

Memorial Elementary School Fun Run raises over \$52k

In October, the Memorial Elementary School and the Memorial Parent Teacher Organization raised over \$52,000 through its recent Memorial Fun Run fundraiser.

The second annual Memorial Fun Run took place on Oct. 9, and brought together nearly 500 students, staff and cheering families for a morning of fitness, fun and community spirit on the school's outdoor track.

The program, organized by the Memorial PTO, serves as an exciting and healthy alternative to traditional product sales, while also teaching students valuable lessons in fitness, leadership and character. Every student was encouraged to participate and received a



The second annual Memorial Fun Run brought together nearly 500 students, staff and cheering families for a morning of fitness, fun and community spirit on the school's outdoor track. Photo courtesy Mendon-Upton Regional School District

FUN RUN

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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 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

SUPPORT

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Mendon Senior Center updates

Fuel Assistance

The Fuel Assistance program helps to defray the cost of winter heating bills with applications being accepted through April 30, 2026.

The Mendon Senior Center will be processing applications for Mendon families, seniors and disabled individuals under the administration of SMOC (South Middlesex Opportunity Council). Applying early is advisable. If your gross household income falls within the updated limits shown in the following chart you may qualify for fuel assistance and discounts on electric and telephone bills. Call the Mendon Senior Center at 508-478-6175 to request an instruction checklist and to make a free confidential appointment.

Please note- anyone who is eligible for fuel assistance is automatically eligible to use the

Mendon Food Pantry located at the center. Contact Jenn Talamini at the senior center if your household size is larger than this chart. Help is just a call away.

Household size (Max income)	Amount
1 person	(\$51,777)
2 people	(\$67,709)
3 people	(\$83,641)
4 people	(\$99,573)
5 people	(\$115,504)

What are you thankful for?

Here at the Senior Center we are thankful for all of our volunteers including those who serve Tri-Valley lunch and their helpers: Wendy Bohannan, Karen Cieply, Phil Cieply, Betsy Edsall, Warren Goodnow, Rosie Gibson-Hare, Peg Nogueira, Dona Son, Carolyn Wass and our newest volunteer Doris Campagna.

Contact Amy Wilson Kent at 508-478-6175, if you'd like to

join our friendly team once or twice a month.

Mendon Food Pantry

The Food Pantry is located at the Senior Center and is open for Mendon residents one Friday per month by appointment. Upcoming dates include Dec. 5, Jan. 9, Feb. 6. For more information or to make an appointment call Amy Wilson Kent at 508-478-6175.

Blood Pressure Clinic, Tuesday, Nov. 18, 11 a.m. - 12 p.m.

The Salmon Family VNA of Greater Milford and the Regional Board of Health, in cooperation with the Mendon Board of Health, will be offering a free Blood Pressure Clinic on Tuesday, Nov. 18, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Please call or stop by the center to register. Drop ins are also welcome. Why not consider



staying for lunch at noon? If you'd like to do so, please make a separate reservation for lunch.

New Players Welcome

The Mendon Senior Center offers a variety of recreational activities including the following. Beginners are welcome to come and learn.

- **Cribbage, Wednesdays, 9:45 a.m.** The Cribbage group is always looking for new players, all levels welcome, drop in.
- **Hand, Knee & Foot Canasta 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!

Let's Make Medicare Simple

Maggie Mood, Senior Benefits Specialist, has assisted numerous seniors trying to navigate their way through health insurance changes this fall. She will be available at the Mendon Senior Center on Tuesday, Nov. 18, working one on one by appointment to answer your Medicare questions and help

you research the plan best for you given you physician and medications. She can assist with Medicare Advantage Plan Comparisons, Medigap (Supplement) Plan Support, Prescription Drug Plans (Part D) and Enrollment Assistance if needed. Call Shawna to set up an appointment on Tuesday, Nov. 18 from 9 a.m. to noon.

Note: Maggie Mood is an Independent Licensed Agent and does not offer every plan in our area.

Mendon Minstrels Chorus fall performance, "Your Sports Report," Thursday, Nov. 20 at 11 a.m., followed by lunch

Music lovers and sports enthusiasts are invited to a rousing, good time when the Minstrels' fall performance showcases tunes inspired by some of our favorite past times including baseball, football and hockey. Classic songs included in the playlist are *Take Me Out to the Ball Game*, *Sweet Caroline* and *Sweet Georgia Brown* just to name a few.

They have a few other entertaining songs incorporated for your listening enjoyment. Please call the center or stop by to register for the music program and/or lunch.

MENDON SENIORS

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Mendon scarecrow contest winners announced

By Theresa Knapp

Twenty-two sites participated in the Mendon Cultural Council's second annual Scarecrow Contest this year.

Residents and businesses signed up in advance, a map was created, and the public voted on their favorites.

The winners were:

- 1st Place: Vandervalk Winery**
- 2nd Place: Joint Operations**
- 3rd Place: McGann Family**



Vandervalk Winery won 1st Place in the Mendon Cultural Council's second annual Scarecrow Contest. Courtesy photo



Joint Operations won 2nd Place for its display. Courtesy photo



The McGann Family's creation won 3rd Place in the town-wide scarecrow contest. Courtesy photo

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Upton Senior Center news for November & December

Crafts with Betty

Friday, Nov. 14 at 10 a.m.

Join us as we make a fun craft to get us in the holiday spirit! All materials will be provided — just bring your creativity! RSVP by Nov. 7.

Men's Club Supper

Friday, Nov. 14 at 5 p.m.

Mark your calendar for October's Men's Supper! Enjoy a delicious meal of ziti and meatballs and great conversation. This event is free for Upton seniors only. Don't miss this fun event. Sign up by Nov. 7 at the Senior Center! Need a ride? Transportation is available — call to schedule. Next Men's Club Supper: Dec. 12 at 5 p.m.

Crafty Nest: Make Your Own Welcome Mat or Wreath

Monday, Nov. 17 at 1 p.m.

Join the Crafty Nest at the Senior Center for a fun and festive DIY workshop! Create a personalized welcome mat or beautiful fall wreath—the perfect addition to your entryway or a thoughtful handmade holiday gift.

Cost: \$30 per person (paid in advance)

Registration deadline: Friday, Nov. 7 at the Senior Center

Memory Café

Wednesday, Nov. 19 at 2 p.m.

The Memory Café offers a safe, welcoming space for people experiencing memory changes—whether or not they have a formal dementia diagnosis—and for their caregivers,

family, and friends. It's a place to connect, share stories, and enjoy activities together.

Thanksgiving Luncheon

Friday, Nov. 21 at 12:30 p.m.

Come celebrate with your friends at the Senior Center and enjoy a Turkey Dinner with all the fixings, generously provided by Country Sooper. Bring your appetite and holiday cheer—we look forward to sharing this special day with you! \$8 per person. RSVP by Friday, Nov. 14.

Birthday Bash

Friday, Dec. 5 at 12:30 p.m.

Due to a schedule packed with holiday events, we're combining our November and December birthday celebrations! Pizza and Cake will be served — don't miss the good food, great company, and double the birthday fun! Free for Upton residents born in November or December, \$5 for all others. Sign up by Monday, Nov. 3.

SAVE THE DATE Stain Glass Demonstration

Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 9:30 a.m.

Ever wonder how stained-glass art is made? Come join us for a demonstration of how to create a stained-glass work of art. Eileen Rakitin, former teacher, has been creating and teaching stained glass for about 20 years. She will demonstrate the steps involved in making a piece of stained-glass art here at the Upton Community Center. Let the glorious colors



of stained glass help you start your morning. RSVP by Monday, Nov. 24.

SAVE THE DATE Carols with Miscoe Hill Middle School Chorus

Thursday, Dec. 11 at 9:15 a.m.

The students from Miscoe Middle School are bringing their holiday spirit to the Upton Senior Center! Stop by for a special coffee hour featuring winter caroling from the 6th grade Miscoe chorus. RSVP by Monday, Dec. 8.

Upton Food Pantry

Do you need food assistance? The Upton Community Food Pantry is open to all Upton residents!

Hours of Operation are Wednesdays 12 - 2 p.m. and Fridays 11 - 1 p.m. Are you unable to come at these days and times? Contact us for more information or to set up an appointment call 508-529-4558.

The UCC Food Pantry is seeking donations:

- Hearty soups, pasta sauce
- Baked beans
- Ready/Minute rice
- Instant potatoes
- Cooking oils (olive, canola, vegetable oil)
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- Laundry detergent
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A retiree's guide for National Retirement Security Month



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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If you're retired, it's easy to let your finances go on autopilot. Since October is National Retirement Security Month, it's a good time to revisit some areas that can impact your long-term financial security and help your money last a lifetime.

Consider these suggestions:

Manage your withdrawal rate. You'll likely need to tap

into your retirement accounts — your IRA and 401(k) or similar employer-sponsored plan. But think carefully about how much income you withdraw every year. If you take out too much, especially in the early years of your retirement, you risk outliving your resources. You have the option of withdrawing from these accounts at age 59½. Once you turn 73, you'll be required to take out at least a certain amount each year based on your age and account balance.

Estimate health care costs.

When you turn 65, you will be eligible for Medicare, but you may still need a Medicare supplement plan, both of which will require premium payments. You'll probably also incur a variety of other unreimbursed expenses for doctor visit copays or deductibles, prescription drugs and vision, hearing and dental care. Additionally, about 70% of adults ages 65 and older will need some form of

long-term support, according to the Department of Health and Human Services. This may include a paid home health aide (average cost of \$77,792 per year), an assisted living residence (average cost of \$70,500 per year) or nursing home care (private room average cost of \$127,750 per year). (Cost estimates are from Genworth 2024 Cost of Care Survey.) Over the course of your retirement, these can add up, so be realistic when budgeting for health care expenses in retirement.

Consider when to take Social Security.

You can start receiving monthly Social Security checks at age 62, but your payments will generally be larger if you wait until your "full" retirement age of 66 or 67. (The size of your payments will "max out" at age 70.) If you believe you have longevity working in your favor, and you can afford to wait, you may well be better off by delaying Social Security as long as possible.

Avoid investing too conservatively. Once you're retired, you might think you should take as few chances with your investments as possible — after all, you have less time for them to bounce back from a downturn than you did during your working years. Nonetheless, it's important to consider keeping a reasonable percentage of growth-oriented investments in your portfolio to help you stay ahead of inflation. Even at a low rate, inflation can erode your purchasing power over time.

Keep your generosity in check.

If you have grown children who need financial help, or grandchildren heading to college someday, you'd no doubt like to do what you can to assist them. However, the hard truth is that they have more time than you to find workable financial solutions, whereas if you deplete your funds through your generosity, you could put yourself in a pre-

carious position. So, be as giving as you can afford — but try not to go beyond that. By preserving your financial independence, you'll end up benefiting your family as well.

Retirement is ideally an enjoyable time in your life, especially if you feel financially stable. So, take time to check in periodically to keep that stability on track.

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

Mark Freeman, CEPA
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SUPPORT

continued from page 1



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.

United Parish of Upton celebrates 20 years of its Holiday Bazaar



A photo from the 2024 Holiday Bazaar. Courtesy photo

The United Parish of Upton, 1 Church Street, will be having our annual Holiday Bazaar on Saturday, Dec. 6 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This year marks twenty years of the Holiday Bazaar and all are welcome to celebrate with us!

The fair will feature over thirty-five vendors, crafters, artisans, silent auction, raffles,

our homemade pies, lunch in the Reindeer Café, an outside fire pit with smores, and Alpacas! Free admission and free parking.

This year we are excited to include four New England based authors and illustrators. There will be signings and scheduled readings of their picture books. Readings will take place in the

Winter Festival area for children, hosted by the United Parish Early Learning Center. Readings are not a drop-off event. All ages welcome.

For more information and updates follow us on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/unitedparishupton> or on our website at unitedparishupton.org



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FUN RUN

continued from page 1

free event T-shirt, regardless of pledges raised.

Students collected donations online from family and friends leading up to the event. They then spent 30 minutes running, walking, skipping or dancing around the Fun Run loop during school hours. Most students completed between 30 and 35 laps as classmates and families rooted them on.

This year's event raised more than \$36,000 in direct funding and over \$16,000 in corporate sponsorships, a significant increase from last year's total of \$28,000.

"We're thrilled by the incredible turnout and community spirit at this year's Fun Run," said Memorial PTO President Erin Valcourt. "It was amazing to see students, families, and staff come together to support our school while having so much fun. The energy, smiles, and teamwork throughout the day truly show what makes our school community so special."

Proceeds from the fundraiser will help cover field trip admission costs and transportation, as well as support in-school enrichment programming and a replacement part for the school's playground.

"This event would not be possible without the invaluable support of our generous sponsors,"

Valcourt said. "We have enormous gratitude for our amazing Fun Run Committee members who spent countless hours coordinating all aspects of the event, along with our volunteers, and everyone who contributed to making this event such a huge success."

Mendon-Upton Regional School District Superintendent Maureen Cohen and Memorial Principal Wendy Bell thanked all of the students, families, staff members, and PTO volunteers who participated in this year's Fun Run.

"The Fun Run is becoming one of our favorite community traditions at Memorial," Principal Bell said. "It brings our entire school together in such a positive way — families, teachers, and students all cheering for one another. We're so grateful to our PTO and our community for their generosity and support."

"This event perfectly reflects what makes the Mendon-Upton community so special," Superintendent Cohen said. "It's an inspiring combination of wellness, teamwork, and giving back, and I'm so proud of the Memorial Elementary School community for the joy and purpose they bring to this event. Their dedication and hard work have paid off, leading to an extraordinary fundraising effort."

Submitted by Mendon-Upton Regional School District

This year's 2nd Annual Fun Run was sponsored by George J. Summers Trucking Co., Hillview Equipment, Mattadoor Garage Doors & Motors, Ranger Inc., S&F Concrete Contractors, Warrior Ice Arena, Strengths Now Inc., Nipmuc Youth Football and Cheer, Jacobs Velella & Kerr PC, Holliston Oil, INIRAM Precision Machine Tool Inc., Integrated Welding, Johnny's Auto, McIntyre Loam Inc., Neuro-Access Educational Consulting, Upton Police Association, Dunton Energy Services, Durable Fence, Kenney & Conley P.C. Trial Lawyers, Maya Mexican Cocina & Tekila Bar, Moura Services LLC, Consigli Construction Co. Inc., HERS Energy Raters LLC, Imperial Chevrolet, J.C. Parmenter Inc., Ken's Pools, WW Contracting Corp, Mendon Upton Youth Soccer Association, and Techno Metal Post Franklin.

Source: Mendon-Upton Regional School District



Memorial Elementary School students ran, walked and rooted for each other during the school's second annual Memorial Fun Run fundraiser on Oct. 9. Photo Courtesy Mendon-Upton Regional School District

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Nipmuc Regional High School awarded \$100,000 Capital Skills Grant

Funds will 'transform' Nipmuc Library Media Center

The Mendon-Upton Regional School District has been awarded a \$100,000 Skills Capital Grant.

"We are thrilled to receive this funding from the state to support Nipmuc students," said Tara Bennett, Nipmuc Regional High School Career, Community & Innovations Coordinator. "These Skills Capital funds will be used to transform the Nipmuc Library Media Center into a modern, flexible learning hub designed to support collaboration, creativity and innovation."

On Oct. 20, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced more than \$13.5 million for 66 high schools, colleges, educational and workforce organizations to expand access to hands-on learning opportunities and state-of-the-art technology in schools across Massachusetts.

"Updates will include flexible furniture and shelving, as well

as designated spaces for small group learning and hands-on experiences," Bennett said. "In addition, the grant will support Nipmuc's Innovation Career Pathways programming, providing students with access to state-of-the-art tools and technologies aligned with current industry standards."

Nipmuc Regional High School's Library Media Specialist Paige Rowse looks forward to the new Nipmuc Library Media Center.

"I am looking forward to being a part of this opportunity to reimagine the library media center," Rowse said. "It's more than just an updated space; it's an investment in critical thinking, information literacy, and strategic skills to better prepare our students for success in their academic, professional, and personal lives."

The state grants will fund the purchase and installation

of modern equipment to support career technical education and training aligned with high-demand industries, such as advanced computer science/information technology, clean energy, healthcare, and environmental science.

"Massachusetts leads the nation because we invest in ideas — through our schools, our colleges, and our people," said Gov. Maura Healey. "Our success in innovation and education is no accident — it's the result of strategic investments. To stay competitive, we need to keep building the best environments for learning and research, and that's exactly what Skills Capital Grants are doing. They're how we prepare our students to lead and how we keep Massachusetts leading the world. Our BRIGHT Act dedicates \$100 million to Skills Capital Grants to ensure that every community has access to the tools and train-

"These Skills Capital funds will be used to transform the Nipmuc Library Media Center into a modern, flexible learning hub designed to support collaboration, creativity and innovation."

~ Tara Bennett, Nipmuc Regional High School Career, Community & Innovations Coordinator

ing that drive opportunity and innovation." education (DESE) for Innovation Career Pathway (ICP) designations in Environmental Science and Healthcare. The two new designations were implemented this year. Nipmuc Regional High School also offers Business & Finance and Information (Computer Science) pathways programs.

"This capital skills grant is a game-changer for the Mendon-Upton Regional School District. It allows us to invest directly in the tools and facilities our students need to bridge the gap between classroom curiosity and their future as skilled professionals," said MURSD Superintendent Dr. Cohen. "We extend our deepest thanks to the state for this grant award. We are eager to see the long-term impact this will have on both our students and the wider Mendon-Upton community."

Submitted by Mendon-Upton Regional School District



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If interested, please contact

editor@UptonMendonFreePress.com

MENDON SENIORS

continued from page 2

Calling all Readers

If anyone has books with a copyright date of 2021—2025 that you are done with, please drop them off. This will help keep the shelves refreshed by adding to the selections available. Next time you come in, why not take a moment to see if there's a book or puzzle you might enjoy – simply borrow, enjoy, and return!

Emergency Medical Folder Seminar, Tuesday, Nov. 25, 12 p.m.

Attorney Amy Azza will present an emergency medical folder seminar and teach you from start to finish on how to create these folders, what to include in them, and how to draft all the documents included (Health Care Proxy, HIPAA Authorization, Durable Power of Attorney, Emergency Contacts and Medical info, summary of insurance and key accounts, a short notice of their wishes in case something unexpected happens). This seminar also includes a free emergency planning medical folder, and free lunch and dessert.

Christmas Fair, Saturday, Dec. 6, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Friends of Mendon Elders will be holding our Christmas Fair on Saturday, Dec. 6, at the Mendon Senior Center, 62 Providence St. from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. We will be showcasing many gently used Christmas items, beautiful, handmade knit

and crocheted items and our famous baked goods sale. There will be a Door Prize Raffle at no cost to anyone who stops by and fills out a raffle ticket. Drawings will be done at 2 p.m.

Yarn Works Group on Thursdays

The Yarn Works Group meets every Thursday afternoon at 1 p.m. at the Senior Center to socialize and share patterns and to knit and crochet. There is also a fabulous assortment of yarn in the basement for your use at no charge. Donations of knitted or crocheted items are wanted to be sold at the Friends of Elders fair on Dec. 7. Donations of hats, scarves, mittens, baby items may also be given to those in need.

Annual Santa Parade, Tree Lighting & Fireworks, Friday, Dec. 5, Founders Park, 1 Main Street, Mendon

Food and music start at 6 p.m. and the parade starts at 7 p.m. *Sponsored by Brothers of the Brush.*

Senior Center Holiday Decorating

Join us Tuesday, Dec. 2, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to help Deck the Senior Center out in holiday fashion.

COA Holiday Dinner Dec. 10 at 12 p.m.

The COA Holiday Dinner will be held on Wednesday, Dec. 10, at 12 p.m. and is once again generously sponsored by Dick and Betty Ferrucci. Seating is limited. Please contact the senior center to register.

Youth Holiday Chorus, Dec. 11 at 10 a.m.

The Miscoe 6th Grade Chorus will be offering a Holiday Program at the Mendon Senior Center on Thursday, Dec. 11, at 10 a.m. Come get into the holiday spirit and support our youth! Please register at the center.

Yankee Candle & Bright Nights Trip, Friday, Dec. 12

Get in the holiday spirit with this fun-filled day! At Yankee Candle learn how candles are made and get a chance to dip your own. Enjoy a late lunch afterwards at the famous Golden Corral featuring an all-you-can-eat buffet. As darkness falls a ride through Bright Nights a renowned village of Christmas lights will be enjoyed! Cost is \$99 per person (no refunds after Nov. 12). Please register at the Mendon Senior Center. Checks should be made out to: Friends of Mendon Elders (*please add 'trip account' in memo line*) Mail to 62 Providence Street, Mendon, MA 01756. *Trip Operated by Bloom Tours.* For more info or questions, please contact Bev Fior at 508-473-8382.

Welcome new Outreach Coordinator Jenn Talamini

The Mendon Council on Aging and Director Amy Wilson Kent are pleased to introduce the Center's newest staff member Outreach Coordinator Jenn Talamini.

Jenn brings over 15 years of experience working with senior adults. Her background in occupational therapy, dementia support, caregiver burnout, home health care and assisted living has made her a diligent, experienced and passionate educator and advocator for the seniors she works with.

Jenn resides in Mendon with her husband, Josh, their daughter, Johanna, and their beloved dog, Benny and cat, Moonshine. Outside of work she enjoys spending time with her family, serving in various



Jenn Talamini is the new Outreach Coordinator at the Mendon Council on Aging.
Courtesy photo

church ministries, being outdoors, listening to podcasts and drinking coffee.

She is looking forward to bringing her passion and knowledge to the seniors of Mendon and can't wait to meet you.

Knitted & crocheted donations needed for Dec. 7 Fair

Donations of knitted or crocheted items are wanted to be sold at the Friends of Elders fair on Dec. 7. Donations of hats, scarves, mittens, baby items may also be given to those in need.

For more information, contact the Mendon Senior Center.

Trinity Episcopal Church Annual
Christmas Fair
 17 Congress Street, Milford, MA
Saturday, December 6
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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.

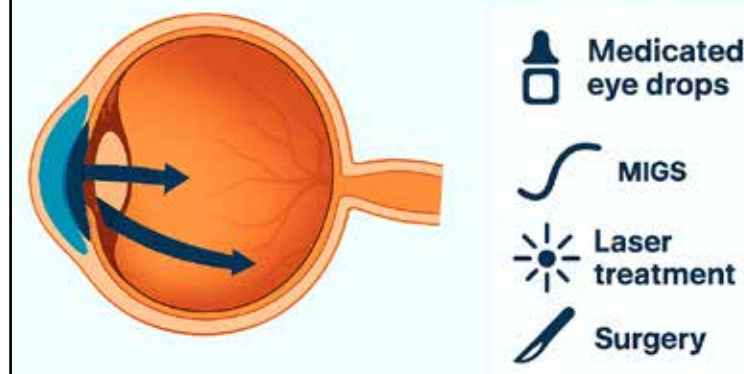
1. Eye Drops

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

GLAUCOMA TREATMENT



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 microsurgies, 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

EYE

continued on page 11

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Recent Home Sales

Date	Mendon	Amount
10/24/2025	8 Neck Hill Road	\$660,000
10/21/2025	14 Carpenter Hill Road #A	\$385,000
10/16/2025	3 Esty Road	\$994,000
10/16/2025	4 Megan Court #B	\$508,000
10/16/2025	10 Bicknell Drive	\$767,500
10/14/2025	46 Crestview Drive	\$767,000
10/06/2025	11 Millville Road	\$545,000
10/02/2025	58 Uxbridge Road	\$315,000
09/26/2025	19 Park Street	\$505,000

Date	Upton	Amount
10/24/2025	54 Rockwood Lane	\$960,000
10/21/2025	10 Prospect Street	\$740,000
10/17/2025	268 North Street	\$700,000
10/17/2025	5 North Street	\$1.28 mil
10/15/2025	10 Mendon Street	\$505,000
10/09/2025	4 Depot Street	\$405,000
10/09/2025	49 Warren Street	\$838,000
10/03/2025	5 Azalea Lane	\$1.35 mil
10/02/2025	16 Fieldstone Street	\$439,900
10/01/2025	105 Crockett Road	\$1.48 mil
09/30/2025	26 Brooks Street	\$680,000
09/29/2025	4 Phylmore Drive	\$880,000
09/26/2025	4 Fiske Mill Road	\$605,000

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



The 2-bed, 1-bath, 1,008 square-foot home at 4 Depot Street in Upton recently sold for \$405,000. Photo source: www.zillow.com

Blackstone Valley Technical Institute launches under Steele's leadership

BVTi opens its doors after hours to empower adult learners

Superintendent-Director Anthony E. Steele II is pleased to announce the launch of a new initiative that supports the pursuit of lifelong learning through high-quality evening programs for adult learners. Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School is proud to serve as the home of the newly established Blackstone Valley Technical Institute (BVTi).

Whether you're a working professional seeking to advance your career through hands-on technical training or trying a new hobby for personal enrichment, BVTi's course offerings are designed to meet a wide range of goals. Programs are engaging, practical, and, most importantly, accessible. If you're ready to Explore, Experience, Excel, let us help you take the next step in your professional or personal journey.

"As an educational leader passionate about vocational education, we're excited to expand our school community by offering new learning opportunities through the Blackstone Valley Technical Institute," said Dr. Matthew Connors, Assistant

Superintendent/Curriculum Director. "Working collaboratively with our Director of Workforce & Economic Development, Mary May, we are focused on developing a strong catalog of adult education programs and course offerings."

"We're eager to expand access to career technical education, launching BVTi with credential-based programs in Advanced Manufacturing, Electrical, HVAC, Plumbing, and Welding," added Mr. Steele. "This endeavor allows us to support adults interested in upskilling or retraining, provide skilled labor to the local workforce, and generate non-



Explore Experience Excel

local taxpayer revenue to help fund the school. It is an honor to serve our employer partners, our students, and the broader school community."

BVTi is currently enrolling students and seeking qualified instructors. Grant funding is available for eligible students, along with flexible payment plans. To explore the full course list or to register, visit www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/bvti.

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EYE

continued from page 10

performed one of the first iDose TR procedures in New England at our Cataract and Surgery Center of Milford. As a leader in advanced eye care technology, we are thrilled to be among the pioneers of this groundbreak-

ing treatment. Our surgery and surgeon were featured in a segment broadcasted on Channel 5 TV. We are available for second opinions and dedicated to providing world-class outcomes.

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BVT 2025 Annual Report

Document highlights facts, figures, student achievements, and more

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) is proud to announce that its 2025 Annual Report is now available on the school's website. Covering the FY25 fiscal year, the report highlights the distinctive achievements of students and staff, as well as key financial information.

"As responsible stewards of your regional vocational technical high school, we continue to take cost-saving measures to protect your investment while providing high-quality career and technical education," said Superintendent-Director Anthony E. Steele II. "This report reflects on the previous school year, which culminated in celebrating the prolific career of Dr. Michael F. Fitzpatrick, who served as superintendent-director from 1994 to 2025. It goes beyond facts and figures to

show how every dollar is maximized to prepare our students to be career- and life-ready by the time they graduate."

Browse the Annual Report

It takes a spark to ignite a passion for safety and a one-of-a-kind career. Discover how unconventional choices, risk-taking, and the pursuit of innovation have shaped the entrepreneurial journey of Kevin Healy and Noah Boudreau (Electronics, Class of 2019) in the Alumni Spotlight, "It Takes A Spark." As founders of Smart Escape LLC, they're revolutionizing safety and successfully demonstrating how a BVT education continues long after graduation.

We invite you to read this story and others in the 2025 Annual Report, available now on the BVT website at www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/annual-report.

Upton community overwhelms Food Pantry with generosity, need continues

The Upton Community Center Food Pantry is extremely grateful for the outpouring of generosity from the Upton community. In recent weeks, residents have come together in incredible ways — shopping for pantry staples, purchasing gift cards, and ensuring that shelves remain stocked for neighbors in need.

The need, however, continues to grow. With the recent end of SNAP benefits, many local families are facing uncertainty about

where their next meal will come from — especially as the holiday season approaches. A list of most-needed items is available at <https://bit.ly/UptonFoodPantryList>.

People can also:

1. Stop by the Upton Community Center (9 Milford Street) to drop off food donations in the Senior Center lobby during open hours, and financial donations Mon-Fri, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

2. Follow "Upton Community

Center" on Facebook for updates and special drives.

3. Visit www.uptonma.gov for full details and resources.

The Upton Community Center Food Pantry has extended its hours to Mondays 9:30 - 11:30 a.m., Wednesdays 12 - 3 p.m., Fridays 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

For more information, contact Katie at 508-529-4558 or ksanclimente@uptonma.gov

Submitted by Upton Community Center Food Pantry

Warm your heart with winter harmonies at Exsultet's 'Baby It's Cold Outside' concert

Kick off the holiday season with the exquisite sounds of Exsultet as they present their annual winter concert. This year's performance, "Baby It's Cold Outside," features moments of ethereal beauty such as in the Hebrides Lullaby, the humor of Cold and Fugue Season, and classics like Santa Claus is Coming to Town. Celebrate the season's joyful moments and experience the warmth of music that brings families and friends together.

Concerts will be held on Friday, Dec. 5, at 7:30 p.m., Christ Lutheran Church, 113 Union



St., Natick; and Sunday, Dec. 7, at 2 p.m., at First Congregational Church, 725 Washington Street, Holliston.

General admission tickets are \$20; students and seniors (65+) are \$15; and children 12 and under are free. Performances are not suitable for children under age 6. Tickets can be purchased beginning in early November through our website (www.exsultet.us) or at the door prior to the performance.

Whether you're a longtime concert-goer or joining us for the first time, this performance promises to be a memorable evening. Come and experience

the magic of the season with songs that have become part of our most cherished traditions. Let's warm up together, because Baby It's Cold Outside!

Exsultet! A Celebration of Voices is an auditioned women's ensemble based in Holliston, MA since 2013. Our concerts are not only filled with beautiful pieces but are thematic and tell a story from the music selections to the spoken poetry and readings we use throughout the concert. Our mission is, and always will be, to create a safe and inclusive place for any woman who wants to enrich her life with the wonder of singing.



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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

ADULT & TEEN PROGRAMS NOVEMBER 2025

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 the Adult Handcrafting Group on Wednesday, Nov. 19 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 Assistants Kris Heumann and Brenda Whitner.

Upcoming book club discussions:

Monday, Dec. 8 at 6:30 p.m.: Discussion of *The Pull of the Stars* by Emma Donoghue.

Copies of Adult Book Club books can be picked up at the downstairs desk. For additional information on upcoming book clubs contact the library at 508-473-3259.

Awards Book Club

Hosted by Taft Library Assistant Jane Blackwood, the Awards Book Club meets on a quarterly basis to discuss fiction award winners of the year. Jane selects from the books that took home the coveted Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the Booker Prize and more! Stop at the downstairs circulation desk to pick up the latest Awards book for discussion.

The current book in the Awards Book Club discussion series is Hernan Diaz's *Trust*, recipient of the 2023 Pulitzer Prize in fiction. Discussion date for *Trust* is Tuesday, Nov. 13 at 7 p.m. Copies of *Trust* can be picked up at the downstairs circulation desk.

Medium Ellen Henry Returns

Medium Ellen Henry will return to Taft for Connections with Spirit: Messages of Hope and Healing on Sunday, Nov. 16 at 1:30 p.m. Come share in

the experience as Ellen delivers messages from your loved ones in the spirit world. If you happen to have a small item from your loved one, Ellen may offer to connect with your loved one using that item. She also offers soul guidance to anyone with a question they wish to ask in front of the group. Please note: Attendance at a demonstration does not guarantee that you will receive a reading. To register visit www.taftpubliclibrary.org. Those who are interested should register soon since this session will fill up quickly.

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 the following upcoming books this year:

Over the Edge of the World: Magellan's Terrifying Circumnavigation of the Globe by Laurence Bergreen
Discussion will be on Thursday, Dec. 4 at 6:30 p.m. downstairs in the library.

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 of discussion for some 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! Lead by Library Assistant (and Mendon resident) Monika Schmid, the group typically meets the last Monday of each month. The group will meet next on Monday, Nov. 24 at 6 p.m. Registration is required. To register, visit our website.

Teen Book Club

Join us for the return of our Teen Book Club! We will be reading *Catching Fire* by Suzanne Collins. Discussion is on Tuesday, Dec. 9 at 5 p.m. Pizza and refreshments will be served. Registration is required. Please visit www.taftpubliclibrary.org

to register. Copies of the book are available for pickup at our downstairs circulation desk.

Slow Flow Yoga for Adults and Teens

Join Katie Aissis from Sprouting Tree Yoga for Slow Flow Yoga. This Vinyasa style yoga class links breath to movement in a dynamic sequence of postures. Participants will build strength while also finding moments throughout the practice to quiet the mind and rest the body. This class is appropriate for all levels, and no previous yoga experience is necessary. Please bring your own yoga mat. Join us on Dec. 9, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, March 24, April 14 and May 12 at 7 p.m. Registration required.

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. If you plan on attending, it's always a good idea to call the library at 508-473-3259 or email the

Friends at friendsoftaftlibrary@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 website. The meeting in November is on Tuesday, Nov. 25 at 7 p.m.

TAFT CHILDREN'S NEWS NOVEMBER 2025

Registration is required for all programs. Please log onto our website: www.taftpubliclibrary.org and find the events page to register along with more information for the programs.

CHILDREN'S NEWS

Itty Bitty Story Time

Itty Bitty Storytime is designed for our youngest patrons birth to 3 years old. Join us for a lot of fun on Tuesdays and select Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.

Story & Craft Time

Join us for Story and Craft Time! Perfect for the preschool-aged child! All sessions take place on Tuesday mornings at

TAFT LIBRARY

continued on page 17

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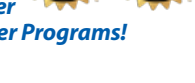
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Upton Town Library Calendar of Events

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

By Upton Library Staff

Holiday Hours

Upton Town Library will be closed on the following days:
Thursday, Nov. 27 – Thanksgiving
Friday, Nov. 28 – Day after Thanksgiving

Museum Passes

The New England Aquarium Pass is back! Reserve a discount pass and receive 50% off admission for up to 4 people. Our museum pass collection includes discounts to a selection of local museums, including Worcester Art Museum (about to open the

Higgins Arms and Armor exhibit), Tower Hill Botanic Gardens (lovely all year long), Old Sturbridge Village and Plimoth Patuxet Historical museums, and classic Boston institutions: Museum of Science, Museum of Art and Boston Children’s Museum. Discounts vary, but are usually close to a 50% discount on admission. Call us or visit our website to reserve!

Thank you to the Friends of the Upton Library for supporting the museum pass program.

CHILDREN & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS

Pumpkin StoryWalk™ –

Now through Nov. 15

Stop by the VFW Memorial Playground anytime it's open to enjoy the library's Pumpkin StoryWalk, "From Seed to Pumpkin" by Wendy Pfeffer. A StoryWalk™ is a self-guided picture book activity, put together with separate story page panels that families can enjoy one at a time with their children. No staff is involved with this event, so enjoy it any time that fits your schedule! For ages 3+

Tools for Tiny Hands – Dec. 12 at 1 p.m., ages 3 to 5

Caregivers and children will join together to learn all about activities that foster fine motor skill development. This program will demonstrate different activities with the participants, and then share an activity bag to take home. This program is in collaboration with Beginning Bridges CFCE and is partially sponsored by the Massachusetts Library System and the Boston Children's Museum. *Please note: Registration information will be shared with Beginning Bridges CFCE.

Winter Trees Craft – Dec. 13 at 11 a.m., ages 3+

Drop in anytime from 11 a.m. till 1 p.m. us as we use tissue paper, scissors, and paint to create a winter tree picture!

ADULT EVENTS

Drum Circle with Dave Curry - Saturday, Dec. 6, 7-9:30 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. *Now a monthly program on the first Saturday of each month, sponsored by Friends of the Upton Library.

Tabletop Game Night for Adults – Thursday, Nov. 20, 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!

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 Charles Duhigg: Unlock the Secret Language of Connection - Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 2 p.m.

Author Talk with **Sue Hincenbergs**: Scheming Wives and High-Stakes Hilarity - Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 2 p.m.

Author Talk with Author and Smithsonian Curator **Paula J. Johnson**: The Legacy of Julia Child's Kitchen - Tuesday, Dec. 9 at 2 p.m.

Book Groups

Monthly book groups are facilitated by Upton Library staff. We also reserve book copies for local private book groups, contact us for more information!

Upton Reads Book Group

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

Tuesday, Dec. 9 at 12:45 p.m., and Thursday, Dec. 11 at 6:45 p.m.: *The Heart of Winter* by Jonathan Evison.

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.

Wednesday, Dec. 3 at 6:45 p.m.: *A Walk in the Woods: Rediscovering America on the Appalachian Trail* by Bill Bryson.

Tween Book Club

Nov. 20 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 *The Unteachables* by Gordon Korman.

Kids' Book Club

Dec. 3 at 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 *Kung Pow Chicken: Jurassic Peck* by Cyndi Marko. This group is for ages 7 to 10.

UPTON LIBRARY

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UPTON LIBRARY

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Monthly Library Events – Register Now!

Most programs and events require pre-registration at uptonlibrary.org or call 508-529-6272. Program details can be found on our website on our Event Calendar. **Registrations open the month prior to events.*

- Baby Storytime** – Fridays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m., ages birth to 3
- Preschool Storytime** – Thursdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m., ages 3 to 5
- Saturday Storytime** – Nov. 22 at 9:30 a.m., ages birth to 5
- Music & Movement** – Nov. 17 & Dec. 1 at 9:30 a.m., ages 1 to 5
- Storybook Art Club** – Nov. 16 at 10 a.m., ages 3 to 5
- LEGO Club** – Nov. 19 & Dec. 3 at 4 p.m., ages 3 to 12
- Crafternoon** – Nov. 18 at 3 p.m., ages 3+
- Tween Book Club** – Nov. 20 at 6:30 p.m., ages 10 to 14

- Kids’ Book Club** – Dec. 3 at 4 p.m., ages 7 to 10
 - Chess Club** – 1st Tuesday each month, 4 - 6 p.m., ages 5 to 14
 - Crafting Club** – 2nd Tuesday each month, 4 - 6 p.m., ages 5 to 14
 - Gaming Club** – 3rd Tuesday each month, 4 - 6 p.m., ages 5 to 14
 - Magic the Gathering: Commander** – 4th Tuesday each month, 4 - 6 p.m., ages 8 to 16
 - FreeDrum Circle** – 1st Saturday each month, 7 - 9:30 p.m., ages 8+
 - Tabletop Game Night for Adults** – 3rd Thursday each month, ages 16+
 - Upton Reads Book Group** – 2nd Tuesday and 3rd Thursday each month
 - Fic or No Fic Book Group** – last Wednesday each month
 - Virtual Author Talks** – varies, see our website
- For more information or assistance with any library services, call 508-529-6272 or email mbachtol@cwmmars.org

Charles River Bank begins Annual Holiday Food Drive

A long-standing holiday tradition at Charles River Bank is the annual Food Drive. Every year during the month of December, Charles River Bank branch offices set up donation tables in their lobbies for customers, community members, and bank staff to make food donations to the Medway, Bellingham and Mendon Food Pantries. The donations are brought to the Food Pantries just before the New Year to help restock after the holidays.

Items most needed by the Food Pantries include: canned meats, soups, stews; dry foods such as cereal and pasta; other non-perishable food items; paper goods,



A sample of the donations made in 2024 by Charles River Bank to the Medway Food Pantry. *Courtesy photo*

diapers and personal hygiene items. Bring your donation to your local Charles River Bank

branch Dec. 1 through Dec. 31. Branch locations can be found at www.charlesriverbank.com.

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TAFT LIBRARY

continued from page 13

10:30 a.m. and Wednesday afternoons at 1 p.m.

Alphabet Storytime

It's all about the alphabet! Each week we will focus on a different letter. We will read a couple of books, sing songs, and learn about the letter of the week! Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Please note there is no Alphabet Storytime the last Wednesday of the month.

Music & Movement with Deb Hudgins & Coffee and Conversations at the Taft

Dates: Wednesday: Nov. 19 & Dec. 17

Join Deb Hudgins at 9:15 a.m. for a 30-minute music and movement theme-based program which features singing and guitar music for young children (infants & preschool).

Coffee & Conversations is from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. Join us for an informal playtime where families will be able to build social connections and learn about early childhood development and family-friendly resources. The library will supply Muffin House muffins!

The BaNannies

The BaNannies are a mother/daughter duo who bring children's songs, both old and new to life! With their silly and interactive songs, they'll have your littles singing, dancing along! The BaNannies will visit the Taft on Monday, Nov. 17 at 10:30 a.m.

Lego Club

Back by popular demand! During this one-hour building session we will be led by the "Lego Lady" Kim Steadman. No need to bring any Legos. This program is great for all ages... as long as they don't eat the Legos! The next session will be held

Tuesday, Dec. 19 at 4:30 p.m.

Preschool Kidding Around Yoga

We will learn yoga poses, dance, sing, and meditate. All abilities are welcome! Mats are available, or feel free to bring your own. Next session will be Wednesday, Dec. 10 at 9:30 a.m.

Music & Movement with Deb Hudgins

Join Deb Hudgins for a 30-minute music and movement theme-based program which features singing and guitar music for young children (infants & preschool). Join us on Tuesdays: Nov. 25 and Dec. 23. The program starts promptly at 10:30 a.m.

Tutors with Tails

Meet Sprite! Sprite is a therapy dog who loves children and love books. Sprite & her owner Janet will visit the Taft on the last Tuesday of each month. Register today for the opportunity to read to Sprite! Spots are limited.

Book Clubs

6-9 Book Club: We will be reading: *Little Legends: The Spell Thief* by Tom Percival. The book club discussion will be held on Tuesday, Dec. 16 at 5 p.m.

8-12 Book Club: We will be reading: *The Wild Robot Escapes* by Peter Brown. The book club discussion will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 18 at 5 p.m.

Graphic Novel Book Club: Join us on Tuesday, Nov. 25 at 5 p.m. for our next book club meeting. We will be discussing *I Survived: The Great Molasses Flood, 1919*.

All book clubs will take place downstairs in the library. Books are available for pickup at the upstairs circulation desk. The book club will include a discussion, pizza, and refreshments.

Pet of the Month: Meet Dusty

Dusty is a lovely grey lady presently residing in the senior room of Milford Humane Society, but she's not a senior, just an old soul. Dusty is what some may call a Spirit Cat, she is quite shy and the master of disguise - sometimes you might not even notice she's in the room with you.

When Dusty first arrived at the shelter she was very nervous and these days she still takes time to trust people. But anyone who puts in the time and effort to gain her trust will be well rewarded. She is an absolute sweetheart. Once Dusty knows you, she loves nothing more than to receive pets and purr as she makes biscuits by the dozen. Dusty took her time adjusting to life in the shelter, so it is to be expected that she would also take some time to adjust being in a new home. Dusty would do best in a quiet home either as an



only pet or with a calm cat companion, and with a patient and understanding person(s) so she can adjust to her new surroundings at her own pace.

For information on meeting or the other cats at the Milford Humane Society please visit www.milfordhumane.org/

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SPORTS

Nipmuc Girls' Volleyball takes home league title

NRHS won 13 games despite challenging schedule

By Chris Villani

The Nipmuc girls' volleyball team finished the regular season with 13 victories, a win in the newly formed CMAC A Division, and the number three overall ranking in Division IV. Head coach Brian Gerard said the team's experience and an especially difficult schedule has been a big help.

"We went out and put together the hardest schedule in D4, and I think it has benefited us," Gerard said. "We lost to some teams from higher divisions, but it made us battle-ready for the playoffs."

The Warriors have numerous players who led the way through the successful campaign, including senior middle hitter Kayleigh Fountain.

"I haven't seen anybody better than her out of the middle position," Gerard said. "That includes the teams in divisions above us."

Another senior captain, Annabel Palmer, finished the regular season as the top player on the team in kills. Gerard called her a

"dominating presence."

"She is one of those kids who you want on the court at all times," he said. "She has a great work ethic, she is aggressive, and she has that competitive nature."

Senior Gabrielle Leet is the engine that helps make the Nipmuc offense run, particularly with her unusual ability to jump set.

"You don't see that a lot at this level," Gerard said. "It makes a difference when she is setting her players because it's at a different height and the tempo and timing are a little bit different. She is also an excellent server."

The trio helped Nipmuc roll through its league and compete with higher-level teams like Shrewsbury, Weston, Ashland, and Wachusett, among others. Gerard said his team more than held its own.

"I would say that, in a lot of those matches, we were leading at one point but we may have ended up losing due to a lack of experience or they had a better serve receive at certain points and that helped them go on



Nipmuc captured the title in its new league and shined against a difficult schedule. Courtesy photo

runs," he said. "But just seeing what's out there in the divisions above you, especially with the power ranking system, it helps you."

This year's Nipmuc team has six seniors and the program also

boasts a large crop of freshmen.

"This group is very tight, they have been together for a long time," Gerard said. The experience made them comfortable on the court. During a timeout in a match at Whitins-

ville Christian, the team's huddle was drowned out by a pep band, but that didn't dampen their enjoyment.

"We just enjoyed the band," Gerard said. "We danced, we sang. They are a good group."

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SPORTS

Unbeaten BVT wins golf league title

Beavers shine in new division

By Chris Villani

Blackstone Valley Tech golf coach Craig Allen was driving home after a rained out state tournament with Leopaul Gamelin and Charlie Leighton and the trio reminisced on what was a stellar season.

“If you had told us at the start of the year that we would go undefeated, and win the league championship in a very tough bracket, I think we all would have been surprised,” Allen said, noting that Valley Tech played in a new league this year with a group that included Hopedale, Whitinsville Christian, AMSA, Nipmuc, and Keefe Tech in CMAC Division B.

BVT not only ran the table in its league, it also knocked off Grafton to win the Highfields Cup, named for the course where both teams play.

“They had 10 seniors and we had not seen them all year,” Allen said. “We beat them by one stroke, which was cool.”

Gamelin led the way for the Beavers this fall and has aspirations of playing college golf. Fellow senior Ayden Joseph earned the number two stroke average through the fall.

“They both worked on their games extremely hard over the summer,” Allen said. “They just had phenomenal seasons.”

Leighton bounced back from a slow start to the season to finish tied for third in the sectional tournament, an event where Gamelin shared the medalist honors. Allen teased Leighton, telling him that he had to adjust to a body strengthened by a summer of hard work at his trade.

Two more seniors, Matteo Lama and Evan Griffin, were

consistent contributors throughout the year, their fourth with the program.

“I kept them as freshmen because I could see they had a lot of potential and over the years they both grew and grew, and they both ended up scoring in matches and helping us out.”

Junior Drew Shanahan also ‘moved up in the ranks,’ Allen said. “He played in the number four spot for us. He just played golf all summer. He played in tournaments and sharpened his game.”

Two more juniors, Chase O’Connell and Nathaniel Nelson, came on strong by the end of the stellar Valley Tech season.

In addition to the success on the golf course, Allen pointed out that many of his players are in similar trades and take classes together. It helped strengthen their bond during the season.

“They all just meshed, they all



The CMAC Division B Champs: Leopaul Gamelin, Charlie Leighton, Ayden Joseph, Coach Craig Allen, Matteo Lama, Evan Griffin, Drew Shanahan. Courtesy photo

got along,” Allen said. “They all wanted to get the better of each other in practice and it made them really competitive. It was a really nice season.”



Leopaul Gamelin earned medalist honors in 10 matches, finishing with a 36.6 stroke average. Courtesy photo

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NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$54,995~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$47,977**

2022 SUBARU OUTBACK
AS LOW AS **\$85/WK**
#D15211 • AWD, HEATED SEATS
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$34,695~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977**

2025 MERCEDES GLA 250 SUV
AS LOW AS **\$145/WK**
#TP5839 • 2.0L TURBO, LEATHER
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$50,800~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$40,977**

2024 HYUNDAI SONATA
AS LOW AS **\$85/WK**
#TP5397 • 25/36 MPG CITY/HWY
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$28,680~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977**

2024 CHEVY COLORADO
AS LOW AS **\$138/WK**
#47843 • LT TRIM, 4X4, ALLOYS
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$44,290~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$38,977**

2024 HONDA CIVIC SPORT
AS LOW AS **\$96/WK**
#D15237 • 30/37 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 **\$124/WK**
#TP5673 • AWD, TWIN TURBO, NAV
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$51,595~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$34,977**

2022 RAM 1500 BIG HORN
AS LOW AS **\$127/WK**
#TP6030 • 4X4, 3.6L V6, ALLOYS
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$45,710~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,977**

2022 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER
AS LOW AS **\$124/WK**
#TP5646 • XLE TRIM, ALLOYS, CPO
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$45,775~~ | **WHOLESALE PRICE: \$34,977**

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Mike Penner
General Manager

SEVEN-DAY VEHICLE EXCHANGE PROGRAM

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