



# Bellingham BULLETIN

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## Municipal Spotlight

### Bellingham Redesigns Website, Adds Facebook Page



Karen Dutil, left, and Hilarie Allie have played key roles in the redesign of Bellingham's website and the addition of a municipal Facebook page.

By KEN HAMWEY,  
BULLETIN STAFF WRITER

Bellingham has redesigned its municipal website by implementing major changes that will enable users to navigate the site more effectively. Another plus on the technology front is the addition of a municipal Facebook page.

What's basically changed on the town's municipal website is the improved way departmental information is organized and the ability to find the content readily.

"The redesigned site ([www.bellinghamma.org](http://www.bellinghamma.org)) now is in compliance with the ADA (American Disability Act)," said Karen Dutil, the town's IT Director. "Fonts and text sizes are easier to read. Past site deficiencies were recognized but now improvements have been made for sight-impaired individuals."

Town Administrator Denis Fraine, who's worked with Dutil on the redesign, likes the

**REDESIGN**  
*continued on page 2*



## Bellingham Safety Officials Aim to Be Age & Dementia Friendly

### Task Force Plans Comprehensive Survey & Meetings with Town Elders to Develop Courses of Action

By DAVID DUNBAR

"Dementia is our biggest challenge," says Bellingham Police Chief Ken Fitzgerald. "More training is needed, so when officers respond to an emergency, they know whether they're dealing with someone suffering from dementia or a younger person in crisis."

The current effort in Bellingham for the town to become Age & Dementia Friendly will help to provide that kind of training, plus much more.

The Age & Dementia Friendly Task Force, of which Chief Fitzgerald is a member, is working on multiple fronts with the priority of getting an effective, affordable community-wide assessment of what's needed most.

The goal, says Patty Sullivan who stepped away as the Massachusetts Council on Aging's (MCOA) lead contact last month, "is to make Bellingham a great

**DEMENTIA**  
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REDESIGN

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new-look home page.

"It's easier to find things," Fraine said. "The online payments link is a good example and there's ease in finding specifics like a calendar of events (board meetings), the latest town news, updates on trash pick-up and recycling, how to report a pot hole, how to sign up for code red, and links to all other departments and town activities."

A previous redesign occurred in 2017 but the current upgrade is a major plus.

"It needed to be modernized," Dutil offered. "There are technology improvements, and the content is definitely more organized. And, we're in ADA compliance. Also, each department head, or a designated individual, has undergone training to update the content of their pages."

Dutil emphasized that the redesign has not involved using taxpayer money — the funds were generated from a statewide grant that she wrote. "The town received a Community Compact Grant for \$55,000 that paid for

the website redesign," she said.

The town's new Facebook page was launched on July 1, and Fraine believes that by focusing on town news and events the page can help to eliminate misinformation on other Facebook pages.

"More people are using Facebook," he said. "And we see a fair amount of misinformation about Bellingham on other Facebook pages. We want to give users as much accurate and updated information as possible on town news. Much of the info on the town's municipal website is now available on the new Facebook page (@townofbellinghamma)."

Currently, the police and fire departments, the DPW, library, senior center and board of health all have their own Facebook pages. "The news they post will be tagged onto the municipal Facebook page," said Hilarie Allie, the Select Board's Administrative Assistant. "Be sure to like and follow the Facebook page for accurate information."

Users can directly message the administrators of the Facebook page (Dutil and Allie) with questions and expect a response during business hours. "I'll try to answer any questions or get the needed information from the departments," said Allie.

Fraine, Dutil and Allie all have strong, positive opinions on the redesign of the municipal website and the addition of Facebook.

"The Select Board has prioritized the need to do a better job of sharing accurate information with the public," Fraine emphasized. "The Select Board wants to make sure the town is disseminating updated and accurate information and wants to hear what's on residents' minds. We want the public to come to our sites for their news and we want to be transparent in our approach."

Dutil, who's worked for the town for 30 years (20 as I.T. Director) says: "It's my job to execute all of the Select Board's requests to provide the platforms to get information out accurately and quickly."

Allie's focus is on getting more of Bellingham's residents to use the town's Facebook page. "We realize that residents are going to Facebook to get information on the town," she said. "So, we've created our own page to provide accuracy. The Select Board's aim is to be as transparent as possible."

Technological upgrades, re-designs and improvements are inevitable in this day and age, and Bellingham officials are striving to make its website and Facebook pages more dependable and easier to use.

DEMENTIA

continued from page 1

place to grow up and grow old."

The MCOA has identified "Nine Domains of Livability" for attention. They are transportation, housing, public safety, outdoor spaces and buildings, services, civic participation and employment, social inclusion and participation, access and equity, and communication, information, and technology.

The work of the Task Force is to figure out what town residents need in each of these "Domains" and then make changes.

This is where the community assessment comes in. It will be a comprehensive survey that could take months and should produce actionable results.

Fire Chief William Miller, a member of Bellingham's Age & Dementia Friendly Task Force, is planning a series of meetings with town seniors. He says, "There will be one at Wrentham Manor, another at Depot Court, and a third at the Senior Center." What is learned from these meetings will inform a plan of action.

Among other things, these meetings are intended "to impress on seniors the need to call 911 before their problems get even worse." He fears that "some seniors are afraid to call or that they don't want to become a problem." His department is working on developing a list of medical conditions that seniors could write down and post on their refrigerators to help inform responders.

Police Chief Fitzgerald explains another dimension of the dementia challenge. "People are in denial, or they just don't know the problem, or they don't care. So, it's difficult for us to know how to respond most effectively." He likes the idea of a dementia registry that would contain contact information of those affected.

The MCOA's Patty Sullivan said there are several dementia training programs that are free for towns and their departments including schools and public safety. More information is available on the MCOA website.

Along with dementia at the top of Chief Fitzgerald's list of priorities is elder abuse. "We have lots of resources that people can connect with if they want to." Elder abuse can take multiple forms; there's physical abuse, but also mental and emotional abuse.

At the Senior Center on Tuesday, August 13 at 11:30 a.m., the Bellingham Police Department will offer an illuminating and surprising look at elder abuse. Bring your questions and please call (508) 966-0398 to reserve your seat.

To learn more about the MCOA's dementia-friendly initiative, part of Dementia Friendly America (<https://dfamerica.org>), visit <https://dfmassachusetts.org>.

(For more information about the town's effort to become Age & Dementia Friendly, please contact Task Force Co-chair Kay Page at the number above.)

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# From the Town Clerk.....

## Upcoming Elections

There are two more elections scheduled for this year. The Massachusetts State Primary and the General Election.

The Massachusetts State Primary will be held on Tuesday, September 3, 2024 in the Bellingham High School Gymnasium. Polling hours will be from 7AM until 8PM. Leading up to Election Day, there will be In-Person Early Voting held at the Municipal Center beginning on August 24th and ending on August 30th. The hours for In-Person Early Voting will be as follows:

**Saturday, August 24th – 10 a.m.– 4 p.m.**

**Monday, August 25th - 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Tuesday, August 26th – 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday, August 27th – 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

**Thursday, August 28th – 8:30 a.m.– 4:30 p.m.**

**Friday, August 29th – 8:30 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

If you wish to vote by mail, and have not filled out a request card (the State will be sending out the second round of cards by August 20th), please contact us at townclerk@bellinghamma.org and we will send you an application. If you are an unenrolled (“independent”) voter, please choose the party ballot that you would

like to receive. The choices are: Democrat, Republican or Libertarian. There is no such thing as an “independent” ballot.

This Primary pertains to State and County offices only.

The General (Presidential) Election will be held on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, once again in the Bellingham High School Gymnasium. Hours will be from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m. There will be a two-week period of In-Person Early Voting beginning on October 19th and ending on November 1st. Once again, if you wish to vote by mail, please fill out the request card that will be mailed to you or contact the Town Clerk’s office at townclerk@bellinghamma.org for an application.

Please watch the Town website and *Bellingham Bulletin* August issue for further information.

### Public Information Requests

Due to the increasing number of public records requests, please submit all such requests in writing (email) so that we can better keep track. Vital records requests may be called in or requested in person. Thank you for your cooperation.

# Bellingham Days August 8th -August 10th

Bellingham Days is back again. The fun begins on Thursday August 8th at 6 p.m. when the carnival opens for their first night of fun at Bellingham Memorial Middle School. Take a ride, try your hand at their games or maybe have some cotton candy or fried dough. Then feel free to return on Friday night at 6 p.m. for more carnival fun!

This year we have added a Vendor Fair to our Saturday event list. It will be held on Saturday August 10th from 12 – 5 p.m. on the Memorial School Fields. All fees for the spaces will be donated to the Friends of the Bellingham Library. We currently have over 20 vendors with more applications arriving daily. We will have Tupperware, a facepainter, Urban Air, Henna tattooing and many more. Also, the band, Steve Blunt & Friends will be performing at noon on the stage for families to enjoy! At 2 p.m., the carnival will open for children of all ages.

The events don’t end at 5. At 5:30 on Saturday, we will have 3 bands performing on stage. AK Cody, Critical Mass and Belling-

hammered. Free train rides on the “Rambling Railroad” from 6 p.m. – 9 p.m. and we end the evening with our fabulous fireworks.

Bellingham Friends of Music are running the tickets sale and concession stand during the Bellingham Carnival and Fireworks, August 8 - 10, 2024. Please consider donating some time to our booster organization as they support many, many different programs and initiatives for our music program. Both student and adult volunteers are needed! Here’s the link to sign-up to volunteer: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0D4DA5A62EABF49-49833297-2024#/>

Discounted wristband vouchers will be available to purchase at the library beginning on Monday, August 5th.

Keep your eyes peeled for more updated information on our town website [www.bellinghamma.org](http://www.bellinghamma.org), our new Facebook page, Town of Bellingham Ma, and our Facebook event page, Bellingham Days Family Concert, Vendor Fair & More!

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# Run, Roll and Raise:

## Space2Thrive 5K to Support VOLT Hockey on September 14th!

By JENNIFER RUSSO

Coming up on Saturday, September 14th at the West Hill Dam in Uxbridge is an opportunity to be surrounded by nature's beauty, hang out with friends, and get those steps in, all while making it possible for people with disabilities to thrive.

The 5K, organized by Space2Thrive founder Helena Liedtke, raises money for VOLT Hockey, an adaptive team sport that enables people with physical

disabilities to engage in a competitive and fun environment, learn the value of teamwork and sportsmanship, and connect with others.

"In contrast to traditional wheelchair hockey, a Volt Hockey wheelchair is equipped with a fixed stick of flexible material, which is mounted directly at the tip of the electric hockey chair's fender bracket. The chairs can be customized to adapt to an individual's needs and to offer additional physical



The Space2Thrive 5K supports adaptive team sport VOLT Hockey, and this year's event will take place on September 14th at the West Hill Dam in Uxbridge.

support. Therefore, Volt Hockey especially opens the world of participating in a team sport to an underserved population of people living with physical disabilities, who have limited upper and lower body mobility," explains Helena.

The sport, which originated in Denmark 40 years ago, is very popular in Scandinavian countries, but is rather new to the United States. This month, VOLT is running a camp in Oslo, Norway and Helena is excited to bring that knowledge

back to the states to apply it here.

"As a parent, for the first time in my daughter's life I was able to cheer her on when she competed with her team at the North American Championship in Canada or the World Cup in Sweden. When you've spent 15 years supporting your child while they are going through and recovering from countless medical procedures, having the opportunity to support her in such a positive way was exhilarating," shares Helena.

The goal for the upcoming 5K is to raise \$20,000 to enable more people to be able to play VOLT Hockey, support attendance at camps, and enable families to attend tournaments. Each chair costs between \$6K-10K and can be adapted to each person and their unique needs. The playing rink and accessories have additional costs associated. Helena hopes for 100-200 participants in the race this year, which is on a trail where one can easily run, walk, or use a wheelchair to participate in. There will be raffles and prizes, activities for kids, and a lemonade stand.

Her passion for bringing VOLT Hockey to the area and founding Space2Thrive comes from a personal understanding of how important it is to have equitable environments. One of her daughters was born with a genetic condition that changed their lives and opened her eyes to the fact that there were less opportunities for her daughter to engage in activities with her sister or her friends.

"Through my daughter I realized how many social and environmental barriers still are prevalent in our communities. However, there was a moment when I attempted to sign my daughter up at a dance school

where her younger sister was dancing. Wide-eyed, and with a bewildered expression on her face, the owner replied with a long drawn-out "no". It sounded like a rhetorical question, to which I, of course, should have known the answer. I think that was the moment when the idea to "just do it myself" started to form," shares Helena.

Space2Thrive started almost ten years ago with music and movement classes and events where all were welcome, and where families caring for children with disabilities invited peers with or without disabilities, and other friends and family members. Families were able to interact, and children learned the lesson that everyone can be a part of a community if they choose to.

"Every single person has the choice to create inclusive and equitable social and physical environments," says Liedtke.

"People with disabilities are people first and should be treated as such. Don't make assumptions. Believe people's experiences. In the end, we all just want to belong, be heard, and be loved regardless of the attributes accompanying our appearances. The more social and physical barriers we break down, the more we will focus on the person and not their impairment," says Helena.

If you would like to participate in the Space2Thrive 5K, you can sign up through the Space2Thrive website at <https://www.space2thrive.org/5k-come-out-and-revive> - it is \$20 per entry (or \$25 the day of the race). If you would like to help in other ways, you can sign up to volunteer, donate funds or raffle baskets, help them connect with potential sponsors or share on social media channels.

Learn more about Space2Thrive and their VOLT Hockey team at: [www.space2thrive.org](http://www.space2thrive.org) or follow them on Facebook or Instagram @Space2Thrive.

Sign-ups are open for the VOLT session starting in September at the Hockomock Area YMCA in North Attleboro. Sign up is open to participants with physical disabilities ages 13+. Children 8-12 years with physical disabilities are encouraged to reach out if interested as consideration will be made for offering an additional practice time for this age group. If interested, please reach out to [helena@space2thrive.org](mailto:helena@space2thrive.org).

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# Summer Cleanout is Greener with Affordable Junk Removal

## Business Spotlight

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

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

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

Jay Schadler started his business in 2005. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with eight trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

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

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

Not everything ends up in a landfill—not if Jay can help it. He first tries to either recycle or donate items. Only after he tries to repurpose items do they end up at the transfer station.

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard dumpster for a week and chucking up to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates

that tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

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

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

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

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They also have a thriving commercial business, working with contractors and roofers to clear away debris and keep the job site clean. They can even handle commercial and residential emergencies with same-day service.

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

Contact Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business take care of everything for you. Call Jay Schadler at (774)

287-1133 or visit us online at [www.affordablejunkremoval.com](http://www.affordablejunkremoval.com).

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# Love to Sing? Join the Greater Milford Community Chorus!

By JENNIFER RUSSO

Do you love singing? The Greater Milford Community Chorus (GMCC) is excited to begin its fall/winter season and extends a warm invitation to singers in the community to join them as they prepare for their upcoming annual holiday program, which is always a wonderful success!

Founded in 1973, the GMCC has been entertaining the community in many ways throughout the years. From their flagship Spring and Winter programs, performing with the Claflin Hill Symphony, their Melody & Harmony volunteer outreach group that performs at community lo-

cations throughout the year, and being asked to perform in a local opera this year, there is no shortage of opportunities to showcase talented voices!

The chorus is directed by Mark Schiappucci, a graduate of New England Conservatory and an active singer throughout the Boston and central Massachusetts area. He is a talented conductor who makes the experience fun, with his quick wit and humor, and unique ability to make some of the more complicated pieces much easier to understand.



Personally speaking, I have been involved with the chorus myself for the last couple of years and, as someone who has been singing my whole life, it has been a great creative outlet for me. More than that, I am a better sight-reader of music than I ever was before, and I've had the pleasure of meeting truly amazing people along the way.

The winter performances combine both traditional and contemporary works, from holiday favorites to 16th century carols, songs in English and other languages, theater-based compositions, thoughtful Hannukah folk pieces and even songs from movies most of us have seen.

This season, the chorus is looking for all voices, but has a particular need to grow the tenor

and bass sections. Men are strongly encouraged to join, as most songs are in harmonies of four or more parts.

"I came into the choir not really knowing what to expect...I just lied to sing a variety of music. The group welcomed me and guided me toward the right section (I didn't know I was a tenor)...it's been great for the past 10 years, as both my wife and I are involved. I learn more about music theory, reading, singing the 'parts you don't know' and making beautiful harmony. The best part is at the concerts you feel that the audience is all happy at the same time, something you just don't get in the rest of the world," says Ray Kuhl.

Ray encourages men to "be a part of a group that appreciates you for you, not the job you do or any status, not the money you make or anything like that - bring a voice and create smiles in the audience. Nothing makes you feel as good as being there for your group and making everyone happy."

Show dates this year are Saturday December 7th and Sunday December 8th, as well as with the Claflin Hill Symphony on Saturday December 14th.

Rehearsals for this season begin on August 26th and are held at the Milford Memorial Hall with registration beginning at 6:30 PM. Rehearsals are held weekly on Mondays from 7-9:30 p.m. The chorus welcomes singers of all abilities (no audition necessary) who are 18+ years of age. Prospective singers can attend the first three rehearsals before deciding if it is a good fit for them. Those who join will pay a membership fee of \$25 and a refundable \$20 fee for sheet music that will be refunded once music is returned at the end of the season.

For more information, please visit the GMCC website at [www.greatermilfordcommunitychorus.org](http://www.greatermilfordcommunitychorus.org)

The GMCC is sponsored by the Milford Community Use Program and Milford Cultural Council, funded in part by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

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# The Little Gym of Medway Helps Children Build Confidence, Develop Skills, Make Lifelong Friends

*TLG offers respite during "Parent Night Out" events*

Leah Chan (and her husband Nigel) took over The Little Gym (TLG) in Medway in 2021 and since then have made several improvements to enhance the experience of TLG members.

"We've updated our equipment and interior, and worked with our staff to ensure a more dynamic and engaging class experience. Additionally, we've focused on cultivating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all families. We have also made a significant effort to reach out to the local community by supporting local and non-profit organizations."

Chan says the "typical" TLG customer is a family with children aged 4 months to 12 years old. She says TLG is committed to providing a nurturing and supportive environment where children can build confidence, develop physical skills, and make lifelong friends.

"Our programs are designed to be both fun and educational, fostering a love for physical activity and learning. We pride ourselves on our strong sense of community and our dedication to helping every child reach their full potential," Chan says, adding their most

popular programs are the parent/child classes for the youngest kids and pre-k gymnastics.

"We are also growing our non-competitive grade school gymnastics program, and we offer a unique dance class on Sundays that combines techniques from both dance and gymnastics," says Chan. "We also host monthly community events, Parents' Night Out(s), and our ever-popular birthday parties."

A typical birthday party at TLG includes 1.5 hours of fun-filled activities led by the enthusiastic TLG instructors. The \$440 package for 15 guests includes exclusive use of the gym, themed games, music, gymnastics activities, and paper goods.

Chan says, "We work with parents to pre-plan the event and handle the setup and cleanup, allowing them to relax



*"We've been Little Gym members for almost 7 years now and I can't say enough great things about them! My daughter adores everyone here and it truly is the highlight of her week coming to her Little Gym class! She has come such a long way with not only her gymnastic skills but her social skills as well. Their patience, knowledge and creativity are just a few reasons why we love them!"*

**-Kristen, TLG Member**

*"It's always sunny and 70s in the gym."*

**-Leah Chan, owner  
The Little Gym of Medway**



and enjoy the celebration. Needless to say, it's always sunny and 70s in the gym, so no one has to worry about inclement weather ruining birthday party plans!"

The Little Gym will be hosting events in September and October that are open to members and non-members. Themed events that families can attend (and parents can learn more about TLG) will be held on:

**Fri., Sept. 6: Back to School Bash**  
**Fri., Oct. 18: Halloween Party**

In addition, TLG will host a "Parent Night Out/Parent Survival Night" on Fridays, Sept. 20 and Oct. 11. These events are drop-off events for bathroom-independent kids to have fun at the gym while parents enjoy a night out for 2.5 hours.

For more information about The Little Gym of Medway, stop by 74 Main Street in Medway, call (508) 533-9405, or visit [www.thelittlegym.com/massachusetts-medway/](http://www.thelittlegym.com/massachusetts-medway/).

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*\*Bellingham Library has some Unlimited Ride Wristbands for sale at a significant discount.*

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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 1/2.** A Roth IRA allows for 100% of contributions to be taken out for any reason, with no taxes or penalties. Furthermore, 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 investing, 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.

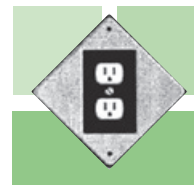
Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, [www.PlanDynamic.com](http://www.PlanDynamic.com). Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

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# Thank You!

We wanted to thank everyone who has reached out to us after Sammy Coniaris' recent passing. You made donations in her name, had trees planted in her memory, sent flowers, and wrote such moving tributes about her. Each of these has meant the world to us.

Her doctors, especially Dr. Deeb Salam of Tufts Medical Center, stayed with her through all her health challenges. Nurses, doctors, and health care staff at Tufts and Milford Regional Hospital supported her through everything. Father Greg Christakos of Sts. Anagyroi Greek Orthodox Church in Marlboro, MA was there for us when we most needed him.

Our regulars to Pete's Bluebird (you know who you are!) brought so much joy to our lives. All of our friends and family have made a difference—to Sammy when she was with us—and to us who now feel her loss.

Sammy's favorite movie was *The Wizard of Oz*. Her favorite song? "Somewhere Over the Rainbow." When you hear this song, think of Sammy and smile.

Thanks again, from the bottom of our hearts,

-Bill Coniaris and Joe Deslauriers





# The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

## Work With The Best! b.LUXE

BY GINA WOELFEL

Are you looking for an incredible beauty salon to start or advance your career? Work at b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio! With its exceptional reputation, highly talented team of professionals, and a full selection of hair, makeup, spa, and tanning services, we're dedicated to providing an outstanding experience for both clients and employees. b.LUXE is genuinely a great place to work! Below, hear from a few of our stylists and estheticians as we explore why b.LUXE is ideal for motivated hair, makeup, and skincare professionals to flourish and succeed.

"Early in my career, a well-known Boston salon owner took me under their wing and shared their talent. They taught me about the artistic side of the beauty industry and the business side. I received such well-rounded training. I love sharing what I know with the whole b.LUXE Team." - **Heather Cohen, Owner of b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio.**

Join us at b.LUXE, where our core values of teamwork, education, structure, optimism, and trust will skyrocket your success! You'll also enjoy competitive salaries, exceptional educational opportunities, travel, benefits + more!

"I really enjoy the team atmosphere at b.LUXE. There is always someone there to lend a helping hand." - **Morgan Courtright, Stylist**

b.LUXE Hair and Makeup takes pride in being Massachu-



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setts's highest-rated salon on Google. Our team works together to take care of our clients and support the training and development of our staff. With over 750 reviews showcasing our commitment to high-quality service, we have established a luxurious beauty experience in a collaborative environment. Our goal is to empower our team members, foster self-confidence, enable career growth, and provide sustainable incomes

"I love working at b.LUXE! Not only do I get to work with my twin sister, Nicole, but the rest of the girls feel like family, too!" - **Sarah O'Connell, Senior Stylist**

Our senior staff enthusiastically share their experience and knowledge, providing unhindered access to their skills. We encourage the growth of our fellow artists and actively seek opportunities to help our co-workers grow and achieve great things.

"I love the city-loft feel of the salon! The culture at b.LUXE is a teamwork environment, with continuing education, great leadership, and complimentary 'LUXE for everyone' services like the keratin glove and BE-



FORE Oil treatments that the clients love!" - **Sandra Wilkey, Senior Stylist**

One of the biggest motivators for joining our team is the exceptional educational opportunities we offer. Whether embarking on your cosmetology journey or looking to advance your skills, our education program is at the pinnacle of what the industry offers.

"The energetic, positive, and supportive vibe from this amazing group of women is how we're able to share our passion for hair with our guests. This is why I love being a part of this team!" - **Heidi McDade, Senior Stylist**

Our cutting, coloring, and event styling specialists hold Monday education sessions, allowing our junior stylists and assistants to learn techniques in a warm and supportive environment with the people they work with daily. In addition to our in-house education, b.LUXE regularly hosts Goldwell sponsored

events with well-known educators like Jacob Kahn, Johnny Kelly, and Kylie Bussing. Our aesthetics team attends seminars and collaborates with guest educators from our skincare line, G.M. Collin, an undisputed leader in dermo-corrective skincare solutions.

"The educational opportunities with G.M. Collin provide me with in-depth product knowledge that allows me to offer the best solutions for every skin concern. Whatever your goals are here, you will always have someone in your corner to support you and cheer you on." - **Corinn Bradford, Esthetician**

Are you an established artist looking to expand your clientele or a recent graduate from cosmetology school seeking help building your client base? Look no further! Our in-house marketing department is here to support you with social media tutorials, collaborations, promotions, and direct engagement with our followers to bring new clients to your chairs. b.LUXE also maintains a waitlist that encourages our clients to be open to trying all stylists to expedite their wait times!

"We grow together. We grow as a team. The opportunities are endless." - **Senior Stylist, Dani Johnson:**

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# Exsultet! A Celebration of Voices Holds Auditions this August

By MADDIE MIGA

Exsultet! A Celebration of Voices is an all-female chorus group that's been sharing their love of music since 2013. As they begin to prepare for their 2024-2025 season, the chorus will be holding auditions for new singers to perform in their annual show-cases.

Exsultet! was founded by Richard Larraga, the Artistic Director and Conductor of the chorus. Larraga also happens to be the Minister of Music at the First Congregational Church in Holliston, where the chorus often goes to perform and rehearse. Tania Carosi, one of the original members of Exsultet!, described how the chorus "brings a lot of happiness to the girls that participate in the group." The chorus values being an outlet for talented singers to share their love of music with one another and their audiences.

The chorus holds two annual performances every year. This includes their Holiday Concert in early December and their Spring Concert in early May. Unlike other choral groups, Exsultet! "tells a story" during their performances by incorporating a mixture of songs, poetry, and readings.

Each concert is typically built around a certain theme and follows a storyline written by the conductor. These performances also feature actors and actresses, making it "a mix between a play and a concert." Carosi goes on to explain how the audience is able to "see and hear about a story" through the actors, while the chorus "performs songs that go along with those same emotions and feelings found in the plot.



Members of Exsultet! A Celebration of Voices pose during a dress rehearsal of one of their annual concerts.

By doing this, we try to illustrate the theme that's being conveyed in the story with both music and acting."

For their Holiday Concerts, the chorus features various Christmas songs, Hanukkah songs, and other musical pieces that "bring in other cultures and traditions that people might not have exposure to." And this past spring, Exsultet! performed a variety of romantic songs in their concert titled "You Are The One." The performance followed the love story of one of the choir members and her husband, and became one of Carosi's favorite Exsultet! concerts due to its authenticity and originality.

Carosi first joined Exsultet! after graduating college, when she was in search of a musical outlet for herself. She "always had a passion for singing and was in three performing choirs in high school." Carosi had also begun working in Holliston around this time and wished to meet more people who shared her interest in chorus. After looking at nearby

choirs and auditioning for Exsultet!, Carosi has been a part of the choral group ever since.

From 2013 to now, Exsultet! has continued to "expand and welcome educated and devoted singers." While the chorus began with "around six to seven members," it has grown into a much larger family of singers, percussionists, actors, and stage crew members. Carosi stated how these people have truly "helped



A Celebration of Voices performing at the First Congregational Church in Holliston.

put on our productions and have greatly contributed to our performances." Throughout the years, though, Exsultet! has kept the same mission of "allowing and welcoming other females who are interested in and devoted to music." Looking ahead, the chorus wishes to keep growing by "branching out to new locations." While they usually have performances in Holliston and Dedham, Exsultet! has begun extending its talents by holding one of their latest concerts in Amherst.

This month, the chorus will continue expanding by holding auditions on Monday, August 26. The chorus has two openings for Soprano singers who are interested in performing for their 2024-2025 season. Auditions will be taking place at 7 p.m. at the First Congregational Church in Holliston. Those who are interested should come prepared to perform one of the pieces from the Exsultet! website: [www.exsultet.us](http://www.exsultet.us).

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**With hurricane season beginning we wanted to quiz our readers on their home and auto insurance:**

1. Torrential rain causes water to pool outside your house and water pours into your finished basement. Does your homeowner policy cover this claim?
2. The wind rips off dozens of shingles and blows a tree down onto your roof. Would your homeowner policy cover this even though the claim happened during a hurricane?
3. Your neighbor's tree falls onto your parked car during the storm. Whose insurance would pay for the damage, yours or your neighbor's?

**A1:** Water coming across the ground is 'flooding' and flooding is excluded on the homeowner policy. Sadly, there is no coverage.  
**A2:** Yes, your homeowner policy covers wind damage and falling objects; the storm type does not matter.  
**A3:** Sadly, your auto comprehensive coverage would respond to this damage.

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# 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 identify 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 permanent 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.

- 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.

## 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).

## 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:

## 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.
- **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.

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# St. Blaise Vendor Fair Set for September 21

## Call for Vendors!

The Annual Vendor Fair is planned for Saturday, September 21, 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the grounds of St. Blaise Parish, 1158 South Main Street, Bellingham, MA. Admission is free and open to the public. Our popular Grandma's Attic will be open for shopping.

The Brotherhood of St. Joseph the Worker will be offering hamburgers, hotdogs and other delicious food items for sale.

The Ladies of St. Anne will have some amazing desserts for sale to either eat on the grounds or to take home and share with family and friends. Tables to sit and enjoy your lunch will be set up in the food area.

### CALLING ALL VENDORS!

Vendor spaces are 20x20' and available for \$30 per space and tables are \$5 each. Located right on Route 126, the site offers major roadside visibility. To rent a space or get additional information, you can contact Jay Castonguay at jaystjohn2006@yahoo.com. As of July 15th, we have 20 vendors signed up, so don't miss out on the spaces still available! Maximum capacity is 36.

Hope to see you there to get a jump on shopping...remember Christmas will be just 3 months and 3 days from then!

# Keep It Fresh and Local with Farmers Markets

BY ANGIE FITTON

Farmer's Markets are an integral part of our society. They provide fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables that are essential to healthier eating, and most also have local artisans selling their goods. Many towns in Massachusetts have Farmers Markets. I've included a list of some in this vicinity open for the season.

- Franklin - 200 Main Street
  - Fridays from 2-6 p.m.
  - www.franklinfarmersmarketma.com
- Holliston - Holliston Farmers Market - 24 Water Street
  - Tuesdays from 3-7 p.m.
- Medway - Farmers Market, VFW, 123 Holliston Street
  - Thursdays 3-7 p.m.
- Medway Community Farm Farmstand - 50 Winthrop Street
  - Mondays, Thursdays, Fridays, 2-6 p.m.
  - Saturdays 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

- Millis - Farmer's Market at Millis Church of Christ - 142 Exchange Street
  - Wednesdays from 2-6 p.m.
  - (508) 376-5034
- Natick - Natick Common on Common Street - www.natickfarmersmarket.org
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  - Saturdays, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

## EYES

continued from page 12

### 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.

For more details, see our ad on page 12.

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# August 2024 at Bellforge Arts Center: Locally Grown

Locally Grown represents Bellforge Arts Center's mission to support artists, enhance cultural opportunities, and foster the creative community. It highlights the finest in locally sourced food, drink, and music, creating connections for all ages. Bellforge plans to convert two buildings at the former Medfield State Hospital into a performing arts and education center, with phase two introducing a culinary arts center and revitalized agricultural fields.

In August, Locally Grown will feature intimate weeknight events every Wednesday, showcasing local musicians and performers,

leading up to a larger day festival in September. This series provides a glimpse into the future of the multi-arts center, emphasizing its artistic and culinary ambitions.

**August 7, 5-8 p.m.: Locally Grown with Tiny The Bear and Superpink**

**August 14, 5-8 p.m.: Locally Grown with Miranda Rae and Notebook P**

**August 21, 5-8 p.m.: Locally Grown with Dan Decristofaro and Lainey Dionne**

**August 28, 5-8p.m.: Locally Grown with Coco Smith and Sweet Petunia**

## To Get to Bellforge Arts Center:

Take Rt. 27 to Hospital Road. Make a left on Hospital Road, then a left on Service Drive.

If using Google Maps or Waze: Use 1 Service Drive, Medfield in your GPS

If using Apple Maps: Use 45 Hospital Road, Medfield in your GPS

You will turn in to the hospital grounds when you see the school buses. Drive up the hill, where you will find several available parking lots on your left. Bellforge is on the right (walk between the brick buildings) with events located outside on the grounds of the former Chapel.

For more information, visit [bellforge.org/events](http://bellforge.org/events).

# Local Democrats to Host Governor's Council Candidate Forum

In a cooperative effort to involve the voters in our communities in the Governor's Council District 2 race, the Democratic Committees of Bellingham, Dover, Franklin, Medfield, Milford, Millis, Needham, Norfolk, Plainville and Wrentham will host a forum for the Democratic candidates for the Governor's Council District 2 race on Wednesday, August 7th at 7 p.m.

The forum will take place at Norfolk Public Library. It will also air live on Norfolk Public

Library and available on their YouTube Channel.

The Governor's Council records advice and consent on state treasury warrants, pardons, commutations, and gubernatorial appointments. Appointments include judges, clerk-magistrates, public administrators, and members of the Parole Board, Appellate Tax Board and Industrial Accident Reviewing Board, as well as notaries and justices of the peace.



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# Bellingham Boosts IT Infrastructure with \$9,263 Grant from Mass. Interlocal Insurance Association

In July, Bellingham was awarded a \$9,263 grant from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA), the town's property and casualty insurance provider, to fund information technology (IT) upgrades that help safeguard data, ensure the continuous operations of services, and protect the town against evolving cyber threats.

"Funds from this grant allowed us to update our IT systems and fiber connections, ensuring our network connectivity and providing a more secure cyber environment," said Karen Dutil, Bellingham's IT Director. "Bellingham now has an updated IT infrastructure and a new level of protections against cybercrimes – benefiting our residents, staff, and taxpayers and creating additional liability protections."

For the 2024 fiscal year, MIIA awarded \$1 million to fund over 150 grant requests from its members for loss prevention, risk management and safety activities and equipment, including items such as infrared cameras and

moisture and temperature sensors, as well as efforts to enhance cyber security with assessments, training, and software solutions, among other initiatives.

"MIIA commends Bellingham for its efforts to mitigate risk, protect property and people, and prevent financial losses," said Stan Corcoran, MIIA Executive Vice President. "Through our grant program, we're proud to partner with our members to identify common areas where we typically see insurance claims and provide solutions that lead to effectively mitigating these losses."

The Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association is the non-profit insurance arm of the Massachusetts Municipal Association. As a member-based organization, MIIA's focus is to provide excellent service and quality risk management solutions to nearly 400 cities, towns, and other public entities in Massachusetts. For more information, please visit <https://www.emiia.org/> and [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org).

# First Universalist Society in Franklin – August Summer Services

First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is pleased to announce our Summer Sunday Worship Series for August 4, 2024 through August 25, 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 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](http://fusf.org) or contact our Interim Minister, the Reverend Beverly Waring at (508) 528- 5348 or [minister@fusf.org](mailto:minister@fusf.org).

### August 4, 2024: Embracing Differences and Commonalities

The Unitarian Universalist Value of Pluralism encourages us to "embrace our differences

and commonalities with Love, curiosity, and respect." Bobbi Gerlits, one of FUSF's lay leaders, has been reflecting on this value for the past few months. Her journey toward a better understanding of pluralism has been shaped by the Sunday before Thanksgiving, three libraries, Henry David Thoreau, rules, Norman Rockwell, and a housewarming gift.

### August 11, 2024: Winds of Change

Change can be a whirlwind. Some see transformation as an exciting new chapter in life and accept it freely like a breath of fresh air. Others may find change frightening and difficult to embrace. In considering the range of emotions we all experience on this topic, where would you place yourself when you reflect on transformations you've made throughout life? How many times have you freely chosen change and how many times has personal change been driven by life's circumstances? Please join FUSF Lay Leader, Deb

Prudhomme in the exploration, reflection, and embrace of the winds of change.

### August 18, 2024: An Expression of Love

FUSF Lay leaders, Stirling and Brian Cousins, believe our shared UU Value of Transformation calls on each of us to collectively transform ourselves and to grow spiritually and ethically. In this sermon they will explore how the personal choices we all make enable us to undergo ethical transformation related to our relationship with the interdependent web of life (Value of Interdependence). They will further discuss how transformation applied to the ethics of our personal choices is a full expression of Love.

### August 25, 2024: Minister Rev. Bev

FUSF Interim Minister, the Rev. Beverly Waring (Rev. Bev.) is back in the pulpit and looks forward to seeing you.

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# Discovering Justice Annual Gala Honors MA State Senator Becca Rausch with 2024 “Partner for Justice” Award

Celebrating the importance of partnerships in supporting their impactful programs, Discovering Justice recognized Massachusetts State Senator Becca Rausch (D-Norfolk, Worcester and Middlesex) as a “Partner for Justice” at its Annual Gala last month.

Held at the Artists for Humanity EpiCenter on June 26th, gratitude and appreciation were the focus of the night at Discovering Justice’s Annual Gala 2024: “Partners for Justice,” which raised \$325,000 for the organization’s statewide programs.

Introducing Senator Rausch during the evening’s speaking program, Discovering Justice Executive Director Matt Wilson commended her “tireless and dedicated work” as the civic education sector’s champion



**Massachusetts State Senator Becca Rausch addresses the audience at Discovering Justice’s Annual Gala on June 26th.**  
Photo © Meredith Nierman.

for civics in the Massachusetts legislature – particularly for her ongoing support on the Senate Floor for Massachusetts’ landmark Civic Education Law since it was passed in 2018. “Through her passion for civic engagement and her persistence,” Wilson said, “Senator Rausch has

emerged as a leader on Beacon Hill to bring robust civic education to every student in Massachusetts.”

Based in the John J. Moakley U.S. Courthouse in Boston’s Seaport District, Discovering Justice is a civics education nonprofit that brings students and

communities together to examine the workings of the justice system, explore the ideals of justice, and prepare to engage as active citizens. This year, its programs served 27,000 students of all ages in classrooms across the Commonwealth.

Alongside Rausch, Discovering Justice’s Gala honored five additional “Partners for Justice” Awardees for their long-term collaboration with, and exceptional commitment to, the organization’s programs and civics education for students across Massachusetts: Springfield Public Schools Director of Humanities Thomas Rachele; Jones Day Associate Hannah Essquenazi; Boston Public School Educators Christy Nelson and Tracy Coutts; and the law firm Goodwin Procter.

Each “Partner for Justice” Awardee spoke on their work in partnership with Discovering Justice and the impact of that work on students and communities. Awardees were then presented with customized award plaques created by Artists for Humanity’s teen program participants.

In her address, Senator Rausch extolled the importance of “bring[ing] civic education

to our students, and bring[ing] those students into the rooms where policy is made, democracy lives, and equity advances, inspiring them to envision themselves there in the future.”

Reflecting on the Gala, Senator Rausch would later remark: “I am so deeply proud to partner with Discovering Justice. I absolutely loved gathering with others who share our collective passion for civic education, from students and educators to attorneys and policymakers, as we learn from and inspire one another.”

“Discovering Justice’s partners are essential to our work,” said Executive Director Matt Wilson. “It was inspiring to hear directly from partners like Senator Rausch and to celebrate all the collaboration that makes this work possible. The night was a reminder of the importance of civics education not only for each of us and our students as individuals, but also for our schools, cities and towns, and communities.”

To learn more about Discovering Justice’s innovative civic education programs for students across the Commonwealth, visit [www.discoveringjustice.org](http://www.discoveringjustice.org).

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## 6<sup>TH</sup> Annual Franklin Oddfellows Cornhole Tournament September 8<sup>th</sup>

On September 8, 2024, the public is invited to join the Franklin Odd Fellows for an afternoon of fun and good cheer starting at 1 p.m. at the Bellingham Sportsman Club at 360 Lake St., Bellingham, MA 02019. This will be a fundraiser event with profits going to the Massachusetts Chapter of the Arthritis Foundation. Teams will consist of two players each with

a registration cost of \$25 per player. Team pre-registration is encouraged, but not necessary to be able to participate as cash payment will be collected at the door. Tournament formatting will be round robin play to establish seeding for a double elimination tournament. Last year's event went well, but we're looking for more teams this year. Get your teams together and register

today! The Sportsman Club is an outdoor venue with an indoor lounge, cash bar and TV. The Odd Fellows will provide a buffet lunch and a cash payout to the winning team/teams. Many thanks to the Sportsman Club for use of their facility for this event. Register and prepay at: <https://franklinmassoddfellows.org/cornhole2024/>

## Bellingham Business Association to Hold Cookout for Members August 21st

*Event to Be Held at Circle CG Farm Campground, Hosted by New Owners*

BBA members are invited to a fun family cookout on Wednesday, August 21st, from 5-8 p.m. at the Circle CG Farm Campground, with new owners. Members are welcome to bring the whole family and should RSVP by August 17th, including their name and number of guests, to [contact@bellinghambusinessassociation.org](mailto:contact@bellinghambusinessassociation.org).

The Bellingham Business Association is an organization of business professionals who are focused on expanding their business opportunities while expanding their relationships with and exposure to other local business

owners. In addition, members are involved in many community and civic activities, providing two scholarships each year, awarding an annual "Unsung Hero" award and supporting many causes within the community, including the Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, Bellingham Friends of Music, and Operation Graduation, just to name a few.

Dues are currently due for all members. Annual dues are \$75 per year, or \$100 if not paid by September 16th. Visit [BBA Membership Application.pdf](#) for the application, or send dues to:

**BELLINGHAM BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**  
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The organization's annual fundraising golf tournament will be coming up on Monday, September 16th at Wentworth Hills Country Club in Plainville. To find out more about participating or sponsoring the event, visit <https://www.bellinghambusinessassociation.org>.

For any questions, email [Contact@BellinghamBusinessAssociation.org](mailto:Contact@BellinghamBusinessAssociation.org).

## Join Bellingham Women of Today for Ice Cream Social, Aug. 6th

The Bellingham Woman of Today invites you to cool off with our Ice Cream Social at the Bellingham Library community room, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham on Tuesday, August 6th, 6:30-8 p.m.

Come and join us for some free ice cream and see what we're all about. We are looking

for new members, and we'd love to meet you. Hot fudge, cookie and brownie sundaes with other toppings available.

Please register at [bellingham-womanoftoday.com](http://bellingham-womanoftoday.com) with your name, contact information and number of attendees. Visit us on Facebook.

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# Bellingham Public Library News & Events for August

For updates about library programs and services, please see [www.bellinghamlibrary.org](http://www.bellinghamlibrary.org).

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

## Summer Reading 2024

It's not too late to sign up for our Summer Reading Program! This year the Summer Reading Program is sponsored by the Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation and the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library. Thank you to these organizations for their continued support of programs at the Bellingham Library!

The Summer Reading 2024 theme, "Read, Renew, Repeat!" is all about conservation and sustainability!. School aged children will record every 30 minutes that they read on a tracking sheet and reach a prize after every 2 hours of reading. Our pre-readers will keep track of the number of books they read and reach a prize after every 10 books.

We are also working with the Bellingham Public Schools to share their information about the

school's summer reading/math programs for BHS students!

**Krafty Kids**– Thursdays at 1 p.m. through August 15th

Details of the craft each week are on the calendar. Please register for each week.

**Coming in August sponsored by The Friends of the Library and the Rockland Trust Charitable Foundation**

**EcoMagic** with Mike Bent, Saturday, August 3rd at 11 a.m., please register!

Steve Blunt & Friends Family Concert, Saturday, August 10th at 12 noon, on the ball field near the library as part of Bellingham Days!

## Bellingham Days Vendor Fair to benefit the Friends of the Library!

On Saturday, August 10th from 12 to 5 p.m. there will be a Vendor Fair on the field between the football field and BMS. Vendor tables are \$25 for a 10-foot space. Funds raised at this event will benefit the Friends of the Bellingham Library. Contact Sue Garten at [sgarten@bellinghamma.org](mailto:sgarten@bellinghamma.org).

## Highlighted Programs

**Summerween!** –This summer the library will be celebrating Summerween with films on Fridays, August 9th and 16th. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m., and the movie will start at 7 p.m. Bring your own blanket or pillows for comfy floor seating or chair seating provided by the library. Includes crafts and scavenger hunts, popcorn, candy, water and punch! See the library website for film titles and ratings.

**Friends of the Library Book Sale** – The week of August 19th.

**Red Cross Blood Drive** – Friday, August 30th, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Register at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)

## Ongoing Children's Programs

**The Baby Bunch** – Mondays at 9:30 a.m. through August 12th, For infants 0-18 months and caregivers.

**Read to Freedom the Reading Dog** – Mondays from 5:30-7. Check calendar for details.

**Safari Story Time** – Tuesdays at 10:15 a.m. through August 13th. For children ages 2-5 (younger siblings always welcome). Register for each session.

**Picnic Stories on the Bellingham Town Common** – Wednesdays at noon, weather permitting.

**Green Thumb Club** – Final meeting, August 5th at 1 p.m. A bi-weekly program where families can come plant different types of seeds during each session and watch them grow throughout the summer! Please register!

**Ring a Ding** – Thursdays at 10:15 a.m. through August 15th, drop in!

**Adult/Child Book Club** – For kids in grades 4-6 or 6-9 and an adult in their life who loves to read. Meets monthly. If you are interested in joining, those in Grades 4-6 should contact Amanda Maclure, [amaclure@cwmars.org](mailto:amaclure@cwmars.org); grades 6-9 should contact Diane Nelson, [dnelson@cwmars.org](mailto:dnelson@cwmars.org). Check the library calendar for details.

**Sensory Story and Play** – Fridays at 10:15 a.m. through August 16th. For children ages 2-5 of all abilities (younger siblings always welcome). Please register for each session.

## After School Programs will resume on August 27th

Registration is mandatory for children in grades 4-6 to attend the ASK program. See library calendar for August & September ASK sign up dates.

- ASK Program hours 2:30-4:45 p.m.
- The Teen Room is open for grades 7-12 from 2-4:45 p.m.
- Check the library website for details on the programs. <https://www.bellinghamma.org/281/After-School-Programs>

## Adult Programs

**Book Discussion Group** –1st Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. In-person or on Zoom. Contact Cecily Christensen, [cchriste@cwmars.org](mailto:cchriste@cwmars.org).

Our upcoming titles are:  
August: *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng

September: *Fahrenheit 451* by Ray Bradbury

## LIBRARY

*continued on page 19*

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LIBRARY

continued from page 18

October: *Chances Are* by Richard Russo

Yoga for the Seasons – Summer Series

Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m.. Check the library calendar for details and to register.

**Bellingham Skein Artists** – Adult Knitting Group -Wednesdays at 6 p.m. All skill levels. Bring your own materials.

**Writing Group for Adults** – Tuesday, August 13th at 6:30 p.m. Contact Marjorie Turner Hollman at marjorie@marjorie-turner.com.

**Library Board of Trustees Meeting** – Thursday, August 8th at 7 p.m. in library Conference Room.

**Friends of the Library Monthly Meeting** – Tuesday, August 13th at 7 p.m. Email library@bellinghamlibrary.org for Zoom link

**Virtual Ask-A-Lawyer Program with Attorney Brian T. Salisbury** – Monday, August 19th 5-7:30 p.m., Zoom with local attorney Brian T. Salisbury of the law firm Doherty, Dugan, Cannon, Raymond & Weil, PC. Free appointments are 20 minutes long, with Zoom link sent after registration closer to the appointment date. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, Attorney Salisbury will

not provide legal representation in any legal matter discussed.

**Virtual Author Talks** – to register, go to: <https://library.org/bellingham>

**Wednesday, August 7th at 2 p.m.** – Behind the Scenes at the Space Station with Smithsonian Curator Dr. Jennifer Lavasseur

**Thursday, August 15th at 2 p.m.** – Redefining Success for Parents of Teens with Irena Smith, PhD

**Wednesday, August 21st at 7 p.m.** – An Exploration of Friendship, Reckoning, and Hope with Novelist Shelby Van Pelt.

Coming in September!

Steve McGrath returns with his Smartphone Photography Series, Tuesdays, September 3rd, 17th and 24th at 5:30 p.m. and on Saturday, September 14th and 21st at an outdoor location to be determined. Registration begins August 5th. Please register for each class.

**Concert on the Common with Too Human** – Friday, September 6th at 6 p.m.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency. It is also supported in part by the Friends of the Bellingham Public Library.

# 12 Years Later, MA Rep. Michael Soter's Annual Senior Cookout Still Going Strong

On Thursday, July 11th, State Representative Michael Soter (R-Bellingham) hosted his annual lobster roll and chowder cookout at the Bellingham Senior Center. He was joined by Bellingham Select Board vice chairman Sahana Sahin and member Jennifer Altomonte.



State Representative Michael Soter and Bellingham Select Board Vice Chair Sahana Sahin serve lobster rolls to guests at the Bellingham Senior Center.

Representative Soter began this annual tradition when he was first elected to the Bellingham Select Board 12 years ago. Today, he continues to host the event throughout the 8th Worcester District, bringing meals to seniors in Uxbridge, Blackstone, Millville, and Bellingham.

The event in Bellingham had a record turnout of 155 seniors, with about a dozen more picking up meals to-go from their car. Earlier in the summer, Representative Soter hosted the same event for over 100 seniors at the

Millville and Uxbridge Senior Centers. He plans to bring the event back to the Blackstone Senior Center later this summer.

This year's menu was prepared by Grumpy's Restaurant in Bellingham. Additionally, Representative Soter served a variety of drinks, chips, and ice cream options directly to the guests at their seats.

In his remarks to guests at the Bellingham Senior Center, Representative Soter commented, "Especially today, it can be dif-

icult to consistently put meals on the table at home. I started this event hoping that, by providing just a single meal to the senior citizens in my district, I could relieve some of the pressure of this difficulty."

In addition to providing a free meal, this event provides an opportunity for members of the com-

munity to speak with Representative Soter about their legislative concerns and priorities on Beacon Hill. "The seniors in the 8th Worcester District give so much to our community," Representative Soter added. "The least I can do is give a little back."

Representative Soter is grateful for the support from the senior center staff, volunteers, and donors that made this event possible. He looks forward to hosting this event again in future years.

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# Register O'Donnell Announces Finding Your Roots Program

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell announced in July that under the Registry of Deeds' History Comes Alive program, a new service has been recently created where a dedicated bank of computers is available for free genealogical use to the public. The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is pleased to announce the opening of its Genealogy Research and Resource Center.

"The Registry is excited to offer this research service. As we all know, interest in genealogy is growing by leaps and bounds. According to an ABC News report it is now ranked the second most popular hobby. Another survey indicated that approximately 4 out of 5 people want to explore their genealogical roots," according to Register O'Donnell.

The Register noted that the genealogical workstations at the Registry contain the popular database Ancestry.com, American Ancestors, and the digital records from the Massachusetts Archives. "In the future, we hope to add other research databases," noted Register O'Donnell.

"Besides this wealth of infor-



**Foxborough resident Dan Maloof, aka DJ Dan, does some historical research at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds' new Genealogy Research and Resource Center in preparation for an upcoming trivia night.**

mation, the Registry has more than 13 million land-related documents to explore dating back to 1793 when Norfolk County was created through an act of the legislature and signed into law by Governor John Hancock. These records include deeds, liens, foreclosures, mortgages, conveyances, trusts, and mortgage discharges.

"Today thanks to cutting-edge technology, we have taken genealogical research one step further. Our transcription program, the first of any Registry of Deeds in New England, has taken Registry documents writ-

ten in hard-to-read cursive penmanship by quivers from 1793 to 1900 and transcribed them into clearly readable print," stated O'Donnell.

This transcription project of over 4500,000 recorded legal land documents was part of the "History Comes Alive" Program started at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds.

"It is the Registry's vision," noted O'Donnell, "that we will continue to take steps in building up our Genealogy program including holding public seminars, publishing articles of note on social media, and adding to our database. After all, learning more about ourselves can just be a few clicks away."

If you would like to use the free genealogy database, please drop by the Registry of Deeds located at 649 High Street, Dedham, or call (781) 234-3305 to reserve a time.

To learn more about these and other Registry of Deeds events and initiatives, "like" us on Facebook at facebook.com/norfolkdeeds. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram at @norfolkdeeds.

# Temple Etz Chaim Names Rabbi Rachel Putterman as New Spiritual Leader



**TEMPLE ETZ CHAIM**

hospitals. She also created an innovative series of tefillin videos - "All Genders Wrap" - which is widely used in Jewish education programs around the country.

"I am honored and overjoyed to step into this role as the next spiritual leader of the Temple Etz Chaim community," said Rabbi Rachel. "I have been impressed by the warmth, commitment, and thoughtfulness of all of the community members I have met so far. I can't wait to get to know everyone and look forward to being present with congregants during times of joys and oys - and everything in between."

Rabbi Rachel received her rabbinic ordination and Master's degree in Jewish Studies from Hebrew College in 2020. She also holds a J.D. from American University's Washington College of Law and brings a unique perspective from her previous career as an attorney advocating for veterans and domestic violence survivors. She takes over for longtime Rabbi Tom Alpert, who retired from the pulpit in June 2024 after more than a decade of service and who remains connected to the community as a rabbi emeritus.


Temple Etz Chaim, founded in 1990, is a Reform Jewish congregation serving Franklin and its surrounding communities. The Temple is committed to providing a welcoming space for spiritual fulfillment, Jewish education, and community engagement for members of all ages.

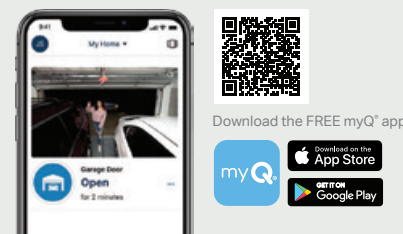
Temple Etz Chaim, a vibrant Reform Jewish congregation in Franklin, Massachusetts, is pleased to announce the election of Rabbi Rachel Putterman as its new spiritual leader, effective August 1, 2024.

Rabbi Rachel, as she prefers to be called, brings a wealth of experience in Jewish leadership, education, and community building to her new role. She most recently served as the Director of Hillel and Associate Chaplain at Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, where she oversaw religious, cultural, and educational programming while providing pastoral care to the campus community.

"We are thrilled to welcome Rabbi Putterman to our Temple Etz Chaim family," said Dr. Michael Rubin, President of Temple Etz Chaim. "Her diverse background in Jewish education, pastoral care, and community engagement aligns perfectly with our congregation's commitment to spiritual fulfillment, lifelong learning, and Tikkun Olam, or the repair of the world."

Rabbi Rachel's extensive experience includes serving as an adjunct faculty member in Hebrew College's adult education program and two units of chaplaincy training at Boston area





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# Bellingham Senior Center Highlighted Events for August

The Bellingham Senior Center is located at 40 Blackstone St., Bellingham. Reach them at (508) 966-0398 or online at [www.bellinghamma.org](http://www.bellinghamma.org).

**August is Elvis Presley Month!** Call ahead to reserve your spot for the following:

- **Thursdays at Noon**, see Elvis movies including *Viva Las Vegas*, *Fun in Acapulco*, *Jail House*, and *Blue Hawaii*.
- **Friday, August 16**, Elvis Trivia with Jeff Loverude, 1 p.m.
- **Friday, August 30, at 1 p.m.**, Elvis Impersonator Dan Fontaine

**Tap Dancing Ted:** Join us on Friday, August 2, at 1 p.m. Please call ahead to reserve your seat for the show!

**Elder Abuse:** Some abuse is obvious, some is not. To help figure out what's what please join the Bellingham Police Department for an illuminating, and surprising, look at this growing problem. Tuesday, August 13, at 11:30 a.m.

**Popular Music and Veterans with Jon Waterman:** Program consists of songs, history, and an

accompanying slideshow pertaining to some of the experiences of veterans of World War I, World War II, the Civil War and other conflicts alongside the history of popular music in America. Join us on Friday, August 23, at 1 p.m.

**Spiritual Book Club:** Continuing this month will be a discussion about the book *Aging as a Spiritual Practice*. Book Club meets via Zoom on Mondays at 9 a.m. Please call host Josie Dutil at (508) 657-2705 to join or for more information.

**Coffee & Conversation:** Join the clever, smart, sociable folks who turn out for C&C. Every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m.!

**Tech Connect:** Staying organized on your iPhone and iPad. Learning to take notes, create to-do lists, and manage the calendar. Plus, learn about Siri, the virtual assistant used on the iPhone and iPad. Tech Connect on Tuesday, August 6, at 1 p.m., with KevTech, supported by a grant from the Bellingham Cultural Council. And on Tuesday, August 20, the focus will be on Androids. Bring your questions, and devices!

**60th Birthday Party:** Bellingham residents turning 60 this year will have a party to go to!

The Senior Center, for the second year, will provide the celebration. Coming on October 10. Do you

know someone who will be turning 60 that we can invite? Let us know at (508) 966-0398.

## Elected MA Officials Celebrate \$1.72 Billion in Federal Funding for Cape Cod Bridges

In mid-July, Sens. Markey and Warren (D-Mass.), Governor Maura Healey, and Congressman Bill Keating (MA-09) held a press conference to celebrate that Massachusetts has secured a total of \$1.72 billion for the replacement of the Cape Cod bridges. A week prior, the Healey-Driscoll administration won nearly \$1 billion from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's

Bridge Investment Program (BIP). The administration previously secured \$372 million from the Federal Multimodal Project Discretionary Grant program, in addition to \$350 million secured by the Congressional delegation from FY24 appropriations. Governor Healey has also committed \$700 million in state funds to the project.

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# Art Pharmacy the 1st Statewide Social Prescribing Solution in US

## Mass. Launch of Innovative Healthcare Program in Partnership with Mass Cultural Council

In July, healthcare services business Art Pharmacy and Mass Cultural Council proudly announced the launch of the nation's first statewide arts prescription solution, also known as arts-based social prescribing. Art Pharmacy's services enable

healthcare providers and other care team members to prescribe arts and culture participation to individuals with a range of health concerns.

Further, Art Pharmacy is thrilled to share that Mass General Brigham has joined this ven-

ture and shares Art Pharmacy's and Mass Cultural Council's vision of bringing this healthcare solution to the Commonwealth.

Social prescribing is the practice of referring patients to community-based resources – like arts and culture engagements – to effectively promote whole person health. Arts-based social prescribing is an effective way to support patients with mental health needs, reduce social isolation and loneliness, and promote adherence to co-morbid treatment plans.

Art Pharmacy's solution uniquely combines decades of research in the field of arts and health with the well-developed care model of social prescribing to address some of the nation's most challenging health problems.

"We are excited to use this novel social prescribing model in a pilot program as an additional tool in addressing blood pressure control," said Anne Klibanski, MD, President and CEO, Mass General Brigham. "We will focus

this care at the primary care sites where patients are at most risk, given the long-standing disparities in blood pressure control for underserved communities. This initiative will work in parallel with our clinical equity efforts and our commitment to a personalized, quality experience for every patient at Mass General Brigham."

Art has long been recognized for its impact on physical and mental health. With the launch of Art Pharmacy's program in Massachusetts today, the arts become a recognized healthcare solution.

While social prescribing is an established practice in other parts of the world, to date it has not been widely adopted in the United States. Mass Cultural Council, the Commonwealth's state arts agency, laid the foundation for this announcement in 2020 with the launch of its CultureRx Initiative, which first introduced the practice of arts prescription in Massachusetts.

After a three-year pilot which

resulted in successful and positive reviews from health providers, cultural organizations, and patients, Mass Cultural Council began work to identify a partner to sustainably scale an arts-based social prescribing ecosystem to serve patients statewide. To implement this solution, the Agency sought a partner that would build a network of arts and culture organizations, recruit additional institutional stakeholders, and build sustainable relationships with health systems and health plans. That search led to Georgia-based Art Pharmacy.

This announcement marks the beginning of a new type of prescription in Massachusetts. Art Pharmacy is actively engaging with additional local and regional stakeholders, including health systems and health plans, to further grow access to arts-based social prescribing.

To learn more about Art Pharmacy, visit [www.artpharmacy.co](http://www.artpharmacy.co). To learn more about Mass Cultural Council, visit [www.MassCulturalCouncil.org](http://www.MassCulturalCouncil.org).

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## Auchincloss Urges Mass Dept. of Education to Use Biden Admin's Safe Firearm Storage Resources

In July, Congressman Jake Auchincloss (MA-04) sent a letter to the Massachusetts Department of Education encouraging school districts to share resources available under President Biden's administration to parents, guardians and families on the importance of safe firearm storage.

Gun violence is the leading cause of death for children in the United States. These safe storage resources for school officials ensure that parents are educated on safe storage, to prevent weapons from being accessed by children. As the U.S. Department of Education has not yet required school principals and administrators to share these resources, Auchincloss' letter advocates that school districts reach as many Bay State families as possible with this potentially life-saving information.

"Today, 4.6 million American children live in homes with access to an unlocked or unsupervised gun, and every year, thousands of kids are injured or killed as a result. These tragedies are devastating but preventable. Proper storage of a firearm has been proven to reduce unintentional shootings," said Mark Collins, Director of Federal Policy, Brady Center to Prevent Gun Violence. "The Biden administration has taken bold action to promote the safe storage of firearms, but now our communities must implement these actions. Brady commends Congressman Auchincloss for urging the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to promote safe firearm storage, and we hope to see this initiative continue to be adopted across the country."

"The research on safe storage is clear - securely storing firearms saves lives. Massachusetts has long been a leader in requiring gun owners to store their firearms safely, but there is a lack of public education and awareness about these laws," said Ruth Zakarin, CEO, Massachusetts Coalition to Prevent Gun Violence. "Ensuring that the Department of Education provides resources to parents and guardians about safely storing their firearms and the dangers of unsecured firearms will save lives and prevent future trauma."

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## 1st Confirmed MA Measles Case since 2020 Linked to International Travel

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) has confirmed that an adult resident from Worcester County who recently traveled internationally was diagnosed with measles in early July 2024. This is the first confirmed case of measles in a Massachusetts resident since early 2020.

People who may have been exposed to measles from this case have already been contacted and provided appropriate public health recommendations.

"Measles is a highly contagious, airborne disease, which has increased worldwide, including here in the United States and in neighboring states in New England," said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein, MD, PhD. "Cases of measles have been reported in 30 states since the beginning of last

year, mostly in people and communities who are unvaccinated. Vaccination is the best way to protect against measles."

According to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as of July 11, a total of 167 measles cases have been reported in 24 jurisdictions across the United States in 2024. The majority were unvaccinated or had unknown vaccination status (84 percent), 11 percent had one dose of the Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) vaccine, and 5 percent had two doses. Nearly half of all reported cases (46 percent) were under 5 years of age. Among reported cases, 53 percent were hospitalized.

Currently, large measles outbreaks are occurring in Europe and elsewhere internationally. Many of the cases reported in the United States are associated

with recent travel. Last month, DPH alerted residents about a potential exposure to measles tied to an international visitor who traveled through Boston to Amsterdam while infectious.

DPH urges anyone who does not know their measles immunization status to contact their healthcare provider to get vaccinated with at least one dose of the MMR vaccine. Health care providers who suspect measles should call DPH at (617) 983-6800 immediately for recommendations and testing guidance. Providers in Boston should call the Boston Public Health Commission at (617) 534-5611.

Learn more about measles at the DPH website at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/measles>.

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# Big Y Investigates Skimmer Incident

On June 29th, 2024, Big Y discovered an unknown individual attached a skimming device to one single terminal in each of their Naugatuck and Plainville Connecticut locations. “The security and privacy of our customers is of utmost importance to us at Big Y,” said Jade Rivera-McFarlin, Manager of Communications at Big Y Foods. “As such, we take our daily security protocols to protect our customers and business very seriously. It was during one of those regular security checks when they were discovered, she added.

The company is actively investigating the circumstances surrounding this incident and have notified and are working with law enforcement. The company has inspected all of the terminals and continues to do so. If they learn that any particular customer’s information was compromised, they will promptly notify them and provide them with additional information so that they can take steps to protect themselves.

As a best practice, customers should always review their bank

and credit card statements for any signs of fraudulent activity and, if they have any questions or concerns, contact their bank or credit card company directly.

If any Big Y customers have questions or concerns about this matter, please call 1-800-828-2688 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

In February, Big Y also discovered skimmers in a number of western Mass. stores, as well as locally, in Milford.

According to www.fbi.gov, “Skimming occurs when devices illegally installed on or inside ATMs, point-of-sale (POS) terminals, or fuel pumps capture card data and record cardholders’ PIN entries, if applicable.

Criminals use the data to create fake payment cards and then make unauthorized purchases or steal from victims’ accounts. It is estimated that skimming costs financial institutions and consumers more than \$1 billion each year.

The FBI offers the following tips for consumers:

## Tips When Using an ATM or POS Terminal, Including for EBT

- Inspect ATMs, POS terminals, and other card readers before using. Look for anything loose, crooked, damaged, or scratched. Don’t use any card reader if you notice anything unusual.
- Pull at the edges of the keypad before entering your PIN. Then, cover the keypad as fully as possible when you enter your PIN to prevent cameras from recording your entry. Keep in mind that a pinhole camera may be present anywhere on or around the terminal.
- If possible, use ATMs in a well-lit, indoor location. These may still be compromised, but are less-vulnerable targets.
- Be especially alert for skimming devices in tourist areas, since these are popular targets.
- When possible, use debit and credit cards with chip technology. There are few-

er devices in the U.S. that steal chip data than magnetic strip data. However, the mag-stripe data on the backs of these cards is still vulnerable.

- Avoid using your debit card when you have linked accounts, since the card’s compromise will give criminals access to all of the accounts. Use a credit card instead.
- Routinely monitor your credit card, bank, and EBT or other benefits accounts to promptly identify any unauthorized transactions. If possible, set email or text-message alerts to notify you of card or account transactions.

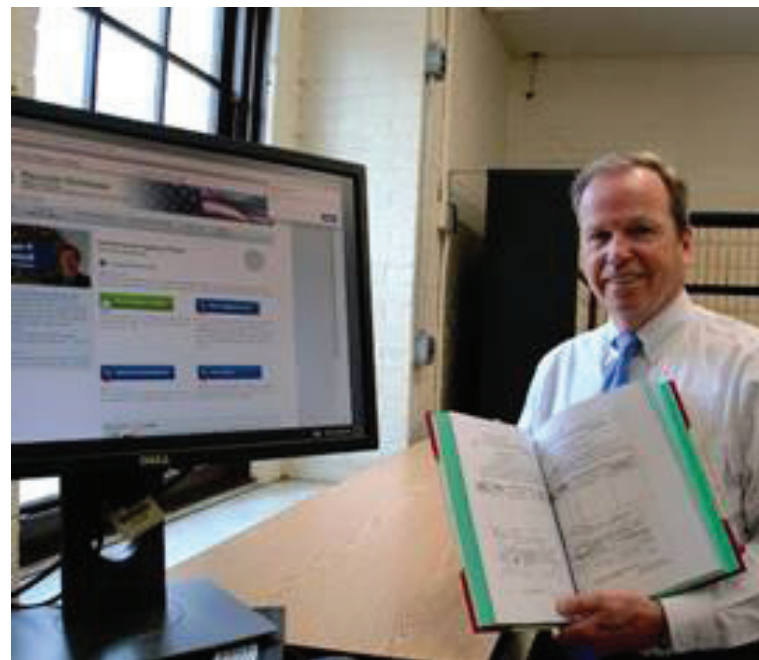
- Proactively review the account-security options available for any payment cards you use. These options can include multi-factor authentication of transactions or freezing an account between your own transactions. Such steps may seem inconvenient, but they significantly reduce the risk of financial losses.
- Contact your financial institution immediately if the ATM doesn’t return your card after you end or cancel a transaction. This may suggest the presence of a foreign device in the card reader.

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## Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell Announces Reelection Campaign

William P. O'Donnell announced his intention to seek re-election to the office of Register of Deeds in Norfolk County, a position he has held since 2002. For more information, visit [www.registerbil-lodonnell.org](http://www.registerbil-lodonnell.org).

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# Sports

## BHS Volleyball Team Aiming for Return to State Final

By KEN HAMWEY,  
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

Bellingham High's volleyball team has some unfinished business to tend to this fall.

Last year, the Blackhawks advanced to the Division 4 state final, where they lost to Ipswich, 3-2, after surrendering a 2-1 advantage after three sets.

That heartbreaking exit from the playoffs hurt, and the returnees from last year's squad are more motivated to produce another lengthy run that will end with a championship banner.

"Every year, I ask the girls to submit three team goals and three personal goals," said Steve Mantegani, who's starting his 10th year as the Blackhawks' coach. "I pay close attention to their choices, because it helps me to formulate my objectives. That practice gets us all on the same page."

Mantegani, who's guided BHS to seven tourney berths in nine years, revealed his goals before pre-season practice, which will begin on Aug. 19.

"They start with repeating as Tri Valley League Small Division champs," he said. "Our second goal is to qualify for the tourney, and the third is to earn a top-four power ranking. If all these things occur, then there's a good chance we can get to the state final again."

Last year's team, led by two senior captains (Ari Elster and Ciara Cratyton), compiled a 16-3 regular season record, then rolled to four tourney triumphs over South Lancaster Academy, Advanced Math and Science Academy, Rockland, and Frontier Regional.

Losing to Ipswich left last year's contingent with a 20-4 record, and interestingly enough, its four losses all went to five sets.

Mantegani emphasized that Ipswich was "a seasoned team that was heavily favored." By beating BHS, Ipswich captured its third straight state title. "When we went ahead, it seemed like we were playing not to lose," Mantegani said. "Regardless of the outcome, I was extremely proud of our team."

This year's squad has seven returnees, two players up from the

jayvees and three others who may be in the mix to fill open slots.

"Our strengths include a high volleyball IQ, speed and quickness, a high skill level, good ball control and a strong offense," Mantegani said. "For leadership and team chemistry, we'll need to replace our two senior captains from last year."

Following is a thumbnail look at the players with comments from Mantegani:

### RETURNEES

**SOPHIA SOTO** — A sophomore libero, she was the TVL Small Division's Most Valuable Player last year and a *Metrowest Daily News* all-star. A great passer who takes control of the court, her instincts are strong, and she enjoys volleyball. A superb server who ignites our offense. She had 56 aces, 331 digs, and 710 serve receptions (with only 54 errors) last year.

**VAL NOLAN** — A junior outside hitter, she was a TVL Small Division all-star last year. A very good offensive player, she's dynamic on defense. An athletic player who serves well, she gets her share of kills and digs. Last year she compiled 245 kills, 77 aces and 225 digs.

**MIA MILANI** — A sophomore outside hitter, she amassed four all-star honors last year (TVL, MAVCA, *Boston Herald* and *Metrowest Daily News*). A powerful hitter, she's a strong passer who also blocks effectively. She doesn't shy away from the big moments. She had 249 kills and 84 aces last year.

**TAYLOR CALLERY** — A senior setter and right-side hitter, she's versatile, has great energy and stepped up as a hitter last year. A good server who's in her fifth varsity season, she's brings lots of experience.

**MADY DeOLIVEIRA** — A sophomore outside and right-side hitter, she's strong on defense and very versatile, willing to play and position. A very consistent competitor.

**JACOBI HOUSTON** — A junior setter, she's the quarterback of our offense. She's got strong and steady hands and is scrappy. Quick to the ball, she knows how to push the ball anywhere on the court.



The Bellingham High girls' volleyball team finished with a Final Four appearance before losing in the state title match against Ipswich. The Blackhawks compiled a final record of 20-4.

**AUBREY CALLERY** — A freshman middle hitter, she filled in for Kat Ducharme, who missed 16 games last year because of an injury. A good server and blocker, she's a very level-headed competitor.

### TOP JAYVEES

**KAIDYN SHEA and KYLA CERONE** — A pair of senior defensive specialists, they were promoted to the varsity last year for the state tournament. They are capable servers who are strong on defense and bring an energetic style to the court.

### IN THE MIX

**MIA BARTUCCA (sophomore setter), STEPHANIE PAINCHAUD (freshman middle hitter) and LINDSAY DIXON (freshman middle hitter)** — This trio of young players has the potential to be on the roster this season.

\*\*\*\*\*

Mantegani, who's been the coach of the boys' volleyball team for the last six years, is acutely aware that three goals need to be achieved by the girls in pre-season practice.

"We need to find our leaders (captains will be chosen when pre-season practice concludes), we must become conditioned for five-set matches and we have to develop good court chemistry."

The Blackhawks will open their season at home on Sept. 4 against Norton.

Relying on a coaching philosophy that emphasizes developing skills and passion for volleyball, Mantegani says that "if those two things occur along with working hard in practice, then winning will be the by-product." He also knows that his players can learn valuable life lessons from athletics. "Like how to be a quality teammate, how to overcome challenges and adverse situations, and

that you have to earn everything," he emphasized.

Mantegani's girls' volleyball team was one of two Bellingham squads that competed in a state final last year (cheerleading was the other). He believes a return appearance on the big stage is realistic.

"The girls will still be young, but they'll bounce back and be totally focused on getting to the next level," he noted. "Last year, the girls wanted to win. This year, they think they can win."

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# Sports

## Madison Elliott Secures Cheerleading Role at UConn

By KEN HAMWEY,  
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

Madison Elliott had a dynamic career as a cheerleader for Bellingham High, and later this month, she'll be attending classes at the University of Connecticut, where she's already been selected to the Huskies' 27-member cheerleading team.

The 18-year-old Elliott competed on the Blackhawks' squad for five years, was a two-time captain, and captured Tri Valley League all-star awards six times. As a sophomore in 2022, she was on a squad that hit the jackpot. That contingent won the TVL championship and the South Regional crown before capturing the Division 4 state championship. During her senior year, the Blackhawks finished as Division 4 state runners-up behind Case Regional.

"My top thrill at BHS was competing on a state championship team," Elliott said. "That was a dream come true. Another thrill was being named a captain for two years."

When Elliott, who chose UConn over Syracuse, Penn State and UMass-Amherst, learned of her acceptance in March, the Bellingham native didn't waste any time pursuing her goal to continue to cheer at the collegiate level.



**Madison Elliott will major in communications at the University of Connecticut and plans on pursuing a career in sports journalism or sports broadcasting.**

"I went to an interest clinic and a recruitment clinic on the Storrs campus," she said. "Then, I went to five open practices before two tryouts that were held on May 18 and May 19. There were 80 candidates, and I was chosen for the 27-member team (23 women and 4 men). I would go to classes at Bellingham then drive to UConn for all the necessary practices and tryouts. It was a bit hectic, but it all worked out."



**Madison Elliott competed on the Blackhawks' squad for five years, was a two-time captain and captured Tri Valley League all-star awards six times.**

"Madison is the only 2024 BHS student-athlete who'll be competing for a Division 1 school," said Bellingham Athletic Director Michael Connor.

Elliott will major in communications and plans on pursuing a career in sports journalism or sports broadcasting.

The 5-foot-3 Elliott also excelled in academics at BHS. An honor-roll student, she also was a two-time National Honor Society student. Always eager to assist others, she participated in the Best Buddies program and the Special Olympics and worked as an intern at the athletic office.

A captain who led by example and by being vocal and communicative, she often led the team in workouts and helped the coach (Tracey Elliott, her mother) with a variety of other duties.

A competitor who thoroughly enjoyed stunting in whatever routines were being performed, Elliott is acutely aware that her transition to big-time college cheerleading will be challenging. Primarily because there'll be more games and the lights will be brighter.

"UConn's men's basketball team has been the national champ for the last two years and has won six NCAA titles," Elliott emphasized. "And the women's team has won 11 national cham-

pionships. That means there'll be more people at games. The keys will be to maintain tip-top condition, improve my athleticism and enhance my skill level. I'll also need to balance academics with all the practices and games. UConn cheerleaders also get involved in a variety of events and fund-raising activities."

At UConn, its cheerleaders will perform at all football games, and during the winter, they will be cheering for both the men's and women's basketball teams. "The spring season will be devoted to competing for the championship of the Universal Cheerleading Association (UCA)

Cheerleading at BHS was a five-year activity for Elliott, but the sport covered two seasons (fall and winter). That led her to compete for 10 seasons, but she worked hard and credits her mom for the program's success. "She's a great motivator who relies on lots of effort," Elliott offered. "Always devoted to the team, she made sure everyone's grades were good. She not only wanted us to be quality competitors, but she strived to turn out good people and good citizens."

Relying on a competitive philosophy that focuses on winning, reaching one's potential and having fun, Elliott credits her sport for learning valuable life lessons.

"I've learned how to be a good teammate, how to lead and how to overcome adversity," she said.

As a sophomore at the age of 15, the personable Elliott overcame a big dose of adversity. She had to deal with a difficult medical situation — thyroid cancer.

"I had surgery to remove my thyroid gland that had seven tumors," she recalled. "I was diagnosed in March of 2022 and had the surgery at Mass. General Hospital in June. I did not need any chemotherapy or radiation. I'm thankful that I'm cancer-free."

Elliott has remained positive throughout that situation. And, during her cheerleading tenure, she's competed with enthusiasm and passion.

Now, with graduation in her rear-view mirror, Elliott views the end of her time at BHS as "bittersweet."

"I'll miss my teammates and classmates," she said. "But I'm eager to start a new chapter in my life."

Elliott already has experienced success as a collegian. She'll be on a cheerleading squad that will be performing for title-winning teams, and she'll also be cheering at many major college venues.

Madison Elliott's passion and grit will be welcomed attributes at UConn.

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# Sports

## 3-Sport Captain, 3X All-Star Kay Had an Incredible Season in Softball at BVT

By KEN HAMWEY,  
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

Lynsey Kay's senior year of softball at Blackstone Valley Tech produced some dynamic numbers — 11 home runs (school record), 21 RBIs, 28 runs, 39 hits, 26 stolen bases in 26 attempts and an on-base percentage of .506.

The 18-year-old Bellingham native, however, wasn't just a prolific softball player. She was more. Much more.

Kay was a three-sport athlete and a three-sport captain (softball, field hockey, and winter cheerleading). She also was a Colonial Athletic League all-star — twice in field hockey and three times in softball.

Her efforts in the academic arena were also superb. She was a two-time National Honor Society student, finished her senior year with a GPA of 4.0 and earned a significant financial-aid package to attend Regis College in Weston where she'll aim for a career as a dental hygienist and play softball.

The 5-foot-3 Kay had some career statistics in softball that put her in an elite category. She hit for a batting average of .448 and finished her three-year career with 100 hits. She also stole 62 bases in 64 attempts.

"I'm glad my final season at BVT ended with some good stats," the humble Kay said. "It was rewarding to hit 11 home runs in my senior season and finish three years on the varsity with 100 hits."

With only three homers in her first two seasons, Kay went to work after her junior year to improve. A club softball player, she devoted lots of time to that level and focused on improving her power. "I committed that off-season to sharpening my hitting skills," she said.

What also is impressive about Kay's softball career was her willingness to play whatever position coach Pete Cardoza chose.

"Lynsey is one of the best players I've coached in my eight years at BVT," Cardoza said. "She was



**Lynsey Kay compiled a GPA of 4.0 and will attend Regis College where she'll focus on a career as a dental hygienist.**

our No. 1 pitcher as a sophomore, she played shortstop as a junior and was our centerfield in her final year. Besides being versatile, she's a great hitter who hits for power, she's fast, bunts extremely well and she's got excellent skills and technique."

Since Kay was born and raised in Bellingham, local softball fans no doubt must have been curious why she chose BVT after attending elementary and middle school in Bellingham.

"I knew early on that I wanted a career as a dental assistant," Kay said. "BVT has an excellent four-year program that I wanted to pursue. I had friends when I was in school at Bellingham, but I knew there would be new friends at BVT."

The fresh start turned out to be a prolific journey — in athletics and academics.

Although Kay was an all-star playing forward in field hockey, it was softball where she excelled.

"My favorite position was shortstop," she said. "It's a position where you have to think fast, be athletic and rely on a strong arm. My style leans on being aggressive. I usually charged the ball instead of waiting for it to come to me."

Kay's most memorable game was a 9-2 victory last spring



**Lynsey Kay hit 11 home runs in her senior season at BVT and finished with 100 career hits.**



**An outstanding shortstop, Lynsey Kay relies on athleticism and a strong arm.**

over Advanced Math & Science Academy. "They had beaten us in all five meetings that I played against them," she recalled. "I fielded well and hit a home run. But, all our players contributed and pitcher Brooke Gniadek had good control and located the ball effectively."

BVT, which had a 10-12 over-

all record last spring, has been to the playoffs seven years in a row but Kay rates the inability to go deep a bit disappointing. "We lost to Seekonk, Clinton and Norton," she said, "but that competition was strong. We battled against good players and came away with improved skills."

Kay's top thrills at BVT include being chosen as captain in three sports, hitting a record 11 home runs as a senior and compiling 100 career hits. "Reaching triple figures on hits was a challenge but I'm pleased I achieved that statistic," she offered. "As a captain, I strived to lead by example, to be communicative and also supportive."

Kay rates Cardoza as a coach who was "motivating, energetic and enjoyable to play for." And, Cardoza is sure Kay will succeed at Regis for several reasons. "She's a quality athlete and a team-first player who'll play wherever she's needed," he said.

Kay, who has spent her summer playing club softball and focusing on strength and condi-

tioning drills, hopes her transition to Division 3 college softball will be smooth. "I'm working to improve my quickness and overall skills," she emphasized.

Calling her parents (Kristen and Jason) and her sister (Lauren) role models for their support and encouragement, Kay says she's learned valuable life lessons while competing. "I've learned how to lead and to be a good teammate," she noted. "And, it's crucial to have a short memory if a mistake occurs. Getting ready for the next play makes one able to deal with adversity and to be resilient."

Kay's years at BVT have been rewarding but also bittersweet. "I've made some great connections, but I'll miss teammates and classmates," she said. "However, a new chapter awaits and I'm excited about the future."

When asked if it'll be difficult to replace her, Cardoza replied: "She got on base every game last spring except one, and it's never easy to replace 39 hits and 11 home runs."



# 4H ALARM Robotics Builds Leaders as Well as Robots

By J.D. O'GARA

The 23 young members of the 4H ALARM FRC Robotics Team 2079, who meet regularly at Franklin's Red Brick Schoolhouse, had a momentous year building their 120 lb. robot, "Hydra," and entering it into several First Robotics Competitions this year. This group certainly earns their name, an acronym for "A Lot of Awesome Robot Makers." Participating in First Robotics Competitions (FRC) run by FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), the team of students from 8th to 12th grade from 11 local towns, first became second place finalist and winner of the Team Spirit Award at the New England District BSU Event 2024, and later won the prestigious Engineering Inspiration Award at both the New England District Championship in West Springfield and WPI. The latter earned them a spot at the World Championship at Houston, Texas.

Local Town Pages met with some members of the 4H ALARM FRC Robotics Team 2079, learning about the process of building the robot and taking it to competition. After a game kick-off in January, the students

and mentors worked for over 9 weeks, sometimes putting in over 20-30 hours every week to design, build and program Hydra for the specific tasks of the challenge.

"Basically, we CAD the whole robot, and then we send it to our sponsor, Bauer, and they laser cut all the plates. All the metal that's not plates, we get from onlinemetals.com and cut them to size to fit our design," said Ishan Kasam.

Team members originally split off into subgroups to come up with various robot designs, later merging ideas into one CAD design.

"The faster we can do the CAD, the faster we can get the plates sent to Bauer," added teammate Siddharth Prabhu. "Once we have a very detailed CAD model ... we can look at the CAD and know exactly where it goes on the robot."

After the design was complete, various members of the team worked on multiple parts of the robot simultaneously.

The young engineers explain some of the challenges they faced and how they dealt with them, improving the robot after each competition.

"It was a learning process," said Prabhu, "(at one point) we



Shown is the 4H ALARM FRC Robotics Team after winning the First "Engineering Inspiration Award" at the New England District Championship.

had to glue all the screws in, because they kept falling out due to hard hits. Later, our drive train fell apart. Each competition elicited improvements to the model."

Programmers also played an essential role. Using JAVA, the programmers had about a week before the competition to work with the robot once it was

built. "A lot of the things we program are driver assistances that help the driver drive the robot better or smarter," adds Vansh Mookim. For example, since the robot had to pick up a circular "note", a program was created to help the robot better align to it.

Team mentor Erica Payne, an electrical engineer who also

mentors Girls Who Code, believes the robotics team is getting a leg up in the professional world. "This is real engineering ... (the kids) are learning mechanical engineering skills with the CAD, they're learn-

**ROBOTICS**  
continued on page 30

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## The Bellingham Lions 2024 Spring Golf Classic Was a Great Success

The Bellingham Lions would like to thank all the golfers, sponsors, and those who donated raffle items to make this year's Bellingham Lions Spring Golf Classic a great success. All proceeds earned will go to two \$1,500 scholarships to high school graduating seniors, who don't need to attend Bellingham High School but need to reside in Bellingham. The Lions also use the proceeds to help charities within our community, nationally and internationally.

Save the date for the Bellingham Lions 2025 Spring Golf Classic: It will be held on Monday, June 16, at Blissful Meadows Golf Club, 801 Chocolog Road, Uxbridge, MA 01569.

Any questions or if you need further information on the tournament or the scholarships, send an email to [BellinghamMALions@outlook.com](mailto:BellinghamMALions@outlook.com) or contact Elena Rosemere at [erosemere@mindspring.com](mailto:erosemere@mindspring.com). We always need players, sponsors, and raffle items.



# Library Resources of the Month – Bellingham History

There are a number of online resources that can be accessed through the library's website pertaining to the history of Bellingham. These include the *Bellingham High School Yearbooks*, *Town of Bellingham Annual Reports*, *Vital Records of Bellingham*, *History of the Town of Bellingham 1719-1919*, two books about *Deborah Sampson*, and *Massachusetts Memories Road Show Photographs*.

Both the Bellingham High School Yearbooks and the Annual Reports have been made available on the library's website through the Digital Commonwealth, Boston Public Library's statewide digitization program. The oldest yearbook online is the 1939 edition. Years 1940 and 1941 were not available to be digitized, but every edition from 1942 through 2018 is available online. Yearbooks can be searched by year, and once you have selected a yearbook you can search inside it for a specific person. Print copies of the yearbooks are in the library's Local History Room.

*Annual Reports* are available for online viewing from as far back as 1862. There are a number of annual reports in the 1800s that were not available for digitiza-

tion, but every edition is accessible from 1899 through 2021. Like the yearbooks, the annual reports can be searched by year, and once a certain year has been selected, you can search inside it. Print copies of the annual reports are in the library's Local History Room.

The *Vital Records of Bellingham, to the Year 1850* is available online through the Internet Archive. This is a record of births, deaths, and marriages in Bellingham up to 1850. A print version is in the library's Local History Room.

*History of the Town of Bellingham 1719-1919* by George F. Partridge has been made available online through the Internet Archive. Visual adjustments can be made for brightness and contrast, as well as increasing or decreasing the page size. The library also owns several print copies of this book, in both the circulating collection and Local History Room.

Two books about Deborah Sampson have been linked on the library's website. Deborah Sampson became a hero of the American Revolution when she disguised herself as a man and joined the Continental Army from May 1782 to October 1783, enlisting in Bellingham.

*The Female Review: Life of Deborah Sampson – the Female Soldier in the War of the Revolution* by John Adams Vinton has been made available through the Internet Archive. *Soldier's Secret: the Story of Deborah Sampson* by Sheila Solomon Klass is linked to the library's Overdrive electronic book collection. You need a library card to check out books from this collection. It is also available on Hoopla, which you can access through the library catalog or the library's website under the Resources tab. The library also has several print copies of this book that can be checked out.

The *Mass. Memories Road Show* is a statewide, event-based participatory archiving program that documents people, places, and events in Massachusetts history through family photographs and stories. Archivists and public historians in University Archives and Special Collections in the Joseph P. Healey Library at UMass Boston collaborate with local planning teams and volunteers to organize free public events where individuals

bring photographs to be copied and included in a digital archive. Bellingham was honored to be selected for a "Road Show" event in November 2022. Over 200 photographs were digitized, and 13 videos were filmed.

To access any of these online resources, go to the library's website at [www.bellinghamlibrary.org](http://www.bellinghamlibrary.org) and click Resources, then click Research/History. You might just learn some fascinating facts about your town!



## Bristol County Savings Charitable Foundation Awards \$133,750 in Grants to 14 Nonprofits in Taunton-Attleboro

Bristol County Savings Bank's Bristol County Savings Charitable Foundation (BCSCF) awarded grants totaling \$133,750 to 14 non-profit organizations in the Taunton/Attleboro region during a ceremony recently at White's of Westport in Westport, Massachusetts.

The local organizations that received grants from the Foundation are as follows:

**Taunton/Attleboro area, \$133,750** – American Credit Counseling Services (\$2,500), Applause Academy (\$2,500),

Franklin Food Pantry Incorporated (\$10,000), Grit & Grace Sober Living (\$5,000), Horizons For Homeless Children (\$5,000), Junior Achievement of Southern MA (\$10,000), Manet Community Health Center (\$10,000), Old Colony Habitat for Humanity (\$50,000), Pave Your Path, Inc. (\$5,000), Pride, Inc. (\$10,000), Reach Out & Read (\$2,500), Rehoboth Antiquarian Society (\$7,500), SMARTS Collaborative (\$2,000) and Triumph, Inc. (\$11,750).

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**ROBOTICS**

*continued from page 28*

ing electrical engineering skills with the wiring, they're learning computer engineering skills with the software programming, they're learning manufacturing engineering skills, because they have to understand that you don't just invent it and it magically appears, they have to understand schedule and production, they're learning project management, because we're a whole team, and they have to understand that you have to one piece done before another piece can be done, and communication skills..."

At the World competition, Hydra was operated a "drivers," who make a game play. The Franklin team was randomly paired with two other teams for a 3:3 match.

Although going to the World Championship required a lot of coordination, the experience in Houston inspired a sense of belonging to the team.

"We were worried how we'd stack up. We almost thought the kids would be disappointed with the amount of stiff competition,



**4H Alarm FRC Robotic's 2024 robot, "Hydra," in action.**

but we were pleasantly surprised when the final matches began," says mentor Pallavi Naravane, an electronic engineer who teaches programming and robotics.

"You could be talking to someone outside (who speaks

a different language, but you (both) know the language of robotics. There's a community there that understands you," noted teammate Ishika Kumar.

Winning First Robotics' Engineering Inspiration Award this year speaks to 4H ALARM Ro-

botics' commitment to inspiring younger children to appreciate engineering. The award "celebrates outstanding success in advancing respect and appreciation for engineering within a team's school or organization and community."

In fact, the 4H ALARM Robotics Team has taken younger members of the community under its wing, with a host of outreach events geared toward teaching younger kids. The team held a TinkerCAD workshop at the Franklin Public Library, in which they taught younger children CAD basics, The high schoolers also held a five-hour Scratch Hackathon in October for elementary and middle school kids, and they created and coached two elementary-aged FLL Explore teams, bringing those teams to First Robotics competitions.

The mentoring opportunities instilled a sense of leadership. "One thing I learned is you have to be really patient, and you should not confront someone who is a little shy," says Mookim, "You should slowly learn and engage, and then they won't be shy anymore."

Other mentors of the team this year include Ajit Naravane, Arnold Kalmbach, Steve Dunbar, Erica Schweighoffer, Steven Schweighoffer, James Minihane, Nick Mosher, and Jon Miller.

4H ALARM Robotics is supported by generous sponsors- Dassault Systemes, Pratt & Whitney, TE Connectivity, Gene Haas Foundation, General Dynamics-Mission Systems, Mathworks, Natural Resources Management, Tib Family and partners 4H and the Franklin Public Library.

Hydra has a little life left in it, still, before it's taken apart and salvaged for next year's robot. The team will take it to the "Mayhem in Merrimack" competition at Merrimack High School on September 14th and later to the New England Robotics Derby (NERD) on October 12th.

Those interested in connecting with 4H ALARM Robotics can find them at [www.alarm-robotics.com](http://www.alarm-robotics.com), on Facebook (AlarmRobotics2079), on X @4-H Alarm Robotics and on Instagram at 4h\_alarm\_robotics.



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# Calendar

## August 3

**The BLACK BOX Sings ... Frozen, 7 p.m.,** outside at THE BLACK BOX, 15 W. Central St., Franklin, tickets at THEBLACKBOXonline.com or by calling the box office (508) 528-3370

## August 5

**Book Discussion Group, 6:30 p.m.,** Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, *Our Missing Hearts* by Celeste Ng

## August 6

**Bellingham Women of Today Ice Cream Social, 6:30-8 p.m.,** Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, enjoy ice cream and toppings while learning about this organization, register at bellingham-womanoftoday.com

## August 7

**Forum for the Democratic candidates for the Governor's Council District 2 race, 7 p.m.,** Norfolk Public Library). Will also air live on Norfolk Public Library and available on their YouTube Channel.

**Virtual Author Talks, presented by Bellingham Public Library, 2 p.m.,** register at <https://libraryc.org/bellinghamma>, Behind the Scenes at the Space Station with Smithsonian Curator Dr. Jennifer Lavoisier

## August 8

**Bellingham Days, 6-10:30 p.m.,** Carnival opens, Bellingham Memorial Middle School grounds

## August 9

**Bellingham Days, 6-10:30 p.m.,** Carnival Bellingham Memorial Middle School

**Summerween!, 6:30 p.m.** doors open, Halloween-themed film at 7, Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, check library website for title info. and ratings, popcorn, candy, water, and punch provided. Bring a blanket for the floor or use library seating.

## August 10

**Bellingham Days, 2-11 p.m.,** Carnival, Bellingham Memorial Middle School, Bellingham Days Vendor Fair to benefit the Friends of the Library, 12-5 p.m., on the field between the

football field and BMS, Steve Blunt & Friends Family Concert, at 12 noon, other musical bands starting at 5:30 p.m., free train rides on "rambling railroad" 6-9 p.m., fireworks 9:30 p.m.

**Shred Day, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.,** Bellingham Municipal Center, 10 Mechanic St., Bellingham, bring your old records and files to have them shred on site by the Town's waste hauler, E.L. Harvey. For Bellingham residents.

## August 11

**The BLACK BOX Sings ... Taylor Swift, 7 p.m.,** outside at THE BLACK BOX, 15 W. Central St., Franklin, tickets at THEBLACKBOXonline.com or by calling the box office (508) 528-3370

## August 13

**Writing Group for Adults, 6:30 p.m.,** Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, email [marjorie@marjorieturner.com](mailto:marjorie@marjorieturner.com)

**Friends of Bellingham Library monthly meeting, 7 p.m.,** Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, get Zoom link by emailing [library@bellinghamlibrary.org](mailto:library@bellinghamlibrary.org)

## August 15

**Virtual Author Talks, presented by Bellingham Public Library, 2 p.m.,** register at <https://libraryc.org/bellinghamma>, Redefining Success for Parents of Teens with Irena Smith, PhD

## August 16

**Summerween!, 6:30 p.m.** doors open, Halloween-themed film at 7, Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, check library website for title info. and ratings, popcorn, candy, water, and punch provided. Bring a blanket for the floor or use library seating.

## August 17

**The BLACK BOX Sings ... Wicked, 7 p.m.,** outside at THE BLACK BOX, 15 W. Central St., Franklin, tickets at THEBLACKBOXonline.com or by calling the box office (508) 528-3370

## August 19

**Virtual Ask-A-Lawyer Program with Attorney Brian T. Salisbury, 20-minute appointments 5-7:30**

p.m., Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham

## August 21

**Virtual Author Talks, presented by Bellingham Public Library, 7 p.m.,** register at <https://libraryc.org/bellinghamma>, An Exploration of Friendship, Reckoning, and Hope with Novelist Shelby Van Pelt.

## August 26

**Exsultet! auditions, (sopranos needed for elite women's chorus), 7 p.m.,** 1st Congregational Church, Holliston, come prepared to sing a piece from website <https://exsultet.us>

## August 27

**Bellingham Public Schools first day grades 1-12 & Kindergarten orientation**

## August 30

**Red Cross Blood Drive, Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.** Register at [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org)

# Save the Date: September 28th Franklin's Harvest Festival

The 21st Annual Harvest Festival is set for Sat., Sept. 28, with a rain date of Sun. Sept. 29, from 12 noon to 5 p.m. It will take place on Main Street and the surrounding streets in downtown Franklin. Put it on your calendar!

Organized by the Franklin Downtown Partnership, more than 150 vendors will display their specialties. Look forward to music, food, kids' activities, special items from local merchants, artwork and crafts.

"The Harvest Festival is a great time to socialize, relax, and enjoy the community spirit. There are many shopping and dining opportunities in downtown Franklin," said Scott Martin, President of the Franklin Downtown Partnership and Harvest Festival Chair.

The Partnership welcomes business owners to sponsor the Harvest Festival. Please email the FDP office at [downtown.franklin@yahoo.com](mailto:downtown.franklin@yahoo.com) to learn about sponsorship opportunities.

This year's festival sponsors, to date:

**Platinum** – Dean Bank

**Gold** – Hockomock YMCA

**Silver** – The Enclave of Franklin, Glenn Meadow Apartments, Notturmo Home Services

**Bronze** – Eagle Stainless Tube & Fabrication, Fenton Financial Group, Keefe Insurance, LeafFilter

For festival, booth registration or sponsorship info, visit the FDP website at [www.franklindowntownpartnership.org](http://www.franklindowntownpartnership.org).

Follow the Partnership at: <https://www.instagram.com/franklindowntownpartnership/> and <https://www.facebook.com/franklindowntownpartnership.org/>

The Franklin Downtown Partnership is a non-profit 501 (c) 3 organization made up of more than 350 business owners, residents, and community leaders working to revitalize downtown Franklin. Residents can join the Downtown Partnership for only \$25. The Partnership manages events like the Strawberry Stroll and the Harvest Festival, and initiatives such as beautification, streetscape design, green space, alley murals, and sculpture projects. For more information go to [www.franklindowntownpartnership.org](http://www.franklindowntownpartnership.org).

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*Quintessential Brass* (brass band)

Wednesday Aug 14. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm, 6:30pm – 8:30pm  
*Alexander's Jazztime Band* (jazz standards)



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