next meeting, Friday, September 27th, at 9:30 a.m. at the Franklin Senior Center.



Franklin Republicans talked with strollers. Find out more at <https://www.franklinmarepublicans.com>.



Franklin Democrats chatted with passersby. Find their website at <https://franklindemocrats.org>.





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BalletFranklin Announces New Director

BalletFranklin, the ballet conservatory at the Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA), is thrilled to announce Russell Clarke as their new Director. Clarke was born and raised in Glasgow, Scotland. He received his ballet training at the Royal Ballet School in London. During his time at the Royal Ballet School he performed with the Royal Ballet Company in productions that included *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Swan Lake*. Clarke joined Ballet Arizona in 2007 and performed principal roles in *Don Quixote*, Christopher Wheeldon's *Polyphonia*, Twyla Tharp's *The Golden Section*, George Balanchine's *Movements for Piano and Orchestra*, *La Valse*, *La Sonnambula*, *The Four Temperaments*, and Ib Andersen's *Play, 1052, A Midsummer Night's*

Dream, Mosaik, Symphonie Classique, and *The Nutcracker*. Clarke received critical acclaim for the role of the Poet in George Balanchine's *La Sonnambula* and was praised by the New York Times for the role of Phlegmatic in Balanchine's *The Four Temperaments*. Clarke originated a principal role in Andersen's *Diversions*, which was seen on the Kennedy Center Stage in June 2010. In Clarke's final season with Ballet Arizona he originated the principal role in Ib Andersen's world premiere of *Cinderella*, which received critical acclaim. After retiring from Ballet Arizona, Clarke went on to direct the Community Dance Academy at Walnut Hill School for the Arts for four years. He is currently an Associate Professor at The Boston Conservatory at



Berklee and Professor of Dance at Dean College. Clarke began teaching at FSPA in 2023.

Current BalletFranklin Director Cheryl Madeux will assume

the role of Artistic Advisor for the ballet conservatory program. Madeux received her training at the Nutmeg Conservatory for the Arts. She has enjoyed a long professional career, dancing with such venerable companies as the Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, and principal dancer with the Hartford Ballet under the direction of Kirk Peterson. Madeux performed extensively throughout the United States and Europe and has been coached by such ballet luminaries as Igor Youskevitch and Eleanor D'Antuono.

BalletFranklin is proud to incorporate American Ballet Theatre's National Training Curriculum, a high-quality level-based program with age-appropriate technique backed

by a comprehensive approach to child development and dancer health. Introduced in 2010 by Cheryl Madeux, who is currently an ABT examiner, the ballet conservatory at FSPA promotes a positive atmosphere of learning while challenging and preparing each student for their goals in the arts.

For more information, prospective students and families are encouraged to visit balletfranklin.com, call (508) 528-8668, or stop by the studios at FSPA. BalletFranklin is located at the Franklin School for the Performing Arts at 38 Main Street, Franklin MA. Follow BalletFranklin on Instagram (@balletfranklin) and Facebook.

Franklin Children's Museum Finds a Home

On May 22nd, the Children's Museum of Franklin announced they signed a lease for 157 Cottage Street in Franklin.

In this space, they plan interactive exhibits for kids 0-10, pro-

gramming for elementary and middle school students, leadership and volunteer opportunities for high school students and internships for college students. Museum founders expect the

space to draw visitors from up to an hour away, something they've already seen in their Mobile Museum events.

While working on construction and exhibit design are

planned, Franklin Children's Museum founders will also apply for grants and fundraise, and they hope individuals and sponsors will help them with a lofty goal of \$450,000 this fall.

For more information, or to donate, visit www.childrensmuseumfranklin.org



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Franklin School Community Regroups after Failed Override

By J.D. O'GARA

On June 11th, 45.3% of Franklin voters turned out to vote on a proposed \$6.8 million Proposition 2 1/2 tax override for the town. Franklin Schools, in particular, music, theatre and some language programs, faced drastic cuts in the face of the budget shortfall. Voters were divided on the measure, which failed at the polls, which failed 5,778 to 5,542, by 236 votes.

At a June 18th Franklin School Committee meeting, cuts were outlined, and much discussion was held. You can view this on Franklin TV's YouTube Channel at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mcxG4nP96wQ>

As of June 20th, Franklin Public Schools had prepared a letter to the school community that noted that the district was working with an appropriation of \$75,324,829, approved May 22nd. The letter reads, in part,

“While this appropriation represents a 4.5% increase over FY24, the largest increase the Franklin Public Schools have ever received, it still represents less than the School Committee’s approved budget intended to stabilize the district. As a result of the failed override vote, there is not enough funding to support the approved budget for current services and staffing in the next year (FY25). We must implement program and service cuts as a result of the failed Proposition 2 1/2 override...”

The letter went on to outline cuts that, according to Dave Callaghan, of the Franklin School Committee, would be voted on officially September 27th, following *Local Town Pages* deadline. Here are some of the cuts to be voted on prior to finalization, as discussed in the letter:

“With a less-than-level service budget, 37 positions were eliminated, including teachers and

educational support personnel (-5.1%), school administration (-6.4%), and other district non-union personnel and administrator (-22%), necessitating the district to prioritize educational needs. Over the past months, we have identified the reductions and shared the associated impacts with our school community.

- Educators = 33/644 = 5.1%
- School Leaders = 2/22 = 9.1%
- District non-union personnel and administrator = 3/9 = 22%”

Cuts, once officially voted, will reduce, in elementary, the number of schoolteachers, curriculum specialists for math and literacy, library support, and school adjustment counselors. At middle school level, they would eliminate middle school chorus and orchestra, reduce Spanish teachers, reading and library support, and close school libraries on certain days of the week. In high school, the number of teachers would be reduced, with some classes filling up beyond recommended guidelines, and electives would be reduced, and extracurricular activities reduced or eliminated. At press time, these weren't finalized, but areas of focus include computer science, languages, creative writing, music programs and junior and sophomore AP electives. School administrators and teacher professional development would also be reduced, as would students support services, staff transfers would be necessary, and all fees for students would be increased by 25%. Again, this had yet to be voted on at press time. To read the full letter, visit:

https://www.franklinps.net/sites/g/files/vyhlf4431/f/uploads/budget_update_to_sc_6_18_24.pdf



Shown, student Emma Levy speaks to about 50 members of the Franklin community who turned out on a hot June 20th for a “Sit-In for Solidarity” to, as organizers put it “show love and support for Franklin students and teachers as they navigate this difficult time.” Franklin Public Schools had hoped the community would pass a \$6.8 million budget override to sustain its programming, but the override failed by 236 votes, necessitating deep cuts.

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

The b.LUXE Mature Makeup Makeover

BY GINA WOELFEL

EMBRACE YOUR AGE WITH CONFIDENCE

b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio believes that age is just a number and women at every stage in life deserve to feel beautiful and confident in their makeup. Mature skin is unique, and what worked in our 30s may differ from what's best for us in our 40s and 50s. And as we reach our 60s and 70s, our makeup needs will change again. That's why we're thrilled to introduce our exclusive **Mature Makeup Makeover Service**, a tailored offering designed to address the specific needs of mature women.

Renowned Makeup Artist Madison Elliott is the face of the new Mature Makeup Makeover. With extensive experience in the industry, Madison has worked with numerous celebrities, fashion icons, and top brands. Her specialty is enhancing natural

beauty and empowering women to embrace their unique features with grace and confidence.

Madison Elliott - "I started doing makeup because I loved seeing people's reactions when they saw themselves for the first time in the mirror. I love that every client sitting in my chair feels like my friend when we're finished. Not everyone knows mature makeup, and learning the proper techniques can be overwhelming. I love teaching makeup! It makes me so happy when my clients tell me they love the eyeliner trick I taught them or that the foundation we chose feels so natural. When they tell me they love how they look, it's the most wonderful reminder of why I chose to be a makeup artist."

There's been a noticeable shift in recent years in social media, television, and advertising to better showcase and represent older women. New makeup companies are targeting the 40-plus age



group, which shows progress in providing products for those of us with a few more smile lines. However, there is still much work to be done in makeup and department stores nationwide. While these products are a welcomed addition to our mature makeup selection, it would benefit cosmetic companies to educate their salespeople on appropriately recommending and applying their products to older skin.

We designed our Mature Makeup Makeover to help you perfect the techniques that address age-related makeup concerns and focus on the colors, textures, and methods that best complement your style for every occasion. Our bodies typically begin to slow down collagen production in our mid to late 20s or early 30s. Around the age of 40, the decline in our collagen lev-



els can lead to common signs of aging, such as wrinkles, fine lines, and sagging skin. Menopause can further contribute to these changes and also impact facial volume. Adjusting our cosmetics and application approach to better suit our current needs allows us to emphasize our favorite features and feel more confident and comfortable with our outward appearance.

This month, Madison worked with one of our favorite, long-time clients, Deborah Sweet, for a session to discuss her makeup concerns and questions for someone over 50. Madison covered every aspect of makeup with Deborah, from product selection to application techniques, including brush and sponge selection. See Deb's before-and-after photos above or scan the QR code to visit our before-and-after gallery at bLUXE.com.

Deb Sweet - "Madison was incredible to work with! I've never had a makeover before and was initially a little uncomfortable with the idea. Madison immediately put me at ease. She helped me feel like I belonged in her chair and shared her passion and insight every step of the way. Madison's makeup expertise left me feeling like the best version of

myself and has also carried over into my daily routine. I wouldn't hesitate to spend time in her chair again!"

Mature Makeup Makeover

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b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio believes that beauty is ageless and that all women should embrace their age with grace and confidence. We're here to help you do that!

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5K Raises Over \$5,300 for Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail Committee

The Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail Committee (FBRTC) is thrilled to announce the successful completion of the 5K race hosted by the Tri-Valley Front Runners (TVFR - www.trivalleyfrontrunners.com), which raised over \$8,500 to support the development and maintenance of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT). We extend our heartfelt gratitude to TVFR and especially to Mark

Capparella, the dedicated race director, and his team for their unwavering support and exceptional organization of this event. At the most recent FBRTC meeting, Mark and the TVFR team presented President Cliff Winters with a donation of \$5,373.56, which accounted for the net proceeds of the 2024 race.

For more information, visit <https://www.franklinbellinghamrailtrail.org>.

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RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Sports

Cossette Started Softball Early and Excelled

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

At a very young age Franklin's Ava Cossette was watching her older brother Zack, 12 years older, playing baseball. She soon learned to not only love the game itself, but the shortstop position in general.

"I loved going to the games and watching him play; I think I was around five years old and was obsessed with the shortstop position," she said. "I basically became a shortstop because of him, if he could do it I could do it better."

With her glove in her hand and a bat on her shoulder Cossette began playing youth softball for Franklin. In the beginning it was a new position just about every day, but by the time that she reached the sixth grade, her coaches had tapped her as the team's third baseman, because she not only had the strongest arm, but was the only one who could get the ball across the diamond. Her dream to play in her brother's footsteps came two years later during middle school when she was moved from third to short; a position she has played ever since.

Now playing the position she solely desired to play, Ava had to decide if she was going to go to the high school or apply for Tri-County Regional Vocational High School, both in Franklin. Her decision would be based on her health.

"Growing up I always had health issues and was in and out of hospitals, but the nurses who cared for me where all so nice," Cossette said. "The medical field was always in my sight, so I wanted to give it a try. No matter what school I decided on I would get a degree, but with Tri County I would come away with a specific education."

After choosing to attend Tri-County, Cossette was not only nervous but excited to get on the softball field and try out for the team. She noted that tryouts were her favorite time of the year, but being a freshman at a new school, she was a little apprehensive due to the fact that she was so much younger.

"I was the only freshman to make the varsity team, and being so young and having to play with the older girls made me nervous," she said. "But I soon found out that they made it super easy to play my favorite sport. Mentally knowing that they were better than I was, the captains that year didn't see age, they just saw talent."

Cossette knew that, despite what the captains saw in her, she still had to prove herself and earn her way onto the field. When she got her first start as a freshman, she knew she had made it but knew that she also wanted to continue to improve if she wanted to hang around.

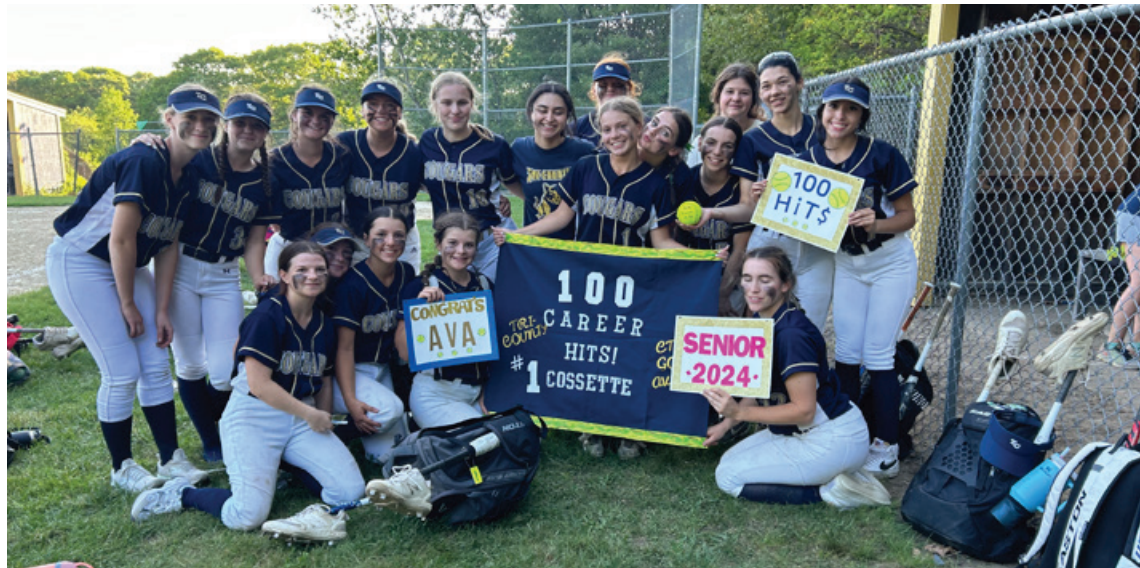
Ava's original goal was easy, get on base, a goal she fully accepted and ran with. During her TC softball days, she found herself as the Cougars lead-off hitter all four seasons. Over her first two campaigns with the Cougars, Cossette would step into the right side of the batters box to face opposing pitchers, but over the last two seasons she found herself batting more from the left-hand side of the plate.

Coach Carol Savino of the Mass Drifters, Cossette's club team noticed something in the young softball player and decided to make her a left-handed slap hitter, something Cossette has learned to love.

"Coach Savino told me that she knew that I was not a power hitter, but I could be a great slap hitter. I love trying new things, so I gave it a try," she said. "I really didn't know what to expect, but eventually picked things up and became a lot better than I ever expect to be. Coach Savino taught me the basics of slap hitting and gave me the drills I needed to succeed."

Tri-County head coach Stephanie Caffrey has really been impressed with Cossette learning how to slap hit.

"She was not really a big hitter as a righty, but as a left slap hitter she has really made a name for herself," the Cougars Coach said. "She was our leadoff hitter all four years and even celebrated her 100th career hit this year and being that her first year had



A leadoff hitter all four years she played Varsity Softball at Tri-County, Ava Cossette celebrated her 100th career hit this year, a feat despite losing play time to COVID.



Softball left slap-hitter Ava Cossette played a key role in Tri-County's Mayflower League and State Vocational Championships this year.

COVID implications, this is an incredible accomplishment."

Caffrey went on to say that her leadoff hitter always seemed to find a way to get on base, and once there, was a great base runner.

"Once she got on base, I usually didn't have to tell her anything; she knew what had to be done and when," Caffrey said. "Unfortunately, now that she is leaving, I am going to have to pay more attention to my base runners come next season."

Cossette noted that one of her favorite parts of the game was getting on base and being able to run wild.

"I really love baserunning, it's probably the most active part of

softball. It's a high adrenaline rush for me and keeps the defense on their toes. I have even learned competitive leading which makes the opposition think I'm going to steal every time," she said. "Bad decisions on the bases, I've probably done that a million times, but how do you learn if you never try?"

Last season, Cossette and her Cougar teammates were able to capture the Mayflower League, Large Division Championship for the first time in 18 years and while that was impressive the team wanted to come back and do it again this season. Tri-County was not only able to go back-to-back with league titles, but the Cougars also went on

to capture their first ever State Vocational Championship this year.

"Because of the past history that Tri-County has had, we were not even thinking about the State; we were focused on looking to repeat as league champions. We didn't want the school to have to wait another 18 years," Cossette said. "When we got to the States we all wanted to play well together and we did, the best we ever played. Being my senior year and to be part of this team, with these girls winning the states was unbelievable."

Coach Caffrey went on to say that backing up this season's Mayflower League Championship with the school's first State Vocational Championship in school history was something of beauty.

"The seniors were a big part of the success that we had this year," the Coach said. "But Ava was really a big piece of changing the culture here at Tri-County. She has been a phenomenal all-around player the past four years."

Having graduated, Cossette is now headed to college, where she is planning on majoring in nursing while also hoping to continue to play softball.

With Cougar softball now in her past, it's time to go out and change the world in a different way and maybe along the way still play some softball.

Living Healthy

Summer Eye Safety

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

We all use sunscreen to protect our skin, but don't forget to protect your eyes as well. Summertime means more time spent outdoors, and studies show that exposure to bright sunlight may increase the risk of developing cataracts and growths on the eye, including cancer. The same risk applies when using tanning beds, so be sure to protect your eyes from indoor UV light as well. Sunlight reflected off sand and water can cause photokeratitis, the condition responsible for snow blindness, so beach- and pool-goers: Take note.

Independence Day is just around the corner. Your 4th of July holiday usually ends with enjoying professional fireworks and maybe even lighting a few of your own in the backyard. Before you light your first bottle rocket or sparkler, let's talk about

the dangers of fireworks and how to keep you and your loved ones safe.

Most firework injuries happen in a one-month span from late June to late July. Each year approximately 16000 people visit an emergency room because of a fireworks-related injury, and there are 18 deaths. The number of people sustaining minor injuries not requiring an ER visit is thought to be much higher. The most common injuries are to the hands and fingers, legs, head, face, ears and arms. Sometimes people pick up packs of fireworks at the grocery store thinking they're safe because they're small and don't produce large displays. Often, these are the fireworks we give or use close to children. Consider the number of ER trips these common, "safer" fireworks cause each year. Many of us think the people most at risk of getting injured are those lighting the fuse, but bystanders are the

most at risk. Those on the sidelines account for 65% of all ER visits for firework-related injuries.

Eye injuries caused by fireworks are very common and can have devastating effects. Your eyes are delicate, and any fireworks injury could potentially cause permanent damage. Sparks, flames, smoke, and flying pieces of debris are all hazards inherent in any display. The four most common eye injuries are: detached retina, scratches on the cornea, ruptured eyeball and burns. Any eye injury can lead to long-term vision problems or even blindness. If your eye has been hurt, seek medical attention right away. Please leave fireworks to the professionals and let's all enjoy a safe 4th.

UV radiation, whether from natural sunlight or indoor artificial rays, can damage the eye's surface tissues as well as the cornea and lens. Unfortunately, many people are unaware of the dangers UV light can pose. By wearing UV-blocking sunglasses, you can enjoy the summer safely



while lowering your risk for potentially blinding eye diseases and tumors. It is important to start wearing proper eye protection at an early age to protect your eyes from years of ultraviolet exposure.

Everyone of any age and any degree of skin pigmentation is susceptible to UV damage. Children are particularly susceptible to UV damage. People with light colored eyes may have an increased risk of certain eye diseases tied to UV exposure, including eye cancer. Some studies show that people with certain eye diseases such as retinal dystrophy may be at greater risk for UV-related sun damage.

Cataract is a clouding of the eye's lens. The lens must be clear in order to focus light properly onto the retina. Extensive exposure to the sun is one of the major reasons why we develop cataracts. Cataract surgery is by far the most common surgery performed in the United States.

According to a national Sun Safety Survey conducted by the American Academy of Ophthalmology, only about half of people who wear sunglasses say they check the UV rating before buying. The good news is that you can easily protect yourself. In order to be eye smart in the sun, the American Academy of Ophthalmology recommends the following:

Wear sunglasses labeled "100% UV protection": Use only glasses that block both UV-A and UV-B rays and that are labeled either UV400 or 100% UV protection.

Choose wraparound styles so that the sun's rays can't enter from the side.

If you wear UV-blocking contact lenses, you'll still need sunglasses.

Wear a hat along with your sunglasses; broad-brimmed hats are best.

Remember the kids: It's best to keep children out of direct sunlight during the middle of the day. Make sure they wear sunglasses and hats whenever they are in the sun.

Know that clouds don't block UV light: The sun's rays can pass through haze and clouds. Sun damage to the eyes can occur any time of year, not just in summer.

Be extra careful in UV-intense conditions: Sunlight is strongest mid-day to early afternoon, at higher altitudes, and when reflected off of water, ice or snow.

By embracing these simple tips you and your family can enjoy the summer sun safely while protecting your vision ...

And if you have a cataract and it's time for surgery, remember that new technologies exist to optimize vision and outcome: Bladeless laser cataract surgery is a major advancement in cataract treatment, is FDA approved and embraced by top Ophthalmologists in the US and around the world.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we offer in-house optical service with the best in UV protection sunglasses. And if you need cataract surgery, Dr. Kaldawy is proud to have been the first surgeon in the area and among the first in Massachusetts to offer bladeless laser assisted cataract surgery. We are happy to have been pioneers of this technology in our communities. We implant high quality premium lenses, with correction for distance, near and everything in between. Many cases of astigmatism are no longer a problem as these implants can now be offered even if you have astigmatism thanks to bladeless laser surgery. Our percentage of complications is one of the lowest in the Nation and is measured by

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Franklin Public Schools Recognized as a MA School Wellness Champion District

Franklin Public Schools was recognized for completing the School Wellness Initiative for Thriving Community Health (SWITCH) Massachusetts Wellness Coaching Program.

On May 21, Franklin Public Schools School Wellness Advisory Council (SWAC) was recognized at the Healthy Kids, Healthy Programs Summit by the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Education and Secondary Education (DESE). The District also received a large banner outlining the recognition that will be displayed on the fencing of the Oak Street Complex.

The SWITCH program is a statewide initiative for supporting and advancing wellness efforts for Massachusetts students, schools and communities.

Members of the council worked to conduct a Wellness Policy Assessment, updating the

policy to meet state and federal requirements, as well as action planning, prioritizing and implementing wellness initiatives and monitoring and evaluating results.

“I am very proud of our council members on this great accomplishment for our District,” said Superintendent Giguere. “In our schools, we are dedicated to providing students with the top wellness practices, allowing for academic success and overall student performance.”

The SWAC was created in 2013. It was established to recommend, review and help implement school district policies addressing school nutrition, nutrition education, physical activity and related issues that impact student health. The SWAC meets monthly and includes representation from students, parents, FPS staff, School Committee members and administrators from



across the district developing programs that actively promote wellness in schools and maximize opportunities for grant awards.

The SWAC was selected to participate in DESE’s two-year coaching model. The first year focused on evaluating and then revising Franklin’s Wellness Policy using the WELLSAT Scorecard. The second year focused on implementing the policy.

Many community members have participated in SWAC over the years. Currently, the com-

mittee is chaired by Assistant Superintendent Dr. Tina Rogers and members include, Director of Food Services Colin Boisvert, Director of Life Long Learning Pattie Gay, YMCA Coordinator Krystina Edens, FHS Nurse Melissa Conroy, Community Member Elise Stokes, School Committee Member KP Sompany, Public Health Nurse Alisha Deptula, Health and Wellness Director Kristin Letendre Smith, parent Stacey Federico, Associate Director of Franklin Food

Pantry Laura Doherty and three Franklin High School students.

On behalf of SWAC, “The SWAC Committee is fortunate to have built connections with many community partners. These relationships strengthen our initiatives by expanding our reach and providing support from businesses and organizations. We are grateful to these businesses and organizations for their support of education in Franklin.”

Bishop Feehan Awarded First-Ever NASA Endeavor STEM Leadership Certificate

Bishop Feehan High School proudly announces its recognition as the first-ever award winner for leadership in STEM education from the NASA Endeavor STEM Teaching Certificate Project and the U.S. Satellite Laboratory.

“Bishop Feehan is the first district in the country to earn the building-level stem leadership certificate designation,” said En-

deavor STEM Program Director Dr. Karen Woodruff. “This is an initiative that we recently started, and we are thrilled that Bishop Feehan will be our inaugural awardee.”

Additionally, three Bishop Feehan science teachers, Eileen Correia, Audrey Lavertu and Kelly Gomez were awarded Leadership Certificates in STEM Education.

EYES

continued from page 20

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Franklin High School Announces Class of 2024 Valedictorian and Salutatorian

Superintendent Lucas Giguere is pleased to announce that Anna David is the valedictorian of the Franklin High School Class of 2024, while Jennifer Soohoo is the salutatorian.

Anna David

“Anna David embodies excellence in every sense of the word,” said Franklin High School Guidance Secretary Julie Bellan. “Throughout her time here at Franklin High School, she has consistently demonstrated a commitment to academic excellence, leadership and service to her community. Her enterprising spirit has allowed her to take risks and face challenges head-on throughout her time at Franklin High School, where she has consistently pushed the boundaries of her intellect and curiosity.”

After completing all math and computer science courses offered at FHS, David took multiple advanced college courses during her time as a high school student. David has held leader-

ship positions as president of the Robotics Club, president of the Math Team, member of the National Honor Society and robotics group leader of the Science National Honor Society. She has also worked to initiate a school-sponsored science fair and a local chapter of the International Robotics Honor Society.

Additionally, Anna leads multiple community-based robotics teams; the International Robotics Honor Society, 4-H ALARM Robotics and Sense and Sound Robotics.

Anna has sought out opportunities to further her skills, including a paid internship at the University of New Hampshire and its InterOperability Laboratory. The internship involved research and the completion of a project relating to advanced engineering, computer science and robotics. The previous summer, she participated in the Beaver Works Summer Institute at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and had the opportunity

to take a class on autonomous drones.

Jennifer Soohoo

“Jennifer Soohoo’s academic career at FHS has been nothing short of impressive,” said Superintendent Giguere. “She has continuously put forth her best effort, as evident through the various Advanced Placement courses she has challenged herself with, and her ability to think critically has allowed for her to not only excel within the classroom but outside of it. She is a strong self-advocate who is not afraid to ask questions, and a student who truly leads by example.”

Soohoo demonstrated a willingness to serve as a role model and leader by being an active member of the Franklin community, participating in Best Buddies, Empty Bowls, Math National Honor Society, Science National Honor Society, Spanish National Honor Society, Unified Music Club, Unified Track and Varsity Volleyball.



Anna David (left) is the valedictorian and Jennifer Soohoo (right) is the salutatorian of the Franklin High School Class of 2024. (Photo Courtesy Franklin Public Schools)

In her senior year, Soohoo took on additional leadership roles as the social media coordinator for Best Buddies and the treasurer for Empty Bowls.

Soohoo is greatly interested in the medical field. She has loved the sciences since she was young and wants to positively impact the lives of those around her. Her excellence in academics, passion

for helping others and hard work has earned her acceptance into the Honors Program at the University of Connecticut, where she plans to study biology.

She hopes to continue to be an active member of her college’s campus community in order to learn new skills, meet new people, and further her interests.



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Dean College Announces Formation of the Schools of Performing Arts

Dean College, located in Franklin, Mass., is thrilled to announce the creation of the Schools of Performing Arts, a dynamic and innovative institution that merges the best elements of the School of the Arts and the Joan Phelps Palladino School of Dance. This groundbreaking school will be under the esteemed leadership of Interim Dean, Jim Beauregard, a highly respected 30-year veteran of the Dean faculty, and Interim Assistant Dean, Stephen Tracey-Ursprung, whose commitment to academic excellence and student engagement is unparalleled.

“I am excited to serve as the Interim Dean of the Schools of Performing Arts at Dean,” said Jim Beauregard. “This unique convergence of talents is designed to provide a multifaceted, interdisciplinary approach to performing arts education, offering our students the flexibility to explore and refine their passions with professional rigor. The new Schools of Performing Arts will harness the synergies of theatre, dance, music and arts management into one cohesive unit.”

Experiential Learning & The

Dean Difference

At the core of the School of Performing Arts is The Dean Difference, a unique philosophy centered around exceptional student support and engagement. The curriculum will feature innovative and experiential learning opportunities such as:

- Collaborative Productions: Real-world experience through collaborative projects that involve theatre productions, dance performances and musical showcases.
- Industry Internships: Partnerships with leading arts organizations to provide students with invaluable, hands-on internship experiences.
- Master Classes: Workshops and seminars conducted by industry experts, including notable choreographers, directors and music producers.
- Public Performances: Multiple sold-out “Mainstage” performances every semester.
- Capstone Projects: Signature senior-level work in a culminating presentation.

Jim Beauregard: Celebrating 30 Years of Artistic Excellence

For three decades, Interim Dean, Jim Beauregard, has been a cornerstone of Dean excelling as Associate Professor of Theatre and Dance and Technical Director. With his unparalleled vision and passion for all aspects of the arts he has directed and choreographed over 40 plays, and his technical finesse has graced more than 150 theatre and dance productions. As founder and director of Dean College Summer Theatre, Beauregard has nurtured countless talents to pursue their passion.

Beauregard’s teaching encompasses courses like technical production, acting, musical theatre ensemble, movement improvisation, stage combat, character study for dancers, and public speaking. His leadership extends beyond the classroom; he has chaired the Faculty Personnel Policy Committee and served on numerous committees, including the Appeals and Rank Committees.

As an arts administrator and academic leader with a diverse background in the management

of theatre production, he is a dedicated advocate for theatre education. Beauregard spent seven years on the executive board for The Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival (KC/ACTF), Region I. His passion was recognized with the Kennedy Center Gold Medalion, and his directorial work, including the award-winning production of “Urinetown,” earned national acclaim.

Currently, as Artistic Director at Homebrewed Theatre Company, Beauregard continues to champion original material, featuring many Dean College alumni. Beauregard, an Army veteran, has a B.A. and M.A. in Theatre and Dance from Rhode Island College.

Stephen Tracey-Ursprung: Innovating Dance Education

Interim Assistant Dean, Stephen Tracey-Ursprung, brings vision and enthusiasm, focusing on dance composition, history, and pedagogy. Tracey-Ursprung has showcased fresh perspectives as the producer of the annual Arts Mosaic performance series and has choreographed numer-

ous pieces that showcase innovative student work.

Tracey-Ursprung chairs the curriculum committee, plays a pivotal role in the academic program review team, and mentors the Dean College chapter of the National Honor Society for Dance Arts (NHSDA). Beyond Dean, he recently completed a prestigious research fellowship at Jacob’s Pillow, a historic center for American modern dance.

An active performer and educator, Tracey-Ursprung contributes to Dancing Legacy, co-directs the NilsSprung Dance Project and Reject Dance Theatre, and co-chairs the DANCE 2050 initiative for the National Dance Education Organization. He holds a B.A. in Economics and Italian Studies from Brown University and an M.F.A. in Dance from Smith College.

Dean College is deeply proud to recognize the outstanding efforts of Beauregard and Tracey-Ursprung, whose passion and commitment continue to inspire our artistic community.

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FPS Appoints New Girls' Varsity Volleyball Coach and New Boys' Varsity Soccer Coach

Superintendent Lucas Giguere and Athletic Director Karrah Ellis are pleased to share that Emily Carens has been appointed as the new Girls Varsity Volleyball coach and Nick Goldman has been appointed as the new Boys Varsity Soccer coach.

"We are so excited to have Coach Goldman and Coach Carens as part of Franklin Athletics," said Director Ellis. "Both Emily and Nick bring a wealth of experience and knowledge to our varsity teams. We are looking forward to a great season ahead."



Coach Emily Carens. (Photo courtesy Franklin Public Schools)

Emily Carens - Varsity Girls' Volleyball Coach

Carens has been a member of the FHS Volleyball staff for the past two seasons. She played four years of women's volleyball at Worcester State University where she was a two-time captain and a three-time MASCAC Volleyball 1st Team All-Conference player.

Goldman served as Head Coach of the Nipmuc Regional High School Varsity Boys Soccer Team for the past two seasons and for the nine years prior he was a member of the Franklin Boys Soccer coaching staff. Goldman played four years of men's soccer at Endicott College.

Nick Goldman - Varsity Boys' Soccer Coach



Coach Nick Goldman. (Photo courtesy Franklin Public Schools)

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Every Monday Jim Derick and Nick Remissong are down with Talkin' the Blues. Then Frank Falvey plays the delightfully unexpected - with Frank's Music.

Tuesday - join host Pamela Hines as she guides you along the rich history of jazz and all the legendary jazz greats on her program, Jazz Journey.

Wednesday - if it matters, it's all on Steve Sherlock's Franklin Matters Radio. Mark Lenzi & Kim Simone talk, taste and tour The Wonderful World of Wine.

Thursday brings back the great albums and artists of the seventies and eighties with Turntable, hosted by David (Vibe) Butler and Pauly (G) Guarino.

Friday offers a broad variety of programs: Music to Lift the Spirit, Chapters, Senior Story Hour, More Perfect Union, and more. All on wfpr - community radio.

Franklin Knights Award \$4,000 in Scholarships

The Knights of Columbus 1847 Franklin are proud to announce the winners of this year's Robert Simmler PGK, Sacred Heart Council 1847 Knights of Columbus College Scholarship 2024. Congratulations to An-

drew O'Neil, \$3,000 and Leslie Baker \$1,000.

Andrew is a graduate of Franklin High School and Leslie of Montrose School. Both of these accomplished students are active members of the St

Mary's Parish Community. Their achievements were especially noteworthy amongst the many wonderful talented candidates that applied for the 2024 scholarship award.

We wish Andrew the best of luck as he goes onto Providence College in the fall, and Leslie as she attends Cornell in the fall.

The Robert Simmler PGK Knights of Columbus Sacred Heart Council 1847 Scholarship

is named in honor of Mr. Robert Simmler, he was a very active and accomplished member of the Knights of Columbus, Sacred Heart Council and the Franklin Community.



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The College Essay - Let the Student's Voice be Heard!

My favorite pastime is reading students' college essays and essay tips from the experts - Admissions Officers. Does this make me a college nerd? Probably! But it certainly is why I do what I do!

Selecting a college essay topic can become the most challenging aspect of the application process. Students tend to search for the perfect topic that is not cliché, layered with the pressure to create a fascinating story that has never been told before. The truth is, all stories have been told before: the comeback story after a basketball injury, the mission trip that changed your life, the patience you showed after vacationing with 30 family members in a small cabin with one bathroom. The lesson is that there is no one unique topic - they have all been done.

Does this mean that you settle for mediocrity? No, but it does mean that you need to differentiate yourself by finding YOUR voice, make sure it is heard, and unveil the fantastic and authentic YOU in your story. Here are a few tips from the experts. **FREE RESOURCE:** email me for the full list of tips.

1. Just make sure that the story you're telling is uniquely YOURS.

"I believe everyone has a story worth telling. Don't

feel like you must have had a huge, life-changing, drama-filled experience. Sometimes the seemingly smallest moments lead us to the biggest breakthroughs." *Maggie Schuh, high school English teacher in St. Louis.*

2. We want to learn about growth.

"Some students spend a lot of time summarizing the plot or describing their work, and then the "in what way" part of the essay winds up being one sentence. The part that is about you is the most important part. The majority of the essay should be about your response and reaction to the work. How did it affect or change you?" *Dean J, admissions officer, and blogger from University of Virginia.*

3. Tell a good story.

"Most people prefer reading a good story over anything else. So... tell a great story in your essay. Worry less about providing as many details about you as possible and more about captivating the reader's attention inside of a great narrative. I read a great essay this year where an applicant walked me through



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

the steps of meditation and how their body responded to it. Loved it." *Jeff Schiffman, Director of Admissions at Tulane University*

4. Write like a journalist.

"The first few sentences must capture the reader's attention, provide a gist of the story, and give a sense of where the essay is heading. Think about any article you've read—how do you decide to read it? You read the first few sentences and then decide. The same goes for college essays. A strong lead will place your reader in the "accept" mindset

from the beginning of the essay. A weak lead will have your reader thinking "reject"—a mindset from which it's nearly impossible to recover." *Brad Schiller, MIT graduate and CEO of Prompt*

5. Write like you speak.

"You should use words and phrases that you would actually use in everyday conversation. The most meaningful essays are those where I feel like the student is sitting next to me, just talking to me." *Kim Struglinski, admissions counselor from Vanderbilt University.*

6. Read it aloud.

"Reading your essay aloud is the best way to corroborate that your essay is revealing your voice. Do you feel the emotions? Is it a good story? Is the reader learning something valuable about you? And, will the admission reader say 'yes, I can see this student making a difference at our college'?" *Tracy Sullivan & Maryline Michel Kulewicz, College 101 Admission Consultants*

There are so many admission resources out there. I really enjoy reading Rick Clark's Georgia Tech Admission Blog. He is knowledgeable, honest, and tells an engaging story. Hint: elements of a good essay!

The college tips were paraphrased from College Essay Guys's "35+ Best College Essay Tips from College Application Experts".

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Saturday: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. CLOSED Sunday**

Calendar

July 3

Franklin 4th of July Celebration, 6-10 p.m., Franklin Town Common, 6 p.m. Smoke N Whiskey, 7:30 p.m., Backyard Swagger

July 4

Franklin 4th of July Celebration, 12-10 p.m., Franklin Town Common, 12 p.m. Matt Zajac, 1:15 Jamie Barrett, 3 p.m. Ken Freeman & The Sunset, 4:30 Jessie Liam Band, 7 p.m. Neon Lighthouse

July 5

Fun with Drones! 1 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, With licensed drone pilot Brian Kourtz of Boston 25 News

Franklin 4th of July Celebration, 2-10 p.m., Franklin Town Common, 2 p.m. Padula Trio Plus One, 3:30 Two Guys Who Like Sharks, 4:30 Attleboro School of Rock, 7 p.m. Neon Wave

July 6

Franklin 4th of July Celebration, Franklin Blues Festival, 12-10 p.m., Franklin Town Common, Fireworks 10 p.m., Franklin High School, 12 p.m. Jr. Krauss & The Shakes, 1:45 Neal & The Vipers, 3:30 Professor Harp, 5:15 Mike Crandall Tribute Band, 7 p.m. Bruce Katz, 8:45 Delta Generators, 10 p.m. Fireworks at Franklin High School

July 7

Franklin 4th of July Celebration, 12-6 p.m., Franklin Town Common, 12 p.m. Zajac Bros., 2 p.m. Brandt Taylor Band, 4 p.m. Gary Hoey

July 8

Flying High Dogs! 4 p.m., Franklin Public Library lawn, 118 Main St., Franklin

July 10

Todd Brodeur Frisbee Demo! Wednesday, 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

Bellingham Concerts on the Common, 6-7 p.m., Bellingham Town Common, Free pony rides. 6:30-8:30 p.m., *Westwood Swing* (big band) *Sponsored by Middlesex Savings Bank.*

July 12

Henry the Juggler, 1 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

Franklin Concerts on the Common, Mike Tarrara 3-5, Reminiscent 6-8, Movie *Back to the Future* 8:30-10:30

July 13

Toe Jam Puppet Band, 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

July 14

Second Sunday Speaker Series presents Ren (Karen) Antonowicz from Spirits of Fashion, discussing Museum's bridal gown exhibit, 1:15 p.m., (doors open 1 p.m.), Franklin Historical Museum, 80 West Central St., Franklin

July 15

Mr. Vinny Bubble Show! 4 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

July 17

Caravan Puppet Show: Timeless Tales! 10:30 a.m. Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

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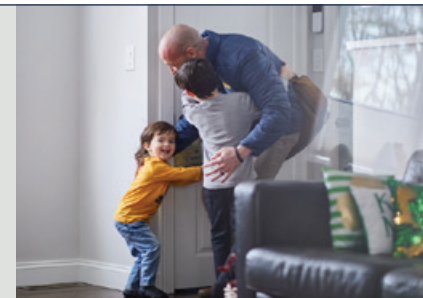


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July 20

Franklin Public Library Book Sale, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, Books \$1

History in Concert: Journey through American Pop, 3 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, Performed by Jon Waterman

July 22

Interactive Puppet Storytime! Monday, 4 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

Interactive Movie: Jaws, 6 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

July 24

The BenAnna Band! Wednesday, 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, children's program

Bellingham Concerts on the Common, 6-7 p.m., Bellingham Town Common, Free pony rides. 6:30-8:30 p.m., *Code* (classic rock). *Sponsored by Middlesex Savings Bank.*

July 18

Family Yoga! Thursday, 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

With Katie from Sprouting Tree Yoga, fun, interactive toddler & kids yoga class. No yoga experience necessary. Please bring yoga mat or towel.

July 19

Franklin Public Library Book Sale, 1-5 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, Books \$1

Crochet FUNDamentals, 1 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, supported by Franklin Cultural Council, a local agency, supported by Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Franklin Concerts on the Common, Marc Berger 3-5, Strumdawgs 6-8 p.m.

Animal Affair! Wednesday, 3-6 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

Bellingham Concerts on the Common, 6-7 p.m., Bellingham Town Common, Free pony rides. 6:30-8:30 p.m., *Back Pages* (rock and pop). *Sponsored by Middlesex Savings Bank.*

July 25

Family Yoga! Thursday, 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

With Katie from Sprouting Tree Yoga, fun, interactive toddler & kids yoga class. No yoga experience necessary. Please bring yoga mat or towel.

July 26

Rainforest Reptiles! 1 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

Franklin Concerts on the Common, It's a J Thing, 3-5, Frank Padula Band 6-8

July 29

Music at the Blissful Concert! Monday, 4 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, family concert

July 31

Mike Bent's EcoMagic Show! 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

August 2

Franklin Concerts on the Common, David Rak 3-5, Electric Youth 6-8, Movie *Wonka* 8:30-10:30

Bellingham, Franklin among 214 Fire Departments Awarded Fire Safety Grants

The Healey-Driscoll Administration announced last month that 214 municipal fire departments across Massachusetts will share \$1.6 million in competitive grants to support fire and life safety education for school-age children and older adults. Locally, the Town of Bellingham was awarded \$18,560 and the Town of Franklin awarded \$24,936 in Firefighter Safety Equipment Grants.

Since 1995, the Department of Fire Services' Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE)

grant program has supported firefighter-educators who deliver age-appropriate fire safety education to kids and teens across Massachusetts. In that time, the number of children who die in fires has dropped to historically low levels, from two dozen or more per year to zero for nearly three consecutive years.

"The SAFE grants have been helping local fire departments deliver life-saving lessons to Massachusetts' young people for nearly 30 years," said Governor Maura Healey. "This year's

awards continue that legacy of fire safety education for our most vulnerable residents and their families. Our Administration is committed to helping every community protect its residents through public safety programs like this one."

In 2014, DFS launched the Senior SAFE program, which is geared toward another vulnerable population – older adults, who face a disproportionate risk of death or serious injury in a fire.

"Senior SAFE connects firefighter-educators with senior centers, councils on aging, and other community-based resources in a unique state-local partnership," said Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll. "Effective safety education, smoke and carbon monoxide alarm installation, and other grant-funded services are helping to keep our seniors safe at home."

In FY24, 214 municipal fire departments will split \$1,138,565.58 in SAFE funding and/or \$492,179.29 in Senior

SAFE funding. Another 12 departments will share funding for regional SAFE and/or Senior SAFE programs.

"Fire safety education is a smart investment in the safety of our residents and the livability of our communities," said Secretary of Public Safety and Security Terrence Reidy. "Children and older adults are historically the most at risk in a fire,

GRANTS

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Temple Etz Chaim Celebrates Retirement of Rabbi Alpert

Rabbi Tom Alpert of Temple Etz Chaim, Franklin, Massachusetts was honored by his congregation on the occasion of his upcoming retirement. Rabbi Alpert is retiring on June 30, 2024, following 12 years as the temple's spiritual leader and will become the temple's Rabbi Emeritus at that time.

The temple organized a musical evening for Rabbi Alpert and his wife Eileen, which was headlined by several people who had previously worked with Rabbi Alpert as well as temple members. The event was held at Dean College on June 1, 2024.

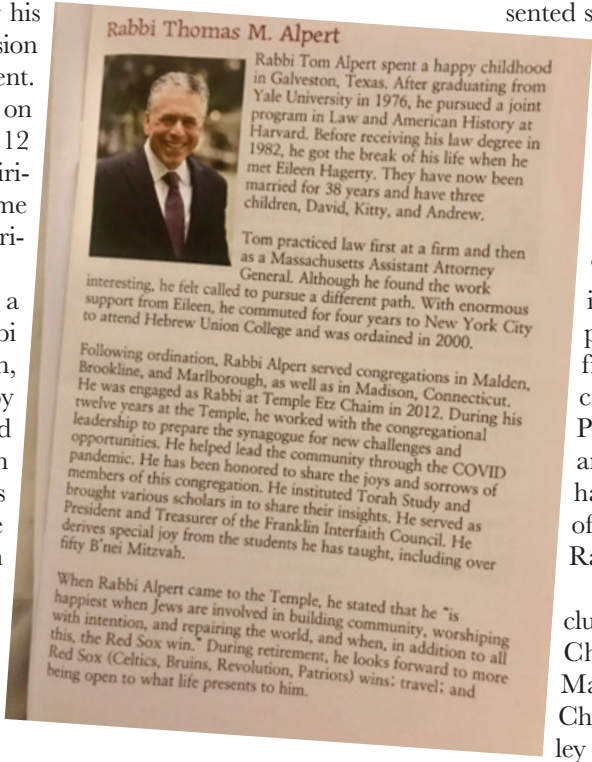
The entertainment included Rabbi Deborah Zecher, a two-time MAC and Broadway World nominee, who found a second career as a cabaret singer, and Sue Horowitz, whose music straddles Jewish spiritual music and folk music. Cantor Irving

Spenadel who sings at Temple Etz Chaim for High Holy Day

the temple's cantorial soloist for B'nei Mitzvah services each presented several musical selections connected with their relationship to Rabbi Alpert.

Outgoing Temple President Andrew Rubenstein presented Rabbi Alpert with a "Memory Book" that included the evening's program and messages from members of the congregation. Incoming President Michael Rubin announced that the Board had conferred the honor of Rabbi Emeritus upon Rabbi Alpert.

The temple's Choir concluded the evening's event. Choir members include Margaret Black, Melissa Chartoff, Ellen Keith, Harley Keith, Anina Lawrence, Lisa Lawrence, Kaitlyn McGarvey, Hannah Rich, Lee Rich, Cindi Rudman, and Steve Schultheis.



services, Cantor Rachel Reef-Simpson who worked at Temple Etz Chaim earlier in her career, and Debbie Gelber who is

GRANTS

continued from page 27

but the SAFE and Senior SAFE grants are helping to provide them with the tools to protect themselves and their families."

"I'm deeply grateful to the trained firefighter-educators who are the backbone of the SAFE and Senior SAFE programs," said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine. "They've reached hundreds of thousands of youngsters and seniors with lessons that have prevented untold tragedies. I truly believe these grants are a key factor in making Massachusetts one of the most fire-safe states in the nation."

The fire departments in towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Medway, and Uxbridge have been selected to receive additional state funding from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) as part of the Department of Fire Service's (DFS) Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) and Senior SAFE grant program to support fire and life safety education for school-aged children and older adults.

The Bellingham Fire Department is receiving \$5,679 for its program designed to teach children the importance of recognizing the dangers of fires and safety behaviors, and \$1,865 for the Senior SAFE program, to be used to teach and improve fire safety in senior housing.

Rep. Soter commented, "I am extremely grateful to learn that our district has been selected to receive this funding." He added, "The opportunity for the students in our district to learn the importance of fire safety is crucial to their safety and educating our district on the many preventative measures that can be taken will be beneficial to the safety of our community as a whole."

The S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE programs are funded through legislative earmarks to the Executive Office of the Public Safety & Security, and they are administered by the Department of Fire Services. For more fire service grant opportunities, visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-for-fire-departments>.

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Franklin Team “Energized” by Strawberry Stroll!

Local members of the “Energize Franklin” team who staffed their booth at last month’s Strawberry Stroll in Franklin were energized by various conversations with residents! In addition to answering questions about ideas for climate friendly actions people can take to reduce their carbon footprint while saving money, the team learned that several Franklin families have recently taken steps such as changing to LED lighting, installing heat pumps or mini-splits, leasing or purchasing an electric or hybrid vehicle, and even installing solar panels. The Energize Franklin website (www.energizefranklin.org) hosts the free exchange of money-saving and energy-saving information, and the team encourages local residents to leave a testimonial about the actions they have taken.



Anyone can go to the site to browse suggested actions, or you can sign up and track the actions you’ve done and create a to-do list for items you would like to accomplish. Having a free account also allows you to track your carbon reductions and leave a testimonial. For easy access, use the QR code here!



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First Universalist Society in Franklin – July Summer Services

First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is pleased to announce our Summer Sunday Worship Series through July, 2024. Please join us each Sunday as we explore the Unitarian Universalist (UU) values of Equity, Transformation, Generosity, Interdependence, Justice, Pluralism and Love. All services start at 10 a.m. Afterwards, we invite you to stay for coffee, cookies and conversation.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin MA. For further information about FUSF please explore our website at fusf.org or contact our Interim Minister, the Reverend Beverly Waring at (508) 528-5348 or minister@fusf.org.

June 30: Equity's Call

The Unitarian Universalist value of Equity declares "... that every person has the right to flourish with inherent dignity and worthiness." Join Marggi, one of FUSF's Lay Leaders, as she explores how this value has been a guiding force behind the eclectic spiritual path that eventually led her to the UU world. Marggi will further explain how she views equity as the cornerstone that allows any type of organization to optimally thrive and for every other UU value to organically unfold.

July 7, 2024: Transformation: Present Moment, Wonderful Moment

FUSF Lay Leaders Ann Willever and Ellen Adduci will

explore the Unitarian Universalist value of Transformation through the teachings and practice of Zen Buddhist monk and peace activist, Thich Nhat Hanh. Ann and Ellen are also members of the Path of Peace Sangha that meets at FUSF on Monday evenings. The service will include guided, silent and walking meditation, all of which are part of the Monday evening Sangha gatherings. Thich Nhat Hanh's teachings focus on mindfulness and, together, we will reflect on how this practice has helped us deal with the challenges of everyday life and transform suffering as we discover more joy and compassion. No previous meditation experience is needed.

July 14: Generosity: The Artist Within

Creativity is an inherent quality in every person. The natural inclination to create

and innovate is a fundamental part of human nature. Sue Sheridan, an accomplished artist, and Lay Leader at FUSF, will explore how the visual arts, and painting in particular, can provide a pathway to creativity; and perhaps even lead to a sense of communion with something greater than ourselves. By viewing paintings and describing the creative process involved, Sue will explore how to access the artist within. As one of our UU values states, Generosity connects us to one another in relationships of interdependence and mutuality. By sharing our gifts of creativity with one another, we are cultivating a spirit of gratitude and hope.

July 21: Interdependence: The Web of All Existence

Join us as FUSF Lay Leader, and landscape architect, Steve Derdiarian explores one of the new UU values, Interdependence. He will start with examining the Interdependent Web against the perspective of the scale of time, then how we share relationships with plants and living creatures in our own backyard and finally, how we, as humankind, fit into this amazing tapestry of life. Steve will also touch upon some of the things we each can do to promote biodiversity in our lives, along with the first exciting steps FUSF has taken this spring to promote biodiversity on our property. After service please feel free to walk the grounds which include new native plant gardens, a peace pole and garden and a labyrinth.

July 28: Justice: What We Choose to Center

The UU value of Justice challenges Unitarian Universalists "to work to be diverse multicultural Beloved Communities where all thrive". What practices can help us cultivate a community in which all belong? Please join Louise Marcoux, a Lay Leader at FUSF, to reflect on what our stories place at the center – and what they marginalize – and explore how we each might become more open to narratives different from our own.

Historic Happenings at the Franklin Historical Museum for July 2024

July is all about bridal fashion, continuing the exhibit that opened June 1. Please note, the museum will be closed Independence Day weekend, July 6 and 7.

Franklin Historical Museum Bridal Exhibit, until Aug. 4

Back by popular demand, the Franklin Historical Museum flaunts bridal styles from the late 19th century to the recent past, including our stunning "parachute dress" from 1946. The exhibit is open during regular hours, Saturdays 10-1 and Sundays 1-4, closed July 4 weekend. FREE

The Second Sunday Speaker Series – Sun, July 14

The Second Sunday Speaker Series at the museum continues on July 14, 2024 with Ren (Karen) Antonowicz, from Spirits of Fashion (Spiritsoffashion.com), discussing changing wedding fashions over time with reference to the wedding dresses on display at the museum. Doors open at 1 and the presentation begins at 1:15. FREE

'Cinema 80' Films in the 'Silent Saturday' series are on hiatus until September

Silent Saturdays have been popular since they started early this year and will be back with more in the fall. Chris Leverone, a videographer and graphics artist from Franklin, currently a producer at Franklin TV, developed this program in cooperation with the Franklin Senior Center.



The Franklin Historical Museum is located at 80 West Central Street, Franklin. The museum is open Saturday mornings from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and Sunday afternoons from 1-4 p.m. The museum will be closed Independence Day weekend, July 6 and 7.

When visiting the museum, please consider donating a non-perishable item for the Franklin Food Pantry.

Questions? Contact Alan Earls at (508) 560 3786.

Visit us online at <https://www.franklinmuseum1778.com>





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12 Pratt Drive



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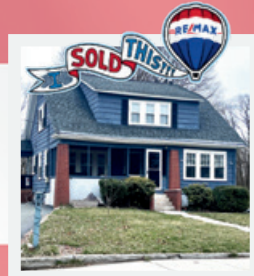
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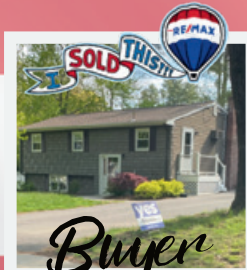
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