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March 2025

Pancake Breakfast Brings Community Together Each Year



Photo credit from last year's event: Sophie Letichevsky

By SUSAN MANNING
STAFF WRITER

It's never too early to learn the importance of community involvement.

That's what math teacher and Student Council advisor at Ashland High School Joshua Wiczer said.

"The breakfast is run by members of the Student

Council, a group of about 100 student leaders in the school. The students will be cooking

BREAKFAST
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Gabe Mugerian, a Living Legend

SUBMITTED BY ALICE ZOBIAN

If you've lived in Ashland, you know Gabe. He's like Madonna, Cher, Bono and Prince – one name says it all. This year he will be celebrating his 100th birthday.

It's great when you see it in the paper, it's even better when you know the person.

Gabe is our father's first cousin and we got to know him when we were kids. Uncle Gabriel, Aunt Rose and their mom were forthcoming and generous people. We are so proud that they are our relatives.

The first time we visited Ashland was in the late 60's. Uncle Gabriel drove to Sunnyside, New

York to pick us up and drive us to Ashland. We thought he was so cool with his Cadillac, cowboy boots and cigar. His 1961 Imperial with push button transmission, square steering wheel and incredibly large fins was great to pretend to drive. We met great neighbors and even then Uncle Gabriel knew everyone in town. The week would end with a great party, a barbecue and we couldn't wait till next year.

Once we got to High School, our yearly visits stopped. We came to visit when his beloved sister passed away and then spo-

LEGEND
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LEGEND

continued from page 1



radically.

The family has kept in touch with Uncle Gabriel by calling him every Saturday. He answers the phone saying "I'm still alive" which we always look forward to hearing. He feeds his outdoor cats and watches his westerns. Plays Megabucks and never wins but he has always been a winner with us.

A truly unique American, a Living Legend named Gabe. Happy 100th Birthdday.

BREAKFAST

continued from page 1

and serving breakfast, as well as helping out in other capacities," he said.

The event –the Student Council’s Annual Pancake Breakfast—is Sunday, March 23, 9 - 11:30am, at Ashland High School Cafeteria (65 E. Union St., enter through the back of the school). Tickets cost \$8 for adults, \$5 for children 12 and under

Wiczer said it’s nice to see the community come out and support the student population.

“All proceeds go to the Ashland High School Student Council, who in turns puts the money back into the schools. In the past few years, we’ve purchased two water-bottle filling stations, departmental supplies, donated to the “Helping Our Own” fund at the high school (designed to help students who can’t afford to attend the prom, senior week, and other events), purchased new banners on the light posts in the parking lot, and helped purchase the electronic sign in the front of the school,” said the advisor.

So, what’s on the menu?

The menu is all-you-can eat. “We’ll have plain, blueberry, and chocolate chip pancakes.



Bacon and sausage. Muffins, coffee cake, fruit. Juice, coffee, tea, and hot chocolate,” he said.

“We have been running this event most years since 2014. This is our first time running

this in March; in the past, it’s been either November or December,” according to Wiczer.

“The pancake breakfast is a great way to bring our community together over good food. It’s an opportunity for friends, fam-

ily, and neighbors to connect, while also supporting student council projects that improve our school,” said Student Council president, Sarah Miksis (‘25).

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NEW ADDRESS

Putts4Pages Returns to Library March 29-30

Play Mini-Golf in the Library

The third annual Putts4Pages Mini-Golf in the Library is once again on course to raise thousands in support of the Ashland Public Library. Ashland businesses have generously stepped up to sponsor all 18 holes and then some. And, thanks to a generous grant from the Boston Athletic Association and the Ashland Select Board, the cost of putting on the event is fully covered allowing all proceeds raised through hole sponsorships, our brand new ride-to-school and gift card raffles, and ticket sales to go directly to support the programs the library puts on for all ages at no charge for participants.

The event, sponsored by the Friends of the APL, will take place after hours at the library March 29 and 30. Saturday evening, March 29, is for adults only and features “Mocktails, Munchies, and Mini Golf” on the 19th hole from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. Mocktails will be provided by Erica’s and Ashland Ale House with a sweet and savory selection of munchies prepared by Dulce D Leche. Ticket price for this night of fun is \$20 per person.

The excitement continues on Sunday, March 30, from 10 am to 3 pm when the whole family can play through 18 holes of mini-golf set up throughout the stacks and inner spaces of the library. Tickets are \$5 per person, with a cap of \$25 per family.

Win a Ride to School in a Fire Truck!

Imagine the thrill of arriving at school in a fire truck, a police car, or maybe one of those cool DPW trucks! Your child’s dream can come true just by entering

our new, exciting raffle. The winning Ashland K-5 students will win a ride from home to school on an Ashland fire truck, police cruiser, or a DPW truck. Tickets for a chance to show up to school in an official town vehicle are just \$5 each.

Win a Gift Card to Try a New Place or Revisit an Old Favorite

For the grownups, we’re featuring \$1 raffle tickets to win great gift cards to Pizza Mine, Cherry Blossom Chinese Cuisine, Sunnyside Café, Shaw’s, Blush Bouquets, Nick’s Pizza and Grill, Marathon Deli, The Bagel Table, 2 Mauro’s, Anthony’s Barber Stylist, Ashland REIKI & Wellness Center, SubZero Nitrogen Ice Cream, or Dr. Greens. Raffle tickets are available during the March Book Sale (Feb. 28-March 1) as well as during the mini-golf event.

We’re also featuring a take-your-own-pic golf themed photo booth, fun activities in between holes, music throughout the library, and a big screen tour of the best golf courses in the world.

Thank You to Community Businesses

Ashland businesses making the event possible include Needham Bank (Flagship Sponsor for the second year in a row), Middlesex Savings Bank, 126 Self Storage, Ashland Mini-Storage Experts, Mathnasium of Southborough, Worcester Air Conditioning, Richard Francis Salon and Spa, Ashland Lumber, AT&R Insurance, Ellen Gellineau SLP @ ellengspeechtherapy.com, Ashland Animal Hospital, The Residence at Valley Farm, Mike’s Collision,

Tom’s Auto Body, Annemarie’s Dance Centre, Abbey Carpet & Floor, Platinum PT, and Ashland Community Acupuncture LLC.

“Friends of the Green” include, Ashland Family & Implant Dentistry, Minucci Auto Body Inc, Main Street Wine & Spirits, Ashland Lumber, Lunkers, Modelville Hobby, Oak Realty, and TJ’s Fine Food & Spirits.

We still have room for additional businesses to step up to sponsor the 19th hole or become a Friend of the Green. Contact president@friendsoftheapl.org for information on how YOU can support the Ashland Public Library.

Order Your Tickets Now

Mini-golf tickets are available on-line now. Use the QR code below to order tickets and tee times or use the link at www.friendsoftheapl.org. Proceeds from this fundraising event will go to pay for all of the in-person and virtual library programs for all ages, as well as 16 different Museum Passes, stocking Little Libraries all over town, supplementing classroom shelves in Ashland Public Schools, and much, much more.

Order tickets here or go to www.friendsoftheapl.org



Irish Cabaret with Patty Carver!

Please join the Ashland Historical Society on March 16, 2025 at 2PM for an Irish Cabaret! Join Patty Carver in an hour filled with Irish music, trivia and toasts! Sing-a-long to Irish classics

including Oh Danny Boy, Molly Malone, Who threw the Overalls in Mrs. Murphy’s Chowder and The Unicorn, just to name a few! So get your Irish on and celebrate St. Patrick’s Day with Patty’s Irish

Cabaret! And... May your ships never be bottoms up!

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Ashland's Young Musicians Shine at Prestigious Music Festival

BY SARA DEIBLER,
LISA UGLIALORO, AND
HEIDI HANSON

Ashland is once again proving itself to be a community rich in musical talent! Over 20 exceptional band and chorus students from Ashland have been selected to participate in the highly esteemed Central District Massachusetts Music Educators Association (MMEA) Music Festival Concert. This prestigious event brings together the finest young musicians from across the region, providing them with the opportunity to collaborate with renowned conductors and educators, refine their skills, and perform at an unforgettable concert showcasing their hard work and dedication.

Students from over 70 schools in the district were selected following a rigorous audition process. Chorus students were selected to the Chorus ensemble, while band students were selected to either the Concert Band (primarily consisting of woodwind and brass instruments) or the Orchestra (including a full string section alongside woodwinds and brass).

Senior Central District MMEA Auditions were held in mid-November, and the Festival Concert was held on January 18th at Mechanics Hall in Worcester. Congratulations to the following students who were selected to perform at the Senior Festival Concert:

Band: Ariel Achildiev (Baritone saxophone)*, Nathan Gerlovin (Clarinet), Sadie Gilhooly (Horn),

Millie Jaiswal (Bass clarinet), Nathaniel Kinsman (Horn), Daniel Lee (Clarinet)*, Spencer Leland (Timpani)*, Sabrina Lin (Clarinet), Andrew Martin (Bassoon)*, Hasani Reddy (Tuba)*, Neha Ruthramoorthy (Bass clarinet)*

Orchestra: Sarah Miksis (Trumpet)*

Chorus: Erick Almeida (Bass), Cora Franzella (Soprano), Gabby Ilin (Alto)*, Hunter Meigs (Bass), Jhosep Ramirez Gonzalez (Bass)

**Indicates the student, based on their high scores in the audition, was given an All-State Recommendation, allowing them to audition for potential placement in the All-State Music Festival.*

Junior Central District MMEA Auditions were held in early February, marking the first time in over a decade that Ashland's 7th and 8th grade students participated in the event. In addition, two 9th graders auditioned. Five students were selected to participate in the Junior Festival Concert, which will be held on May 3rd at Blackstone-Millville Regional High School in Blackstone. Congratulations to:

Band: Sam Apostola (Clarinet), Mark Mayatshikh (French Horn), Kaiya Smits (Oboe)

Orchestra: Jonah Bloom (French Horn), Ben Deibler (Bassoon)

Additionally, Sarah Miksis, a senior trumpet player at Ashland High School, has once again demonstrated her exceptional musical talent by earning a coveted spot in the Massachusetts All-State Band for the second consecutive year. This prestigious achievement comes after a



AHS Senior Sarah Miksis Earns Consecutive Spot in Prestigious All-State Band

highly competitive audition process, showcasing Sarah's dedication, skill, and passion for music. As a member of the All-State Band, she will have the honor of performing at the renowned Symphony Hall in Boston on Saturday, March 29, 2025. Congratulations to Sarah on this outstanding accomplishment!

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to all the students who auditioned and who earned a place in these prestigious festivals. The District Music Festivals are more than just an event—they are an opportunity for students to grow artistically, collaborate with fellow musicians, and experience the joy of high-level ensemble performance. Their selection is a testament to their commitment to excellence and the strong music education programs in our schools.

The Ashland Music Association (AMA) would like to thank

APS SPRING 2025 BAND & VOCAL MUSIC CONCERT SEASON

PERFORMANCES ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

- 3/12 - AHS Bands and AMS Wind Ensemble, 7 PM
- 3/18 - AMS 6th, 7th, & 8th Grade Concert Bands, 7 PM
- 4/25 - AHS Vocal Music Solo Night, 7 PM
- 5/15 - AHS Choir Concert, Elevating LGBTQ+ Voices, 7 PM
- 5/22 - AHS Concert Bands Blue & White
- 6/4 - Mindess, AMS 6th Grade Band, & the Jazz Ensemble
- 6/10 - AMS 7th & 8th Grade Concert Bands
- June - AMS Choir (date TBD)

SAVE THE DATES!



Community Support for Music Education

FOUNDED IN 2010, THE ASHLAND MUSIC ASSOCIATION IS A PARENT VOLUNTEER RUN 501(C)(3) ORGANIZATION THAT PROVIDES FINANCIAL AND VOLUNTEER ASSISTANCE TO MUSIC PERFORMANCE PROGRAMS IN THE ASHLAND, MA PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

Learn More at AshlandMusic.org

the Ashland Select Board and BachKnives for generous grants that supported our students' participation in the Junior and Senior Central District Auditions and Festival Concerts.

As these talented students prepare for their moment in the spotlight, the entire town has even more opportunities to experience the magic of live music and vocal performances. Get ready for an exciting season of performances as Ashland Public Schools proudly presents its Spring Concert Band and Choral Music Series! This year's lineup promises to be an unforgettable celebration of musical excellence, featuring a diverse array of events:

MICCA Competition Preview Concert - Experience the outstanding repertoire our students are preparing for the Massachusetts Instrumental & Choral Conductors Association (MICCA) competition, a showcase of excellence in school music programs.

Composer Showcase - A special evening featuring the work of a local Ashland composer alongside original compositions by student musicians.

Elevating LGBTQ+ Voices: The Ashland High School Choir will present a moving and powerful program that fosters awareness, inclusivity, and artistic expression through vocal music.

With a mix of classical, contemporary, and original works, this season offers something for every music lover. Whether you're a long-time supporter of Ashland's music programs or a newcomer to the local concert scene, these performances are sure to inspire and delight.

Join us in celebrating the dedication, passion, and artistry of our young musicians. Mark your calendars, gather your friends and family, and come experience the power of music in our community. We can't wait to see you in the audience!

A Bright Future for Ashland's Music Program

With these performances just around the corner, it's clear that Ashland's music program is in great hands. Our middle and high school band and choir students continue to demonstrate their commitment to the arts, and we can't wait to see what the future holds for them. Don't miss these incredible performances—mark your calendars and come show your support for our talented young musicians as they showcase their hard work and passion!

Ashland Public School music programs are supported by the Ashland Music Association (AMA), a parent volunteer run organization raising funds to support program expenses not covered by the school budget. Over the past 5 years, the AMA has invested over \$60,000 in the Ashland Public School music programs.

Learn more about the upcoming season and the achievements of Ashland music students at the AMA website, <https://www.ashlandmusic.org/home>, where you can view details about the upcoming season, enjoy Fall 2024 concert recordings, learn about the APS music teachers, and read about the latest exciting news in the AMA newsletter, Clocker Beats.

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This Land Is NOW Your Land

It is done! The 53 acres that once belonged to the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ is now an official part of the Town Forest. For years many folks assumed that it already was. They would have been quite surprised if one day the chainsaws had come to clear cut the whole thing.

Now it is protected! The conveyance of the property located at the end of Winter Street and behind four homes on Myrtle Street occurred on January 24. Together with SVT's Cowassock Woods section, our Town Forest is now over 700 acres in size and features some of the best trails and habitat within the I-495 metro area.

Some years ago, the Church explored developing the land -- evidence of that effort can be seen in the many perc test pipes spread throughout the property -- but the Church also had a strong desire to protect the land. Each summer, upwards of 450 kids per day come to the youth summer day-camp which is located on the adjacent land on the Framingham side of the forest. There the kids learn to appreciate the forest. By working with the Town, the Church was able to accomplish both of its goals.

The land is now doubly protected. First, as conservation land, it is protected by Article 97 of the Massachusetts Constitution. Approved by Massachusetts voters in 1972, "Article 97 grants to the people the right to a clean environment and authorizes the acquisition of land for conservation purposes to be protected in perpetuity" according to the state website.

A second layer of protection is provided by a Conservation Restriction (CR) owned by Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT). A Conservation Restriction is a deed for the property's conservation rights. SVT was granted the CR by the Town in return for their \$250,000 contribution to the purchase price. As the 'holder' of the CR, SVT is in a overseer position to ensure that the property remains natural and unspoiled.

As with most of the forest, operational control is provided by the Town Forest Committee and its volunteers. The relationship between the Committee and SVT is defined in CR. Though carefully negotiated over several months, the CR could not be submitted to the state for approval until after the land purchase was final. It now awaits state approval, and that approval must be received before the Town can get reimbursed for the grant portion of the purchase price -- \$605,750.

In addition to finalizing the CR, there is other work that must be done. As on the Riverwalk, a sign must be installed to acknowledge the state's contribution to the purchase. There is also a bridge to build, trails to be marked, a parking area to enhance, and some signage to install.

If you would like to volunteer to be a forest helper, please indicate your interest in an email sent to: TownForest@Ashland-Mass.com.

Come take a hike

The new section of the forest will be called the UCC-CR Section — UCC referring to the

Church and CR for the Conservation Restriction. The Forest Committee would like to share it with you.

Members of the committee will lead guided walks at 9:00AM on the following Saturdays and Sundays: March 28 and 29, April 4 and 5, April 18 and 19, and May 2 and 3. You can register by sending an email to: TownForest@AshlandMass.com. Please indicate which date and how many people will attend. The committee will notify you if any of the dates must be cancelled due to weather. The walks will start at the trailhead located at the Eversource Powerlines near end of Winter Street. Parking along the forest side of the road is permitted.

The Ashland Town Forest Committee (ATFC) is a volunteer committee appointed by the Select Board. Their mission is to manage and maintain the forest. Forest maintenance includes removal of trees that fall on trails or that pose a threat to public safety. The ATFC is also responsible for signage, removal of invasive plants, trail erosion, and the promotion of the Town Forest as a public asset.

The Forest Committee sends thanks to the many people who helped bring this project to fruition, and to the Select Board and Ashland Town Meeting voters who had the wisdom and foresight to approve this purchase. That wisdom and foresight as demonstrated in 1942 by Henry Warren through his gift of the initial 450 acres to the Town has resulted in this gem of a forest. It is there for all of us to enjoy.

SUBMITTED BY ASHLAND TOWN FOREST COMMITTEE



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Your Money, Your Independence

Homebuying in March: A Smart Time to Make Your Move?



Glenn Brown, CFP

March signals the beginning of homebuying season as the weather improves and more sellers list homes after waiting through the slower winter months.

Some buyers will wait in hopes of aligning closing with the end of school year; thus, buyers in March may have less competition and more options.

Before scrolling Zillow, open houses, and finding a real estate agent, let's discuss things you need to implement.

Define Your Priorities.

Think about what you need in a home, make a list, and then prioritize #1-25, as not everything can be #1 or 1A. Consider factors like location, bedrooms, outdoor space, designated areas (i.e. office, kids' playroom), open concept, amenities, etc. Also know your preferences: move-in ready v. fixer-upper, few neighbors v. neighborhood, and public v. private school. And whatever you do, don't let listing photos redefine your priorities.

Do Your Research.

Research the local market to understand pricing trends and gain an idea of what to expect when making offers. Learn what's going on with schools, public safety, property taxes, new ordinances, and city/town infrastructure. Also, if you don't want to live on a busy road, know the existing commercial and industrial zones.

Get Pre-Approved for a Mortgage.

This shows sellers that you're a serious buyer and can afford the property. Pre-approval also

helps you understand how much you can borrow. Don't confuse pre-approval with ability to pay, as an underwriter is viewing your financial situation today - not what you have planned.

Explore Loan Options.

When buying a home, securing the right mortgage is critical. Here are some common types:

Conventional Loans - Not backed by the government, these are offered by banks or private lenders. Down payments are 5-20% with required credit scores higher than 620, best rates for scores 780+. Benefits include competitive rates and flexible terms, however, there are limits on the amount borrowed.

FHA Loans - Government-backed Federal Housing Administration loans are designed to help first-time homebuyers or those with lower credit scores qualify for a mortgage. Down payments are as low as 3.5% for credit scores of 580 or higher. While lower down payment and easier to qualify, Private Mortgage

Insurance (PMI) is required, which increases overall costs.

Jumbo Loans - A type of mortgage that exceeds the conforming loan limits set by the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA). Down payments are often 20%+ with higher credit scores, incomes, and investment assets.

Adjustable-Rate Mortgages (ARMs) - Offer a lower initial interest rate for a fixed period, typically 5, 7, or 10 years, then adjusts based on market conditions. Down payments are 5% or more with eligibility similar to conventional loan requirements. Ideal for those expecting to refinance or move again in 5-7 years. There's a risk of higher payments as rates adjust or if the refinancing or move doesn't (can't) occur.

Understand the Full Costs.

At closing you may need more than the down payment, this includes escrow (property taxes and insurance), prepaid interest, and other closing costs for \$5-15K additional. This can be rolled into the mortgage, so get a breakdown from your lender to avoid surprises.

About that Financial Plan.

As a CFP, I've helped many

clients with their homebuying (and selling) process. What eases stress is knowing what happens AFTER moving into your new home. Knowns include a new monthly budget, adjusted cash flow expectations, spending timelines on renovations, and any short-term lifestyle compromises. Additionally, we've run scenarios planning for the unexpected, family additions and/or desire to change jobs for greater work/life flexibility.

Through planning, you're confident in aligning your home with your financial independence.

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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Explore, Create and Inspire – Summer Programs for Young Artists Now Available at Hopkinton Center for the Arts

BY JENNIFER RUSSO

It's never too early to start thinking about summer activities for the kids during their vacation months, and Hopkinton Center of the Arts (HCA) is already on top of it. Hopkinton Center for the Arts is a regional art center, a non-profit organization that aims to foster joy and engagement through various forms of art. They serve the MetroWest community through classes and events that inspire and celebrate creative expression in all its forms.

With an exciting variety of programming that includes everything from ceramics to dance, HCA brings an opportunity to learn something entirely new, build skills with immersive experiences, explore expression through different artistic mediums, and spark creativity in young minds throughout the area.

"We know families have a lot of options for summer programs and for those with kids who love art or want to mix it up or try something different than the traditional summer camp, we really have so much to offer," shares HCA Operations Director Sandee Buckley.

"Whether a kid comes in just in love with creating or is unsure of what they are interested in, we meet them where they are at. We have amazing instructors who work professionally in what they are teaching or who are used to working in a classroom setting, so they are very adept at working with students of all levels and abilities. They encourage and inspire students to be their very best and find the thing that they connect with personally."

Do you have a child or teen with a flair for drama? HCA offers acting and theater classes, including the preparation and performance of musicals including Alice in Wonderland and Frozen Jr, which includes workshops on performance, prop and set design, and filmmaking. The performances are open to the public so the community can enjoy the shows and students can show off their hard work to an audience. A Middle-School Intensive Theater program focusing on the work of Stephen Schwartz (Wicked, Pippin, etc.) is also available.



Younger kids who love to dance will learn to celebrate stories like Snow White and Beauty and the Beast through movement, where teens can participate in dance workshops featuring ballet, jazz, contemporary dancing, and more, exploring techniques and artistry. Additionally, there is a choreography workshop for kids in grades 6-12 who want to try their hand at creating dances themselves, which really begins to hone project management and collaboration skills too.

For the young visual artist, there are ceramic and clay workshops, which have become very popular in recent years. There are also classes on illustration and cartooning, printmaking, drawing faces, oil painting, fiber art, sculpture, and even designing a board game with characters and maps.

"Every week, we also bring in an entertainer for a special performance for all the campers, from musicians to puppeteers to storytellers. It's really fun and colorful and we work around different themes each week. We also have an art exhibition during the summer that is intended to be interactive and child friendly. As part of the program, students are able to meet the artists and learn from them. It really enriches their experience," shares Sandee.

In addition to the summer programming for kids and teens, there is also adult programming available for those who want to



expand their interests, abilities, or knowledge in the arts.

"Summer is a wonderful time for an adult who wants to dabble in an art form because it's a shorter commitment. We encourage adults to not ignore themselves and try something new," says Sandee.

The HCA also offers a weekend concert series in the summer for people of all ages to enjoy, which are "Pay what you can" events. Held outside in the amphitheater, bands and artists planned for this year include Hit the Bus, Professor Harp, Chris Fitz, the Fat City Band, and more.

Summer programs through HCA are an exciting chance for children and teens to immerse themselves in a creative environment, foster their passions for art, make new friends, and create lasting memories. If you are looking for an opportunity for kids to receive expert instruction and learn new skills but also gain confidence and learn how to express their individuality in a unique way, consider signing them up!

Full and half day programs are available beginning June 30th for kids from age four to eighteen, and both single and multi-week options are ready to book. Pricing varies and can be found on the HCA website at www.hopartscenter.org and there is a

scholarship program available for those who may need some assistance. The HCA is located at 98 Hayden Rowe St in Hopkinton, MA. Email info@hopartscenter.org

or contact them by phone at 508-435-9222 with any questions.

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Struggling With Acne?

By LISA MASSIMIANO,
LICENSED ESTHETICIAN AND
CERTIFIED ACNE SPECIALIST

If you have been diagnosed with acne and haven't been satisfied with drug store products or the suggested treatment from your doctor, consider seeing an Acne Specialist.

What is an Acne Specialist?

An Acne Specialist is a licensed skin care professional who is specially trained to treat acne using a combination of clinical treatments, home care protocols and regular follow-up during the process of clearing acne prone skin.

Most physicians don't have the time to spend educating patients on the root cause of their acne. They often prescribe oral antibiotics and strong topical retinoids that can leave skin dry, red and irritated. Patients get frustrated with these side effects and stop using the products.

How an Acne Specialist Can Help You.

An Acne Specialist will assess your individual skin type, and the type of acne you have, to develop a plan of action spe-

cifically for you. They will take the time to teach you about the root cause of acne and provide information on lifestyle, diet, medications, and ingredients in makeup and skin care products that exacerbate acne. They help you to get your skin clear and teach you how to keep your acne under control.

For people struggling with acne, it can be frustrating to try and communicate with their doctor on a timely basis. My clients tell me that the best part of working with an Acne Specialist is that we are there for them to answer their questions and provide support while they go through the process of getting their skin clear.

Questions about acne? Email Lisa Massimiano, owner Skin Smart Salon and Acne Clinic at skinsmartsalon@aol.com or call 508 881-1180. Visit the website skinsmartsalon.com for information about Skin Smart's acne program and other services.

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Here's To A Greener 2025!

By KEVIN KAM FOR ENERGIZE
ASHLAND



A belated Happy 2025 from Energize Ashland! Every December I find myself watching the classic movie *It's a Wonderful Life*, and especially the bank run scene where Bailey Brothers Building & Loan is filled with customers seeking return of their deposits and Jimmy Stewart's character passionately explains to them that "your money's not here, your money's in Joe's house, which is right next to yours, and next to the Kennedy's house," and so on. His point being that we're all financially connected and invested in each other's homes and well-being, both literally by holding a mortgage or savings account, and indirectly through being a community.

In the same way that fellow BBB&L shareholders and neighbors invested in each other, you can directly invest in your neighbors' climate-related home improvements and solar projects. The simplest way to accomplish this is to hold your checking or savings deposits in a local bank or

credit union, perhaps one of the 67 which participates in the Mass Save HEAT Loan program and several of which have a branch in Ashland! Alternatively you could identify a bank or credit union which specializes in loans for climate-related projects by using the search tools at bankforgood.org and bank.green which allow you to sort and screen by numerous categories, including physical locations and savings/loan products.

Higher on the risk/reward spectrum is direct investment in specific companies or projects. These types of investments typically come in one of two flavors: 1) you loan money to the company which the company (much like BBB&L) then puts to use in its business of climate-related projects like building solar farms or installing heat pumps, and then you receive monthly or

quarterly interest payment; or 2) you have a small ownership interest in such a company. Let's be clear: there is no guarantee that your investment will provide the stated return or even that your investment amount will be returned to you in the same way that a federally-insured bank's deposits are guaranteed. With that important caveat, I recommend the following platforms which offer access to such investments: Honeycomb Credit, Climatize, and Energea. Each of these platforms has a different target investor and different types of offerings, so it's useful to browse each thoroughly. Investment minimums can be as low as \$10. Also, consider your own willingness and ability to take risks with your money.

If you found this brief introduction interesting, check out the events page on our website, <https://community.massenergize.org/AshlandMA/>, for details on a presentation coming in the spring on crowd-funded investments in climate companies and projects.

Marathon Runners

Maggie Champion



Hello! My name is Maggie Campion and I am excited to run the 2025 Boston Marathon for the Town of Ashland! Growing up in Ashland, Marathon Monday was always special for me and my family. My parents are both runners and proud Boston Marathon finishers. I knew I would someday want to run this special race if afforded the privilege.

I completed my first Boston Marathon last year in and it was an amazing experience! I am excited for the opportunity to run again this year for Ashland. I graduated from Ashland High School in 2019 where I played field hockey and lacrosse and forged strong friendships. I feel

honored to give back to the town I will always call home.

The money raised by the 15 Ashland runners will be put toward the BAA Grant Program, which directly benefits Ashland residents. My fundraising goal is \$3,000 and I hope you will consider supporting me. Donations can be made to City Hall Systems by visiting the Town website, www.ashlandmass.com or through my venmo @maggie-campion. I hope to see you on the marathon route, cheering us on!

Mikayla Tirabassi



Hello everyone! My name is Mikayla Tirabassi and I am a 2016 graduate of Ashland High. I am so excited to have been selected to run for the town of

Ashland where I have resided my whole life. This is an incredible honor. Growing up living very close to the Boston Marathon course, I was always able to watch the runners go by and cheer them on. I aspired to be like them and made it a dream of mine to run the Boston Marathon one day... Now I have that chance! I am looking forward to raising money to make this town even better for generations to come. I want future generations to have the same experience I did living in this town. This includes finding lifelong friends, getting a great education, and the experience of living in a safe, loving community. I have run one marathon before, but Boston will be a new challenge for me. I am very competitive with myself and am hoping to beat my previous marathon time of 3 hours 38 minutes. My goal is not only to support Ashland's BAA Grant Program but also to inspire others to work hard & prioritize your goals & dreams. The one thing you can control in

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Women caregivers face financial challenges



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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Provided by Edward Jones

On March 8, we observe International Women’s Day. Although this event celebrates women’s achievements, it’s still true that women, especially caregivers, face significant financial hurdles. How can these challenges be met?

To begin with, let’s look at some concerning statistics connected to American women in the “sandwich generation” — those who care for children and parents or other relatives — from

a study by Edward Jones and research firms NEXT360 and Morning Consult:

- Nearly half of women report feeling financially strained.
- Almost two-thirds of women say caregiving duties have harmed their ability to save for their own financial goals.
- More than half of women have had to reduce their professional responsibilities due to caregiving, resulting in the loss of potential income.

So, if you’re a sandwich-generation woman, what can you do to improve your financial outlook?

Consider these suggestions:

- **Establish your own financial goals.** Depending on the length and complexity of your caregiving duties, your own financial goals could be affected. For example, you may need to change your retirement date from what you had originally intended, or else adjust the retirement lifestyle you had envisioned. However, this doesn’t mean

you shouldn’t try to establish your own short- and long-term financial goals and then create a strategy for achieving them. In doing so, you may find it helpful to work with a financial professional.

- **Contribute as much as you can to your retirement accounts.** Your caregiving obligations may be preventing you from working as many hours as you like, or perhaps even from accepting a higher-paying position. In either case, your ability to contribute to your retirement accounts may well be diminished. Nonetheless, each month try to put in as much as you can afford to your IRA and your 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored retirement plan. And if you do get salary increases, think about boosting your monthly contributions to your plan.
- **Don’t rush into taking Social Security.** You can start collecting Social Security as early as age 62, and you might be tempted to do so if you’re feeling some financial pres-

sure because of your caregiving responsibilities. But your monthly benefits can be bigger if you wait until your full retirement age, which will be age 67 if you were born in 1960 or later. So, if you can find other ways to bridge this gap — possibly through a spouse’s income or your own savings — it may well benefit you to wait as long as you can before collecting.

- **Maintain separate finances.** If your parents are concerned about falling behind on their bills, they might suggest combining their bank accounts with yours. This may not be a good idea — if your finances get tangled with those of your parents, you could end up paying for some of their expenses, even if they can afford to do so themselves. Consequently, try to keep your finances separate.
- **Create a financial power of attorney.** You may want to see whether your parents will agree to give you a financial power of attorney, so you

can make decisions on their behalf should they become incapacitated. Such an arrangement can help protect them and you.

There’s no sugar-coating it: Caregiving can be financially taxing on caregivers. But by taking the appropriate steps, you may be able to help reduce some of the stress involved.

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Confidence From The Top – Wigs & Toppers For Hair Loss

BY GINA WOELFEL

Hair is a big part of how we express ourselves, and if it starts to thin or fall out, it can feel disheartening. But there's good news! At b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio in Medway, we're here to help with compassionate, personalized solutions designed to restore not just your hair but your confidence, too.

Last year, Heather Cohen, the owner of b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio expanded its services by introducing natural and synthetic wigs and toppers to help address hair loss and thinning. Many women face hair loss due to various factors such as stress, alopecia, medication side effects, and cancer treatments, often without an easy, non-medical solution for support.

Two years ago, Heather was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis, and the medication her doctors prescribed to help control her condition caused significant hair thinning. This experience gave her a deeper understanding of her client's struggles and a renewed passion for helping them feel beautiful.

"As a salon owner with access to the best hair care products in the business, I never imagined I would experience hair loss myself," Heather explained. "Over the years, I've worked with many clients dealing with this same issue, but I never had the right solutions to offer them."

Heather tried using extensions but found them uncomfortable due to her fragile hair and not as versatile as she had hoped.

"That's when I discovered wigs and hair toppers," Heather revealed. "They completely transformed my look and boosted my confidence! I knew I wanted to offer these options at my salon."

With a small team of her most experienced stylists, Heather set out to obtain the education and certification needed to provide exceptional hair replacement and supplemental services.

The b.LUXE Studio now offers a wide selection of high-quality human hair and synthetic wigs and toppers, all designed to look and feel completely natural. With a diverse range of styles, colors, and textures available, you can book a consultation with our wig specialists to try on samples and discuss your options. During the consultation, we carefully take scalp measurements to ensure your wig or topper fits perfectly and securely. Each piece can be custom-colored and styled for a flawless, natural blend. You'll feel both confident and comfortable with your new hairstyle.

Human Hair Wigs

Our human hair wigs offer a natural-looking and versatile solution for those seeking a realistic alternative to their own hair. These wigs are made from the highest quality human hair, closely resembling natural hair's texture, shine, and movement. They can be cut, colored, and styled just like your own. Advanced craftsmanship, such as lace fronts and monofilament tops, creates a lifelike hairline and scalp. A monofilament wig features a transparent mesh layer with each strand hand-tied, providing a more natural look and feel that allows for versatile parting. These wigs offer a secure, comfortable fit that stays in place without shifting. While they do require some upkeep, human hair wigs are durable and long-lasting and can be heat-styled to provide various styling possibilities.

Beauty is our Business!



HAIR LOSS SOLUTIONS

Human Hair Wig Pricing: \$1000 - \$4000 | Includes cutting, coloring and styling

Human Hair Topper Pricing: \$400 - \$1800 | Includes cutting, coloring and styling

Synthetic Wigs

Modern synthetic wigs have transformed the hair loss experience by providing realistic, low-maintenance options that resemble natural hair. Advanced synthetic fibers now mimic real hair's texture, shine, and movement. Many of these wigs feature lace fronts and monofilament tops, which create a lifelike hairline and scalp appearance.

One advantage of pre-styled synthetic wigs is that they retain their shape even after washing, making them ideal for individuals seeking a quick and hassle-free solution. Additionally, they are lightweight and comfortable, and they hold their style well in various weather conditions, including humidity and rain. With proper care, synthetic wigs offer a convenient and affordable way to feel confident and polished every day.

Synthetic Wig Pricing: \$200 - \$700 | Includes cutting, coloring and styling

Toppers

Human hair toppers are non-permanent hair accessories designed to enhance a person's natural hair's volume, length, or coverage. These toppers are made from real human hair and blend seamlessly with existing hair to create a natural, fuller look. They are available in various styles, colors, and lengths, can be dyed or cut to match your desired style,



and are typically secured with clips, tape, or integrated bands. Toppers are ideal for individuals experiencing hair thinning, patchy hair loss due to alopecia, or anyone looking to change their hairstyle without making a permanent commitment.

A Unique and Compassionate Approach

At b.LUXE, we take a unique and compassionate approach to hair loss, recognizing that each individual's journey is different. Heather's experience with hair loss due to rheumatoid arthritis medication has inspired the studio's commitment to providing realistic and empathetic solutions tailored to each client's needs. In addition to offering effective hair replacement options, b.LUXE embraces a holistic approach to beauty and well-being. We've designed our Scalp Spa Treatments to nourish and rejuvenate. They feature detoxifying scrubs, nutritive oil applications, and soothing massages to enhance scalp health, calm the mind, and address issues such as dryness, itching, oiliness, clogged follicles, and hair thinning.

Prioritized Client Comfort

At b.LUXE, we genuinely care about supporting you throughout

your journey, offering a warm, safe, and welcoming space where you can feel at ease and valued. Our experienced team is here to guide you every step of the way, providing personalized one-on-one services in a private setting. We're deeply committed to your comfort and well-being, ensuring you receive the utmost care and attention with solutions thoughtfully tailored to your unique needs.

For clients experiencing hair loss due to cancer treatments, we are proud to partner with The MGH Cancer Center at Newton-Wellesley Hospital to provide effective hair loss solutions.

You're never alone here—we're with you every step of the way, offering expertise and compassion at every turn.

For more information and to view our introductory consultation video, scan the QR code to visit our "Hair Loss Solutions" page. To schedule a consultation, you can book online or feel free to contact our team directly at (508) 321-1624.

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HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

You've landed an interview, now to prepare

BY THERESA KNAPP

Congratulations, the company has noticed your résumé and they've scheduled an interview with you. Now what?

Now you prepare. Getting a job is difficult and time-consuming. The more prepared you can be, the more confident you can be, and the more successful you can be.

For the employer, the purpose of the job interview is to assess the candidate's skills, their motivation, and to see if they are a good fit with the company's culture and mission.

For the candidate, the interview can help assess if the job description is accurate, if you're comfortable with the "feel" of the company and its representatives, etc.

First impressions count

According to the American Psychological Association, first impressions can have a real impact on your professional success. Ways to strengthen your chances of making a good first impression include:

- 1. Know your audience:** Know who you're interviewing with so you can speak to them directly
- 2. Exude confidence:** Speak slowly and calmly, make eye contact
- 3. Field questions gracefully:** Don't get defensive, you don't know an answer, it's okay to say so
- 4. Prepare and practice:** You cannot overprepare
- 5. Be a good listener:** Pay attention, make eye contact, nod, don't interrupt or finish their sentences

Source: www.apa.org/gradpsych/2012/11/first-impressions

Preparation is key

- Read the job description thoroughly, research unfamiliar terms and acronyms
- Research the company through its website, blog, and LinkedIn page
- Search for company reviews on sites like GlassDoor, Indeed, Jobcase, etc.
- Search for the company in the news, is there anything about the culture, stock, etc., you should (or should not) discuss during the interview? A quick Google search could reveal important information
- Be familiar with the office location (even if it's a virtual position or interview)
- Have your elevator pitch ready

Your "elevator pitch" should be "u-nique"

An elevator pitch is your introduction. The pitch should be 30 to 60 seconds long and should address your professional history, accomplishments of which you're most proud of, and relevant career goals which tie in with the job for that you're applying.

The pitch should end with a fun fact about yourself, something that can help you stand out from the other candidates. It should be positive and not too personal.

Many employers receive hundreds of applications for each job. It will help your chances if you have a memorable interview. What makes you "u-nique"? Employers often ask each candidate the same list of questions so they can make accurate comparisons,

and they often hear similar answers from each applicant. By sharing something unique about you – that you can directly relate to the job responsibilities – your chances of standing out can increase. Do you speak several languages? Do you have a unique hobby? Did you audition for American Idol? Were you at the 2004 Red Sox World Series Game?

Five questions to ask yourself as you prepare

According to the job search engine Indeed.com [bit.ly/Indeed5questions], five questions to ask yourself before a job interview include:

- What past accomplishments are you most proud of?

- What three things do you want to get better at this year?
- What skills do you have that you've noticed differentiate you from your peers?
- What would your past or present colleagues say is the best thing about working with you?
- Where do you want to be in three or five years?

Take some time to think about your answers. An interview is the time to shine, to identify areas in which you are proud, and to share those accomplishments. Let the employer know what skills and energy you'll bring to their company.

If you're wondering how to highlight your strengths in an interview, Indeed [bit.ly/IndeedPersonalStrengths] says focus on quality not quantity, back up your strengths with examples, and provide original answers to routine questions – you want to provide the answers they're looking for while standing out from the competition.

10 common job interview questions and how to answer them

According to the *Harvard Business Review* [bit.ly/HBR10CommonInterviewQuestions], the following questions are often asked during a job interview:

- Could you tell me about yourself and briefly describe your background?
- How did you hear about the position?
- What kind of work environment do you prefer?
- How do you deal with pressure or stressful situations?
- Do you prefer working independently or on a team?
- How do you keep yourself organized when balancing multiple projects?
- What did you do in the last year to improve your knowledge?
- What are your salary expectations?



- Are you applying for other jobs?
- Can you explain a time gap on your résumé?

Be prepared to respond to these questions with the answer and, when appropriate, why that is the answer.

For helpful detailed responses, visit bit.ly/HBR10CommonInterviewQuestions.

"What is your greatest weakness?"

Another often-asked and often-dreaded interview question is, "What is your greatest weakness?" The purpose of this question is to see if you're honest, self-aware, and open to self-improvement; it gauges your emotional intelligence.

According to themuse.com [bit.ly/MuseGreatestWeakness], there is a simple formula to answer this question:

- Clearly describe your weakness [ex. Delegating]
- Give a short example of a time your weakness affected your work [ex. The meeting started late because I did all the prep work myself, I should have delegated.]
- Talk about what you've done to improve your weakness. [ex. I now look to my team or coworkers to ask for assistance at the beginning of a project.]

When answering the question, be sure to answer concisely and focus on the solution, not the weakness. And always leave the answer on a positive note.

"Do you have any questions for us?"

At the end of most interviews

is one last question: "Do you have any questions for us?" Your answer should always be "yes" even if the employer has answered every question you had. It is important you ask at least one question, preferably 1-3 questions as time allows. Suggestions include:

- How would you define success in this role?
- How is success measured in this role?
- What is the most challenging aspect of this role or this team?
- What do you like about working here?
- How many other members are in this department?
- How would you define company culture?
- What opportunities do you offer for professional development?
- Questions related to information on their website, blog, or social media
- What are the next steps in the hiring process? [this should not be your only question]

It's always best to ask some of these questions during the interview but be sure to save one or two questions for the end.

For the "70 best questions to ask in an interview," visit bit.ly/Indeed51QuestionsToAsk.

This article includes original content and information from Indeed.com, themuse.com, Harvard Business Review, and PositivePsychology.com

INTERVIEW PREP

continued on page 12

HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

Digital footprints, yours and theirs

By THERESA KNAPP

According to Business News Daily, “It’s no longer that a great resume and a solid interview dictate whether you get a job offer. Your personal social media profiles can potentially seriously affect your professional life.”

Business News Daily suggests the following tips for passing social media screenings:

1. Don’t erase your profile: This can imply you have something to hide and does not guarantee the profile is completely deleted (but do

remove inappropriate content)

2. Use social media to your benefit: Use your socials to promote content that shows your knowledge, professionalism, achievements, etc.
3. Google yourself to see what others will see when they do the same
4. Consider making your profile private: It is legal for employers to check public social media accounts, and be wary of hiring managers

requesting information beyond what’s available online (this is similar to employers asking inappropriate questions during interviews and should raise a red flag)

Source: www.businessnewsdaily.com/2377-social-media-hiring.html

There are ways to make social media work to your advantage during the interview process, including updating your social media profiles with up-to-date information, this includes Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Tik-

Tok, X – anywhere you have an active account; and like/follow companies that interest you and companies where you are interviewing.

LinkedIn.com offers the following tips to improve your LinkedIn profile:

1. Choose the right profile picture
2. Add a background photo
3. Make your headline more than just a job title
4. Record and display your name pronunciation

5. Grow your network
6. List your relevant skills
7. Request recommendations
8. Showcase your passion for learning
9. Add comments

Follow relevant influencers in your industry

Source: bit.ly/LinkedInProfileTips2024

This article includes original content and information from Business News Daily and LinkedIn.

INTERVIEW PREP

continued from page 11

“What’s your greatest weakness?” possible responses

When a potential employer asks this question, and they usually do, the following topics can be good answers as long as the ‘weakness’ is not directly related to the job you’re seeking. For example, if you’re applying

to be a salesperson, you would not say your weakness is cold calling; and if you’re applying to be an auditor, you would not say your weakness is math.

Other possible responses relate to:

- Public speaking
- Delegation
- Time management
- Writing

- Organization
- Attention to small details
- Cold calling
- Confidence
- Decision-making
- Explaining complex or technical topics
- Feedback, giving or receiving
- Grammar

- Math
- Patience
- Self-esteem
- Understanding when and how to say no

A full list can be found at bit.ly/MuseGreatestWeakness

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What is emotional intelligence?

Questions like “What is your greatest weakness” test your emotional intelligence, to see how you would behave, engage, and react in certain situations. Other questions used to gauge emotional intelligence, and could easily be asked during an interview, include:

1. How do you de-stress after a bad day at work?
2. What’s something you’ve achieved that you’re most proud of and why?
3. Who are some of your top role models, why do they inspire you?
4. How do you celebrate success?
5. How do you respond when a co-worker challenges you?
6. Have you ever had to change your behavior, either at work or home, if so, why did you have to change, and how did you change?
7. How do you recover from failure?
8. When have you felt demotivated, and what did you do to overcome this?
9. How would some of your closest friends describe you?
10. What kind of behavior makes you angry/annoyed?

Source: positivepsychology.com/emotional-intelligence-interview-questions/



HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

Résumés, cover letters, and references

BY THERESA KNAPP

Résumés and cover letters are important because they help job seekers convey their qualifications, experiences, and skills to potential employers. Your resume and cover letter should be tailored to each specific job and should mention several of the qualifications listed in a job description.

Many companies use an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) so it is important to use as many keywords from the job description as possible as this will increase your chances to make it past the initial filter.

Résumés

Résumés provide a first impression to the employer and should put your best foot forward. The ideal resume is one page long, but two pages is common.

The layout should include your name, email address (be sure it is a professional email address), and phone number at the top of the page, your home address is not necessary. The next section can be a Professional Summary or Objective (optional), then Experience (in reverse chronological order) in paragraph or bulleted list form. Follow this with Education, and end with an optional Achievements or Skills section.

Do not include a Reference section on your resume. According to indeed.com, resume tips to help you land an interview include:

- Look for keywords in the job posting and include those on your resume
- Review resume examples for your industry
- Résumés should be simple and brief
- Include concrete achievements and metrics when possible
- Include only relevant information
- Use a professional font, 12 points, black font (unless your industry prefers color and creativity)
- Margins should be one inch (expand to 1.15 or 1.25

inches if you don't have a lot to fill the document)

- Call attention to important achievements within a job description or in a separate "Achievements" or "Skills" section at the bottom of the resume
- Proofread, proofread, proofread
- Make multiple versions of your resume

Source: www.indeed.com/career-advice/Résumés-cover-letters/10-resume-writing-tips

Coursera [www.coursera.org] suggests using action words such as *generated, reviewed, crafted, analyzed, developed, compiled, arranged, secured, collaborated, documented, presented, administered, refined, produced, accomplished, increased, grew, improved, managed, delivered, transformed, fulfilled, engaged, negotiated*, etc.

For 150 resume action words, visit www.coursera.org/articles/resume-action-words. According to Forbes.com, the top skills to put on your resume in 2025, if applicable, are:

- Data analysis and project management
- AI and machine learning
- Software engineering and IT infrastructure
- Critical and strategic thinking
- Problem-solving
- Adaptability and agility
- Collaboration and teamwork
- Communication skills

Source: www.forbes.com/sites/rachelwells/2025/01/10/top-skills-to-put-on-your-resume-in-2025/

Cover letters

If a job description says a cover letter is not required, you don't have to submit one. If it says a cover letter is optional, it's in your best interest to submit one.

A cover letter is a short letter that accompanies your resume and illustrates how your experience would directly relate to the

specific position to which you're applying.

According to the Columbia University Center for Career Education, the goal of a cover letter is to highlight your qualifications, showcase your motivation, and reflect your voice and written communication skills. To write an effective cover letter, you should review the job description and research the company and its values and mission. The Columbia website says, "As you craft your cover letter, use examples that demonstrate your relevant skills, knowledge, and interests."

The standard format includes a heading that matches your resume (centered), the address of the company (against left margin), then a salutation (if no name is given use "Hiring Manager or the title mentioned in the job description). The first paragraph is the introduction where you say what job you're applying for and why; and the second paragraph (this could be two paragraphs, if need be) can highlight one or two skills or experiences and how they are relevant to the job for which you are applying. The last paragraph is a conclusion where you recap what you would bring to the organization and your interest in the position, and thank them for their consideration.

Source: <https://www.careereducation.columbia.edu/resources/how-and-why-write-great-cover-letter>

References

References are typically not requested until a job offer is pending, though some companies may request them up front.

Be sure to alert the people you are using as references so they are not surprised when they receive an email or phone call related to your application.

Carefully consider who in your current job you can use as a reference that will not compromise your current work situation.

When choosing your references, the American Association of University Women (AAUW) says you should find colleagues you can trust, pay attention to titles, be prepared (always keep an updated list of references, keep

them updated with current information), follow up after they provide a reference with a thank you note and tell them if you got the job. And finally, never misrepresent your references or yourself.

Source: www.aauw.org/resources/career/boost-your-career/providing-references/

This article includes original content and information from the American Association of University Women, coursera.org, forbes.com, indeed.com, and Columbia University.

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HELP WANTED: A guide to getting your next job

Job search and technology, what you need to know about AI

BY VICTORIA RAYEL
CAREER COUNSELOR AND
LIFE COACH

If you're thinking about starting the new year with a new job, it's important to be clear about your job targets, ideal industry,

applicants and expedite the process.

To stand apart in this market, you need to know what to expect when it comes to technology in the job search. Three tips to ensure you don't get lost in the application 'black hole' include

application materials match the job for which you're going. You can use tools like Jobscan and free AI Chatbot's (ex. ChatGPT, Perplexity, Gemini) to help make sure you match the skills and experiences the job requires.

For example, upload your ré-

sumé. Put this list in a grid" skills this job is looking for and list where they come up on my résumé.

Consider "Apply for me" Tools

Sites like Ladders and LazyApply apply to jobs on your behalf for a fee. You will fill out a series of questions, select the jobs that are interesting, then the tools will submit your application. Job searching can be a tedious task, and technology can help you save time in applying. Now you can spend more time on important things like interview preparation, upskilling, and the next tip.

Networking

Roughly 15% of positions are filled through online applications, so it is suggested job seekers spend at least 50% of their job search time on reconnecting with their existing networks and building

WHAT IS "ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE"

According to NASA, citing the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019, "Artificial intelligence refers to computer systems that can perform complex tasks normally done by human-reasoning, decision making, creating, etc."

www.nasa.gov/what-is-artificial-intelligence

new relationships. If online applications are not helping you get interviews, start having conversations. Coffee chats, phone calls, networking events, LinkedIn Group discussions, Discord, Facebook and any community groups you're involved in can be an amazing resource to connect to people.

Finally, don't let AI intimidate you. It's time to embrace the new normal and leverage technology to help you succeed.



location, pay, and have a résumé. With an increasing number of applicants due to a changing business environment, geo-political landscape and overall economic changes, recruiters use tools like AI to help them quickly find top

using artificial intelligence (AI), helpful automatic tools, and networking.

Use AI to Beat AI

When applying for a position, it's important to make sure your

sumé and the job description into ChatGPT, then try these prompts:

Type "Select three accomplishments from my résumé that match this job best" or

Type "Create a list of key

RUNNERS

continued from page 8

life is work ethic and hard work.

If you want something, go and get it, nothing is stopping you but you! Please consider donating to this great town and also to support my journey!

Tom Goss

My name is Tom Goss and I'm running in the 2025 Boston Marathon. You probably think I'm just another guy having a

mid-life crisis. Maybe you're right. But I prefer to think I'm a middle-aged man getting his second wind. I'll let you decide. My marathon story begins about 2



years ago...

At the age of 42, I found myself slowing down, gaining weight, and always tired. It's hard to find the motivation to exercise when you feel your health declining. But in late December 2022, I stepped onto a treadmill for the first time in more than five years. That first post-pandemic run after years of being sedentary was so disappointing. I can't tell you why I got back on that treadmill a second time, but I did. In the following months, I eliminated alcohol from my life, cleaned up my diet, and learned to moderate my appetite. My energy started to return and I continued hitting the treadmill once or twice a week. I focused on progress (not perfection) and I shaved a few seconds

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RUNNERS
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Fidget needs new home

Fidget, a very handsome 6-year-old boy, was surrendered to MWHs and is now in search of his forever home. Fidget went through an unfortunate event that brought him to the shelter, something he wasn't too happy about initially. It took him time to adjust and build trust with the people taking care of him. But once Fidget had his breakthrough, he became the best boy. After moving him into a foster home, he revealed his true personality, which is actually quite endearing.



Fidget can still be reactive to new sounds or situations he's uncomfortable with (like being held if he doesn't trust you completely yet), but his body language is very clear, and he gives signals if something bothers him, or if he's scared by noise. As he becomes more comfortable with you, he turns into a very chill cat who loves all kinds of attention, from being held to full belly rubs. He can be a bit stubborn when he wants something and isn't shy about letting you know it! Fidget can become a full lap cat and a great companion who enjoys following you around. Even though he's 6, he still enjoys short play sessions, which he needs, especially since he's a bit chubby (no judgment here). Fidget also loves being brushed, and even though he has short hair, he will need some brushing sessions because he loves it, and it helps him stay comfortable.

This sweet boy is looking for a quiet forever home with someone who can be gentle and patient with him, and ideally, someone who's home most of the time to keep him company. Don't worry, he'll make sure to interview you as well to ensure you're the right match for him (you may choose Fidget, but he also needs

to choose you). Fidget would do best as the only cat in the home so he can fully enjoy the attention of his future "servants" and reign over his kingdom (because, as you may already know, you'll be living in his house, not yours).

*** We want to be fully transparent about a health issue Fidget has had in our care. During a pre-dental screening, his blood work showed he was diabetic. At this time, he was not symptomatic. We treated him with insulin for about a month, and he went into remission. It is unknown if he will become diabetic again, but he could. The benefit here is this is something a veterinarian can monitor easily. Fidget is doing very well with watching his diet and at this time he is not on any prescription food.***

As we are closed to the public, adoptions are by appointment only. If you have an interest in meeting Fidget, please use this link to find additional information about him. You can also see all our currently available Adoptable Cats here, and fill out our online adoption application:

<https://metrowesthumanesociety.org/adoptable-cats/>

We will review all applications and make appointments for those applicants we feel would provide a good and loving home.

Ashland Lions Club March 2025 Update

Ashland Lions Meat Raffles

Ashland Lions is continuing another great year of meat raffles! This month we will have TWO meat raffles – Saturday 3/1 and Saturday 3/29 at 12pm, at TJs Food and Spirits in Ashland, and continue the first Saturday of each month throughout the winter. As always there will be great food, fun people, and great meat to choose from. See you there!

Ashland Lions Regatta on the Sudbury River

The Ashland Lions will hold their 5th annual Lions Toy Boat "Regatta" on the Sudbury River on Saturday, March 22nd, 2025 (rain date Sunday March 23rd). Numbered boats, starting from the canoe launch at Gyncel Park will "race" under the bridge by Burnams, over the falls at Marathon Park and down the river to a finish line behind the V.F.W. on Pleasant Street. Boats will be launched at 10:00am. Come watch this fun event! You do not need to be present to win. Tickets, corresponding to the boat numbers, are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. Only 300 tickets will be sold. Cash prizes will be awarded to the top 3 finishers. For tickets, you can visit our website at www.ashlandlions.org, or call Lion "Dok" at (508) 881-4664 or talk to any Ashland Lion. All proceeds go to support our community and Lions Eye Research.

Ashland Lions Scholarships

Each year, the Ashland Lions award three \$2000 scholarships to high school Seniors living in Ashland. Applications for 2025 are now being accepted. Students

and parents can get more information on how to apply by visiting the guidance department at AHS or Keefe Tech, or by visiting our website at ashlandlions.org.

Seeking Sponsors for our Community Shred-it Event

Our annual community Shred-It event is coming soon and we're looking for community sponsors to keep this event free for Ashland Residents. In May/June we will have a shredding truck on-site to have your personal documents safely shredded. Email Lion Deb at shredit@ashlandlions.org for details.

Senior Breakfasts

Seniors, why not join us and other members of the community for breakfast? Senior Breakfasts are on the first Thursday of each month (weather permitting), held at the Ashland Senior Center, 162 West Union St in Ashland. This event runs through May. Contact the Senior Center to sign up no later than the week prior to the event.

Lions Little Free Library

Bored? Grab a book! The Lions Little Free Library is located just outside the Ashland Post Office, across from Main Street Spirits. Stop by and check it out!

Eyeglasses and Cellphone Collection

Eyeglasses and cellphone collection is a year-round project with collection of used prescription and nonprescription eyeglasses, sunglasses, hearing aids and cell phones. In the past year we have collected over 800 pairs of glasses!

Collection boxes are located at:

Ashland Post Office
Ashland Senior Center
Old train station - Ashland
Moody Optical - Ashland
Middlesex Bank – Ashland
Fayville, MA Post Office
Studio Optics – Framingham
Southborough Senior Center
Southboro Post Office on Rt.85
TJ's Food and Spirits
The Residence at Valley Farm

Become a Lion and Give Back

Do you love the feeling of giving back to your community, while meeting some new people and having some fun? If you're interested in becoming a member of the Ashland Lions, please reach out to our membership chairperson Dan Mitchell via email at membership@ashlandlions.org for details, or message us on Facebook! You can also find several Ashland Lions members at Honeydew on West Main Street most weekday mornings.

Stay up-to-date on Lions happenings

To see the latest status of our events, please visit our Ashland Lions Facebook page. Click the Like button and you will be automatically notified of changes or cancellations. While you're at it, be sure to follow Ashland Town News too!

LION DAN MITCHELL
ASHLAND LIONS CLUB

RUNNERS

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off my pace every few days. Then I began to extend the distance and frequency of my runs. It was a simple, gradual process.

I just turned 45 and I feel young again. And what does a 45-year-old man do after he's regained his strength? Run a ridiculously long foot race, of course! I'm lucky to be 1 of 15 brave souls who will be running in the 2025 Boston Marathon and raising funds for Ashland's BAA Grant

Program. This is a program that supports all kinds of important programs in the town, including:

- The Ashland Emergency Fund
- Ashland Youth and Family Services
- Community Enrichment Programs at the Ashland Public Library

RUNNERS

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Senior Community Center Activities for March 2025

PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES:

Mar 3rd at 12:00

NEW!!! Lunch and Learn, "Life Transition Binder" w/ Sandra Batra of Life Link Consulting A Life Transition Binder pulls together all of your important life details, including: medical, insurance, service provider information, financial, retirement, property, etc. Reservations for Lunch: Please use the payment box outside the Main Office to reserve your seat.

The cost is \$6 per person. Reservation due by FEB. 27th at Noon.

MARCH Tues. 9 am-2:15 pm

Frid., 9 am-10:45 am

FREE Income Tax Preparation by AARP

Runs Mar. 4th – Apr. 4th
AARP will prepare simple tax returns. (No complex returns that require a schedule E or F and No Rental Properties Depreciation). You must pick up "In Take" paperwork and schedule an appointment in person at the front desk in order to participate.

Mar 4th at 12:00

NEW!!! Mardi Gras Lunch. June Weiner, Casual Gourmet Chef, will be cooking a delicious lunch. This lunch is supported by Ashland Lions & Greater Ashland Lions Club. Please use the payment box outside the Main Office to reserve your seat. The cost is \$6 per person. Reservation due by FEB. 27th at Noon.

Mar 4th at 1:30

NEW!!! "American Women Code Breakers during WWII" w/ Donna Halper FREE Learn how over 10,000 American Women Code Breakers working behind the scenes in wartime intelligence helped win the War by deciphering Japanese and German secret military communications.

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x 1.

Mar 6th at 9:00

FREE Breakfast sponsored by Ashland Lions

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

Reservation due by Friday, FEB. 28th at noon.

Mar 6th, 13th, 20th, & 27th

10:00 – 12:00

SHINE In Person Appointment w/ Lenore Tracy FREE

Call to make an appointment 508-881-0140 x1.

Mar 6th at 10:00

Ashland Council on Aging Meeting. Public Invited.

Mar 6th at 10:30

Downton Abbey Viewing: Season 3, Episode 4 FREE Tea and coffee provided. Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

Mar 6th at 12:00

Friends of the Council on Aging Meeting Public Invited.

Mar 6th & 20th at 1:30

NEW!!! Mindful Coloring FREE

Enjoy coloring and conversation. Color pencils, markers and coloring pages will be provided. Or feel free to bring your own coloring book and implements. Drop ins welcome.

Mar 7th at 10:00

Crafting – Card Embossing w/ Milly FREE

Supplies will be provided. Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

Mar 10th at 12:00

Lunch w/ Karen Spilka's Listening Hour w/ Liaison Momi Haidri

FREE! Please use the payment box outside the Main Office to reserve your seat. Cost \$6 per person. Reservation due by MAR. 6th at Noon.

Mar 11th, 18th, 25th

10:00-11:00 AM

NEW!!!! Dull Men's Club w/ Julian "DOK" Doctor FREE!

If you are a bored guy. If you are not doing anything special on Tuesday mornings. If you enjoy stimulating conversation either as a talker or a listener or both. Come enjoy a cup of coffee & a donut and good camaraderie. Call 508-881-0140 x 1 to reserve your spot.

Mar 11th at 11:00

NEW!!!! Coffee & Donuts Social at Ashland House FREE!

Susan McNulty, Outreach Coordinator will be hosting a social for residents.

Mar 11th at 1:00

NEW!!!! Popcorn & a Movie, "Fried Green Tomatoes" 1991 PG FREE!

Evelyn (Kathy Bates), an ordinary housewife, visits a nursing home and befriends an older lady named Ninny (Jessica Tandy). Together, they bond

over stories from the past about two intrepid women.

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x 1.

Mar 12th & 26th 9:00-11:30

Veterans Office Hours w/ Richard Sabounjian

Appointments recommend. Call 508-429-0629 to schedule.

Mar 12th at 10:00

Computer Class: "Using Google Calendar" w/ Jonathon Barron FREE

Registrations Requested. Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

Mar 12th at 11:30

NEW!!! "Lifestyle Factors & Hypertension" w/Anne Fitzgerald, RN

FREE! Discuss how various aspects of lifestyle can contribute to the Development of hypertension. Includes tips on how to make changes to reduce that risk. Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x 1.

Mar 13th 10:00-12:00

Terrarium Workshop w/ Ashland Garden Club - \$15 pp Cost

Create a small version of a succulent paradise in a bowl. All necessary supplies, such as bowls, soil, greenery, etc., will be provided.

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x 1.

Mar 13th 1:30-3:00

Cooking Class with Chef Lee – Thai Pearl Balls (steamed meatballs in sticky rice with scalions, lime juice, eggs, soy sauce and more)

Class \$5 pp. Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1

Mar 14th at 10:00

Pins & Needles Sewing Class w/ Tobi – Project TBD. FREE

Please bring your sewing machine.

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

Mar 14th 10:00-11:30

Legal Phone Consultation with Arthur P. Bergeron FREE

Call to make an appointment 508-881-0140 x1

Mar 17th at 12:00

St. Patrick's Day Lunch w/ Celtic Music by Sean Fullerton
Chicken Parmesan Dinner. Cost per person \$6. Space is limited.

Please use the payment box outside the Main Office to re-

serve your seat.

Reservation due by MAR 13th at Noon

Mar 18th at 11:15

Understanding the Benefits & Implications of Artificial Intelligence w/ Jonathan Barron FREE. Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x 1.

Mar 19th at 10:00

Town Manager's Coffee Hour FREE All are welcome!

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1. Drop ins welcome.

Mar 20th at 11:00

NEW!!!! "How Much Can You Fit Under the Bed" Declutter talk w/ Ann Newberry, Smooth Transitions FREE

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x 1.

Mar 20th from 4:00-5:00

NEW!!!! BINGO w/ prizes sponsored by Ashland High School Leo's Club FREE!

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x 1.

Mar 21st at 10:00

Crafting w/ Elissa – Candy Jar FREE

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

Mar 24th at 10:30

Hearing Aid Cleaning w/ Hopkinton Audiology FREE

Hopkinton Audio will clean your hearing aids

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

Mar 24th at 12:00

Lunch and Learn: "New Scams" w/ Kevin Doucette, Middlesex Sherriff's Department Reservations for Lunch: Please use the payment box outside of the Main Office to reserve your seat. The cost is \$6 per person. Reservation due by MAR 20th at Noon.

Mar 27th at 10:00

Clocktown Memory Cafe w/ music by John & Linda

Clocktown Cafe provides a welcoming place for individuals with Alzheimer's disease, dementia or a cognitive impairment accompanied by the caregiver. Light refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to Susan McNulty smcnulty@ashland-mass.com or 508-532-7945.

Mar 27th 4:45-5:30

Line Dancing w/ Robin Starr (1st of 4 classes) NEW!!!

Join us for an early evening

Line Dancing Class with Robin. A variety of dance styles are taught to all levels of mobility. \$4 pp per class.

Mar 28th at 10:00

Pins & Needles Sewing Class w/ Tobi –FREE

Bring your own sewing machine.

Call to reserve your seat at 508-881-0140 x1.

Mar 31st at 12:00

Lunch and Trivia Contest Reservations for Lunch:

Please use the payment box outside of the Main Office to reserve your seat. The cost is \$6 per person.

Reservation due by MAR 27th at Noon.

Weather Cancellation Policy:

- The Community Center will follow the public school system for snow cancellations and delays. If schools are closed, the Center is closed & there will be no services – including transportation.
- If schools are delayed 2 hours, the Center will not open until 11 am. All Morning programs starting before 11 am will be cancelled, including any transportation services.
- Cancellation and delay announcements will be televised. Please be safe and use your own judgement.

WEEKLY PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

* Note: All classes are a suggested donation of \$4 per person * Unless otherwise noted.

Monday Lunches at 12:00 pm weekly, except holidays. Reservations must be made by Thursday before the scheduled lunch. Please use the payment slip and locked box located outside of the main office to reserve your seat. Cost pp \$6 unless otherwise noted.

Bingo w/ Micki - First and Third Tuesdays of the month at 1 pm w/ Micki

Bowling - Tuesdays at Ryan's Amusement in Millis at 9 am

Blood Pressure Check FREE!!! - Wednesdays at 10:30 am

SENIOR CENTER

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SENIOR CENTER

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- Canasta** - FREE!!! Wednesdays at 12:30 pm
- Chair Yoga** - Wednesdays at 1 pm
- Chess** - FREE!!! Mondays at 1:30 pm
- Craft Class FREE!!!** - Third & Last Friday of the Month at 10 am
- Cribbage** - FREE!!! - Thursdays at 12:30 pm
- DROP-IN Knitting Group** - FREE!!! Second and Fourth Tuesday of the Month at 11 am
- Exercise with Joni** - Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:30 am
- Intermediate and Advanced Watercolor Class** - Tuesdays & Wednesdays at 9:30 am
- Line Dancing with Lisa** - Thursdays at 12 pm
- Line Dancing with Robin** - NEW!!! Thursdays at 5:15 pm (4 classes) starting March 27
- Mahjong** - FREE!!! Fridays at 10:30 am for all levels
- Mindful Coloring** - NEW!!! FREE!!!! First and Third Thursdays of the Month at 1:30 pm
- Mindfulness & Meditation** - Thursdays at 11 am with Mary Green
- Parkinson's Boxing** - First & Third Wednesday of the Month at 1:30 pm
- Pins and Needles** - FREE!!! Sewing Class- Second and Fourth Fridays of the Month at 10 am
- Pitch Card Game** - FREE!!! Mondays at 1:00 pm
- Tai Chi** - Tuesdays at 11:45 am with Jon Woodward
- Veterans Office Hours** - FREE!!! Every other Wednesday from 9 -11:30 am. Check Calendar for Dates.
- Zumba Gold with Kellie** - Tuesdays at 10 am

RUNNERS

continued from page 15

- Community / Senior Outreach Programs for Ashland residents
 - Public Safety Programs run by Ashland Police/Fire Departments
 - The Ashland Food Pantry
- All 15 runners have committed to raising \$3,000 for the grant program in order to gain entry to the marathon. I reached my fundraising goal the first week of

Greater Ashland Lions Club

Happy St. Valentine's Day!

Our annual Coat Drive collected 147 warm winter coats for children and adults. Thank You to all who donated coats, we know they were appreciated

An upcoming event everyone looks forward to is our Trivia Night. This year it'll be on April 11, so start getting your team together. Here is a sample of a General Knowledge answer and question: "Name this emerald musical that won the 2025 Golden Globe for "Cinematic and Box Office Achievement". (see below for the Question).

February is American Heart Month, a time when all peo-

ple—especially women—are encouraged to focus on their cardiovascular health. Anyone can raise awareness about the risks of heart disease and the importance of identifying and managing heart-related health conditions. Here are a couple of websites with information you can use: <https://www.cdc.gov/heart-disease/php/heart-month/index.html> and on Facebook: Million Hearts®

Do you have any used eyeglasses hanging around? We'll take them! Please bring them to the Police Station (located in the Public Safety Building at 12

Union St), Market Basket (Pond Street / Rte.126), the VFW (at 311 Pleasant Street), or the Town Hall (Main Street).

Wanting to get involved in the community? We're a low-pressure group of service-oriented folks always looking for new members. If you'd like to learn more about the Lions and our club, please contact Lion Alexis at cvarnie@hotmail.com.

For more club information, please check us out on Facebook: Greater Ashland Lions Club. #weserve #kindnessmatters.

Some February observances to warm you up during the cold days: The 1st is Abolition of Slavery Day along with First Day of

Black History Month. On the 2nd, its Groundhog Day. The 7th will be National Wear Red Day. To all the football fans; Superbowl is on the 9th. We celebrate Lincoln's Birthday on the 12th, while President's Day is on the 17th. Best day is the 14th as it is St. Valentine's Day (don't forget a Card, maybe something sweet or even out for dinner)!

We are the Lions in Purple. We Serve!

SUBMITTED: LION ROSALIE PORTER, 2ND VP

Trivia Question: Wicked

Steve Uliss Culinary Scholarship, WACA is matching donations

In late November the Ashland community was stunned and saddened by the sudden loss of former resident and community partner, Steve Uliss. Steve was a huge part of the community and gave of his time and talents to many events and causes. The

Uliss family has created the Steve Uliss Culinary Scholarship program in honor of Steve to serve the students of his alma mater, Shawsheen Valley Technical High School.

WACA had a very long relationship with Steve that has

spanned over 20 years. Because of this strong connection, WACA is conducting a donor challenge to assist in raising funds for this scholarship. For every dollar contributed to the scholarship fund, WACA will donate a matching amount up to \$2,000. The chal-

lenge will run through March 14. Donations to the scholarship can be made payable to Steve Uliss Culinary Scholarship and addressed to Amy Luis, PO Box130, Hopkinton, MA 01748

Ashland 2025 Rain Barrel Program, Every Drop Matters

It is that time of year again to start thinking about water conservation and saving rain water. Rainfall is hard to gauge, and harvesting rain water with a rain barrel can mitigate the irregular patterns of rainfall. To help

homeowners and the town manage their water supplies, Ashland is offering residents the opportunity to purchase rain barrels at a discount. To participate in the Town Rain Barrel Program, click here for an order form, or for more information visit <https://www.ashlandmass.com/668/Rain-Barrels>.

Order deadline is March 28, 2025

Every Drop Counts

- Rain Barrels benefit both communities and our planet by:
- Providing a clean, untreated water source that can be used for gardening and cleaning.
 - Decreasing energy consumption and greenhouse emissions at water treatment plants which is crucial to fighting climate change.

- Reducing water bills and saving homeowners gallons of water usage annually.
- Using less water helps to sustainably manage water as a global resource, ensuring its availability for future generations.

About The Great American Rain Barrel

- 100% re-purposed, food grade, UV protected and BPA free barrels. Produced in Massachusetts.
- Most durable rain barrels on the market: 3/16" wall thickness. Screen filtered to keep mosquitoes out.
- Will last for years when properly drained & stored for winter. Pay for themselves in one year.



- Several rain barrels can be linked together — easy 5-minute setup.
 - Available Colors: Forest Green, Earth Brown, and Nantucket Grey.
- For more information contact: Donna Musto (508) 532-7951 dmusto@ashlandmass.com

March 2025 at the Ashland Library

Special Event:

In Person - "MockTails and Mini-Golf" - Friends of the Ashland Library Fundraising Event

*For Adults
Saturday, March 29 @ 6:30—8:30 PM

Get ready for an un-fore-gettable weekend March 29 and 30 when you can play 18 holes of mini golf INSIDE the Ashland Library. The Friends of the Ashland Public Library is teaming up with local business sponsors for this tee-riffic fundraising event that promises hole-in-one fun for the whole family! It will be a great chance to have a ball, support a great community resource, and get a rare look at the library "after hours."

Play tees off on Saturday evening, March 29, with adults only "Mocktails and Mini Golf" on the links from 6:30 to 8:30 pm. This night of fun for the 21+ crowd will feature munchies and mocktails included in the ticket price of \$20 per person. Line up the babysitter now and make a night of it! Mocktails will be provided by Erica's Ristorante and the Ashland Ale House. Munchies will be provided by Dulce de Leche.

In Person - Play Mini Golf in the Ashland Library - Friends of the Ashland Library Fundraising Event

Sunday, March 30 @ 10:00 AM—3:00 PM

The excitement for families, singles, seniors, or anyone interested is on Sunday, March 30, from 10 am to 3 pm (yes, the library will be open on Saturday night and Sunday just for this event, although regular library services and staff will not be available during the Mini-Golf program). The whole family can play through 18 holes filled with hills, jumps, bumps, twists and loops scattered throughout the stacks and inner spaces of our fabulous library. Tickets for Sunday are \$5 each with a \$25 family cap.

AND you can purchase raffle tickets for rides to school for the kids - police, fire, and DPW trucks (\$5 per ticket) as well as \$1 tickets to win a \$25 gift card from Blush Bouquets, Dr. Greens, Pizza Mine, Sunnyside Cafe, Shaws, and Cherry Blossom. Raffle tickets will only be sold during the March book sale (on Fri 2/28 & Sat 3/1) and the

actual Mini-Golf event - gotta be in it to win it!

Adult:

Visit our Website Calendar for Additional Info & Registration links:

<https://tinyurl.com/apl-calendars>

Virtual - New Zealand Romance Writers Panel: How Geography and Culture Impact Creativity

Saturday, March @ 12pm

We are thrilled to be welcoming Aotearoa (Land of the Long White Cloud) Kiwi romance authors Esme Brett, Courtney Clark Michaels, and Stephanie Ruth to our virtual stage! We're going to be chatting about how New Zealand's Indigenous history and the country's culture affect their writing and publishing journeys (or, do they?).

Virtual - In Conversation with Horror Author J.W. Ocker: "Cult Following" and Other Odd Things

Monday, March 3 @ 7pm

This one is for horror fans everywhere! We're so pleased to be chatting with author J.W. Ocker about his book *Cult Following: The Extreme Sects That Capture Our Imaginations--And Take Over Our Lives* and any other odd thing he'd like to discuss! For anyone interested in the mentality around cults, we invite you to join us for a discussion on "30 most infamous, audacious, and dangerous cults in history". Maybe a cautionary tale?

Virtual - Bestselling Author Karen Thompson Walker

Monday, March 3 @ 7pm

Bestselling author Karen Thompson Walker will discuss her new novel, *The Strange Case of Jane O*, in conversation with bestselling author Angie Kim.

Virtual - Front Street Readers Book Club

Tuesday, March 47:00—8:00 PM

Read *The Book of Lost Friends* by Lisa Wingate.

Virtual - Changing Perspectives: 5 Women Writers of Speculative Fiction with Bill Thierfelder

Tuesday, March 4 @ 7pm

This program looks at five remarkable women who have made deep inroads into the realm of fantasy and science fiction. We'll explore each au-

thor's life and then delve into the primary themes of their often mind-bending, mind-expanding books.

Virtual - New iPhone 16 Series and iOS 18: Camera and Photos App News and Reviews with Deborah Tual

Tuesday, March 4 @ 7pm

*Note: This program will NOT be recorded

Join Deborah Tual, our favorite iPhone and Photography aficionado, to learn what's new in the latest iPhone 16 series camera system (launched Sept 2024) and how the newest iOS 18 software improves the Photos app, adding better features and tools to edit and enhance your photos on all iPhone models.

Virtual - Bestselling Author Kelley Armstrong

Tuesday, March 4 @ 7pm

Bestselling author Kelley Armstrong will discuss her new mystery, *Cold as Hell: A Haven's Rock Novel*.

In Person - Mah Jongg

Wednesday, March 5 @ 6:00

Whether you have a rudimentary knowledge of Mah Jongg or have been playing for years, we would love to have you join us for an evening of strategy, luck and fun. This is an opportunity for the novice to hone their skills and experienced players to share their knowledge.

Virtual - Environmental Book Club

Wednesday, March 5 @ 6:30pm

Read *The Water Will Come: Rising Seas, Sinking Cities, and the Remaking of the Civilized World* by Jeff Goodell.

Virtual - Author Callan Wink

Wednesday, March 5 @ 7pm

Bestselling author Callan Wink will discuss his new novel, *Beartooth*.

HYBRID - Romance Book Club

Thursday, March 6 @ 6:30pm

Read a South American Romance by a debut or "new to you" author.

Virtual - Declutter series with Jamie Novak: March How to Spring Clean Your Clothes Closet (easily)

Thursday, March 6 @ 7pm

Decluttering humorist Jamie Novak shares shortcuts for spring cleaning your clothes closet (what to keep and where

to donate items) without stressing out. Plus, the one FREE thing that will keep your closet clutter-free.

Virtual - Flight of Remembrance with Marina Kirsch

Thursday, March 6 @ 7pm

Marina Kirsch will talk about her family's experience in Latvia, occupied Poland, and Germany before, during, and after World War II as recorded in her book, *Flight of Remembrance*.

Virtual - "Our Science, Ourselves: How Gender, Race and Social Movements Shaped the Study of Science"

Thursday, March 6 @ 7pm

Our Science Ourselves tells the story of a trailblazing network of women scientists in the Boston area in the 1970s, 80s and 90s including Ruth Hubbard, Rita Arditti, Evelyn Fox Keller, Evelyn Hammonds, Anne Fausto-Sterling, and Banu Subramaniam.

Virtual - African Art Series: African Artists Traditional and Modern

Sunday, March 9 @ 2:30pm

Anonymous Doesn't Live Here Anymore--African Artists Traditional and Modern: in the collection of the Fitchburg Art Museum.

In Person - Card Making with Jan Poppendieck

Monday, March 10 @ 6:30pm

Jan will teach embossing, die cutting, proper stamping, and use of equipment individually and group techniques of creating unique cards.

Virtual - Boston Light: Three Centuries of History with Author Jeremy D'Entremont

Monday, March 10 @ 7pm

Based on Jeremy's book, *Boston Light: Three Centuries of History*, this talk focuses on Boston Light Station, the site of the first lighthouse on the North American continent. Jeremy will trace its history through three centuries of tragedy, rescues, and colorful human interest stories of keepers and their families.

Virtual - Historical Fiction Book Recs with Bestselling Author, Jane Healey

Tuesday, March 11 @ 6:30pm

Love Historical Fiction but not sure what to read next? Join bestselling author, Jane Healey (and Ashland fave!), monthly for

30 minutes of pure book recommendations - the best of historical fiction out there!

Virtual - Thriller/Horror Book Recs with Bookstagrammer @redreadreviews

Tuesday, March 11 @ 7:30pm

Not sure what to read next? Join Jody Blanchette (aka @redreadreviews), monthly, for 30 minutes of pure book recommendations - the best of horror and thrillers out there!

Virtual - Author Allison Pataki in Conversation with Historical Fiction Author Kerri Maher

Tuesday, March 11 @ 7:30pm

We're excited to partner with the Groton Public Library for this event! Groton Reads 2025 Author, Allison Pataki, discusses her novel, *Finding Margaret Fuller* with fellow historical fiction author Kerri Maher (author of *All You Have to Do is Call*).

Virtual: Inclusive & Diverse ROMANCE Book Recommendations with Read My Lips Boston

Wednesday, March 12 @ 6:00

Hear about the best ROMANCE book recommendations with BIPOC/LGBTQ+/ Neurodivergent/Disabled etc. characters or by representative authors. Join book store owners (and twin sisters!), Lily and Hannah Barrett, quarterly for 30 minutes of pure romance book recommendations - that are by diverse authors or have inclusive storylines!

Virtual - Bestselling Author Lisa Unger

Wednesday, March 12 @ 7pm

Bestselling author Lisa Unger will discuss her thriller, *Close Your Eyes and Count to 10*, in conversation with Tim Ehrenberg, creator of Tim Talks Books.

Virtual - Bill Gette: Belize - From Orange Walk District to Punta Gorda

Thursday, March 13 @ 1pm

Bill has led groups to Belize for many years to explore tropical lowland rainforests, pine savannahs, and extensive wetlands. As part of his conservation work, he has also trained Belizeans to be naturalist guides

LIBRARY*continued from page 18*

there. During this PowerPoint presentation, Bill will take you on a tour from Orange Walk District in the northwestern part of the country to Punta Gorda in the south. He will show you a wide variety of wildlife, beautiful scenery, and the Mayan ruins at La Milpa and Lamanai.

In Person - Women's Wisdom Circle: Everyday Spirituality

Thursday, March 13 @ 6:30pm

Welcome to our Women's Wisdom Circle! For this session Meredith Bazirgan will lead a discussion on Everyday Spirituality. How to cultivate it; how to connect around it.

In Person - Mystery Book Club

Friday, March 14 @ 12pm
Read *Trust Me* by Hank Phillippi Ryan.

Virtual - Friday Night Film Discussion

Friday, March 14 @ 7pm
Watch "Quartet" (2013, Kanopy)

In Person - Horror Mini-Fest @ the Ashland Library!

Saturday, March 15 @ 12-3:30pm

We're so excited to welcome this amazing slate of authors to the Ashland Library - Clay McLeod Chapman, Eric LaRocca, Rory Power, Cat Scully, and moderator, Emily C. Hughes! We'll have an afternoon of fun with discussions, horror Jeopardy!, and book sales/signings!

Virtual - Freedom to Read: Interview with Amanda Jones, author of "That Librarian"

Sunday, March 16 @ 1:00
Amanda Jones is a middle-school librarian from the town she grew up in in Louisiana, who in 2022 attended a meeting at her local public library to speak out against censorship. She then found herself the target of a hate campaign on social media, with accusations of grooming children and death threats. This pushed her into high gear as an advocate for the Freedom to Read, and in her 2024 book *That Librarian: The Fight Against Book Banning in America*, she tells her story. Amanda will be joining us to discuss her book, the importance of the library profession, and book joy, all in a national climate of assaults on the freedom to read. For librarians, she is a hero. For

readers, she is a cautionary tale. For all, her story is a call to action. We hope you will join us for this very important discussion!

Virtual - Irish Whiskey - History and Recs with Travis Ireland of The Friskey Whiskey Podcast

Monday, March 17 @ 7pm
How perfect of this for St. Paddy's Day? Travis IRELAND of the Friskey Whiskey Podcast will join us to discuss the history of Irish whiskeys and the best he's encountered! So, pull up your comfy chair and highball glass and be ready to be educated and entertained. If you are 21+, we encourage you to BYOB for this special occasion.

In Person - Cook Book Club

Tuesday, March 18 @ 5:00
Cook from My Vermont Table : Recipes for All (Six) Seasons by Gesine Bullock-Prado.

Virtual - Masters of Song: Rodgers and Hammerstein Part 3

Tuesday, March 18 @ 7pm
This duo revolutionized the Broadway Musical in the 1940's and 1950's. Follow a detailed exploration of their major works (*Carousel*, *South Pacific*, and *The Sound of Music*) with musician and composer Clint Edwards.

In Person - Bio/Memoir Book Club

Wednesday, March 19 @ 11am
Read *A Well-Trained Wife* by Tia Levings.

Virtual - Bestselling Author Curtis Sittenfeld with Gabrielle Zevin

Wednesday, March 19 @ 7pm
Bestselling author Curtis Sittenfeld will discuss her beloved novel, *Prep*, in celebration of its 20th anniversary, as well as her new short stories collection, *Show Don't Tell*, in conversation with bestselling author Gabrielle Zevin.

In Person - Great Decisions

Thursday, March 20 @ 6:30pm
Discuss American Foreign Policy at a Crossroads.

Virtual - Nourishing the Caregiver: Cultivating Calm in Chaos

Thursday, March 20 @ 7pm
This interactive workshop will help you: define stress, learn daily stress management techniques, understand the distress alphabet, learn the seven dimensions of wellness, and set goals for yourself. This class is appropriate for anyone caring for someone (even themselves!)

and is not dementia-specific.

Virtual - Inclusive and Diverse Book Recs with Bookstagrammer @sometimesleelynnreads

Thursday, March 20 @ 7:30pm

Looking for the best books with BIPOC/LGBTQ+/ Neurodivergent/Disabled etc. characters or by representative authors but not sure what to read next? Join bookstagrammer, Leelynn Brady (aka @sometimesleelynnreads), monthly for 30 minutes of pure book recommendations - any genre as well as YA and Middle Grade books, as long as they are by diverse authors or have inclusive storylines! We're sure you'll find something to like from Leelynn's many enthusiastic reviews.

Virtual - Another Visit with Romance Author Carla Kelly

Monday, March 24 @ 7pm
We always have so much fun with Carla that, by popular demand, we're having her back! Once again, we'll be talking about Carla's early books as well as her American Historicals and her latest book of Christmas stories, *Regency Glad Tidings* as well as *A Naval Surgeon to Fight For*. Carla may yet have some surprises for us! Oh, wait, there's more! Carla is also a former seasonal ranger in the National Park Service. We hope to see our romance, history, and nature buffs again!

Virtual - The Real Margaret Fuller with Pulitzer Prize Winner Megan Marshall

Tuesday, March 25 @ 7:00—8:15 PM

Megan Marshall's, *Margaret Fuller: A New American Life* (2013), a character-driven narrative biography grounded in fact that tests the boundaries of the form, was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in Biography in 2014 and the Massachusetts Book Award in Nonfiction. Join us as she discusses this seminal work!

Virtual - "The Case of Lizzie Borden and Other Writings" by Elizabeth Garver Jordan

Tuesday, March 25 @ 7pm
In celebration of Women's History Month, Jane Carr and Lori Harrison-Kahan will discuss the life and career of Elizabeth Garver Jordan, the groundbreaking journalist, suffragist, author, and editor whose fearless reporting on women preceded the #MeToo movement and popularized the true-crime genre. As editors of *The*

Case of Lizzie Borden and Other Writings, a Penguin Classics edition of Jordan's journalism and fiction, Jane and Lori will share their journey to rescue this overlooked feminist figure from history and explore why Jordan's work, much of which has been out of print for over a century, matters now.

Virtual - Art on Thursday: Fierce Females: Women in Art with Jane Oneail

Thursday, March 27 @ 7pm
This program shines a spotlight on fierce female artists who defied societal norms and pushed the boundaries of creativity, yet remain underappreciated in the annals of art history.

Virtual - Friday Night Film Discussion

Friday, March 28 @ 7pm
Watch "A Call to Spy" (Kanopy)

Virtual - A History of Guinness Beer with Guinness Brewery Ambassador, Mike Reardon

Monday, March 31 @ 7pm
We're so excited to chat with Mike Reardon, a Guinness Ambassador - a highly trained beer expert and storyteller who captivates Guinness lovers and audiences with the beer, culinary, and cultural history of this fantastic beer. So, sit back, relax, grab a pint (if you're over 21), and join us for this wonderful discussion to close out St. Paddy's Day month!

Adult Weekly:

Knit and Crochet Club
Mondays @ 6pm
Walk-In

Gentle Yoga
Tuesdays @ 6pm
Registration is required

ESL Conversation Group
Wednesdays @ 6:30pm
Walk-In

Children:**Special Programs:**

Anime Club
Tuesday, March 4 @ 6:30pm
Calling all anime fans! Kids in grades 3 through 6 are invited to join us once monthly for our brand-new Anime Club. Whether you love Pokémon, Yu-Gi-Oh, or anything else in between, this is the club for you! Watch new series, work on crafts, play games, and meet new friends! Registration required.

Stories, Songs, and Stretches

*for ages 4-7
Thursday, March 6 @ 6:30pm

Kids and their parents or caregivers are invited to play together through stories, songs and yoga shapes. No experience or equipment necessary! Registration is requested.

Clocktown Rockers!

*For ages 2-5 with a caregiver
Friday, March 7 @ 10:30am
Friday, March 14 @ 10:30am
Friday, March 28 @ 10:30am

A special Friday edition of this popular story time! Join Miss Katrina for this new music and movement program! We'll dance to favorite kids' tunes, have fun with instruments and other props, and read a story, all while building your child's early literacy and executive function skills. For ages 2-5 with a caregiver.

Chinese Storytime

Tuesday, March 11 @ 6pm
Bring the whole family to the library for engaging stories, familiar songs, a fun art project and a special scavenger hunt, all in Chinese! Registration is requested and all are welcome.

La Hora del Cuento

*para familias
Spanish Storytime
*for families
Wednesday, March 19 @ 6:30pm

Los invitamos a disfrutar en familia de una sesión de cuentos en español en la biblioteca. Ofreceremos la oportunidad de sumergirse en historias cautivadoras, rimas divertidas y canciones alegres, ¡todo en español! Join us for a special story time, offering families the opportunity to immerse themselves in captivating stories, fun rhymes, and cheerful songs, all in Spanish.

Friday Free Play

Friday, March 21 @ 10:00
*For ages 0-5

Build your child's social and motor skills and connect with other parents during this low-key library play time. An assortment of special age-appropriate toys and activities will be available for children ages birth through 5. Drop in any time, no registration required.

Little Crafters

*for 0-5 with a caregiver
Monday, March 24 @ 10:30am

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Come join the Ashland Mom's Club for this story time, where little hands get to explore big ideas! Start with a sweet and lively story time, followed by a simple craft that's perfect for curious minds. Bring your imagination, and let's make some colorful memories together!

Lego Club with Kim the Lego Lady

*Grades K-3

Wednesday, March 26 @ 4:30pm

Calling all LEGO masters! Join Kim the Lego Lady for an interactive building adventure! Afterward, your awesome creations will be displayed in the library until the next LEGO club! Registration is required and space is limited.

Book Clubs!**Graphic Novel Book Club Jr.**

*For 1st and 2nd graders

Wednesday, March 12 @ 4:15pm

Calling all first and second graders for APL Kids book club! Each month we will introduce an exciting book series. The children will follow along with Ms. Katrina as she reads the first book of the series aloud, then we'll discuss what we've read and do a fun craft or activity together! Copies of the first and second book in the series will be available for checkout after the meeting. Registration required.

Graphic Novel Book Club

Thursday, March 20 @ 6:30pm

*grades 3 thru 6

Dive into a world where stories jump off the page! Each

month, you'll read an exciting graphic novel before our meeting, where we'll chat about the book, play awesome games, and unleash your creativity with fun art projects. Plus, you get to vote on what book we'll read next—so your voice truly matters! With new friends, thrilling stories, and endless fun, it's the ultimate way to bring reading to life. Don't miss out on the excitement—come be a part of our graphic novel gang!

Space is limited to 16 and registration is required.

Kindergarten Book Club

Tuesday, March 18 @ 4:30pm

Calling all budding bookworms! Join us for the Beginning Readers Book Club, where stories come alive in the most magical way! Every month, kindergartners gather for a fun-filled, choral-style reading adventure. We'll explore new worlds, create themed art, and make new friends—all while having a blast with books!

Space is limited to 12 and registration is required.

Ashland STEM Club

Saturday, March 1 @ 11am

Please Register

*for kids in K-5

Join this exciting workshop, run by high school students, that ignites curiosity with hands-on experiments, new innovations and take-home activities.

Coding Class for Kids

Saturday, March 1 @ 1pm

Saturday, March 8 @ 1pm

Saturday, March 22 @ 1pm

Gear up for a tech-tastic adventure with our Coding Class for Kids! Every other Saturday, kids from Kindergarten through

grade 5 will dive into the thrilling world of coding, where imagination meets innovation. With hands-on fun taught through an interactive game, your child will master the basics of coding. Whether they're building games or solving puzzles, this class promises excitement and discovery at every turn. Space is limited and registration is required.

Little Picassos Club

*Grades 2-5

Tuesday, March 11 @

4:30pm

Tuesday, March 25 @

4:30pm

Looking to create your next masterpiece? Join Miss Kayla for Little Picassos Club, ideal for kids in grades 2 through 5. Each week, we will learn about a different artist or art style and work on unique art projects, ranging from painting to sculpting and everything in between! Come ready to get your hands messy and let your creativity show! Registration required.

Weekly Storytimes:**Clocktown Rockers!**

*For ages 2-5 with a caregiver

Tuesdays at 10:30-11am

Join Miss Katrina for this new music and movement program! We'll dance to favorite kids' tunes, have fun with instruments and other props, and read a story, all while building your child's early literacy and executive function skills.

Storytime Sprouts

* For ages 0-3 with a caregiver

Wednesdays @ 10:30am-11am

Join us for a fun and interactive story time filled with singing, reading, bounces, fingerplays, puppets, instruments, and more! This engaging program is designed to introduce young children to the joys of literature and music while promoting early literacy skills.

Saturday Stories

*for ages 2-5 with a caregiver

Join Miss Kayla for a new Saturday morning storytime!

We'll read lively stories, do fun rhymes and movement activities, and work on simple crafts. For families with children ages 2-5. No registration required.

Saturday, March 1 @

10:30am

Saturday, March 8 @

10:30am

Saturday, March 15 @

10:30am

Saturday, March 22 @

10:30am

Saturday, March 29 @

10:30am

Project ABC Play, Learn, and Grow Group

*for Ages 0 to 5

Tuesdays at 11am

A parent and child group offered by the Metrowest YMCA and the Early Childhood Alliance of Ashland & Framingham. A structured program to help prepare children for socialization and a school experience.

Registration *IS* required for this program

Teen:**Teen Makers Club**

Thursday, March 13 @ 6pm

Join us for our new monthly club of teen makers!

Stitch, knit, crochet, and generally hang out with other crafty teens the second Thursday of every month from 6:00PM-7:00PM. Bring, work on, and show off your latest projects, and maybe learn a few new tips while you're here! Registration is requested, but walk-ins are welcome!

Stress Less Event for Teens

Thursday, March 27 @ 4pm

March is filled with MCAS, bad weather, and too frequently, bad vibes. Throw all that away and come to the Stress Less Event for Teens! Save the date, Thursday, March 27th from 4:00PM to 5:00PM, for an evening of relaxation featuring a petting zoo of baby animals! Pet bunnies, chicks, a piglet, a lamb, goats, and more while your stress floats away. Stay tuned for more details. Event is for teens 12-18 years old.

Friends of the Ashland Public Library 2-Day Book Sale

Friday, February 28 @ 5:30-7:30pm

Saturday, March 1 @ 9:30-4pm

The Friends of the Ashland Public Library invite you to their Big 2-Day Book Sale on February 28th and March 1st!

The sale includes thousands of titles, organized by genre and author, with a special section for children's books. And, by popular demand, the \$5 a bag sale is back! Fill a bag (that the Friends provide) from the Bag Sale tables for \$5!

AND, in preparation for the next Mini-Golf event on Saturday, March 29th and Sunday the 30th (keep a lookout for more info on it!), you can purchase raffle tickets for rides to school for the kids - police, fire, and DPW trucks (\$5 per ticket) as well as \$1 tickets to win a \$25 gift card from Blush Bouquets, Dr. Greens, Pizza Mine, Sunnyside Cafe, and Cherry Blossom. Raffle tickets will only be sold during the March book sale and the actual Mini-Golf event - gotta be in it to win it! To keep the shelves stocked with fresh selections, the Friends will be accepting donations in the library parking lot of gently used books, audio books and DVDs. Friends volunteers will be available to assist donors from 9:30am until 1pm on Saturday. There is also a cart in the mezzanine lobby for donations at any time during library hours.

Proceeds from these monthly book sales and all fundraising efforts made by the Friends fund 100% of children, teen, and adult programs, our wonderful Museum Passes, and so much more! If you can't make it to the sales, the Friends have a book sale corner on the 1st floor of the library (in the beautiful original part of the building). There, you can find great books for yourself and your family any time the library is open.

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Board of Health Messages

The Impact of Gender on Heart Disease

Heart disease remains the leading cause of death in both men and women in the United States, but there are important nuances based on gender. Coronary artery disease (CAD) affects the blood vessels that supply oxygenated blood to the heart, called the coronary arteries. In CAD, there is reduced blood flow to the heart muscle. A buildup of fats, cholesterol and other substances on the vessel wall causes coronary artery disease. The buildup, called plaque, narrows the blood vessel.

The overall prevalence of coronary artery disease is lower in women, and they tend to develop heart problems at older ages (the average age for a first heart attack in men is 65, compared with 72 in women). Hormonal differences appear to protect premenopausal women, but after menopause the risk of heart disease increases for women.

The manner in which heart disease develops can be different as well. Men typically develop plaque buildup in the largest arteries that supply blood to the heart. Women are more likely to develop plaque buildup in the heart's smallest blood vessels, known as the microvasculature. This can impact the symptoms that they may present with during a heart attack.

The most common symptom of heart attack in both men and women is chest pain or pressure. This pain can radiate up to the jaw or down the left arm. This pain is often accompanied by diaphoresis (sweating) and ashen skin tone (greyish cast to skin).

Women are more likely than men to also have symptoms that include nausea, back pain, dizziness, unusual fatigue, and indigestion or heartburn.

Most heart attacks happen when a blood clot obstructs a narrowed artery supplying the heart. However, there are less-common scenarios that can also disrupt coronary blood flow, causing similar symptoms.

- Myocardial infarction with nonobstructive arteries (MINOCA) refers to heart attacks in which the coronary arteries do not have significant narrowing. There are several potential causes; among them are temporary tightening of

the heart's arteries (coronary spasm) or blockages in very tiny arteries. MINOCA is five times more common in women than in men.

- Spontaneous coronary artery dissection (SCAD) results from a tear in the inner wall of one of the heart's arteries, which creates a flap or swelling. About 90% of people with SCAD are women.
- Stress cardiomyopathy (broken heart syndrome or takotsubo syndrome) typically occurs after severe emotional or physical stress, triggering a surge of hormones that alters the heart's shape. More than 80% of cases are in women, but outcomes are worse in men.

Gynecological and reproductive history for women can help identify those who may be at increased risk of developing heart disease later in life. Women with a history of endometriosis, preeclampsia, or gestational diabetes should adopt heart-healthy lifestyle habits, be familiar with the signs and symptoms of heart disease, and ask their physician to assess their risk of heart disease.

Family history can help shed light on our individual risk as well. If there is a family history of heart disease/heart attack in your background, ensure that your physician is aware, as different testing may be indicated than in a person with no family history of heart disease.

Many simple blood tests can also help us assess our risk:

- Blood Lipids
- Glucose
- Hemoglobin A1C
- Complete Blood Count
- Lipoprotein (a), or Lp(a)
- In addition, blood pressure and weight/body composition and lifestyle factors like diet, exercise, smoking history, alcohol intake, sleep habits, and stress are all considered when determining risk.

See your healthcare provider regularly and ensure that they know your family history and relevant lifestyle practices in order to inform your individual care.

If you have any questions

related to this content, please contact the Ashland Board of Health:

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Main Phone number: 508-532-7922

Building Independence with Resistance Training

Muscle loss associated with aging is called Sarcopenia. Unless we work to maintain or strengthen our muscles, we will slowly lose mass and strength as we age. Women lose muscle earlier than men, starting in their late 30's. Men have a protective effect from Testosterone, but they also lose muscle after age 60. Loss of muscle has a negative effect on our balance and functional capacity in older years, increasing the risk for falls and the likelihood of becoming dependent on others for daily care.

Resistance Training exercises help us to maintain or increase our muscle mass and strength, regardless of age. Keeping our

muscles strong helps us to prevent falls, and to be able to complete the tasks of daily living independently; things like carrying groceries, climbing stairs, pushing up out of a chair, bending to pick something off the floor.

Some folks believe that they are too old to begin resistance training, but studies conducted with elderly assisted living residents showed that participants demonstrated gains in lean muscle mass, strength, flexibility, mobility and decreased the need for caregiver assistance after a 14-week program working out twice per week for approximately 20 minutes per session. (Average age was 88.5)

Study findings included the following:

- Participants increased average leg press weight from 58 lbs. to 105 lbs.
- Average triceps press weight increased from 40 lbs. to 53 lbs.
- Participants gained an average of 3.8 lbs. of muscle and lost 2.9 lbs. of fat

Collateral benefits of resis-

tance training include improved glucose metabolism, reduced arthritis pain, improved bone density, decreased symptoms of depression, improved sleep and increased flexibility/range of motion.

If you have any chronic health conditions, do check with your physician before embarking on a new exercise regimen and plan to use very light weights for the first 4 weeks, so joints and ligaments have time to adjust before increasing weight. At the beginning, it is more important to focus on good form and range of motion rather than heavy weight.

If you have any concerns about proper form, it may be worthwhile to schedule a few sessions with a personal trainer (always check credentials first) and if you have a more complex medical or orthopedic history, working with a physical therapist is recommended.

Resistance training options can include:

- Free weights

HEALTH

continued on page 22

SALMON

HEALTH & RETIREMENT



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Sports

Fish In The Water

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Being in the water is something that Ashland's Mandy Reid loved doing and at a very young age her parents decided to get her involved in swimming. The youngster found that she would rather stay in the water all day long instead of getting out. She also noticed that she was very comfortable in the water and loved to swim competitively, while meeting new people.

Her senior campaign with the Clockers is about to strike midnight and swimming with her teammates will become a thing of the past. She is constantly thinking about continuing her swimming on the collegiate level but is unsure of where.

"I am not sure where I am going to college, but I would like to continue swimming," she said. "If not for a college I'll definitely find myself in a pool somewhere for fun."

Currently Reid has been talking with the Coach at the University of Massachusetts at Dartmouth to see if swimming for the school could be a possibility. However, in order to do so she's going to have to go through another hip surgery.

The Ashland native has been swimming on club teams pretty much her entire life and was looking forward to swimming with the Clockers when she got to high school. Two years prior to entering high school she began taking on the distance swimming events as she felt it was more in her wheelhouse.

"I am not good at the sprinting events and would rather swim the longer events like the 200 and 500 freestyle as I have the endurance," Reid said.

During her sophomore season, her last fully healthy year Reid finished 8th in the South Sectionals with a time of 5:32 in the 500 free



and 16th in the Division 2 State Tournament with a time of 5:33. She also was able to set the school record in the 200 IM at the Sectionals with a time of 2:20 (no one on the team has been within three seconds of it since).

"Ever since I got to high school I wanted a record," she said. "This senior had the 200 IM record and I was close to her so each meet I pushed myself further and further in the event until I was eventually able to see my name up on the board; it made me very happy."

Who knows what else she would have been able to accomplish over her past two seasons had she not been hurt and need to have the first surgery: reconstructive hip surgery.

"It had been developing overtime and it began hurting a few years before high school. During my freshman and sophomore years it was manageable, but last year it really hurt," Reid said. "The pain was starting to affect my times and I was having difficulty pushing off the wall to make my turn. My kick was not the same and eventually I could barely move in the water."

Being that the water was her comfort, Reid was not having fun at all. The pain was horrible and at that time she didn't even

know if she'd be able to swim ever again. It was a frightening experience.

"She pretty much spent her entire junior year swimming in pain yet still competed and was a dependable scorer throughout the season," Clocker Swim Coach Mike Kotch said. "She is just that talented, where at 50% she can still impact a meet."

After having the hip surgery Reid found herself rehabbing so that she could get back not the pool for her final campaign with her Ashland teammates and enjoy her senior season.

"I was on crutches for two months and back in the water soon after that although just floating, but I was glad to be there," she said. "I was so happy and blessed to be able to get back into the pool and eventually compete again."

Although she was still having some pain, it was a different pain and she worked through it and began to see the improvement over time. The pain went away as she got stronger and was beyond happy when she knew that she would be able to compete in her senior season.

Coach Kotch noted that despite her ups and downs, Reid has been a leader, motivator and a great teammate. She gets into



the pool ad gives everything that she has for her team in an effort to win as much as they can. According to the coach she can do just about everything except for the breaststroke.

"She has mustered out wins in the 200 and 500 freestyle for us this season despite knowing she is a shell of herself, she comes in every night to practice smiling and working as hard as her body will allow," he said. "She is a great reminder of what we talk about year in and year out: just give each other the best version of yourself. It won't be easy, but it will be appreciated by your teammates and that it is a contagious positive."

Knowing that she was not 100% herself, Reid not only wanted to go out and swim but try to help her team win in any way that she could this season.

"This year was not one of my best years, but after recovering I am very proud of myself," she said. "Coming into the year I was just hoping that I could make it through the season while helping the team in any way that I could."

Once the season is over she will have surgery on the other hip and go through the rehab process once again; hoping that she is ready to jump back into the pool for a collegiate team, wherever that may be later in the year.

HEALTH

continued from page 21

- Gym equipment
- Resistance bands
- Plyometrics-use of your own body weight for resistance

- Online videos

Building a consistent practice of muscle maintenance will pay dividends in terms of preserving your independence and your ability to participate in the activities you enjoy. Frailty is not an inev-

itable part of the aging process.

Please feel free to reach out to Ashland Board of Health at 508-532-7922 if you have any questions or concerns.

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Real Estate Corner

Ashland Recent Home Sales

Date	Ashland	Amount
02/18/2025	399 Main Street	\$434,000
01/23/2025	237 Pleasant Street	\$590,000
01/22/2025	18 Higley Road	\$1.04 mil



The 4-bed, 4-bath, 3,381-square-foot home at 18 Higley Road in Ashland recently sold for \$1,035,000. www.zillow.com Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages

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Advantages of using a buyer's agent when purchasing a home



Kim Foemmel

REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

Recently perceived changes to the structure of real estate commissions haven't really changed things much at all. This was noted in the Professional Insights

article published in the Dec. 18, 2024, issue of the Hopkinton Independent. Many home buyers have long had the misconception that it benefits them to negotiate directly with the seller's agent rather than use their own buyer's agent.

Some buyers believe that by cutting out the buyer's agent, they can get some or all of the offered buyer agency commission. That's not necessarily the case, as it creates extra work for the listing agency. Licensed agencies are never obligated to share a commission with an unlicensed buyer. After all, kickbacks are illegal, and buyers who believe they're entitled to a licensed agent's commission are mistaken.

When buyers feel entitled to that commission, they may make lowball offers to make up the difference, which can lead to them losing out in multiple-offer situations. It may be hard for them to understand that the listing

agency already has pre-negotiated the commission with the seller of what they will be paid if the buyer comes direct, as now the agent has more work to do to keep the deal together when having to manage and oversee a buyer's process and expectations.

Buyers are advised to keep their existing relationships with buyer agents, to explore the benefits of having an agent and to consider making fair market value offers in order to "win" the house in multiple-offer situations.

It's unwise for both buyers and sellers to underestimate the value of their agents to keep the deal together. Statistics show that buying or selling a home can be as stressful as a death in the family. It's the real estate agent's job — and their goal — to manage stress and expectations by educating their clients; helping them understand their rights as well as understanding and communicating the working of home systems;

understanding well and septic systems that may be foreign, scary or overwhelming for buyers who never had them; doing due diligence when it comes to meeting health, conservation and building departments' requirements; understanding the condition and risks of the home; dealing with inspection and safety issues; determining the value of the home; and working with attorneys and mortgage companies to ensure a smooth transaction and get you to the finish line.

Buyers and sellers may go through the home sale process once a decade, but your agent navigates the process on a daily basis. Rely on their expertise and experience, as those are invaluable to help you prepare and price a home, create a competitive offer and keep the transaction together, especially when dealing with difficult clients and unexpected snags such as home inspection and title issues.

Homes sell for what the buyer is willing to pay and the seller is willing to accept. Paying your agent fairly gives them incentive to work hard for you. There is no standard commission rate, so if an agent's rates are different than others, ask what services their rate includes or cuts out.

Hard-working real estate agents who know the value they bring to the table and refuse to compromise their high level of service deserve fair compensation, and they'll ensure you have an enjoyable home buying or selling experience.

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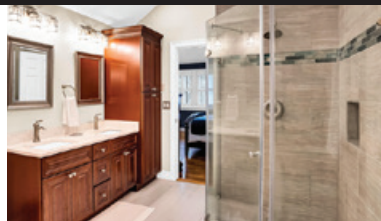
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