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August 2024

Hopedale youth creates MBTA announcement, tells riders 'I love trains'

Colson Tacosik participated in a program featuring children with autism

By THERESA KNAPP

The next time you're on the MBTA, you might hear the voice of Colson Tacosik, 13, of Hopedale come over the loudspeaker.

Colson created a public service announcement as part of the T's celebration of Autism Acceptance Month in April.

Colson's mother, Kate Rose, learned about the program from the Autism Alliance in Framingham. According to autismalliance.org, the Massachusetts-based organization provides "support, programs, and resources to families and individuals affected by autism spectrum disorders."

Rose says, "So many individ-



Colson Tacosik, 13, of Hopedale created a public service announcement as part of the MBTA's celebration of Autism Acceptance Month in April. Courtesy photo

uals with autism love trains, and this was such a special opportu-

MBTA PSA
continued on page 2



Over And Out – Hopedale Youth Baseball 12u Wins Tondorf Tournament

Hopedale Youth Baseball 12U Team continued their dominance this summer, as they won their fourth consecutive Tondorf Baseball Championship against a very strong Medway Team in the tournament Finals.

The 11-game tournament regular season provided a glimpse

into the possibility of another championship, as Hopedale went 9-1-1 and a first-place seed.

Pitching, catching, and defense were the calling card to a strong regular season, led by pitchers Griffin Dalpe, Calvin Mandeville, Colin Johns, and Nolan Vaillette, Hopedale al-

lowed a tournament low 2 runs per game.

Defense helped the pitchers tremendously, with Matthew Goldman (Matty G) behind the plate, stellar infield play by Trey

YOUTH BASEBALL
continued on page 3

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MBTA PSA

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nity for those who participated. I love the language of ‘autism acceptance,’ and I love that the MBTA was so willing to partner with the Autism Transit Project.”

In 2022, the Autism Transit

couraged to personalize. She recorded Colson on her cellphone and submitted it for approval. This was Colson’s message:

“Hello, my name is Colson and I love trains. My favorite MBTA is the purple line. This year, the MBTA is recognizing Autism Acceptance Month by

“Hello, my name is Colson and I love trains. My favorite MBTA is the purple line. This year, the MBTA is recognizing Autism acceptance month by letting me make this announcement. Please take off your backpacks on crowded trains to make room for others. Plus, no one likes to get whacked in the face by your backpack - I know that I don’t! Enjoy your ride!”

Project started in New York City. According to autismtransitproject.com, “Many children with [Autism Spectrum Disorder] exhibit perseverative behaviors around trains. It is not at all unusual for the first full sentences an autistic child utters to be a train announcement.”

The PSAs were designed to provide helpful hints for making riding the train easier for everyone.

Rose said participants were sent a script that they were en-

letting me make this announcement. Please take off your backpacks on crowded trains to make room for others. Plus, no one likes to get whacked in the face by your backpack - I know that I don’t! Enjoy your ride!”

At the end of the process, project participants were invited to the MBTA headquarters where they took a tour which included the control room, and met with dispatchers of whom they were able to ask (many) questions.

Hopedale firefighter Tyler Alt graduates from Fire Academy

June Call/Volunteer Class #113 included 25 graduates from 18 communities

In June, State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy Director Eric S. Littmann announced the graduation of 25 recruits from the most recent Call/Volunteer Recruit Firefighter Training Program.

The graduates included Hopedale firefighter Tyler Alt. Each graduate received a certificate of completion at a ceremony held at the Department of Fire Services’ Stow campus.

In addition to Hopedale, the graduating firefighters of Call/Volunteer Recruit Class #113 represent the fire departments of Boylston, Carlisle, Grafton, Haverhill, Holland, Lincoln, Millis, Millville, Northbridge, Oakham, Paxton, Rutland, Shirley, Tyngsborough, Uxbridge, Wenham, and Weston.

“Massachusetts firefighters are on the frontlines protecting

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

Video of the ceremony can be found at www.youtube.com/dfsosfm.

The Call/Volunteer Firefighter Recruit Training Program is unique in that it delivers a standard recruit training curriculum, meeting national standards, on nights and weekends to accommodate the schedule of firefighters in suburban and rural areas. Making the training more accessible means more firefighters can participate and allows them more time to practice training skills with instructors.

The MFA, a division of the Department of Fire Services,



Hopedale firefighter Tyler Alt recently graduated from the Fire Academy. Photo credit: Massachusetts Department of Fire Services

has offered the program since 2003. More than 3,000 call and volunteer recruits have graduated since then.

Graduates have completed 240 hours of training on nights and weekends. Upon successful completion of this program, all students have met the standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001. In addition, they have the ability to become certified to the level of Firefighter I/II and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operations Level by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications.

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YOUTH BASEBALL

continued from page 1

Holterhoff, Owen Worthington, Johns, Dalpe, & Vaillette, along with their center-field general Jaxen Whyte. Together, they made certain no runs came easy for opponents.

Rounding out the championship team with great plays was Nathan Castiglione, Teddy Hodgdon, Sam Catalogna, and Charlie Schuler.

While pitching and defense led the way during the regular season, during the playoffs, Hopedale added another aspect to their game – power - and that’s when their opponents knew they were in trouble.

Hopedale beat Holliston 11-0 in round one of the playoffs behind four strong innings by Vaillette. Hopkinton was next, and they received the same treatment, a Hopedale 11-1 win led by Matty G, who provided the power with a home run blast deep into the Medway landscape.

Now standing in their way at the Championship round (best two out of three) was a very



strong Medway team, their clear rival during the regular season and all four Tondorf seasons.

Hopedale won game one of the series 5-2 behind the pitching of Johns, Mandeville, and Dalpe – along with a spectacular run

saving play at short stop late in the game by Colin Johns.

Game 2 was an amazing game, a 6-5 heart beating win. Matty G pitched five strong innings striking out 10+ Medway batters. Hopedale first scored in

the 3rd when Griffin D. triple to center scored Calvin M. to even the game at 1-1 heading into the 4th inning. The score remained that way until the top of the 5th, bases loaded for Hopedale’s Matty G, who hit a shot to the

fence scoring two and Hopedale soon found itself with a 5-1 lead late. But Medway is a strong team and capitalized on walks and a few hits to bring them to within 1 run at 5-4 late in the game. That changed in the top of the 6th, with two outs, Matty G at the plate, home run over the right field fence to provide that extra run Hopedale needed. Griffin Dalpe came on in relief to secure the heart pumping save. Hopedale went on to Win 6-5 in front of a large and loud contingent of Hopedale fans.

The team also won other awards, Hopedale was crowned Home Run Derby Team Champions with participants Jaxen Whyte, Owen Worthington, Calvin Mandeville, and Matthew Goldman. In the individual Home Run Derby competition, Hopedale’s Matthew Goldman took home first place against representatives from all other Tondorf teams.

Congratulations to this group of players and coaches (Marc Goldman, Scott Mandeville, & Russ Dalpe) for a memorable four-year performance; Hopedale Youth Baseball is alive and well! Let’s Go!

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The Little Red Shop Museum has reopened, more 'museum-y'

Changes contribute to more streamlined experience

By THERESA KNAPP

The Little Red Shop Museum has reopened and visitors may notice some different (previously hidden) items on display plus some changes in layout.

The gift shoppe has been moved to the loom room, there are designated docents in each room, and the exhibits now tell the 'story' of the town of Hopedale.

At the June 6 meeting of the Historical Commission, co-chair Suzan Ciaramicoli said, "On the front wall we have something about the old house (the breadboard, the pictures); we've been researching the history of Mother Mendon who was the municipality



our goal is to tell the story, from beginning to end, as you walk through on a timeline."

What specifically is in the museum?

According to www.littleredshopmuseum.org, "The Little Red Shop Museum holds artifacts related to the town's development, the region, and the textile industry (in which Hopedale played a starring role)...The Little Red Shop began as a machine shop, and the Draper Corporation, which it became, produced the looms used all over the world to create high-quality, cotton-woven fabrics.

"Because the Draper Corporation was the single most significant and longest-lasting influence on the town of Hopedale, it often overshadows other important histories of the area. The Little Red Shop Museum preserves this history's many facets and shows how that history is still relevant today."

Regarding the building itself, "The circa 1845 Little Red Shop, the oldest remaining industrial building in Hopedale, was the original home of the Draper Company, which manufactured parts for textile looms. The company expanded to the complete manufacture of looms and all of their parts, eventually becoming the world's largest textile loom manufacturing operation."

The museum is open limited hours, primarily select Sundays and Wednesdays; hours can be found at www.littleredshopmuseum.org.

Historical Commission cites 'tremendous service'

Digital Commonwealth digitized 'Cotton Chats,' annual town reports from 1886-2022

Historical Commission cites 'tremendous service'

By THERESA KNAPP

In a conversation related to a \$50 membership renewal invoice from Digital Commonwealth (which was approved unanimously), the Hopedale Historical Commission acknowledged the invaluable work the organization is doing for the town.

Historical Commission co-chair Suzan Ciaramicoli said, "We have gotten so much value from Digital Commonwealth this year with the digitization of all the annual reports from 1886 through 2022. They also are digitizing Cotton Chats for us, and they will be digitizing residential listings."

The Draper Corporation's Cotton Chats are similar to a modern-day company newsletter. They can be found at <https://bit.ly/digitizedDraperCottonChats> and at the Internet Archive at <https://archive.org/details/cottonchats00drap/mode/2up>



An excerpt from the Draper Corporation's Cotton Chats (April 1931), all of which have been digitized by Digital Commonwealth. Source: <https://archive.org/details/cottonchats00drap/mode/2up>

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Hopedale Day in the Park to be held Sept. 21, vendors and sponsors needed

This year's Hopedale Day in the Park will take place on Sept. 21 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (Rain date, Sunday, Sept. 22)

event includes entertainment, food, craftspeople, community groups, and more. Vendor and sponsorship forms are avail-



Calling all artists, crafters, Hopedale organizations, Hopedale businesses, and Hopedale business owners who wish to participate.

Application forms will be available on the Hopedale town website: www.hopedale-ma.gov >Boards and Commissions >Cultural Council

able at www.hopedale-ma.gov/hopedale-cultural-council.

To view a past event, visit bit.ly/HopedaleDayInThePark2015.

For more information, contact hopedaleculturalcouncil@yahoo.com.

Source: Facebook @Hopedale-Cultural

Hopedale Day in the Park Sponsors 2024

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Bancroft Memorial Library

50 Hopedale Street, Hopedale
Keely Bethel-Penny, Library Director
(508) 634-2209
kbethel-penny@cwomars.org

Library News

Reminder: Our Friday Summer Hours of 10am-2pm continue to be in effect through Friday, August 30th.

The Library will be closed on Saturday, August 31st and Monday, September 2nd for the Labor Day weekend.

The Trustees and staff at Bancroft Memorial Library bid farewell and Happy Retirement to Director Tricia Perry on July 19th, after dedicating 40 years of her life working in libraries. In the 3 years she was here, Tricia was instrumental in making the Bancroft Memorial Library an engaging, welcoming place for everyone and we truly wish her the very best of luck in her retirement!

The Trustees of the Bancroft Memorial Library are pleased to announce that Keely Bethel-Penny has been selected as the new Library Director, and she will move to this new role on July 20th. She has been working in public libraries for more than eighteen years and has been the Senior Library/Technical Services

Assistant at the Bancroft Memorial Library for the past two years, so her face will be familiar! During that time, Keely has established a great rapport with Trustees, staff, and patrons. She is committed to expanding the role of the Library in the community and creating a welcoming place for all library users.

Stepping in to the role previously held by Keely, please welcome Susan Rolfe! Susan has worked in libraries for 9 years and is looking forward to her new role as Senior Library/Technical Services Assistant. While an avid reader of mysteries and thrillers, Susan challenges herself to read a variety of genres so she can recommend books and authors to a broad audience of readers.

The Library Trustees invite residents to stop by the Library to meet Susan and to catch up with library staff members.

Required Reading for Summer Copies of the required reading titles for Summer Reading are available at the Library and via Libby (Overdrive) for e-books and e-audiobooks.

Community Conversations - Wednesday, August 7th at 6:30pm

Community Conversations will meet to discuss "The Role of Law in Modern Society". If you are interested in joining the conversation, please sign up at the Circulation Desk or online on the Library website under Calendar of Events.

News from The Friends of the Hopedale Library

FlowerPower.org Fundraiser The Friends of the Hopedale Library are running a Flower Power Fundraiser through October 15th! You can order fall bulbs online and have orders shipped directly to you. The Friends of the Hopedale Library earn 50%, which goes right back to the Library to pay for programming, museum passes, and other expenses not covered by the Library budget. Shop at <http://hopedalelibrary.fpfundraising.com>.

Weekly Events in the Marjorie Hattersley Children's Room On Monday August 5th and Monday August 12th there will be a new code word of the week. Search the Library to find the word, relay that to Miss Laura and you will receive an entry ticket for the Weekly Prize Drawing.

On Friday August 2nd, Friday August 9th and Friday August 16th there will be a Brain Buster puzzle (maze, word search, crossword, etc.). Complete it, show Miss Laura and you will receive a second entry to win a weekly prize!

Reading Dog Visit: Saturday, August 3rd from 10am-11am, all ages welcome! Would you like to practice reading out loud? Would you like a friendly ear to listen as you read? Why not come and read to a dog?! Come to the library and meet our four-legged reading star dog SUNNY! Registration is required and the link to register is on the Library website on the Calendar of Events. You are welcome to bring a book from home or choose one from the Library and time slots will be in 15-minute increments.

Campfire Storytime: Mondays 8/5 and 8/12 6pm



- 7pm, all ages welcome Bring something to sit on and join us at the Statue of Hope to share a story, enjoy the summer evening and relax before heading off to sleep.

Art Day: Tuesdays, 8/6 and 8/13 from 2pm - 4pm, all ages welcome Did you know that the Blue Heron is the symbol for the Hopedale Parklands? Drop in between 2:00-4:00pm and create art featuring the Blue Heron. On Wednesday, August 14th, we will host an Art Show at the Library to showcase the fabulous art our community created! There will be 3 different groups of art materials based on age, so all are welcome!

Picnic Storytime: Thursdays 8/1, 8/8 and 8/15 at 11am, all ages welcome Join Miss Laura on the lawn of the Hopedale Community House for a Picnic Story Time! We'll share a story, do a finger rhyme or two, dance and sing, run through bubbles and play with some outdoor toys. You might decide to stay and have a picnic lunch when we're through! If the weather is inclement, we will meet in the program room at the Library.

Kayla's Crochet Crew: Friday, August 9th from 1pm - 2pm, Ages 8-12 Join Kayla as she teaches crocheting! Registration is required and the link to register is on the Library website on the Calendar of Events.

Weekly Wednesday programs

Seed Exploration with Mass Audubon: Wednesday, August 7th at 6pm, ages 6-11 Join Mass Audubon at the Hopedale Pond to explore the plants, seeds and wildlife that live there. This program is for Ages 6 - 11 and registration is required. The link to register is on the Library website on the Calendar of Events.

Community Art Show

Wednesday, August 14th at 6pm, all ages welcome! All summer we have been creating art pieces celebrating the Blue Heron, the symbol of conservation in Hopedale. Join us as we showcase all the masterpieces to the entire community!

The 2024 Summer Reading Program wraps up on Friday, August 16th. Please be sure to submit all reading logs and BINGO sheets before then to receive raffle tickets for a chance to win a Grand Prize! Winning tickets will be drawn after closing on August 16th and all winners will be contacted by telephone. GOOD LUCK!

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

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Eighth Annual Fairy Walk - A Magical Day

Thank you to all of our visitors for a beautiful, magical day. Thank you to new friends and old. The 8th Annual Hopedale Fairy Walk brought us amazing weather, kind people, the most original attire, great food and shopping and full, happy hearts.

Thank you to our generous sponsors, our thoughtful and dedicated volunteers, the best entertainers in the biz, incredibly hardworking vendors and our sincerely impressive, creative house builders.

Thank you to our Hopedale Highway Department for always making everything look beautiful and doing more than we ask. Thank you to our emergency services departments for their support.

Thank you to our partners in the Hopedale Park

Commission (past & present) for helping us make this event happen.

Thank you to the businesses and homeowners who put out flyers, maps and signs for us. And thank you to those of you who are always rooting for this event and helping to make it happen.

Photos courtesy of Friends of Historic Hopedale, Facebook page



Firefighter Gleason Retires



Last month Firefighter/Paramedic Richard Gleason was honored for his 28 years of service at the Hopedale fire department. He was sent on his way, after his final shift, to enjoy a hard-earned, well-deserved retirement.



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Planning Board approves site plan review for two 6,600 square foot warehouses at 370 South Main Street

By THERESA KNAPP

At its meeting on July 10, the Hopedale Planning Board approved a site plan review for Pro-Painting Inc. at 370 South Main Street (Route 140) where the owner Gabriel Praxedes, who lives in Clinton, plans to develop two 6,600 square foot warehouses.

The hearing opened in March and was continued a few times before being closed

on July 10.

The board's decision was read by Planning Board Chair Stephen Chaplin and stated, "[W]arehouses are a use allowed by right in the GB-A Zoning District. The subject property is located in the GB-A Zoning District, and therefore, the proposed use is allowed by Site Plan Review through the Planning Board."

The decision stated:

- The proposed use is in

compliance with the town's bylaw;

- It is essential or desirable to the public convenience or welfare at the proposed location;
- It will not be detrimental to adjacent uses or to the established or future character of the neighborhood;
- It will not create undue traffic congestion or unduly impair pedestrian safety;

and

- It will not overload any public water, drainage or private sewer system or any other municipal facility to such extent that the proposed use or any existing use in the immediate area of the Town will be unduly subjected to hazards affecting the public health, safety or general welfare.

There were no public comments at the July 10 meeting, and the board unanimously approved the site plan review.

For more information on the project, including the application and building plans, visit www.hopedale-ma.gov/planning-board or bit.ly/370southMainStHopedale.

Cheers to a Successful Year!

BVT Students Earn 165 Medals at SkillsUSA Competitions in 2024

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) students proved their vocational-technical ability at the annual SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, June 24-28. The event is the world's largest showcase of career and technical education students.

The highlight of the conference is the SkillsUSA Championships, where more than 6,500 outstanding career and technical education students – all state contest winners from across the nation – compete in 110 hands-on skill and leadership competitions. Students work against the

clock and each other, proving their expertise in occupations such as electronics, computer-aided drafting, precision machining, medical assisting, and culinary arts.

In the third and final stage of the SkillsUSA competition series, BVT students competed with impressive results. Once again, the student competitors demonstrated their career-technical expertise and proudly claimed two silver medals. All contestants who medaled or met a threshold contest score for their event as an indicator of proficiency were awarded Skill Point Certificates.

"Our students continually

strive to perfect the skills needed to compete against the best vocational-technical students in the SkillsUSA District, State, and National Championships," said Superintendent-Director Dr. Michael Fitzpatrick. "In 2024, our students proved their technical skills are among the best in the country by earning 165 medals at all three levels.

The following BVT students placed in the top 10 at the 2024 SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference Championships and earned Skill Point Certificates. More details are available at www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa.

BLACKSTONE

Silver: Darshannie Francis Drackett, Health Occupations

Professional Portfolio

DOUGLAS

Silver: Skyler Robinson, Restaurant Service
9th Place: Om Patel, Mobile Robotics

GRAFTON

6th Place: Cooper Often, Mechatronics

HOPEDALE

National Officer Elect: Kallie Allen.

MILLBURY

National Voting Delegate: Elizabeth Moroz.

NORTHBRIDGE

6th Place: Sosie DerKosroffian, Medical Terminology
9th Place: Dylan Leeds, Mobile Robotics
National Voting Delegate: Nicolette Paradis

UPTON

6th Place: Justin Fransen, Mechatronics

UXBRIDGE

National Voting Delegate: Charlotte Lewis.

About Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT):

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School serves the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. Located in the heart of the Blackstone Valley, BVT creates a positive learning community that prepares students for personal and professional success in an internationally competitive society through a fusion of rigorous vocational, technical, and academic skills.



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Your Money, Your Independence

Teaching Kids Financial Responsibility: Summer Jobs and Roth IRAs



Glenn Brown, CFP

Have a teenager working this summer?

Did they earn money babysitting or mowing lawns?

How about a W-2 from selling ice cream or as a camp counselor?

You can open a Roth IRA for your child to evolve their financial knowledge while helping invest for retirement, a first house and/or qualified educational expenses.

Kids establishing Roth IRAs. There is no age minimum, as long as they earn income. It's up to the parent to document to IRS that their kids had income earned from work, either W-2 or self-employment taxable wages.

If under 18, an adult opens and maintains control of a Custodial Roth IRA with the child as beneficiary. Once an adult, usually 18 in most states, the account is transferred to a Roth IRA in their ownership.

After a Custodial Roth IRA is opened for 5 years, the advantages of tax-free earnings

and withdrawals are same as Roth IRA. Recall a Roth IRA's tax treatment is most valuable when time horizons are long and current tax rates are low, both true for kids.

What if your teen spent all their earnings? After a talk about budgeting (i.e. 3 Jars - Spend, Save, Gift), a parent or grandparent could fund a Roth IRA up to the amount of the child's reported earned income on tax returns.

Some parents will make 'match' contributions based on money earned in a summer job. If a teen earned \$3,800 for 2024, a parent will fund \$3,800.

Remember, these contributions count against the \$18,000 tax-free gifts per individual for 2024. So, if you've funded \$18,000 for child's 529 Plan, find another individual (i.e. spouse, relative) who can make the Roth IRA contribution.

Introduction to personal investing. Have fun by letting your teen research an ETF or company to invest in, have them explain reasoning behind their choice and teach how they can follow. The next year, have them choose a different investment with the new contribution. Over time, they have a mix of investments, outcomes and lessons learned. This hands-on experience lays a foundation for making informed financial decisions of greater magnitude later in life.

Taxation of withdrawals before age 59 ½. A Roth IRA allows for 100% of contributions to be taken out for any reason, with no taxes or penalties. Fur-

thermore, if a Roth IRA withdrawal is for qualified education expenses, you avoid the 10% penalty on earnings but still pay income tax on the earnings at the kid's tax rate. Thus, Roth IRA could supplement educational savings. Later, they could also withdraw up to a \$10,000 to pay for a first-time home purchase.

Impact to financial aid? Yes, in a good way. The "expected family contribution" or "EFC" formula has student owned assets assessed at 20% with two notable exceptions. First is 529's owned by parent's is 5.6% and retirement accounts owned by parent or child counts as 0%. However, if a child takes money from a Roth IRA, even to pay for college, up to 50% of the withdrawal may be assessed.

In conclusion, opening a Roth IRA for kids is a proactive way for parents to teach financial responsibility and secure their children's financial future. It's not just about saving money; it's about cultivating a mindset of financial discipline and planning that will benefit them throughout their lives. By harnessing the power of invest-

ing, compounding and leveraging tax advantages, parents can give their children a head start towards financial independence and security.

Not all institutions offer Custodial Roth IRAs, but many do with no minimums and low fees. Consult your Certified Financial Planner to learn more.

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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2024 Election information available on town website

The town has updated its website with information related to voting in the 2024 election.

Voting by mail

In most elections in Massachusetts, you can choose whether you prefer to vote in person or by mail.

No-excuse early voting by mail is available for state elections, state primaries, presidential primaries, and most local elections.

These ballots are known as "Vote by Mail" ballots and can be requested using a Vote by Mail Application available at www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/elections/languages/vote-by-mail-applications.htm.

While early Vote by Mail ballots are more common, there are special circumstances where you may need to use the Absentee Ballot application to apply for an absentee ballot instead. For more information about absentee ballot eligibility, visit www.sec.state.

www.sec.state.ma.us/divisions/elections/voting-information/absentee-voting.htm

Applying for your ballot

You can request your Vote by Mail ballot online, by mail or by email/fax.

Application Deadlines

Your mail-in ballot must reach your local election officials by 5 p.m. on the 5th business day before the election. No matter when the application is post-marked, your application must be at the local election office by the deadline.

2024 Application Deadlines:
Sept. 3 State Primaries: 5 p.m., Monday, Aug. 26
Nov. 5 State Election: 5 p.m., Tuesday, Oct. 29
Apply as early as possible, es-



pecially if your ballot will need to be mailed out of town. The Postal Service recommends allowing up to 7 days for mail delivery.

To ensure that you receive your ballot with enough time to mail it back, you should apply

2-3 weeks before Election Day.

Returning your Ballot

There are several options for returning your ballot. You may return your ballot by:

Mailing it back using the envelope provided

Hand-delivering your ballot to your local election office

Dropping your ballot off at an early voting location during early voting hours

Using a ballot drop box.

Note, ballots CANNOT be dropped off at a polling place on Election Day.

Your ballot must reach your local election office or drop box by close of polls on Election Day in order to be counted. The only exception is for ballots returned by mail in the biennial state election in November, when 3 extra days are allowed for ballots post-marked by Election Day to arrive in the mail.

You can use the Track My Ballot tool at www.sec.state.ma.us/WhereDoIVoteMA/TrackMyBallot to check the status of your ballot. The tracker will show you the date your ballot was mailed, the date it was returned, and whether your ballot was accepted or rejected.

Nov. 5th State Election
If returned in person or by drop box: 8 p.m., Nov. 5, 2024

If returned by domestic mail: by 5 p.m. on Nov. 8, 2024 (must be postmarked by Election Day)

If returned by mail from outside the United States: 5 p.m. on Nov. 15, 2024 (must be postmarked by Election Day)

Voting in person

You can still vote in person if: You applied to vote by mail, but never returned your ballot

You mailed your ballot back, but it hasn't reached your local election office

Your ballot was received by your local election office, but it was rejected

If any of the above is true, you can vote at an early voting location or at your polling place on Election Day. If your mail-in ballot reaches your local election office after you vote, the mail-in ballot will be rejected.

You can't vote in person if your ballot has reached your local election office and was accepted. Once your ballot is accepted, you have voted. You can't take your ballot back or vote again.

For more information related to voting, visit www.hopedale-ma.gov/home/news/2024-election-information

Source: www.hopedale-ma.gov

2024 ballot return deadlines

Sept. 3rd Presidential Primaries: 8 p.m., Sept. 3, 2024

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Sports

College Baseball on the Horizon?

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Brayden Lewis began playing baseball around the age of 3 or 4, with his grandparents pitching the ball to hit as he batted; little did he know years later it would have been a catalyst to being able to play collegiate baseball.

"I still enjoy soccer and basketball, but baseball is my primary sport and I'm hoping to keep it in my future plans," the Hopedale three-sport athlete said. "I would like to eventually get drafted and play Major League Baseball and if I continue to work hard, I can accomplish that dream. Growing up baseball was originally for the fun of it, but who know where it can take me now."

Playing professional baseball would be Lewis' ultimate dream, but he still has one year left at Hopedale High School and then hopefully another four with a college team. Currently, he has contacted a few local schools hoping to continue this baseball dream with Bryant University in Smithfield, RI, being his top choice. In addition to a good baseball team Bryan also is know for its good business field, something Lewis is looking to get involved with.

"I believe that I have the talent to play there," Lewis said. "When I was younger, I was much smaller than all the other kids and never figured that this is where I'd be now."

Being on the smaller side, Lewis needed to make adjustments. As he got older, he began spending more time in the weight room to get stronger allowing him to gain a lot of ground on those who were bigger than he was in the earlier days.

"Baseball is his passion," Hopedale Coach Kevin Bresciani said. "He is a hard worker and has been able to put on a ton of muscle; you can see he has worked really hard in the wight room."

It was around the eighth grade when Lewis realized that he really wanted to pursue baseball in college. He already had a love for the game and saw that he was improving over the years. As he grew up, Lewis not only played for the Hopedale travel team and eventually the NWS Devils,



Lewis remembers his first start with Hopedale saying that he made all his plays in the field during the cold day game but was unable to get his first hit that Saturday morning. He was walked twice while batting seventh for the Blue Raiders that day.

The freshman batted .357 that season and found himself becoming the team's lead-off hitter by the end of the campaign. Lewis recalls the Coach looking to switch things up, so he gave the freshman a shot at the lead-off position in the batting order and when he had himself a decent performance, he left him there.

Over the seasons Lewis continued to get stronger while improving his hitting and throwing in the field. The shortstop would bat .380 during his sophomore campaign and then this past season hit .537 to finish second in batting average in Central Massachusetts. He would also contribute 36 hits, which led CMASS. He also scored 24 runs for Hopedale with 6 doubles, 4 triples, 11 RBI and 11 stolen bases.

"I can hit the ball for power, but I am mostly looking to make contact and drive the ball hard s o m e - where,"

Lewis said. "My batting accomplishments this past season were big accomplishments, but it was nothing that I was looking for, I just want to go out and help this team win."

When the season concluded Hopedale found themselves winning the Dual Valley Conference and was awarded the number two seed in the Division 5 State Tournament. However, once in the state tournament the Blue Raiders were upset 4-0 by Westfield Tech Academy, the number 34 seed, in the first round. Lewis and his teammates were shocked, but the then junior believes it was all on the team.

"I really think that we came into the game too high on ourselves and took them too lightly," he said. "We (as a team) just didn't show up to play."

Having lost in the State Tournament Lewis wants to get stronger and better during this off-season so that Hopedale and once again have a good regular season, while returning to the tournament only to have a different result. He is looking to guide his team past that first round and make a deep run in the tournament as a senior.

Coach Bresciani, who has seen Lewis improve each year, is looking for the senior to make good on his promise.

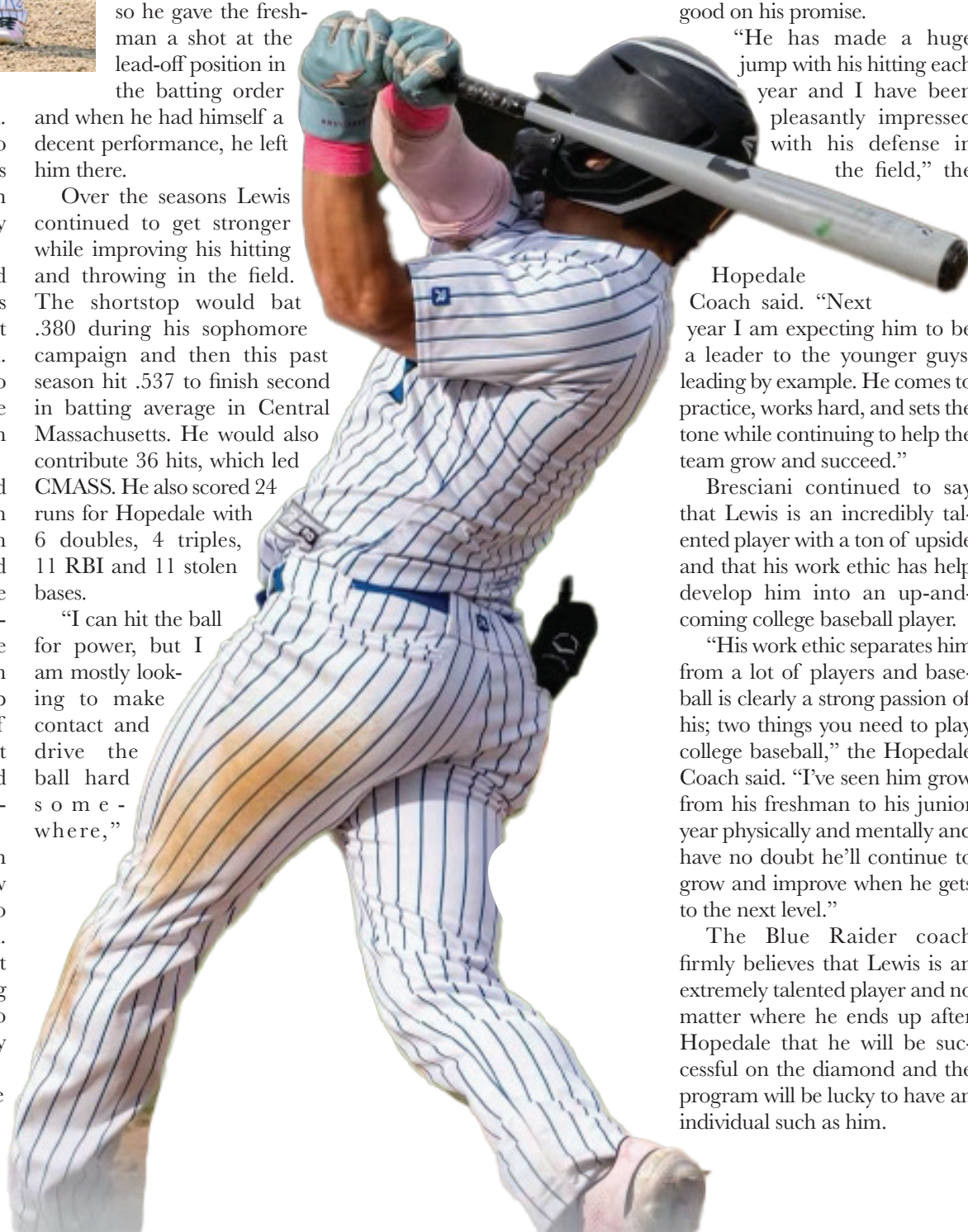
"He has made a huge jump with his hitting each year and I have been pleasantly impressed with his defense in the field," the

Hopedale Coach said. "Next year I am expecting him to be a leader to the younger guys, leading by example. He comes to practice, works hard, and sets the tone while continuing to help the team grow and succeed."

Bresciani continued to say that Lewis is an incredibly talented player with a ton of upside and that his work ethic has help develop him into an up-and-coming college baseball player.

"His work ethic separates him from a lot of players and baseball is clearly a strong passion of his; two things you need to play college baseball," the Hopedale Coach said. "I've seen him grow from his freshman to his junior year physically and mentally and have no doubt he'll continue to grow and improve when he gets to the next level."

The Blue Raider coach firmly believes that Lewis is an extremely talented player and no matter where he ends up after Hopedale that he will be successful on the diamond and the program will be lucky to have an individual such as him.



Living Healthy

Back to School Eye Health and Computer Vision Syndrome

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

As the back-to-school season approaches, parents are busy preparing their children for the academic year ahead. From buying new clothes to stocking up on school supplies, the checklist can seem endless. However, one crucial aspect that often gets overlooked is eye health. Ensuring that children have optimal vision is essential for their academic performance and overall well-being. Additionally, with the increasing use of digital devices in education, understanding and addressing Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS) is more important than ever.

The Importance of Regular Eye Exams

Regular vision screening using evidence-based tools and procedures is essential to iden-

tify children with possible vision impairments. These screenings educate parents and caregivers about the importance of vision care, ensure referrals to eye care professionals for comprehensive exams, and help parents understand the significance of following treatment plans.

However, the availability of appropriate vision screening varies depending on location and the specific schools or programs children attend. These discrepancies can lead to inequalities in children's vision care in the United States. Notably, 1 in 17 young children and 1 in 4 school-aged children have undetected and untreated vision disorders that can interfere with learning and development.

Untreated vision disorders can cause children to fall behind in school, exhibit behavioral problems, miss developmental milestones, and even suffer per-

manent vision loss. Therefore, a continuum of eye care that includes both vision screenings and comprehensive eye examinations is recommended. All children, even those with no signs of trouble, should have their eyes and vision screened at regular intervals.

Five Steps to Eye Health

- 1. Understanding the Importance:** Parents and caregivers need to understand the importance of vision screening and arrange eye exams if screening suggests a possible vision disorder.
- 2. Routine Screening:** Children should participate in routine vision screening conducted by trained and certified screeners using evidence-based tools and procedures.



3. Referral for Examination:

Children who do not pass vision screening should be referred to their medical home or an eye care professional for a comprehensive eye examination.

4. Eye Examination:

Eye exams should be conducted by eye doctors trained and experienced in treating young children.

5. Follow-up and Treatment:

Parents and caregivers should follow the treatment plan, ensure ongoing care, and share eye examination results with school nurses or other relevant personnel.

Understanding Computer Vision Syndrome

Computer Vision Syndrome, also known as Digital Eye Strain, refers to a group of eye and vision-related problems resulting from prolonged use of digital devices. Symptoms of CVS include:

- Decreased or blurred vision
- Burning or stinging eyes
- Sensitivity to light
- Headaches
- Neck and back pain

CVS is more common if there are more than two hours of continuous computer screen time a day. The most common causes include improper viewing angle or distance from the screen, glare, extended use, staring without blinking, and uncorrected vision problems.

Preventing Computer Vision Syndrome

While it may not be possible to eliminate digital device use, these measures can help prevent CVS:

- **Adjust Viewing Angle:** The center of the monitor should be 20 to 28 inches from your eyes and 4 to 5 inches below eye level. Position reference materials so they can be seen without moving your head.
- **Reduce Glare:** Position your screen to avoid glare from lights or windows. Use glare filters if necessary.
- **Rest Your Eyes:** Follow the 20-20-20 rule: every 20 minutes, look away from your screen at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds. After two hours of continuous screen use, rest your eyes for 15 minutes.

Signs Your Child May Need an Eye Exam

While annual eye exams are crucial, specific signs indicate a child may need to see an eye doctor sooner. These include:

- Squinting or tilting the head to see better
- Complaints of headaches or eye strain
- Difficulty reading or doing close-up work
- Sitting too close to the television or holding digital devices close to the eyes
- Excessive tearing or sensitivity to light

If any of these symptoms are present, it's essential to schedule an eye exam as soon as possible. As always... "Moms know better". In doubt, schedule a comprehensive eye exam.

The Rise of Digital Device Use in Education

In recent years, digital devices have become integral to the educational experience. Research shows that 25 to 93 percent of computer users experience a problem so common there's a name for it: Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS).

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Beware of fraudsters, a reminder from the Hopedale Police Department

Common scams are the 'grandparent scam' and 'phone scam'

The Hopedale Police Department is asking our senior citizens to be aware of potential fraudsters calling them to scam them of their life savings. Fraudsters typically target senior citizens as they view them to be more willing to communicate with scammers, and generally lack computer technology, which makes them more vulnerable to web- or email-based scams. The scammers believe seniors have amassed some wealth over the years and can be naïve about the numerous ways in which fraud is committed in modern times.

Hopedale Police Chief Mark A. Giovannella says all residents should feel free to call the police if they suspect fraud. "If you do not think it sounds right, please give us a call. This is what we are here for. I would rather get the phone call to prevent someone from getting scammed than try to investigate how they did."

Fraudsters use a variety of ways to scam senior citizens, and the two most common methods are the 'grandparent scam' and the 'phone scam.'

The grandparent scam is where the scammer reaches out to someone who pretends to be

their grandchild in financial trouble, or they are in jail and need bail money. The fraudster will ask for money immediately and tell their victims to use a wire transfer. If that is not an option, the fraudster will have the victim buy several gift cards and read off the gift card information. The fraudster will stress urgency on the issue to prevent their victims from contacting other family members, or they will ask the victim to keep it a secret to avoid embarrassment.

The other most common scam used against senior citizens is a phone scam wherein the fraudster identifies himself or herself as an IRS agent, or calls them to offer free medi-

cal supplements, devices, or discounts. With these types of phone scams, the fraudster attempts to get the victim's personal information (full name, address, date of birth, social security number, and credit card information). Once they have this information, they will immediately deplete the funds on a credit card or try to open additional credit cards or loans.

The best prevention for stopping phone scams is awareness. Awareness of the above scams, and knowing many others exist, is more than half the battle against elder fraud. Another way to prevent fraudsters from scamming is to keep your person information private and never give it out over the phone or email. For those who use computers, be cautious of

emails and attachments. Do not open emails from sends whose names you do not recognize – in fact, delete or block them. Never click on a link or open an email attachment you don't recognize. Remember, emails, links, and attachments spread viruses and give fraudsters access to your computer. Furthermore, you should always consult with family members upon receiving a call or email where an individual or organization is requesting money, gift cards, or personal information.

As a reminder, any resident who feels they were the victim of a scam, or if someone is trying to obtain your personal information, should contact the Hopedale Police Department.

Source: www.hopedale-ma.gov

EYES

continued from page 12

- **Blink Often:** Blink frequently and use lubricating eye drops to prevent dry eye.
- **Get Your Eyes Checked:** Ensure your prescription is correct, especially for computer use.

If symptoms persist, consult an ophthalmologist for a comprehensive evaluation and treatment plan.

Choosing the Right Eyewear

For children who need corrective lenses, selecting the right eyewear is crucial:

- **Durability:** Choose sturdy frames that can withstand daily activities.
- **Comfort:** Ensure the frames fit well and are comfortable.
- **UV Protection:** Consider lenses with UV protection for outdoor activities.
- **Blue Light Filters:** Several studies suggest that blue light-blocking glasses do not improve symptoms of digital eye strain. The American Academy of Ophthalmology does not recommend blue light-blocking glasses because of the lack of scientific evidence that blue light is damaging to the eyes.

Conclusion

As children head back to school, ensuring their eye

health should be a top priority. Regular eye exams, attention to symptoms of vision problems, and strategies to prevent Computer Vision Syndrome can help safeguard their vision and support their academic success. By taking these steps, parents can ensure their children have the visual tools they need to thrive in and out of the classroom.

Computer Vision Syndrome is very common, and more eye strain can be expected as screen work increases. Our center and optometrists have state-of-the-art equipment to diagnose and treat many eye problems, including CVS. With in-house ophthalmologists available, there is no need to seek outside referrals. Our seven dedicated eye care providers across three state-of-the-art facilities in Franklin, Milford, and Millis offer convenient Saturday and after-hours appointments. This back-to-school season, all new patients, children, and adults, receive a new pair of select eyeglasses. Our quality in-house optical shop has its own lab and experienced opticians ready to help. From basic eye exams to high-tech surgeries, we provide comprehensive eye care for returning scholars and the entire family.

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- Active enrollment in e-statements – you must sign into your online banking account at least once every 12 months to keep enrollment active.

Milford Regional Awards Six Scholarships to Student Volunteers

2024 awards sponsored by the Auxiliary of Milford Regional and the Perry Memorial Volunteer Scholarship

Milford Regional Medical Center awarded student volunteers planning to pursue careers in the healthcare field scholarships totaling \$4,500. Three students received scholarships from the Auxiliary of Milford Regional and three students received scholarships from the Perry Memorial Volunteer Scholarship.

Nicolas Araujo of Franklin, Kaylee Chen of Grafton and Katrina Gagnon of Hopedale were recipients of \$1,000 from the Auxiliary. Araujo plans to study chemical engineering, Chen is preparing to pursue a career in nursing and Gagnon aspires to become a physical therapist.

“I’ve always had a passion to help others,” said Gagnon. “Just knowing I’m making a difference

in someone’s life is so meaningful to me.”

The Auxiliary serves Milford Regional through programs of education, community service, public relations, and support of volunteer services – along with supporting the hospital through fundraising efforts. Since its founding, the Auxiliary has raised close to \$1 million, resulting in state-of-the-art equipment, advanced technology, key renovations, scholarships, expansions in patient care and critical programmatic support.

Jeri Adiletto of Franklin, Elsiana Aires of Westborough and Jessica Lutton of Uxbridge each received \$500 from the Perry Memorial Volunteer Scholarship. Adiletto is planning to study nursing, Aires is a pre-med



Above: Three local students received \$500 from the Perry Memorial Volunteer Scholarship: Pictured left to right are: Milford Regional Medical Center Director of Volunteering Elaine Carter, Rebecca Perry, Jessica Lutton, Jeri Adiletto, Elsiana Aires and Perry Scholarship Chair Bob Cole. Below: Three local students received \$1,000 from the Auxiliary of Milford Regional. Pictured left to right are: Katrina Gagnon and Kaylee Chen. Not pictured is Nicolas Araujo.

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student and Lutton hopes to become an X-ray technician.

“I was in and out of hospitals as a kid and I loved the nurses who took care of me. I considered them my heroes,” said Adiletto. “I feel like this is my opportunity to give back the same way they gave back to me.”

For more than 20 years, Bill and Anne Perry were dedicated

volunteers at Milford Regional Medical Center. The Perry’s were known for their commitment to volunteerism and appreciation for education. Milford Regional volunteer Bob Cole oversees all of the fundraising for the Perry Scholarship program.

“Milford Regional is incredibly grateful to the Auxiliary and the Perry family for understand-

ing and supporting the importance of investing in the higher education of these student volunteers who aspire to be the next generation of healthcare professionals,” said Milford Regional Medical Center President and Chief Executive Officer Edward J. Kelly.

Hopedale Resident Named To Dean's List At Quinnipiac University

The following area students were named to the dean's list for the Spring 2024 semester at Quinnipiac University:

To qualify for the dean's list, students must earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 with no grade lower than C. Full-time students must complete at least 14 credits in a semester, with at least 12 credits that have been graded on a letter grade basis to be eligible. Part-time students must complete at least six credits during a semester. Names followed by an asterisk denotes with honors.

About Quinnipiac University

Quinnipiac is a private, co-educational, institution located 90 minutes north of New York City and two hours from Boston. The university enrolls 9,000 students in 110 degree programs through its Schools of Business,

Communications, Education, Computing and Engineering, Health Sciences, Law, Medicine, Nursing and the College of Arts and Sciences. Quinnipiac is recognized by U.S. News & World Report and Princeton Review's "The Best 388 Colleges." The university is in the midst of program expansion and renewal for both traditional and adult learners, attraction of diverse communities, development of innovative corporate partnerships and construction of an ambitious set of capital projects. For more information, please visit qu.edu. Connect with Quinnipiac on Facebook and follow Quinnipiac on Twitter @QuinnipiacU.

The Hopedale resident who earned Dean's list status is Troy Hobson.

Real Estate Corner

Recent Home Sales

Date	Hopedale	Amount
07/12/2024	36 Inman St.	\$425,000
07/02/2024	19 Haven Way	\$795,000
06/21/2024	360 S. Main St.	\$570,000
06/20/2024	23 Westcott Road	\$650,000

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









The 4-bed, 2-bath, 1,438 square foot house at 122 36 Inman Street in Hopedale recently sold for \$425,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com

Looking to advertise in our Real Estate Corner?

Contact Susanne: 508-954-8148

sue@sodellconsult.com

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

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1 No Watercolor Classes 1:00 pm Tai Chi Errand Van Available 	2 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
5 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 9:30 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	6 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 9:00 am Grocery Shopping 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge	7 9:30 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 1:00 pm Cribbage	8 10:00 am Watercolor Classes 12:00 pm Lunch 1:00 pm Brain Games Challenge 1:00 pm Tai Chi	9 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
12 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 9:30 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Lunch at Senior Center 12:00 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	13 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge Errand Van Available 	14 9:30 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 1:00 pm Cribbage	15 10:00 am Watercolor Classes 1:00 pm Tai Chi 1:00 pm COA Meeting Errand Van Available 	16 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
19 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 9:30 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Lunch at Senior Center 12:00 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	20 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 9:00 am Grocery Shopping 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge	21 9:30 am Nurse Clinic 9:30 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 1:00 pm Cribbage	22 10:00 am Watercolor Classes 1:00 pm Tai Chi	23 12:00 pm Senior Center closes
26 9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 9:30 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	27 9:00 am Yoga with Crystal 9:30 am Grocery Shopping 12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge Errand Van Available 	28 9:30 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 1:00 pm Cribbage	29 10:00 am Watercolor Classes 1:00 pm Tai Chi Errand Van Available 	30 12:00 pm Senior Center closes

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