

localtownpages Hopedale

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Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

November 1, 2025

All-Female Scouts BSA Troop 219 Includes Hopedale Girls

Troop 219 is one of the first all-female Scouts BSA troops in the area and includes members from Milford, Hopedale, Bellingham, and surrounding areas.

Established in 2019, this troop is not led by the supervising adults, but by the scouts themselves. The scouts are given the responsibility and privilege to plan and execute all of their troop activities and projects. In 2019, leaders who had sons previously in Scouts BSA, wanted the same experience for their daughters and decided to start this troop. Scoutmaster



The all-female Scouts BSA Troop 219 in uniform. Photo provided by Michele Duffy

SCOUTS

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Keeping Local News Alive and Communities Connected

By JENNIFER RUSSO

For the first time in our newspaper's history, the cost of postage has surpassed the cost of printing. On average, mailing services have increased in price by over 7% in the last couple of years. While the USPS may require this operationally, it does underscore the growing financial challenges facing local journalism today. Paper, ink, fuel, and distribution costs have all risen sharply in the past year, and while we've absorbed those increases for as long as we could, we now find ourselves at a turning point — and we need your help.

Despite these challenges, one thing hasn't changed: our commitment to providing free, local news that keeps our communities informed and connected. Local journalism is not just about headlines — it's about people. It's about the high school team's championship win, the opening of a new family business, the celebration of a lifelong volunteer, the coverage of town meetings, and ensuring that every story is told.

When you open your community newspaper, you

DONATION

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SCOUTS

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Michele Duffy loves seeing her girls in Scouts BSA gain useful skills while earning their badges, and having fun with their fellow scouts.

For some of the Scouts in Troop 219, they were encouraged to join after watching and hearing about their older brothers going through the same program growing up. Many of the scouts said that “learning about campouts, fun activities, day trips, hiking and regular meetings in both scouts and cub scouts made all of it sound interesting”.

One scout, having been in both Girl Scouts and Scouts BSA, said that while both provided essential skills, she enjoyed how the Scouts BSA focused more on the outdoors and survival skills like building a fire, first aid, and camping.

One priority of Troop 219 is for the scouts to do the planning and executing of their trips and projects rather than the advisors doing the work. In the past few years, the troop has attended the West Point Camporee in New York, gone camping and biking along the Cape Cod Canal, kayaking at Buck Hill Reservation, and attended their annual Week of Summer Camp at Camp Squanto in Plymouth. In addition to these trips, they also go camping every month. At these trips and during their regular troop meetings, the scouts gain many skills that are useful in all areas of life.

Many of the scouts agreed that being in this troop has taught them leadership, teamwork, safety, responsibility, and navigation. One thing shared by the scouts in Troop 219 is their dedication and love for the troop and the experiences gained, as stated by one of the scouts, “Scouts BSA is all that it lived up to be and even more.”

Hopedale Winter Stroll & Shop Hop on Dec. 6

The 14th Annual Hopedale Winter Stroll and Shop Hop will be held on Sat., Dec. 6.

The stroll takes place at many stops along Hopedale Street and Dutcher Street, including many historic buildings such as the Draper Gym, Hopedale Community House, Bancroft Memorial Library, Hopedale Unitarian Church, Union Evangelical Church and the Little Red Shop Museum.

Grab a drink from the mobile Irish pub and a meal from one of our food trucks or Hopedale restaurants and then shop multiple vendor locations that will showcase work from local vintage vendors, hand makers, artisans, food vendors and mobile shops.

Many businesses across Hopedale will take part in the Stroll and Shop Hop with special offers for customers. Hop

on the shuttle bus and visit them! All of this will end in the longstanding and popular town tradition of the tree lighting and Santa visit at the Hopedale Community House.

Check out our website for more information and to see pictures of previous years.

Source: Facebook @FriendsOfHistoricHopedale

Senior Tax Work-Off Applications Available Through Dec. 19

Applications for the 2026 Senior Real Estate Tax Work-off Program are available at the Hopedale Senior Center. This highly successful program is open to seniors aged 60 and over who pay real estate taxes and reside in Hopedale.

The program offers jobs in various town departments. Qualified seniors’ job skills are matched to job requirements. In lieu of pay, seniors who complete the required 84 hours of

service will receive a \$1,000 real-estate tax credit (minus required taxes and withholdings).

The deadline for applications is Dec. 19, 2025.

Application forms may be obtained at the Hopedale Senior Center, located in the Community House, 43 Hope Street. Seniors may call 634-2208 with any questions.

Prior participants may apply. However, primary consideration is given to first time applicants.

No individual is guaranteed return to a previously held position.

All applicants must complete a new application, attach a copy of a legal ID, a recent Real Estate Tax bill, and complete a CORI. Please note, this is a program announcement only. Full details of eligibility, policy and credit calculations are detailed in the application packet.

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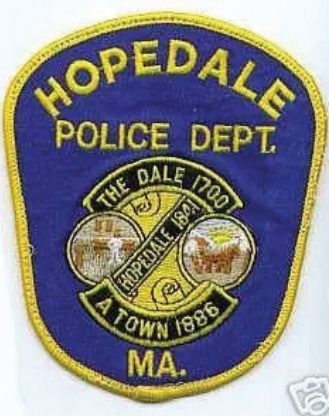
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Hopedale

Police

Logs

The public safety logs for Sept. 1 to Oct. 11 can be found on our website www.hopedaletownnews.com



Community Preservation Committee Still Accepting Applications

The Community Preservation Committee was created to provide funding for quality-of-life improvements for the citizens of Hopedale. The areas that we focus on are Historical Preservation, Open Space, and Housing. Our original call for grants had the cutoff date for grant applications as September 15. However, the Commu-

nity Preservation Committee has determined that we will continue accepting applications for grants.

Information on our Community Preservation Plan, Our Application and Guidelines; and a PowerPoint presentation. The timeline on the presentation is no longer applicable, but there is still good information in

it. The documents are available at: <https://www.hopedale-ma.gov/community-preservation-committee>.

If you’re interested in applying then please email the application to: cpcommission@hopedale-ma.gov.

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Memorial Elementary School News

The Memorial Elementary School faculty was proud to unveil the Center for Innovation, Research and Creativity (CIRC) upon the start of the 2025-26 school year after spending the previous year planning, designing and preparing for this opportunity. CIRC is an enrichment program available to students that is collaboratively taught by members of our Unified Arts Department and classroom teachers. CIRC classes are built into the weekly schedule and are designed to incorporate enrichment opportunities for all learners across four distinct courses: Art, Digital Media, Health & Wellness, and Music. The students will cycle through each of these nine-week courses throughout the school year. Students will be challenged to think critically, work collaboratively and develop their problem-solving skills as they participate in each of the four CIRC courses. All CIRC lessons are presented at a developmentally appropriate level. Examples of the units in each domain are described below.

Students will be tasked with creating a functional and inclusive playground during their Art course. Working in small groups, they will learn how engineering and design impact daily life and our community, conduct research to inform their decision (including matters of safety, materials, accessibility and popularity of equipment), create a blueprint and build a scaled model design of their playground to present to their peers.

Our 5th and 6th grade students will participate in a project based learning unit, Reimagining Draper, during which they will creatively design their vision for how Hopedale can utilize the Draper Factory site. Students



will research the needs of our town, make proposals for the site and design their models. This is an opportunity for Memorial School students to plan for Hopedale’s future!

During the Health & Wellness course, students will be learning about the Six Dimensions of Wellness: Physical, Mental, Emotional, Spiritual, Social and Environmental. Classes will be held either in the CIRC room or the gymnasium during which students will learn about and engage in a variety of activities and exercises designed to improve one’s health and wellness.

Students will form their own band during Music class! They will choose their musical genre, create a variety of musical instruments using materials in CIRC, explore novel instruments such as a glockenspiel, use technology to compose a song, design merchandise and promote their band! Be on the lookout for the next “song of the year!”

We have enjoyed a very successful and engaging start to CIRC. Thank you to many talented and creative staff members at Memorial School for turning this vision into a reality for our students. It has been exciting to see the enthusiasm of our students, and staff! We are also thankful to Toshiba for providing the school with a \$5000 grant for CIRC. These funds were used to purchase a 3D Printer, a Wide-Format Printer, and supplies that are already being utilized in CIRC. Additionally, thank you to the many MES parents and families who donated supplies over the summer that help prepare CIRC for the start of the school year.



DONATION

continued from page 1

read about your neighbors, your schools, and the heartbeat of your area. You’re seeing your community reflected in print - its triumphs, challenges, and spirit. Local news brings people together, fosters accountability, and preserves the stories that make each town unique. Without it, those small but powerful connections risk being lost.

Advertising revenue has always been a vital source of support for our papers, and we are deeply grateful to the local businesses that continue to support us. But as printing and mailing costs rise to historic levels, advertising alone can no longer carry the full weight of production. We recognize that our small businesses are facing similar pressures, and we would prefer not to raise advertising rates too much. Instead, we’re turning to you — our readers — for help.

This November, we’re launching our annual ‘Support the Newspaper’ campaign. Every donation, no matter the size, helps offset the rising costs of printing and distribution, ensuring that your paper remains free, local, and delivered right to your doorstep or mailbox. Your

contribution isn’t just helping to print pages — it’s helping to keep civic engagement alive, preserving our community history, and giving a platform to local voices that deserve to be heard.

We are endlessly thankful for your readership, your trust, and your belief in the value of local journalism. For decades, this paper has been honored to share your stories, celebrate your milestones, and champion the spirit of our towns. With your help, we can continue to do so for many years to come.

Please consider a donation, in any amount. To contribute to our community news, please visit <https://bit.ly/SupportTheNewspaper> or scan the QR code. Thank you for your support. We have been honored to be a part of your community, and we are excited to continue to bring you the news and stories that matter to you each month.



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Rebuilding Self-Confidence, One Wig at a Time

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

Heather Cohen has always loved making women feel beautiful, but the owner of B.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio lights up when she talks about her latest professional focus, making high-quality realistic wigs for women with hair loss and not only helping them feel whole, but beautiful, again.

"There's nothing I would rather do than be here working on the wigs. I loved my business as a whole since the day I opened it," says Cohen, "but the impact I make on hair loss clients far exceeds anything I thought I would be able to do for people."

The stylist herself felt the upheaval of hair loss four years ago, when a medication she was on caused her own hair to fall

out. Not only was it personally devastating, but since her career centered around beautiful hair, succumbing to baldness was simply not an option. That was when she began her several years-long research process.

Cohen estimates she's spent thousands of dollars researching different vendors and materials for her specialized wigs. Since her salon caters primarily to Caucasian women, her wigs are created for that demographic, although, she explains, she learned a lot from a huge black women's hair industry, where wigs are accepted as mainstream. She also learned how to find ethically-sourced hair.

"I don't want to get involved with anyone who is taking advantage of somebody who economically might be struggling, and they're paying them \$2 for their thick, beautiful ponytail. If you see a wig that's inexpensive, the hair is not being ethically sourced or, it did not come from a human head, or they're getting what we call 'drain hair,'" she says.

Cohen is upfront about the cost. "A custom human hair wig can be anywhere from \$1,000 to \$4,000, and it really does depend on the length," she says. That's why Cohen undertook training to receive the correct credentials for a National Provider Identifier (NPI) number, so her clients can use insurance and health savings accounts (HSA).

"There are reasons for hair loss where your health insurance will actually help pay for a cranial prosthetic, which is a really cool word for a wig," she explains.

The entrepreneur spends a lot of time networking with health care providers to build her client base. Others have discovered her through social media support groups and word-of-mouth.

Krista Sirignano found Cohen through a friend, after struggling for decades with alopecia.

"Heather really knows her stuff when it comes to wearing wigs or any type of hairpiece. She took so much time and care with me until we found the perfect fit that made me feel comfortable and really good about myself," she says.



Heather Cohen, owner of b.LUXE Hair & Makeup Studio in Medway, is passionate about helping women with hair loss come out of hiding.

Rhonda Parker, whose hair had also thinned due to medications, had tried synthetic wigs, but "after seeing how really beautiful and natural the human hair toppers and wigs looked on, I decided to go that route. On my way home from B. LUXE I stopped by my daughter's house, and she thought my hair looked beautiful, not even realizing it was a topper. As I am always self-conscious, that was the best feeling ever!"

"I always tell people when you first wear alternative hair, it's like exercising a muscle. The more you do it, the easier it gets," says Cohen. "And nobody knows, because nobody is as critical of you as you."

This niche takes commitment, however.

"You can't dabble in wigs," says Cohen, "It's all or nothing, because my wig clients truly need a partner. They need to be able to call me on Friday morning and say, 'I can't get this wig on right. It's crooked. I need to come in today,' and I have to be available to them. You really need to make the decision that you're going to leave the chair behind."

Someday, though, Cohen hopes to train stylists, and by 2026, she envisions her own brand of wigs, noting, "I feel like I've definitely cracked the code on like what feels comfortable, what feels good, what looks natural, and what stays on, and I want to be able to create that line and be able to give it to everybody."

Cohen has employed her new skills for breast cancer organizations such as the Susan B. Komen Foundation (www.komen.org), and the Gloria Gemma (www.gloriagemma.org).

This month, she'll work with Runway for a Cause (<https://runwayforacause.org>), currently planning its annual NYC fashion show.

Cohen feels immense reward from her new career focus, receiving a sense of giving back.

"Working with hair loss clients and giving them back that level of self-confidence makes me feel like I'm paying the universe back for all of the good that has happened to me," she says, "It's really amazing to help people just feel better and know they don't have to hide."

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Clear the Clutter this Fall with Affordable Junk

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 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

Business spotlight

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!

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National ‘Let Grow’ Program Takes Root at Bright Beginnings Center

Beginning in October, the Bright Beginnings Center, preschool for Hopedale Public Schools, started partnering with families to introduce the Let Grow program, an innovative national movement designed to nurture independence, confidence, and resilience in children of all ages.

The *Let Grow* initiative was co-founded by NYU Professor Jonathan Haidt, author of the bestselling book *The Anxious Generation*. Haidt began the program after observing what he described as “the increasing fragility of young people on campus.” As more formal, adult-directed activities have taken the place of child-directed, independent free time after school, there has also been a shift in the emotional makeup of our children. He believes that today’s children are growing up with less unstructured play and fewer opportunities to take manageable risks, an absence that leaves them unprepared to face frustration, discomfort, and even open dialogue.

“The Let Grow movement was born to help children build the confidence and resilience they need to thrive,” Haidt explains. Through simple, developmentally appropriate experiences, children learn to trust their own abilities and discover the satisfaction of independence.

Co-founder and psychologist Peter Gray adds, “Children who have more opportunities than others for independent activities are not only happier in the short run, because the activities engender happiness and a sense of trustworthiness and competence, but also happier in the long run, because independent activities promote the growth of mental capacities for coping effectively with life’s inevitable stressors.”

At the Bright Beginnings Center, the *Let Grow* philosophy is being embraced both in classrooms and at home. Families are invited to take part by offering preschoolers optional opportunities for age-appropriate independence. These might include moments of independent play,



Bright Beginnings Center students participate in Let Grow program. Courtesy photo

self-care tasks such as putting on their own shoes or zipping their coats, or helping with simple household chores like unloading the silverware from the dishwasher.

Educators at the Bright Beginnings see these experiences as essential steps in early childhood development, helping children learn responsibility, problem-

solving, and perseverance. “Giving young children the chance to try, make mistakes, and succeed on their own is one of the greatest gifts we can offer,” said BBC Principal Kristen Poisson. “It’s how they learn confidence, creativity, and resilience.”

Although *Let Grow* is primarily focused on the K-12 population, BBC has modified the materials

for their preschool population in an effort to set their students up for success early on. As Poisson says, “At the core of all we do in preschool is providing early gains for later success. The social emotional foundation is so important because it sets the stage for everything else. Children can’t truly be successful with academics if their social emotional wellbeing is not in place and that’s what we are trying to do.”

October presented BBC families with their first opportunity to participate in the month-long Let Grow initiative. Poisson said there will be three other opportunities throughout the school year with new “challenges” for students and their families to try.

As the *Let Grow* program takes root in Hopedale, BBC hopes it will inspire families to see independence not as something to fear, but as something to celebrate, a key part of growing strong, capable, and happy children.

Submitted by Bright Beginnings Center

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5th Annual Growing Minds Fair on Nov. 19

The Growing Minds Fair is back for its 5th year at Hopedale Jr. Sr. High School, on Nov. 19.

This hands-on fair event introduces elementary school students in grades K-6 to a wide variety of careers through fun, interactive, activities. This year, the fair will expand past the STREAM acronym and into The National Career Clusters, in order to expose students to even more industries.

One station will feature Decorate your Own Piggy Bank, which will help students learn more about the Investing In The

Future cluster and related careers. Another station related to careers in the Caring For Communities will include Kindness Cards.

The team of event planners are made up of seniors, Kate Friesema and Gabby Rinehart alongside junior, Josie Fleming.

The fair will be sponsored for the fifth year by Children Across America, which is a non-profit organization who strives to bring educational opportunities and equal access to healthcare to students everywhere.

Join us on Nov. 19 at 2:30 pm in Hopedale Jr. Sr. High School cafeteria.

High school student volunteers will help facilitate the STREAM activities related to each cluster and create a hands-on experience for the students. We hope to see you there!

Please reach out to Kate Friesema (friesemak26@hopedaleschools.org) or Hopedale DECA (deca@hopedaleschools.org) if you have any questions.





Where is Hopedale's best fall foliage?

We're looking for Hopedale's best fall foliage photos. Share yours with us on Facebook @HopedaleTownNews on the pinned post, or email them to editor@localtownpages.com, and we'll post them for you.

Photo: Dudley Road by Theresa Knapp

Hopedale Day in the Park 2025

The 45th Hopedale Day in the Park was held on Sat., Sept. 20, on the grounds of the Hopedale Community House and the Hopedale Unitarian Church.

It was a beautiful sunny day for attendees to enjoy the food and many activities from crafters and vendors. Entertainment was provided by DJ Mike Rutkowski, Animal Farm Petting Zoo, and Rainforest Reptiles. Vehicles from the Hopedale Highway and Hopedale Fire Departments were on display, and there was a special appearance by “Dunkin” the Police Department comfort dog.

A juried art show was on display in the gym, and many classes from the Jr-Sr high school and other organizations provided games for the kids.

The Hopedale Cultural Council wishes to thank the Community House, the Unitarian Church, sponsors, and volunteers who made this day successful.

Submitted by Hopedale Cultural Council

The 2025 Hopedale Day in the Park Art Show was judged by Sarah Alexander of the Hopkinton Center for the Arts.

Winners include:

Watercolor:

- 1st Place: Deborah Bottomley
- 2nd Place: Cindy Ward

Mixed Media:

- 1st Place: Roberta Ciaramicoli
- 2nd Place: Roberta Ciaramicoli
- Honorable Mention: Donna Merrill

Acrylic/Oil:

- 1st Place: Donna Merrill
- 2nd Place: Judith Belben
- Viewer's Choice: Libia Goncalves

Photography:

- 1st Place: Samuel Hockenbury
- 2nd Place: Billi Manning

Purchase Prize Awards:

- Milford Federal Bank to Linda Massey for “The Bridge”
- Frank's Appliance to Deborah Bottomley for “Hopedale Pond Peace”
- Bright Insurance to Marilyn Rocks for “Vibrant Vermillions”
- PINZ gift certificate won by Barbara Castonguay

Special Town Meeting to be Held on Nov. 18

Citizen Petition seeks to increase Select Board to five members

By THERESA KNAPP

A Special Town Meeting will be held on Tues., Nov. 18, at 7 p.m. at the Hopedale Community House, 43 Hope Street.

The warrant can be found at www.hopedale-ma.gov, and contains 12 articles related to money transfers and capital requests, veterans' tax abatement annual cost of living increase, capital planning related to 150-154 Mendon Street, and acquiring condos at 54 Hopedale Street for town purposes.

There is also a Citizen Petition to increase the Hopedale Select Board from three members to five.

Source: www.hopedale-ma.gov

Medicare Open Enrollment through Dec. 7

Medicare Open Enrollment is now through December 7, and the Hopedale Senior Center is your local resource for Medicare information. They can answer questions like:

1. Would you like to review your current coverages?
2. Are you a caregiver or an individual trying to assist a family member with their Medicare coverage and associated supplemental plan options?
3. Are you getting ready to transition to coverage under the Medicare System?

For assistance or more information, call 508-634-2208 and ask for a SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) appointment.

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'The Outsiders' to be performed Nov. 21-22

Join the talented students of Hopedale Jr./Sr. High School's Drama Club as they bring to life 'The Outsiders,' S.E. Hinton's creative, emotional, and hard-hitting coming-of-age story of rival street gangs in late 1960's Tulsa, Oklahoma.

Step back in time and revisit the world of the Greasers, the grittier, more grounded counterparts to the upper-class Socs, and share their experiences struggling to survive in a world of haves and have-nots.

The stage version of this landmark novel will be performed Fri., Nov. 21, at 7 p.m. and Sat., Nov. 22, at 7 p.m. in the Dennett Auditorium at Hopedale High School. Tickets will be available online and at the door before both performances.

Submitted by Hopedale Friends of Music



Dan Kelly will play the part of teacher, Mr. Syme, in 'The Outsiders' later this month.



Devon Thomson, Alex Tramboulakis, Turo Rigdon, and Rose Deering at rehearsal for 'The Outsiders' to be performed on Nov. 21 and Nov. 22. Courtesy photos

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Ariana Raddi and Mia Picanso at rehearsal at Hopedale Jr./Sr. High School.

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Your Money, Your Independence

Use November to Finalize Year-End Success and Plan for 2026

**Glenn Brown, CFP**

November is a pivotal month for financial planning — the time to measure progress, make final strategic tax decisions for 2025, and prepare for 2026. Wait until December, and your finances might get lost somewhere between pumpkin pie and ugly holiday sweaters.

Here's what you do now to stay in control.

1. Review Your Planning Goals

Have you met savings and investment targets? Paid down debt? Improved spending habits? Reviewing your progress helps identify what to accelerate before December 31 and where to focus in 2026.

2. Tax Planning Strategies

November is ideal for evaluating tax opportunities while there's still time to act.

- Does a Roth conversion or switching future 401(k) contributions to Roth make sense?
- If converting, what's your projected 2025 tax bracket, and how much room remains before moving up a bracket?
- Are you or a grandparent planning to gift more than \$19,000 to a child's 529 Plan?
- Are you self-employed and opening a Solo 401(k)? The plan must be created by December 31, though contributions can be made until your 2026 tax-filing deadline.

Regulatory Update & Gifting: The OBBB Act of 2025 made many TCJA provisions permanent, including lower income tax brackets and the higher standard deduction, so the expected 2026 "rate reset" won't occur. Some temporary provisions — like higher SALT deduction limits and expanded child/education incentives —

phase down later. Consider whether realizing income, Roth conversions, or charitable deductions in 2025 could improve your long-term tax plan.

The annual gift tax exclusion remains \$19,000 per recipient for 2025, and the federal lifetime gift and estate tax exemption rises to \$15 million per individual starting January 1, 2026. The top estate and gift tax rate stays 40%.

3. Open Enrollment and Workplace Benefits

Open enrollment is your yearly chance to review benefits:

- Does your health plan still meet your needs?
- Should you fund an HSA or FSA for pre-tax medical savings?
- Do supplemental life, disability, or dependent care benefits make sense?

Use Your FSA Before It Expires: FSAs are "use-it-or-lose-it." For 2025, employers may allow up to \$660 to carry over into 2026, or a 2½-month grace period—not both. If you don't use it, it's gone — unlike that leftover Halloween candy you somehow keep eating through March.

4. Evaluate Your Investment Portfolio

Review your asset allocation and rebalance if needed. Diversification across asset classes — not just equities — helps manage risk.

If nearing retirement or expecting major expenses, plan how to access funds efficiently. Tailor your strategy by account type (taxable, traditional, Roth, HSA) to balance liquidity, growth, and tax efficiency.

5. Cash Flow & Emergency Savings

Review cash flow and savings. Retirees using a Bucket Strategy should replenish cash to cover short-term income gaps over 2–3 years. Working individuals should maintain 3–4 months of liquidity and access to credit (e.g., HELOC) for unexpected expenses.

6. Don't Forget Your RMDs

For 2025, the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) age remains 73. Inherited IRAs from non-spouses after 2019 require annual RMDs within the 10-year rule. Penalties have been waived through 2025 but take effect January 1, 2026.

Conclusion

November is a month for reflection, gratitude, and preparation. Reviewing finances now can set you up for a stronger 2026 — and help you avoid that awkward moment when you realize you splurged on "holiday gifts" for yourself.

If you're unsure where to start, connect with your Certified Financial Planner® to finish 2025 strong and position yourself for success in the year ahead.

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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Camera Club to Meet in November

The Stony Brook Camera Club meets in-person and/or virtually on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. from September to June. November's meetings include:

- Nov. 6: Member competition (Hybrid)
- Nov. 13: Program: Digital Apps for Planning Photo Shoots (Zoom)
- Nov. 20: Image Study (Hybrid)

In-person meetings are held at the Anglican Church of the Redeemer, 195 Main Street, Franklin. Our meetings feature speakers, competitions, image studies, and discussions of general interest. We also sponsor a number of photography activities and workshops throughout the year. SBCC includes and welcomes members of all abilities.

See our website: stonybrookccc.com for a calendar of events and membership information.

Submitted by The Stony Brook Camera Club

Hear One of the Oldest Church Organs in New England on Sundays

Special presentation, recital on Nov. 9

This year, the William Goodrich organ at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wrentham is 200 years old.

Originally built in 1825 for the Universalist Church in Providence, Trinity Church has been the organ's home since 1915.

To celebrate this milestone, the church is presenting opportunities to hear this amazing instrument. The events will be held at the church on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m. Following each event, refreshments will be served in the church parish hall. There is no admission charge, but a donation to support the maintenance of the organ is requested.

On Nov. 9, prominent Boston-area organist Peter Sykes will present

a recital illustrating the organ's full potential as a solo instrument. Mr. Sykes is a well-known performer on keyboards of all types and has been Director of Music at First Church in Cambridge since 1986. He is a teacher and recording artist and is currently Associate Professor of Music and Chair of the Historical Performance Department at Boston University. The recital will be preceded by a presentation about the organ's history and its builder, William Marcellus Goodrich. The presentation will be given by Matthew Bellocchio of Andover Organ Company, which has maintained the instrument since 1968.

On Nov. 16, there will be a Four-Person Organ Recital. This recital brings together four musicians with strong connections to Trinity Episcopal Church "back home" to celebrate their associations with this instrument. The performers are Lorna Russell, Organist Emerita and former Director of Music at Trinity Church; Philip Hall, pianist and substitute organist at the church; David Burnham, current Director of Music at St. Gabriel's Church in Marion, Mass.; and Rick Duthe, current Director of Music at the church.

Please join us for these events as we celebrate an instrument that has been making good music for 200 years! We look forward to seeing you there.

Bancroft Memorial Library

Library News

The Library will be closed on Tuesday, November 11th for Veterans Day. The Library will be open from 10am-2pm on Wednesday, November 26th and will be closed Thursday, November 27th for the Thanksgiving holiday.

Cribbage Tournaments

We are excited to partner with Blackstone Valley Libraries to host Cribbage Tournaments! Whether you're a seasoned pro or a beginner, this event is open to players of all levels. Enjoy an evening of strategy, fun, and great company! Registration is mandatory; please contact the hosting Library directly to sign up.

At Upton Public Library, Wednesday, November 19th 5:30-7:30pm

At Shrewsbury Public Library, Wednesday, December 3rd 5:30-7:30pm

Helen Symonds Book Group – Wednesday, November 5th at 1:00pm

The group will be discussing

The Wedding People by Alison Espach.

Community Conversations – Wednesday, November 5th at 6:30pm

Community Conversations will meet in the Program Room to talk about “Election Wrap Up.” This meeting can be attended via Zoom; please email kbethel-penny@cwmar.org to request the link.

Get help with Jenna – Tuesday, November 18th from 10:30am-12:30pm

Need help with applications or accessing support services? Jenna, a Community Health Worker with the Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health, is here to help! She works closely with the Hopedale Board of Health and has a Master’s degree from Nichols College, along with extensive experience in healthcare and human services. Whether you need assistance with applications for MassHealth, WIC, Fuel Assistance, or Medicare – or you’re looking for support with past-due bills or navigat-

ing life’s challenges – Jenna can provide guidance. Schedule a FREE 30-minute appointment with Jenna through the Library’s Calendar of Events on the website, or call the Library at (508) 634-2209.

Maker Monday – Monday, November 17th at 6:00pm

This month the adult crafting workshop is Felting! Registration is required using your library card. Please register online on the Library website under Calendar of Events or call the Library at (508) 634-2209.

Drop in Cribbage – Fridays 11/7, 11/14, 11/21 & 11/28 at 1:30pm

Join us every Friday in the Program Room where we offer a relaxed, come-when-you-can atmosphere to enjoy friendly games with players of all levels.

News from the Friends of the Hopedale Library:

The next Friends of the Hopedale Library Meeting is Wednesday, November 12th at 6:30pm in the downstairs Program Room.

Beehives and Their Importance to Man – Monday, November 3rd at 6:00 pm

The Friends of the Hopedale Library are pleased to present veteran beekeeper Kenneth Warhol as he takes us on a dive into the beehive to better understand bee society and their importance to man. Learn about the challenges facing bees and the hobby of beekeeping. This program includes a tasting of different honeys from around the world. Please register online on the Library website under Calendar of Events or call the Library at (508) 634-2209

Craft Swap – Saturday, November 8th from 10:30am – 1:30pm

The Friends of the Hopedale Library are hosting a Craft Swap on Saturday, November 8th in the downstairs Program Room. No need to bring something to take something — everyone is welcome! We’re accepting all types of arts and crafts supplies, including kits, equipment, and tools. Items can be new, used, or

opened, as long as they’re clean and in usable condition. Be sure to bring a bag! Can’t make it that day? No problem! You can drop off your donations at the library anytime during regular hours.

Book Donation Day – Wednesday, November 19th from 5:30-7:30pm

The Friends of the Hopedale Library would love your like-new books for our Ongoing Book Sale. Children’s books of any age are welcome. Due to space constraints, we ask that adult books be published within the last 10 years or later. Unfortunately, we cannot accept old books, textbooks, or cookbooks. We depend on books in saleable condition to raise money to support our programming.

Ongoing Book Sale

Did you know that you can support the Friends of the Hopedale Library anytime the Library is open by shopping at the Ongoing Book sale? We offer a selection of adult and children’s

LIBRARY

continued on page 11

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LIBRARY

continued from page 10

titles, and even puzzles! You can find the sale area downstairs just outside the Program room. All monies raised go back to the Bancroft Memorial Library to pay for children's and adult programs, museum passes and other expenses not covered by the library budget. Thank you for your support!

About the Friends of the Library

The Friends of the Hopedale Library, founded in 1983, is an active volunteer, non-profit organization with a town-wide membership and a representative executive board. We work with the library staff and the trustees to support the library in providing funds for equipment, materials, and programs not covered by the library's regular operating budget. The Friends of the Hopedale Library meets the second Wednesday of the month, September through June at 6:30pm. New members and ideas are always welcome.

News from the Marjorie Hattersley Children's Room:

Veteran's Recognition Activity – Saturday, November 1st from 10:00am-1:00pm

Drop in the library and make a special project to thank a Veteran for their service.

Tummy Time Play – Tuesdays 11/4, 11/18 & 11/25 at 10:00am, ages 0-18 months

Join us for some infant fun in a safe environment! Along with a story there will be fun, developmentally appropriate toys that encourage gross motor development. Drop in!

Toddler Tunes – Thursdays 11/6, 11/13 & 11/20 at 10:00am, ages 18 mos– 3 years

This program is perfect for energetic toddlers! Along with a story, we will work on gross motor skills and play with balls, a parachute, instruments, bean bags, scarves and more. Drop in!

Movie Matinee – Saturday, November 15th from 11:00am-1:00pm

Join us for a movie at the Library! Bring some snacks, a cozy blanket, get comfy and enjoy a family friendly flick!

Volunteer Saturdays for High School Students – Saturday, November 22nd 11:00am-1:00pm

Each month there will be an opportunity for high school students to earn 2 hours of volunteer time from 11am - 1pm. Registration is required. Please

register online on the Library website under Calendar of Events or call the Library at (508) 634-2209. We will provide all necessary supplies, you just bring your energy and motivation.

Genre Book Club

This is a book club for readers of all ages who want to discover what they love about reading! With help from Miss Laura, you will find the perfect-for-you book in the genre of your choice. Each time you explore a new genre, you'll earn a colorful genre badge to add to your own personalized bookmark - collect them all as you read your way through different types of stories. There are no required meetings - just sign up with Miss Laura, read at your own pace, and earn badges as you go. It's reading made fun, flexible, and full of discovery!

B.A.S.H. (Bancroft After School Hangout)

B.A.S.H. is a drop-in program for children in grades 4–6. It runs weekly from 2:30pm to 4:00pm Monday through Thursday. Students can walk to the Library from the elementary school and play video and board games, use library laptops or get creative with arts and crafts. This program offers a fun and safe way for kids to socialize after school in a positive environment. Children must be able to contact a parent,

Honoring Our Veterans

Ceremony Thursday Nov. 6, 2025

Hopedale Community House - 9:00 am

Please join us at the Hopedale Community

House for our annual ceremony.

Light refreshments at the Senior Center follow the program.



guardian, or caregiver in case of emergency and are expected to demonstrate appropriate behavior while in the Library.

For updates throughout the month, Friend us on Facebook

and sign up at www.wowbrary.org to discover the Library's newest books, movies and music. Our webpage is www.bancroft-memoriallibrary.org

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Bursts of color from flowers, flags and changing leaves honor loved ones in Hopedale Village Cemetery in mid-October.

Photo credit: Theresa Knapp

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Living Healthy

What It Is and How to Treat It

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

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of preventable blindness, affecting millions of people worldwide. Often called the “silent thief of sight,” glaucoma usually develops slowly and without symptoms. By the time people notice vision changes, significant and irreversible damage may already have occurred.

So, what exactly is glaucoma, and how is it treated today? Let’s take a closer look at this common but serious eye condition—and the many advanced treatments now available.

What Is Glaucoma?

Inside your eye, a clear fluid called aqueous humor circulates to nourish tissues and maintain healthy pressure. Normally, this fluid drains through tiny channels. In glaucoma, those channels become blocked or don’t work properly. Pressure builds up and damages the optic nerve—the

cable that carries visual signals from your eye to your brain.

The most common type, called open-angle glaucoma, develops slowly over time. Other forms, like angle-closure glaucoma or normal-tension glaucoma, are less common but can also cause vision loss.

How Is Glaucoma Detected?

Because glaucoma often has no warning signs, regular eye exams are essential. Your eye doctor can measure your eye pressure, examine your optic nerve, perform a visual field test, and use imaging (like OCT scans) to look for early damage. Detecting glaucoma early is the best way to preserve your vision.

Treatment Options

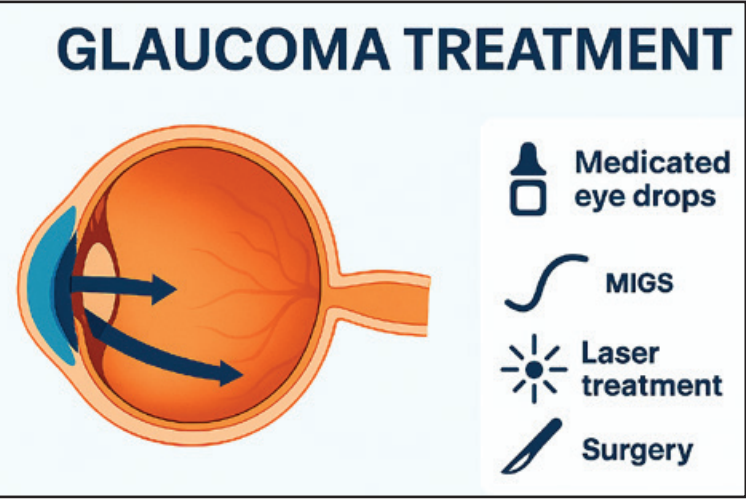
The main goal in treating glaucoma is to lower eye pressure and protect the optic nerve. Fortunately, there are now many options—from simple eye drops to sophisticated laser and surgical procedures.

1. Eye Drops

Eye drops are usually the first line of defense. They either help your eye drain fluid better or slow down its production.

- **Prostaglandin Analogs** (like latanoprost, bimatoprost, and travoprost): These are among the most common and effective glaucoma drops. They’re typically used once a day and can lower eye pressure well. Some patients may notice red eyes, longer eyelashes, or a slight darkening of the iris or eyelid.

Now, there’s an exciting new advancement: **iDose TR**—a tiny injectable device placed inside the eye that slowly releases medication over many months, so patients don’t have to use daily drops. Another long-lasting option is **Durysta**, a biodegradable implant that steadily delivers medicine inside the eye.



These treatments reduce the burden of daily drop use and help maintain consistent eye pressure.

- **Beta Blockers** (like timolol): These reduce the eye’s fluid production. They’re effective but can sometimes cause fatigue, slower heart rate, or breathing issues in patients with asthma.
- **Alpha Agonists** (like Brimonidine) and **Carbonic Anhydrase Inhibitors** (like Dorzolamide): These drops also lower eye pressure in different ways, though they can cause dryness, mild stinging, or allergic reactions in some patients.

For those who struggle to remember daily drops or experience side effects, these new sustained-release options are changing how we manage glaucoma and are quickly replacing drops as first line of treatment:

2. Laser Treatment (SLT)

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty, or SLT, is a gentle, in-office laser procedure that helps the eye’s natural drainage system work better. It takes only a few seconds, is painless, and can lower pressure just as well as daily drops for many patients. SLT is safe, repeatable, and eliminates the need to remember medications (drops)—it’s a great choice for many patients. SLT is quickly replacing drops as first line treatment for glaucoma.

3. Minimally Invasive Glaucoma Surgery (MIGS)

For patients needing more pressure reduction—or those already having cataract surgery—MIGS procedures are an excellent option. These involve placing tiny stents or micro-

devices (like the iStent, Hydrus Microstent, or Xen Gel Stent) to improve drainage through small, self-sealing incisions. Recovery is usually quick, and the risks are lower than with traditional surgeries.

4. Advanced Glaucoma Surgeries

In more advanced cases, or when other treatments aren’t enough, traditional surgeries can achieve stronger pressure control.

- **Trabeculectomy:** This surgery creates a new pathway for fluid to drain from the eye.
- **Aqueous Shunt or Tube Implants:** These use small drainage tubes to help fluid leave the eye safely.

Although these procedures require close follow-up, they remain highly effective for patients with advanced glaucoma, however they are risky procedures.

In Summary

The good news is that glaucoma care has advanced tremendously. From effective drops and innovative implants like iDose TR and Durysta, to gentle laser treatments and modern microsurgeries, we have more tools than ever to protect your sight.

The key is early detection and ongoing care. Regular eye exams allow your doctor to catch glaucoma before it causes permanent damage and to tailor treatment to your specific needs.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we are committed to offering the latest advancements in glaucoma care, including iDose TR. We are proud to have performed one of the first iDose TR

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Sports

Teagan Richards, running is her passion

By Christopher Tremblay
Staff Sports Writer

Not that long ago Teagan Richards found herself constantly running. She found running a passion of hers and would run everywhere, eventually her parents thought she should take part in an actual race. So at seven years old Richards took part in her first 5K road race and crossed the finish line with a time around 30 minutes.

Last year, she entered the Hopedale Jr.-Sr. High School and was able to try out for the varsity cross country team under Coach Tim Maguire. Although it was her first year of competitive running on a regular basis, the youngster held her own.

“I had always wanted to run when I got to the high school and when captains practice came along I went,” she said. “I was so excited but nervous a little at first because I was so small, but had no issues running with the older girls.”

Richards knew that running with the older girls on the team she would have to push herself to be able get her original 30-minute time down. Her first high school varsity cross country race would be at the Dual Valley Conference (DVC) Jamboree to open the season last fall. Not knowing what to expect, she decided that she would stick close to her teammates and in doing so was able to decrease her overall best time.

“After decreasing my personal record (PR) by 10 seconds I knew that I’d be able to continue to lower my times,” Richards said. “All I needed to

do was keep working hard and staying close to my teammates and my times should get faster.”

Her first win would come midway through her seventh-grade season and not only was it a great feeling to cross the line first, but she also once again set another PR. It wasn’t that much longer when she became Hopedale’s number one runner and, although only a seventh grader, she felt no real pressure being that top dog - she just went out and ran her best.

When her first campaign running for the Blue Raiders came to a conclusion as the team’s number one runner, the youngster knew that she’d have to work on improving during the off-season, so she got involved in as many road races as she could while training heavily to get her times down.

“After taking over as our number one runner last year, she put in a lot of training during the summer and has continued this year right where she left off,” Coach Maguire said. “You can see that she is certainly faster than she was last year and much more familiar with myself as well as the team this year. She is a quiet kid but feels like she is one of the girls on the team now, just a year older and maturer.”

The Blue Raider coach went on to say that Richards has displayed a great work ethic and is a very consistent runner who knows how to compete at the varsity level as a young athlete.

Coming into her season this fall, Richards knew that Hopedale had qualified for the States last year and would love to get

back there once a gain this year. Hopedale finished ninth as a team last fall. In addition to helping the team get back to the post-season, Richards would also like to decrease her personal best time of 20:16, preferably under 20 minutes for the 5K.

While 16 seconds doesn’t seem like a lot, it is something that could take some work to get down.

“To cut those 16 seconds off my time, I know that I am going to have to work hard and hopefully have myself a really good day on the course and push myself, and the lower times will come,” the eighth grader said.

Thus far, the Hopedale runners are running at a .500-win pace with Richards herself capturing two wins in the meets. The young runner still has four plus years to work on her craft while giving the Blue Raiders a quality lead runner.



Hopedale Cross Country runner, Teagan Richards. Courtesy photo

“I have two wins this year so far and would like to win some more, but I know that I am still young and it may take time,” Richards said. “I’ll take things slow and hopefully steadily improve not only this season but throughout my high school career.”

Another goal of the young Hopedale runner would be to place high in the States and become a top runner. In addition to running cross country for the Blue Raiders Richards also plays basketball and softball, but its cross-country that she enjoys the most.

EYE

continued from page 12

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BLACKSTONE VALLEY Xpress

FREE PRESS

Hopedale Senior Center Calendar of Activities - November 2025

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
				
3	4	5	6	7
9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Mah Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance	10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 12:30pm Cribbage 12:30 pm Line Dancing	9:00 am Veterans' Day Program 9:00 am Walking Group 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi	10:00 am Low Impact Exercise Senior Center closes at 12:00 pm
10	11	12	13	14
9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Mah Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	CLOSED FOR VETERANS' DAY 	10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 12:30pm Cribbage 12:30 pm Line Dancing	9:00 am Walking Group 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi	10:00 am Low Impact Exercise Senior Center closes at 12:00 pm
17	18	19	20	21
9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Mah Jongg 12:00 pm Lunch at Senior Center	12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance SPECIAL TOWN MEETING 7:00 pm Hopedale Community House	9:30 am Nurse Clinic 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 11:00 am Meditation 12:30 pm Literature 12:30pm Cribbage 12:30 pm Line Dancing	9:00 am Walking Group 10:00 am Watercolor Class 1:00 pm Tai Chi	10:00 am Low Impact Exercise Senior Center closes at 12:00 pm
24	25	26	27	28
9:00 am Free Panera 9:00 am Bridge 10:00 am Low Impact Exercise 12:00 pm Mah Jongg 12:30 pm BINGO	12:30 pm Mah-Jongg 12:30 pm Bridge 3:30 pm Dance	10:00 am Low Impact Exercise Closed at 12:00 pm	CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING 	CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING 

Real Estate Corner

Recent Home Sales

Date	Hopedale	Amount
10/15/2025	14 Lake Street	\$321,700
10/14/2025	54 Hill Street	\$299,900
10/03/2025	75 Jones Road	\$620,000
10/02/2025	105 Laurelwood Drive	\$410,000
09/25/2025	54 Dutcher Street #8	\$375,000

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages

Looking to advertise in our
Real Estate Corner?

Contact
Susanne Odell Farber
at 508-954-8148
or by email at
sue@sodellconsult.com



The 2-bed, 2-bath, 1,368-square-foot condo at 54 Dutcher Street in Hopedale recently sold for \$375,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com



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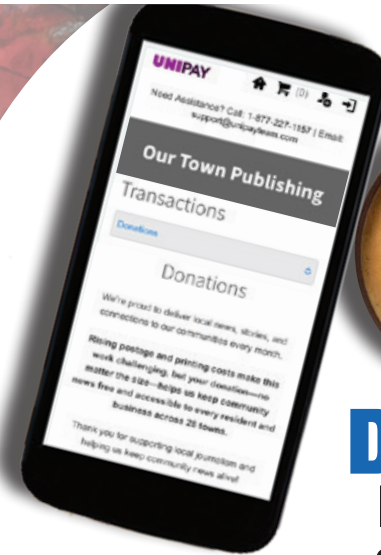
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With gratitude,
Jen Schofield, Publisher
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