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Last month, Woodstock Building Associates (WBA) installed this play gazebo for the "downtown" area of the Children's Museum of Franklin. Ben Hagen (center) was the first to try it out. He is flanked by the museum's creators, Erin Gallagher (l) and his mom, Meg Hagen (r).

FHS Boys Basketball Donates to Santa Foundation



In late March, members of the FHS Boys Basketball champion varsity team and JV team and their booster club donated cases of basketballs to the Santa Foundation, which will distribute them to needy families at Christmastime.

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

Franklin High School Boys' Basketball players took time out of their weekend on Saturday, March 29th, to deliver several cases of basketballs to the Santa Foundation in Franklin. Both JV and Varsity basketball players, the latter recently winning a state championship, with help from volunteers from their Boosters organization, participated in the donation, which will help provide

local teens in need with gifts this upcoming holiday season.

Karla Boudreau, of the Santa Foundation, expressed heartfelt gratitude to the basketball team and the Boosters organization for the donation, which fits right in with the Santa Foundation's and her Meme's Stockings theme of "caring for the community." Boudreau welcomed the young

DONATES

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Almost There...

Children's Museum of Franklin Seeks One Last Financial Push to Open

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

There's a whole new world being built in Franklin, small in scale, but limited only by how far imagination can

reach. That, and the need for just a bit more funding.

Much is taking place over at the Children's Museum of Franklin, which will be lo-

cated at 157 Cottage Street in Franklin. Founders, local moms Erin Gallagher and Meg Hagen, have been working hard engaging educators, sponsors and individual do-

MUSEUM

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RE/MAX

MUSEUM

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nors to turn their dream of a regional children’s museum into reality, and they are nearly able to open those doors.

“Developing a really inclusive space has really been a priority for us from the beginning,” says Gallagher, “and that was part of why we built our advisory committee” that includes an occupational therapist, a speech/language pathologist, and multiple education advisors who collaborate to make each area physically, socially and emotionally accessible. The idea was “to truly create a welcoming space where every family can have a successful and joyful experience,” says Gallagher.

She and Hagen anticipate that those features will attract families and educators from many communities. The 501 (c)3 nonprofit, which has already reached 180+ communities across MA and RI through its Mobile Museum, will generate revenue once the doors are open from daily admissions, memberships, programming and parties. Until then, however, fundraising remains the biggest hurdle.

“We have a couple of exhibit areas in particular that are dependent on funding, as well as



Shown is the outside of what will be a Sensory Tree, an 8-foot diameter tree that will offer a peaceful space inside.

reserves to open our doors,” says Gallagher. An envisioned “Wind” exhibit, comprised of large, interwoven pneumatic tubes, for example, still needs financial backing.

Some generous sponsors have stepped up to fund several exciting exhibits.

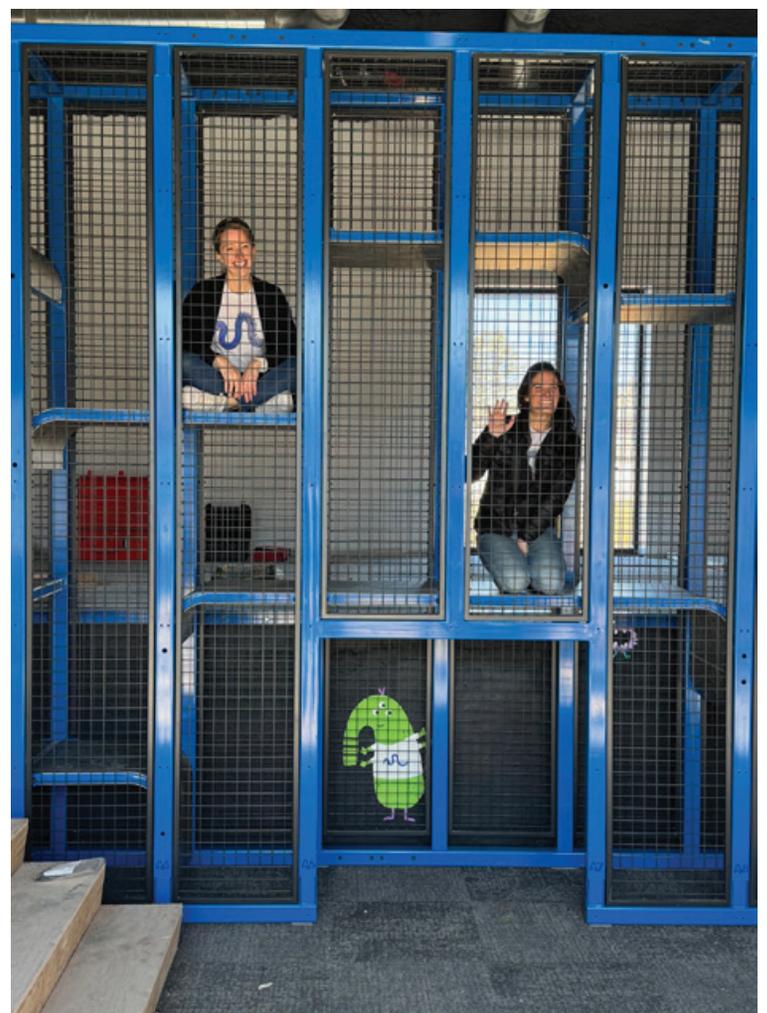
The Imaginative Play Downtown has been entirely sponsored by local families, in addition to a custom Gazebo created by Woodstock Building Associates.

Kids will be drawn to a dinosaur exhibit (which will also teach concepts of math and measurement) as well as a water play area, with a water table designed by Science Kinetics and Vanderbilt University. Rockland Trust is funding “Miss Money’s Playroom.” Boston Productions, Inc. has a human bodies mirror

exhibit for the Healthy Hearts, Healthy Bodies area, which will also feature a pumping heart provided by Abiomed.

In the middle of the space, an 8-foot diameter Sensory Tree, built by C.R. Schmall Building & Remodeling and designed by Craft Architecture, will feature branches reaching to the ceiling, felt sound-absorbing leaves, and an interior designed to be a little darker and calmer, with a fiberoptic starlight ceiling, touch lights, and other sensory tools. This sensory reset space will be “a central and inclusive and really an exciting part of the museum.”

The Transportation area, sponsored by Vendetti Motors, ties into the building’s history as Agway. With a big window, once a loading doorway, situated close to train tracks, children



Last month, the museum’s climbing structure was installed in “the pit.”

can play with car ramps built by Tri-County students and a custom train table while they watch MBTA commuter rail trains pass by.

There will of course, be a climbing structure, located in an accessible step-down pit. The contained structure will be visible from either of two baby feeding nooks, designed with help from lactation consultants and furnished by Bob’s Dis-

count Furniture.

A Makerspace will also draw young artists, with tables and stools funded by the Franklin Cultural Council, and a science classroom will offer elementary- and middle school-age kids a place for supplemental STEM learning programs.

MUSEUM

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localtownpages

Published Monthly Mailed FREE to the Community of Franklin Circulation: 13,164 households & businesses

Publisher Chuck Tashjian

Editor J.D. O’Gara

Send Editorial to: editor@franklintownnews.com

Advertising Director Jen Schofield 508-570-6544 jenschofield@localtownpages.com

Creative Design & Layout Michelle McSherry Kim Vasseur Wendy Watkins

Ad Deadline is the 15th of each month.

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Advertisement for Attorney Daniel J. Cardinal, featuring a photo of a family and text about estate planning services.

Middlesex County 4-H Fife & Drum Corps in Bellingham May 18th

Young Musician Group to Take Part in Memorial Day Parade, Seeks Members

The Middlesex County 4-H Fife and Drum Corps was founded in 1972 in order to pass on New England's fife and drum tradition to young musicians. The group's repertoire consists of fife and drum music dating from the American Colonial Period to modern pieces written in the traditional style. Comprised of youth aged 8 to 18, the corps is led by its members, who elect their leaders and determine their own events and repertoire each season. The corps performs in parades and at historical commemorations throughout New England during the year. April and May are busy months with several upcoming events:

Saturday, April 19: Concord Patriot's Day Parade. This event includes a parade through Concord, MA and a ceremony at North Bridge. The parade steps off at 8:30 a.m.

Sunday, April 27: Lincoln Salute. This is a "Muster" where fife & drum groups from all over New England come to perform. The event takes place at Pierce Park, 17 Weston Road, Lincoln, MA and starts at 1 p.m.

Saturday, May 3: William Diamond Junior Fife & Drum Corps' Muster. This event includes a brief parade and performances of fife and drum corps and marching units. There will also be colonial crafts people displaying their wares. Activities begin at 12 p.m. at Hastings Park, Lexington, MA.

Sunday, May 18: Bellingham Memorial Day Parade. The parade steps off at 1 p.m. from the Bellingham Memorial Middle School and ends at the Town Common.

Monday, May 26: Andover Memorial Day Parade. The parade steps off at 10 a.m. from the intersection of Elm Street and Florence Street.

The corps provides music lessons during weekly Sunday afternoon rehearsals at Bemis Hall, 15 Bedford Road, Lincoln, Mass.

The corps is happy to welcome anyone, including those who do not yet play an instrument. Instruments, instruction and most uniform parts are provided without charge. The participation fee is just \$40 per year. For more information, reach out at mc4hfd@gmail.com or mc4hfd.org.



MUSEUM

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"Meg has been meeting quite a bit with the director of STEM at Franklin Public Schools as well as the high school science chair to identify areas they see as gaps as students enter high school," says Gallagher. The museum will also afford leadership and internship opportunities for high school and local college students.

Outside features include picnic tables, musical percussion and raised bed gardening, and Middlesex Savings Bank provided a grant for bubble hoops.

Accommodations for all ability levels are baked into every detail. Coming in, families can use the custom Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) board to plan their visit. "Looking at the board with your child, you'll be able to identify different areas of the museum and figure out what you want to do in the space," says Gallagher.

Areas of the museum will be color-coded, with colored pathways on the floor leading to the play zones. Sound absorbing panels and discs will also be installed along the ceiling and sides. Not only are bathrooms wheelchair accessible, but one also contains a changing table for larger children who need it.

Gallagher is excited to see her and Hagen's vision manifest.

"It feels pretty magical, what we've put together, and I'm so excited to watch it come to life," she says. The Founding Families



Children's Museum of Franklin's transportation exhibit will incorporate a view of an actual working train.

program, she says, has been a great help toward raising funds, and fingers are crossed a grant will soon come through from the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Meanwhile, a couple fundraisers are planned this month, including "Move for the Museum: Community Fitness Fundraiser," at Downtown Sports,

240 Cottage St., Franklin. on Sunday, May 4th, from 3-5 p.m., hosted by Body Fit Training, and a Dave & Buster's fundraiser, <https://tinyurl.com/Franklin-ChildrensMusDB>.

To learn more, visit <https://www.childrensmuseum-franklin.org>.

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DONATES

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athletes to the new Santa Foundation space at 275 Washington Street to make the donation and become part of a larger charitable effort.

“Prior to this, out of Joy Street, we couldn’t have anybody into the facility, and now it’s a completely welcoming environment for really anyone of any age to be part of the Santa Foundation, said Boudreau. She hopes this donation sets an example for younger teams.

“It’s kind of nice. We hope it becomes tradition, said Boudreau, “especially for teenagers – we don’t have a lot of gifts for them.”

Kristen O’Leary and Kevin Sullivan, of the Franklin High School Boys Basketball Boosters, were the adults actively involved in helping the team organize the donation.

“We try and say it’s on and off the court, but CJ Nealy, the coach, doubles down on character,” says O’Leary. “Act how you want to be remembered,” he tells them, and so this is one example of how they can be remembered for doing something for the community and for each other. Charity is a big deal, and they are humble enough to know that they’re in

a place where most kids are not, in terms of being champions.”

Kevin Sullivan explained that Karla, a neighbor of his



Karla Boudreau, right, of the Santa Foundation, gives a hug to Kristen O’Leary, left, of the FHS Boys Basketball Boosters, on the morning of the donation.

and Kristen’s, revealed that the Santa Foundation struggles with enough gifts for adolescents and older teens.

“This is a natural,” said Sullivan, “The community sup-

ports the team and athletes so much at Franklin High School, and specifically this basketball team here. They come out to the games, they sit in the stands, they cheer these boys on, people that don’t necessarily have a kid in high school. It’s just one way to give back to the community that supports these teams and these players.”

O’Leary explains the Boosters raise money all year long and decides each December where money is going. Much of the funds are raised at the concession stands, and the boys also participate in a calendar raffle. She added that a few years ago, the players did trainings for younger kids as a fundraiser as well. “They’re seen as role models, and we want them to act as role models, and this is an opportunity to do that.”

Coach CJ Nealy accompanies the players to make the donation, although he insisted he took “zero credit” for it, as “it was all on the Boosters.

We want to always find ways to give back,” said Nealy, “The community supports us so much. You don’t see that type of crowd in a lot of gyms we play in. We just have a great supporting town and community, and any way we can give back to that town is really what we want to do.”

The 39-year-old Santa Foundation’s mission is to ensure needy families in the area have gifts at Christmastime and it has helped families with support with utility and housing costs as needs arise. The organization holds various fundraiser throughout the year, with a Charity Disc Golf Event coming up on June 29th at Dacey Field in Franklin that will include instruction, lunch, a tournament, and raffles. For more information on the event, visit <https://sfdiscgolf.my.canva.site/>.

For further information on the Santa Foundation, visit www.sfjoy.org.



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Franklin Operational Override Vote of \$3.86M on Ballot

Special Town Election June 3, 2025

On March 19th, the Franklin Town Council voted to adopt the Joint Budget Subcommittee (JBSC) recommendations issued March 12th for a \$3,862,672 operational override ballot question to the registered voters of the Town of Franklin in a **Special Local Election on Tuesday, June 3, 2025.**

To pass, the override will require a majority “yes” vote.

To learn more details about the proposed override, Franklin voters can go to:

[https://ma-franklin.civicplus.com/1089/Fiscal-Year-2026-Override-Information.](https://ma-franklin.civicplus.com/1089/Fiscal-Year-2026-Override-Information)

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“One of the best ways to fight off mosquito and tick bites and subsequent disease transmission is to apply insect repellent before going outside,” said Jim Mazzuchelli, owner of WPC Pest Control.

Yet, many people don't make it a priority to protect against these biting pests by taking this simple action. Those who do may not realize that there is a correct way to use repellent for it to be effective.

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Association (NPMA):

1. Look for a product containing an active EPA-registered ingredient, such as DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon-eucalyptus or IR3535.
2. Read the product label and follow the instructions carefully. If sunscreen is also being worn, repellent should be used over top of sunscreen.
3. Shake the product well. Then, hold it about 6-8 inches away from exposed skin and spray evenly in a sweeping motion.
4. Spray the palms of hands to apply the repellent to the face and ears, being sure to avoid eye and nostril contact.
5. Apply the repellent over clothing, which should completely cover feet and ankles.

“Another great way to avoid contact with mosquitoes specifically is to remove any standing



Jim Mazzuchelli, owner of WPC Pest Control

water around the yard to deter mosquito breeding,” said, Jim Mazzuchelli of WPC Pest Control.

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Franklin Teen Sid Rao Becomes Eagle Scout

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

At the end of this month, on May 31st, Boy Scout Troop 126 will celebrate Sid Rao's achievement of Eagle Scout in an Eagle Court of Honor to take place at St. Blaise Catholic Church in Bellingham.

For his Eagle Scout project, Rao, 18, created new lifeguard chairs for Camp Haiastan, an Armenian summer camp located on Uncas Pond. He came up with the idea in late 2023 and was able to complete the project in April of 2024.

The camp, explained Rao, "is close with Troop 126. I asked the camp director how can I give back, and the lifeguard chairs were not suitable at all. The one on the dock was really old, both of them were past their life span. He said it would be great if someone was able to build another one, and I was able to build (them) from scratch."

John Miller, Facilities Manager for Camp Haiastan, explains, "(Sid) came up with the idea, he planned it out, he led the project and a bunch of us

helped him build it. He did great job. We used (the chairs) all last summer; the lifeguards loved them. They're nice and solid, we're very happy."

With the Eagle Scout project, says Rao, "You design it, and you have the other scouts help and build it." Rao's father was an important advisor, he says, as well as Mr. Miller, and Sid fundraised for the supplies, which he got at a discount from the local Lowe's.

"I reached out to my Troop and asked if any volunteers wanted to help me," he says. Three other Scouts, Aarush Sao, Aidan Arnold, and Bhuvan Patchala stepped up, and Rao says, "I don't think I'd have been able to do it without them."

The effort, says Rao, "created a good feeling. Finally being able to complete that project and finish it felt good, like all my hard work paid off," he says.

Rao has been a Scout with Troop 126, which is chartered by and meets Wednesday nights at VFW Post 3402 in Franklin, since he moved to town in third



For his Eagle Scout project, Sid Rao fundraised and created, with help from team he led, lifeguard chairs for Camp Haiastan in Franklin.



grade. "I was in (Cub Scout) Pack 126, then crossed over to (Boy Scout) Troop 126," he says. Sid enjoyed some major campouts as a Scout, such as one in Philmont Scout Ranch and the National Jamboree. "What I like about Boy Scouts most is

the trips, getting to know new people, and spending the time in the woods away from your phone," says Sid, who became a Senior Patrol Leader (SPL).

That, he says, built "my ability to lead and grow. I was able to create a lot of experiences and learn what it is to be a leader, and the ability to learn from other people."

Rao's Mom, Rashmi, is an Assistant Scout Leader for Troop 126, who encouraged both of her sons to take part in Boy Scouts after her own experience as a Girl Guide.

"Sid has learned leadership skills at a super crucial time," she says, "He led a group of 40 scouts, would run the camp, make sure everyone is safe and plan a meeting every month. I think he has really learned a lot from this scout experience. He learned to be independent, got the perseverance and endurance to really be out there in the world and open to new experiences, and he's ready to go off to college."

Right now, Sid is still deciding on which college to attend, having been accepted to Babson, Bentley and Michigan State. He plans to study accounting.

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Doing the Thing that Makes Her Happy

Franklin Mom Recounts Her Experience Playing Field Hockey at the World Cup

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

This past October, Franklin resident Allie Atwood, a Realtor with Mendon Local Realty, got an experience she never expected, the chance to play for the USA national Field Hockey Masters team in the World Cup in Cape Town, South Africa.

"I played field hockey in college at UMass Dartmouth and in high school at Nipmuc Regional," says Atwood, "then, after I had my daughter in 2017, I really stopped playing. I just did not know that there was adult field hockey out there." On a whim during COVID, she says, "I went to this outdoor Mom workout group in Foxboro. Another Mom heard me say I play field hockey and asked me, 'Do you want to play now?'" Atwood texted the number the other mother supplied and joined a pickup group. "It was the most lovely group of women I've ever played field hockey with," she says. In fact, she was able to bring her two children, Sam, now 4 and Kelly, now 7 1/2, with her to a few pickup games, since other women in the group would come with their older kids in tow.

"It ended up being a really enjoyable thing they did, stay up late and play with friends," she says.

It was through that pickup league Atwood met a woman, Lauren, on the Masters team.



"She recruited me to play. Honestly, once I found this group of women, really, at Forekicks in Norfolk, they had connections to other leagues. It was unreal. Field hockey has always been the thing that makes me happiest. To have that as a consistent back in my life especially after coming out of COVID, was amazing," says Atwood. Everyone, she says, "needs that thing," something she tells her children so they can understand why she is gone a lot to play. "This is the thing that makes Mommy really happy," she tells them.

Last May, Atwood joined about 16-18 women (all over 35) from the Boston area to head down to Virginia to try out for the Masters team.

"That experience was intense, because that was the first



Franklin resident Allie Atwood had the opportunity to play for the Masters World Cup field hockey team this past October in Cape Town, South Africa.

time I'd been coached and playing seriously in probably 10 years," says the athlete, adding, "Pickup was just fun, but this was, obviously, intense drills, being evaluated for skill sets and being coached while you were there.

Once she knew she had made the team, Atwood says, she spent as much time as she could this past summer, at least three days a week, playing in different pickup leagues.

"The pickup leagues are just all different groups around," says Atwood, "One is a specific club team in Boston that I would play that is co-ed, Minuteman Field Hockey."

For the competition, Atwood traveled with three other women she plays with from the Boston area who also made the Masters team. They spent

a total of about 16 days there, with two days of practice for the whole Masters team. Atwood is grateful her husband, Jeff, held the fort at home while she was away, streaming the games for the family to watch. She is also thankful her co-workers at Mendon Local Realty stepped up to help her with her listings.

"The tournament started on Saturday, and we were lucky we got to scrimmage Argentina and Germany before the tournament started," explains Atwood. "Then, the tournament started, and it was pool play; groups of four and you all play each other round robin. Our pool was US, Hong Kong, Australia, and the Netherlands, and then the top two teams move on. We finished last." Later, in a continuance of play for the losing teams, USA would play a second Australia

team and then Zimbabwe, but in the end, finished last of all the teams.

Despite the team's placement, Atwood says, "I could not speak highly enough of the positive experience we had down there. We may have come in last, but our team was the most supportive, lovely, enjoyable group of women. Our two coaches were extremely knowledgeable, positive and had more of a growth mindset throughout the tournament, so our record definitely does not reflect our growth and improvement as a team."

Atwood says the women taking part in the Masters all shared "a camaraderie across the whole World's Cup." She and her other local Masters teammates are once again in the process of trying out for the team.




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Franklin Food Pantry & Empty Bowls Club Share a Decade of Raising Funds, Awareness

What: The Franklin Food Pantry and Empty Bowls Club are hosting their 10th Anniversary Empty Bowls Dinner, featuring a simple meal of soup and bread, handcrafted ceramic bowls by

Franklin High School students, a silent art auction, live music, and family-friendly activities.

Who: Franklin Food Pantry and Empty Bowls Club (Franklin High School Students)

When: Thursday, May 22, 2025, 6 to 8 p.m.

Where: Franklin High School Cafeteria, 218 Oak St, Franklin, MA 02038

Why: To raise awareness and funds for the Franklin Food Pantry and address food insecurity in the community, remembering the message, "Somewhere, someone's bowl is empty."

Tickets: Adults: \$22 online (\$25 at the door), children (18 and under) \$12 online (\$15 at the door), available at: <https://bit.ly/4hXgMuM>

To sponsor this event, please email Jen Johnson, Development Associate, jjohnson@franklin-foodpantry.org

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Empty Bowls 10th Annual Dinner

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 Franklin High School Cafeteria

Tickets:
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 Children: \$12 online, \$15 in person



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Your Money, Your Independence

Battle of The Ages: Wealth Effect vs. Experience Spending



Glenn Brown, CFP

logical shift often leads people to cut back on spending—not just on luxuries, but on the very experiences that bring meaning, connection, and joy to their lives.

And that’s when internal and external conflicts begin.

The First To Go, But Should It?

When people react to a market downturn or economic uncertainty, one of the first things they scale back on is experience spending—travel, events, concerts, dining out, hobbies, and other non-essential but fulfilling activities.

For many, these aren’t reckless purchases; they’re often the things that create memories, deepen relationships, and improve well-being. Yet the negative wealth effect convinces people that now isn’t the time.

“We’ll go next year.”

“Let’s wait and host a big celebration on your ___th birthday”.

“I’ll take that art class when things feel more stable.”

Here’s the rub: markets are never stable but do come back, while specific opportunities don’t.

Timing of Experiences Are Critical

Consider the family vacation to Disney, it is a different shared experience for all going when kids are 6 & 8 versus their late teens.

Or the family trip with your HS senior you’re planning to do. What’s their availability (and desire) once in college to go on a family trip with mom and dad? That window’s closing.

You might delay a trip only to find your health, schedule, or relationships have changed.

A Psychological Toll

There’s a hidden cost to delaying experience spending, and it’s not just about missing out on fun. It can lead to a sense of stagnation, disconnection, and even regret. As humans, we are wired for novelty, connection, and purpose. When we constantly suppress those desires due to financial fear, even when we can afford it, we shrink our lives unnecessarily.

Over time, this pattern will increase stress and negativity which creeps into your work and relationships. What’s worse, these delays rarely improve your

financial picture meaningfully. Even after skipping a few celebrations or delaying a vacation, it’s not going to make your 401k come back.

Don’t Let Perception Steal Reality

The key is recognizing that the negative wealth effect is largely psychological. Your net worth on paper will fluctuate, but if your income, emergency savings, and long-term plans are still intact, then cutting off all experience-based spending will do more harm than good.

Ask yourself: “Is my fear based on the actual numbers—or how I feel about them?”

If it’s the numbers, then review your historical net worth data and if it’s close to 12-24 months ago, know this happens and will happen again. Move on.

Now if it’s how you feel, then consider the sources driving your fear. If you’re doomscrolling politics, maybe it’s time to put the phone down, go for a walk, listen to some music and think how to move forward with your planned experience spending.

Now if your budget doesn’t

have planned experience spending, that’s another topic for another day.

Life Moves Pretty Fast...

To paraphrase Ferris Bueller, “Life moves pretty fast, if you stop until everything feels financially perfect, you could miss it”. Spending mindfully on experiences that matter isn’t wasteful—it’s often the best investment you can make. Oh Yeeeah!

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

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

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Spring Cleaning is Greener with Affordable Junk Removal

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

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

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

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

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

Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled above-ground pools, hauled away ancient hot tubs, taken down old

Business spotlight

fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll come for a single item, or they'll clean out an entire house. And they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

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

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard dumpster for a week and chucking up to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates that tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

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

Jay and his team beat the big waste haulers on both price and



customer service. When you call Affordable Junk Removal, you aren't connected to an anonymous call center. Your phone call goes right to Jay.

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

Affordable Junk Removal is fully licensed and fully insured,

and they'll treat your property with care and respect.

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

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston. It's not uncommon for

someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

Contact Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business take care of everything for you. Call Jay Schadler at (774) 287-1133 or visit us online at www.affordablejunkremoval.com.

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First Congregational Church of Franklin Partners with Franklin Public Library to Preserve Historic Town Records

The First Congregational Church of Franklin, in partnership with the Franklin Public Library, is proud to announce the successful completion of a year-long project to organize and preserve a remarkable collection of 18th and 19th century records that document the early civic and spiritual life of the Town of Franklin.

Spearheaded by Vicki Earls, Reference Librarian at the Franklin Public Library, and Christine Brown, longtime church member, the project brought together historical expertise and community dedication to ensure that these fragile and invaluable documents are protected for future generations. These records, originating from the time when the church functioned as the de facto seat of government in colonial Massachusetts, are not only essential to the church's history, but also serve as critical town archives from Franklin's earliest days.

"This effort was a true collaboration rooted in a shared respect for our town's deep history," said Brown. "It was an honor to help care for these documents, which tell the story of both our congregation and our community."

As part of the preservation effort, the historic records have been carefully relocated to the Franklin Public Library's secure, environmentally controlled archive room. This facility will ensure the long-term safety of

the documents, protecting them from temperature fluctuations, humidity, and other environmental factors that contribute to deterioration.

The project would not have been possible without the enthusiastic support of Felicia Oti, Library Director, who generously enabled Earls to dedicate time and expertise to the work. The church also extends special thanks to Lyn Pickhaver, Church Historian, whose years of careful custodianship laid the foundation for this preservation initiative.

Together, the team carefully reviewed, organized, and rehoused the documents to prevent further degradation and to make them more accessible for future research.

"This project reflects the spirit of Franklin," said Earls. "It's about honoring our past, working together across institutions, and ensuring that the stories of those who came before us are not lost."

Plans are in place to continue preserving and digitizing the collection to allow for broader public access and educational use. Digitized records currently available can be found on the Internet Archive: https://archive.org/details/@first_congregational_church_of_franklin

For more information about the project or the records, please contact Vicki Earls at Franklin Public Library.

Beautification Day Set for May 17

The Franklin Downtown Partnership and Franklin Garden Club are gearing up for Beautification Day on Saturday, May 17. Volunteers are needed to prepare downtown Franklin for the spring season.

Roll up your sleeves and dig in. Many hands are needed to help plant a variety of flowers on the bridges, barrels and boxes in front of the businesses.

Volunteers with trucks, please meet at 7:30 a.m. at Fairmount Fruit Farm at 887 Lincoln Street to pick up trays of flowers and deliver downtown. If you don't have a truck, arrive by 8:00 a.m. at the public parking lot near the bridge in front of The Rome restaurant. Bring work gloves, rakes and garden tools, if you can.

Students: if you have community service hours to satisfy, this is the perfect opportunity to earn your hours. You will get a note documenting your service.

Franklin DPW helps by supplying water, hoses and mulch. They will also clean up litter and debris in certain areas.

The committee also needs volunteers to water the plants for the season. There are 18 weeks of watering needed throughout the summer months. Pick the weeks that work for you.

To volunteer to plant on May 17th, contact Eileen Mason at eileenmason@remax.net To volunteer to water this summer, email Sandy Sauer at sandy@franklintercarpetone.com, or call her at (508) 733-8929.

"Our goal is to give people something to smile about as they drive through our historic downtown and maybe just make their day a little better," said Eileen Mason, Beautification Day Chairperson.

Franklin Downtown Partnership Executive Director, Lisa Piana, appreciates the many people who come together to make this a success. "The Partnership is very grateful to Eileen Mason, Sandy Sauer, the Franklin Garden Club, the DPW and the many members of our community who volunteer to make our center beautiful for the spring and summer," she said.

Franklin Downtown Partnership is also very grateful to the following sponsors who make Beautification Day possible.

Platinum: D.G. Ranieri Real Estate; Doherty, Dugan, Cannon, Raymond & Weil, P.C.; Eileen Mason-RE/MAX Executive Realty; G & C Plumbing & Heating; Glen; Meadow Apartments-Schochet Companies; Middlesex Savings Bank

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Silver: Elizabeth's Bagels; Fenton Financial Group; Simon's Furniture; Vet Med Pet Supplies

Stay up to date on the Downtown Partnership's Beautification Day and community other events here:

<https://www.instagram.com/franklindowntownpartnership/> and

<https://www.facebook.com/franklindowntownpartnership.org/>

The Franklin Downtown Partnership is a non-profit 501c3 organization made up of more than 350 business owners, residents, and community leaders working to revitalize downtown Franklin. Residents can join the Downtown Partnership for only \$25. The Partnership manages events like the Strawberry Stroll, the Harvest Festival, the Ladybug Historical & Cultural Trail, and initiatives such as beautification, streetscape design, greenspace, alley murals, and sculpture projects. For more information go to www.franklindowntownpartnership.org

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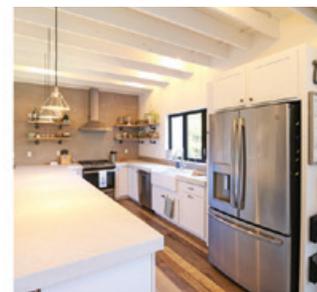
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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Tame the Mane—We’ve Got The Secret to Smooth Summer Hair

BY GINA WOELFEL

Has your frizzy hair gone rogue with a mind of its own? Don't sweat it! When the humidity hits, **The Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment** will have you smooth sailing all summer long.

Frizz and lack of definition are common struggles, especially in the summer heat for people with curly, wavy and textured hair. But now, you can say “Buh-bye” to frizz and hello to the most smooth, defined curls with the Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment, **available at b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio in Medway, MA.** “My curls have never looked this good—soft, defined, and totally frizz-free,” says one happy b.LUXE client, Linda Picard. “It’s a total game-changer for summer.

Beach days and warm summer nights are calling—and we’re here to help you look your best—effortlessly. Managing frizzy hair can feel like a full-time job, but what if we told you that you could say goodbye to frizz without losing your hair’s natural texture or integrity? Imagine a summer where your hair stays smooth and hydrated—even in the muggy heat. We’re talking about a **quick, easy, and effective solution** for everyone—from those with tough curls to fine, damaged hair.

Ready to learn more? Let's dive into why the Saphira Treatment is the must-have summer service for you!

Frizz-Free Hair Without the Fuss

The magic behind this treat-

ment is in the ingredients! Its mineral-based DeFrizz technology is composed of **26 Dead Sea Minerals, Lily Flower and Essential Oils.** These ingredients work together to soothe and refresh your scalp, promoting a healthy foundation for your hair. The treatment also includes **hyaluronic acid**, which is a humectant that helps seal in moisture to keep your hair hydrated, preventing dryness and minimizing frizz. It's like a spa day for your hair!

And did we mention the diamond powder? We're talking the fancy stuff here, folks—because diamonds are a girl's best friend, right? The Saphira Mineral Treatment infuses your hair with **diamond powder** for an extra dose of luxe, leaving it smoother, more radiant, and shining with a healthy, head-turning glow.

The Difference is in the Texture

Love your waves, curls and coils? Keep them! Not to be confused with traditional smoothing or keratin treatments that relax and straighten the hair. The Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment retains your natural texture while eliminating frizz, healing the hair and adding strength. A thermodynamic process occurs when the treatment is applied. One of the key ingredients, **Hyaluronic Acid** is a humectant which hydrates the hair and seals in moisture, eliminating protein bonds that create frizz. This new technology is unlike anything else on the market.

Quick, No-Hassle Treatment

One of the best things about the Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment is how easy and fast it is—no hours spent in the salon or sitting under a hooded dryer. In fact, this treatment can be done in under **60 minutes**, with **no processing time required.** So, you can get an effortless, frizz-free look during your lunch break and be ready to take on the rest of your day! Plus, it's **formulated without harsh chemicals**, so no



SAPHIRA MINERAL DEFRIZZ SMOOTHING TREATMENT

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strong smells or waiting for the treatment to “process.” Another bonus! Air drying and blowouts are so much easier! By reducing frizz, your curls and waves dry smoother and sleeker.

Lasting Results That Will Keep You Frizz-Free for Months

Now, let's talk about longevity. After just one treatment, the Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment will leave your hair **smooth, hydrated, and frizz-free for up to five months.** That means you can enjoy beautiful hair all summer long!

The Best Part? It Works on All Hair Types.

Tough curls, damaged strands, fine hair—you name it, this treatment's got it covered. It's the go-to solution for anyone looking to keep their hair healthy, shiny, and frizz-free.

Book Your Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment Today!

Go on—you deserve it! Skip the daily frizz battle and spend

more time enjoying your summer. The weather's heating up, and it's the perfect time to level up your hair game. With the Saphira Treatment, you can finally say goodbye to frizz and hello to smooth, shiny hair—perfect for summer, and just as amazing year-round.

The Saphira DeFrizz Treatment is **priced at \$275** and **includes a full-sized Prep & Maintain Shampoo and Mineral Mist** for you to take home.

So, why wait? Book your appointment today and give your hair the **luxury treatment** it deserves.

To schedule a Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Healing Treatment, you can scan the QR code above, call us at (508) 321-1624 or go to **bluxe.com** to see all we have to offer.

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Franklin Art Association Welcomes Painter Shilpa Adduri May 7th

The Franklin Art Association invites you to our Wednesday, May 7 meeting. We will warmly greet Guest Demo-Artist, Shilpa Adduri, fine art painter, who will give a step-by-step, water-based media demonstration. Our free-to-the-public meetings are held at the Franklin Senior Center at 6:30 p.m. first Wednesdays each month.

Shilpa Adduri works in the technique called, "One Stroke."

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

Wanting to be inspirational, Adduri says, "My art captures the beauty and serenity I find in the world, expressed through acrylics and watercolors."

FAA welcomes the public and its members to attend. Refreshments are served at the break.



Shilpa Adduri demonstrating 'One Stroke' approach to painting



Shilpa Adduri, Acrylic, "One Stroke" example

There will be an ongoing sale of raffle tickets for our art raffle

to raise money for our annual art scholarship which goes to a student choosing to continue their education in the study of the arts. Members are requested to donate work to be raffled. Please come by to see the wonderful creativity of local artists as they demonstrate their skills and support our scholarship fund.

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

Local Man Part of Cradles to Crayons Boston Marathon Team

Mike Pennini, of Franklin, was a part of a 9-runner Cradles to Crayons 2025 Boston Marathon team of runners last month.

Cradles to Crayons provides new and gently used clothing and other necessities – free of charge – to children experiencing homelessness, crisis, or low-income situations. These runners not only raise awareness of the important work Cradles to Crayons is doing to support children in need across Massachusetts. They also raise funds to participate in the marathon. Those funds will directly support Cradles to Crayons' mission to purchase clothing items, which can then be distributed to children in the community.

"After my wife and I had our son 4 years ago, I learned more about clothing insecurity," Pennini said. "The work that Cradles to Crayons is doing, is incredible," he added. "Every step I take will help deliver clothing and school supplies to children who require a helping hand. Together, we can make a difference and ensure that every child has the tools they need to thrive."

This year was Mike's 9th marathon. The local husband and father has run more than 20 half marathons and several trail races as he prepared for the Boston Marathon over the past 10 years.



Mike Pennini, of Franklin, shown here with his son, Aiden, was part of the Cradles to Crayons 2025 Boston Marathon team.

Mike is thankful for the support he has received from the town of Franklin.

"I would have lost my mind if it weren't for the support of the great Franklin community businesses and neighbors. Thanks to them, I've hit my fundraising goal! It's a great cause, and I encourage everyone to support the rest of the Cradles to Crayons Boston Marathon team."

If you would like to support Cradles to Crayons, the team link is still up at <https://www.givengain.com/campaign/join-us-in-making-a-difference-via-the-2025-boston-marathon-29569>.

Franklin LGBTQ Alliance Upcoming Events

Movie night!

Thursday May 1st from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Franklin TV and Radio, 23 Hutchinson St., Franklin

Since our movie night a few months ago was canceled due to the weather a couple months ago, we will be redoing our movie night! Join the Franklin LGBTQ Alliance for a movie night! We will be watching *Dumplin*, which is rated PG-13. Willowdean, the plus-size teenage daughter of a former beauty queen, signs up for her mom's Miss Teen Bluebonnet pageant as a protest- with help from some drag queens- that escalates when other contestants follow her footsteps, revolutionizing the pageant and their small Texas town.

Celebrate with Pride is coming up quick!

On June 21st with a rain date of June 22nd from 12-4 pm, it will be on the Franklin Town Common. We are looking for volunteers and vendors/exhibitors. For more information and to sign up, visit our website www.franklinlgbtqalliance.com.

We also need sign-ups for the Strawberry Stroll which is Friday June 13th from 4-8 p.m. in downtown Franklin. If you would like to help run the booth and/or pass out flyers for our Celebrate with Pride event, visit <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084DACA82FA1FCCE9-56104103-strawberry> to sign up.

Stamp Out Hunger – May 10, 2025

Franklin's annual "Stamp Out Hunger" food drive is Saturday, May 10, 2025. Franklin residents are encouraged to fill a bag with non-perishable food

items and leave it by their mailbox. Letter carriers will collect the bag during their regular mail delivery (or return later in the day) and deliver it to the Frank-

lin Food Pantry. Thank you for helping nourish our neighbors! For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/4ib4DCv>

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Memorial Day Parade & Ceremonies & Other Veterans News

Memorial Day Parade – Monday, May 26 – 11 a.m. *NEW ROUTE*

The Memorial Ceremonies at Dean College, Union St. and St. Mary's Cemeteries will be held prior to the parade.

Memorial Day Ceremony – Monday, May 26 - Noon @ Town Common

Please note: If it rains on May 26, please check the Veterans' Services web page: www.franklinma.gov/335/Veterans-Services for cancellation notice.

Memorial Day Breakfast – Friday, May 23, 2025

Franklin Senior Center, 9 a.m.-11 a.m.

Featuring guest speaker James Gurganus, Chief Master Sergeant, USAF (RET)

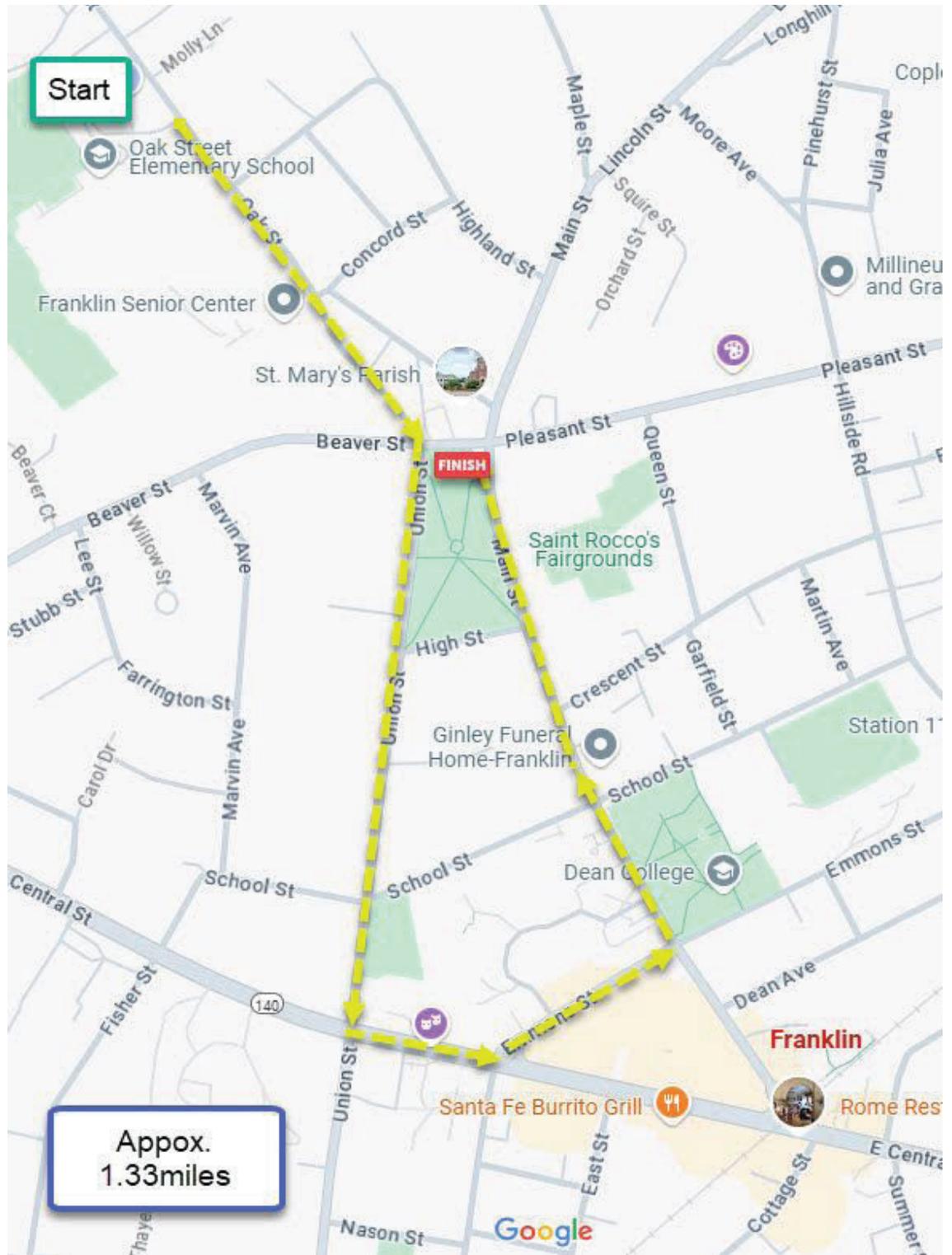
Reservations by May 9th to (508) 613-1315

Veterans Coffee Social

This month's Veterans Coffee Social will take place at Franklin Senior Center at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, May 7, 2025.

Franklin Fallen Heroes' Remembrance Ceremonies

In honor of the 45 Franklin Veterans who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, remembrance ceremonies are held on the anniversary of their KIA date. The ceremonies are led by members of the American Legion Post 75 and VFW Post 3402 and are held at 9 a.m. on the Veterans Memorial Walkway on the Franklin Town Common. This month, Charles Christakes, WWII veteran, will be honored on May 11th. Family members, friends and members of the community are all welcome to attend. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be postponed to the following day.



Franklin's Memorial Day Parade will take place on May 26th this year, following a new route.



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Franklin Police Investigate Gunshots

On Wednesday, April 9, 2025, approximately 9:10 p.m. a resident reported hearing gunshots in the area of 758 Union St. in Franklin and called the police.

Upon arrival, officers could not find anyone in the area. However, they recovered shell casings in the area. Officers

checked with all residents in the area, and it was determined that no one was hurt, and no damage was found to any property.

The case is currently being investigated by the Franklin Police Detective Unit. No additional information or interviews will be released at this time.

Warrior Family Books for NICU Fundraiser May 21

Warrior Family Books for NICU will hold a fundraiser at Pizzeria UNO, Bellingham on May 21st. Mention it and 20%

of proceeds of your order will benefit the charity. <https://www.facebook.com/WarriorFamily-BooksForNICU/>

FHS Theater Company Reaches State Finals of METG Festival

Franklin High School Theater Company's presentation of *The Yellow Boat*, a play based on the tragic story of a child with congenital hemophilia, reached the State Finals of this year's competitive Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild (METG) festival.

The 32 Franklin High School students, including cast and crew, staged *The Yellow Boat* in the State Finals at John Hancock Hall in Boston on March 28. The Franklin High School Theater Company was one of 15 groups to make the State Finals for the Massachusetts High School Drama Festival held by METG, out of 88 schools that entered the competition during the preliminary round.

The festival, which calls on each group to perform a 40-minute, one-act play, also includes a preliminary round and a semi-final round, with each stage judged by a team of METG Adjudicators.

"It's a real privilege to be with these kids. They are a really magical group," said Franklin High School Drama Director Chloe Selznick, who is in her first year leading the program. "We're all just very grateful. When we took group photos at the State Finals, instead of saying 'cheese,' the kids would say, 'We weren't supposed to be here!' There's a lot of

gratitude within the company."

The Franklin High School Theater Company was assisted in its production of *The Yellow Boat* by Erin Ferreira, who came on as a volunteer to be the show's movement director and assistant director. Franklin High School student Riley MacDonald served as the production's dramaturg, providing classmates with a research package containing insight into the context of the play, showing how the story should be handled with sensitivity and truthfulness.

Throughout the METG festival, the Franklin High School students witnessed 25 plays staged by drama groups from other schools in the matter of a month.

"Most people won't see one play in a year, let alone see that many," Selznick said. "It was a real treat all around. It was a wonderful experience. There was a lot of support. Now, afterwards, there's a lot of gratitude."

The METG Festival is a prestigious annual event for high school theater companies, and this marked the 94th year of the competitive drama festival.

METG also has a middle school division and a musical theater division. In addition to the annual METG Festival held in March, the organization also facilitates a series of acting and



The Franklin High School Theater Company performed the play *The Yellow Boat* as part of the Massachusetts High School Drama Festival held by METG, becoming one of 15 groups to make the State Finals out of 88 schools that entered. (Photo Courtesy Maggie Warren)

technical theater scholarship contests held in December.

This experience with the METG Festival will provide some momentum for the Franklin High School Theater Company ahead of its next production, a musical called *Urinetown*, with showings planned for June 13-14.

"We are so impressed by the incredible skills and abilities of our stage performers, crew and

everyone involved with staging this play," Principal Weber said. "They possess great individual talents and also display incredible teamwork. Bravo to our students for an incredible run in the METG Festival. And bravo to Director Selznick for the guidance she is providing to this talented group."

"I'd like to congratulate all of our stage performers and crew

members who really put their hearts into these shows," Superintendent Giguere said. "Their passion, talent and skills are inspirational. They really did a great job with this play. I'd also like to recognize Director Selznick and our other teachers, along with parents and all of our Franklin High School Theater Company supporters, who help make all of this possible."

Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail 5K Run and Walk May 17th

The Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail's 14th annual 5K Run and Walk will take place on Saturday, May 17th at 9 a.m. Enjoy the outdoors while supporting the continued development of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT). The Run and Walk will begin at Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) Grove St. Trailhead, with parking available at 210 Grove Street, Franklin (Waters Corporation parking lot).

This event is open to participants of all ages and fitness levels, making it a great outdoor

activity for families and community members. Plenty of water and refreshments will be available during and after the race. Whether you're running, walking, or simply enjoying a scenic stroll along the trail, the 5K offers an opportunity to reconnect with nature and support a great local cause.

All proceeds will go towards the committee efforts to advocate for trail improvements.

Learn more at <https://www.tri-valleyfrontrunners.com/fbrtc/FBRTC5K.php>.

The Franklin Bellingham Rail Trail Committee is always

looking for volunteers. For information, visit www.franklinbellinghamrailtrail.org.



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Living Healthy

Introducing the PanOptix® Pro IOL: A Breakthrough in Cataract Surgery – and a First for Massachusetts

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

Cataract surgery has evolved dramatically over the past few decades, moving from a simple removal of the clouded natural lens to a transformative procedure that can restore full-spectrum vision. The introduction of advanced intraocular lenses (IOLs) has redefined the standard of care, allowing many patients to regain sharp vision at multiple distances without the ongoing need for glasses.

Now, a new generation of lens technology is poised to elevate outcomes even further: the Clareon® PanOptix® Pro Trifocal IOL. Alcon recently announced the official U.S. launch of this lens, with commercial availability starting in May 2025. I'm honored to share that I will be performing the first PanOptix

Pro implantation in Massachusetts, bringing this groundbreaking innovation to our community.

What Is the Clareon® PanOptix® Pro IOL?

The Clareon PanOptix Pro is Alcon's latest trifocal intraocular lens designed for use during cataract surgery. It builds on the success of the original PanOptix® IOL, which was the first trifocal lens approved by the FDA in the United States. This new version offers enhanced optics, improved light management, and a more seamless range of vision.

This lens features ENLIGHTEN® NXT optical technology, a refinement that allows for 94% light utilization — the highest reported light transmission of any trifocal IOL on the market today. Compared to its predecessor, PanOptix Pro also

boasts a 16% increase in contrast between intermediate and distance vision, delivering a sharper, more comfortable visual experience across the entire range.

Additionally, targeted diffractive refinements help redirect 50% of light previously lost to scatter toward useful focal points, greatly enhancing image clarity and reducing glare.

Why It's Better Than the Original PanOptix

The original PanOptix lens already offered excellent outcomes, allowing patients to see clearly at near (reading), intermediate (computer), and distance (driving) ranges. However, some patients experienced visual disturbances like halos or glare, especially in low-light settings. The Clareon PanOptix Pro addresses these concerns with:



- Improved contrast sensitivity
- Reduced light scatter
- More uninterrupted light distribution
- Enhanced optical image sharpness

These refinements translate to better night vision, clearer contrast, and greater patient satisfaction, especially in visually demanding environments.

Another major improvement is the Clareon AutonoMe® pre-loaded delivery system, which allows for more precise, consistent lens placement during surgery — a benefit for both surgeons and patients.

Key Benefits for Patients

- Seamless vision across distances — from reading a phone to driving at night
- Reduced dependence on glasses
- Brighter, sharper vision
- Low-light confidence, such as in restaurants or while driving at night
- Built-in UV and blue light filtering for retinal protection

Risks and Considerations

While the PanOptix Pro IOL offers impressive advantages, it's important to remember that no intraocular lens is perfect for every patient. Some individuals may still experience mild visual disturbances such as glare or halos, particularly in the first weeks after surgery. The brain also requires time to adapt to trifocal optics, and some patients may need a short adjustment period.

The lens is not recommended for those with significant macular disease, irregular astigmatism, or certain other ocular conditions. A comprehensive preoperative consultation is critical to determine candidacy.

Alternatives to the PanOptix Pro

For patients not suited to trifocal lenses, several other IOL options exist:

- Monofocal IOLs: Provide clear vision at one distance, typically requiring glasses for near or intermediate tasks
- Multifocal IOLs: Offer multiple focal points, though with a more limited range than trifocals
- Extended Depth of Focus (EDOF) IOLs: Improve intermediate and distance vision with reduced halos, though near vision may still need support

Choosing the right IOL is highly individualized and should be guided by lifestyle, eye health, and visual expectations.

A First for Massachusetts

Bringing the Clareon PanOptix Pro to Massachusetts is a milestone I'm proud to be part of. Our practice has always embraced cutting-edge technology to enhance patient outcomes, and this next-generation lens is no exception. Performing the first PanOptix Pro implant in the Commonwealth underscores our ongoing commitment to innovation, excellence, and personalized care.

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Healey-Driscoll Administration Announces \$3.2 Million in Fire Safety Grants

Franklin is one of more than 300 Massachusetts fire departments that will receive over \$3 million dollars in grants to support safety equipment for firefighters and life safety education for kids and older adults, according to the Healey-Driscoll administration.

“Massachusetts firefighters do much more than fight fires – they’re our first line of defense in any emergency,” said Governor Maura Healey. “These grants will help firefighters protect themselves from injury and illness, rescue people in danger, and keep our most vulnerable residents safe from fires and other hazards at home. We are proud to be able to support

these vital first responders who never hesitate to answer a call for help.”

The awards are drawn from three grant programs coordinated by the Department of Fire Services.

The Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant Program reimburses local fire departments for purchases of turnout gear, hazardous gas meters, SCBA components, accountability systems, thermal imaging cameras, and more. This round of grants will provide \$1.63 million in funding to fire departments in 266 communities. In many cases, the reimbursed purchases will help them attain compliance with Occupational Safety & Health

Administration or National Fire Protection Association safety standards. Franklin will receive \$8,995 for Firefighter Safety Equipment.

The Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) Grant Program funds firefighter-educators who deliver age-appropriate fire and life safety education to school-age children. Since the grants’ inception in 1995, the number of Massachusetts children who die in fires has dropped to historically low levels, from two dozen or more per year to zero for nearly three consecutive years. This year’s awards will deliver more than \$1.1 million to 204 local fire departments. Franklin will receive

\$7,200 of these funds.

“For 30 years, the SAFE grants have delivered life-saving lessons to Massachusetts’ kids and teens through our local firefighters,” said Secretary of Public Safety and Security Terrence Reidy. “This is just one of the powerful local-state partnerships that make Massachusetts one of the safest places in the nation to live, work, and raise a family.”

In 2014, DFS launched the Senior SAFE Grant Program, which is geared toward another vulnerable population – older adults, who face a disproportionate risk of death or serious injury in a fire. Nearly \$485,000 will support alarm installation, fire safety education, fall pre-

vention strategies, and other resources delivered by 203 local fire departments in partnership with local senior centers, councils on aging, and other community partners.

The state has awarded Bellingham a Senior SAFE grant of \$2,600.

“People aged 65 and older are at greatest risk of death or serious injury in a fire at home,” said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine. “The Senior SAFE grants make a difference by sending trained firefighters to conduct home safety assessments, install or replace smoke and carbon monoxide alarms, and help our seniors age in place safely and independently.”

EYES

continued from page 16

We believe our patients deserve access to the latest proven technologies — not just to restore vision, but to improve how they live, work, and experience the world.

Why Milford Franklin Eye Center?

Cataract surgery is all about better precision, more safety, and excellent outcomes. At Milford Franklin Eye Center, I am proud to have been the first surgeon in the area and among the first in Massachusetts to offer bladeless laser-assisted cataract surgery — and the first in Greater Boston to implant the original PanOptix lens. We are now excited to bring the PanOptix Pro to our community.

The top five teaching hospitals in the nation offer bladeless laser cataract surgery — and so do we. All surgeries are performed at our state-of-the-art surgery center in Milford using advanced laser technology and premium lenses that correct for distance, near, and everything in between. Many cases of astigmatism are now fully correctable with these modern lens implants.

Our complication rates are among the lowest in the nation. One hundred percent of surgeries are performed under topical

anesthesia — meaning no needles, no shots around or behind the eye, no stitches, and no scalpels. It’s truly no knife, no shots, no stitch surgery.

We have anesthesiologists present for all cases and we never perform surgery in an office space, unlike some other practices. We also do not charge additional fees for use of the operating room — another key difference. There is no longer any need to travel hours for your cataract surgery. The most advanced care is already here, close to home.

It’s Time to Be Pro Panoptimistic!

The Clareon PanOptix Pro IOL is more than just an upgrade — it’s a significant leap forward in cataract surgery outcomes. With its groundbreaking light utilization, refined optics, and proven range of vision, it stands to become the new gold standard for patients seeking independence from glasses and sharp, vibrant vision at all distances. Experience cataract surgery results second to none — here, closer to home, at the Milford Franklin Eye Center.

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Franklin Food Pantry Celebrates National Volunteer Month

Franklin, MA (April 8, 2025) – April was National Volunteer Month, a special time to recognize the invaluable contributions of volunteers. The Franklin Food Pantry kicked off this important month by hosting its annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, which celebrates the incredible impact volunteers have on the organization and the Franklin community. The luncheon held on April 3, 2025, was made possible by G&C Plumbing and Heating who sponsored the event, and New England Chapel who provided the space. Elizabeth’s Bagels, The Rome Restaurant, Starbucks on E Central St., Twist Bakery & Cafe, and volunteer bakers provided food, paper goods, desserts, and more. Paul Vicario Studio beautifully captured the event through photography.

Each week, more than 120 individuals volunteer their time at the Franklin Food Pantry making it possible to deliver essential food assistance and service programs to over 850 households in Franklin. Their efforts support

vital initiatives such as in-person and walk-in shopping, curbside pickup, mobile pantries at three Franklin locations, Kids’ Snack Bags, the Weekend Backpack Program, holiday meal packages, the Community Gardens Program, and many more. In 2024 alone, Franklin Food Pantry volunteers collectively contributed over 12,000 hours of their time and talent.

Distinguished guests who attended to show their appreciation included Massachusetts State Senator Becca Rausch, State Representative Jeff Roy, Franklin Deputy Town Administrator Amy Frigulietti, Franklin Town Board Member Cobi Frongillio, Superintendent of Franklin Public Schools Lucas Giguere, and Director of Council on Aging Sarah Amaral.

Senator Becca Rausch addressed the volunteers, stating, “Your work is irreplaceable. Volunteers keep The Pantry’s warehouse full, the shelves stocked, and the operation running smoothly. You pack the backpacks, load the mobile pantry,

and assist shoppers. Every hour you spend is a labor of love. And there is so much love supporting this organization and uplifting the people it serves.”

State Representative Jeff Roy presented the 2024 President’s Volunteer Service Award to 39 exceptional volunteers whose service has significantly impacted the Franklin community and serves as an inspiration to others. The Gold Award, recognizing over 500 volunteer hours in the past year, was presented to Amber Baur. The Silver Award, for 250 to 499 volunteer hours, was awarded to David Bascom, Vicki Coates, Diane Daddario, Suzanne Gendreau, and Kym Pruitt. The Bronze Award, for 100 to 249 volunteer hours, was presented to Dominic Agostino, Jim Barton, Colleen Bond, Teresa Burr, Erika Cummings, Dave Custer, Mary Anne Dean, Kim DeCrescenzo, Robert Doyle, Rachel Flum, Kathy Ginley, Angela Draper, Karen Giuliano, Richard Guiliano, Oona Harrington, Jonathan Haddad, Jeanne Hummel, Martin Kaufman, Jen Kuse,



The Franklin Food Pantry kicked off National Volunteer Month by holding its annual Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon, and presented the 2024 President’s Volunteer Service Award to 39 exceptional volunteers including: Top Row: L to R: Cindy Conti, Nancy Schoen, Jen Kuse, Stephanie Potts, Vicki Coates, Carol Malachowski, Amber Baur, Marty Kaufman, Dave Custer, Suzanne Gendreau; Middle Row: L to R: Pam Spicer, Jeanne Hummel, Kim DeCrescenzo, Bob Doyle, Gary Nassoioy, Jon Haddad, Dom Agostino, Richard Guiliano, Maureen Sabolinski, Dave Bascom; Bottom Row: L to R: Donna O’Neill, Chris Lovell, Colleen Bond, Erika Cummings, Kathy Lesica, Mary Anne Dean, Rose O’Koren, Lynn Rizzolo

Kathy Lesica, Christine Lovell, Carol Malachowski, Ann Maloney, Felecia McKenney, Gary Nassoioy, Donna O’Neill, Joseph

PANTRY

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Sports

Franklin Doubles Dominating

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The sport traditionally named lawn tennis was invented in Edgbaston, Warwickshire, England where the athletes originally struck the ball with their hands. It wasn't until the 16th century when rackets were added to the sport and subsequently the game was named tennis. Doubles tennis requires a team of two players on each side, emphasizing collaboration and teamwork.

Franklin's senior doubles tandem of Sydney Tolonen and Brook Daniels had not begun playing the sport until late in their lives, and after only three years together, the duo has made a name for themselves, posting a 29-4 record for the Panthers. The duo went 1-0 during their freshman campaign together, improved to 13-1 the following year and last spring went 15-3.

Tolomon, who was previously a competitive swimmer, was in the water when COVID hit, and when she got tendonitis, she decided to look for a sport outside while recovering. It was here she joined a club tennis team with a friend, who would later drop out, and found that she truly loved the sport.

"I had never played a racket sport before, but quickly found that I loved the strategy of the game," Tolonen said. "It was a sport that anyone can learn, and I was picking up the skills at a fast pace."

Her now partner, Daniels, literally picked up a tennis racket for the very first time as freshman. Having been a lacrosse player in the spring, Daniels had given the sport up, and her parents wanted her to continue to do something in that time frame, so they signed her up for tennis, something the freshman was not thrilled with.

"I was definitely mad at first and obviously nervous having never played the sport in my life," Daniels said. "Tennis was in all aspects complicated from the scoring to actually playing the game."

However, about midway through her freshman campaign with Franklin, Daniels started to understand the game, and



although she was not sure what had happened, things started to click on the court.

While both girls would play with different partners their first year with the Panthers, they eventually were paired up near the end of the season, winning their only match together. Franklin coach Bob Pingeton would keep the duo together their sophomore season, and the rest is history.

"That first year, we had singles players who had already established themselves, so there was no room there," he said. "But these two were made for doubles and went strong to the net. A lot of players don't like to go to the net but instead stay on the baseline – Brooke and Sydney were different."

It was during their sophomore year the two would get the chance to play together on a regular basis. Pingeton noted that while the duo was still young and rather timid, they were winning. They were not blowing teams out, but surviving.

"They were still learning the game, especially as doubles teammates," the Franklin coach said. "But they had the confidence in one another, and that lead to winning matches."

While Tolonen had played both singles and doubles as a freshman, she found she enjoyed playing with a teammate much preferable.

"I love the aspect of teamwork, so doubles was definitely the better fit for me. Being paired with Brooke, I found that we had a great chemistry on and off the court," shew said. "We picked up on each other's skills and excelled

Senior doubles duo Sydney Tolonen (left) and Brook Daniels (right) played a big part in Franklin capturing its first ever Hockomock League Championship in school history last spring.



from there; I'm more of a consistent baseline player, while Brooke goes hard to the net."

Having basically been able to go 29-4 over the past two seasons as relatively new students to the game, both girls are beyond proud of what they've been able to accomplish in such a short time. Tolonen noted she took up tennis for fun and never thought it would take her to where she is today.

"Tennis was a different sport all together," Daniels said. "But what we've been able to accomplish so far – I would have never thought possible in a million years."

Both girls have similar approaches to the game, according to the Coach.

"They both have strong serves and are aggressive to the net," he

said. "When one is at the net they are very strong, and very rarely do they lose points."

As they begin their third and final season together as doubles teammates, Daniels and Tolonen are looking to take their game to the next level while helping the team move deeper into the tournament.

"We've gotten to the point of understanding one another's strengths and weaknesses," Daniels said. "We know when we have to calm one another down or bring them up. Coming into our final season I obviously want to continue with our winning record, while having fun during our senior year."

"I'm hoping that as a team we can defend our Hockomock League Title, and to put together an undefeated season would be great, but the biggest thing is to

enjoy one more season with my tennis family," Tolonen said.

Last spring, Franklin captured its first ever Hockomock League Championship in school history, and Daniels and Tolonen were a huge part of that.

"They are the driving force behind our team and consistently give us a chance to win," the coach said. "Having only lost a handful of matches over the last few years – this year is status quo and looking for them to continue to win a majority of their matches."

Pingeton expects his senior doubles tandem to improve upon their game throughout the season and help the team go further into the tournament. The coach is also hoping that they can qualify to take part in the first-ever state doubles tournament.

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PANTRY

continued from page 18

O’Koren, C. Lynn Rizzolo, Maureen Sabolinski, Nancy Schoen, Pamela Spicer, Debra Stiffler, and Lawrence Verney.

“We are deeply grateful for the extraordinary contributions of our volunteer team,” said Tina Powderly, Executive Director, Franklin Food Pantry. “Every hour they give, always with a smile, has a profound impact on our client. They are the driving force behind our ability to offer

a diverse array of essential programs with dignity, and we are deeply grateful.”

The Franklin Food Pantry will continue to celebrate the volunteers throughout April including special social media posts thanking volunteers and highlighting the important role they play at The Pantry.

For more information on the Franklin Food Pantry, or receiving food assistance, please visit the Franklin Food Pantry website at www.franklinfoodpantry.org.



Attendees at the Franklin Food Pantry’s annual Volunteer Luncheon. Top Row (L to R): Franklin Deputy Town Administrator Amy Frigulietti, State Representative Jeff Roy; Bottom Row (L to R): Franklin Food Pantry Board Chair, Amber Baur, Senator Becca Rausch, Pantry Volunteer Bob Doyle, and Franklin Town Board Member Cobi Frongillio.

Save the Date for June 13 Strawberry Stroll

Mark your calendar: The Franklin Downtown Partnership’s Annual Strawberry Stroll is set for Friday, June 13, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. in downtown Franklin. The rain date will be Saturday, June 14 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

This year, the stroll will extend farther up Main Street to Dean College and Franklin Public Library with more music and activities, according to Strawberry Stroll Committee Chairman Kevin Johnson of Edward Jones. “Don’t miss this great evening of music, food, and vendors who offer a variety of products and services,” Johnson said.

“The Stroll is a terrific community event,” Roberta Trahan, Vice President of the Franklin Downtown Partnership agrees. “It’s always a fun time to visit the shops and restaurants downtown and catch up with friends. The committee has been working hard to expand the event this year with more interactive activities.”

The Downtown Partnership is very grateful for the support from their sponsors.

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Sponsorship opportunities for the stroll are still open and filling up quickly. If you are interested in being a sponsor, contact the Franklin Downtown Partnership at downtown.franklin@yahoo.com.

Stay up to date and follow the Franklin Downtown Partnership at:

<https://www.instagram.com/franklindowntownpartnership/> and

<https://www.facebook.com/franklindowntownpartnership.org/>

The Franklin Downtown Partnership is a non-profit 501c3 organization made up of more than 350 business owners, residents, and community leaders working to revitalize downtown Franklin. Residents can join the Downtown Partnership for only \$25. The Partnership manages events like the Strawberry Stroll, the Harvest Festival, the Ladybug Historical & Cultural Trail, and initiatives such as beautification, streetscape design, greenspace, alley murals, and sculpture projects. For more information go to www.franklindowntownpartnership.org.



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SAFE Coalition Receives \$25K from Community Health Systems

Funds to Be Used to Build Regional Adolescent Wellness Center

SAFE Coalition has received a \$25,000 grant from Community Health Systems Foundation to break ground on its Adolescent Wellness Center. The Center will be a central space for teens across southeastern Massachusetts to access resources that combat substance use and mental illness.

Built inside SAFE HQ in Franklin, the space will offer a fully dedicated spot for teens-only support, hosting drop-in hours, referral services, mentorships, peer groups and classes as well as educational nights for area caregivers.

The Center is designed to directly address the high rates of mental illness and substance use among teens. Events like drama therapy, sobriety nights, and trauma-informed yoga will offer more ways to play, cope, and grow.

Supports will also be available for education, prevention

and recovery from substance use. The Center will offer programs to help students build resiliency tools that combat the perceived need for substance use, while support groups and peer mentorship will give teens added ways to be heard, gain advice, and belong. Recovery plans, referral services, and accountability check-ins will offer additional touchpoints.

Research shows that offering teens neutral social spaces is essential to maintaining a sense of wellbeing. Such spaces decrease social isolation and build a psychological sense of belonging. Regular visitors to these places report better overall mental health. Neutral social spaces are associated with higher levels of community cohesion and wider social networks, too.

The need for teen mental health and substance use support is greater than ever. Rates of teen depression and anxiety



have remained high since 2020 and remain one of the Surgeon General's top priorities. And teen overdose is at an all-time high, while the prevalence of vaping and other substance use persists. Yet, in-school and extracurricular programs across the region have shuttered due to cuts in school spending despite their success in preventing teen isolation, increasing touchpoints with supportive adults, and building self-esteem. Community-led programs are helping to close a critical gap in support by offering judgement-free, compassionate care to teens who

need it most.

Community Health Systems (CHS) was established in 1994 to support nonprofit organizations that enhance the community's capacity to achieve optimal health, wellness, and quality of life.

SAFE serves over 55 communities in Massachusetts with programs for teens, support groups for loved one's impacted by others' substance use, harm reduction education, resources for families in need like a community diaper bank, housing support, and more. SAFE's services are free to recipients, and no insurance is needed.

SAFE began in 2015 after a community discussion on the increasing deaths from opioid use and what could be done to combat the rising epidemic. Today, the nonprofit works with first responders, local and state politicians, municipalities, schools, other nonprofits, and concerned citizens across southeastern Massachusetts to fill gaps in substance use prevention and education, harm reduction, recovery, and mental health support.

Learn more about SAFE Coalition at (508) 488-8105 or info@safecoalitionma.org.

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Franklin PMC Kids Ride Returns June 8, 2025

Young Riders Rally to Crush Cancer

Get ready to ride for a cause! On Sunday, June 8, 2025, the Franklin PMC Kids Ride returns as one of 25 youth cycling events taking place across New England this year. These rides are part of the Pan-Mass Challenge (PMC) Kids Rides program, which inspires children to get involved in philanthropy by riding their bikes and raising money for cancer research and treatment at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Since its start, the program has raised over \$12 million to support the fight against cancer.

In 2024, the PMC Kids Rides welcomed more than 1,400 participants and 500+ volunteers, raising upwards of \$422,000. That effort contributed to the



PMC's record-breaking annual donation of \$75 million to Dana-Farber. The Kids Rides program also celebrates a major milestone this year: its 21st anniversary! Last year also marked the PMC's lifetime fundraising total surpassing \$1 billion since 1980.

Now in its 19th year, the Franklin event offers young cyclists (ages 3 to 14) a meaningful and fun way to get involved. Riders can choose from 3, 6, or 10-mile routes. For younger children not quite ready for a full course, there's a "Tikes and Trikes" area that offers a safe, enclosed space to ride. The day is filled with fun activities, interactive stations, and a festive post-ride celebration with games, food, music,



and more. In 2024, Franklin saw 126 kids take part, raising over \$42,000. This year, organizers are aiming to hit \$50,000 — with every single rider-raised dollar going directly to Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Top fundraisers will be honored with special recognition. Kids who raise \$500 or more earn the title of "PMC Kids Heavy Hitter," while those who raise over \$1,000 will be cele-

brated as "PMC Kids Breakaway Fundraisers." Both groups will receive a commemorative item and certificate for their incredible efforts.

The Franklin ride was founded by local resident Lisa Marchioni. "I launched the Franklin ride to honor a dear friend who passed away from lung cancer, leaving behind three young children. I wanted to help other families avoid that heart-

break," she shares. "After riding the adult PMC myself in 1991, I was inspired to get kids involved. My daughter rode in the Medfield event and was so moved by the experience that she wanted to bring it to our town. That's how the Franklin ride was born."

The event takes place at Jefferson Elementary School (628 Washington Street) from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on June 8, 2025. Registration is open to families from any town. There is a \$20 sign-up fee and a minimum fundraising goal of \$40 per rider.

The PMC Kids Rides program is made possible by Yawkey Foundations, with support from Yasso, 105.7 WROR, and Landry's Bicycles. The PMC is co-presented by the Red Sox® Foundation and M&T Bank.

To register, donate, or learn more, visit kids.pmc.org/franklin or reach out to Lisa Marchioni at lisabxyz@verizon.net.

Circle of Friends to Host John Gorka

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John Gorka returns to the Circle of Friends Coffeeshouse on Saturday, May 17th at 7:30 p.m. He is perhaps the quintessential iconic singer-songwriter of the 80's folk scene. Hailing from New Jersey, but forged in the Greenwich Village Fast Folk scene, he honed his craft and persona into an unmistakable image.

Many well-known artists have recorded and/or performed John Gorka songs, including Mary Chapin Carpenter, Nanci Griffith, Mary Black and Maura

O'Connell. John has graced the stage of Austin City Limits, Mountain Stage, etown and has appeared on CNN. <http://johngorka.com/>

The Circle of Friends Coffeeshouse is a non-profit organization affiliated with Franklin's First Universalist Society. Concerts are presented in a smoke-free and alcohol-free environment at the Society's handicapped accessible Meetinghouse, 262 Chestnut St. in Franklin, and begin at 7:30 p.m.; doors open at 7 p.m. Bev-



erages and gourmet desserts will be available. Please visit <http://www.circlefolk.org/> for more information.

Franklin PorchFest Returns, June 7th

Franklin PorchFest, an outdoor music event, will return on Saturday, June 7th from 12 to 6 p.m. with a rain date of Sunday, June 8th.

Musicians and bands of all genres will be performing on porches and patios throughout Franklin's Cultural District. This walkable event is also the perfect opportunity to check out our local shops and restaurants.

All the information you need is on our website <https://franklin.porchfest.info/>.

If you have a band or are a performer and would be interested in performing at Franklin PorchFest, click the tab up top on our website; "Band" and register for the event. Porch owners interested in hosting a band can also register by clicking the tab "Porch". Franklin PorchFest



is made possible with investment funds granted from the Mass Cultural Council through the Franklin Cultural District Committee and the Town of Franklin.

You can also follow us on Facebook and Instagram.

Calendar

May 1

Franklin LGBTQ Alliance presents Movie night! 6:30-8:30 p.m., Franklin TV and Radio, 23 Hutchinson St., Franklin, *Dumplin'*, which is rated PG-13

May 3

The Music of Taylor Swift: A Concert Presented by the Blackstone Valley Quartet! 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, event possible through support from Franklin Cultural District and the Massachusetts Cultural Council through the Franklin Cultural District Investment Grant.

Enchanted Spring at Bellforge, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Bellforge Arts Center, 45 Hospital Road, Medfield, www.bellforge.org

Charles River Chorale Spring Concert, "If You Can Dream It, You Can Do It: 40 Years of Making Music Magical," 5 p.m., Medway High School Auditorium, 88 Summer St., Medway

May 6

Voice of Franklin Toastmasters, 7:30 p.m., Franklin TV

and Radio, 23 Hutchinson St., Franklin, all welcome to practice improving public speaking skills

May 7

Franklin Art Association meeting, 6:30 p.m., Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin, artist Shilpa Adduri will do demonstration, www.franklinart.org

May 10

Stamp Out Hunger Letter Carrier Food Drive, Franklin residents encouraged to leave bag with non-perishable food items by mailbox to be picked up during regular mail carrier hours, info. at <https://bit.ly/4ib4DCv>

Pen to Picture!, 1 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, with three-time Pura Belpré Made possible with a grant from the Mass Cultural Council.

Women in Music Celebration, 2 p.m.-6 p.m., Bellforge Arts Center, 45 Hospital Road, Medfield, www.bellforge.org

May 11

Mother's Day Tea, 1-3 p.m., Proctor Mansion, 36 Common St., Wrentham, more info. at (877) 384-1861

May 16

Franklin Public Library Book Sale, 1-5 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, All books \$1

May 17

Franklin Beautification Day, sponsored by the Franklin Downtown Partnership, 8 a.m. at the public parking lot near the bridge in front of The Rome restaurant. Contact Eileen Mason, eileenmason@remax.net

Franklin & Bellingham Rail Trail 14th Annual 5K Run & Walk, 9 a.m., Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) Grove St. Trailhead, with parking available at 210 Grove Street, Franklin (Waters Corporation parking lot). Register at <https://www.tri-valleyfrontrunners.com/fbrtc/FBRTC5K.php> or

learn more at www.franklinbellinghamrailtrail.org.

Franklin Public Library Book Sale, 9 a.m.-12 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, All books \$1

Holi Celebration! 2 p.m., Franklin Town Common, presented by Franklin Public Library, Music, activities, and of course, COLOR!! Wear something that you don't mind getting messy! In the event of inclement weather, the Rain date will be Saturday 5/31. Program made possible with support of the Franklin Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

John Gorka, 7:30 p.m., Circle of Friends Coffeehouse, 262 Chestnut St., Franklin, <http://johngorka.com/>, <http://www.circlefolk.org/> for ticket info.

May 20

Voice of Franklin Toastmasters, 7:30 p.m., Franklin TV and Radio, 23 Hutchinson St., Franklin, all welcome to practice improving public speaking skills

May 22

Franklin 10th Annual FHS Empty Bowls Club fundraiser for Franklin Food Pantry, 6-8 p.m., Franklin High School Cafeteria, 218 Oak St., Franklin, Tickets: Adults: \$22 online (\$25 at the door), children (18 and under) \$12 online (\$15 at the door), available at: <https://bit.ly/4hXgMuM>

May 26

Franklin Memorial Day, parade from Oak St. at 11 a.m., town common ceremony 12 p.m.

May 31

Music of Lennon & McCartney, 3 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, presented Melodious Zach

June 3

Franklin Special Election, for override information visit <https://ma-franklin.civicplus.com/1089/Fiscal-Year-2026-Override-Information>.

Youth Wind Ensemble Announces Auditions, Concert Tour

The Rhode Island Philharmonic Youth Wind Ensembles (RIPYWE) is holding auditions for membership in the 2025-26 concert season which will culminate with the RIPYWE Symphonic Winds doing a 12-day concert tour of northern Europe. The finest student musicians entering grades 7 through 12 in the area are strongly encouraged to audition for this once in a lifetime opportunity. RIPYWE Alumni are also invited to join the European concert tour.

RIPYWE was created to give advanced woodwind, brass and percussion grade 7-12 students from Rhode Island and nearby Massachusetts and Connecticut an opportunity to rehearse and perform high quality wind ensemble repertoire. Auditions will be held at the RI Philharmonic's Carter Center for Music Education & Performance in East Providence. Audition details are available online by going to the RI Philharmonic Music School

website www.riphil.org and by emailing RIPYWE ensemble manager Elliott Eastman at eeastman@riphil.org or director Neves at dneves@riphil.org.

"Participating in RIPYWE gives our region's finest woodwind, brass and percussion students an opportunity to have a nearly professional level musical experience every week. Each and every member is constantly challenged to achieve their best while also being nurtured in a student-centered positive uplifting atmosphere," said David Neves, Music Director of Youth Wind Ensembles for the Rhode Island Philharmonic Music School. "The music being performed is the finest available for wind bands. RIPYWE members are usually accepted into their states' All-State/District honors groups, and have a head start on future music participation in college and beyond. If a student is serious about being the best possible player on their instrument,

RIPYWE is the place to be."

Founded in 2002, the RIPYWE ensembles rehearse once per week on Wednesday evenings from September through May. In addition to the June/July 2026 European Concert Tour, RIPYWE performs three major concerts each season. Advanced students interested in auditioning and being selected to the advanced RIPYWE Symphonic Winds which will be touring Europe should sign up to audition soon maximize their opportunity to secure a spot in the group. Any alumni of RIPYWE from previous years who are interested in the European trip should contact Dr. Neves at dneves@riphil.org as soon as possible for more information.

For more information about RIPYWE, contact RI Philharmonic Music School Ensemble Manager Elliott Eastman at (401) 248-7038 or via email at eeastman@riphil.org.

FISH of Franklin Seeks Volunteers

FISH of Franklin's mission is helping Franklin residents get to their medical appointments – and volunteers are needed. FISH, which began at the Franklin Federated Church in 1973, is a non-profit organization run completely by volunteers. People give their time to either drive or answer telephone calls. They schedule and arrange for drivers to transport clients to and from appointments. They have driven as far as Boston and Providence, and locations in between such as Milford, Upton, Walpole, Wellesley and Norwood.

Those requesting rides can request up to two rides to medical appointments per month, and the names of all those requesting rides are kept confidential.

If you are interested in volunteering for FISH or are a Franklin resident in need of a ride to a medical appointment, call (508) 528-2121.

May 2025 at Franklin Public Library

Library Hours

The Library will be closed Monday May 26th for Memorial Day.

Franklin Public Library's 2025 Reading Challenge!

May: Unearth the world!

Welcome to the Franklin Public Library's second Annual Reading Challenge! For each monthly prompt that you complete and submit on time you will receive a Free Book Coupon that's good at the library's Book Sale. Submissions MUST be submitted by the last day of each month to qualify for that month's Free Book Coupon. For complete details and to sign-up, visit our website! Grand prizes made possible by the Friends of the Franklin Library!

ESL & Adult Literacy Program

The Franklin Public Library has started an English as a Second Language and Adult Literacy Program to serve Franklin and surrounding communities.

Volunteers and students do not need to be Franklin residents. If interested, fill out the registration form on the library's website.

Special Events for Kids

The Whalemobile! Friday, May 2nd @ 1-3 p.m.

Kids in grade K-6! Join us for a special event to learn about how whales and humans are similar and different! Explore the different learning stations, touch baleen, teeth and bones, including the chance to journey inside Nile—the life-sized inflatable humpback whale! 20 Participants will be admitted into the whale at a time, so bring your patience and flexibility!

My Lady & Me Jewelry Workshop! Wednesday, May 7th @ 5:30 p.m.

Registration Required!
FOR KIDS IN GRADES 3-5! Join local artist Paulina Teng for a special workshop with the special lady in your life celebrating the love we have for the strong women who raise us and support us!

Music at the Blissful! Saturday, May 17th @ 10:30 a.m.

Join us for a fun, high energy music program for children and their grownups! Musician Evan Haller brings the energy to get the whole crowd up and dancing!

Special Events for Adults

Planning for Human Ingenuity in the Fight Against Climate Change, Sat. May 3rd @ 3 p.m.

Join us in welcoming Professor Erin Baker of UMASS Amherst as we discuss the technologies for combating climate change and implications for energy justice.

Erin is a Distinguished Professor of Industrial Engineering and the Faculty Director of the Energy Transition Institute. Her research is in decision making under uncertainty applied to the field of energy and the environment; with focus on energy justice and publicly-funded energy technology Research and Development portfolios in the face of climate change.

Painting for Adults, Saturday, May 24th @ 1 p.m.

Registration is required! Join Miss Lily to create your very own step-by-step painting of a covered bridge! All materials will be provided.

Special Events for All Ages

The Music of Taylor Swift: A Concert Presented by the Blackstone Valley Quartet!

Saturday, May 3rd @ 10:30 a.m.

Taylor Swift is one of the largest names in music today. The Blackstone Valley Quartet, based in North Grafton, specializes in mixed genre performances on stringed instruments, reimagining familiar melodies with a fresh, innovative twist. The Blackstone Valley Quartet strives to unite people of all ages and all walks of life through the power of music. This event is made possible through the generous support of the Franklin Cultural District and the Massachusetts Cultural Council through the Franklin Cultural District Investment Grant.

Pen to Picture! Saturday, May 10th @ 1 p.m.

Since 2023, Franklin Public Library and the Franklin middle schools have joined forces to host world-renowned graphic novelists and celebrate the art of storytelling. This year, we welcome three-time Pura Belpré award-winning illustrator, author, and artist Raúl the Third to Franklin! Raúl the Third will share his process, art, and latest titles. He is the author and illustrator of many elementary and middle grade books, including *The Snips: A Bad Buzz Day*, *Stuntboy: In the Mean-*

time, *Stuntboy: In-Between Time*, *The Lowriders* series, and multiple picture books. Breakout sessions, photo ops and book signing will also be available. This event was made possible with a grant from the Mass Cultural Council.

Holi Celebration! Saturday, May 17th @ 2 p.m.

Join the Franklin Public Library for a special celebration of the Holi Festival, outside on the Town Common! Music, activities, and of course, COLOR!! Wear something that you don't mind getting messy! In the event of inclement weather, the Rain date will be Saturday 5/31. This program is made possible through the generous support of the Franklin Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Music of Lennon & McCartney, Saturday May 31st @ 3 p.m.

Join us in welcoming Melodious Zach as we jam to the music and history of John Lennon and Paul McCartney. Free

Franklin Library Book Sale

Friday, May 16th, 1:00-5:00pm. Saturday, May 17th, 9 a.m. to 12 Noon

All books are just one dollar!

Bag Sale - \$5 A Bag—Saturday, May 17th, from 1-4 p.m.

Come fill a brown bag with all the books you can!

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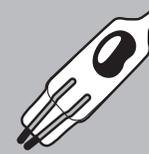
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Q&A with a Former Harvard Academic Advisor: Insights for College-Bound Students

In April 2022, *College 101* began contributing monthly articles to the *Local Town Pages*. Shortly after my first piece appeared, I received a message from Bob Doyle, a local resident and longtime Harvard University employee, who told me he enjoyed reading my work—I was so honored! We’ve been pen pals ever since. Bob held many roles at Harvard, but the one I find most fascinating is that of Academic Advisor. We finally met in person, and I had the opportunity to interview him about a topic close to both our hearts: the importance of first-year college students connecting with their academic advisor.

What is the Role of an Academic Advisor?

- An advisor helps students navigate both academic choices and personal development. The greater role is not answering the students’ questions, but guiding students to discover answers on their own—skills that last beyond college.
- Students should seek the guidance of more than just their official advisor - finding an “unofficial” advisor will provide different and valuable perspectives, and maybe even a better fit.
- Most first-year classmates are experiencing college for the first time, so build a network that also includes upperclassmen and grad students.
- A good advisor should be approachable, open, and provide opportunities for students to discuss their thoughts, courses, and plans.
- “Understand the relationship between your area of expertise and the rest of the world” - your expertise could fit into so many different areas. An advisor can help the student think freely.

What Challenges Do First-Year Students Face, And How Can an Advisor Help?

- The initial challenge is adjusting to unfamiliarity—

new people, roommates, spaces, expectations. Students will need to learn to self-advocate for themselves and be responsible for their schedule, tasks, and life. Join activities to meet people and feel grounded.

- Advisors should recognize the signs of struggle, even when a student won’t admit it. It’s their job to listen and gently offer suggestions—not directives.
- Bob would often tell his first year students they will learn the alphabet, “You already know the letters A and B. You may learn C and D in your first semester.” Students can dwell on disappointment—or figure out what to do next. Talk to their professor or TA.

How Should Students Approach Course Selection?

- Explore. Most colleges allow students to drop/add courses within a certain time period - it is intentional to help students determine course fit. Think of the first few days of a new semester as a shopping period where students attend courses that they are curious about and then make changes.
- Students should not commit to a major until they have explored their interests and have taken a course(s) in their potential major. Most schools offer a “minor” which allows a student to balance two areas of interests.
- Approximately 50% of students change their field of study.
- A good rule of thumb in the 1st year is to take 1 general course, a couple of courses in the prospective major, and 1 course of interest per semester.

How Can Students Build Relationships With Professors and Advisors?

- Go to office hours. Ask questions. Follow up after class. This will help a student ex-



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

pand their knowledge of the fields they are interested in.

- At large schools, students may meet with grad students. That’s still valuable.
- Aim to build at least one strong professor relationship per year. Eventually letters of recommendation will be

needed, and they can only write well about students they truly know.

What Misconceptions Exist About a Liberal Arts Education?

- Many students treat college like a job pipeline. But the

original goal of college was to develop critical thinking and understand diverse disciplines.

- Don’t limit yourself to one field. Take courses that connect your major to the broader world.
- For example, a chemistry student took “The Science of Cooking,” expecting to cook. He didn’t—but he learned the science behind heat and he performed research for his dissertation on how to reverse microwave heating.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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Bishop Feehan Unveils 2025 Legends & Legacy Honorees

Bishop Feehan High School President Tim Sullivan '87 has announced the newest members of the school's Athletics Hall of Fame and Arts Hall of Fame,

along with two distinguished contributors. All will be honored at Feehan's Legends & Legacy celebration on May 21, 2025, at the school's Attleboro campus.

For more information, visit <https://www.bishopfeehan.com/apps/news/article/2059640>.

Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild Plans 2026 Quilt Show

The Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild is pleased to announce that its biennial quilt show will be held on Saturday and Sunday, March 14th and 15th, 2026 at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical Show in Upton, Massachusetts. The Guild has selected "Creating Comfort" as their show theme. This theme reflects not only the members' love of quilting but also reflects the guild's mission and fundraising efforts. Over 200 member quilts as well

as guild challenges and round robins will be on display. Also included at the show will be a special raffle quilt, the quilters' boutique, raffle baskets, and local area vendors. Any local area vendor wishing to participate in the Guild's show should contact Deb Hudgins through the website at thimblepleasures.org or by contacting her by mail at TPQG, P.O. Box 447, Mendon, MA 01756.

The guild has chosen Home Base as the show's special fund-

raiser. All funds raised through the sale of items at the special fundraiser table will be donated directly to Home Base. Home Base is a Red Sox Foundation dedicated to healing the invisible wounds of veterans, service members, and their families through clinical care, wellness, education and research. The 2026 show is being chaired by Gina Brooks, Donna Hopkins, and Val Ogilvie.

Call for Artists!!

1st Annual Fakes & Forgeries Exhibit

Seeking artists to create interpretations of masters' artworks.

Open to all, including students. No entry fee.

Exhibit to be held at the Franklin Historical Museum June 7th-22nd

Registration deadline: May 23rd

Request entry form and exhibit guidelines by emailing the Franklin Art Association Secretary at faasecretary@gmail.com

Enter Today!!

FRANKLIN ART ASSOCIATION

SCAN ME for Prospectus

Party for the Pantry Raises Over \$31,000 for Franklin Food Pantry

The Franklin Food Pantry, which provides food assistance

and programs in Franklin, Massachusetts, is pleased to an-

nounce it raised over \$31,000 at this year's Party for The Pantry which took place on Saturday, March 29, 2025. The ticketed party, which took place at THE BLACK BOX, featured live music from The Pub Kings, J.P. Royer, and Matt Zajac and Friends, as well as a silent auction and numerous raffle prizes.

Sponsors for the event included: Allegra Marketing Print Mail, THE BLACK BOX, Direct Federal Credit Union, Laura and Kyle Juszczyszyn, Middlesex Savings Bank, Raydio, CR Schmall Building and Remodeling, The Baur Family, The Gendreau Family, Colonial Fence, Eagle Stainless Tube and Fabrication, Mike and Maureen Sabolinski, Elemen-Tree House, K Cooks, and Upfront Guitars.

New this year, the event featured a travel auction from AmFund Foundation, which provides fundraising travel programs to non-profit organizations, helping raise crucial funds through unique and memorable travel experiences. Party for The Pantry attendees had the opportunity to bid on eight



once-in-a-lifetime vacations, including trips to Africa, Florence, Paris, Ireland, Sedona, Greece, Scotland, and Portugal. Those who were unable to attend the event but still wish to support The Pantry by purchasing travel packages can contact Julie Manninen from AmFund Foundation at julie@amfund.org.

"We are incredibly grateful for the overwhelming support from our community at this year's Party for The Pantry," said Tina Powderly, Executive Director of the Franklin Food

Pantry. "The generosity shown by our attendees, sponsors, and volunteers will enable us to continue providing vital resources to our neighbors in need." Fundraising events are an essential operating revenue source for The Pantry. Money raised will purchase food and personal care items, pay for the cost of programs and services, and support daily operations.

For more information on supporting the Franklin Food Pantry, or to attend an upcoming fundraising event, please visit the Franklin Food Pantry website at www.franklinfoodpantry.org.

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Franklin Public Schools Receive \$5K for Visiting Author Program

Superintendent Lucas Giguere and Horace Mann Middle School Reading Specialist Erin O’Leary are proud to share that Franklin Public Schools have been awarded a \$5,000 grant from the Franklin Cultural Council to continue the visiting author program.

“I want to thank the Franklin Cultural Council for such a generous donation that will allow us to continue the visiting author program,” O’Leary said. “With their help, we can continue promoting engaging and hands-on reading curriculum that unites the three middle schools in a unique and exciting way.”

The three Franklin middle schools have a long-standing tradition of welcoming highly engaging young adult authors. The program was originally a school-wide initiative at Horace Mann Middle School but spread to all three middle schools in 2019.

The visiting author program is built around contemporary authors whose books are popu-



Remington Middle School teachers pose with author Jordan Sonnenblick, showcasing some of their favorite books.

lar, engaging, and speak to the middle school experience. Reading specialists collaborate with publishers, school and district administrators, the Franklin Public Library, and Plainville bookstore An Unlikely Story to select an

author whose work aligns with Franklin’s core values and curriculum. Previous authors include Aisha Saeed, Jordan Sonnenblick and Steve Sheinkin.

In recent years, the middle school visiting author experience



Author Steve Sheinkin presents to the Remington Middle School student body. (Photos Courtesy Franklin Public Schools)

has been a three-day residency. The author spends a full day at each middle school presenting to the student body, signing books, answering questions, and hosting small group writing and reading sessions. There is also an evening event for community members.

The visiting author’s work is woven into the curriculum leading up to the visit. Their books are used for summer reading, purchased for classroom libraries, and chosen for read-alouds. Teachers utilize the author’s

books to teach lessons regarding figurative language, dialogue, paragraph structure, and other skills.

Given the scope of this endeavor, the schools seek multiple funding sources to sustain the program. O’Leary has been awarded a grant to finance part of the experience for the last several years. And thanks to the Franklin Cultural Council’s grant, the visiting author program will continue in the 2025-26 school year.

Charles River Chorale Celebrates 40 Years with Magical Spring Concert

The Charles River Chorale is excited to present its Spring Concert, *If You Can Dream It, You Can Do It: 40 Years of Making Music Magical*, on May 3rd at 5 p.m. at the Med-

way High School Auditorium. This special event marks the chorale’s 40th anniversary, celebrating four decades of community and song.

For more information and ticket details, visit our link: <https://www.charlesriverchorale.com/tickets> or access the QR code provided.

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Bristol County Savings Charitable Foundation Awards \$2.8M in Grants to Nonprofits in 2024

Bristol County Savings Bank announces that its Bristol County Savings Charitable Foundation awarded a record \$2,868,417 in grants in 2024. The Bank distributed the funds to 265 different non-profits within the communities it serves, including Taunton, Attleboro, Raynham, Rehoboth, Franklin, New Bedford, Dartmouth and Fall River, Massachusetts and Providence, Pawtucket, Cumberland and Greenville, Rhode Island. It also was the fifth consecutive year that the Bank awarded grants totaling more than \$2 million. Since the Foundation's inception in 1996, more than \$33.6 million in grants have been committed to hundreds of local 501(c)(3) organizations.

The Foundation's purpose is to fund the needs that con-

tribute to the economic and the social well-being of the people and institutions located in the greater Taunton/Attleboro Region, the SouthCoast Region and the greater Providence, Rhode Island Region, with particular emphasis in the areas of education and literacy, economic development and housing for the low- to moderate-income population. In recognition of the fulfillment of its objective, the Bank was recently named one of the Top Charitable Contributors in Massachusetts by *Boston Business Journal* for the eighth consecutive year, ranking #35 on the BBJ list of 96 companies that granted at least \$100,000 to Massachusetts non-profits during the 2023 calendar year.



Franklin's Helen Keller Elementary School Celebrates LOVE Keller Day, STEM Day

Helen Keller Elementary School students recently participated in two engaging events — LOVE Keller Day and STEM Day — that brought students together to celebrate neurodiversity, build connections across grade levels, and explore the wonders of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM).

“Helen Keller Elementary School continues to foster a learning environment that values inclusivity, curiosity and innovation,” said Superintendent

Giguere. “Through events like LOVE Keller Day and STEM Day, students are empowered to build meaningful connections and explore the world around them in exciting and engaging ways.”

LOVE Keller Day

During LOVE Keller Day, students sported tie-dye shirts to recognize Neurodiversity Week, embracing the idea that no two people are alike. Students in partnered classes joined together to share how they learn

best, discuss their passions and enjoy reading their favorite stories with their buddies.

LOVE Keller Day events are held throughout the year to create opportunities for students to connect with partner classes across grade levels. The students participate in team-building activities that foster kindness, awareness and acceptance while engaging in meaningful discussions about Keller's Core Values: Caring, Inclusive, Intelligent, Respectful and Unique.

“These celebrations help our students build relationships, develop empathy, and recognize the strengths that make each of us unique,” said Principal Busavage. “Seeing our students embrace these values and create a supportive school community is inspiring.”

STEM Day

As part of STEM Day, Helen Keller Elementary School welcomed Franklin High School Math and Science National Honor Society members to lead students in a series of hands-on, standards-aligned STEM activities. Across four interactive centers, Kindergarten to fifth-grade students explored key sci-



Helen Keller Elementary School students participate in Geometry Bingo during STEM Day. (Photo Courtesy Franklin Public Schools)

entific and engineering concepts through engaging, inquiry-based challenges.

“Our students loved working alongside high school mentors and engaging in STEM challenges that sparked curiosity and critical thinking,” said Principal Busavage. “These activities reinforced classroom learning and encouraged collaboration, perseverance and creative problem-solving.”

Fifth-grade teacher Wendy Greenstein takes a selfie with Helen Keller Elementary School students on LOVE Keller Day. Students in Wendy Greenstein's class partnered with Donna Grady's Kindergarten class and added a splash of color to black and white brains. (Photo Courtesy Franklin Public Schools)



GOOD DEEDS: The Community Preservation Act

By WILLIAM P. O'DONNELL,
NORFOLK COUNTY REGISTER OF
DEEDS

Dear Friends of the Registry, Registry Stakeholders, and Norfolk County Residents, Spring is here, and as many of us take this opportunity to enjoy the wonderful public spaces that the communities in Norfolk County have to offer, I wanted to take a moment and share with you some history and information about the Community Preservation Act.

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) is the result of more than two decades of work to create legislation that would provide all 351 Massachusetts cities and towns with a tool to preserve their most unique natural, community, and physical infrastructures in the face of rapid expansion and development.

The CPA allows cities and towns to establish a Community Preservation Fund to preserve open space, historic preservation, affordable housing, and outdoor recreation. Additionally, the CPA establishes a statewide Community Preservation Trust Fund which the Department of Revenue (DOR) oversees and which contributes annually to municipalities that have ratified the CPA.

The Community Preservation Act was signed into law on September 14, 2000. Today, with the addition of Sheffield, Swampscott, Townsend and Winchester, MA in 2024 there are 200 Massachusetts communities that have adopted this act. 19 of the 28 communities that make up Norfolk County have adopted the law since it was signed back in 2000. As of December 31, 2019,

fees collected for the Community Preservation Act were increased to \$50 for most land documents recorded and \$25 for municipal lien certificates. The Registry of Deeds, at no additional cost to the Commonwealth or local communities, collects these revenues once a land document is recorded and forwards the monies to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue each month. The funds forwarded to the Commonwealth are then redistributed back to CPA communities.

The fees for the CPA are set by the State Legislature on land documents recorded here at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds. The following chart provides an illustration of the funds generated by the CPA in your community based on recorded real estate filings for that community during the 2024 calendar year.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA) SURCHARGES BY TOWN FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2024

TOWN	TOTAL
AVON	\$29,925.00
BELLINGHAM	\$141,225.00
BRAINTREE	\$214,975.00
BROOKLINE	\$300,150.00
CANTON	\$164,200.00
COHASSET	\$71,500.00
DEDHAM	\$151,850.00
DOVER	\$51,450.00
FOXBOROUGH	\$117,200.00
FRANKLIN	\$215,600.00
HOLBROOK	\$81,350.00
MEDFIELD	\$95,800.00
MEDWAY	\$95,900.00
MILLIS	\$84,875.00
MILTON	\$165,375.00
NEEDHAM	\$194,600.00
NORFOLK	\$82,675.00
NORWOOD	\$148,075.00
PLAINVILLE	\$55,300.00
QUINCY	\$452,650.00
RANDOLPH	\$191,300.00
SHARON	\$106,175.00
STOUGHTON	\$193,925.00
WALPOLE	\$171,900.00
WELLESLEY	\$207,525.00
WESTWOOD	\$94,450.00
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Register O'Donnell Promotes Consumer Notification Service

Dedham, MA – As home transactions pick up speed as spring continues and in light of recent publicity from the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) Boston Division relating to quit claim deed fraud, or “deed theft,” Norfolk County Register of Deeds, William P. O'Donnell, today, reminds residents about the Registry's Consumer Notification Program.

The F.B.I. Boston division has reported that from 2019 through 2023, 58,141 victims nationwide reported \$1.3 billion in losses relating to real estate fraud. In the Boston Division alone, 2,301 victims reported losing more than \$61.5 million during the same period.

Deed theft can take different forms. The most common type of fraud preys on people who are in danger of losing their property through foreclosure. The owners are told that they qualify for a “short sale,” a process where the foreclosing lender settles for less than the amount owed on the

mortgage, and that if they sign the deed over to a third party, they can avoid the foreclosure. The owner signs a deed over to the third-party scammer, not realizing they are still responsible for the debt, and the scammer, rather than negotiating the short sale, collects and keeps the rental payments until the lender eventually forecloses.

Another type of deed theft targets elderly people who sign over their property without realizing what they are doing. This is often done by a family member. Deed theft is a serious crime that can result in the loss of one's home and equity. Homeowners should be aware of these scams and talk to a lawyer before signing any papers that have to do with their property.

A growing concern is forgery, where a scammer fakes a homeowner's signature on a deed and records it in the registry of deeds. A forged deed is not valid and conveys nothing. If a buyer or a lender rely on a forged deed

and don't do their due diligence on a property's title, they are out of luck. They, not the legitimate property owner, will ultimately lose any money paid to the thief. Forgery is a felony in all fifty states, punishable by jail time and heavy fines. The court may also require restitution for damages caused by the forgery, such as the costs of clearing the title.

F.B.I. Boston is working with property owners, realtors, county registers, title companies, and insurance companies to thwart the fraud schemes.

“Our mission at the Registry of Deeds is the safety and security of all property records. We recognize that there are unscrupulous individuals who may try to take advantage of the property rights of others,” says Register O'Donnell, “In 2015, we at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds initiated a Consumer Notification Service, a free service whereby subscribers sign up to be notified when any document is recorded under their name. This initiative came about in response to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (F.B.I.) indicating property and mortgage fraud was one of the fastest growing white-collar crimes in America.”

At the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, one can sign up for notification if a document is recorded in one's name at the Registry.

Information on “Consumer Notification” can be found on the Registry website, www.norfolkdeeds.org under the heading “Services.” The Registry Customer Service Department can assist anyone who would like to set up the notification for their property.

Norfolk County Real Estate Activity Shows Mixed Results in March

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reported that Norfolk County recordings for the month of March 2025 indicate a decrease in overall real estate compared to last year, but an increase compared to February 2025.

The Registry of Deeds recorded 7,550 documents in March 2025, a slight decrease of 1% from March 2024, but a 10% increase compared to February 2025.

“Lending activity and property sales and transfers represent a majority of the documents recorded at the Registry of Deeds, and March 2025 showed a slight decrease in both categories compared to last year,” noted Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell. “The slight decrease in real estate activity may be an indication of various economic factors affecting the country as a whole, which are now impacting the local real estate market. However, it is still early in the homebuying season, and this decrease may be a result of potential buyers waiting for more favorable economic conditions.”

The total number of deeds recorded for March 2025, reflecting both commercial and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 1,132, down 4% from March 2024, but up 9% from February 2025.

“This March was a slower start to the homebuying season than previous years, but we are hopeful that activity will pick up as we move further into the season,” stated Register O'Donnell. “Interest rates, inflation, and employment levels are key factors that influence the real estate



market. While interest rates have decreased, encouraging buying, inflation still reduces consumer purchasing power. Employment levels and consumer confidence also play significant roles.”

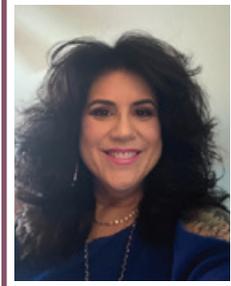
In March, lending activity showed a slight decrease compared to the same month a year ago. A total of 1,065 mortgages were recorded in March 2025, down 2% from March 2024, but up 8% from February 2025. According to The Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, average mortgage interest rates in March 2025 were between 6.63% and 6.67% compared to March 2024 when interest rates were between 6.74% and 6.88%.

The average sale price of commercial and residential properties for March 2025 was \$1,166,825, a 12% increase compared to March 2024, and a 10% increase from February 2025. However, the total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales decreased by 13% from last year, totaling \$519,237,415, but increased 15% from February 2025.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds is located at 649 High St., Dedham. Find them on Facebook at facebook.com/norfolkdeeds and on X and Instagram at @norfolkdeeds. Reach them at (781) 461-6101 or by email at registerodonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.



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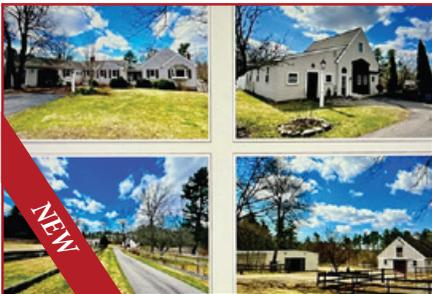


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