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January 2025

George Whiting Receives Boston Post Cane

By J.D. O'GARA

On November 22, 2024, 100-year-old Mr. George Whiting, native of Bellingham and lifelong Bellingham resident, became the holder of Bellingham's *Boston Post Cane*. Mr. Whiting was presented with the cane by members of the Bellingham Historical

Commission. Members of his family attended the ceremony, held at the Bellingham Public Library.

As a younger man, he'd dismissed the honor as something "for old people," Whiting kidded.

"I'd like to thank everybody who had a part in this. Thank

you so much. It's a tremendous honor, really. I couldn't believe that I'd ever be holding the Boston Post Cane, and it will be in my possession ... until when," Whiting added, jokingly.

WHITING

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Members of the Bellingham Historical Commission, Back, L-R, Jeff Prescott, Bernadette and Rick Marcoux present Mr. George Whiting, Front, with Bellingham's *Boston Post* cane.



Artist Bren Bataclan with a few of the 230 students who participated in conceiving ideas for the new mural inside the main entrance at Stall Brook Elementary School in Bellingham.

Color Mixed with Kindness

Stall Brook Students Collaborate with Artist on New Mural

By DAVID DUNBAR

On Friday, December 20, 2024, a colorful, engaging mural conceived by students and painted by a professional artist was unveiled at the Stall Brook Elementary School in Bellingham.

Principal Shannon Barca, who has 12 years of experience in school administration, says "I've never seen such a connection between the children and an outsider."

MURAL

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WHITING

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According to information provided to the Bulletin by Bernadette Rivard, “In 1909 the Boston Post newspaper established a long-standing tradition to honor the most senior resident of each town in their distribution district. 700 canes, made from African black ebony with a knob fashioned from gold, were sent to Selectmen of various New England towns with the instructions to present it to their oldest male resident.

The resident was to be the ‘keeper of the cane’ until his death, and then it would be passed on to the next oldest resident.

In 1930, women became eligible to receive the cane. Bellingham continued this tradition for many years, in fact the tradition outlasted the newspaper.

According to an article in the Winter 2018 issue of the Crimpville Comments, the Historical Commission’s newsletter, the cane was lost for many years and the tradition passed away. The cane was presented to Proctor Prosperity Cook when he was 93 years of age. Mr. Cook died

in a car accident on December 3, 1940. He had the cane with him at the time of the accident. His great-grandson, Carleton Gaskill, Jr. located the cane 35 years later and presented it to the Bellingham Historical Commission.

Due to its historical significance, the Historical Commission no longer presents the original cane, but does honor that person and the tradition, by presenting this replica, which looks very, very much like the original!”

Past recipients of the cane, and members of the Bellingham Historical Commission believe the list is in the order that the cane was awarded:

Alanson Bates, John H. Eaton, Patrick T. Allen, Edwin Migneault, William Byron, George C. McMaster, Joseph Hoar, Alonzo Whitney, Marion H. Williams, Philomena Guillet, Eugene Rhodes, Melissa Holbrook, Proctor P. Cook... lost for 35 years... Glendolene Lee, Mary Zajak, Charlotte Olleberger, Cecile Dalpe, Mary “May” Vater, Mabel Massart, Mary Leveille, Joitiben Patel, Mary Markey (2019-2020), and Rolande Du-bois (2020-2024).

MURAL

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The artist to which she referred is Bren Bataclan, a California-raised painter who owns an art studio in South Boston and for 20 years has been creating murals for schools. According to Bataclan’s website, the artist has gifted close to 4,000 paintings in over 100 countries and all 50 states, merely requiring recipients to “smile more.” This kindness-based effort led to mural painting, and the painter has now painted over 300 school murals.

“It’s the best job I’ve ever had,” he says. More information is available at www.bataclan.com, including examples of murals he has created for schools across America.

The local process started late last month – just before Christmas – with Bataclan meeting with students in kindergarten through third grade at the school. He asked them to come up with mural themes and submit drawings that he could paint. “We got 200 drawings to choose from,” he smiles.



What would Christmas be like without an appearance by The Grinch? At a school-wide meeting late last month to unveil the new mural, The Grinch was on hand and posed with some of the kindergarten-to-third grade students.

“The kids did the drawings,” Bataclan explains, “and I did the painting. They brainstormed and came up with ideas. It took us about a week to get all this done!”

“This was truly an amazing experience,” says principal Barca. “The interactions be-

tween the students and Bren were absolutely touching.”

Core values of Stall Brook Elementary School include hard work, cooperation, respect, kindness, and inclusivity. And you can see each one in the new mural that covers multiple walls just inside the school’s main entrance.

From the Town Clerk

Thank you Bellingham for the warm welcome to the Town Clerk’s position!

I have big shoes to fill with Larry’s retirement, but we’re getting a lot done. This year we have

only one scheduled local election, which will be held on June 3rd. Open seats and information about positions will be in upcoming Bulletin issues.

In the meantime, please make sure to fill out your census when it arrives mid-January. Returning your census will assure you stay active on voter rolls and keep accurate numbers for the state.

Also, if you have a dog, please fill out the dog license form that

comes with it and mail or drop off the form with payment and rabies information back to us. The cost is still \$15 for spayed or neutered dogs and \$20 for intact. Licenses are due by April 1st, but the sooner the better!

I look forward to working for you in this position!

Amy Bartelloni
Interim Town Clerk

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Stall Brook Says Farewell to Beloved Custodian

By J.D. O’GARA

Long time and well-loved Stall Brook Elementary School custodian David Picard, a Bellingham native, retired at the end of 2024. On Friday, November 22nd, bubbling over with the enthusiasm only kids under 10 can muster, the entire school celebrated the man who had been there nearly three decades. Older children took turns reading a specially written poem, and second graders treated him to a snack-laden candy poem. Some of the youngest even made special hand-made paper sets of keys thanking him for each of the different ways he took care of the school building. Teachers combined their musical talents in a customized rendition of “So Long, Farewell,” and

participants of all ages bid Mr. Picard “adieu” with an endearing goodbye video.

“He’s just the keeper of the building, and he knows all the history,” said Wendy Buratto, Stall Brook secretary. She explains that contractors and general managers who reconfigured the building and office last summer relied on him heavily, because “he knew from the ground up, what had been done to the building and what they needed to do.”

Picard, touched by the outpouring of affection, said, “I always treated this place like my home. People were angry at me sometimes, because I was so picky about what happened in the building, but I’ve been here

longer than anyone here.”

When he first came to Stall Brook, a young man, Picard ambitiously took on several projects, planting trees, installing lamps where unattractive telephone poles stood. He took on projects all along, with his latest being a carefully painted revamp of the original, roughly 50-year-old wooden Stall Brook School sign that borders Hartford Ave.

“Mr. Picard took it, and he worked many, many hours on restoring the sign, and it’s gorgeous. It looks brand new,” said Buratto.

As a surprise parting gift, Picard was presented with a

FAREWELL
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Stall Brook staff and Superintendent Marano say goodbye to Picard, gathered around the school’s original sign, which Picard hand-restored.



Everyone at Stall Brook Elementary School celebrated the man who took care of the school, Dave Picard, as he embarked on his retirement. They even named the circle in front “Picard Park,” with its own sign.

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SCAN ME

Finding the Fitness Program that Works for You

By JENNIFER RUSSO

Getting healthy and trying to shed some extra pounds in the new year is one of the most popular resolutions that people make. Whether that means being more careful about what we are eating and drinking (especially after all of those yummy holiday treats in November and December), start a new fitness regimen, or both – many people are looking to get their bodies in better shape.

With all of the different fitness programs out there, this may seem a bit overwhelming. Even a person with the best intentions may not know where to begin. Finding the right fitness format for the results you aspire to achieve can include a number of factors, including what works best for your individual body and what you enjoy doing. Yes, you CAN enjoy exercising if it's the right thing for you! With so many different programs out there, what are some of the options you might consider?

- Running/Jogging/Walking –** No gym or studio membership needed, but a commitment to a regular schedule and being accountable is. Walking and running are a great way to get the body in shape by doing something we naturally do anyway. It is amazing for cardiovascular health and weight management but be sure to stretch well and use proper form to be mindful of joints such as knees and hips.
- Yoga –** There are many types of yoga out there, but vinyasa and hatha yoga are slower and more flowing forms of the practice which focuses on breathing. It builds strength and balance without being too intense. Bikram (or hot) yoga incorporates high heat to help go deeper into postures and improve circulation. Power yoga and kundalini yoga are a little more physical for those who want to challenge themselves a bit more in that way.
- Spinning/Cycling –** Anyone who has taken a spin class can tell you that it is high intensity and

- exciting. The benefits are calorie burning, lower joint impact, cardiovascular health, and mental health. It is also held indoors, so weather is not a factor in getting on the bike.
- CrossFit® –** This popular program is great for anyone who loves being part of a community of likeminded fitness enthusiasts. Led by trained coaches, the workouts combine fitness and nutrition, high intensity and functional movements, and work in a mix of weight training and aerobic exercise.
- Barre –** Barre is most often a group-format class, which focuses on targeting specific muscles through repetitive, small, isometric movements. For example, pulsing the legs in a lunge position. Working the muscles to a point of fatigue, it is one of the best exercises for toning, developing lean muscle and improving posture.
- Zumba® –** Zumba is an aerobic fitness program that incorporates Latin American style

- dance movements. It is a highly energetic workout that can be adapted for different fitness levels, and can improve coordination, relieve stress, and promote weight loss and cardio health.
- Pound Fitness® –** Pound fitness is a whole-body workout that combines cardio, strength training and Pilates-inspired movements with drumming. With lightly weighted drumsticks, the class becomes a part of the music, while shedding calories and toning the body.
- Water Fitness –** For those who are concerned about limited mobility or joint pain, water-based fitness activities incorporate resistance in a way that is low impact. Water aerobics classes, swimming classes, and aqua jogging are a great way to get a workout in that works the body with less strain.
- Strength Training –** For those who have the goal to build muscle and grow mass, a traditional gym and weight training is the best option. Hiring a

- fitness trainer who specializes in these types of workouts and understands the safety measures involved is important to reduce risk of injury. Combine these strength workouts with a high-protein diet and some cardio workouts for balance.
- Martial Arts –** A fantastic way to not only get a great workout, but build a skill, martial arts training is a full-body workout that uses a collection of philosophies, forms and fighting techniques to train the body and mind. Karate, founded in Japan, is the most popular choice, but Jujitsu, Kung Fu, Krav Maga, Judo, Taekwondo, and Muay Thai are all forms of martial arts that people enjoy. For a lower impact choice, Tai Chi is also very popular.
- Whatever fitness program you are considering, whether it be one or a variety, making the move to obtain a healthier lifestyle and improve the function of the body is a win!
- You've got this!

Did You Know? DPW Has Moved to Depot Street

The DPW operations and facilities moved its administrative office to Depot Street in mid-October. We will be keeping the current location of 26 Blackstone Street for the Garage, offices and materials storage. Our new administration and vehicle garages will be at 215 Depot St. We'll have 2 locations going forward, with Depot St being the headquarters. Our new facility will provide better collaboration, customer interaction, better facility, improved lighting and more parking, and better use of space.

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With this move there are some changes occurring:

Trash bags will NO longer be available for purchase at the DPW and will be sold only at Market Basket. They are still available at the Town Recycle Center, and we are actively looking to identify a location or 2 in south Bellingham.

Office hours will also change to Monday thru Friday from 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Municipal Spotlight

Lussier Finds Niche as Bellingham's Planning Director

By KEN HAMWEY,
BULLETIN STAFF WRITER

Robert Lussier, who's been on the job for eight months as Bellingham's Director of Engineering and Planning, has some admirable goals that he's eager to achieve.

The 30-year-old native of Bellingham has three prime objectives that focus on collaboration, improving the community and updating the zoning bylaws.

"It's imperative to instill more collaboration with applicants and the public," said Lussier, who majored in environmental engineering at the University of New Hampshire. "So often issues crop up that involve performance standards in our zoning bylaws and procedural rules. Some examples include noise, lighting and landscape buffers. The best way to achieve mitigation is to implement changes in our zoning bylaws."

Lussier, who graduated from Bellingham High in 2012, firmly believes the community can improve its livability. His second goal addresses that.

"Livability and quality of life need to be emphasized," he offered. "There are areas of town that need some TLC. With input from the newly-formed Zoning Bylaw Review Committee, it's important to develop regulations for areas that should be more pedestrian-friendly and more aesthetically pleasing. The key is to provide services that better suit the town's needs."

Lussier's third objective involves firming up special-permit approval. "Special permits, for example, are needed for drive-through establishments and most industrial projects," he noted. "The bylaw-review committee has been meeting and will present some changes at the next Town Meeting in the spring. Their work will be ongoing for several years."

Lussier seems well-prepared for his current role. After graduating from UNH, he worked briefly as a seasonal engineer for the Department of Conservation and Recreation at the Wachusett Reservoir. His function was to assist the staff with roadway maintenance.

Lussier moved on to McClure Engineering in Charlton as a civil engineer. "I worked for 3½ years on site and utility designs for private projects," he said. "I later worked for CMG, an environmental and civil engineering company in Sturbridge. I was project manager for municipal projects and private development."

Lussier, who had been an associate member of Bellingham's Planning Board for three years, replaced Jim Kupfer last May as Town Planner. Kupfer currently is working in a similar position in Barnstable.

Lussier says there are two aspects of his new role that he really enjoys.

"I like collaborating with different departments," he emphasized. "It's a plus when we can get public safety departments, like police, fire and the DPW, involved in projects. That leads to better results. I also like putting my fingerprint on a community where I was born and raised."

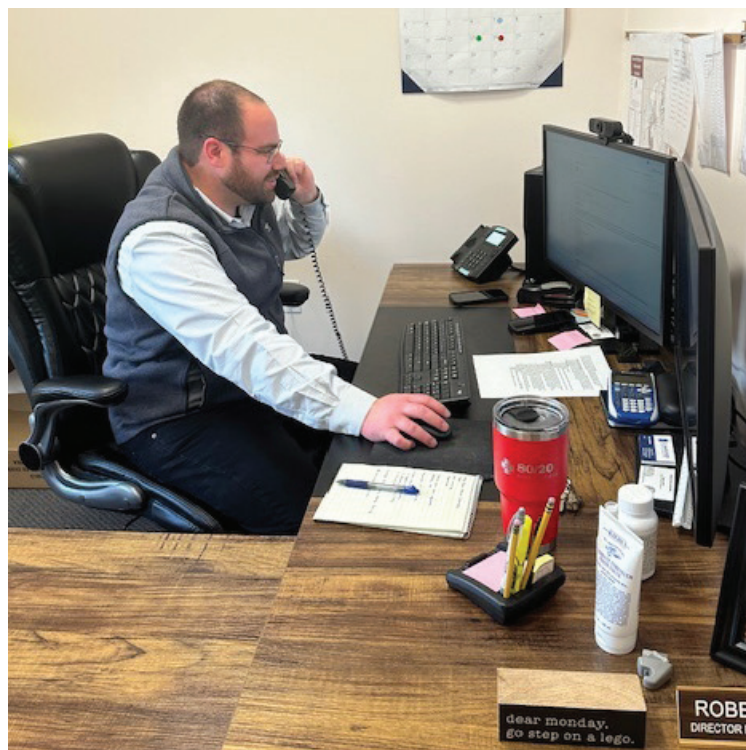
His biggest challenge is all about controlling growth.

"What's difficult is balancing what the town wants and having to deal with state mandates," Lussier noted. "Two examples of the state's influence are the MBTA housing mandate and the Clean Energy Bill (energy storage)."

The MBTA housing issue was settled at the November Town Meeting when voters approved amending the zoning bylaws to create an MBTA Community Overlay District. The state requires that towns bordering a community with MBTA service have to create additional housing. Bellingham was ticketed to create 750 units in a 50-acre zone.

"The overlay district includes the Curtis Apartments on Mechanic Street and the Charles Apartments on North Main Street," Lussier said. "There already are 550 units in those complexes, so we just need 200 to comply with the mandate. Any additional units would be built at those two sites."

Lussier said that the energy mandate (battery energy storage off Farm Street) was passed over at Town Meeting because "town officials want to get more



Robert Lussier, who majored in environmental engineering at the University of New Hampshire, has been on the job for eight months as Bellingham's Planning Director.

input from Farm Street residents and conduct public outreach sessions in the spring." If a zoning change is approved at the spring town meeting, Bellingham would eventually receive \$4.5 million in tax revenue.

The article involves building 392 battery storage containers

that would store excess electricity produced at the Medway power plant. The containers are 20 feet long, 10 feet tall and eight feet wide.

Lussier said the public has voiced concerns due to the uncertainty associated with new technology and safety issues linked

to lithium batteries. "There have been fires at some facilities, and it's understandable why residents have safety concerns," he said.

The developer (Hecate Energy) can bypass local zoning by going through the state Department of Public Utilities and request a zoning exemption. Lussier, however, said, "The DPU can approve the project, taking it out of the hands of local communities, but that route takes time."

On another front, Lussier indicated that he'd like to see re-development of outdated structures and businesses. He also believes that industrial intrusion into Bellingham is on its last legs. "Large industrial parcels have been developed, and I'm confident that we're nearing the end of the industrial boom in Bellingham," Lussier offered.

Primarily providing technical assistance to the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Appeals, Lussier is respected by all town committees. "I've got a good working relationship with all town boards," he said. "I'm pleased that my suggestions are often well-received."

Robert Lussier no doubt has found his niche in Bellingham.

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Operation Graduation Craft Fair a Jolly Time

Bellingham’s Operation Graduation, a 30+ year parent-led program with the goal offering Bellingham High School seniors a graduation-night all-night party in a fun and safe environment, held its Holiday Vendor & Craft fair on December 7, 2024, filling many hallways with unique wares. Proceeds from the event go to support the all-night party for BHS grads.

For information on helping the cause or participating in this year’s fundraisers, visit <https://tinyurl.com/BHSOPGRAD25>.



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The Greater Milford Community Chorus Dazzles in their Annual Holiday Concert

By JENNIFER RUSSO

The Greater Milford Community Chorus delivered a lovely performance at their annual holiday program this season, leaving the audience with smiles as they joyfully went into the festive season. With a program that seamlessly blended the classic carols we know and love, modern song arrangements and medleys, and solo performances, the show brought the warmth of the holidays to the stage beautifully. It was definitely a highlight of the community's seasonal celebrations.

Under the direction of Mark Schiappucci, the chorus of fifty-five members is comprised of people who live in Milford and surrounding towns, with varying musical experience. From professional singers to those who simply love singing as a hobby, the chorus brings together members of all ages and backgrounds to create beautiful harmonies.

This year's program, which the chorus titled "Silver Bells," included sixteen chorale songs such as "We Three Kings," "O Holy Night," "Do You Hear

What I Hear," and a beautiful Jewish-faith song called "Hanukkah Wish." Medleys included a nod to Christmas songs performed on Broadway and an innovative arrangement of popular songs combined with the song "Holiday Road," a song made popular by the movie *National Lampoon's Christmas Vacation*.

There were three solo performances, including a piano instrumental of The Christmas Song with the chorus accompanist Wayne Ward, a beautiful rendition of "All is Well" with soprano Carly Alden, and an original piece titled "Under a Star So Bright" written and performed by tenor Jeff Lovell. Also featured were the combined talents of Zachary Surapine, who sang as a tenor, but also performed two beautiful violin solos in the program.

The chorus is always welcoming new singers and rehearsals for the Spring season begin on Monday, January 6th at Memorial Hall in Milford, starting at 7 p.m. There are no auditions and just a basic understanding of music is necessary. Interested

members of the community are welcome to come to the first few rehearsals before making a commitment to join.

Learn more on the GMCC website at greatermilfordcommunitychorus.org or on their Facebook page at facebook.com/SoundsOfGMCC.



Carly Alden performs a solo performance of Michael W. Smith's song, "All is Well," at the GMCC holiday show.



Jeff Lovell sings his lively original song, "Under a Star so Bright," in his solo performance.



Music Director Mark Schiappucci leads the Greater Milford Community Chorus in their joyful holiday program.

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Naval Academy Student Returns to BFCCPS to Speak

By J.D. O’GARA

Students at the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School were treated to a visit by an alum of the school on Monday, November 25th. Artemesia Saparoff, a second-year student enrolled in the United States Naval Academy, said she was grateful for the opportunity to talk to the younger students.

“I’m so glad to have the opportunity to come to the Academy, and now that I know what it’s all about, I’m excited to share it...so they can have these opportunities open to them as they get older,” said Saparoff.

The child and grandchild of two Harvard graduates, Saparoff had initially expected to follow in those footsteps of academic rigor, but she credits BFCCPS with widening her perspective.

“Being at the BFCCPS definitely helped set me up for this future,” said Saparoff, “particularly because of its emphasis on character development. There’s more to a person than just their academics. There’s that moral



BFCCPS eighth-grader Arnav Garg speaks with Artemesia Saparoff, a second-year student of the U.S. Naval Academy who returned to the school December 7th to share her experiences.

aspect, there’s ethics, and when I (visited) the Naval Academy, I thought it was particularly attractive because of this whole integrated view of a person; they’re made up of not only their academics, but what they can do physically, what they can do morally, and what they can provide to our nation.”

Life at the academy isn’t for the faint of heart, however. Artemesia notes that each day begins with a 5:30 a.m. run and is packed with group formations, group class projects and nighttime briefs. She enjoys that motivation, noting that her fellow Academy members have become family.

“You can’t get through that place alone, and I just love the aspect of getting to know everyone on such a deep level and what makes them tick,” says Saparoff, “You’re graduating with these people who are going to be your friends for life, and you’re graduating for a common goal of helping the United States Navy and helping the mission of this country. I think it’s a great experience for service, and to develop yourself and be helpful to those around you.”



Saparoff hands out information to BFCCPS 7th graders, Swarnamita Majumdar, Zoe Shum, and Poorvi Raiabovina (L-R) about the U.S. Naval Academy and its rigorous requirements for admission. Getting in is difficult, but for those who do, tuition is free.

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Hoping “New Year, New You” Makes Financial Goals Come True?



Glenn Brown, CFP

Made New Year's resolutions to improve your financial wellness in 2025?

Now is when many of us reflect on what we've accomplished and where we fell short. This introspection often leads to the creation of New Year's resolutions, with financial goals ranking high on the list. Whether it's paying down debt, saving more, or investing smarter, the start of the year feels like an ideal time for a fresh financial start.

Yet, people often struggle to make lasting changes to their financial habits. Understanding the reasons behind these challenges can help create more sustainable financial planning strategies for the year ahead.

Let's examine 5 common challenges.

1. Unrealistic Expectations

- A common reason why New Year's resolutions fail. Take someone who wants to save 50% of their income or pay off long-standing debt in a short period. While ambitious, these goals often don't align with one's current financial reality, thus frustration and discouragement occur when progress is slower than expected. Setting unattainable goals results in burnout and abandonment.

Resolution: Break goals into small, manageable steps. Instead of resolving to pay off a debt in one year, consider reducing the balance by 25% in 6 months. If you end up with more, great, but an incremental approach brings accomplishment and makes the goal feel more achievable.

2. Lack of a Clear Plan

- Vague goals like “save more money” or “get out of debt” lack actionable steps, making it difficult to execute. Without a structured plan and understanding your “why”, it's easy to become distracted by day-to-day life, leading to stagnation.

Resolution: Develop an outline of specific considerations, steps and timelines. For example, if building an emergency fund is a goal, then create a budget, set up logistics like automatic transfers and monitor progress/spending to stay on track.

3. Failure to Track Progress

- An easy way to lose sight of financial goals is not having scheduled check-ins. It doesn't need to be weekly or even monthly, but there needs to be consistency in times to review and identify where adjustments are needed. Without this, bad habits persist or worse, form, and now you're battled to unwind new problems.

Resolution: Leverage technology and objective people that are unafraid to tell you much-needed truths. For many couples, an outside intermediary saying what needs to be said greatly benefits relationships. Also, make sure you celebrate milestones along the way.

4. Emotional Spending and Instant Gratification

- Many struggle with impulse spending or seek instant gratification, especially after a stressful day. Afraid to look at your Amazon spending history? This behavior derails the best-laid financial plans.

Resolution: Identify triggers and implement strategies to delay or review purchase decisions. Create a spending prioritization strategy by identifying where you want to spend your money, this helps shift focus from immediate desires to long-term financial goals.

5. Lack of Accountability

- Some are great at executing on their own, for others going it alone can make sticking to financial goals even more challenging. Without a support system or accountability partner, it's easier to lose focus and fall back into old habits.

Resolution: It goes beyond someone telling you “No” when needed, as by sharing progress and/or changes along the way, an accountability partner can help reassure you're on track and motivate you with confidence to keep pushing forward.

Conclusion

Financial resolutions are a powerful tool for creating long-term financial security, but they require more than just wishful thinking.

Maybe it's time to socialize

your goals, set monthly action steps to create fresh start moments and leverage an accountability partner (i.e. Certified Financial Planner) to make your 2025 resolutions happen.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.

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

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Get to Know the b.LUXE Experience - 2.0

Many of you loved the original Beauty Beat article, "Get to Know The b.LUXE Experience," from a few years ago. We've grown and evolved over the past two years, adding new services, talented team members, and more ways to enjoy your beauty experience. We're excited to share what's new and what's been happening—there's so much to update you on!

As the creative minds behind The Beauty Beat, the team at b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio loves sharing the latest trends, tips, and inspiration. But did you know many of our ideas and new service offerings are sparked directly from our conversations with our incredible clients? Your stories, challenges, and beauty goals motivate us to innovate, create, and seek services to meet your unique needs.

What's New at b.LUXE?

- **Apprentice Services at Specially Discounted Prices:** Enjoy top-notch beauty services at a fraction of the cost while supporting our training stylists! In collaboration with the Massachusetts State Board of Cosmetology, b.LUXE is proud to introduce an apprenticeship program offering hands-on experience and high-quality, supervised services at specially discounted rates. This program provides our young talent with exceptional education and training, all while delivering great value to you.
- **Wig & Topper Hair Services:** We now offer compassionate, customized solutions for

clients experiencing hair loss or seeking hair-enhancing options. Our full range of human hair and synthetic wigs, toppers, and holistic scalp treatments restore your appearance, confidence, and well-being.

- **Expanded Beauty Services:** We're excited to announce the addition of new treatments and services alongside our signature offerings! Our new Mind Body Facial is a holistic skincare treatment that combines the rejuvenating benefits of facial therapy with the healing energy of Reiki and aromatherapy, providing a complete mind-body experience.
- **The Saphira Defrizzing Treatment:** This hair treatment features Hyaluronic Acid with a formula enriched with 26 minerals from the Dead Sea, diamond powder, lily flower, and essential oils. It removes frizz and transforms dry, brittle hair into soft waves that enhance natural hair patterns and texture. Each treatment includes a full-sized Prep & Maintain Shampoo and Mineral Mist for you to take home.

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We're excited to be recognized as Google's highest-rated salon in Massachusetts, with over 800 five-star reviews! Additionally, we're proud to be a two-time recipient of The Salon Today 200 Award, which honors the best beauty establishments in the country. Our bright and vibrant studio is home to passionate professionals who

genuinely care about our clients. Whether you're visiting for a haircut, coloring, or a spa day, we strive to make every experience luxurious.

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Rep. Soter Joins Letter to Markey, Warren Urging Timely Support of Social Security Fairness Act

The Social Security Fairness Act has seen strong bipartisan support in the U.S. House of Representatives, being approved by an overwhelming majority (327-75). Rep. Soter believes this act is critical to addressing the inequalities in the current federal law that has resulted in significantly reduced Social Security benefits for millions of public service employees.

Visit <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/82/text> for the pending bill.

Rep. Soter joins many other Massachusetts legislators, standing in solidarity with the police officers, firefighters, teachers, and other dedicated public employees calling for the U.S. Senate to bring this act to the Senate Floor for its timely passage. This legislation will truly make a positive difference in many constituent lives. Despite these current acts intending to prevent individuals from being paid by Social Security while also receiving a government pension, the result has had severe impact on many families in the country.

Rep. Soter stated, "During these difficult times, this truly will help the middle class that are struggling to make ends meet. The Republican led house passed this act overwhelmingly, and it is time to hold Senator Warren to her word that she will put this up for a vote."

The letter further applauds Majority Leader Schumer's pledge to bring the act up for vote and urges Senators to work with their colleagues to pass it in a timely manner.

Evergreen Students Present Wreath to Bellingham



Submitted photo

Bellingham children attending the Evergreen learning Center in Milford presented the Town with a wreath this year. Shown is Denis Fraine, center, with Bellingham students from the town.

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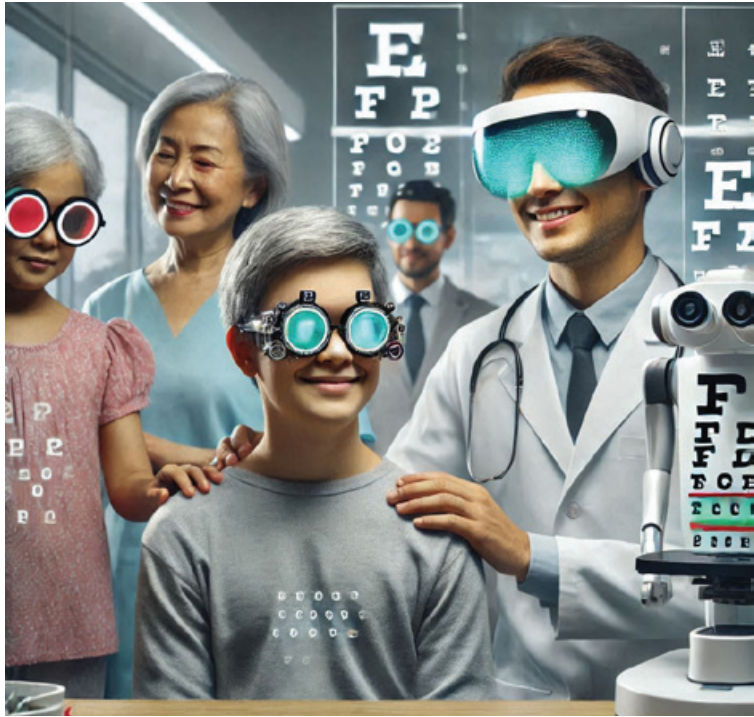
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Decades of Service to the Community: Welcoming a New Provider and Exploring What's New in Eye Care for 2025

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

Milford-Franklin Eye Center has proudly delivered outstanding eye care to the community for decades. We are excited to announce that Dr. Mark Barsamian has joined our team as a vitreoretinal specialist and Chief of our Retina Service. Dr. Barsamian will see patients every Thursday in our Franklin office, enhancing access to advanced care for retinal disorders.

With locations in Milford, Franklin, and Millis, outreach services to Marlborough, and an award-winning surgery center in Milford, we are the leading provider of medical and surgical eye care in the region. Our dedicated team of 58 professionals, including experienced surgeons and four optometrists, is committed to providing comprehensive, high-quality care. As one of the few ophthalmology practices in Massachusetts with a licensed surgical facility, we eliminate the need for patients to travel long



distances for procedures like cataract surgery.

Dr. Roger Kaldawy, Medical Director of the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford, has completed over 30,000 cataract surgeries and introduced blade-

less laser-assisted techniques to the area. He is among the first surgeons in New England to perform the iDose TR implant for glaucoma, an innovative drug delivery system recently featured on Boston's Channel 5. Dr. Kaldawy

also holds distinctions in corneal transplantation and has trained numerous ophthalmologists in advanced surgical techniques.

Dr. Dan Liu, a fellowship-trained corneal specialist, brings expertise in cataract surgery with ORA technology, corneal transplants, keratoconus management, and glaucoma procedures. She provides comprehensive care for conditions like macular degeneration, diabetic eye disease, and dry eye. Dr. Liu is board-certified and an active member of professional ophthalmology organizations.

Dr. Barsamian, a board-certified vitreoretinal specialist, focuses on the medical and surgical management of retinal disorders. He completed a two-year surgical fellowship at The Ohio State University and is an active member of organizations like the American Society of Retina Specialists. Outside of work, he enjoys cycling and family activities.

Our optometry team includes Dr. Shalin Zia, who specializes in routine eye care, contact lens fitting, and managing eye diseases; Dr. Michael Adams, with expertise in corneal pathology and specialty contact lenses; Dr. Donald Conn, who completed his residency in Ocular Disease and Primary Care and provides comprehensive eye care for all ages; and Dr. Purvi Patel, a seasoned optometrist with experience in diabetes, glaucoma, and public health. Together, they offer exceptional care for patients of all ages.

diseases like diabetic retinopathy, glaucoma, and age-related macular degeneration (AMD) at earlier stages. This early detection empowers healthcare providers to intervene promptly, significantly improving patient outcomes.

In the realm of surgical procedures, minimally invasive techniques are gaining prominence. Femtosecond laser technology, for instance, is revolutionizing cataract and refractive surgeries, offering faster recovery times and enhanced precision. Additionally, robotic-assisted surgery is emerging as a game-changer, enabling surgeons to perform intricate procedures with unparalleled accuracy and dexterity.

Gene and stem cell therapies are also making significant strides in treating previously untreatable eye conditions. Researchers are exploring innovative ways to repair damaged retinal cells and restore vision in patients with inherited retinal diseases. While still in their early stages, these therapies hold the promise of transforming the lives of countless individuals.

The integration of telemedicine into eye care has accelerated, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Remote consultations and monitoring allow patients to access expert care from the comfort of their homes, particularly beneficial for those in rural or underserved areas. Telemedicine also facilitates the sharing of medical images and data, enabling specialists to collaborate seamlessly across geographic boundaries.

In the realm of contact lenses, advancements in material science and design have led to the development of more comfortable and durable lenses. Smart contact lenses, equipped with sensors and microelectronics, are on the horizon, offering the potential to monitor vital health parameters like glucose levels and eye pressure.

As we navigate the future of eye care, personalized medicine is gaining traction. By analyzing an individual's genetic makeup and medical history, healthcare providers can tailor treatment

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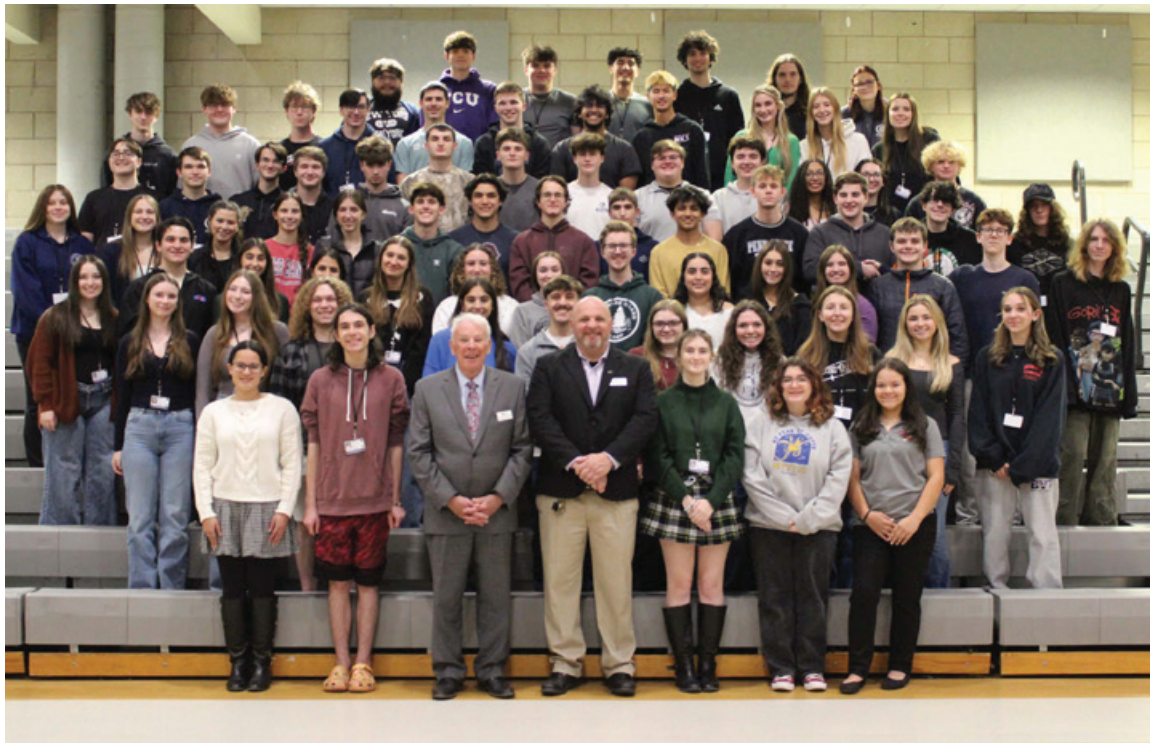
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BVT Class of 2025, 78 Adams Scholar Recipients



Congratulations, BVT Class of 2025 Adams Scholars!

The John and Abigail Adams Scholarship is a merit-based program that provides tuition at a Massachusetts state college or university. 78 Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School seniors are the proud recipients of an Adams Scholarship. The award allows these students an option to fur-

ther their vocational and career training with additional education, advanced training, and credentials. The first-time score on a high school MCAS exam determines eligibility for an Adams Scholarship. Adams Scholars receive free tuition for up to eight semesters of undergraduate edu-

cation at a Massachusetts public college or university, renewable for eight consecutive semesters or four years. Recipients must use the tuition credit in the first

fall semester following their high school graduation and maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better.

The following members of the Class of 2025 from Bellingham have earned a John and Abigail Adams Scholarship:

Kiele Sarnie, Construction Technology.

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

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School serves the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas,

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

EYES

continued from page 12

plans to maximize efficacy and minimize side effects. This personalized approach is particularly relevant for complex eye conditions like glaucoma and AMD, where treatment options vary widely.

In conclusion, the year 2025 marks a period of extraordinary progress in the field of eye care and ophthalmology. From AI-powered diagnostics to revolutionary surgical techniques and groundbreaking therapies, the future holds immense promise for improving vision and quality of life for individuals worldwide. As technology continues to advance and research breakthroughs emerge, we can anticipate a brighter future for eye health.

lence, advanced technology, and patient-centered care sets us apart. We provide world-class cataract surgery and advanced treatment options close to home, with results that rival major Boston centers. All surgeries are performed in our accredited surgical facility, never office-based, ensuring the highest standards of care and no additional out-of-pocket surgical fees. Our in-house optical shop crafts glasses while you wait, with new patients receiving a complimentary pair of select frames. We also offer after-hours, same-day emergency appointments, and Saturday availability to accommodate busy schedules.

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Need something new to read? The Bellingham Library’s website has a link called *Reading Recommendations*, which takes you to a number of ways that you can find your next great read! The possibilities to explore under the Reading Recommendations link are:

- BookPage
- New Titles
- New York Times Best Sellers
- Novelist Book Recommendations
- Similar Books
- Staff Picks
- Topic Based Recommendations

BookPage is a monthly reading recommendations magazine made available to readers through more than 3,500 subscribing public libraries and bookstores across the United States. The Bellingham Public Library subscribes to both the print and digital versions of BookPage! For more than 30 years, BookPage has been a trusted source for book reviews, recommendations, and author interviews. It highlights new authors as well as anticipated bestsellers, pointing readers to the best new releases across all genres. Come into the

library and pick up your copy of BookPage in print or click on the BookPage link under *Reading Recommendations* to read the online version.

Clicking on *New Titles* will bring you to Wowbrary, an electronic newsletter which highlights all the week’s new titles at the library. This includes fiction and nonfiction, adult and young adult titles, DVDs, music CDs, audiobooks, as well as books in large print. You can select the language you would like to read the newsletter in and can view previous newsletters from prior weeks too! There is also a link to sign up if you would like to receive Wowbrary in your email’s inbox each week.

New York Times Best Sellers will bring you to the lists of NY Times Best Sellers for the current week, as well as previous weeks. This includes lists for:

- Combined print and ebook fiction and nonfiction
- Hardcover fiction and nonfiction
- Paperback trade fiction and nonfiction
- Advice, how-to and miscellaneous

LIBRARY
continued on page 22

Bellingham among over 100 MBTA Communities that Have Approved Multifamily Districts ahead of Deadline

By the end of November, the number of communities that have adopted multifamily zoning intended to comply with the MBTA Communities Law had increased to 105 cities and towns. These zoning changes are expected to result in new housing creation, lowering costs across the state.

Since Monday, town meetings in Belmont, Foxborough, Hopkinton, Manchester by the Sea, Seekonk, Shirley, Shrewsbury, Ashland, Kingston, Millis, and Bellingham approved new multifamily zoning districts. A full list of the 105 communities who have passed zoning intended for compliance can be found on the “Submission Statuses” section of the MBTA Communities webpage.

“The intention of the MBTA Communities law is to increase opportunities for new housing, which will lower costs for us all, and we commend cities and towns who are planning for the future needs of their residents.

Forward-looking communities are not only seeking compliance with the law but working hard to seize this opportunity to create and expand vibrant, affordable neighborhoods that meet the needs of their young families, senior citizens, and municipal workforce,” said Ed Augustus, Secretary of Housing and Livable Communities.

Recent polling by UMass Amherst/WCVB identified housing as the top issue for Massachusetts residents and found that a majority (53 percent) of poll respondents support the MBTA Communities Law.

The Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities has approved 37 communities and is actively reviewing district compliance applications as they are submitted. Compliant communities are now eligible to apply for the new MBTA Communities Catalyst Fund, which provides financial support to communities for housing and infrastructure projects.

MBTA Communities Law Background

The high cost of housing in Massachusetts is due in part to local exclusionary zoning, which limits the supply of new housing relative to demand, increasing overall housing costs.

The MBTA Communities Law (Section 3A of the state Zoning Act) was passed near-unanimously by a bipartisan Legislature in 2021 with the intention of removing exclusionary zoning barriers to housing production. The law requires 177 communities to zone for multifamily housing. It does not require development.

Multifamily district design is a locally controlled process. More information on community categories, deadlines, and zoning requirements can be found at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/multi-family-zoning-requirement-for-mbta-communities#complying-with-section-3a-guidelines>.

Bishop Feehan Announces First Quarter Honor Roll 2024-2025

Vice Principal for Academics, Charlotte Lourenco, is proud to announce the Honor Roll students for the first quarter. Honor Roll is a recognition of high-

performing students based on the student’s overall average in any given quarter, regardless of the levels of their classes. Bishop Feehan has three levels of Honor Roll. First Honors is awarded to students whose overall average in that quarter is grade 93.00 or

higher, Second Honors is grade 90.00 or higher, and Third Honors is 85.00 or higher, with no individual grade below 80.

Full release available here: <https://bishopfeehan.edlioschool.com/apps/news/article/2003291>

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Franklin Art Association Welcomes Artist Shilpa Adduri

January 8th

The Franklin Art Association invites the public to our Wednesday, January 8 meeting. We will warmly greet Guest Demo-Artist, Shilpa Adduri, our fine art painter for this month's public demonstration. She will be giving a fine art, water-based media demo. Our free to the public meetings are held at the Franklin Senior Center at 6:30 p.m., generally on the first Wednesday of the month.

Shilpa Adduri works in the technique called "One Stroke." She is a Master Elite Director of this style which combines shading, blending and highlighting in a single brushstroke, central to her teaching. She gives lessons helping others to uncover their art potential while fostering joy and connection. Her approach offers creativity and moments of tranquility. She offers lessons locally.

Wanting to be inspirational, she says, "My art captures the beauty and serenity I find in the



Shilpa Adduri demonstrating 'One Stroke' approach to painting

world, expressed through acrylics and watercolors."

FAA welcomes the public and

its members to attend. Refreshments are served at the break.

Also, FAA is offering an art



Shilpa Adduri "One Stroke blossoms"

workshop with gouache paint artist, Kim Weineck, for February 8, 9:30-4 p.m. at Franklin TV station, 23 Hutchinson Street, for \$95. Contact Susan Plume at susan_plume@yahoo.com or text her at (508) 846-2589.

There will be an ongoing sale of raffle tickets for our art raffle to raise money for our annual art scholarship which goes to a student choosing to



continue their education in the study of the arts. Members are requested to donate work to be raffled. Please come by to see the wonderful creativity of local artists as they demonstrate their skills and support our scholarship fund.

The FAA is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Franklin Cultural Council, Franklin Cultural District and www.franklinart.org. And we can be viewed on Franklin Matters, Facebook and Instagram.

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Local Agriculture Community Gathers for Annual Tradeshow and Conference

BY LISA GENTES-HUNT

For the second year in a row, a group of nine local organizations are gathering to provide local farmers, fishers, food producers and community members with a workshop and conference that they are hoping will help educate and inspire about 400 attendees.

The Second Annual Southeast New England Agriculture Conference is scheduled to take place on February 2, 2025.

The event, which is open to the public and will feature programs for both children and adults, is offering those in the food producing community the chance to gather, network in person and learn about valuable resources.

"They are doing the hard work, and we are connecting them to resources," Susan Mur-

ray, Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership's (SEMAP) Executive Director, said of the farmers and food producers.

The conference, being held at Bristol County Agricultural High School in Dighton, is a collaboration of SEMAP, the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, Northeast Organic Farming Association of Rhode Island, Plymouth County Extension 4-H, Buy Fresh Buy Local Cape Cod, The Pocasset Pokanoket Land Trust, Oasis on Ballou, and Cluck & Trowel Farm, according to Brad Fesmire, the SEMAP Community Engagement and Program Director.

"Workshops range from hands-on production and training, business skills such as work-



Justine Cruz Corchado, who owns and operates Jaebird Farm in Bellingham, plans to attend SEMAP's upcoming annual conference in February. On top of centralized information for farmers, she says, the organization offers great workshops and provides information on farming grants. Photo used courtesy of Jaebird Farm.

can be grown anywhere. With microgreens, people can grow fresh food like lettuce in a small container on a windowsill, she noted.

SEMAP's executive director said connecting farmers like Corchado to educational and grant resources is part of the aim of the conference and aligns with SEMAP's mission.

"We're building stronger agricultural communities," Murray said. "Farmers reach out to us (at SEMAP) We meet with them, walk their farms, talk about what problems that they're having and what goals they have, and we sit with them to put together an action plan."

Those plans can involve educational goals, financial assistance goals, or connecting the growers with specialized consultants who can assist them in everything from website creation and marketing to getting into sustainable farming.

"We are a problem-solving organization that's working on farm viability and making sure that our farms stay in business," Murray said.

At the Second Annual Southeast New England Agriculture Conference in February, the consortium of local groups will be working together to make the conference an enjoyable and educational day for farmers, fishers, food growers, community members and children too.

This year's conference will feature a full day of workshops and 4-H activities for children ages three and up.

Children will be able to have fun taking part in the agriculture, nature-based and educational activities provided by outside educators, Murray said.

"We're making it a super fun day for kids," she noted, adding that the children's tickets include breakfast, lunch and workshop fees.

Murray noted that tickets for the 2025 event are available on a sliding-scale basis, and any farmer or community member can contact SEMAP for more details.

For more information on the Second Annual Southeast New England Agriculture Conference or to purchase tickets, go to: <https://semaponline.org/>.

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force development and risk mitigation, and broader issues facing small farms, such as land access and climate change," Fesmire stated.

One Bellingham farmer and business owner is excited to be able to attend the upcoming conference.

Justine Cruz Corchado, the owner and operator of Jaebird Farm in Bellingham, has attended SEMAP events in the past, but this will be her first time attending the group's "Annual Southeast New England Agriculture Conference."

Corchado, who has owned and operated her farm for the past two years, is a fan of SEMAP and its resources.

"SEMAP is great at providing information for farmers in a centralized spot," Corchado said. "They do a lot of great workshops" and also provide locals with information on farming grants, she stated.

The Chelsea native's farm focuses on fresh eggs and growing pesticide-free fruits and vegeta-

bles, she noted.

Growing up in a city without much green space, Corchado came into farming with the idea of giving back to the community with fresh food that is locally grown and nutritious, something that can be harder to come by in an inner city like Chelsea, the business-owner stated.

After taking a leave from her busy lifestyle in the city and leaving her demanding government job, Corchado was inspired by growing strawberries with her son. She eventually bought the just-over-two-acre farmland in Bellingham and established the female-owned and operated Jaebird Farm.

"We are a very new farm and only in our second year and rolling into our third season come spring," she said. "This is an awesome thing I get to do after living in a city and not having any green space and remembering when fresh food was hard to come by."

The Bellingham resident said one of her goals of farming is to share with others that fresh food

LoSA Christmas Celebration a Delicious Success

The Ladies of St. Anne held their Christmas Gala at the Bellingham Sportsman Club on December 12. The delicious dinner buffet included family-style roast beef, roasted chicken, pasta with sauce, roasted potatoes, green beans, tossed salad, rolls with butter, coffee, tea and dessert. After dinner, six rounds of Family Feud with Christmas themed surveys were played. It was a loud, laugh-filled night and everyone went home with a gift.



Bellingham Senior Center Highlighted Events January 2025

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

Holliston Rail Trail Walk: On Thursday, January 2 at 11 a.m., we will be exploring a small section of the Upper Charles Rail Trail in Holliston. We will walk approximately a little over a mile passing a picturesque horse farm and through the historic Phipps Tunnel into town. We will have lunch at Casey's Public House (the old train station). After lunch, we will head back to our starting point (Cross Street Parking lot) for the van to pick us up. Please dress appropriately.

Spiritual Book Club: The Club meets via Zoom on Mondays at 9 a.m. Discussion will be about The Dalai Lama's Cat and the Four Paws of Spiritual Success. 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. January's Special Guest will Stephanie Grey from Congressman

Auchincloss' office, Tuesday, 1/21 at 9:30 a.m.

Fall Prevention Program: Norfolk County Sheriff's Office's FREE telephone service "Are You Okay?" program is a daily telephone service offered to the seniors of Norfolk County. This FREE Monday-Friday service is very flexible. You pick the time (between 7-10 a.m.) and the days of the week you would like to be called. Call 1-866-900-7865 or join us at the Senior Center on Thursday, January 16, at 10:30 a.m. to learn more.

Inclement Weather Policy: Senior Center programming and transportation this winter will be aligned with the Bellingham school's cancellations and delayed openings. The Center will remain open for information and referrals unless the Town Hall closes. If you requested transportation to a doctor's appointment, hairdresser, or shopping on a day schools are closed, we apologize for any inconvenience. Call the Center at (508) 966-0398 for the latest information.

21st Annual Gary Mirliss Memorial Blood Drive

Blood Drive January 11, 2025
King Philip Middle School, 18 King St., Norfolk, MA 02056
8 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Walk-ins will be accommodated on a first-come, first-serve basis, so we recommend that you make an appointment! Spots are filling up fast!
To make you appointment you can go to <https://bit.ly/Mirliss2>
For information, please email: GM.Memorial.Drive@Gmail.com

Happy New Year!

from our families to yours!

May all the best the season has to offer be yours throughout the upcoming new year.

The Sue Ranieri/Melissa Bertonazzi Team





Suzanne Ranieri

508-380-1643

Suzanne.Ranieri@NEMoves.com

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St. Blaise Christmas County Fair a Wonderful Time for All

The Christmas Country Fair, held December 7 at St. Blaise Church delighted children and adults alike. The New England country store, as well as the craft tables, had many customers checking off gifts on their Christmas wish list with the variety of unique handmade items.

The mouth watering aromas of sausages and peppers, dynamite, clam chowder and many other favorite foods from the Cafe greeted all as they entered the Parish Hall. Free coffee and popcorn was available to anyone throughout the day. Many people bought dessert to have after their lunch from the Christmas Bakery, in addition to buying goodies to take home.

The children loved playing Santa Putt-Putt, Reindeer Ring Toss, and other games for prizes in the Kids Zone and creating their own Nativity scene to take home. Children took time to take pictures with Santa while telling him what they want for




Christmas. They also wrote letters to place in the special mailbox for Santa

The Card Game, with its many different themed baskets as prizes, was in play all day with over 40 winners.

The Money Raffle, with first prize of \$500 and four other drawings for various amounts, will be drawn on Sunday, January 12, 2024. Tickets can still be purchased after weekend Masses.





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MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau Partners with Tailbox to Launch Innovative AI-Powered Travel App

Framingham, MA - The MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau (MBVB) is thrilled to announce its partnership with Tailbox, an innovative AI-powered travel app, to launch the MetroWest Boston VisiTOURS. This cutting-edge app is designed to transform the way visitors explore the MetroWest region, offering personalized, interactive experiences that uncover the area's rich history, hidden gems, and must-see attractions.

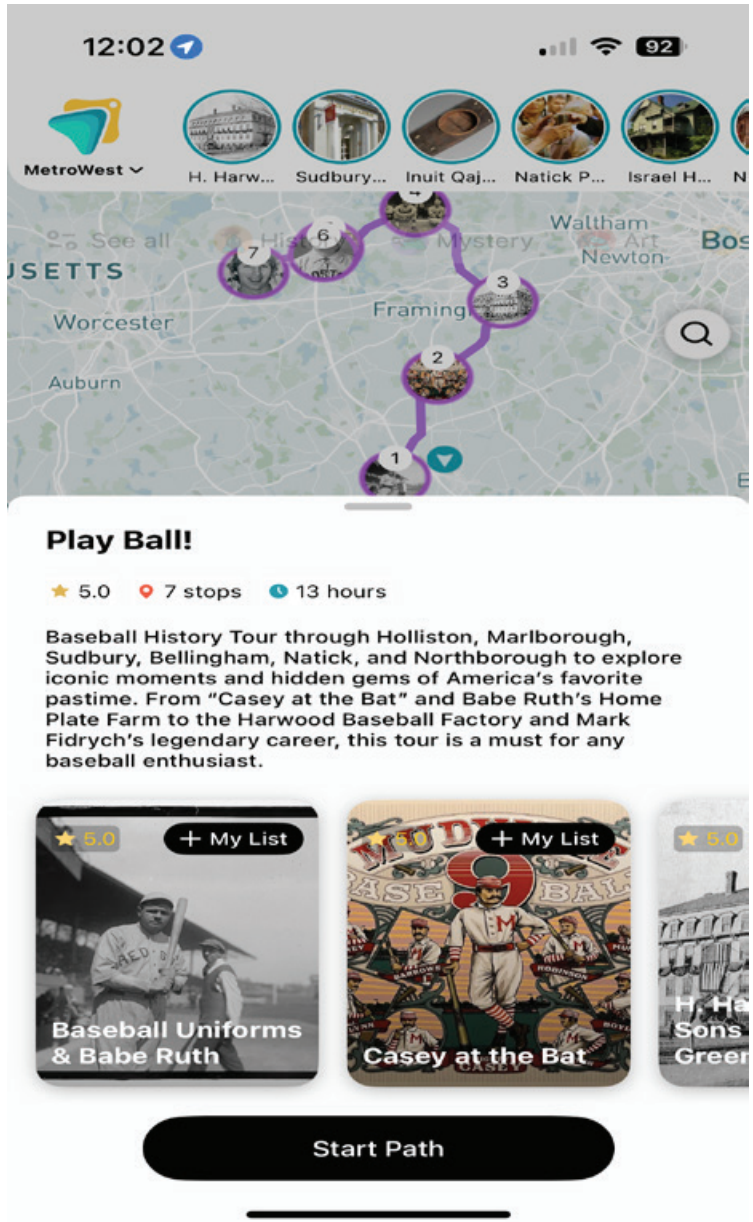
With the new app, powered by Tailbox's advanced AI technology, visitors can dive deeper into MetroWest's landmarks, historical sites, and cultural attractions. Whether you're a local resident or visiting for the first time, the MetroWest Boston VisiTOURS will provide customized walking and driving tours, audio guides, interactive Q&A features, and real-time updates, making it the ultimate digital travel companion.

"Tailbox matches travelers with unique experiences tailored

to their preferences, interests, and location. Through custom recommendations and immersive stories, Tailbox provides a seamless blend of exploration, discovery, and connection," said Bayazid Malikov, co-founder of Tailbox.

"We are excited to partner with Tailbox to enhance how visitors and locals experience MetroWest," said Stacey David, Executive Director of the MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau. "This app brings our region's history and culture to life in a fun and engaging way, giving users a deeper and more personalized experience."

With a soft launch this fall for iOS users and a full launch in January 2025 for both Apple and Android devices, the app is perfect for all types of travelers—whether you're a family, solo traveler, history buff, or adventurer—offering a fresh and engaging way to experience the charm and attractions of MetroWest.



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New England Patriots #27, Marcellas Dial, Chooses SAFE for “My Cause My Cleats” Initiative

The SAFE Coalition, in Franklin, was recently chosen to participate in the NFL’s “My Cause, My Cleats” program, with their logo featured on Patriots running back Marcellas Dial’s cleats for the December 1st game against the Indiana Colts.

NFL’s “My Cause My Cleats” program (#mycausemycleats), a longstanding outreach initiative, allows NFL players to “reveal their passions beyond the game and wear their hearts on their feet.”. Players are given the opportunity to pick a cause that is important to them and represent their chosen organization on custom designed cleats.

Dial decided to participate after learning of SAFE’s service to those suffering substance use and mental health. Dial feels



Leanna Puccio

connected to this issue having witnessed the passing of his dad in 2021 due to cirrhosis of the liver. He wanted to honor his dad and tell his story in the hopes of helping people going through



similar experiences.

“It’s a big platform, because I can bring attention to people who are going through it about how it doesn’t only affect you, but the people around you,” Dial Jr. said in a recent article on the New England Patriots’ website.

“My dad knew what he was going through was affecting him, but early on, I don’t think he was



Joe Flynn @footballfunnyguy

thinking about how it would impact us later on,” Dial says. “By the time he tried to get a hold on everything it was too late. That’s the message I want to share and get out to everybody who is struggling – to not be self-centered in your thinking. Think about the people in your life who love you.”

In addition to SAFE’s logo, Marcellas also had the words “Sobriety is a superpower” painted on the side of his cleats.

A new recruit to the Patriots in 2024, Dial’s wife and young daughter now regularly cheer him on from the sidelines.

SAFE Coalition, a nonprofit founded to combat the rising threat of opioid addiction and overdose in southeastern Massachusetts, now supports over 37 towns across the state with recovery and support groups, referral services, one-on-one nonclinical recovery support, resource connection, community trainings,



educational programming for adolescents and schools, events like film screenings and talks, sober art and music nights, and trauma-informed yoga. SAFE also voluntarily advises opioid abatement funding boards in municipalities across the state.

Those interested in SAFE’s services or wanting to collaborate with the organization can contact SAFE at (508) 488-8105 or info@safecoalitionma.org

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FOR UPDATES

FAREWELL

continued from page 21

metal fabricated sign made for the grassy circle outside the school office, an area in which Picard did all the tree planting and other landscaping. The sign officially named the spot “Picard Park.”

Now that he will have time on his hands, students in grades K-4 had ideas for how he could fill his days. “Go to the beach,” said a couple. “Eat lots of pickles,” said another. Lots more suggestions, such as “Spend more time with your family,” “Go on a bike ride,” “Go to places you’ve never been,” “Star in a play and be a



Students took turns giving Mr. Picard a big hug goodbye.

big, bad wolf,” “and “Get more sleep and rest and don’t forget Stallbrook School,” offered an array of pastimes.

Picard, himself, has his own ideas as well. The self-described tinkerer is eager to work on his collection of vintage electronics, everything from clocks to antique phonographs.

Peter Marano, Superintendent of Bellingham Public Schools, wished him well, noting, “Mr. Picard is phenomenal person -- cares so much about the school. He is Stallbrook. That’s the best way to describe him.”



Faculty members offered a customized performance of “So Long, Farewell.”

Munchin’ on Munchkins with Santa

On December 7, 2024, the Bellingham Police Association held its annual Munchkins with Santa event. Children enjoyed holiday crafts, munchkins courtesy of our local Dunkin’, and,

of course, time with Santa. Shown, from left, top row, Officer Nicky, Johnny, Lt. Daigle; bottom row, Andrew, Ceci, Vivian, Santa, and Alex



Even the youngest students thanked Mr. Picard for all that he did at the school, creating special keys he could keep that acknowledged his hard work.

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First Universalist Society in Franklin January 2025 Happenings

Moving Towards an Indigenous Worldview

Sunday January 19, 2025 @ 10 a.m.

Our planet faces so many crises, it can be hard to read the news. And yet, throughout the world, Indigenous communities and nations hold out a different way of being. Guest preacher, Claire Karl Muller will speak to this vision, finding our personal stake in it and what UU Mass Action is doing with Indigenous leaders here in Massachusetts to

get there. Find out more about UU Mass Action on their website www.uumassaction.org

About CLAIRE KARL B.W. MÜLLER (THEY): Claire Karl is a force of nature. They are a 5th generation Germanic settler to Eastern Massachusetts and identify as a white, middle-class, non-binary, small-fat, queer organizer. Their values are curiosity, compassion, and truth and people power. They feel called to work with other white middle class folks on racial, economic and climate justice and joined

the team at UU Mass Action in 2020. Claire Karl is coordinator of the statewide climate justice coalition Mass Power Forward, which they co-founded in 2015, as well as the UU Mass Action staff lead for Indigenous Solidarity.

Find Your Oxygen Mask - An Interactive Workshop

Sunday, January 19, 2025 from 11:45 a.m. – 1 p.m.

The FUSF Welcoming Congregation Initiative Team invites you to an interactive workshop titled, “Find Your Oxygen Mask.” Members of the LG-BTQIA+ community, their allies, and anyone interested in learning more, are welcome to attend. We will connect, learn, and share resources, fears, and hopes during these uncertain times. We hope that whoever you are, wherever you are from, whomever you love, whether your heart is heavy or light, you will join us.



Jigsaw Puzzle Tournament and Sale

Friday, January 24, 2025 6 to 8 p.m. OR Saturday, January 25, 2025 10 a.m.- Noon

Team Tournament: Enter your team to puzzle against other teams in a friendly and fun competition on either Friday night or Saturday morning. Each team receives the same 500-piece puzzle and races to finish first. Prizes given for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place. It's only \$40/team for teams of up to four people to participate and your team goes home with the completed puzzle! Team registration and puzzle tournament rules can be found at FUSE.org. For questions call Vicki @ (508) 654-6740. Cash, check or electronic payment accepted.

Puzzle Sale: Over 500 Jigsaw puzzles will be for sale both Friday and Saturday. You do not need to enter a tournament to shop. Most puzzles are priced between \$3 and \$5 - Some are brand new! Be sure to stock up for all those puzzlers in your life (or yourself). Cash, check or electronic payment accepted.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin.

Our Interim Minister is Reverend Beverly Waring.

For more information about FUSF please visit our website at fusf.org or contact us at info@fusf.org; call (508) 528-5348.



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LIBRARY

continued from page 14

- Children’s middle grade hardcover, picture books and series
- Young adult hardcover and series

The *Novelist Book Recommendations* link will take you to a database called NoveList Plus, which helps you to find what to read next. You can search by keyword, title, author, series, or narrator. If you enjoy reading a certain author or liked a particular title, you can search for that author or title and then click on a link to similar authors/titles. You can also search by types of books that you like to find other books that fit those criteria.

Similar Books will bring you to lists of best seller read-alikes. If you enjoyed reading a certain best seller, check out this link to see if there is a list of similar books that you might want to try.

Staff Picks lists each library staff member with the types of books they generally prefer. Just click on the staff person’s name and you will get a list of their favorite books. There is also a *Staff Picks* display in the library with selections for you to choose from.

Topic Based Recommendations features lists of books that are separated by the months of the year. Under each month are lists pertaining to that month. For example: under January are lists for New Year’s Resolutions and Civil Rights in honor of the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday. There are also displays in the library to correspond with the different lists each month.

No matter what type of book you like to read, the library has recommendations for you! To access these suggestions, go to the library’s website at www.bellinghamlibrary.org. Scroll down to the *Reading Recommendations* link. You can also stop by the library and ask a staff person for ideas!

Total Deed and Mortgage Recordings up in November

Dedham, MA – Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reported that Norfolk County recordings for the month of November 2024 indicate an increase in the total number of deeds and mortgages recorded as compared to November 2023.

The total number of deeds recorded for November 2024, which reflects both commercial and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 1,333, up 5% from November 2023 and down 7% from October 2024.

"In the past five months, recordings show a sustained increase in the overall number of deeds recorded year over year, reflecting a consistent interest in real estate in Norfolk County," noted Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell.

In November, lending activity also increased compared to the same month a year ago. A total of 1,372 mortgages were recorded in November 2024, up 17% from November 2023 and down 10% from the previous month.

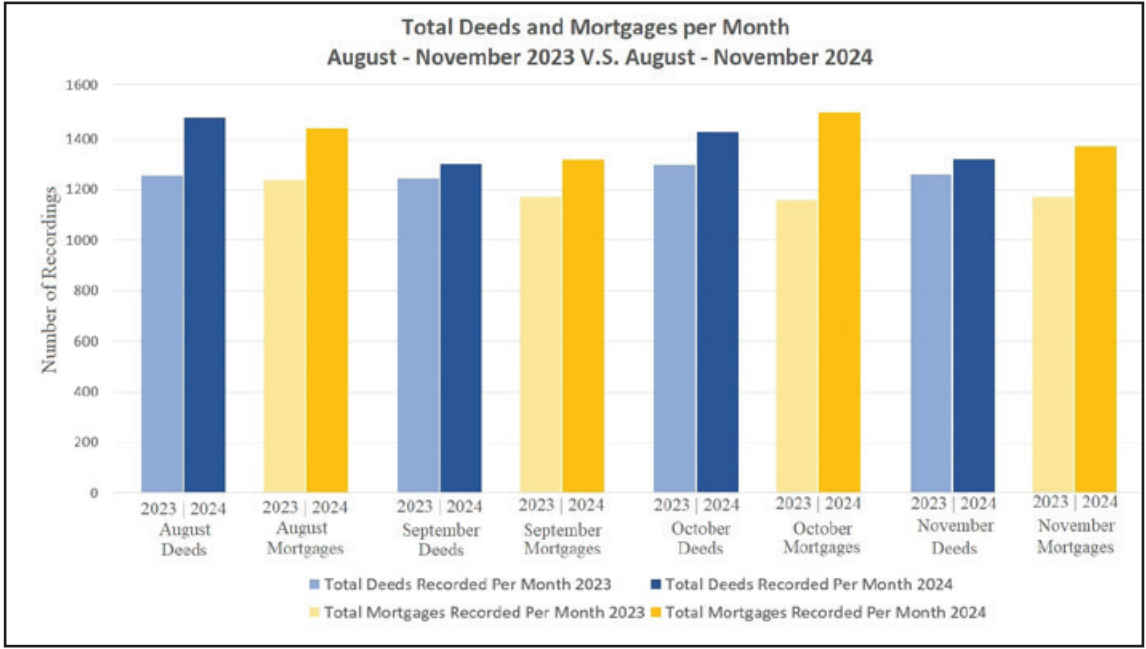
"While average mortgage interest rates have started to creep back up from their late September low they are still below the levels seen this time last year. Despite the recent increase in interest rates, the market continues to draw in prospective homebuyers and borrowers," Register O'Donnell added, "The trajectory of average mortgage interest rates will likely play a role in determining the number of indi-

viduals seeking to take out new mortgages or refinance existing mortgages."

The Registry of Deeds recorded 8,336 documents in November 2024. This was 3% less than in November 2023 and a 13% decrease compared to October 2024. Following JPMorgan Chase's acquisition of First Republic Bank last year, November 2023 saw an uncharacteristic number of over 350 mortgage assignments recorded, slightly skewing the percentage of the total number of documents recorded for November 2024 compared to November 2023. The adjusted number shows a 1% increase in real estate activity in November 2024 compared to this time last year.

The average sale price of commercial and residential properties for November 2024 rose to \$969,585, a 1% increase compared to November 2023 but a decrease of 15% from October 2024. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is down, decreasing by 2% from last year and down 26% from last month.

"There is no doubt that Norfolk County is a desirable place to live and work. It is a credit to all the communities and the municipal staff and leaders who have created such a vibrant area to live and work," stated Register O'Donnell. "However, due to the limited inventory of available property not matching that demand, I think many would agree that it is a difficult market



for buyers, especially first-time home buyers."

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has been closely monitoring the foreclosure market. In November 2024, there were 2 foreclosure deeds recorded as a result of mortgage foreclosures taking place in Norfolk County, less than the 5 recorded in November 2023. In November

2024, there were 26 notices to foreclose, the first step in the foreclosure process, less than the 27 recorded in November 2023.

"... I would urge anyone struggling to pay their mortgage or who knows someone who is struggling to contact one of the non-profit organizations listed on our website, www.norfolkdeeds.org," said Register O'Donnell.

To learn more about Registry of Deeds events and initiatives, "like" us on Facebook at facebook.com/norfolkdeeds. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram at [@norfolkdeeds](https://twitter.com/norfolkdeeds).

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is located at 649 High St., Dedham. Reach them at (781) 461-6101 or email register-odonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.

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Sports

Sports Roundup

By KEN HAMWEY,
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

Resilient BHS Eleven Wins TVL Small Division Title

Bellingham High's football team seems like it had fun overcoming major challenges during the 2024 season.

Two years ago, the Blackhawks started their season 0-3 but rolled over all its Tri Valley League Small Division foes to win the conference championship. Last year was almost a carbon copy of what the 2023 contingent achieved.

The 2024 squad started 1-3 with its only victory coming against Blackstone-Millville Regional. Losses to Ashland, Westwood and Dedham followed, but the Blackhawks never quit. They went into domination mode, finishing their season with seven straight triumphs. Those games included wins over Medway, Millis, Dover-Sherborn and Millis (all-division foes).

Unable to land a playoff berth in Division 6, BHS then downed Apponequet and Pembroke before subduing Norton, 26-7 on Thanksgiving to clinch its second straight TVL title and their third in the last four years.

The 2024 Blackhawks limited their five small division opponents to a mere 5.6 points per game and finished their season at 8-3.

"After three straight losses, my son Chris (defensive coordinator) told the team we weren't going to lose another game," head coach Dan Haddad noted. "The captains bought into his philosophy, and everything changed. The players responded, practices became more energetic, and competition was created. And, our coaches never turned on each other. There was no finger-pointing."

Haddad also held himself accountable. "I told the kids I had to be better," he said. "I also said that they could do something special. The seniors weren't going out with a losing record, and everyone knew that on any given day any team in the TVL can win."

Another plus was the injury list — it got lighter. Captain Mason Jacques (wide receiver) returned after missing four

games because of a shoulder injury. Quarterback Zach Berkley also returned after missing two games because of a concussion, and cornerback Michael Demers bounced back after a knee injury forced him out for a game. Running back Colin Piccirelli, however, injured his back and was ruled out for the year.

Bellingham will be moving up to Division 5 next year, but Haddad isn't worried. "We were ranked No. 18 in Division 6 but if we were in Division 5 last fall, we would have been ranked No. 7," he said. "When we started to win, the teams in front of us kept winning. We lost out on a playoff berth by two places (16 teams qualify). I never thought that we'd win the league and not be in the playoffs."

If Norton had beaten Bellingham on Thanksgiving, the TVL Small Division would have ended in a three-way tie with Norton and Medway joining BHS.

Winning two straight TVL division titles after poor starts speaks volumes about intensity, character and mental toughness. Those are the attributes that Haddad says mattered, especially after starting the 2023 and 2024 seasons at 0-3 and 1-3, respectively.

BHS grid teams seem to enjoy and embrace Herculean tasks.

Simpson Stars for Westfield Eleven

Former BHS grid star Blake Simpson knows what it's like to win a TVL Small Division title. He and his teammates rolled to their crown by thoroughly dominating opponents during their COVID-shortened season of 2020.

The Blackhawks finished that campaign at 5-0 during the spring, but, because of the pandemic they were unable to compete for a chance to play in the Super Bowl.

Simpson was a dynamic running back on that team and he also played linebacker, a position that led to his starring for Westfield State last fall. A senior, Simpson led the Owls with 52 tackles (10 of them for losses) and he had 1½ sacks.

During a loss to Anna Maria College in Westfield's opening game, the 6-foot, 210-pounder



Blake Simpson, who led Westfield State's football team with 52 tackles, earned weekly conference and team honors on defense.

had nine tackles (two of losses) and one sack. That effort earned him not only a berth on the MASCAC (Mass. Scholastic Collegiate Athletic Conference) weekly honor-roll, but also gave him Westfield's Defensive Player of the Week Award.

"I was very pleased with those honors," Simpson said. "I played sparingly at running back early on but was moved to linebacker after I suggested that idea to head coach Peter Kowalski. Playing linebacker in high school helped me to adjust quickly. I was familiar with the read-and-react nature of the position and relied on strength, being instinctive and quick."

Chris Ehorn, the Owls' linebacker coach and defensive coordinator, previously coached at Western New England. Arriving at Westfield last fall, he said that Simpson excelled immediately at outside linebacker and made his transition go smoothly.

"Blake could have played both ways," Ehorn emphasized. "He took advantage of the college's strength and conditioning program. He's a hard-worker and a great student who practiced the way you need your best player to practice. A team-first competitor, he did what was asked and I never worried about his side of

the field. Blake will be tough to replace."

At BHS, Simpson's five-game stats at halfback were stunning. He carried the ball 75 times and never fumbled, gained 565 yards and averaged 7.5 yards per carry. He scored eight touchdowns and had 12 two-point conversions for 72 points. Those numbers earned him the team's Offensive Player of the Year Award.

"Blake dared opposing players to tackle him," BHS coach Dan Haddad said. "A coach's dream, he worked hard and always gave his best — 100 percent. Blake was an iron man, so tough that you never had to worry about him. He was reliable and dependable, and I have my running backs watching film of him."

Simpson said his favorite college game was a 13-10 victory over Mass. Maritime. "I had eight tackles (two for losses) but winning was more important," he said. "Everyone played a perfect game." The Owls finished last season at 4-6 (4-5 in the conference).

"I was happy to see BHS win another TVL championship," said Simpson. "The players and the coaches deserve lots of credit."

Simpson already has his future lined up. After he graduates from Westfield State, he will work for AAF CPAs as a staff accountant in Westboro.

BHS Cheerleaders Finish 6th At States

The BHS cheerleading team finished third at the regional meet and sixth in the Division 4 State Championship.

"We had an amazing performance at regionals," coach Tracey Elliott said. "But, at the states, some aspects of our routine were fantastic and on other parts the girls did not execute. Mistakes can be costly when you have only two minutes and 30 seconds and one opportunity."

Elliott said her squad is very determined to work harder for the winter season and is pushing forward. "I'm a firm believer that when you ask for strength, God doesn't just give you that," she emphasized. "He sends you challenges to make you stronger. This is one of those times and I know our team will come back stronger."

BHS previously had third-place finishes at both the Tri Valley League and the Regional meets. Rockland High won the regionals and became fall state champions. "Led by coach Janine Reardon, Rockland was absolutely amazing," Elliott said.

Smith, Dormady Shine at State Meet

Senior Emma Smith finished 25th and sophomore Jenna Dormady took 33rd place at

the Division 3 State Cross-country Championships at Fort Devens.

Smith's time was 20 minutes, 58 seconds while Dormady was clocked at 21:16 for the 5K course. In a field of 175 runners, Cameron Davis of Oxford High took first-place honors in a time of 18:20.

Dormady and Smith, who were named to the Tri Valley League all-star team, qualified for the states after finishing 14th and 20th, respectively, at the Division 3A Cross-country Championships at the Wrentham Development Center.

"Jenna and Emma worked hard and competed intensely all season," said coach TJ Chiapone. "They had a great day at the state meet."

Sports

BHS Track Teams Have the Talent for Success

By KEN HAMWEY,
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

The Bellingham High boys' and girls' indoor track teams finished 1-4 in Tri Valley League meets last year. But, if coach Sam Cowell's goals are realized, don't expect a repeat of those numbers.

"My goal for this season is for each team to achieve a winning record," said Cowell, who's in his third year at the helm. "I also want our athletes to continually improve on their personal records and I want to increase our team's presence at the Division 5 Championship Meet. Realistically, I believe we can send 5-10 of our athletes to the championship meet."

The 47-year-old Cowell, who also coaches field hockey and outdoor track at the middle school, is impressed with his cast of competitors.

"We've got excellent athletes," he said. "They're extremely coachable and eager to learn and improve. We also have a great group of seniors to mentor our younger athletes. Our sprinters are young and talented. I expect to see some of our individual and relay records to be broken this year."

"Our distance runners are also young and talented. They're dedicated and fresh off the renaissance of the cross-country program under TJ Chiappone's leadership. Working hard to improve their stamina and speed, the future is bright for our distance program."

Cowell likes some new talent that's joined the team. "Jack Taylor is a proven distance runner from the outdoor squad who's running indoors for his first time as a senior," Cowell offered. "Bryan De Almeida and Trista Corshia are promising athletes joining the team for the first time."

Cowell has a high caliber of assistant coaches. "It's a terrific group," he noted. "John Pendlebury returns to work with the throwers and high jumpers; Travis Hites returns for his second season working with the sprinters; and Peter Lacasse (outdoor head coach) works with our hurdlers."

"I want to see each athlete reach their greatest potential while putting the team first,"



Coach Sam Cowell is flanked by the track team's captains, from left, Sydney Bashford, Emma Smith, Alannah Doyle, and Gabe Egan.

Cowell emphasized. "I hope each member takes pride in wearing a Bellingham uniform and being part of the history and legacy of BHS athletics."

At the Bulletin deadline, both the boys' and girls' teams were 0-1 after facing Norton in their opening meets. The girls lost, 54-41, and the boys fell short by a point, 47-46.

Following is a thumbnail look at the teams and comments from Cowell.

CAPTAINS

*Sydney Bashford (senior) competes in the 55-meter hurdles and long jump. Her personal best in the hurdles is 11.20 seconds, and her long-jump best is 12, feet, 3 inches. She lettered as a junior and scored six points.

"Sydney is a great mentor to young athletes. She's dedicated and is a compassionate leader who's eager to give her teammates the caring mentorship that she received as a younger athlete. Sydney will work to improve her three-step technique in the hurdles."

*Gabe Egan (senior) competes in the 55-meter dash, 300-meter dash, and long jump. His personal bests are 7.05 seconds in the 55-meter dash; 39.24 seconds in the 300-meter dash; and 17 feet, 5 inches in the long jump. He scored 26 points as a junior and is

a two-time TVL all-star.

"Gabe is a superb athlete and a natural leader. Since he was a sophomore, teammates have gravitated to him because he gives 100 percent in every practice and is humble in his achievements. Gabe's goals are to go sub-7 seconds in the 55-meter dash and compete in the Division 5 Championship."

*Alannah Doyle (junior) competes in the shot put. Her personal best is 26 feet, 1.75 inches. She scored 17 points as a sophomore.

"Alannah is our leader for both boys' and girls' throwers. She will provide leadership for a big throwing group. Alannah is a dedicated thrower and a great asset to the program for her talent, commitment to perfecting her technique, and natural leadership. She's working on utilizing the rotational technique, which should dramatically improve her distance."

*Emma Smith (senior) competes in middle-and-long distance events. Her personal bests are 3:28.28 in the 1000-meter run; 5:55.12 in the one-mile; and 13:24.23 in the two-mile. One of the team's top scorers last year, she had 30 points and was a TVL honorable mention all-star as a sophomore.

"Emma is coming off a strong finish to her cross-country career, where she placed 25th in the Di-

vision 3 Championship race. We have high expectations of what she can achieve in the TVL. She will likely run the 1000, one-mile, and two-mile events. Emma is a team player who is always ready to take on whatever race will benefit the team most. I expect to see Emma among the top distance runners in the league this year."

TOP RETURNEES

*Olivia Carney (senior) competes in the 55-meter dash and 300-meter dash. Her personal bests are 7.52 seconds in the 55-meter dash and 43.75 seconds in the 300-meter dash. She was the top scorer for the girls with 30.5 points as a junior and is a TVL all-star.

"Olivia is a phenomenal talent. She broke school records in the 100-meter dash and the 200-meter dash in outdoor track last spring, and I fully expect her to break the 55 and 300 records this year indoors. She's been training hard in the off-season, attending a sprinter's camp in Washington D.C. over the summer to work on her starts and sprinting technique. Olivia's goal is to win the 55-meter dash at this year's Division 5 Championship."

*Brady Carroll (senior) competes in the 55-meter dash, 300-meter dash, and long jump. His personal bests are 7.25 seconds in the 55-meter dash; 42.98 in the

300-meter dash; and 17 feet, 2.5 inches in the long jump.

"Brady started running track his junior year and made an immediate impact. He's a great training partner for Gabe. They push each other and their sprinting teammates to maximum performance."

*Eli Cowell (junior) competes in the 55-meter hurdles, 600-meter run, and long jump.

His personal bests are 9.9 seconds in the 55-meter hurdles; 1:38.32 in the 600-meter dash; and 15 feet, 7.25 inches in the long jump.

"Eli is coming off a great sophomore season in outdoor track where he started to consistently approach his hurdling with a good three-step rhythm. If he can transfer that to his 55-meter hurdles this winter, he should be able to compete with the top hurdlers in the TVL."

*Jenna Dormady (sophomore) competes in the 600-meter run, 4x400-meter relay, and long jump. Her personal bests are 1:53.74 in the 600-meter run and 12 feet, 7.5 inches in the long jump.

"Jenna is a terrific middle-distance runner, but her greatest competitive quality is that she's extremely versatile. She can excel in long distance, she can sprint, and she can score points in both the long jump and the high jump. Whatever we need, Jenna can step up for the team."

*Alyssa Gerbrands (sophomore) competes in the 55-meter dash, 300-meter dash, and high jump. Her personal bests are 55-meter dash (8.63 seconds); 300-meter dash (53.95); and high jump (4 feet, 8 inches).

"Alyssa just missed qualifying for the Division 5 Championship in the high jump during her freshman year. I expect Alyssa to jump five feet this year and be one of the top high jumpers in the TVL."

OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Cowell also expects Jack Taylor (distance), Emma Carroll (sprints), Eric Mounsey (distance), TJ Poelaert (sprints), Megan Skarin (distance) and Alyssa Gerbrands (sprints and high jump) to score important points for the team

Bellingham Public Library News & Events for January

For updates about library programs and services, please see the library website, www.bellinghamlibrary.org.

Additional details about library programs are available on the library calendar at <https://bit.ly/4eJRLSh>

January Hours

Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., Sundays – Closed

Holiday Closings

Closed Wednesday, January 1st (New Years Day)
Closed Monday, January 20th (Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday)

Highlighted Programs

New Year, New Program! – English Conversation Group
Practice speaking English with other adult English language learners in a relaxed, comfortable place, and meet new friends as we learn by talking together. Conversations will be facilitated by a library staff member or volunteer. If you can speak English

but want to improve your English conversation skills, this is the group for you! This is not an English class, but a place to practice speaking to become more fluent in the English language. Drop-in classes offered weekly on the following dates/times. Attend as often as you wish!

Monday, January 6th from 1-2 p.m.
Tuesday, January 14th at from 6-7 p.m.
Wednesday, January 15th from 11 a.m. to 12 noon
Thursday, January 23rd from 5-6 p.m.
Chat & Craft for Adults – Date and craft project not determined at press time, see library calendar for details.

Ongoing Children's Programs
The Baby Bunch – Mondays at 9:30 a.m.: A space for infants 0-18 months and their caregivers to come play and socialize.
Ring a Ding – Mondays & Thursdays at 10:15 a.m.
Read to Freedom the Reading Dog – Mondays from 5:30-7 p.m. Check the calendar for details

and to sign up for a 15-minute time slot!
Sensory Story Time – Tuesdays at 10:15 a.m.

Join us for a story, sensory activities, and open play! For children ages 2-5 of all abilities (younger siblings always welcome). Please register for each session you'd like to attend.
First Saturday Family Fun – Saturday, January 4th at 11 a.m. Join us every first Saturday of the month for a family craft - this month's theme will be snow!
Drop in from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. - No registration needed.

Adult/Child Book Club – For kids in grades 1-3, 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 1-3 should contact Melissa Denham, mdenham@cwmar.org, grades 4-6 should contact Amanda Maclure, amaclure@cwmar.org, and grades 6-9 should contact Diane Nelson, dnelson@cwmar.org. Check the library calendar for details on the January meeting dates and times.

After School Programs
Registration is mandatory for children in grades 4-6 to attend the ASK program. Registration for new participants takes place each day after school between 2:30 and 4:45 p.m. Hours vary for both programs on early release days, so please check the library calendar for schedule changes.

- 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.

For ASK: <https://www.bellinghamma.org/288/Elementary-Middle-School>
For Teen Room: <https://www.bellinghamma.org/354/Programs>

Adult Programs
Book Discussion Group – Generally meets the 1st Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Attend in person or on Zoom. Contact Cecily Christensen, cchriste@cwmar.org, for more information.

Our upcoming titles are:
January: *The Rescue* by T. Jefferson Parker
February: *Absolution* by Alice McDermott
March: *Still Life* by Louise Penny
Yoga for the Seasons – Yoga & Meditation for Winter
Tuesdays at 8:30 a.m. Check the library calendar for details and to register.

Needlecraft Night – Wednesdays at 6 p.m.

Do you enjoy knitting, crocheting, or any of the other fiber or needle arts – needlepoint, macrame, embroidery? Come and join us on Wednesdays. All skill levels are welcome, including beginners. Please bring your own materials. No registration, drop in!

Writing Group for Adults – Tuesday, January 14th at 6:30 p.m.

Writers, readers, listeners – come join us! Local area writers Amy Bartelloni and Marjorie Turner Hollman welcome the public to an evening of reading

and listening. Hear what local writers are working on, and share what you are working on. Works of fiction or non-fiction, all are welcome. Reading limit is 9 minutes per reader, with a brief opportunity for positive, personal comments only. To participate contact Marjorie Turner Hollman at marjorie@marjorie-turner.com.

Friends of the Library Annual Meeting – Tuesday, January 14th at 7 p.m.

Library Board of Trustees Meeting – Thursday, January 9th at 7 p.m. in the Conference Room at the library

Virtual Ask-A-Lawyer Program with Attorney Brian T. Salisbury – Monday, January 27th starting at 5 p.m. Local attorney Brian T. Salisbury of the law firm Doherty, Dugan, Cannon, Raymond & Weil, PC will meet with you individually through Zoom to discuss any legal questions you may have. Appointments are 20 minutes long and are free. Appointments are between 5 and 7:30 p.m. Register for an appointment and you will receive the Zoom link close to the appointment date. You will be asked to choose an appointment time when you register. Note: Your registration with your email address will go to Attorney Salisbury so he can send you the Zoom link. Please note: The Bellingham Library Ask-A-Lawyer Program is a limited pro bono legal service provided by Attorney Brian T. Salisbury and is strictly limited to 20-minute consultations regarding legal questions that you may have. Unless otherwise agreed in writing, Attorney Salisbury will not provide legal representation in any legal matter discussed.

Virtual Author Talks – to register for these talks, go to: <https://libraryc.org/bellinghamma>, recordings of these talks are also available on the library website in the days following the event.

Wednesday, January 15th at 7 p.m. – Virtual Conversation with Author TJ Klune

Thursday, January 23rd at 2 p.m. – Virtual Talk with Bestselling Author Amanda Montell

Tuesday, January 28th at 1 p.m. – Virtual Talk, Working with a Literary Agent

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Calendar

January 6

Adult Book Discussion Group, 6:30 p.m., in-person or Zoom, Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, contact cchrste@cwmar.org for more info., January title: *The Rescue* by T. Jefferson Parker

Greater Milford Community Chorus first spring season rehearsal, 7 p.m., Memorial Hall, Milford, new members always welcome

January 8

Franklin Art Association meeting, 6:30 p.m., Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin, artist Shilpa Adduri to give fine art, water-based media demo, members and public encouraged to attend, refreshments served at break

LGBTQ Book Club, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Pete's Nerd Emporium 10 Main St. Franklin, Franklin LGBTQ Alliance monthly book club, title: *Q.E.D* by Gertrude Stein

January 14

Writing Group for Adults, 6:30 p.m., Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, for writers, readers, listeners, to participate contact Marjorie Turner Hollman at marjorie@marjorieturner.com.

January 15

Virtual Author Talks – Virtual Conversation with Author TJ Klune, 7 p.m., Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, to register for these talks, go to: <https://library.org/bellingham>, recordings of these talks are also available on the library website in the days following the event.

January 19

Moving Towards an Indigenous Worldview, 10 a.m., First Universalist Society of Franklin, 262 Chestnut St., Franklin, info@fusf.org; (508) 528-5348, Guest preacher, Claire Karl Muller will about what UU Mass Action is doing with Indigenous leaders here in Massachusetts. Find out more at www.uumassaction.org

Find Your Oxygen Mask - An Interactive Workshop, 11:45 a.m.- 1 p.m., First Universalist Society of Franklin, 262 Chestnut St., Franklin, info@fusf.org; (508) 528-5348, Members of the LGBTQIA+ community, their allies, and anyone interested in learning more, are welcome.

January 23

Virtual Author Talks – Virtual Talk with Bestselling Author Amanda Montell, 2 p.m., Bellingham Public Library, 100 Blackstone St., Bellingham, to register for these talks, go to: <https://library.org/bellingham>, recordings of these talks are also available on the library website in the days following the event.

January 24

Jigsaw Puzzle Tournament and Sale, 6-8 p.m., friendly fun competition, each team receives same 500-piece puzzle and races to finish first, prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place. \$40 per team up to four members, take home completed puzzle, sign up at FUSE.org or call Vicki at (508) 654-6740 with questions.

January 25

Jigsaw Puzzle Tournament and Sale, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., friendly fun competition, each team receives same 500-piece puzzle and races to finish first, prizes for 1st, 2nd, 3rd place. \$40 per team up to four members, take home completed puzzle, sign up at FUSE.org or call Vicki at (508) 654-6740 with questions.

January 28

Virtual Author Talks – Virtual Talk, Working with a Literary Agent, 1 p.m. to register for these talks, go to: <https://library.org/bellingham>, recordings of these talks are also available on the library website in the days following the event.

13th Annual Franklin Turkey Trot Raises \$49,630 for Franklin Food Pantry

Over 950 Participants Enjoyed Thanksgiving Morning Tradition

The Franklin Food Pantry, which provides supplemental food assistance and programs in Franklin, Massachusetts, announces that a record-breaking \$49,630 was raised by more than 950 runners and 65 sponsors at this year's annual Turkey Trot held on Thanksgiving Morning, Thursday, Nov. 28, 2024. The funds raised support programs and services that assist more than 1,800 individuals and families and surpasses last year's fundraising effort of \$45,000. Organized in conjunction with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Franklin, this is the 13th year for the family-friendly fun run, which welcomed participants of all levels and abilities.

"Whether you ran, walked, donated, or cheered us on, your support means the world to those we serve," said Tina Powderly, Executive Director of the Franklin Food Pantry. "Thanks to your generosity and the help of our amazing sponsors, we raised nearly \$50,000 to provide nutritious food and essential goods to our neighbors in need. We're so grateful to be part of such a caring and giving community—thank you for making a difference!"

The Franklin Food Pantry is grateful for the following organizations and individuals who served as this year's race sponsors:

Presenting Sponsors: G&C Plumbing & Heating and Sweetgreen

Platinum Sponsors: Accurate Baker Elman, LDS Church Franklin, MyFM 101.3, Next9Up, Physician One Urgent Care, Notturo Home Services, Terrazza, and Wild Birds Unlimited

Gold Sponsors: America's Best Defense, Body Fit Training, Club Pilates Franklin Village, Eagle Stainless Tube & Fabrica-

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The Franklin Food Pantry thanks the following local businesses and partners who provided food for race day morning: Garelick Farms, Shaw's Supermarket, and members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

The Franklin Food Pantry thanks the following local business and partners who provided door prizes for the event: Body Fit Training, Child Therapy Boston, Comer Teng Studio, Elizabeth's Bagels, Learning Express Toys, Kevin Holmes, Level 99, Muffin House, Stott Fam-



ily, Urban Air Adventure Park, USMMA, and Wicked Fitness Franklin

For more information on the Franklin Food Pantry, to receive food assistance, or to donate funds and food, please visit www.franklinfoodpantry.org.

About the Franklin Food Pantry, Inc.

The Franklin Food Pantry, Inc. offers supplemental food assistance, household necessities, and resource referral programs to more than 1,800 individuals per year. The Pantry relies on donations and grants to purchase items and pay for daily operations, and partnerships with The Greater Boston Food Bank, Spoonfuls, and local grocery stores to achieve greater buying power and lower costs. Programs include In-person Shopping, Curbside Pick-up, Emergency Food Bags, Mobile Pantries, Home Delivery, Kids' Snack Bags, Weekend Backpacks, Holiday Meal Kits, and the SNAP match at Franklin Farmers Market. The Pantry is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in good standing in Massachusetts, recognized by Charity Navigator as a Four-Star Charity, and awarded GuideStar's Platinum Transparency ranking. The Pantry is located at 341 W. Central St. in Franklin, MA on Route 140. Please visit www.franklinfoodpantry.org for more information.

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