

## 'Chick-Filady' meets 'Ziggy' at conclusion of pen pal program

**Mendon Senior Center program connects generations, seeks volunteers**

By Theresa Knapp

MENDON – Every month during 4th grade, 10-year-old Mackenzie Robinson of Mendon received a letter through the U.S. Postal Service from “Ziggy,” her senior pen pal assigned through the Mendon Senior Center; and, each month, she would return the favor under the pen name “Chick-Filady” (an homage to one of her favorite restaurants).

“My pen pal and I wrote to each other once a month throughout the school year,” explains Robinson. “I wrote about dance, piano lessons, school, my family, and my



**Mackenzie Robinson, age 10, of Mendon (aka “Chick-Filady”) with pen pal Cheryl Lemon (aka “Ziggy”) exchanged monthly letters during the school year, and met in person in May.**  
Courtesy photo

favorite things. We asked each other questions in our letters. My pen pal wrote

**PEN PAL**  
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## Upton's Pratt Pond one of many waterbodies affected by harmful algae

By Theresa Knapp

UPTON – In July, Pratt Pond joined a growing list of waterbodies throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to close due to harmful cyanobacterial (algal) blooms. It has since reopened.

Information on [www.mass.gov](http://www.mass.gov) states, “Cyanobacteria – also known as blue-green algae – occur naturally in freshwater, but can multiply quickly under certain conditions, creating a highly concentrated area known as a cyanobacterial harmful algal bloom. Algae blooms can be harmful to people and animals.”

According to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, a division of the National Institutes of Health, “Algae are always in natural bodies of water like oceans, lakes, and rivers,



**In July, a public health advisory was posted at Upton's Pratt Pond which was closed due to harmful algae.**  
Courtesy photo

and a few types produce toxins. A harmful algal bloom (HAB) occurs when toxin-producing algae grow

**ALGAE**  
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## Upton Town Library Calendar of Events

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

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

### Keep Cool and Study On!

The Upton Community Center is a cooling center during our open hours, and we have three quiet study rooms. Drop by and relax in our lounge seating, or reserve a study room online!

### Summer Reading Bingo for Adults!

Summer reading isn't just for children! Participate by picking up a bingo sheet at the library desk. Get bingo and return your sheet to earn raffle tickets to compete for prizes!

### Virtual Program: Your Brain on ChatGPT

Wednesday, Sept. 17, 7 - 8 p.m.

Does using ChatGPT and AI have a cost on our brain cognition? A new study from MIT found the answer could be yes. Hear from lead researcher and professor Dr. Nataliya Kosmyna of MIT Media Lab about this groundbreaking study and its implications. Please note this is a virtual program and it will not be recorded. Registration required to receive a link to the webinar. Register for the program at [uptonlibrary.org](http://uptonlibrary.org). This program is organized and sponsored by Watertown Free Public Library.

### Friends of the Upton Town Library News:

Looking for a beach read or a summer gift? The ongoing booksale has you covered with paperbacks, mystery books and gift bundles!

Booksale proceeds support the discount museum pass program, with two new additions this summer: Plimoth Patuxet Museum and Old Sturbridge Village!

### Adult Events

*Drum Circle with Dave Curry* - Saturday, Sept. 6, 7 - 9 p.m. Ages 8 - Adult

Join facilitator Dave Curry for an evening of freestyle drumming. Instruction and extra drums are provided, but you can also bring your own drums and percussion instruments. No prior experience is necessary, so the circle is suitable for beginners on up to experienced drummers. Registration is requested. This is now a monthly program on the first Saturday of each month, sponsored by Friends of the Upton Library.

*Tabletop Game Night for Adults* - Thursday, Aug. 21, 5:15 - 7:30 p.m.

Join our tabletop game series for adults! Meets every third Thursday of the month from 5:15 - 7:30 p.m. Beginners and experienced players both welcome. Register at [uptonlibrary.org](http://uptonlibrary.org).

### Virtual Author Talk Series

View free online author talks, either live or recorded. Register and get more information at the library website, or at <https://library.org/uptontownlibrary>

Author Talk with **Casey McQuiston**: *Returning to Romance Through Food and Flirty Fun* - Wednesday, Aug. 20 at 7 p.m.

Author Talk with Organizational Psychologist **Dr. Tasha Eurich**: *How to Thrive in a World of Constant Chaos* - Thursday, Aug. 28 at 2 p.m.

Author Talk with **Hannah Nicole Maehrer**: *On Writing Darkly Charming Villainous Love* - Wednesday, Sept. 3 at 7 p.m.

Author Talk with Communication Expert **Jefferson Fisher**: *Argue Less and Talk More* - Wednesday, Sept. 10 at 2 p.m.

### Children's & Young Adult Events

*Read with Copper* - Aug. 14 at 4 p.m.

Join Copper the Therapy Dog and have him be your reading partner! This is a 1-on-1 experience for your child to read their favorite reading material to Copper, so be sure to bring a book with you. This program encourages reluctant readers to practice their reading skills in a judgment-free session. Copper is a 4-year-old large English Chocolate Lab and is certified through Animal-Assisted Therapy Services (AATS) of Mas-

sachusetts. He will be guided by his owner and handler, Wendy Hodge. For ages 5+. Pre-registration required. One time slot per family. This event is a donated service by our presenter.

*Summer StoryWalk* - through Aug. 31

Our Summer StoryWalk will continue through the end of August at the VFW Memorial Playground. Stop by to enjoy the panels that share the picture book for *Hiking Day* by Lizzy Rockwell. On the last panel, click on the QR code to be entered a chance to win a paperback copy of the book for your home library!

### Monthly Library Events - Register now!

All programs and events require pre-registration at [uptonlibrary.org](http://uptonlibrary.org) or call 508-529-6272. Registrations open the month prior to events.

*Baby Storytime* - Fridays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Baby Storytime is for ages birth to 3 and is held on Fridays. This is a 20-30-minute lapsit program featuring stories, songs, and nursery rhymes. Pre-registration required.

*Preschool Storytime* - Thursdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.

Preschool Storytime is for ages 3 to 5 and is held on Thursdays. This is a 45-minute program featuring stories, songs, rhymes, and a craft. Pre-registration required.

*Saturday Storytime* - Aug. 23 at 9:30 a.m.

Once a month we offer a 30-45-minute Saturday Storytime, blending Baby and



Preschool storytimes featuring stories, songs, rhymes, and a craft. Can't join us for our weekday programs? This event is just for you! For ages 0-5. Pre-registration required.

*Music & Movement* - Aug. 18 & Sept. 8 at 9:30 a.m.

This program features Deb Hudgins and is an interactive program, perfect for children and their caregivers to enjoy together. Deb plays guitar and sings, and is sure to incorporate stories, dancing, fingerplays, games and more at each of her fun, themed performances. This program is partially funded through a grant with Beginning Bridges CFCE in Uxbridge. For ages 1 to 5. Pre-registration is required.

*Storybook Art Club* - Aug. 19 at 10 a.m.

This program meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Children will enjoy a picture book and create a craft inspired by the story. This month will feature books all about shells! Pre-registration required. For ages 3 to 5.

*LEGO Club* - Aug. 20 & Sept. 3 at 4 p.m.

### UPTON LIBRARY

continued on page 6

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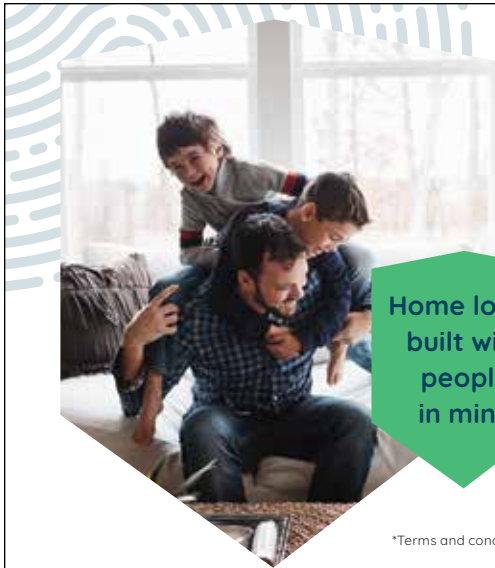
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## Mendon Taft Library holds 25th Great Cardboard Boat Race



The Mendon Taft Library held its 25th annual Cardboard Boat Race on July 23. Twenty-nine vessels entered this year's event. Prize winners were not available at press time. More information and photos will be provided in the September newspaper. *Photos by Ashley Blanco*



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**Reader Submission Deadline** is the 25th day of the month preceding the publication date. For example, items should be submitted by Feb. 25 to be included in the March issue.

**Please submit to:**  
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## Taft Public Library Calendar of Events

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

### August 2025 Adult Programs

#### Upcoming Events:

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

#### Adult Handcrafting Group

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

#### Adult Book Club

The Adult Book Club is led by Library Assistant Kris Heumann. Over the summer the group is reading *Demon Cop- perhead* by Barbara Kingsolver and *The Last Thing He Told Me* by Laura Dave. The discussion for both books will be upstairs in the library on Monday, Sept. 8 at 7 p.m. For additional information on upcoming book clubs contact the library at 508-473-3259.

#### Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club

Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club is back with a whole new slate of books to discuss for 2025-26! Led by Library Director Andrew Jenrich, the club will tackle *There's Always This Year: On Basketball and Ascension* by Hanif Abdurraqib first. Dis-

cussion of the Abdurraqib book will be on Thursday, Sept. 11 at 7 p.m. Other upcoming books in the Footnotes series include:

- *Over the Edge of the World: Magellan's Terrifying Circumnavigation of the Globe* by Laurence Bergreen
- *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us* by Ed Yong
- *There is No Place for Us: Working and Homeless in America* by Brian Goldstone
- *Material World: The Six Raw Materials That Shape Modern Civilization* by Ed Conway
- *A Walk in the Park: The True Story of a Spectacular Misadventure in the Grand Canyon* by Kevin Fedarko

Dates for discussion of the upcoming books are to be determined. The Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club typically meets on a quarterly basis. Those interested can pick up a copy of the next book at the downstairs circulation desk.

#### German Conversation Club

Are you looking for a place to practice what German you remember or to improve your German vocabulary? Conversations in German is no pressure, just fun! Led by Library Assistant (and Mendon resident) Monika Schmid, the group typically meets the last Monday of each month. Registration is required. To register, visit our website.

*Please note: German Conversation Club is currently on hiatus, but will resume again in the fall. Contact the*

*library at 508-473-3259 for further details.*

#### Friends of the Taft Public Library Meeting

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

### August 2025 Children's Programs

#### Summer Reading 2025

Summer Reading continues in August! Although Summer Reading is winding down there is still time to log minutes and redeem for prizes. It's never too late to register. Please visit our website at www.taftpubliclibrary.org for more information.

#### August Events

Aug. 27 – Coffee & Conversations 9:30 a.m. & Puppet Storytime 10:30 a.m.

Thank you so much to the incredible staff and volunteers of the Taft Library. Without each of you our Summer Reading program would not be possible.



Also, many thanks to the Mendon Fire Station, Mendon Police Department, Southwick's Zoo, JJ's Ice Cream Shoppe & Beginning Bridges CFCE for partnering with the library on our Read Around Town Adventures. Taking storytime on the road has become a wonderful part of our Summer Reading Program. Your collaboration is greatly appreciated.

The Summer Reading program also would like to thank The Friends of the Taft Library for partially funding our teen incentive program and the Mendon Cultural Council for sponsoring Jungle Jim and The BaNannies.

Lastly, many thanks to all who participated. Your presence at programming and at the library is a true gift. Thank you for making the Taft Library a part of your summer and lives.

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**ALGAE**

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excessively in a body of water.”  
In July, a public health advisory posted by the Upton Board of Health – at Pratt Pond and at www.uptonma.gov – warned the water was “unsafe for people and pets” and further cautioned:

- Do not swim
- Do not jet ski
- Do not boat
- Do not swallow water
- Do not consume fish
- Keep animals away
- Rinse off after contact with water

A post by the Upton Board of Health stated, “On 7/16/25, we were advised by the MASS Dept. of Public Health of a potential algae bloom at Pratt Pond. Due to this information, we have closed the pond to any form of recreation until it has been cleared by the Mass. DPH. Once water testing indicates the pond

**‘WHEN IN DOUBT, STAY OUT!’**

**www.mass.gov regarding harmful cyanobacterial/algae blooms**

has cleared, we will re-open the beach to the public.”

Visit www.uptonma.gov, for the most up-to-date information.

Other local areas affected by the algae blooms include Blackstone Canal in Uxbridge, and the Hopkinton Reservoir in Hopkinton/Ashland. Visit www.mass.gov for a list of waterbodies “that have been reported to DPH [Department of Public Health] by local, state and federal partners that manage or regulate the respective waterbody.”

# BVT celebrates skilled seniors

## 5th Annual Career Signing Day held at BVT

UPTON – The Cooperative Education (Co-Op) program at Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) held its 5th annual Career Signing Day on May 27. The ceremony recognized the senior Co-Op and career placement students, who proudly announced their career or military plans and signed a commitment letter to work with their employer after graduation.

Vocational Director Kerri Balamaitis welcomed the soon-to-be graduates, parents, instructors, industry partners, and school administrators before highlighting the individual student's achievements in their trade area and the Co-Op program. The Class of 2025's remarkable participation in the program led to unprecedented Co-Op numbers, with 167 students involved. Through

their collective efforts, the students have completed over 65,000 hours of work since March 2024 and earned an estimated 1.2 million dollars in salary. The Co-Op experience is made possible by the growing number of local businesses that partner with the school and students each year, ultimately demonstrating the program's positive impact on the local community.

During the ceremony, employment contracts were signed with representatives from local companies, such as: A Custom Company, ACE Temperature Controls, A&L Plumbing-Heating & Cooling, All Air, A.S. Jones, Bellingham Imports, Carter Electric, Centerline Mechanical, Control Point Mechanical, Countryside Healthcare, Curtis Septic Services, Desimone & Sons Construction, Earthworks, Energy Electrical Contractors, Gi-

roux Electric, Harris Construction, Hydrus Controls, J.S. Mortimer, Kennedy Excavating, Koopman Lumber, LEI Corporation, Patrick Subaru, Paiva's Plumbing & Heating, Precision Home Services, Primetals, Renaurd Electric & Communications, Tegra Medical, Traveler Beauty Company, and Window Logic, in addition to military services, which included the Massachusetts Army Reserves and the United States Navy.

While many students signed contracts at the ceremony, several more who could not attend due to work conflicts are headed directly to industry careers. Joining the skilled workforce, these modern vocational students transition directly from high school into high-skill, high-wage employment and continue to gain experience through full-time employment and on-the-job training.

- Harmful algal blooms are the rapid growth of algae or cyanobacteria in water that can harm people, animals, or the environment.
- Going in or near water with a harmful algal bloom can make you and your animals sick.
- Stay out if water looks discolored, has scum, or smells bad.

Source: www.cdc.gov/harmful-algal-blooms/about/index.html

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**UPTON LIBRARY**

*continued from page 2*

This group meets the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month from 4 - 5 p.m. This group is led by Library Director, Matthew Bachtold. We provide the LEGOs while you have fun building and making new friends. This program is for ages 3 to 12. Pre-registration is required.

**Crafternoon** – Aug. 28 - 3 p.m.

This is a new drop-in program that will meet the 4th Thursday of each month. Children can make a simple craft using materials such as crayons, scissors, paint, and glue. This month, we will make paper fans that look like watermelon slices! For ages 3+. No registration required.

**Tween Book Club** – Aug. 21 at 6:30 p.m.

This club is especially for our middle grade patrons, ages 10 to 14. This group reads popular middle grade titles selected by our members. This month, we will be discussing the title *Ground Zero* by Alan Gratz. We welcome new members all year round! Pre-registration required.

**Kids' Book Club** – Sept. 3 - 4 p.m.

Our book club members explore popular juvenile chapter books on the first Wednesday of each month from 4 - 4:45 p.m. We will be discussing the title *EllRay Jakes Stands Tall* by Sally Warner. This group is for ages 7 to 10. We welcome new members all year round. Pre-registration required.

**Chess Club** – 1st Tuesday/Thursday each month, 2 - 5 p.m.

Learn to play chess or just play with new players. Chess boards are provided. For ages 8 to 16. No registration required.

**Crafting Club** – 2nd Tuesday/Thursday each month, 2 - 5 p.m.

Feeling crafty? Join us as we create new projects each month. Beading, crochet, painting – the possibilities are endless! For ages 8 to 16. No registration required.

**Gaming Club** – 3rd Tuesday/Thursday each month, 2 - 5 p.m.

We've got a Play Station 5 and tons of board games and we'd love to have tweens and teens join us! New games each session! For ages 8 to 16. No registration required.

**Magic the Gathering: Commander** – 4th Tuesday each month, 4 - 6 p.m.

Join us for an introduction to the popular card game, Magic the Gathering - Commander format.

We will be joined by local patron, Josef Vargas, as he shares his knowledge with those wanting to learn and play! If you have a Commander deck, please bring it to play. For ages 8+. Please register.

**Upton Reads Book Group**

An eclectic mix of contemporary literary fiction with meetings on the second Tuesday afternoon and Thursday evening of each month in the Community Center classroom, with a Zoom remote option.

Tuesday, Sept. 9 at 12:45 p.m., and Thursday, Sept. 11 at 6:45 p.m.: *The Measure* by Nikki Erlick.

**Fic or No Fic Book Group**

An adult book group led by Librarian Micaela that alternates fiction and non-fiction selections. Meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:45 p.m.

Aug. 27 at 6:45 p.m.: *Someone Else's Shoes* by Jojo Moyes.

For more information or assistance with any library services, call 508-529-6272 or email mbachtol@cwmar.org

**PEN PAL**

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about her family, her hobbies, and favorite things. She also shared a historical fact and a fun fact in every letter! And I really enjoyed it!"

The program culminated in May with an in-person ice cream social at the Mendon Senior Center. There, Chick-Filady and Ziggy met in real life.

"I got to meet Ziggy at a Girl Scout event, we played a game and had to guess our pen pals based on some of our favorite things," said Robinson. "I was a little nervous but Ziggy was so nice and we had a lot to talk about... It was a really great program and I loved how sweet my pen pal was when we met. She and I exchanged addresses during the ice cream social and we are still writing to each other."

Ziggy's real name is Cheryl Lemon.

"My husband and I participated in the pen pal program for two years prior to the pandemic," said Lemon. "We found this program to be very rewarding. It gave us the opportunity to exchange stories about life experiences with today's youth. Getting a letter every month from our pen pal was like getting a surprise gift every month."

**"Getting a letter every month from our pen pal was like getting a surprise gift every month."**

*~ Cheryl Lemon (aka "Ziggy") Senior Pen Pal*

This year, Lemon coordinated the program, which has been in existence for many years.

"It is evident her enthusiasm is contagious as she recruited many new participants," said Mendon Senior Center Director Amy Wilson Kent. "She did a terrific job coordinating the monthly letters between the seniors and members of Girl Scout Troop #65245."

Lemon added, "We were able to partner with 15 Girl Scouts [in grades 3 and 4] from Mendon's Troop 65425 who meet at the Mendon Senior Center biweekly... Throughout the winter and spring months I had very positive feedback from the Senior participants. They shared stories about their pen pal letters and repeatedly stated they couldn't wait to get their next letter! The Girl Scout leaders spoke of the same enthusiasm from their Girl Scout participants."

With the next school year starting soon, Lemon is looking for senior pen pal volunteers. If interested, call or text her at 508-685-1419, or e-mail cheryl.lemon31175@gmail.com.

**Mendon Senior Center offers Medicare planning**

The Planning for Medicare program, led by a Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts representative, is scheduled for Sept. 22 at 6 p.m. at the Mendon Senior Center and is tailored for individuals approaching Medicare eligibility. Topics include an explanation of Medicare, the Medicare enrollment timeline, Medigap and Medicare Advantage plans, and programs available to early retirees. This session is ideal for individuals who may still be working and looking to transition. Please call Shawna at 508-478-6175 or stop by the Mendon Senior Center to reserve your space.

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# Does the 4% rule still make sense for your retirement?



Mark Freeman, CEPA

## FINANCIAL FOCUS®

Provided by Edward Jones

You may have heard of the “4% rule” when it comes to retirement. The idea is simple: After you retire, you withdraw 4% of your investment portfolio each year. In theory, this helps ensure your savings last for your lifetime. While this rule can be a helpful starting point, it's not a one-size-fits-all — and it's definitely not a substitute for a plan tailored to your specific needs, wants and wishes.

The truth is, how much to withdraw in retirement depends on factors like when you retire, if you'll work part time, how long you expect retirement to last, your lifestyle goals, inflation and whether you want to leave a financial legacy to heirs. So, the 4% rule should be viewed as more of a guide than a strict rule.

Let's start with age. The 4% rule is often based on someone retiring at 65 and expecting to live until about 92. But if you retire earlier, you may want your portfolio to stretch further. In that case, you might need to start with a lower withdrawal rate, maybe closer to 3%. And if you retire later, you might safely withdraw a little more — perhaps 4.5% to 5% — depending on your financial situation.

Your retirement lifestyle also plays a big role. Are you planning to travel the world or spend more time at home? If you expect higher spending in the early years of retirement, you may

need to adjust your withdrawal rate or plan to reduce spending later to balance things out.

Your financial flexibility matters too. If you have less wiggle room with your expenses, rely heavily on your portfolio for income or want to preserve wealth for your heirs, a more conservative approach might be wise. In this conservative scenario, your portfolio withdrawals may be met from interest and dividends. Think of your withdrawal rate as existing on a spectrum from more conservative to less conservative, with your personal situation determining where you land.

Then there's inflation. A well-built strategy usually includes small annual increases in withdrawals to keep up with rising costs — about 2.75% per year. But you don't need to take a raise just because the calendar says so. If the markets have had a tough year or you don't need the extra income, it might be smart to skip an increase. Being

flexible can improve the chances your money will last.

It's also important to understand what's known as your “portfolio reliance rate” — how much of your retirement income comes from your investments versus other sources like Social Security or pensions. The higher this percentage, the more conservative you may want to be with withdrawals.

And don't forget the IRS. If you're drawing from a traditional IRA or 401(k), you'll need to take required minimum distributions (RMDs) once you reach age 73. Your RMD for any year is the account balance as of the end of the prior calendar year divided by a life expectancy factor according to the IRS. These RMDs need to be accounted for in your strategy.

The bottom line? The 4% rule is a useful starting point, but it's just that — a starting point. A good financial advisor

can help you build a strategy that reflects your age, your goals and your full financial picture. By revisiting your plan regularly and staying flexible, you'll give yourself the best shot at turning your savings into a secure, fulfilling retirement.

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

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# Bellingham Harvest Fest returns Sept. 20

Bellingham's Harvest Fest is making a comeback.

The family-focused event is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 20, at Bellingham's Town Common from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. A rain date, if needed, is Sept. 27.

The town's two Baptist Churches — First Baptist Church and Bible Baptist Church — are organizing the day's activities.

Harvest Fest began in 2017 and had a three-year run

until Covid-19 forced the two churches to curtail the program. It's being revived after a five-year absence.

For the youth, there will be pony rides, an obstacle course, gymnastic and karate exhibitions, hopefully a magician and other exciting activities. A Christian concert is also scheduled.

Many vendors will be on hand to promote and sell their products. The churches are still seeking sponsors and vendors.

**The churches are still seeking sponsors and vendors. If interested, call 508-844-1843.**

If interested, contact Pastor Baron Rodrigues at 508-844-1843.

After expenses are paid (police detail, permits, entertainment costs, etc.), any funds remaining will go to area food pantries.

# Alzheimer's Support Group to meet Sept. 9

The Hearts, Hugs & Hope, an Alzheimer's support group at Cornerstone at Milford, will meet on Sept. 9 at 6 p.m. at Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living and Memory Support Community, 11 Birch Street, Milford.

This group for caregivers meets in person.

Dealing with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia isn't easy, so it is helpful to share your concerns and personal

experiences with others who completely understand what you're going through. You will also learn about proven strategies to help you better care for your family member.

Call 508-473-0035 to RSVP or contact Director of Compass Programming Jenn Hozempa at [jhozempa@cornerstonemilford.com](mailto:jhozempa@cornerstonemilford.com) for more information. This group meets on the second Tuesday of the month.

# Town of Hopedale Historic Town Hall accepting bids to purchase and redevelop

The Town of Hopedale announced today that following a vote at Annual Town Meeting in May authorizing the sale and redevelopment of the historic Hopedale Town Hall building located at 78 Hopedale Street, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued to sell and redevelop the property.

Over the past two decades, the Town has explored renovating the property or finding alternative uses for the building other than Town offices due to its condition. Town meeting had voted against comprehensive renovation work in 2011, and a proposal to move Town offices to nearby Adin Street did not gain support. Town offices will be relocated to suites acquired by the Town at 54 Hopedale Street.

Of the sale, Hopedale Selectboard member Scott Savage said that the opportunity "marks a difficult but bold step forward," and added that any future redevelopment of the site will be focused on "honoring our past through keeping the façade of the building intact," a sentiment echoed by residents at Annual

Town Meeting. Chairman Savage added "I hope that along with other initiatives currently underway, this will be a symbolic and strategic move towards a new chapter in Hopedale's long and esteemed history."

When reached for comment, Town Administrator Mitch Ruscitti said this of the disposition and move: "the Town is committed to providing a safe work environment and meeting space for both employees and the public. In meeting with the Health Director and Building Commissioner, it became apparent that the building was no longer suitable for those purposes," adding that "repairs to this building to bring it to modern standards and required ADA safety mechanisms would be nearly \$20 million."

Bids are due to Town Hall on Sept. 1, 2025, at 10 a.m. The RFP and all corresponding documentation can be found at [www.hopedale-ma.gov](http://www.hopedale-ma.gov), COMMBUYS, and through the Central Register. The award will be made based on Selectboard review and projected community impact.



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# Pets of the Month: Squeaky and Shelby

Squeaky and Shelby are 2.5-year-old sisters in search of their forever home. This adventurous duo loves to explore their surroundings. Squeaky is pretty black cat with round eyes and a round little body. Shelby is a cute tortie who is always on the move.

Shelby has the skills of an Olympic gymnast. She prefers high places and jumps from one to the other almost as if she was swinging on the high bars. Squeaky likes high places too. But she's not quite as confident or graceful in her dismount. Both sisters enjoy attention from the volunteers, but Squeaky is more interested in sitting still for some love. Squeaky also adores toys and treats.

For more information on Shelby and Squeaky or the other cats at the Milford Humane Society please visit [www.milfordhumane.org](http://www.milfordhumane.org)



Shelby



Squeaky

To meet Squeaky and Shelby, please visit the Milford Humane Society at [milfordhumane.org](http://milfordhumane.org) or call 508-473-7008 for more info.

## Former Nipmuc students' health records to be destroyed on Sept. 30

This is a notice to former students of Nipmuc Regional High School who transferred to another school or withdrew prior to graduation, your student health records, dated before 2018, will be destroyed on Sept. 30, 2025, in accordance with Code of Massachusetts Regulation 603 CMR 23.06.

Beginning in the spring of 2018, students who graduated from Nipmuc were provided their records at commencement.

If you believe your health record is among these files, and you would like to obtain it, please call the Health Office prior to Sept. 30 at 508-529-2143.

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# Back to school eye health and Computer Vision Syndrome

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

## Don't Wait: Now Is the Time to Book Back-to-School Eye Exams

As the back-to-school season quickly approaches, families everywhere are checking off their to-do lists — backpacks, notebooks, shoes, and clothes. But amid all this preparation, there's one essential task that often gets forgotten: scheduling your child's eye exam.

## Why Eye Health Should Be a Top Priority This School Year

Vision plays a central role in learning. Whether reading from the board, using a tablet, or completing homework, children rely on their eyesight throughout the school day. With digital learning becoming more prevalent, eye health matters now more than ever. A comprehensive eye exam could be the key to preventing learning struggles, missed milestones, or behavioral issues tied to undiagnosed vision problems.

Unfortunately, vision disorders often go undetected. In fact, *1 in 17 preschoolers and 1 in 4 school-age children* have a vision problem that remains untreated — problems that can cause kids to fall behind or struggle academically.

## Book Now — Avoid the Rush

Late summer is one of the busiest times of the year for eye doctors. Appointments fill up fast. Booking your child's exam now ensures they're seen before the first day of school — giving them the best possible start to the academic year.

## The Critical Role of Routine Eye Exams

Eye exams are more than just a quick vision check. They help identify problems early and connect families with treatment options. Regular screenings and exams also help prevent future complications, including potential permanent vision loss. Here's what every parent should know:

## Five Key Steps to Protect Your Child's Vision:

- 1. Know the Value:** Understand how important vision care is to your child's development and academic performance.
- 2. Screen Early and Often:** Make sure your child receives regular vision screenings using trusted tools and trained screeners.
- 3. Refer When Needed:** If a screening reveals a concern, follow up promptly with an eye care professional.
- 4. See an Eye Doctor:** Choose an optometrist or ophthalmologist experienced in pediatric eye care for a full evaluation.
- 5. Follow Through:** Stick to treatment plans and share exam results with schools or caregivers as needed.

## Watch for These Signs That Your Child Needs an Eye Exam:

- Frequent squinting or head tilting
- Holding books or devices very close
- Complaints of headaches or



- eye fatigue
- Trouble concentrating on reading or close-up tasks
- Sensitivity to light or frequent tearing

If you notice any of these, don't wait — book a comprehensive exam as soon as possible. And remember: *When in doubt, moms always know best.* Trust your instincts. Get a second opinion.

## Digital Learning and Eye Strain: A Growing Concern

Screens are everywhere — tablets, laptops, smartboards — and kids spend hours a day using them. This puts many students at risk for Computer Vision Syndrome (CVS), also known as Digital Eye Strain.

## Symptoms of CVS Include:

- Blurry or fluctuating vision
- Eye burning or stinging
- Light sensitivity
- Frequent headaches
- Neck or shoulder pain

CVS typically develops after two or more hours of continuous screen time, especially if the screen is too close, too bright, or used without proper eye correction.

## Tips to Prevent Digital Eye Strain:

- **Follow the 20-20-20 Rule:** Every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20

- seconds.
- **Position Screens Properly:** Keep the monitor about 20–28 inches away and slightly below eye level.
- **Reduce Glare:** Use shades, reposition screens, or apply anti-glare filters.
- **Encourage Blinking:** Remind kids to blink often and use lubricating drops if needed.
- **Use Correct Eyewear:** Make sure your child's glasses are up-to-date, especially for screen work.

Despite the buzz around blue light glasses, there's no scientific evidence they help with eye strain. The American Academy of Ophthalmology does not recommend them.

## Choosing the Right Glasses for Kids

If your child needs glasses, the right pair makes all the difference. Look for:

- Durable, child-friendly frames
- Comfortable fit
- UV protection for outdoor play
- Skip the blue light lenses — focus on fit and function

## Our Commitment to Your Family's Eye Health

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# Mendon Senior Center news for August and September

62 Providence St., Mendon  
508-478-6175

Open: Monday – Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Friday – 9 a.m.-12 p.m. by appointment

### New Players Welcome!

The Mendon Senior Center offers a variety of recreational activities including:

**Cribbage** – Wednesdays 9:45 a.m. The Cribbage group is always looking for new players. Stop in Wednesdays at 9:45 a.m. All levels welcome.

**Corn Hole** – Tuesdays and Thursdays 11 a.m. before lunch.

**Hand, Knee and Foot card game** – Tuesdays 1 p.m.

**Mah-Jong** – Wednesdays & Thursdays 1 p.m.

**Brain Games** – Thursdays 11:30 a.m.

Please check our schedule regarding days, times, and availability. Don't see your favorite game listed, please let us know what you'd like to see offered!

### Lunch Anyone?

This summer we are mixing it up a bit. We have several options when it comes to dining

out. The Tuesday/Thursday Lunch Club at the senior center, a once a month Wednesday Dine-out in area restaurants and a once- a- month trip to the Mendon Town Beach with its snack shack; not to mention our COA Cookout!

### Tri-Valley Lunch Club & Menu\*

Come on in and beat the heat! This August we will be offering one meal per week, alternating our Tuesday/Thursday Tri-Valley meal days. (see schedule below) Please make Reservations 48 hours in advance. Transportation is available. Call the Senior Center to schedule rides. Meals are subject to change. Meal cost: \$3 donation.

Thursday, Aug 14

Baked Potato with Chili & Cheese

Tuesday, Aug 19

Meatloaf with Gravy and Garlic Mashed Potatoes

Thursday, Aug 28

Chicken Cranberry Salad, three bean salad, Coleslaw

\* Meals are Subject to Change.

### Fill-in Lunch Servers Wanted

Volunteers are needed to help serve Tri-Valley lunch once or twice a month on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the Center as well as helping out with special meals. Responsibilities include preparing the dining room for lunch, serving the meal, and cleaning up. Hours are typically 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. and you do not have to make a weekly commitment. If you would like to volunteer or learn more about the lunch program, please call Amy at 508-478-6175. Volunteer forms are available at the Senior Center.

### Beach Picnic

Free van ride to the town beach at 11:30 a.m. with Senior Center staff. Bring a picnic lunch or order from the snack shack. Don't forget your sunscreen! Date: Monday, Aug. 18. Call the center at 508-478-6175 to register.

### Sharing Strength-New Support Program

The Mendon Senior Center is pleased to announce the return



of counselor Gail Bourassa, LMHC to the center to offer a supportive program Sharing Strength. The group will have a focused discussion twice monthly based on chosen topics. Scheduled dates for August are 8/14 and 8/28 from 10 - 11 a.m. Please contact Amy Wilson Kent if you are interested in attending this group.

### Magic Show/Ice Cream Social

The Mass Cultural Council presents "Dennis the Magician" at the Mendon Senior Center on Wednesday, Aug. 20

1 p.m./2 p.m. Dennis has been performing magic with his wife Janet for over 50 years. His shows feature Magic, Comedy, Illusions, Live Animals and Audience Participation. Come be mesmerized! Following the entertaining program, make your own sundae with all the toppings you love. There is no fee for either event. The Mendon Cultural Council is funding the magic show and the Friends of Mendon Elders are generously

### MENDON SENIOR CENTER

continued on page 17

## EYES

continued from page 10

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Don't delay. Now is the time to schedule your child's back-to-school eye exam. Let's make sure your child has clear vision and the confidence to succeed this school year. Call us today or book online — appointments are filling fast!

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# Upton Senior Center news for August

## **Annual Senior BBQ & Ice Cream Social**

Friday, Aug. 15 from 1 – 3 p.m.

Summer may be winding down, but we sure aren't. Join us on Friday, Aug. 15 from 1 - 3 p.m. for an afternoon of great food, music, and fun. Enjoy soft pretzels from Philly Pretzel Factory, a delicious BBQ lunch from Firefly's, and live summer tunes by Bill Reidy. We'll wrap up the day with a sweet visit from the Ice Cream Truck! A heartfelt thank you to FUSE (Friends of Upton Seniors) and the Upton Fire & EMS Association for their generous sponsorship.

Cost for this event is \$5 and must be paid at registration.

Please register by Aug. 7 to reserve your spot.

## **Make Your Own Trail Mix**

Thursday, Aug. 21 anytime from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Senior Citizen's Day is a time to honor the wisdom, experience, and contributions of older adults in our community. This year, we're celebrating with a fun and meaningful twist—a

Make Your Own Trail Mix Bar on Thursday, Aug. 21 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Just as our seniors have led the way through life's winding paths, the Trail Mix Bar symbolizes the unique journey each person takes, blending different experiences, choices, and flavors along the way. It's a simple, tasty way to recognize the richness they bring to our lives—and to encourage others to keep blazing their own trails.

## **Line Dancing**

Wednesdays at 1 p.m.

Our recent Line Dancing class was so popular, we've decided to make it permanent! This class will start with basic steps so no experience is necessary and no partner needed. Just bring your enthusiasm and a comfortable pair of shoes. Line dancing is an extremely fun way to exercise while also reducing stress. These dances will be put to all different types of music. Come by yourself or bring a friend. With a passion for music and exercise Marcus Mancini will be the instructor.

He has over fifteen years in both taking and teaching line dancing. It all started for him with a class just like the one we are offering. Classes are \$5 each.

## **Lunch Trip**

Thursday, Aug. 21 at 12:30 p.m.

Join us for a fun and tasty lunch at Dairy Queen! We'll enjoy classic favorites like burgers, fries, and of course, Blizzards! It's a great chance to socialize, relax, and treat yourself to something sweet. Spots are limited — sign up today!

## **FUSE News**

The Friends of Upton Seniors (FUSE) collaborates with the Elder and Social Services staff to help fund social events, services and programs that enhance the quality of life for Seniors. We are a non-profit and all donations are tax-deductible. We welcome your donations, support and participation! For more info, send an email to: [friendsofuptonseniors@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofuptonseniors@gmail.com)

**FUSE Gadgets for Seniors:** FUSE is providing gadgets free



of charge to Upton Seniors to help with daily living tasks like opening milk cartons and jars. If you could use one of these, call the Senior Center or stop by the desk and ask Natalie.

**FUSE T-Shirts are here:** The shirts are \$20 and will be available at the August BBQ and other events. Sizes available are M, L, XL and 2XL. All proceeds from t-shirt sales support events like the August BBQ and Gadgets for Seniors. Get yours by filling out an order form located at the FUSE Bulletin Board.

## **Upton Food Pantry**

Do you need food assistance? The Upton Community Food Pantry is open to all Upton residents! Hours of operation: Wednesdays 12 to 2 p.m. Fridays 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Are you unable to come at these days and times? Contact us for more information or to set up an appointment 508-529-4558.

The UCC Food Pantry is seeking donations of paper towels, laundry detergent, tissues, sponges, dish soap, gift cards and monetary donations.

# ABMI-TV Concerts on the Grass 2025

## MENDON TOWN BEACH

Wednesday Aug 6. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm,

6:30pm – 8:30pm *Vinyl Echo* (power trio)

Wednesday Aug 13. Free Pony Rides 6:30pm – 7:30pm,

6:30pm – 8:30pm *Alexander's Jazztime Band* (jazz standards)



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# Friendship, talent, and full houses define MPAC's hit production of Mean Girls: High School Version

## Cast features actor, director from Upton

The Milford Performing Arts Center (MPAC) celebrated another milestone with its latest production, Mean Girls: The Musical – High School Version, performed to enthusiastic audiences on June 19-20. The performances drew overwhelming community support, showcasing the talent, teamwork, and enthusiasm of teens from across the region—particularly from Nipmuc Regional High School, whose students made up a significant portion of the cast.

Mean Girls: High School Version is a dynamic adaptation of the Broadway musical that brings the drama and comedy of high school life to the stage with a fresh and age-appropriate twist. Based on the hit film, the show follows Cady Heron as she enters the world of American high school and gets caught between the artsy outsiders and the elite clique known as the Plastics. With catchy songs, sharp humor, and an empowering message about kindness, authenticity, and self-respect, the show was a hit with audiences of all ages.

The cast featured young performers from Milford, Hopedale, Upton, Hopkinton, and Worcester, with many standout performances from students of Nipmuc High School. Their



From left to right: Kaitlyn Allington of Upton and Hannah Le. Photos courtesy of Jennifer Rigdon, Milford Performing Arts Center

strong presence helped anchor the production and brought a deep sense of camaraderie and school pride to the stage. The rehearsal process also fostered new friendships across schools, as many cast members met for the first time while preparing for the show.

“This cast brought so much energy and dedication to the show,” said Director Matthew Fear of Upton. “Working on this show was an immense pleasure. I have met some amazingly gifted people and I can't wait to work with them again.”



Back row from left to right: Kaitlyn Allington, Connor Reynolds, Emma Cotter, Amelia Kimball, Annika Cotter, Riley Moyer. Front row: Addie Wein, Kai Strafello, Hannah Le, Katelyn Boisvert, Cassidy Clemons, Madison Blaney, and Abelia Rigdon. Photos courtesy of Jennifer Rigdon, Milford Performing Arts Center

The production was made possible thanks to a dedicated crew: Natalie Crosier of Upton as Stage Manager, John Slusarz of Hopedale as Technical Director, and Patrick Blaney of

Hopedale as Lighting Director. The family team of Jennifer Rigdon (Producer), Abigail Rigdon (Choreographer), and Arturo Rigdon (Sound Technician), all of Hopedale, played a

vital role in bringing the production together.

“The joy we witnessed from

**MEAN GIRLS**  
*continued on page 15*

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Date	Mendon	Amount
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07/17/2025	85 Hartford Avenue	\$700,000
07/15/2025	47 Asylum Street	\$709,000
07/15/2025	27 Pleasant St, lot 2 (3.5 acres)	\$215,000
07/15/2025	27 Pleasant St, lot 1 (1.5 acres)	\$215,000
07/09/2025	25 Wood Drive	\$900,000
07/03/2025	16 North Avenue	\$190,000
06/30/2025	4 Leonard Road	\$1.00 mil
06/27/2025	146 Millville Road	\$525,000
06/27/2025	14 Lundvall Road	\$1.08 mil

Date	Upton	Amount
07/25/2025	21-23 Hartford Avenue S	\$485,000
07/25/2025	93 East Street	\$1.08 mil
07/22/2025	43 Main Street	\$700,000
07/22/2025	1 Nelson Street #C	\$299,000
07/11/2025	4 Fiske Mill Road	\$605,000
07/11/2025	334 Mendon Street	\$710,000
07/11/2025	19 Juniper Road	\$1,327,090
07/11/2025	8 Chickadee Way #24	\$807,861
07/10/2025	175 Pleasant Street	\$920,000
07/09/2025	25 Warren Street	\$680,000
07/09/2025	7 Sienna Circle	\$693,000
07/01/2025	14 Warren Road	\$489,839
06/30/2025	136 Glenview Street	\$915,000
06/27/2025	Kiwanis Beach Rd #1 (3.53 acres)	\$342,500
06/27/2025	Kiwanis Beach Rd #1 (3.11 acres)	\$317,500

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



The 4-bed, 2.5-bath, 3,372-square-foot home at 136 Glenview Street in Upton recently sold for \$915,000. Photo source: Robyn & Sean Sold My House

# A sizzling showcase!

## BVT students earn 135 medals at SkillsUSA Competitions in 2025

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) students proved their vocational-technical ability at the annual SkillsUSA National Leadership & Skills Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, June 23-27. The event is the world's largest showcase of career and technical education students.

The highlight of the conference is the SkillsUSA Championships, where thousands of outstanding career and technical education students – all state contest winners from across the nation – compete in hundreds of hands-on skill and leadership competitions. Students work against the clock and each other, proving their expertise in occupations such as electronics, computer-aided drafting, precision machining, medical assisting, and culinary arts.

In the third and final stage of the SkillsUSA competition series, BVT students competed with impressive results. Once again, the student competitors demonstrated their career-technical expertise and proudly claimed four gold and three bronze medals. The contestants who medaled or those in the top five who met a threshold contest score for their event as an indicator of proficiency were also awarded skill point certificates.

"Our students welcome the

opportunity to compete at the SkillsUSA District, State, and National Championships against themselves and other highly skilled vocational-technical students," said Superintendent-Director Mr. Anthony E. Steele II. "In 2025, our students proved their technical skills are among the best in the country by earning 135 medals at all three levels."

The following BVT students placed in the top 10 at the 2025 SkillsUSA National Leadership and Skills Conference Championships. More details are available at [www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa](http://www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa).

### BLACKSTONE

5th Place: Haley McKinnon, Photography.

### GRAFTON

Gold: Cooper Often, Mechatronics.

6th Place: Connor McInerney, HVAC/R.

### HOPEDALE

National Officer: Kallie Allen.

Bronze: Ella Foster, Engineering Technology-Design.

### MENDON

9th Place: Phoebe Burke, Robotics & Automation Technology.

National Voting Delegate: Payton Smith.

### MILFORD

Gold: Andrew Dolan, Health Occupations Professional Portfolio.

National Voting Delegates: Emily Kee and Maria Clara De Oliveira.

### MILLBURY

Bronze: Allison Garden, Engineering Technology-Design.

7th Place: Robyn Repekta, Telecommunications Cabling.

### NORTHBRIDGE

Gold: Steven Caya, Principles of Engineering-Technology.

4th Place: Autumn Gromelski, Restaurant Service.

9th Place: Esther Alves, Robotics & Automation Technology.

9th Place: Zabel DerKosrofian, Technical Computer Applications.

National Voting Delegate: Bella Baltramaitis.

### UPTON

Gold: Justin Fransen, Mechatronics.

National Voting Delegate: Madison Denise.

### UXBRIDGE

Bronze: Gabrielle Gannon, Engineering Technology-Design.

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

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

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**MEAN GIRLS**

*continued from page 13*

these young performers—from the first rehearsal to the final bow—was incredible,” said Producer Jennifer Rigdon. “The support from families, volunteers, and staff was inspiring. The organization and heart everyone brought to this show made it a truly unforgettable experience.”

Teen performers shared how much the experience meant to them, both personally and artistically:

“Being part of Mean Girls was so much fun,” said Kaitlyn Allington, 17, from Upton. “It was awesome to participate in a program with so many new and different faces.”

“I loved how we learned the choreography and learning how to tap was so much fun,” said Connor Reynolds, 17, from

Worcester. “I was new and everyone made me feel so welcomed.”

MPAC will be partnering with 140Arts Collaborative to continue to evolve as a community arts leader. Under new leadership and with an exciting new vision, the center is committed to producing 3-4 high-quality performances each year, including musicals and straight plays for children, teens, and adults.

Next up is High School Musical Jr., taking the stage on Aug. 22-23 at Upton Town Hall, featuring young performers ages 8 and up. Tickets are available at [www.milfordartscenter.com](http://www.milfordartscenter.com).

For more information about MPAC programs, upcoming performances, or how to get involved, visit [www.milfordartscenter.com](http://www.milfordartscenter.com) or email [info@milfordartscenter.com](mailto:info@milfordartscenter.com)

*Submitted by Milford Performing Arts Center*

# Bishop Feehan announces fourth quarter Honor Roll

## Casey and Keira Kayrouz of Upton on list

Bishop Feehan Vice Principal for Academics, Charlotte Lourenco, has announced the Honor Roll students for the fourth quarter of the 2024-25 school year.

Honor Roll is a recognition of high-performing students based on the student’s overall average in any given quarter,

regardless of the levels of their classes.

Bishop Feehan has three levels of Honor Roll. First Honors is awarded to students whose overall average in that quarter is grade 93.00 or higher, Second Honors is grade 90.00 or higher, and Third Honors is 85.00 or higher, with no indi-

vidual grade below 80.

The list includes Upton residents Casey Kayrouz (grade 10) and Keira Kayrouz (grade 12) who both received First Honors.

The full release can be found at <https://www.bishopfeehan.com/apps/news/article/2088367>

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# Annual St. Mary's Benefit Car Show & Community Event to be held Sept. 6

**Sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council #1562**

The Knights of Columbus Council #1562 of St. Mary's Parish is thrilled to announce the return of the Annual Car Show & Community Event on Sat., Sept. 6 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Uxbridge High School, 300 Quaker Highway, Uxbridge. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m.

This community event promises a day filled with classic and custom cars, family-friendly activities, local vendors, music, food, raffles, and more, all in support of local charitable initiatives.

Get Involved, support a worthy cause. Knights of Columbus Council #1562 has proudly served Uxbridge and surrounding communities for generations, promoting faith, family, and service. Proceeds from the Car Show and Family Fun Day will support local charities, and Knights' programs that assist those in need.

**Ways to participate:**

- Event sponsorships: Gain exposure for your business or organization. Sponsorships include signage, online recognition, and booth space options.
- Vendor tables: Local artisans, businesses, and community

groups are invited to reserve space to sell or promote their goods and services. Limited spaces available.

- Donations welcome: We gratefully accept raffle items, gift cards, services, or monetary donations to support our mission and event expenses.
  - Attend the event: Join us for a fun-filled day! Mark your calendar for Sept. 6, 2025
- Event highlights:**
- Display of classic, muscle, and antique cars, trucks & motorcycles
  - Family-friendly activities, games, and kids' entertainment
  - Food trucks, refreshments, and local treats
  - DJ music, raffles, and a 50/50 drawing

For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/StMarysUxbridgeCarShow2025>.

Call to Action, be a part of something bigger. Help us build a stronger community—one good deed at a time. To become a sponsor, reserve a vendor table, or contribute a donation, please contact Phil Cieply at 508-509-8870 or [pcieply@msn.com](mailto:pcieply@msn.com), or Jeff Richard at 508-475-8950 or [jlfad5@verizon.net](mailto:jlfad5@verizon.net).

# Milford High to hold 65th class reunion on Sept. 13

The Milford High School Class of 1960 will hold its 65th reunion on Sept. 13 from 1 to 5 p.m. at Restaurant 45 (formerly Sponeri's) at 45 Milford St.

(Route 109) in Medway.

For more information, contact Judy (Villani) Tusino at 774-573-8487 or Judy (Tomaso) Poirier at 508-473-0296.



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# Exsultet! Auditions



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Exsultet! has openings for Soprano 1 and 2 singers for the 2025-2026 season. Auditions will take place on Monday, Aug. 25 at 7 p.m. at First Congregational Church, 725 Washington Street, Holliston, MA.

• Exsultet! rehearsals for the 2025-2026 Season will be on

Monday nights from 7 - 9 p.m. in preparation for our two concert weekends. We typically perform our Holiday Concert in early December and our Spring Concert in April/May.

- To audition, download the audition piece, Seal Lullaby, from our website, and prepare to rehearse and sing it with the group. At the end of rehearsal, you will be asked to sing your part in a trio or quartet. Come prepared to sing, work hard, and have fun!
- Please contact Carrie Klimeczko at [carrie7975@gmail.com](mailto:carrie7975@gmail.com) for more information and to schedule a specific audition time.
- Visit [exsultet.us](http://exsultet.us) to learn more about the audition process.

## MENDON SENIOR CENTER

continued from page 11

sponsoring the ice cream social. Seating is limited for this event. Transportation is available.

### Movie Mondays

Come for a special viewing of movies on the big screen this month at the Mendon Senior Center on Monday, Aug. 25 at 1 p.m. Be captivated by the star-studded *Knives Out* Murder Mystery filmed in Massachusetts – featuring Daniel Craig, Jamie Lee Curtis, Don Johnson, Christopher Plummer and many more! Please call or stop by the center to register for this FREE program. Popcorn will be provided. Feel free to bring a friend and your brown bag lunch before-hand if you wish!

### Eat Healthier on a Tight Budget - SNAP Benefits

Need help buying groceries? SNAP can help! The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) formerly known as food stamps has the following eligibility guidelines: Household size 1/maximum gross monthly Income \$2608. Household size 2/maximum gross monthly income \$3525. If you need help applying for the SNAP benefit, contact Senior Center Outreach Coordinator



Janet Hubener at 508-478-6175. Additionally, the Mendon Food Pantry is open the first Friday of each month by appointment. Call Amy Wilson Kent for more information,

“Garden Party theme. New members are welcome! Call the Mendon Senior Center at 508-478-6175 if you are interested in joining.

### Senior Citizens Day Luncheon

Please plan to attend the annual Senior Citizen Day sponsored by the Mendon Lions Club to honor all Mendon senior citizens, especially Leo and Peg Tetreault this year’s Senior Citizens of the Year. The event, scheduled for Sunday, Sept. 21 at 11:30 a.m. at the Unitarian Church of Mendon/Uxbridge, 13 Maple St., Mendon. Please call 508-478-6175 or stop by the senior center to register for this event.

### Save the Dates:

*Mendon Minstrels Chorus Returns!* Music Lovers Invited!

The Senior Center Chorus will begin rehearsals this September on Mondays from 1 - 3 p.m., starting Sept. 15. It’s not too late to join even if you miss the first few sessions! The chorus and musicians, under the direction of Dave Clinkman, will be focusing on music for the November veteran’s program, their upcoming fall program with a sports related theme as well as a spring

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SPORTS

# Nipmuc's Consigli shines, with a little help from Dad

## Rising senior among state's top throwers

By Chris Villani

Eben Consigli has for years dreamed of competing in sports at the division I collegiate level. Heading into his final season at Nipmuc High, he has an opportunity to do just that. But he admits he never thought track and field would be his ticket.

Under the tutelage of his father, Brian, Consigli completed a junior season with the Warriors that saw him eclipse 170 feet in the discus en route to a divisional state championship, and fifth place finishes at the Massachusetts Meet of Champions and the New England regional competition.

Not bad, considering the year started with a bit of a "slump." Consigli broke out of it with a personal best during a meet against Douglas.

"I just felt really good that day," Consigli said. "Winning states had always been a goal of

mine and placing fifth in New England's kind of opened my eyes that this isn't normal for people to be throwing the discus 170 feet. It's hard to do that."

Although he grew up playing baseball in the spring, Consigli gravitated toward track and field in high school as a way to stay in shape for football season. At Nipmuc, he is coached by his father, a former All-American collegiate thrower.

"It's been good," the younger Consigli said. "There are some ups and downs but, even when we are not at practice, we can watch videos of my throws and go over them and see what I need to work on."

Brian Consigli acknowledged that coaching a child — he previously coached his daughter at Nipmuc — can be a "tricky dynamic."

"It's difficult because you have to make sure you coach everybody

the same," Brian Consigli said. "I think I am a lot tougher on my kids because I don't want anybody to say that I treated my kid better than anyone else, they tend to get the other end of the stick."

Stepping back a bit from his coaching role, Brian said it has been a pleasure to watch Eben rise among a talented group of throwers at Nipmuc. "I couldn't be prouder," he said. "He works harder than anybody."

Eben said he has lofty goals for next season, including pushing his personal best up over 190 feet.

"I need to make sure I am getting stronger and that my technique is perfect," he said. He has already been talking to college coaches.

"I've always wanted to compete at the D1 level, I didn't know what sport, but I didn't think it would be track," he said. "It's amazing to realize that could be me in two years."



Eben Consigli captured the divisional state championship this year in the discus. Courtesy photo

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SPORTS

# Giancola plays big role for Post 59

## Nipmuc student was mainstay on mound

By Chris Villani

Josh Giancola already had a season of legion baseball under his belt when he returned to Milford Post 59 this summer, but the Nipmuc rising senior took his game to another level and became one of the team's most reliable starting pitchers.

"I loved pitching and starting, it was awesome," Giancola said. "Having a great team behind me, they had my back. Whenever the ball was hit, I knew my defense would be there."

Giancola made five starts for Milford this summer. He posted a 4-1 record with a 1.27 ERA and allowed just 13 hits through his 22 innings of work.

"I knew I would pitch this year, but I would say it was a little unexpected," Giancola said of his role this summer.

He pitched in a number of high leverage situations as Milford racked up the wins

during the regular season and ultimately finished 20-0 heading into the playoffs.

"It was definitely overwhelming sometimes on the mound, but I just kept throwing strikes," Giancola said.

Giancola worked hard over the fall and winter to improve. A member of the Nipmuc football team, Giancola credited that sport for helping him strengthen his arm and get his velocity up this year. He has also been working on getting better command of his pitchers, including a slider and a changeup.

"I just strengthened every pitch I have," he said.

Giancola also spends a significant amount of time working out at Cressey Sports Performance in Hudson. Hitting the gym and gaining some muscle plays a big role in both improvement and staying healthy during

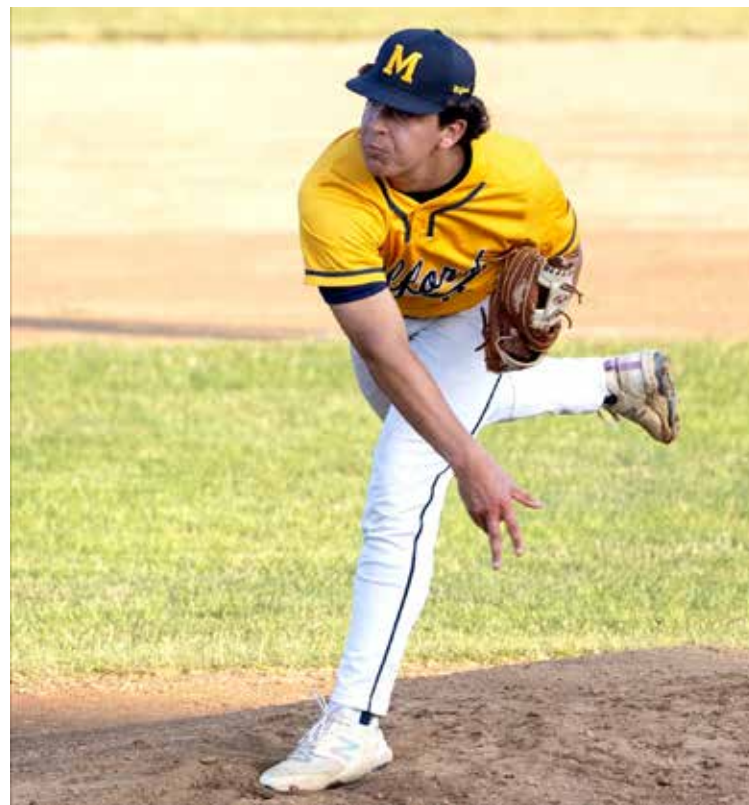
the long baseball season, Giancola said, with the high school campaign rolling right into the summer and the legion season.

Giancola is hoping to be part of a winning team during his senior year at Nipmuc. He also feels like Post 59 has some unfinished business after an early exit from the postseason this year.

"We want to try to get to that state championship," he said. "We have some guys leaving this year, but we are definitely going to be hungry going into next summer."

Giancola is hoping to play baseball in college. Being part of the Milford program has helped him get looks from collegiate coaches, and he also had the chance to take part in the all-star game this summer.

"My coaches have helped me out a lot," he said. "And being on the legion has gotten me a lot of exposure."



Nipmuc's Josh Giancola became one of Milford's most reliable starters this summer. Courtesy photo

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**2024 DODGE DURANGO GT**  
AS LOW AS \$117/WK  
#D14917R • ALLOYS, AWD, 3.6L  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$48,595~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$32,977**

**2022 GENESIS GV70 3.5T**  
AS LOW AS \$128/WK  
#D14928 • NAV, HEATED LEATHER  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$64,700~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,977**

**2023 TOYOTA CAMRY SE**  
AS LOW AS \$96/WK  
#TP5784 • APPLE CARPLAY, ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$38,625~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977**

**2023 CHEVY SILVERADO 4x4**  
AS LOW AS \$127/WK  
#C47486 • CUSTOM, 2.7L TURBO  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$54,180~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,677**

**2021 NISSAN ROGUE AWD**  
AS LOW AS \$71/WK  
#D15340 • SV TRIM, 18" ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$31,710~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977**

**2024 CHEVY TRAX SUV**  
AS LOW AS \$82/WK  
#47621A • ACTIVE TRIM, TURBO  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$28,565~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977**

**2024 TOYOTA TUNDRA 4x4**  
AS LOW AS \$175/WK  
#TP5715 • SR5, ALLOYS, 3.4L V6  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$58,405~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$48,977**

**2022 JEEP CHEROKEE 4x4**  
AS LOW AS \$89/WK  
#25141A • LATITUDE LUX, SUNROOF  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$34,400~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977**

**2022 HYUNDAI TUCSON SEL**  
AS LOW AS \$96/WK  
#TP5647 • AWD, HEATED SEATS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$36,750~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,677**

**2022 TOYOTA COROLLA LE**  
AS LOW AS \$74/WK  
#TP5790 • 30/38 MPG CITY/HWY  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$26,589~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,677**

**2022 HYUNDAI SANTA CRUZ**  
AS LOW AS \$89/WK  
#47004C • SEL TRIM, ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$34,265~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977**

**2024 TOYOTA RAV4 LE SUV**  
AS LOW AS \$110/WK  
#TP5706 • 27/34 MPG CITY/HWY  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$34,960~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,677**

**2022 FORD EDGE SEL**  
AS LOW AS \$96/WK  
#P18138 • 2.0L TURBO, SUNROOF  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$40,395~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977**

**2023 VW JETTA 1.5T SE**  
AS LOW AS \$68/WK  
#D14951L • HEATED LEATHER  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$29,550~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$18,977**

**2021 LINCOLN CORSAIR**  
AS LOW AS \$96/WK  
#P18001 • SUNROOF, LEATHER  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$46,645~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977**

**2022 FORD BRONCO 4x4**  
AS LOW AS \$170/WK  
#C18031 • TURBO, BIG BEND, NAV  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$54,995~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$47,977**

**2022 SUBARU OUTBACK**  
AS LOW AS \$89/WK  
#D15211 • AWD, HEATED SEATS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$34,695~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977**

**2025 MERCEDES GLA 250 SUV**  
AS LOW AS \$149/WK  
#TP5839 • 2.0L TURBO, LEATHER  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$50,800~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$41,977**

**2022 HYUNDAI SONATA**  
AS LOW AS \$82/WK  
#D15118 • 27/37 MPG CITY/HWY  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$28,680~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977**

**2023 CHEVY COLORADO**  
AS LOW AS \$139/WK  
#C5781 • Z71 TRIM, 4X4, ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$44,290~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$38,977**

**2025 HONDA CIVIC SPORT**  
AS LOW AS \$96/WK  
#D15241 • 31/39 MPG CITY/HWY  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$34,190~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,377**

**2022 BUICK ENCORE AWD**  
AS LOW AS \$81/WK  
#P18035A • GX PREFERRED, 1.3L  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$32,225~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977**

**2022 MAZDA CX-5 2.5 S**  
AS LOW AS \$81/WK  
#P17904 • AWD, ALLOYS, SPOILER  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$29,899~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977**

**2024 BMW X1 xDrive28i**  
AS LOW AS \$127/WK  
#TP5673 • AWD, TWIN TURBO, NAV  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$51,595~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,977**

**2022 RAM 1500 BIG HORN**  
AS LOW AS \$120/WK  
#D15138 • 4X4, HEMI, ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$45,710~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$33,977**

**2022 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER**  
AS LOW AS \$127/WK  
#TP5646 • XLE TRIM, ALLOYS, CPO  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$45,775~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,977**

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Mike Penner  
General Manager

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