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Nov. 14 - Dec. 11, 2024

## 'Sanderson Sisters' win Mendon scarecrow contest

**Mendon Cultural Council plans to hold event again next year**

By Theresa Knapp

The winner of the 2024 Mendon Scarecrow Contest was the Thibodeau Family at 25 Carpenter Hill Road for their "Sanderson Sisters" scarecrows.

Second place went to JDM Cannabis at 103 Uxbridge Road for "Snoop Dog," and third place went to Vandervalk Farm & Winery at 25 Lovell Street for "Will Barrow."

The event was sponsored by the Mendon Cultural Council. There were 22 entries in the contest and 284 votes were cast.

"The council was blown away by the response," said MCC Chairperson Joanne Lamothe. "We were hoping for at least five participants, but we had 22 entries including families, residents, businesses, and the municipality."

The contest was judged by



**1<sup>st</sup> Place: Sanderson Sisters by the Thibault Family.** Courtesy photo

the public. The scarecrows were on display around town between Oct. 1 and Oct. 23. The first, second, and third place winners received a trophy, and all other participants received a medallion

(featuring a scarecrow face) for participation.

This was the first year Mendon held the contest.

### SCARECROW

continued on page 9

## Upton Food Pantry has new sign thanks to Silver Award recipients



**For their Girl Scout Silver Award project, Caylee Smith, Ayla Williamson, and Norah Williamson built a new sign for the United Parish of Upton and Upton Food Pantry.** Courtesy photo

By Theresa Knapp

UPTON - Girl Scout Cadettes Caylee Smith, Norah Williamson, and Ayla Williamson of Upton Troop 64528 recently earned their Silver Award by

designing and building a sign for the United Parish of Upton and Upton Food Pantry.

### SILVER

continued on page 16

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# Miscoe Hill Middle School Girls Volleyball team wins game against teachers and staff

*‘Dig Pink’ initiative raises \$4,700 for breast cancer treatment and research*

MENDON - Throughout October, the Miscoe Hill Middle School Girls Volleyball team, under the leadership of Coach Bill McInnis, led a community-wide “Dig Pink” initiative, raising \$4,700 in support of breast cancer treatment and research at Milford Regional Hospital. The team engaged in a variety of fundraising activities, including:

- Concessions Sales: The athletes sold home-made snacks and refreshments during games, providing a tasty way for fans to support the cause.
- Awareness Bracelets: The team offered breast cancer awareness bracelets, allowing supporters to show their commitment to the fight against breast cancer.
- Buck-a-Bump Marathon:

In a creative twist, the team held a “Buck-a-Bump” event where supporters pledged \$1 for every successful bump players executed while keeping the ball in the air.

To celebrate the success of the program, the team challenged Miscoe Hill teachers and staff to a volleyball game on Oct. 25 with the entire student body in attendance along with guests Liz Fleming and Julie Whitney from the Milford Regional Healthcare Foundation. After winning 25-23, the team presented the donation to the Foundation.

Thanks to the hard work and contributions from our players, parents, and the community in the fight against breast cancer!

*Submitted by Miscoe Hill Middle School*



Miscoe Hill Middle School Girls Volleyball recent “Dig Pink” initiative raised \$4,700 for breast cancer treatment and research. Courtesy photo



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## Outdoor Fire Ban - Effective Immediately

**URGENT NOTICE:** Effective immediately: An outdoor fire ban will be in effect for the Town of Mendon until further notice due to extremely dry conditions. These conditions significantly increase the risk of fires that start and have the potential to spread rapidly and become difficult to extinguish.

This includes a wide range of activities such as fire pits, chimineas, recreational fires, and charcoal grills. Sparks and embers from these activities can easily ignite dry vegetation. Also, use caution when using lawnmowers, leaf blowers, ATVs, and other power equipment. The engines can become hot enough to ignite dry leaves and grass.

Thank you for your cooperation in keeping our community safe. Your understanding and adherence to these measures are vital. Remember, we all play a crucial role in preventing any fire incidents during this critical time!



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# Nipmuc Regional High School to host Climate Change Challenge kickoff event

UPTON — The Nipmuc Regional High School will host a Climate Change Challenge kickoff event to launch the year-long, statewide initiative and to train educators on engaging K-12 students in climate change education and action.

The event will take place Nov. 14 - 15 from 7:50 a.m. - 3 p.m. at Nipmuc Regional High School, at 90 Pleasant St., Upton. Educators from across Massachusetts are invited to attend this professional development opportunity to learn strategies for implementing the Climate Change Challenge in their own schools and districts.

This initiative was designed to empower students with the knowledge and skills needed to address one of the most pressing issues of our time. The Climate Change Challenge aims to educate students of all ages

through hands-on experiments and exploring cutting-edge technology alongside their peers and climate change experts. On a monthly basis throughout the school year, students and teachers will have check-ins and webinars with partnering organizations to continue their climate change education. At the end of the year, students will present their findings at a symposium.

The first day of the workshop on Nov. 14 will focus on elementary students in grades K-5 and day two will focus on middle and high school students in grades 6-12.

The kickoff conference will feature opening remarks and a talk from keynote speaker Massachusetts Deputy Climate Chief Jonathan Schrag.

Following the opening remarks, there will be three

workshop sessions, during which participating educators will choose to attend presentations from MaxIQ.Space, NASA GLOBE, Mass Audubon, Cooler Communities, Wade Institute for Science Education, Blue Hill Observatory, Climate Interactive and the Nipmuc History Department. These sessions will provide educators with practical strategies and resources for implementing climate change education in their classrooms.

During the conference, Nipmuc juniors will have the opportunity to connect with local organizations to apply their learning to real-world issues, demonstrating the kind of engagement the Climate Challenge aims to foster statewide.



Nipmuc Regional High School student Bridget Klupa attaches a MaxIQ.Space payload to the Salter High Altitude Balloon gondola in Fort Sumner, New Mexico. Photo courtesy Mendon-Upton Regional School District

CLIMATE CHANGE  
continued on page 4

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**Please submit to:**  
editor@uptonmendonfreepress.com

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CLIMATE CHANGE

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In between the workshop sessions, participants will attend the project showcase, a lunch, networking opportunities and a closing session featuring remarks, grant options and a process walkthrough.

"This Challenge aligns with our district's commitment to providing authentic, real-world learning experiences that develop our students' skills as global citizens and solution seekers," Mendon-Upton Regional School District Superintendent Maureen Cohen said. "We're thrilled to have so many educators and organizations from all over the state in attendance, and this is a great learning and networking opportunity for the Mendon-Upton student community. We look forward to see-

ing the students learn and apply their knowledge about climate change throughout the year."

"I want to provide Massachusetts students with authentic learning experiences similar to what my students have enjoyed," said science teacher Jim Gorman, who received the 2024 Massachusetts STEM Teacher of the Year award. "The projects students will participate in demonstrate the kind of hands-on, environmentally-focused work we hope to encourage through the Climate Change Challenge."

Community members interested in learning more about the Climate Change Challenge or supporting the initiative can contact Jim Gorman at [jgorman@mursd.org](mailto:jgorman@mursd.org), or visit <https://www.massclimatechangechallenge.org>.

*Submitted by Mendon-Upton Regional School District*



Students Mark Calabrese and Bridget Klupa in front of a NASA high altitude balloon gondola in the early morning as it's prepared for launch in Fort Sumner, New Mexico. The project was developed in partnership with MaxIQ.Space. Photo courtesy Mendon-Upton Regional School District

## Nipmuc Regional High School awarded \$5,000 to support athletic programs

MENDON — Mendon-Upton Regional School District Superintendent Maureen Cohen and Nipmuc Regional

High School Co-Principals John Clements and Mary Anne Moran recently announced that the high school has been

selected for a \$5,000 Award from T-Mobile to support the athletic programs.

As part of T-Mobile's Friday Night 5G Lights campaign, which aims to bring awareness to the company's investments in rural America, the campaign offers a \$2 million prize to give one small town a football field makeover, \$25,000 to 16 finalists and \$5,000 to 300 high schools.

Four-time Super Bowl Champion Rob "Gronk" Gronkowski has been an ambassador for this campaign, helping to highlight the charm of small-town

high school football in various communities.

"As Athletic director I am very appreciative of our community and their support for our athletic programs," Athletic Director Chris Schmidt said. "Their willingness to take to social media and help publicize our program led to us receiving this prize. The money won't go to football specifically but I am going to work with the community to see how we can use it to benefit the school as a whole."

*Submitted by Mendon-Upton Regional School District*



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# How can business owners plan for an exit



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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If you're a business owner, you always have a lot to do and a lot to think about. But have you put much thought into how you'll eventually leave it all behind?

Even if you're a few years away from that day, it's a good idea to create an exit strategy. If you're like most other owners, most of your net worth may well be tied up in your business

— so how you exit that business can have a big impact on your finances and your retirement.

As you begin the exit strategy process, you'll need to examine some basic questions, such as how much you want for your business and how much it's worth. But you'll especially need to plan for the mechanics of your exit — that is, just how you're going to sell or transfer ownership of it.

- Essentially, you have three main options:
- **Internal sale or transfer** – You could sell or transfer your business to someone affiliated with the company, such as a family member, business partner or even a group of employees. The advantages of this method are that you'll have greater control over the timing of your exit, and you'll be able to provide greater continuity for your employees, clients and suppliers. One

potential disadvantage is that your net sales proceeds may be less than what you'd get from selling the business to an unrelated third party.

- **External sale or transfer** – The biggest benefit of selling or transferring your business to an unrelated third party is that you can potentially maximize your net sales proceeds. But you'll need to consider some tradeoffs, too. For one thing, a sale to an outside person or business usually requires a long and possibly expensive due diligence process. Also, you'll have less control over the timing of your exit than you would if you sold the business to an internal source.
- **Liquidation** – If you liquidated your business by selling all your assets and shutting down operations, you could end up with far fewer net proceeds than if you sold the business to an internal or external source. However, you

could raise cash pretty quickly. But if you chose to liquidate or dissolve your business, it could potentially be disruptive for your employees, clients and suppliers.

Because everyone's situation is different, there's no clear-cut formula for deciding which of these exit options is right for you. And it isn't simply a matter of numbers, either, because you'll need to consider some intangible factors, too. How will your family be affected by your choice? How would you feel if your business was in someone else's hands, or no longer existed? You'll need to work out these issues, along with the financial ones, before you decide on your business exit strategy.

Fortunately, you don't have to go it alone. You may want to consult your financial, legal and tax advisors, and possibly work with a commercial banker and a business evaluation expert. By drawing on several sources

of expertise, you can feel more confident that you'll make a decision that's appropriate for your needs.

One final suggestion: Don't wait too long before you begin putting together your exit strategy. Time goes fast — and when the time comes for you to say goodbye to your business, you'll want to be prepared.

Contact Mark today to discuss this topic or any of your financial goals.

Mark Freeman  
Edward Jones Financial Advisor  
77 West Main Street,  
Hopkinton, MA  
508-293-4017  
[Mark.Freeman@edwardjones.com](mailto:Mark.Freeman@edwardjones.com)

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# Upton Senior Center

## November events

**New for November**  
*Pitch Group* – Tuesdays at 10 a.m.  
*Scrabble Group* – Fridays at 1 p.m.

**Grief Support Group** *Tuesdays at 1 p.m.*  
The loss of a loved one is painful and difficult but you are not alone. Find compassion and comfort at this grief support group led by Robin Natanel.

**Senior Dinner - sponsored by Upton Men's Club** *Friday, Nov. 15 at 5 p.m.*  
Join us for a delightful dinner sponsored by the Upton Men's Club. November's menu features ziti and meatballs in red sauce from Christiano's in Hopedale. Free to Upton seniors thanks to the generosity of the Upton Men's Club. RSVP by Nov. 11.

**Friends of Upton Elders Meeting** *Thursday, Nov. 21 at 1:30 p.m.*  
We are excited to announce

the formation of The Friends of Upton Elders, a new charitable organization dedicated to enhancing the lives of seniors in our community through fundraising and outreach initiatives. We invite residents of all ages to join us in our mission! Come learn more about how you can contribute to this meaningful cause and help us make a positive impact in the lives of Upton elders.

**Thanksgiving & Birthday Celebration!** *Friday, Nov. 22 at 2 p.m.*  
Celebrate Thanksgiving and our November birthdays at the same time during our Thanksgiving Birthday Bash! Join us while we enjoy a Thanksgiving feast with all the fixings. When we're done, we'll celebrate our November birthdays with dessert and ice cream! RSVP by Nov. 14. \$8 fee includes Thanksgiving lunch and birthday bash celebration. \$5 for those with birthdays in November.

# Mendon Senior Center November events

Programs and Activities Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Friday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. by appointment 508-478-6175

**Weekly Tri-Valley Lunches**  
Tuesday & Thursday ~ 12 p.m.  
Cost: \$3 donation per meal. Reservations must be made 48 hours in advance. Menus are subject to change. Transportation is available. Please call Julie Tulacro at 508-478-6175.  
*Thursday Nov. 14*  
Potato Crunch Fish, Peas & Onions, Herb Potatoes  
*Tuesday Nov. 19*  
Hot Dog, Baked Beans  
*Thursday Nov. 21*  
Chicken Tikka Masala, Lemon Seasoned Rice/Broccoli  
*Tuesday Nov. 26*  
Roast Turkey w/Gravy, Stuffing, Squash  
*Thursday Nov. 28*  
*Senior Ctr closed for Thanksgiving*

**Senior Van Transportation** - Our van service is available Monday thru Thursday for trips to medical appointments, local shopping or just coming down to the Senior Center. If you have any mobility issues, the van does include a lift, and our drivers are trained in wheelchair securement.

Please make your ride reservations at least 48 hours in advance by calling Julie Tulacro, Administrative Assistant at the Senior Center, 508-478-6175. Rides are based on availability of the van; medical appointments get highest priority. Ride fees are \$1 for local rides and \$4 for out-of-town rides. Vanbucks are available, get a 12-punch card for \$10. Please ask Julie.

**Mendon Senior Walking Group** - The Mendon Senior Walking Group meets Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays: 8:30 a.m. The average distance we walk is approx. 2 miles. We walk weather permitting. Diane Howell, the group leader, requests email addresses and phone numbers to be sure all are aware of any walking changes/cancellations. If you are interested contact Diane at [diane.m.howell@icloud.com](mailto:diane.m.howell@icloud.com) or call her at 508-473-3081.

**Tree Trimming & Sing-along**  
Help us to deck the halls of the Mendon Senior Center!  
On Thursday Dec. 5 stop by before or after our noon time lunch to put on an ornament or two or bring one from home to donate. Janet Ahearn will grace us with carols on the piano. You are also welcome to join us for lunch as well. Drop-ins welcome, please register for lunch.

changes for effective date starting Jan. 1, 2025. Also, the Medicare Advantage open enrollment period starts Jan. 1 for those who would like to change their current Medicare Advantage plans. And, for those of you turning 65 soon, it would be a great time to start considering your options. Please call 508-478-6175 or stop by the senior center to register for this informative program led by Mendon SHINE counselors Chet Twardzicki and Janet Hubener.

**Outreach Assistance**  
Senior Center Outreach Coordinator, Janet Hubener is available to offer free confidential counseling, caregiver support, and information and referral services on aging issues for seniors and caregivers. This position is grant funded in part under a state grant. Home visits are available, please contact Janet at 508-478-6175. Helpful information: Free Covid Tests call 800-232-0233.

**Friends Dine Out**  
Carpool with friends from the senior center the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. or meet at the restaurant at 12 noon. The cost of lunch is your responsibility, but the company is free! Lunch this month will be at the Roast House of Blackstone on Wednesday, Nov. 20.

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**Home Energy Assistance**  
*HEAP Help is Just a Call Away*  
If you or someone you know is having trouble making ends meet, please consider contacting the Mendon Senior Center. Our helpful staff including Janet Hubener, Outreach Coordinator, are here to offer confidential assistance with fuel assistance applications and nutritional support to Mendon residents of all ages. The SMOC Fuel assistance program helps defray heating costs incurred between Nov. 1, 2024, and April 30, 2025 for eligible households (see household size/income guide.) Please call for guidelines for larger households. Call Janet at the senior center at 508-478-6175. Additionally, the Mendon Food Pantry, housed at the senior center is well stocked and available to Mendon residents in need. Call Help is just a phone call away. Household size Income Limit: 1- \$49,196, 2- \$64,333, 3- \$79,470, 4- \$94,608.

**SHINE Counseling~Medicare**  
*Open Enrollment ends Dec. 7*  
Plan to join us on Nov. 20 at 10:30 a.m. for an informal meeting regarding Medicare. Open enrollment ends on Dec. 7, so there is still time to make

**Mendon Minstrels Fall Performance**  
Join us on Thursday, Nov. 21 at 11 a.m. for a performance entitled Dream followed by lunch. Register early; space is limited.

**Day Trip: Christmas At Newport Mansions**  
Come away with us by tour bus on Friday, Nov. 29 to Newport and experience the wonder of Christmas! On this magical outing you will tour Newport's two most celebrated mansions, Marble House and The Breakers. In the middle of the day, you will enjoy free time for lunch and Christmas shopping in old town Newport. As the sun sets, the grounds of The Breakers will become a Christmas wonderland as holiday music fills the air, and its landscape is awash in hundreds of thousands of lights. This trip departs Mendon Senior Center at 9:30 a.m. and returns at 7 p.m. Cost: \$90 per person—Checks payable to Friends of Mendon Elders. Payment is due Nov. 20. For questions and information call Bev Fior 508-473-8382

MENDON SENIOR CENTER

continued on page 15



# Knights of Columbus car show



**Letter to the Editor:**

The Knights of Columbus Council 1562 would like to say ‘congratulations’ and ‘thank you’ to all of the winners

at this year’s car show! Your presence made the event a fantastic success. We truly appreciate your enthusiasm and support for our passion for cars and community involvement. We hope you

enjoyed the displays, activities, and camaraderie.

A very special thank you to our volunteers and sponsors who helped bring this event to life and helped us support our

charities.

We look forward to seeing you next year!

*Warm regards,*  
*Jeff Richard and Phil Cieply*

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- 1 1/2", 2 1/2"
- Multi-Color River Stone
- Multi-Color River Stone
- 3/8", 3/4" Blue Stone
- 3/4" Processed Gravel
- 3" Processed Gravel
- Recycled Asphalt
- 1" Dense Grade Gravel
- 3/4" Crusher Run
- Washed Sand
- Mason/Pool Sand
- Stone Dust
- Blue Stone Dust
- Rip Rap
- Fill Clay/General
- Trench Sand



# Mendon Seniors' community involvement



Mendon Seniors have been busy this fall participating in, and supporting, local community events.

The group joined the Mendon Cultural Council scarecrow contest, "Head over heels for the Senior Center!" and participated in the 2nd annual chili contest sponsored by Garrison Speed Shop of Mendon in support of veterans and first responders. Pictured are Chef Dona Son (center) with volunteers Betsy Edsall and Karen Mills who represented the Friends and Senior Center in the chili contest.

The Senior Center also extends thanks to everyone who volunteered or visited its table at the Lions Country Fair and its Oktoberfest. *Source: Medway Senior Center*

## A HELPING HAND...

### Upton Food Pantry hours

**Nov. 19 and Dec. 3: 9:30 to 11:30 a.m.** - The Upton Food Pantry serves residents from Upton as well as nearby towns. Proof of income or church affiliation is not required. We offer non-perishable food, toiletries, paper products and infant needs. Donations can be dropped off in our donation shed located outside the United Parish of Upton office on 1 Church Street, Upton.

### Community supper on Nov. 21

**Nov. 21:** Community Supper - on the third Thursday of each month from September through June at 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., the Faith in Action committee of the United Parish of Upton provides a delicious and nutritious meal for the community. Everyone is welcome. Please call the church office at 508-529 3192 by Nov. 15 to make your reservation.

*If your nonprofit organization is located in Upton or Mendon and provides free services to Upton and/or Mendon citizens, email [editor@uptonmendonfreepress.com](mailto:editor@uptonmendonfreepress.com) for consideration to be listed in this section.*

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SCARECROW

continued from page 1

“We wanted to do something that wasn’t done before and not tied to a major holiday,” said Lamothe. “In earlier times, Mendon was a farming community, and scarecrows were part

of farming so what better way to honor Mendon’s history than a scarecrow contest.” Lamothe said, “The people of the Town of Mendon should know that, without their support, this would never have happened. The Cultural Council wants to say thank you from the bottom of our hearts. We have some re-

ally talented and creative people in Mendon, and the council was glad they had an opportunity to show their talents, and we look forward to what next year’s scarecrow event will bring.” To view all entries, visit their physical locations or see them on Facebook @MendonMABulletinBoard.



A troop of scarecrows by Daisy Troop 65437. Courtesy photo



2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Snoop Dog by JDM Cannabis. Courtesy photo

Mendon’s scarecrow locations include:

- 1st: Thibodeau Family, 26 Carpenter Hill Rd. - “Sanderson Sisters”
- 2nd: JDM Cannabis, 103 Uxbridge Rd. - “Snoop Dog”
- 3rd: Vandervalk Farm & Winery, 25 Lovell St. - “Will Barrow”
- Mendon Town Hall - 20 Main St.
- Peregrin - 1 Maple St.
- Country Bumpkins - 2A Maple St.
- Mendon Post Office - 12 Maple St.
- Rockland Trust Bank - 14 Hastings St.
- Imperial Ford - 8 Uxbridge Rd.
- Mendon Animal Clinic - 128 Uxbridge Rd.
- Mendon Daisy Troop 65437 - 10 Mowry St.
- Imperial Country Store - 1 Millville Rd.
- Mendon Senior Ctr - 62 Providence St.
- Mendon Fire Dept - 8 Morrison Dr.
- Thibault Family - 24 Haywood Cir.
- Centerpoint Driving Academy - 101 North Ave.
- Rodriquez Family - 22 Northbridge St.
- Chenelle Family - 16 Washington St.
- Three Little Wren Farms - 13 Leonard Rd.
- Richotte Family - 7 Milford St.
- Mendon Highway Dept - 66 Providence St.
- Police Dept. - 22 Main St.
- Taft Public Library - 29 North Ave.



3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Will Barrow by the Vandervalk Farm and Winery. Courtesy photo



Raygun by the Chenelle Family. Courtesy photo

Source: [bit.ly/MendonScarecrowMap2024](http://bit.ly/MendonScarecrowMap2024)

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Actually, Homelessness Does Exist in Your Backyard

November is National Homelessness Awareness Month

They are disheveled, un-showered, pushing a shopping cart full of belongings asking for handouts. These are the stereotypical images we have of the homeless. Yet the reality is that there are thousands of unhoused in the state who are not so easily visible and likely living in your community.

Massachusetts, like much of the country, has seen a surge in homelessness over the last year. Overall, the latest state count reveals there are more than 29,000 homeless in the state; a

Thousands of ‘Hidden Homeless’

Despite the number of homeless individuals accounted for, there exists a population of unhoused individuals—unlikely part of any statistics—they are known as the “hidden homeless,” who number in the thousands in Massachusetts.



29,000+ Homeless in MA  
54% Increase from 2023

They are experiencing homelessness out of sight by sleeping in temporary spaces such as their cars or on the floors or couches of family and friends.

An increasing number are seniors on fixed incomes who can no longer afford their rents or mortgages. Because these individuals are



“Because I stayed one night in a motel and then had to sleep in my car, I was still considered not homeless enough to receive emergency shelter services.”

~ Woman in her 20s evicted by her landlord\*

“hidden,” from national or local statistics, they lack access to housing support resources.

Central Mass. Housing Alliance Executive Director Leah Bradley provides additional insight into the state’s homelessness and what can be done to help with this crisis. To read the Q&A:

Scan the QR Code



or visit [milfordregional.org/about-us/community-benefits/](http://milfordregional.org/about-us/community-benefits/)

“All I need for the winter is a pot to melt snow in for drinking water.”

~ Man in his 40s living in a tent in the woods\*

54% increase from 2023. Statewide data indicates this crisis touches EVERY community in the state.

\* Quotes are from local individuals who have spoken to members of the Community Benefits Committee. They are not identified for safety and privacy reasons.



UMass Memorial Health – Milford Regional Medical Center’s Community Benefits Committee is bringing awareness to the homelessness crisis that many in our service region are facing.



# Glaucoma treatment: iDose TR

## Commonly asked questions

By Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.  
Milford Franklin Eye Center

Glaucoma is a condition that can damage our field of vision. It occurs when the pressure inside the eye is higher than what the eye can tolerate. Glaucoma is treatable with drops aimed at lowering eye pressure, but many patients find it challenging to use these drops consistently due to irritation, side effects, or simply forgetting. In these cases, iDose TR, a new sustained-release implant, can offer an innovative solution for managing intraocular pressure without the need for daily eye drops.

**What is iDose TR?**

iDose TR is an FDA-approved prescription medication and drug delivery system for patients with open-angle glaucoma or ocular hypertension. The implant contains travoprost, a prostaglandin analog that has long been used in eye drops to lower intraocular pressure by increasing the outflow of fluid from the

eye. However, unlike traditional drops, iDose TR is gently implanted directly inside the eye, where it releases the drug slowly over time, reducing the need for frequent applications.

**How does iDose TR work?**

iDose TR delivers a sustained release of travoprost, which helps reduce and maintain healthy eye pressure levels. The tiny implant is placed in the eye's trabecular meshwork during a minimally invasive procedure performed under local anesthesia at our state-of-the-art surgery center. Once in place, iDose TR continuously delivers the medication for an extended period, reducing the need for daily drops while effectively managing eye pressure.

The implant does not need to be removed, as it is designed to remain in the eye for many months. In some cases, patients may benefit from the iDose TR implant for up to a year or longer before a replacement is

needed.

**Benefits of iDose TR**

iDose TR offers several key advantages over traditional glaucoma treatments:

- **Long-lasting effect:** Reduces the need for frequent eye drops, improving adherence and convenience.
- **Minimally invasive:** The implant is inserted via a simple surgical procedure, often performed under local anesthesia.
- **Reduced side effects:** May result in fewer side effects, such as redness, irritation, and blurry vision, compared to traditional eye drops.
- **Improved quality of life:** By eliminating the need for daily drops, iDose TR enhances patient comfort and convenience.

**Who is a candidate for iDose TR?**

iDose TR is approved for patients with open-angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension. How-

ever, not every patient is an ideal candidate. Contraindications include:

- Infection or suspected infection in the eye or surrounding area
- Corneal endothelial cell dystrophy or prior corneal transplant
- Narrow angles, where the iris and cornea are too close together
- Allergies to any of the ingredients in the implant

If you meet the criteria, iDose TR may be a great option to help manage your glaucoma and reduce the need for daily eye drops.

**Risks of iDose TR**

Like any medical treatment, iDose TR comes with some potential risks. While generally well-tolerated, clinical trials have shown the following possible side effects:

- Increased eye pressure
- Eye pain, irritation, or redness
- Inflammation of the iris (iritis)
- Dislocation of the implant (rare)
- Macular edema, a swelling of the retina
- Possible permanent brown pigmentation of the iris

It's important to discuss any concerns with your ophthalmologist to determine if iDose TR is right for you.



**Alternatives to iDose TR**

There are several other effective treatments for open-angle glaucoma and ocular hypertension. These include:

- **Eye Drops:** Prostaglandin analogs (like latanoprost), beta-blockers (timolol), alpha-2 agonists (brimonidine), and carbonic anhydrase inhibitors (dorzolamide) are common options.
- **Laser Surgery:** Selective laser trabeculoplasty (SLT) and cyclophotocoagulation are minimally invasive procedures to improve fluid drainage or reduce fluid production.
- **Surgical Implants:** Devices such as the Ahmed glaucoma valve and Ex-PRESS glaucoma implant help drain excess fluid from the eye.

Each treatment has its own set of benefits and risks, and the choice depends on the severity of glaucoma, overall health,

**GLAUCOMA**  
continued on page 11

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# Humble Beginnings and a need for support

**Letter to the Editor:**

The Mendon Council on Aging began seeking a “home” more than 50 years ago for the population it served. Year after year, the Council settled for temporary spaces and “drop-in centers” as they referred to them. Seniors had lunches at the Henry P. Clough school and later at Nipmuc HS on Mondays and Wednesdays. They had supper and held Bingo in the evenings at McDonald’s on Rt. 140 in Milford. Eventually, St. Michael’s Church allowed the Council on Aging limited use in their facility to hold regular weekly programs including arts and crafts.

Out of these humble be-

ginnings, the eventual senior center emerged through the generosity and sweat equity of Mendon residents. The 1989 Mendon Annual Report explains it best, “Ground was broken in August 1989 on Providence Street for the Mendon Senior Community Center. Money was placed in a building trust to start the project. The trust fund [consisted] of private donations and a discretionary grant received in 1988. All labor [was] generously donated by area individuals.” The then Mendon Senior Community Center officially opened on October 28, 1990. Fifteen years later, a second floor and garage were added, again with volun-

teer labor and donated materials, at no expense to the town. For 34 years, the building has served as a home, not just a “drop-in center” for seniors and various clubs and organizations. Though it has served its purpose, it is no longer adequate for our community’s growing needs. The Council on Aging identified a need for a new facility 10 years ago. They conducted surveys, reviewed the programming needs and began the process of looking into an expanded facility. At that time, other town priorities were identified, and the Center was placed on hold but still recognized as a high priority. Since that time, the town has

supported a new police station, town hall renovations, new library and the school system needs. All these initiatives were worthy of our support. This brings us to the present day. Once again, the Council on Aging approached the town with the idea of a new Center. The Selectboard, recognizing this as a high priority, established a committee to do a thorough study and design for a facility that would meet the needs of the community as well as its seniors. The current committee has worked diligently for two years to achieve that goal. Get involved and make the Mendon Senior & Community Center a reality! This new Cen-

ter will provide space for:

- Services for senior and veterans in a fully ADA-compliant facility
- Meeting rooms & event venues for the whole community
- Social functions
- Sponsored meal programs
- Education and wellness activities
- Improved and accessible food pantry
- Safe and ample parking
- Updated shelter facility for town emergencies
- Recreational spaces for all ages

*Respectfully,*  
~The Mendon Senior and Community Center Building Committee

**GLAUCOMA**

*continued from page 10*

and patient preferences. Discuss your options with your ophthalmologist to determine the most appropriate treatment.

**Is iDose TR for me?**

If you’ve found daily eye drops challenging, or if they haven’t effectively controlled your glaucoma, iDose TR might be the solution you’re looking for. It offers long-lasting pressure control, fewer side effects, and greater convenience, allowing you to focus on living your life without the constant worry of administering drops.

The iDose TR implant helps reduce the burden of daily drops, improving patient compliance and quality of life. At Milford Franklin Eye Center,

we are committed to offering the latest advancements in glaucoma care, including iDose TR. We are proud to have performed one of the first iDose TR procedures in New England at our Cataract and Surgery Center of Milford. As a leader in advanced eye care technology, we are thrilled to be among the pioneers of this groundbreaking treatment. Our surgery and surgeon were featured in a segment broadcasted on Channel 5 TV. We are available for second opinions and dedicated to providing world-class outcomes. Here’s to pushing the boundaries of eye care!

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# Upton Town Library Calendar of Events

9 Milford Street, Upton • 508-529-6272 • UptonLibrary.org • HOURS: Tues., Wed. & Thurs. 9-8 • Mon., Fri. & Sat. 9-4 • Sun. CLOSED

By Matthew Bachtold, Library Director and Lee Ann Murphy, Children's Librarian

**SEASONAL PROGRAMS**  
*Autumn StoryWalk – Oct. 1 through Nov. 30* Visit the VFW Playground for our latest Story-Walk™, *The Scarecrow's Hat* by Ken Brown. Stroll through the playground, reading each poster panel with your child. Fill out our QR code at the end to enter a chance to win a copy of the book for your home library. One entry per child.  
*Drop-In Craft – Dec. 4 at 5:30-7:30 p.m.* Stop by the library to make a winter hat! We will use paper, coloring materials, scissors, and cotton balls to make our winter creations. For ages 3+. No registration required. While supplies last.  
*Winter Paper Trees – Dec. 11 at 6 p.m.* Elementary school aged patrons can join us as we share a winter story, and then use construction paper and paint to create beautiful skylines of winter trees. For ages 5 to 12. Pre-registration is required.  
*Gingerbread Clay Pots – Dec. 12 at 6 p.m.* Tweens and teens can join us for this seasonal event, as we make an adorable gingerbread man out of a mini clay pot! Participants will use small terracotta pots, hot glue, and paint to make a seasonal decoration. For ages 10 to 16. Pre-registration required.  
*Teen Hangout – Tuesdays & Thursdays 2 - 5 p.m.* NEW program just for Teens! Teen Hang-

out is a time just for tweens and teens! Every Tuesday and Thursday after school, we reserve the Classroom as a space for teens to hangout, play video games and board games, make crafts, read, and more. This is a drop-in program.  
**SPECIAL EVENTS**  
*Virtual Program: Favorite Romance Books of 2024-25* Monday, Dec. 16, 7 - 8 p.m. – Online program  
Lorelai of Lorelai's Lit Lair will share her favorite romance books of 2024 and what books she's looking forward to in early 2025. This program is brought to you in collaboration with the Ashland Public Library and is sponsored by the Friends of the Ashland Public Library. Registration is required to receive the link to attend this virtual program.  
*Puzzle Swap Returns!*  
Wednesday, Dec. 6, 1 - 2 p.m.  
Bring in a gently used puzzle with no missing pieces to participate in our Yankee Swap of puzzles (either 500 or 1,000 pieces). You will walk away with a new-to-you puzzle of your own! You may bring more gently used puzzles to swap with other patrons after the Yankee Swap icebreaker is over. There will be a table set up with a puzzle going, so feel free to stay and help put it together! To attend this event, please register on the library website.  
*Virtual Author Talk Series*  
View free online author talks, either live or recorded. Register

and get more information at the library website.  
Author Talk with **Mona Susan Power:** Native Rights and Culture in Fiction - Wednesday, Nov. 20 at 7 p.m.  
Author Talk with **Dr. Jeffery Post:** Unearthed: Exploring the Smithsonian National Gem Collection - Wednesday, Dec. 4 at 2 p.m.  
Author Talk with **Laura Dave:** On Pulse-Pounding, Family Driven Mysteries - Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 2 p.m.  
**CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS**  
*Movies at the Library – Nov. 25 at 1 p.m.* Join us for afternoons at the movies in our Greatroom! On Nov. 25, we will screen Inside Out 2, rated PG. Both movies are for ages 5+. No registration required. Not a drop-off event. These events coincide with the release days for the Mendon-Upton Regional School District.  
*Monthly Library Events – Register now!*  
All programs and events require pre-registration at [uptonlibrary.org](http://uptonlibrary.org) or call 508-529-6272. Registrations open the month prior to events.  
*Tabletop Game Night for Adults*  
Join our tabletop game series for adults! New games are featured each month such as 7 Wonders, Mysterium, and Azul. Meets every third Thursday of the month from 5:15 - 7:30 p.m. Beginners and experienced players both welcome! Register at [uptonlibrary.org](http://uptonlibrary.org).

*Baby Storytime – Fridays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.* Baby Storytime is for ages birth to 3 and is held on Fridays. This is a 20-30 minute lapsed program featuring stories, songs, and nursery rhymes. Pre-registration required.  
*Preschool Storytime – Thursdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.* Preschool Storytime is for ages 3 to 5 and is held on Thursdays. This is a 45-minute program featuring stories, songs, rhymes, and a craft. Pre-registration required.  
*Saturday Storytime – Nov. 16 at 9:30 a.m.* Once a month we offer a 30-45 minute Saturday Storytime, blending Baby and Preschool storytimes featuring stories, songs, rhymes, and a craft. For ages 0-5. Pre-registration required.  
*Drop-In Storytime – Nov. 25. & Dec. 9 at 9:30 a.m.* Our Children's Department offers a Drop-In Storytime session, once a month. No registration required! This is a blend of our Baby and Preschool Storytimes; however, no craft will be provided. We will feature stories, songs, rhymes, and fun! This will be held in the Greatroom and will be a larger group size. For ages 0 to 5.  
*LEGO Club – Nov. 20 at 4 p.m.*  
This group meets the 1st & 3rd Wednesday of each month from 4 - 5 p.m. This group is led by Library Director, Matthew Bachtold, and is for ages 5 to 12. We provide the LEGOs while you have fun building and making new friends. Pre-registration is required.  
*Kids' Book Club – Dec. 4 at 4 p.m.*

Our book club members explore popular juvenile fiction titles on the first Wednesday of each month from 4 - 4:45 p.m. For our December meeting, we will be discussing Classic Starts: *Alice in Wonderland & Through the Looking Glass* by Eva Mason. This group is for ages 8-12. Pre-registration required.  
*Tween Book Club – Nov. 21 at 6:30 p.m.* This club is especially for our middle grade patrons, ages 10 to 14. This group reads popular middle grade titles selected by our members. This month, we will be discussing the realistic fiction title *One Last Shot* by John Green Anderson. Pre-registration required.  
**Upton Reads Book Group**  
An eclectic mix of contemporary literary fiction with meetings on the second Tuesday afternoon and Thursday evening of each month in the Community Center classroom, with a Zoom remote option. Tuesday, Dec. 10 at 12:45 p.m., and Thursday, Dec. 12 at 6:45 p.m.: *North Woods* by Daniel Mason  
**Fic or No Fic Book Group**  
An adult book group led by Librarian Micaela that alternates fiction and non-fiction selections. Meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:45 p.m. Meeting date for Nov./Dec. is changed to Dec. 11. Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 6:45 p.m.: *Lady Tan's Circle of Women* by Lisa See.  
For more information or assistance with any library services, call 508-529-6272 or email [mbachtol@cwmar.org](mailto:mbachtol@cwmar.org)



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# It's the most wonderful time of the year to use Affordable Junk Removal

By Linda Chuss

With so much to do around the holidays, give yourself the gift of space by using Affordable Junk Removal to help prepare your home for the season. "Life is hectic, we are all so busy in our daily lives that we don't notice how quickly we are being overrun with junk" said Jason Schadler, who founded the business in this area 20 years ago. "It's nice to park your car in the garage during the cold months, but maybe you need to make room there first, and we can help with that."

With Affordable Junk Removal, you can rent a dumpster or have their Junk Removal Professionals come to haul away items that have been gathering dust and taking up precious space. Setting an end-of-year or New Year's resolution to clean up a neglected basement or attic is a

great start. You can even put a dumpster rental on your gift list. Sometimes the biggest challenge is not knowing where to begin, and that is where Affordable comes in.

"You can load your own dumpster or have our truck guys do all of the work for you," Schadler explained. "And rest assured, we don't just take everything to the landfill. We try and recycle as much as possible. Clothing and household items are donated to local organizations that help our friends and neighbors. We also take some items to Resellables secondhand store in Bellingham. That keeps them out of landfills, gives them a new life, and helps us keep our prices down. We're always looking for ways to be more cost effective because customers appreciate our reasonable prices."

Changes in legislation have made it increasingly more diffi-



cult to dispose of certain items, like mattresses, for example. It is now state law that most textiles and mattresses must be recycled. "Finding places to take mattresses is a challenge and the fees for disposal have gone through the roof," said Schadler. Items like these carry a separate recycling fee that the commercial transfer stations charge because of how labor intensive that recycling is. "People are usually shocked at the cost, and we find ourselves educating the customer as to why these fees exist. Here at Affordable, we view ourselves as an avenue our clients can turn to when they have these items and want them disposed of le-



gally, safely and properly."

Affordable has many repeat customers. "When people call, they reach me, not some automated corporate call center," he said. "They know me and the crew and trust us. We do a good job, are fast, efficient, and reliable. We come when we say we will and if anything unexpected comes up, we communicate. We live here too, we are your friends and neighbors, we

sponsor your little league teams and run into you at the grocery store. We are your local guys." A quick look at the many years of positive online reviews attests to this.

For more information, visit [AffordableJunkRemoval.com](http://AffordableJunkRemoval.com). For an estimate or appointment, call or text 774-287-1133.

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## Taft Public Library Calendar of Events

29 North Avenue, Mendon • 508-473-3259 • TaftPublicLibrary.org • HOURS: Tues. & Wed. 10-7 • Thurs. 3-7 • Fri. 12-5 • Sat. 9-12 • Sun. & Mon. CLOSED

### ADULT PROGRAMS NOVEMBER 2024

**Please note:** The Taft Public Library will be open from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. on Wednesday, Nov. 27 and closed for Thanksgiving on Thursday, Nov. 28.

**Upcoming Events:**  
To register for an event, click on the Library Event Calendar & Registration link at the top of the library's homepage (www.taftpubliclibrary.org).

**Adult Handcrafting Group**  
Let's get crafty! Join us on Wednesday, Nov. 20 at 2 p.m. downstairs in the library and get your craft on! Bring your own craft project, whatever it might be, to work on while you visit. Intended for adults. No registration is required. Crafts are NOT supplied.

**Adult Book Club**  
The Adult Book Club will meet Monday, Dec. 9 at 7 p.m.

upstairs in the library to discuss *Oh William!* by Elizabeth Strout. For upcoming book clubs contact the library at 508-473-3259 to request copies of the books or log in to your account from our website to request them through interlibrary loan.

**Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club**  
The Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club typically meets downstairs in the library on a quarterly basis. This year the group will read and discuss five nonfiction titles. Those interested are asked to stop at the downstairs desk to sign the Footnotes registration sheet and pick up a copy of the latest book. Upcoming books in the Footnotes series:

**January 2025** (date TBD): *American Jezebel: The Uncommon Life of Anne Hutchinson, the Woman Who Defied the Puritans* by Eve LaPlante  
**March 2025** (date TBD): *The Mysterious Case of Rudolf Diesel*:

*Genius, Power, and Deception on the Eve of World War I* by Douglas Brunt  
**June 2025** (date TBD): *How the Word is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America* by Clint Smith

**Awards Book Club**  
New to our slate of adult book clubs is Awards Book Club! Hosted by Taft Library Assistant Jane Blackwood, the Awards Book Club meets on a quarterly basis to discuss fiction and non-fiction award winners of the year. Jane selects from the books that took home the coveted Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the Booker and more! Stop at the downstairs circulation desk to pick up the latest Awards book for discussion:

**Upcoming books:**  
Tuesday, Nov. 19 at 7 p.m.: Discussion of *Night Watch* by Jayne Anne Phillips  
The next two books will come from the 2024 National Book Award and Booker Prize lists

which will be announced in November. Discussions for each title will be in February and May, dates TBD.

**German Conversation Club**  
Are you looking for a place to practice what German you remember or to improve your German vocabulary? Conversations in German is no pressure, just fun! Lead by Library Assistant (and Mendon resident) Monika Schmid, the group typically meets the last Monday of each month. Registration is required. To register, visit our website! Next club date: Monday, Nov. 25 at 6 p.m. Taft Library now has Mango Languages!

Visit the Taft Public Library website for access to the Mango Languages platform. If you have an interest in learning a language, Mango provides lessons in over 70 languages. Children can try their hand at language learning with Mango Little PIM, a platform designed just for them, and for those interested in learning American sign language we provide access to Mango ASL. Mango's Intuitive Language Construction methodology helps build skills in vocabulary, grammar, pronun-

ciation, culture, comprehension, and retention. To see all of the Mango options the Taft Library offers scroll down the left-hand side of our webpage to the Databases section.

**Friends of the Taft Public Library Meeting**  
The Friends of the Library meetings are typically held on the last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. downstairs in the Art Holmes Community Room, unless it falls on a holiday or during a school vacation. All are welcome (and encouraged) to attend! If you plan on attending, it's always a good idea to call the library at 508-473-3259 or email the Friends at friendsoftaftlibrary@gmail.com to confirm the date and time of the meeting. The group will do its best to post any meeting changes on the Taft Library web site.

**TAFT CHILDREN'S NEWS  
NOVEMBER 2024**  
Registration is required for all programs. Please log onto our website: www.taftpubliclibrary.

**TAFT LIBRARY**  
*continued on page 15*





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MENDON SENIOR CENTER

continued from page 6

**December Holiday Programs Save the Dates:**  
*Friends of Elders Christmas Fair ~ Open to the Public*  
The Friends will be holding our Christmas Fair on Dec. 7. We will be holding the event in the Mendon Senior Center, 62 Providence St., Mendon. Times will be 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. We will be holding a Door Prize Raffle that includes several gift cards for Market Basket and Barnes and Noble. No cost to anyone who stops by and fills out a raffle ticket. Drawings will be done at 3 p.m. We will be showcasing many

Christmas items, handmade knit and crocheted items, and our famous baked goods sale.  
*Annual Santa Parade, Tree Lighting & Fireworks!* Friday, Dec. 6 at Founders Park 6 p.m. food & Music 7 p.m. Parade. Sponsored by Brothers of the Brush.  
*COA Holiday Dinner*  
Join us Wednesday, Dec. 11 at 12 p.m. for a wonderful holiday dinner. Seating is limited due to space constraints. Please contact the senior center early to inquire about seating.  
*The Miscoe 6th Grade Chorus* will delight us with Holiday Program again this year on Thursday Dec. 12 10:30 a.m. Call or stop by the center to register.  
*Mendon Minstrels holiday program* will be held on Thursday, Dec.

19 on 11 a.m. followed by lunch. Details to follow.  
*New Years Eve* – Western themed Celebration on Tuesday, Dec. 31 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Details to follow.  
**Senior Center Inclement Weather Policy:** It is the policy of the COA to align w/the Mendon School system cancellations and delayed openings. The center will remain open for information and referrals unless the Town Hall Closes. Please listen to Milford's WMRC radio station following a significant snow fall for school cancellations. If you had a van ride scheduled for that day, we apologize but the van will not be running when the center is closed.

TAFT LIBRARY

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org and find the events page to register along with more information for the programs.  
**Itty Bitty Story Time**  
Itty Bitty Storytime is designed for our youngest patrons birth to 3 years old. Join us for a lot of fun on Tuesdays and select Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.  
**Story & Craft Time**  
Join us for Story and Craft Time! Perfect for the preschool-aged child! All sessions take place on Tuesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.  
**Alphabet Storytime**  
It's all about the alphabet! Each week we will focus on a different letter. We will read a couple of books, sing songs, and learn about the letter of the week! Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Please note there is no Alphabet Storytime the last Wednesday of the month.  
**Coffee and Conversations**  
Dates: Wednesday Nov. 20 & Dec. 18. Coffee & Conversations is from: 9:15 to 10:15 a.m. Location: Taft Public Library, 29 North Ave., Mendon.  
Join us for an informal playtime where families will be able to build social connections and learn about early childhood development and family friendly resources. The library will supply Muffin House Muffins!  
Please stay for the 10:30 a.m. Puppet Storytime. Join

Newton & Friends of Through Me to You Puppetry for songs and stories. At the end of the 30-minute show, children can greet the puppets. Geared for children 2 to 5 years, but all are welcome!  
**Lego Club**  
Back by popular demand! During this one-hour building session we will be led by the "Lego Lady" Kim Steadman! No need to bring any Legos! This program is great for all ages ... as long as they don't eat the Legos! Tuesday: Dec. 10 at 4:30 p.m.  
**Preschool Kidding Around Yoga**  
We will learn yoga poses, dance, sing, and meditate. This class is all about fun- all abilities are welcome! Mats are available, or feel free to bring your own. Wednesday: Dec. 11 at 9:30 a.m.  
**Music & Movement with Deb Hudgins**  
Join Deb Hudgins for a 30-minute music and movement theme-based program which features singing and guitar music for young children (infant and preschool). Join us on Tuesday, Nov. 21. Program starts promptly at 10:30 a.m.  
**Tutors with Tails**  
Meet Sprite! Sprite is a therapy dog who loves children and love books. Sprite & her owner Janet will visit the Taft on the last Tuesday of each month. Register today for the opportunity to read to Sprite! Spots are limited.

**Book Clubs**  
**8-12 Book Club:** We will be reading: *Ferris* by Kate DiCamillo. The book club discussion will be held downstairs in the library on Tuesday, Dec. 3 at 5 p.m. The book club will include a discussion, pizza, and refreshments.  
**Graphic Novel Book Club:**  
This month we will be reading: *The Case of the Golden Bone* by Sara Varon. Join us on Tuesday, Nov. 19 at 5 p.m. to discuss this month's book pick! Pizza and refreshments will be served. Books are available at the upstairs circulation desk.

Recent Home Sales

Date	Mendon	Amount
10/31/2024	36 Bellingham St.	\$689,900
10/16/2024	5 Hartford Ave. W.	\$1.05 mil
10/16/2024	5 Jewell Xing	\$850,000
10/15/2024	3 Forest Park Dr.	\$720,000
10/15/2024	4 Talbott Farm Dr.	\$935,000
10/15/2024	16 Bates St.	\$590,000
10/11/2024	19 Thornton St.	\$775,000
10/10/2024	24 Park St.	\$720,000
10/07/2024	63 Washington St.	\$872,500
09/30/2024	6 Davenport Rd.	\$940,000

Date	Upton	Amount
11/01/2024	10 Maple Ave.	\$665,000
10/31/2024	0 High St.	\$135,000
10/31/2024	1 Shoemaker Ln.	\$680,400
10/24/2024	46 School St. #A	\$665,000
10/21/2024	30-32 Mendon St. (4.2 acres)	\$240,000
10/16/2024	9 Shoemaker Ln. #4	\$769,865
10/04/2024	47 Mechanic St.	\$633,300
09/30/2024	17 Pearl St.	\$875,000
09/30/2024	37 Mendon St.	\$705,000
09/27/2024	57 Milford St.	\$500,000

Source: zillow.com / Compiled by Upton & Mendon Free Press



The 4-bed, 4-bath, 2,800-square-foot house at 17 Pearl St. in Upton recently sold for \$875,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com



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SILVER

continued from page 16

The Silver Award is the highest award a Cadette (middle school-aged) can earn in Girl Scouts, and only 10% of registered Cadette Girl Scouts achieve this award. Each Cadette must log at least 50 hours of work to earn their Silver Award and their project must be sustainable in nature and benefit their community. Through the process, Girl Scouts learn team-building skills, practice outreach with local experts and resources, and take on individual leadership roles with project tasks. Some Girl Scouts go on to earn their Gold Award in high school.

“We are so thankful to Upton's Girl Scout Troop 64528 for this sign, as its impact will be a lasting one for our food pantry, church, and community,” said Food Pantry Coordinator Amy Griswold, noting the sign is strategically placed facing out toward the town common. They have seen an immediate impact of being able to advertise cur-



The Silver Award is the highest award a Cadette (middle school-aged) can earn in Girl Scouts, and only 10% of registered Cadette Girl Scouts achieve this award. Each Cadette must log at least 50 hours of work to earn their Silver Award and their project must be sustainable in nature and benefit their community. Through the process, Girl Scouts learn team-building skills, practice outreach with local experts and resources, and take on individual leadership roles with project tasks. Some Girl Scouts go on to earn their Gold Award in high school.

Source: [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org)

rent needs on the sign.

“Within a day or two of our first posted request, we had people dropping off donations,” said Griswold. “Our goal is to change the sign monthly, asking for 3-4 specific items that are in high demand. In the past, we have relied on social media, or word of mouth to ask for dona-

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Girl Scouts Norah Williamson, Ayla Williamson, and Caylee Smith digging the holes for the sign they erected at the United Parish of Upton and Upton Food Pantry. Courtesy photo

tions, so the addition of an outdoor sign that reaches so many community members driving by is an amazing tool for our advertising. For the patrons, all of this just adds to what we are able to offer them when they visit. Food insecurity remains a huge issue in communities large and small. Every donation, no matter the size, has an immediate impact for someone, somewhere.”

Norah Williamson said the scouts were familiar with the food pantry because they had donated Girl Scout cookies to it in the past. “We had heard there were often things the food pantry didn’t have enough of. We thought a sign would help let people know what things are needed because we already send other messages to the commu-



Girl Scouts Norah Williamson, Caylee Smith, and Ayla Williamson positioning the new sign they built for the United Parish of Upton and Upton Food Pantry. Courtesy photo

nity by posting messages on the Public Safety sign in front of the fire station (we repaired that sign a few years ago for our Girl Scout Bronze Award project).”

Caylee Williamson said, “Our goal with this project was to better our community by bringing awareness to the food pantry and its needs. We wanted to spread information outside just church members to bring more help and attention to it. The more people we can help, the better.”

To earn a Silver Award, each Cadette had to log at least 50 hours of work on the project, which had to be sustainable in nature and benefit the community. Before they began, they submitted a project proposal to the Girl Scouts of Central and

Western Massachusetts Council.

Troop leader Coreen Williamson said the process included meeting with church officials as well as town, county, and state officials. The scouts also wrote letters to abutters and attended a ZBA hearing because “the size of the planned sign was outside the regulations for the zone it was in.”

The scouts met with their carpentry advisor, Bill Andrews, to take measurements and create design ideas, shopped for materials, sourced donated parts such as plexiglass for the door, sheet metal for the magnetic board, and PVC for all the outer covering.

“The girls then got to work building their sign using several types of saws, drills, handheld tools, and lots of other carpentry items,” Williamson said, noting the scouts called Dig Safe to be sure they wouldn’t disturb any underground utilities.

Once the sign was built and planted in the ground, there was a dedication and blessing ceremony during a Sunday worship service.



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SILVER

continued on page 17



# BVT teacher Brian Rhodes earns National PLTW Engineering Teacher of the Year award

UPTON – Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) instructor Brian Rhodes was recently named a 2024-2025 National Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Engineering Teacher of the Year.

This award recognizes educators from a nationwide pool of nominees who exhibit exemplary leadership and are committed to expanding STEM access while empowering students to develop key transportable and technical skills. Rhodes has earned this distinction for his work in the PLTW Engineering pathway.

Rhodes is the Engineering & Robotics program team leader at BVT, where he also serves as the PLTW site coordinator. With nearly two decades of teaching experience, he has made significant educational contributions, particularly in coaching students through VEX Robotics, FIRST Robotics,

ARC Drone, and Skills USA competitions. His professional experience includes notable service in the United States Navy's nuclear power program and works within the semiconductor industry, which complements his academic credentials. He holds a bachelor's degree in nuclear engineering, an accelerated post-baccalaureate in mathematics, and a master of education in curriculum and teaching.

"We proudly join PLTW in celebrating and recognizing impactful teaching and learning that prepares students for their future careers," said BVT's Superintendent-Director Michael Fitzpatrick. On behalf of our school community, we acknowledge Mr. Rhodes' exceptional contributions and congratulate him for making an impact, not only with his students in the classroom but within our larger school communities."

Rhodes was honored at a surprise PLTW award ceremony on



**BVT instructor Brian Rhodes was recently named a 2024-2025 National Project Lead The Way (PLTW) Engineering Teacher of the Year. Courtesy photo**

Oct. 22 during Massachusetts STEM Week. Rhodes entered his classroom and was stunned to see students, staff, administrators, PLTW representatives, family, and special guests.

The event began with welcoming remarks from Vocational Director Dr. Matthew Connors, Gabrielle Gannon, a junior in the Engineering & Robotics program, and Carolyn Gallant, a 2020 graduate, also spoke highly about having Mr. Rhodes as a teacher. PLTW president and CEO Dr. David Dimmett presented Rhodes with the Teacher of the Year award.

Special guests included a citation of recognition presented by State legislators Aidan Doherty, District Director of the Office of Senator Rausch, Senator Ryan Fattman, and Representative Michael J. Soter. The ceremony

concluded with closing remarks from BVT Assistant Superintendent-Director/Principal Anthony Steele.

After the event, Rhodes said he was proud to have earned the award and recognition. He is incredibly pleased to see his students use their vocational training in their professional careers.

BVT currently offers 10 PLTW courses including six from the Engineering pathway and four from the Computer Science pathway. BVT has been recognized as a PLTW Distinguished School for seven consecutive years.

*Source: Submitted by BVT*

## SILVER

*continued from page 16*

Ayla Williamson said, "I really enjoyed presenting in front of the church after we completed our project. Putting in all of the hard work for building the sign, and having everyone thank us, made me feel very proud that we spent the time to help people in need."

Brian Le Suer with the church said he was also thrilled with the new sign. "We are extremely proud that these three girls found the time in their busy lives filled with school and extracurricular activities to reach out and serve the needs of their community."

The scouts submitted a final report to the Girl Scout Council about the process of their project and how they each took on leadership roles and individual responsibilities. They reported on the sustainability of their project, a major requirement of the Girl Scout Silver Award.

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SPORTS

# Nipmuc Golf showed ‘monster improvement’ in ‘24

Warriors more than doubled last year’s win total

By Chris Villani

A mix of young talent and experienced players helped the Nipmuc golf team win seven matches this year, nearly qualifying for the state tournament and easily eclipsing its three victories in 2023.

“Our season was great, we had a monster improvement this year,” head coach Matt Merten said. “Some of our players put in extra work in the offseason and made great strides. It’s a tribute to their character and it was very refreshing.”

Nipmuc saw a number of

newer players step into bigger roles this fall after graduating a fairly large senior class from last year’s squad.

Kylie Yoon played out of the number one spot this fall and regularly shot in the low 40s during the nine-hole matches.

“She is super consistent,” Merten said. “She was a real anchor for our team and she has a laid-back personality that was really helpful as a co-captain.”

Max Fernandes was the team’s other captain. Merten praised him and Yoon for helping some of the newer players



Kylie Yoon was Nipmuc's top player this fall. Courtesy photo



Cooper Graves is a skilled sophomore with a bright future for Nipmuc. Courtesy photo

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develop solid practice and playing habits.

The team set scoring goals at the start of the season and kept having to move the bar as they got better.

“We started out looking to

have four scores in the 40s, but those numbers got lower and lower as they learned how to manage their games better,” Merten said.

Cooper Chaves, Grady O’Neil, and Drew French were

three more consistent contributors.

“Cooper played in the number two spot and he posted some really low scores,” Merten said. “He worked on all aspects of his game regularly. He is only a sophomore, but he caught the golf bug. Once you catch the golf bug, all you want to do is play.”

Merten praised O’Neil for his strong iron play. He said junior Cole McGovern posted some solid scores this fall and sophomores Evan DaSilva and Jack Calvey “really pushed each other” during the season.

One pleasant surprise for Nipmuc was freshman Cody King, who ended up playing in the number four spot in the rotation by the end of the year.

Merten said the chemistry on this year’s team is one of the reasons that it was so successful and finished third in the Dual Valley Conference, trailing only Hopedale and Whitinsville Christian.

“They are a tight-knit group and they kept their eyes on the prize and continued to improve,” the coach said. “They are a great group of kids.”

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SPORTS

# BVT Girls Volleyball puts together stellar year

Beavers captured 15 wins during the regular season

By Chris Villani

The Blackstone Valley Tech Girls' Volleyball team is right where head coach Jacob Ramos thought it would be: at the top of the standings. The Beavers went 15-5 during the regular season, setting themselves up for a strong showing in both the state vocational tournament and the statewide playoffs.

"I can't be any happier, being a first-year coach," Ramos said. "A lot of the girls were on the team when I coached at the JV level, so I kind of grew up with them. It's been a seamless transition."

BVT rolled to an 11-1 start to the year, beating the teams that Ramos thought it should beat and playing tough against some of the better competition.

Junior Nadia Shloul is one of the team's best players at outside hitter and has one of the top kill totals in all of Division III.

"She is an unbelievable player," Ramos said. "It's truly an honor to be able to coach her and know that she is a junior and still has some room for growth."

Shloul is one of the four captains on this year's squad, joining Paige Connolly, Abigail Whittier, and Lauren Gronda. Ramos said all four have been terrific leaders for Valley Tech.

Libero Manuella Bernardes is a great passer, Ramos said, and the leader in the division in both digs and serve receptions.

"She is only a sophomore," the coach pointed out. "It's pretty remarkable to think we have her for the next two years."

Another skilled sophomore is



The BVT volleyball team huddles during a recent match. Photo credit: Elleigh MacNeil

Francesca Malo.

"She has been fantastic," Ramos said. "She is having a great year serving the ball, setting the ball, and she has shown a lot of growth from her freshman to sophomore year. We are super

excited to have her."

In addition to having one of the top teams in the area this year, the number of strong underclassmen on the roster means the Beavers are likely set up to compete in the future as well.

"If you see our roster, we have a lot of good seniors, but I think we are just scratching the surface with some of these younger players," Ramos said. "We have a whole boatload of kids coming up in the pipeline, and a great core coming back."

He added, "There should be no drop-off."

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<p><b>2022 JEEP RENEGADE</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$71/WK</b></p> <p>#D14458L • LATITUDE, 4X4, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$29,265</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977</b></p>	<p><b>2021 TOYOTA TACOMA 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$119/WK</b></p> <p>#TP4187 • SR TRIM, DBL CAB, 3.5L</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$42,605</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$33,677</b></p>	<p><b>2021 DODGE DURANGO GT</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$110/WK</b></p> <p>#D14288 • ALLOYS, AWD, 3.6L</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$48,595</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977</b></p>	<p><b>2024 GENESIS GV70 3.5T</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$202/WK</b></p> <p>#TP4468 • NAV, HEATED LEATHER</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$64,700</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$56,977</b></p>	<p><b>2022 TOYOTA CAMRY LE</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$85/WK</b></p> <p>#TM24-1043A • 28/39 MPG CITY/HWY</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$38,625</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977</b></p>
<p><b>2022 CHEVY SILVERADO 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$120/WK</b></p> <p>#C4251 • CUSTOM, 2.7L TURBO</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$54,180</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$33,977</b></p>	<p><b>2021 NISSAN ROGUE AWD</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$78/WK</b></p> <p>#46502 • 26/33 MPG CITY/HWY</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$31,710</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977</b></p>	<p><b>2022 JEEP CHEROKEE 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$71/WK</b></p> <p>#P16690B • LATITUDE, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$34,400</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977</b></p>	<p><b>2022 HYUNDAI TUCSON SEL</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$85/WK</b></p> <p>#TP4523 • AWD, HEATED SEATS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$36,750</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977</b></p>	<p><b>2022 TOYOTA COROLLA LE</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$78/WK</b></p> <p>#TP4540 • 30/38 MPG CITY/HWY</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$26,589</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$21,977</b></p>
<p><b>2022 CHEVY TRAX LT AWD</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$74/WK</b></p> <p>#46521 • TURBO, PREMIUM AUDIO</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$27,565</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977</b></p>	<p><b>2023 TOYOTA TUNDRA 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$152/WK</b></p> <p>#P16564B • SR5, ALLOYS, DBL CAB</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$58,405</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$42,977</b></p>	<p><b>2020 FORD EDGE SEL</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$81/WK</b></p> <p>#124-253A • TURBO, NAV, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$40,395</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977</b></p>	<p><b>2021 VW JETTA SE</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$71/WK</b></p> <p>#TP4535 • TURBO, HEATED SEATS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$29,550</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977</b></p>	<p><b>2022 LINCOLN NAUTILUS</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$110/WK</b></p> <p>#P16782A • SUNROOF, LEATHER</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$58,745</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977</b></p>
<p><b>2019 CHEVY COLORADO</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$110/WK</b></p> <p>#ST0631A • LT TRIM, 4X4, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$39,180</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977</b></p>	<p><b>2018 HONDA CR-V EX-L</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$85/WK</b></p> <p>#23377A • 27/33 MPG CITY/HWY</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$34,190</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977</b></p>	<p><b>2023 FORD BRONCO 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$105/WK</b></p> <p>#45887A • TURBO, 17" ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$38,995</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$29,677</b></p>	<p><b>2019 SUBARU LEGACY 2.5i</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$67/WK</b></p> <p>#TM25-018A • AWD, HEATED SEATS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$32,695</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$18,977</b></p>	<p><b>2023 MERCEDES GLA 250 SUV</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$114/WK</b></p> <p>#TP3680 • TURBO, AWD, LEATHER</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$48,600</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$31,977</b></p>
<p><b>2022 BUICK ENCORE AWD</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$78/WK</b></p> <p>#46323 • GX SELECT, 1.3L TURBO</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$32,225</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$21,977</b></p>	<p><b>2021 MAZDA MAZDA CX-5</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$88/WK</b></p> <p>#TP4591 • SUNROOF, LEATHER</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$29,899</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977</b></p>	<p><b>2023 BMW X1 xDrive28i</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$110/WK</b></p> <p>#TP3908 • AWD, TWIN TURBO, NAV</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$51,595</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977</b></p>	<p><b>2023 HYUNDAI SONATA SEL</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$81/WK</b></p> <p>#TP4265 • 27/37 MPG CITY/HWY</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$28,686</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977</b></p>	<p><b>2021 RAM 1500 BIG HORN</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$117/WK</b></p> <p>#D14230L • 4X4, V8, 20" ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$45,710</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$32,977</b></p>
<p><b>2021 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS <b>\$124/WK</b></p> <p>#TP4508L • XLE TRIM, MOONROOF</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$45,775</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$34,977</b></p>				

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