localtownpages
Medway & Millis

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Our Town Publishing Changes Hands, Celebrates Relocation

Tri-County Regional Chamber Facilitates Milford Ribbon-Cutting Event

By Judith Dorato O'Gara

On Friday, January 23rd, Jen and Marty Schofield, new owners of Our Town Publishing, celebrated a grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony at their new location at 9 Industrial Road, Ste. 107, Milford, Mass. The full-service printing company provides a range of marketing services for all clients, from consumer to business, as well as publishes community newspapers reaching 28 Massachusetts towns. The reception drew many local professionals, along with Rep. Brian W. Murray of the 10th Worcester District and Laura O'Callaghan, President & CEO of the Tri-County Regional Chamber of Commerce, who was "thrilled" to help facilitate the ribbon-cutting event.

Our Town President & CEO Jen Schofield expressed her gratitude to all who attended for their support.

Front row at ribbon-cutting, from left, Laura O'Callaghan, President & CEO of Tri-County Regional Chamber, Our Town Publishing new owners Jen and Marty Schofield, and Mass. Rep. Brian W. Murray of the 10th Worcester District.

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Zachary DiGregorio of Medway and his luge partner Sean Hollander (obscured) of Lake Placid, NY, placed 8th in the Luge Men's Doubles at the 2026 Winter Olympics with a combined time of 1:45.467. Photo source: @zdigregorio/Instagram. See full story on page 6

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OUR TOWN

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"As both the owner and publisher of 16 area newspapers and a full-service print shop, Marty and I are incredibly proud of the work we do—and even more proud of the relationships that have built this business brick by brick," Schofield added, "This event is more than just showcasing our print shop, newspapers, products and services; it's about building lasting connections. Printing has always been a collaborative craft, and today is a perfect opportunity to share ideas and build new partnerships in a community we are so fortunate to be part of."

"It was wonderful to see such a strong turnout from the newspaper's clients and supporters," said O'Callaghan. "The energy in the room and the enthusiasm for networking really spoke to the respect and support Jennifer and Marty have already earned as the new owners. And of course, nothing makes it official quite like oversized red scissors and a bright red ribbon!"

"I'm pleased to have Our Town Publishing in Milford and very impressed with the number of local community newspapers (it) publishes," said Rep. Murray, who recognized Our Town Publishing with an official citation from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts at the celebration. Murray continued, "Today, it is so difficult to try to get current local information, and the papers that Our Town puts together does just a great job of getting that information out to residents in the community. I was also very pleased to learn of the extent of full-service printing services Our Town offers to businesses and residents in the community. It's very important for folks who have printing needs to know they'll be done locally, professionally and cost-effectively."

Rep. Murray also gave a nod to the Tri-County Chamber for helping to bring exposure and attention to local businesses such as Our Town Publishing.

Tri-County Regional Chamber's O'Callaghan extended her well wishes "to former owner Nicole and her husband, Charles, on their retirement - hopefully they are enjoying their free time somewhere sunny and warm."

Our Town Publishing's celebration afforded local professionals an opportunity to make connections with area businesses.

The Tashjians said they could not be happy to entrust the company they built to Jennifer and Marty.

"With Jennifer's 26 years in the industry and Marty's technical experience, we know our employees, and the continuation of what has been established, will have a long life for the years ahead," said Nicole Tashjian.

For more information on Our Town Publishing's full-service printing, publishing and graphic design services, visit www.ourtownpublishing.com.

To learn more about Local Town Pages' community newspapers, visit www.localtownpages.com.

For more information on the Tri-County Regional Chamber, visit tricountychamberma.org.

Unified Medway Food Pantry project approved for 74 Main Street, one central pantry to open later this year

Tom Anderson and Susan Dietrich, members of the Medway Food Pantry Community Solutions Working Group, standing in the future space of the Medway Food Pantry at 74 Main Street. Courtesy photo

Later this year, the Medway Food Pantry will have a new, unified home following unanimous approval from the town's Planning and Economic Development Board. Organizers call it "a meaningful step forward for food access in Medway."

The project will bring together Medway's two longstanding food pantry operations, the Medway Food Pantry at Mahan Circle (part of the Medway Housing Authority) and the Medway Village Food Pantry, into a single, centralized location at 74 Main Street in the space formerly occupied by the Metrowest Physicians Group in the Medway Shoppes.

"This property will allow us to bring them into one unified pantry for the town," said Susan Dietrich, executive director of the Medway Village Food Pantry, at the Feb. 10 hearing. "It's a project the two pantries have been working on together, and it will allow us to better serve our neighbors."

Deitrich was joined at the hearing by Tom Anderson of the Medway Food Pantry at Mahan Circle.

They explained to the board that, currently, both pantries operate in temporary and limited spaces. The Medway Village Food Pantry is located on the ground floor of Medway Village Church and is only open Saturday mornings, as the space serves as a nursery school during the week.

Deitrich explained the process to set up the Medway Village Food Pantry. "Every Friday we have to go in, we have to set up the pantry. We receive a food delivery of recovered foods, so fresh produce, lean proteins,

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PANTRY

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bread and bakery items, milk – we receive all of that on Friday afternoon. We have to sort it, get it ready to go, and store it; and then come back Saturday morning by 7 a.m., get it all ready, put it in the coolers, open the doors, serve from 8-10 [a.m.]. Then, we have to break it all down and put it away and it's a nursery school."

> Both Medway food pantries will remain open and continue normal operations during the unification process.

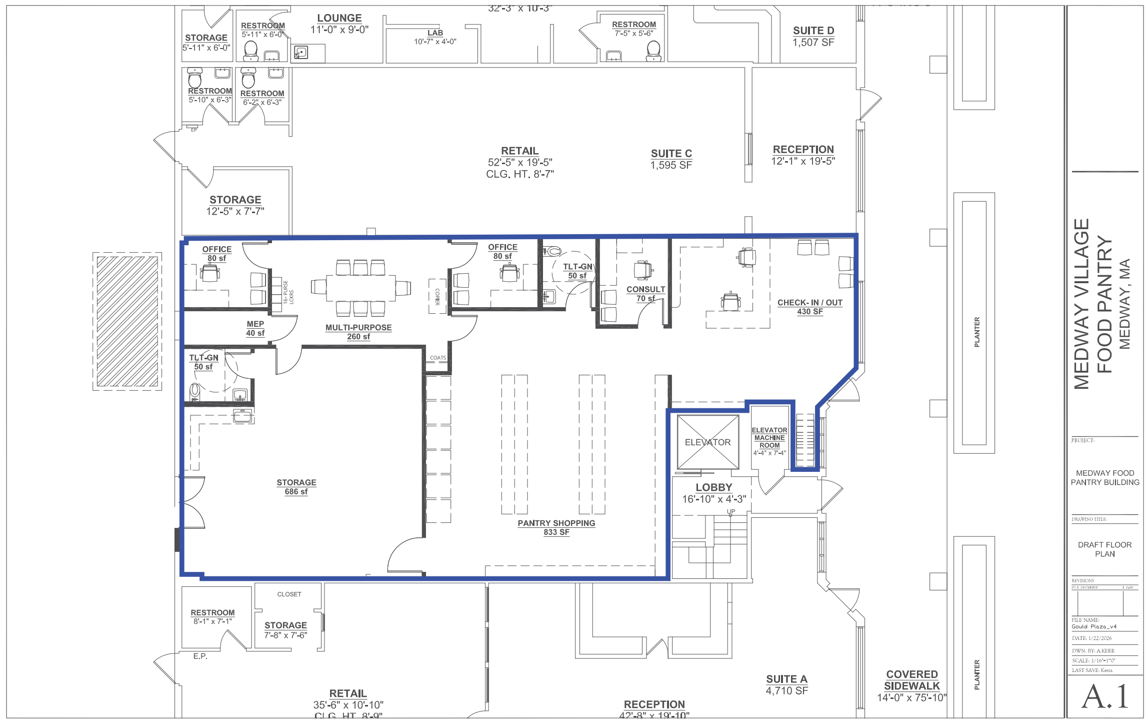
Deitrich said that, in 2025, volunteers contributed more than 9,500 hours supporting pantry operations, and 20% of those hours were for set-up and break-down.

Anderson said The Mahan Circle pantry operates out of the basement of the building, and they have an outdoor, drive-up distribution, all year-round.

"People place their orders with us, we go in, gather the food, bring it back up in shopping carts through an elevator, out the front door. Logistically, it takes a long time to service one car…It's not the most convenient, but it gets the job done," said Anderson.

Together, the two pantries serve approximately 200 households each week, with demand steadily rising over the past five years.

The new facility will continue the current "choice" or retail-style model, allowing clients to select their own groceries rather than receiving pre-packed bags. Organizers say this approach preserves dignity, reduces food waste, and allows families to choose food that best meets their needs.



The area outlined in blue will be renovated into a 'retail store' space for clients to shop. Image source: Medfield Village Food Pantry

The new pantry will operate on an appointment-based system designed to reduce wait times and improve efficiency, while also expanding service hours, including potential evening availability. The central Main Street location is expected to improve accessibility, particularly for residents who currently face barriers due to transportation or limited pantry hours.

After the meeting, Michelle Reed, a volunteer and member of the Medway Village Food Pantry Board, said, "This project represents more than just a new location. It reflects the unification of two food pantry operations that have served the Medway community for decades. The Medway Food Pantry at Mahan Circle has been serving residents since 1992, and the Medway Village Food Pantry since 2004. Both organizations have grown significantly over the years in response to increasing community need."

Construction is expected to begin in late March or early April, with completion and relocation anticipated by the end of summer 2026, pending permits and inspections. Both existing pantry locations will remain open and continue serving clients throughout the process.

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Jennifer Schofield

Editor
Theresa Knapp

Send Editorial to:
editor@millismedwaynews.com

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

Creative Design & Layout
Michelle McSherry
Kim Vasseur
Wendy Watkins

Office Address
9 Industrial Road, Suite 107
Milford, MA 01757

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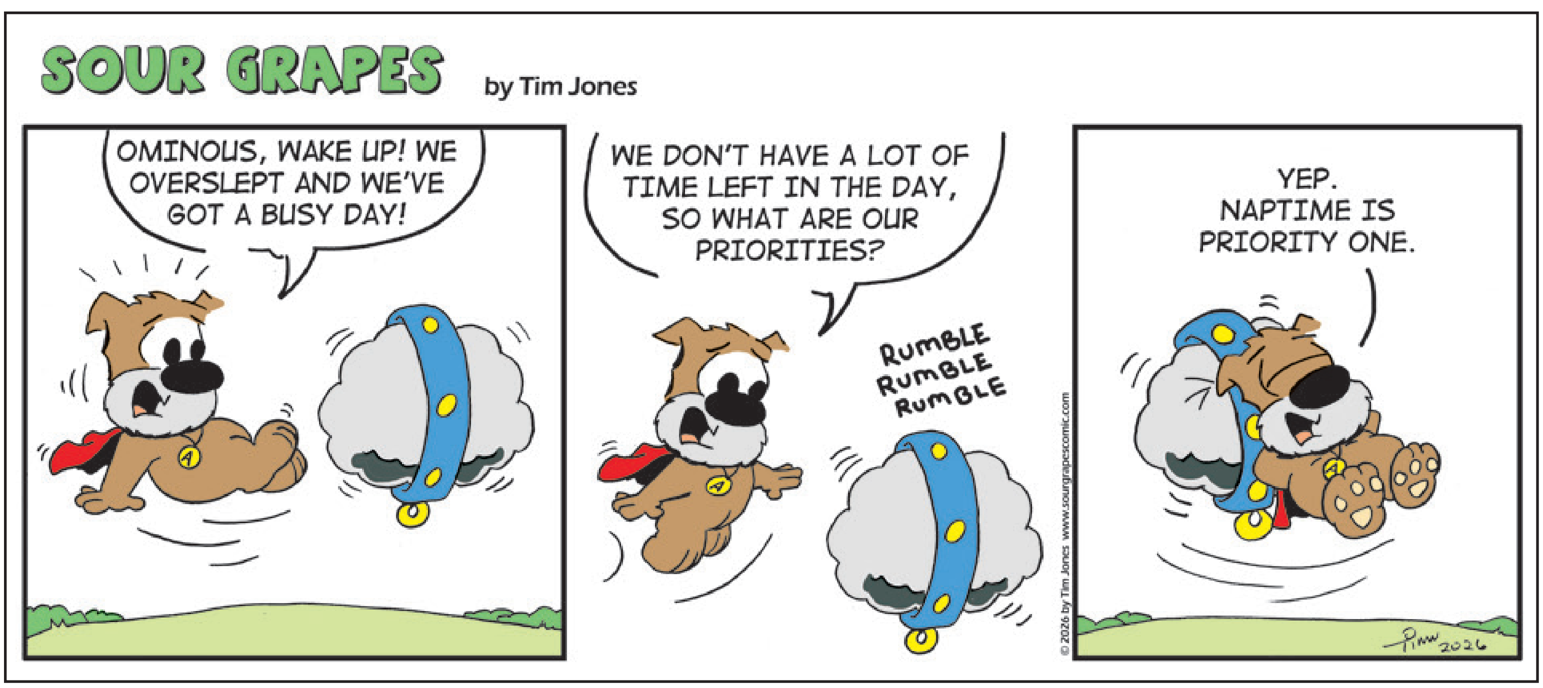

Financial Advisor Mark Freeman Focuses on Clients' Success

Edward Jones
Mark Freeman

Business spotlight

Financial advisor Mark Freeman enjoys getting to know his clients. His aim is to help them clarify their objectives and then, working as partners, to create a financial plan that achieves their goals.

"I love this career because I love helping people," said Freeman. "I work for my clients because I care about them."

A Certified Exit Planning Advisor (CEPA) working for Edward Jones at his 77 West Main St., Hopkinton office, Freeman offers financial advice to business owners and individuals.

I spend a lot of time getting to know my clients. We talk about their financial challenges, and their proposed solutions. Many times I find people are focused on the wrong problem," Freeman said.

A frequent problem is minimizing taxes. He noted many clients, while saving for retirement, inadvertently create, "a tax time bomb." Freeman explained, "If you invest in a diversified portfolio year after year and don't deal with taxes while saving, it could come back to bite you in retirement," in the form of large tax bills. For other clients, "once you establish some type of wealth, taxes become an important part of the discussion since the best way to increase wealth is by keeping more of it," said Freeman. He added, "Helping people avoid tax issues is a primary focus. I work hard to keep a client's money in their pockets and out of Uncle Sam's.

Another issue faced by many of Freeman's clients is being in a "job prison," working in a position they dislike because they feel they need the income." But after reviewing their finances, we often find they can change careers or do something else," he said. Freeman noted he was in that same situation himself until he realized he could afford to change careers.

Freeman added, "I am also trying to make sure that my clients' money outlasts them." One of his first tasks when meeting a new client is to run an analysis of their finances to make sure their funds will support them for their lifetime.

With a mechanical engineering degree from the University of Massachusetts Lowell, Freeman worked in two other industries before establishing his finance career in 2017. Even though his first two jobs were outside his training, Freeman said he was hired by Edward Jones, "one, because I have the ability to analyze data quickly and, two, because I always try to figure out a better way to do things. I bring those skills to my finance clients."

Freeman also tries to understand his clients' motivations. "When I propose a plan, I ask 'how do you feel about it.' If there is something bothering you, I need to fix that," he said.

Much as he partners with his clients, Freeman has developed relationships with the towns where he works and lives. Part of the Hopkinton business community, he has supported many local organizations and nonprofits.

Making their home in Holliston since 2005, he and his wife have raised their now college-aged twins in the town. Freeman currently volunteers as a business advisor for the Holliston High DECA Club, an international nonprofit organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management.

Summing up his work objective and the relationship he has with clients, Freeman said, " My job is to understand what is important to you and figure out how to make it happen."

For more information call Freeman at 508-293-4017 or email him at Mark.Freeman@EdwardJones.com.

I think you already have the correct photo and caption but here is the caption again: The team of financial advisor Mark Freeman and office administrator MaryKate Morin of Edward Jones in Hopkinton helps clients define their objectives and develop a plan to achieve those goals.

The team of Financial Advisor Mark Freeman and Office Administrator MaryKate Morin of Edward Jones in Hopkinton helps clients define their objectives and develop a plan to achieve those goals.

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Local residents named to Worcester State University Dean's List for Fall 2025

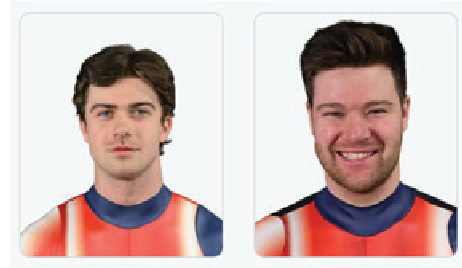
The following students have been named to Worcester State University's Dean's List for Fall 2025:

Medway residents Camryn O Bartlett, Braden Lawes, Maia G McKean; and Millis residents Alina T Donoian and Emily C Themistocles.

Honors are awarded to matriculated undergraduate students who have earned a 3.5 GPA or higher. Full-time students must have earned a minimum of 12 credits and part-time students must have earned a minimum of six credits.

Medway's DiGregorio now two-time Olympian

Zachary DiGregorio, 24, of Medway, together with his luge partner Sean Hollander, 26, of Lake Placid, NY, finished 8th in the Luge Men's Doubles at the 2026 Winter Olympics in Milan-Cortina on Feb. 11, Hollander's birthday.



Zachary DiGregorio (left) and Sean Hollander placed 8th in the Luge Men's Doubles at the 2026 Winter Olympics. Photo source: www.olympics.com.

Every doubles sled completes two official runs in Olympic competition, and the total combined time determines final placings. DiGregorio and Hollander's combined time was 1:45.467.

On Feb. 14, DiGregorio posted on his Instagram account @zdigregorio, "The Olympics are the peak of winter sport, something you chase four years out. Every morning you wake up with a fire inside pushing you to work harder, train harder, and refuse to give up on the dream.

"8th place wasn't the result we came for, but I can honestly say I wouldn't change a single thing about how we prepared. Every high, every low, every sacrifice led us here.

"Proud of the fight, grateful for the journey. Forever thankful of the people who got us here. @seanhollander and I have been through every emotion together, our families and friends who have supported us, and our coaches and staff who always believe in us and make us believe it too."

The Town of Medway held several watch parties to cheer for their team.

The pair previously competed in the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

Your Money, Your Independence

Homebuying in 2026: Smart Moves To Plan Your Purchase

Glenn Brown, CFP

March marks the start of the spring homebuying season. Sellers who waited out the slower winter months are listing homes, and some buyers wait until summer to align closings with the school year.

With mortgage rates slightly lower than 2025 peaks, timing and strategy remain critical. The Fed's latest dot plot signals gradual easing in 2026 and 2027, which could create refinancing opportunities. However, waiting for rates to drop carries tradeoffs, as falling rates often coincide with rising home prices.

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

Define your priorities

Start by listing what matters most in a home, then prioritize #1-25, as not everything can be #1 or 1A. Consider location, bedrooms, outdoor space, remote work offices and play areas. Decide between move-in ready versus fixer-upper, quiet streets versus active neighborhoods, and public versus private schools. Don't let innovative listing photos sway your lifestyle goals and long-term needs.

Understand the local market

Research pricing trends in your desired neighborhoods. Check school ratings, public safety, property taxes, and local infrastructure plans. Also, if you don't want to live on a busy road, know the existing commercial and industrial zones.

Get pre-approved for a mortgage

Pre-approval signals to sellers that you're serious and can afford the property. Don't confuse pre-approval with ability to pay, as an underwriter is viewing your financial situation today - not what you have planned.

Explore mortgage options

Mortgage type matters more than ever in 2026:

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

FHA Loans - Government-backed Federal Housing Administration loans are designed to help first-time homebuyers or those with lower credit scores qualify for a mortgage. Down payments are as low as 3.5% for credit scores of 580 or higher. Keep in mind, Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI) is required, which increases overall costs.

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

Adjustable-rate mortgages (ARMs): Lower initial rates for five, seven or 10 years, then adjust with market conditions. Good if you plan to refinance or move within that time frame.

Tip for 2026 buyers: Consider an ARM with the intention of refinancing in two to five years if rates drop. Locking a lower rate now with a plan to refinance later could save thousands, but ensure your budget can handle potential adjustments.

Plan for full costs

Beyond the down payment, budget for closing costs such as escrow, prepaid interest and other fees. These can add $5,000–$15,000. Some costs can be rolled into the mortgage, but get a detailed lender breakdown to avoid surprises.

Factor in future refinancing if you plan to take advantage of rate drops. This can positively affect monthly affordability and long-term planning.

Align homebuying with your financial plan

The real peace of mind comes after moving in. Planning ahead helps ensure your new home supports your financial goals.

- Adjust your monthly budget for mortgage, insurance and taxes
- Plan short-term renovations or upgrades
- Build contingencies for unexpected expenses or family changes

With a clear plan, you can confidently buy a home that aligns with both lifestyle and long-term financial independence.

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

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of 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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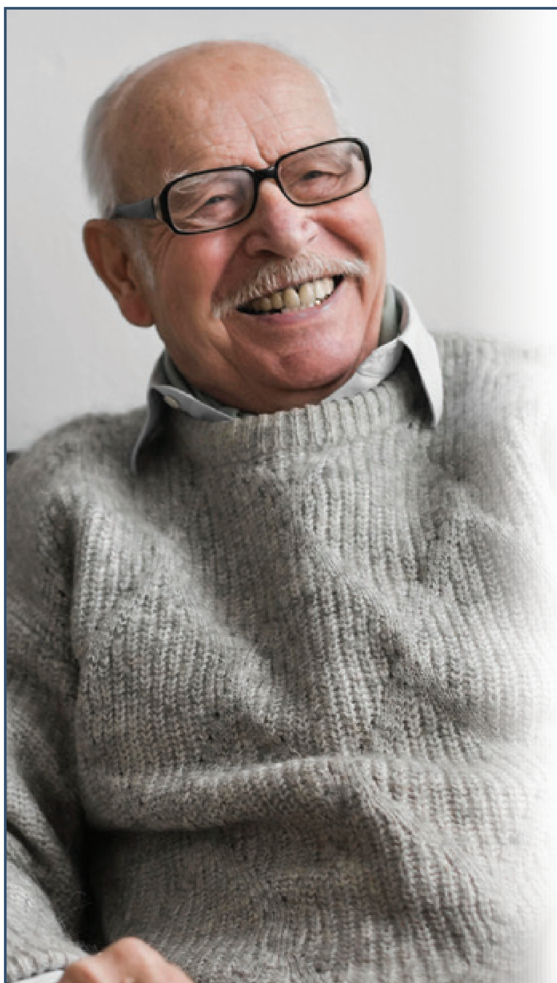

Medway High School students recognized in 2025 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards

From left to right: "2 People Untitled" by Kimora Chin. This piece received Gold Key recognition, and will advance to the national competition and be considered for national awards and scholarships; "The Toxicity of Human Touch" by Delia Muller; "In the Clerb We All Fam" by Kimora Chin. (Photos Courtesy Medway Public Schools)

Medway High School is proud to recognize two students who were recently recognized in the 2025 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for the Massachusetts region.

Junior Kimora Chin was recognized for three different pieces of art. She received a Gold Key for her drawing, "2 People Untitled," a Silver Key for "In the Clerb We All Fam" and an honorable mention for "Xander."

With its Gold Key recognition, "2 People Untitled" will advance to the national competition and be considered for national awards and scholarships.

Junior Delia Muller was awarded a Silver Key for her painting, "The Toxicity of Human Touch."

The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, originally established in 1923, is the nation's longest running and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens. Students in grades 7-12 submit their work across 29 categories of art and writing to be considered.

"We are extremely proud of Kimora and Delia for being selected for awards in this prestigious program," said MHS fine arts teacher Noelle Jackson. "They are both very deserving of this honor. These awards are a direct result of the hard work and passion they continuously put into their art, and it is wonderful to see them acknowledged for their talent."

"Congratulations to Kimora and Delia on this incredible accomplishment," said MHS Principal John Murray. "It is always rewarding to see our students pursuing their passions, and I am proud of Kimora and Delia for putting themselves and their artwork out into the world."

Submitted by Medway Public Schools

Ease the Squeeze on Your Retirement Income Plan

Mark Freeman, CEPA

FINANCIAL FOCUS®
Provided by Edward Jones

Rising prices may not dominate headlines the way they did a year or two ago, but if you're retired, you're probably still feeling them. Even when overall inflation cools, the costliest expenses — like health care, utilities, insurance and property taxes — tend to rise faster than broad inflation numbers suggest. That creates a squeeze that can make you question whether your income plan is built to last.

Fortunately, you often can adjust without drastic cuts that affect your lifestyle. Start by understanding where the pressure comes from and how to build more flexibility into your plan.

Inflation hits retirees differently. You've likely noticed your grocery bill, prescription drug costs and heating expenses haven't returned to "normal." Even small increases compound over time and can chip away at your buying power.

If your income plan was created years ago, it may assume lower inflation or relatively stable price increases over time. Recent years have shown that's not always the case.

Why some income plans feel strained. Any plan relying on fixed withdrawals or rigid budgets can feel tight when living costs rise. If you're drawing from investments, you may hesitate to increase your withdrawals because of market volatility. And if you depend on fixed income sources like Social Security or a pension, yearly cost of living increases may not keep pace with your expenses. You might live 25 to 35 years in retirement, giving small annual cost increases decades to add up.

What you can do without sacrificing stability. A few adjustments can help you stay ahead of rising costs and maintain your financial confidence.

First, review your withdrawal strategy. Ask your financial advisor about flexible approaches that increase income when markets and portfolios perform well and pull back during tougher times. This protects your long-term plan with room to respond to rising prices.

Next, rebalance your portfolio. You may uncover opportunities to shift toward investments with more consistent income or better tax efficiency. Sometimes a small tweak can generate extra cash flow without increasing overall risk.

Finally, look at your income sources. You may be less affected by rising costs if you delay taking Social Security, work a part-time job, add inflation-protected bonds or create predictable lifetime income with annuities, if they're appropriate for your situation.

Don't overlook health care: Health care costs often grow faster than general inflation. Medicare premiums and out-of-pocket expenses can rise annually, and the need for long-term care remains a big financial uncertainty for retirees. Building health care-specific inflation into your plan now can help prevent surprises later. Any savings you have in a health savings account can help you cover health care costs. And many pharmaceutical companies offer financial assistance programs to help pay for costlier medications.

Stay flexible and informed: Today's retirements look different from those of even a decade ago. The key is staying flexible, reviewing your plan regularly and making small adjustments before pressure builds. A financial advisor can help you find the right approach to navigating rising costs without disrupting the life you've worked hard to build.

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

Mark Freeman, CEPA
Edward Jones Financial Advisor
77 West Main Street,
Hopkinton, MA (508) 293-4017
Mark.Freeman@edwardjones.com

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Woodstock Building Associates — Where Thoughtful Design Meets Craftsmanship

By Jennifer Russo

Business spotlight

Home projects don't start with blueprints — they start with conversations.

Founded 48 years ago on the belief that building or renovating a home should feel collaborative, transparent, and even inspiring, Woodstock Building Associates has quietly built a reputation for doing things the right way. The company's work can be seen in thoughtfully designed additions, carefully renovated kitchens and baths, and custom homes that feel as livable as they are beautiful.

Architect and Principal Steven Keene's path into the building world started long before blueprints and job sites. As a kid, Keene was fascinated by how things came together, the structures, spaces, and the way thoughtful design could shape how people live. That curiosity eventually turned into a career, and together with his amazing team, it continues to inspire every project.

"Recently, we worked on a multi-phase home remodel on a modest, 1950s Cape-style house. I purchased the home as-is, and while the structure showed signs of age, it offered solid bones and a strong potential for expansion. We removed the entire upper level and rebuilt it, allowing for three bedrooms, a full bath, a walk-in closet, and a front porch. We also included a 400 sq foot addition on the first floor, which made a huge difference and allowed us to be able to host large gatherings," shares Steven.

What makes Woodstock Building Associates stand out isn't just technical skill — it's their team design-build approach, which keeps everything under one roof. From the first conversation to the final walkthrough, clients work with one coordinated team. Design, estimating, project management, and construction are all connected, allowing ideas to evolve realistically and budgets to stay grounded from the start.

If you have ever been through home renovation, you know that it can sometimes feel overwhelming. The team approach WBA takes is especially appealing to homeowners who value thoughtful direction during a renovation or build. WBA works hard to understand each client's goals and help guide them through decisions big and small, from the overall layout and flow to materials and finishes. There will never be any surprise costs because their focus is on clear communication, realistic expectations, and bringing out the home's full potential while keeping it comfortable and functional.

"One thing that really sets us apart is that we have our own design showroom, where clients can see everything from cabinetry to flooring, bathroom fixtures, and more," Steven shares. "It helps when you can see the products before buying them, and every brand and item we have there are those that we stand behind completely. They are from vendors we trust, top quality, and made to be durable and long-lasting."

WBA offers a wide range of residential needs, including custom home design and new construction, kitchen and bathroom renovations, home additions and expansions, outdoor living spaces, finished basements, accessibility and aging-in-place modifications, and more. No matter what the scope, whether it's a wow-factor moment or replacement windows and doors, the goal remains the same: create spaces that feel intentional, comfortable, and built to last.

Clients often remark on the sense of trust that develops throughout a project. That trust is earned through careful planning, honest timelines, and a team that treats each home as if it were their own.

In a world where construction can feel rushed or transactional, Woodstock Building Associates offers something refreshingly different: a relationship-driven experience rooted in craftsmanship, care, and thoughtful design.

Woodstock Building Associates has offices in Franklin, MA and Woodstock, CT. To learn more or start a conversation about your next project, visit www.wbahomes.com or call 508-570-4853 to discover what's possible when design and building work together.

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A beautifully renovated kitchen by Woodstock Building Associates.

WBA has its own Franklin showroom, so homeowners can see the products going into their renovation.

Millis Council on Aging March Events

Located at 900 Main Street, Millis
(508) 376-7051
Hours: 8:30 AM- 4:00 PM, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday
8:30 AM- 12:30 PM Friday
Monthly Newsletters can be found at the Senior Center, Town Hall, and the Millis Public Library.

Tech Time

Drop-In Help for computers & smartphones with Esther Davis of the Millis Public Library.

Tuesday, March 10 at 12:00 PM

Pizza and Prevention with the Millis Fire Department

Monthly informative and fun program about fire prevention and life safety. Pizza served courtesy of the Friends of the Millis COA.

Monday, March 9 at 11:30 AM. Free. Sign up: (508) 376-7051

Art with Amy Adams

A fun afternoon of creative guided painting on canvas. All materials provided. No experience necessary.

Tuesday, March 10 at 1:00 PM

Cost: $3.00. Sign up (508) 376-7051

Lansing Millis Legacy Award Nominations Now Open. Nominate an adult, age 60-plus, for their outstanding volunteer efforts on behalf of Millis residents and the Town. Call the Millis COA for an application or visit millisma.gov/council-aging. Applications due April 1. Award to be presented in May.

Live Music Event! "From Ireland to America"

Special live music event featuring musician Roger Tincknell of Music for All Ages, brought to us in part by a grant from the Millis Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Tuesday, March 10 at 11:00 AM. Free.

Boston History! "Green Beer & Red Coats"

What does 18th century Britain have to do with 19th century holidays and 20th century government in Boston? A quick look at the history behind Evacuation Day and its pairing with St. Patrick's Day. Hosted by Nancy Snow. Thursday, March 12 at 10:00 AM.

Basic Sign Language Classes

Keep learning enjoyable! Sign language offers a powerful mix of brain health, physical activity, emotional well-being and social connection all while promoting independence and inclusion. Learning something later in life reinforces the ability to adapt and grow. Instructor Shawn Bruhl (of our Dance Fitness and Full Body Workout classes) leads this fun, visually engaging and stimulating series. Free.

Wednesdays starting March 4 for 8 weeks.

Time: 12:30 PM-1:15 PM. Sign up (508) 376-7051

Roger Tincknell

"From Ireland to America" on March 10

'Coffee and Conversations' on March 21

Coffee and Conversations will be held at the Millis Public Library on March 21 from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Topics range with a focus on debating less and understanding more. All political perspectives are welcome and respected.

Future dates include April 25 and May 16.

This event is not sponsored by Millis Public Library.

Town of Millis Income-Restricted Rental Opportunity

Gateway At Millis, Phase 2
240-244 Main Street
Millis, MA 02054

4 Income-Restricted Rental Units

# of Units	# of Bedrooms	Rent	Minimum Incomes*	Maximum Income Limit (% AMI)
1	1-Bedroom	$2,455	$73,650	80%
2	2-Bedroom	$2,719	$81,570	80%
1	3-Bedroom	$2,966	$88,980	80%

*Minimum incomes **do not apply to households receiving housing assistance such as Section 8, MRVP, or VASH**

Maximum Incomes
(set by HUD + based on household size + Area Median Income (AMI))

Household Size	80% AMI
1	$92,650
2	$105,850
3	$119,100
4	$132,300
5	$142,900
6	$153,500

**2025 Area Median Incomes for Boston, Cambridge, Quincy, MA-NH MSA*
Minimum incomes ***do not apply to households receiving housing assistance such as Section 8, MRVP, or VASH***

Applications are available during the application period, from Monday, February 16th, 2026 — Friday, April 17th, 2026

To request an online application or to have one sent by email, visit www.MaloneyAffordable.com/Rental-Properties/Gateway-At-Millis-Phase-2

To have a hard copy of the application mailed to your mailing address, please email GatewayAtMillis@MaloneyProperties.com, call **(617) 639-3064 Ext 778 | US Relay 711**, or visit www.MaloneyAffordable.com/Rental-Properties/Gateway-At-Millis-Phase-2 and use the 'Contact Us' form at the bottom of the page

Applications can also be picked up in-person at:

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Information Session:
Attendance at the information session is not required. The session will be recorded and available for at-request viewing
Tuesday, March 11th, 2026 @ 12pm
https://maloneyproperties.zoom.us/j/83432986459?pwd=npIlLaEdV6qtff0AhUlurikcRyhT5j.1
Meeting ID: 834 3298 6459
Passcode: 446513

DEADLINE: Applications must be submitted online or postmarked no later than **Friday, April 17th, 2026**
Mailed to: Maloney Properties LLC, ATTN: Gateway At Millis Lottery (Phase 2) 27 Mica Lane, Wellesley, MA 02481

- Selection by Lottery
- Asset & Use Restrictions Apply
- Preferences Apply

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Equal Housing Opportunity

SPRING HO

How Much Home Can I Afford?

By the third quarter of 2025, the tide seemingly began to turn in regard to a housing market that had been marked by limited inventory since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. According to market indicators from Redfin, the National Association of REALTORS® and Homes for Heroes, by the summer of 2025 things began to shift in regard to inventory (9.4 percent increase year-over-year). Prices also began to level off, as the median existing home price in the United States was $435,300 in June 2025, which marked a 2 percent increase from the previous year. Price reductions also became more common compared to 2024, signaling a cooldown in some segments.

Although affordability concerns still persist, many people may finally be ready to enter the home-buying arena. When doing so, it's essential prospective home buyers recognize how much they can comfortably spend on a home. Most experts suggest buyers combine lender affordability guidelines with an assessment of one's personal budget. These factors can help individuals determine a reliable budget when shopping for homes.

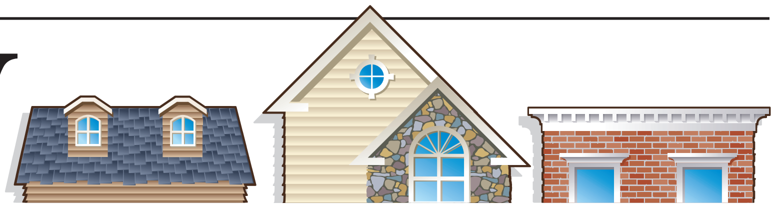
- Debt-to-income ratio: Lenders use various parameters to identify a borrower's creditworthiness. That includes figuring out a person's debt-to-income ratio (DTI). Wells Fargo says DTI can be calculated by adding up all of a person's monthly debt payments and dividing them by gross monthly income. That number is multiplied by 100 to get a percentage. The lower the DTI, the less risky one is to lenders.
- The 28/36 rule: Part of the DTI equation may include the 28/36 rule utilized by many mortgage lenders. This is a standard guideline that can help one see if it's possible to afford a home loan. The 28 percent is allotted housing costs. The monthly housing expenses (principal, interest, taxes, homeowners insurance, private mortgage insurance, and homeowners association fees) should be no more than 28 percent of one's gross monthly income. One's total monthly debt payments, including housing, car, loans, student loans, and credit cards, should be no more than 36 percent of the gross monthly income. So if a prospective home buyer earns $10,000 per month, or $120,000 per year, the housing costs should not exceed $2,800. Total debt payments, including housing, should not exceed $3,600 per month.
- Personal budget considerations: Lenders may allow borrowers to borrow a certain amount of money, and buyers then go out and spend that much on a home. But to avoid living paycheck to paycheck and having all of one's money go toward a home, it is best to account for personal spending habits and savings goals. It's important to have an emergency funds account to pay for unexpected things like home repairs, or to account for instances when income may decline. Ongoing costs to manage the home also merit consideration, as do utilities and future renovations.
- Income-to-home price ratio: Some people abide by another general guideline to shop for a home that costs no more than three to five times their annual household income. That means with an annual income of $100,000, one should aim for a home priced between $300,000 and $500,000. The specific range will also depend on a person's existing debt.
- Interest rates and other factors: The interest rate on home mortgages as well as down payment also must be considered. Resources like Bankrate and Zillow provide home affordability calculators that will factor in interest rates, terms of a loan, down payment, and property taxes. Buying a home when interest rates are high means spending more over the life of the loan. Also, how much one puts toward a down payment has a big impact. Aiming for 20 percent means avoiding paying for private mortgage insurance (PMI).

There is no fail-safe way to determine how much home you can afford. Many factors are in play and are exclusive to buyers in the market for a new home.

Did you know?

The market research experts at Business Research Insights report that the three-season sunroom market size is projected to nearly double between 2025 and 2035. BRI reports that 65 percent of homeowners prefer cost-effective sunrooms when seeking to extend their living space. The popularity of sunrooms can be traced to a number of variables, including year-round access to a home's surrounding landscape. That access might be hindered if the only spaces to experience nature is a patio, deck or another traditional type of outdoor living space. But sunrooms, particularly those equipped with heating and cooling, can bring homeowners in touch with nature during times of year when they might otherwise be compelled to steer clear of their outdoor living spaces due to less welcoming weather.

ME REVIEW



Planning for the Future with Flexible Living

By Tracy LaRosa

The way we think about housing is changing—and flexibility is at the heart of it. Today's buyers are no longer focused on the biggest home possible. Instead, they're thinking ahead: how they want to live now, and how their needs may evolve over the next 10, 20, or even 30 years.

Less space, but better

One of the most noticeable shifts is a desire for less space, but better space. Many homeowners are intentionally downsizing or choosing homes with smaller footprints that are easier to maintain. One-level living is especially popular, offering convenience, accessibility, and long-term comfort without the need for stairs. Ranch-style homes, first-floor primary suites, and layouts with minimal level changes are in high demand—and for good reason. They support aging in place while remaining functional for all stages of life.

Equally important is the rise of multi-purpose rooms. Homes no longer need a formal dining room that's used twice a year or a dedicated guest room that sits empty most of the time.

Instead, buyers are looking for rooms that can adapt:

- A guest bedroom that doubles as a home office
- A dining area that functions as a workspace or homework zone
- A den or bonus room that can serve as a playroom for young children now and a media room for teens later

This flexibility allows homeowners to make the most of every square foot, adjusting how they use their space as their lifestyle changes.

ADUs

Another major trend shaping future-focused housing is the growing interest in Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs). An ADU offers incredible versatility. For many families, it's a smart way to plan across generations. An ADU can house young adult children just starting out, potentially provide rental income to offset rising homeownership costs, and/or serve as a comfortable space for aging parents who want independence while remaining close to family.

Over time, the roles can reverse. Adult children may transition into the main home while older parents downsize into the ADU, maintaining proximity without sacrificing privacy. This kind of multigenerational living is becoming increasingly common, especially as Massachusetts ranks in the top 10% of the most expensive states in the country. With the cost of living continuing to rise, families are rethinking traditional housing models and embracing solutions that offer financial flexibility and long-term stability.

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) offer incredible versatility – for many families, it's a smart way to plan across generations.

Ultimately, these housing trends reflect a smarter approach to homeownership—one that prioritizes adaptability, efficiency, and thoughtful planning. Flexible layouts, multi-purpose rooms, one-level living, and ADUs aren't just trends; they're practical tools for building a home that works for you now, and well into the future.

The b.LUXE ***beauty beat***

Behind the Chair: How We Prepare for You

You've booked your appointment and gathered your inspiration. But have you ever wondered what happens on our end before you even walk through the door? At b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio, the magic doesn't begin when you sit in the chair. It starts long before that.

We asked some of our team to share how they prepare for each guest, and their answers were a beautiful reminder of why our clients keep coming back.

Madison: The Researcher

For Madison, preparation goes far beyond checking the appointment schedule.

"I always review the client's history and notes. If I can, I reach out to previous stylists who have worked with the client and check on formulas, hair type, length, texture, anything I need to know about their hair or them personally."

"Sometimes I ask about their interests or their vibe so the appointment feels more comfortable and less like meeting a stranger for the first time. I even do this with my longtime clients. I still check and update their notes every time."

— *Madison Elliott, Stylist*

For first-time guests, Madison also explains the salon layout so you never feel out of place asking for water or finding the restroom. It's a small detail that helps turn a first visit into a lasting relationship.

Sam: The Organizer

For Sam, a great appointment starts with thoughtful preparation before you arrive.

"I prep my station with all my tools before you walk in, and I check your service history so I can suggest little extras that'll make your hair even better. I also double-check if you're new to me or returning so I can greet you the right way."

— *Sam Dutton, Junior Stylist*

That preparation means you're stepping into a chair that's already ready for you, with a stylist who's ideas you'll love.

Sandra: The Curator

Sandra arrives with a vision already forming, supported by deep product knowledge.

"Before a client's appointment, I'll save reference photos that might be a great fit for them. I also decide on retail products I'd recommend, so I'm ready to talk through what will keep their hair looking its best between visits."

— *Sandra Wilkey, Senior Stylist*

The goal is simple: you leave feeling great about your hair and confident keeping it that way between visits.

Heidi: The Connector

Heidi believes the best appointments begin with comfort and connection.

"I like to think of a funny story about myself before I start with a client so she knows she can relate to me. I think it's very important to be relatable and to have fun so the comfort level is there from the start."

"I also make sure I have plenty of options saved on my Pinterest, new trends, upcoming colors, and cuts that are on point right now, especially if someone comes in with no idea what they're looking for."

— *Heidi McDade, Senior Stylist*

Her mix of fun and inspiration keeps the vibe easygoing and helps clients step outside their comfort zone in the best way.

Emma: The Hostess

Emma's preparation blends technical readiness with genuine warmth.

"Before you even walk through the door, I've already done a little homework. I check who's coming in so your color formula is prepped and I'm ready to hear the latest about your trips, pets, and life updates. Then I make sure my station is fresh and clean so you can sit down, relax, and have the best time in my chair."

— *Emma Ford, Junior Stylist*

That attention to detail makes every visit feel like catching up with a trusted friend who also happens to do incredible hair.

Monique & Corinn: The Sanctuary Keepers

Our estheticians know that skincare is as much about the experience as it is about the results, which begins long before a facial ever starts.

"Before you even come in, I turn on the bed warmer, heat up the oils and stones for your hand and foot treatment, and adjust the lighting so it's calm and comfortable. And I always put out a call button so you can take your time getting settled and ring me when you're ready."

— *Monique Laquerre, Master Esthetician*

"I get the space ready with soft music, the sound machine, and a light room spray so everything feels clean and peaceful. I want the room to feel like a total escape the second you walk in."

— *Corinn Bradford, Master Esthetician*

Corinn is also certified in Reiki and Oncology Facial care, supporting clients with specialized skin needs and creating a truly inclusive experience.

MaryAnn: The Welcome

Before you even reach the styling chair, your experience at b.LUXE has already begun.

"My greeting helps set the tone for the entire appointment: friendly, upbeat, and very welcoming. We take pride in our part of the service cycle."

— *MaryAnn McNally, Front Desk*

The front desk isn't just a check-in point. It's the first moment guests feel the warmth and intention behind every visit.

Heather: The Owner

"I started b.LUXE because I wanted a place where everyone feels taken care of, plain and simple. We are a full hair, makeup, skincare and wig studio with an incredibly talented team, and that makes me so proud every day. We learn together, we grow together, and we show up for every single client," Heather shares.

For Heather, that sense of care extends beyond beauty services and into supporting clients through life's more personal moments.

"And for anyone going through hair loss, I want them to know we have a safe, judgment-free, compassionate space here where we truly get it. We just want people to feel good."

— *Heather Cohen, Owner & Wig Specialist*

Your Visit, Our Priority

The truth is, we love what we do and we love our clients. When you walk through our doors, you're not just another appointment. You're the reason behind every detail we prepare. At b.LUXE, luxury isn't just in the décor, it's in the care, the creativity, and the experience created just for you.

We'd love to welcome you in.

Book your appointment today at b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio

Medway, MA • Where every visit is crafted just for you.

Medway Winterfire to be held on March 22

By Andrea Burke

This year's "Winterfire" in Medway will take place on Sun., March 22, between 2 p.m. and 4 p.m.

To promote Medway's trails, the Medway Trail Club hosts this annual event that appeals to folks of all ages. A nature scavenger hunt, trail walks, cooking s'mores over an open fire, games, and a maple sugaring tapping demonstration comprise just a few of the events available to participate in. Light refreshments will be available and admission is free.

This year's Winterfire in Medway will take place on March 22. Courtesy photo

Those who attend will learn about the trails in the town from members of the trail club and Open Space Committee. View nature from the Viewing Platform, read about the trails, and maybe learn some new facts about the native flora and fauna in the area and a bit of history surrounding the development of open space to walk on.

It has been a cold, icy winter and many people are looking forward to spring but Winterfire is a great bridge between the seasons.

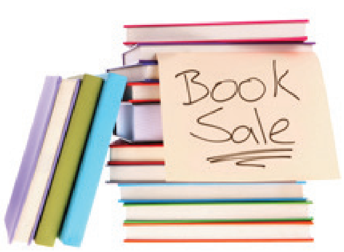
In the meantime, the trails are still open from dawn to dusk and snowshoeing has been a popular, permitted activity this year due to the actual snow fall.

The address for Winterfire is at the Adams Meadow trailhead adjacent to the relatively new All Access Trailhead at 0 (zero) Adams Street, though the parking lot is directly. across from the area between 42-47 Adams Street. Overflow Parking can be behind the high school as the High School Trail connects to those trails heading North and handicapped parking is available at the All-Access trail.

The author is a member of the Medway Trail Club and Open Space Committee.

Friends of the Millis Library Spring Book Sale

The Friends of the Millis Public Library will hold its annual Spring Book Sale on Saturday, March 28 from 9am-1pm in the Roche Bros. Community Room at the library. In addition, there is a Friends of the Library preview and sale for current members being held on Friday, March 27 from 6-8 pm. New membership applications will be accepted that night. One great benefit of being a Friend is first pick of everything! On Sunday, March 29 from 1-3pm there will be a special sale. Each bag of books and media will cost $5.00 on that day. Bags will be provided for this sale.



A large selection of well-organized adult and young adult fiction, non-fiction and children's books in hardcover and paperback will be on sale, plus CDs, DVDs, puzzles, games and special finds and collections at fantastic prices! Credit cards are now being accepted for purchases. Proceeds help to support children, youth and adult programs and the purchase of museum passes for the library. For more information, visit www.millislibrary.org.

Living Healthy

The Blurry Truth: Understanding and Addressing the Rise of Refractive Errors

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

Have you noticed more people wearing glasses these days? It's not just a feeling. Refractive errors, those eye conditions that blur our vision, are becoming increasingly common, particularly nearsightedness (myopia). This article explores what these errors are, why they're on the rise, and what we can do about it.

What are Refractive Errors?

Our eyes are intricate organs, acting like sophisticated cameras. Light enters, is bent (refracted) by the cornea and lens, and ideally focuses perfectly on the retina, the light-sensitive tissue at the back of the eye. This focused image is then sent to the brain, allowing us to see clearly.

Refractive errors occur when the eye's shape prevents light from focusing correctly on the retina, resulting in blurry vision. Common types include:

- **Myopia (Nearsightedness):** Close objects are clear, but distant objects are blurry. This happens when the eye is too long, or the cornea is too curved, causing light to focus in front of the retina.
- **Hyperopia (Farsightedness):** Distant objects are clear, but close objects are blurry. This occurs when the eye is too short, or the cornea isn't curved enough, causing light to focus behind the retina.
- **Astigmatism:** Vision is blurry or distorted at all distances. This happens when the cornea or lens is irregularly shaped, preventing proper light focus.
- **Presbyopia:** This age-related condition makes focusing on close objects difficult. As we age, the lens loses flexibility, hindering its ability to change shape and focus up close. This is why many over 40 need reading glasses.

Why the Rise?

The increasing prevalence of refractive errors, especially myopia, is a global concern. While the exact causes are still being researched, several factors are believed to contribute:

- **The Screen Time Surge:** Our modern lives involve significant screen time – smartphones, tablets, computers, and televisions. This constant close-up focus strains the eyes and may contribute to myopia development and progression.
- **The Great Outdoors:** Studies suggest that spending time outdoors, especially in childhood, has a protective effect against myopia. The wider range of distances the eyes focus on outdoors, along with increased natural light exposure, may be beneficial.
- **The Genetic Factor:** Genetics play a significant role. If your parents or siblings have myopia, you're more likely to develop it.

- **The Urban Influence:** Urban environments often have limited green spaces and encourage indoor activities, potentially contributing to the myopia rise.
- **Lifestyle Shifts:** Changes in diet, like increased processed food consumption, and reduced physical activity may also play a role, though more research is needed.

What Can We Do?

While we can't entirely eliminate the risk, we can take steps to minimize the impact and potentially slow myopia progression:

- **Limit Screen Time:** Encourage children and adults to take regular breaks. A helpful tool is the 20-20-20 rule: Every 20 minutes of screen time, take a 20-second break to look at something 20 feet away. This allows the eye muscles to relax and refocus, reducing strain.
- **Embrace the Outdoors:** Aim for at least 1-2 hours of daily outdoor activity, especially for children.
- **Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle:** A balanced diet and regular physical activity are crucial.
- **Regular Eye Exams:** Comprehensive eye exams are essential, especially for children. Early detection and treatment are key.
- **Corrective Lenses:** Glasses or contacts are the most common and effective correction.
- **Myopia Control:** For children with progressive myopia, doctors may recommend treatments like atropine eye drops, multifocal contact lenses, or orthokeratology.
- **Surgery:** Refractive surgery like LASIK or PRK may be an option for some, but consult with an eye doctor to discuss risks and benefits.

The Future of Vision Care:

Researchers are actively exploring new prevention and treatment methods, investigating the roles of genetics, environment, and lifestyle. New technologies, such as advanced lens designs and drug therapies, are also being developed.

The increasing prevalence of refractive errors is a significant public health issue. By understanding the causes and taking proactive steps, we can protect our vision. Remember, regular eye exams are essential. If you have any concerns, consult an eye care professional.

Milford-Franklin Eye Center: Your Partner in Eye Health

At Milford-Franklin Eye Center, our dedicated team of ophthalmologists and optometrists, supported by highly trained staff, are available to treat various eye problems, including refractive errors. We offer a dedicated optical shop with a children's boutique, providing quality glasses and contacts. We also provide world-class cataract surgery and advanced treatments, including procedures that can eliminate the need for glasses in select cases. All surgeries are performed in our accredited surgical facility. Our in-house optical shop crafts glasses while you wait, and new patients receive a complimentary pair of select frames. We offer after-hours, same-day emergency appointments and Saturday availability. With over four decades of dedicated service, Milford-Franklin Eye Center is committed to delivering advanced eye care close to home.

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Millis Beautification Day on April 11

Millis Beautification Day will be held on Sat., April 11, from 9 a.m. to noon., starting at Millis Town Hall.

Millis Lions and DPW will be ready with bags, safety vests, assignments and information for the much-appreciated volunteers who join us annually at our townwide cleanup of our roadways, parks and trails in Millis.

We encourage residents to join their neighbors and keep an eye out for roadway hotspots where trash is most prevalent, especially along the woods and our waterways where we see the most illegal dumping.

For more information, visit millislionsclub.org, email millisbeautificationday@gmail.com, or call Jennifer Donehey 508-667-4326.

Free magic show for families of first responders, veterans, active military on March 15

On March 15 at noon, Thanks To Yanks is hosting a free children's magic show for families of first responders, and veterans, and active military members. The event will feature magician Tommy James. Space is limited and reservations are required.

The event will take place at the Italian Vets Milford with a pizza lunch to follow.

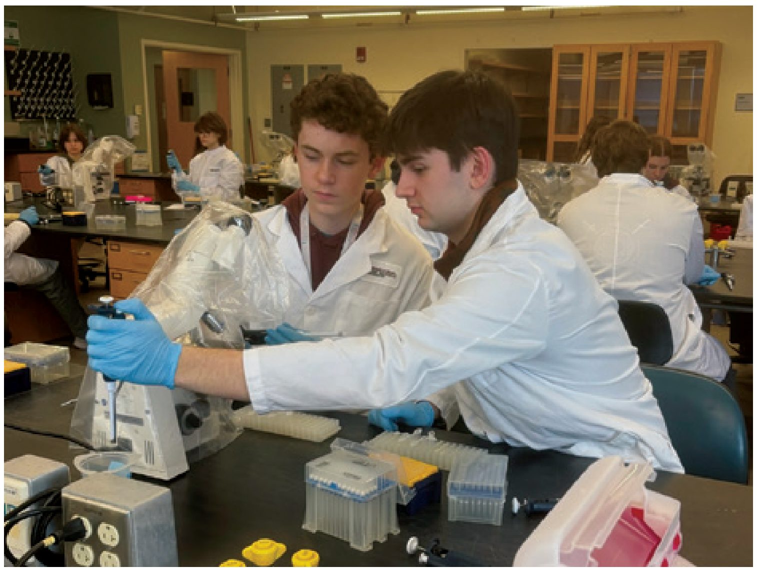
For tickets and more information, contact info@thankstoyanks.org.

Millis students participate in marine biology course at Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole

By Taryn Streck
Student writer

From Jan. 21-23, 18 Millis High School students participated in an immersive marine biology program at the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) in Woods Hole. Through the "Microbial Symbiosis in Aquatic Environments" course, taught by published scientist Dr. Blair Paul and research assistant Stephanie Richards, students engaged in ongoing research and conducted their own microbial experiments.

The Marine Biological Laboratory is a world-renowned hub of biological and environmental research and innovation. MBL's High School Science Discovery Program allows students to investigate various scientific topics through hands-on learning activities. Thanks to an MBL state grant and a transportation grant from MERIT, several MHS students interested in STEM, and faculty chaperones Mrs. Erin Cheney and Mrs. Kathleen Streck, were able to attend the program free of charge.



From left: Nicholas Roy and Ben Vaccaro prepare their microscope while investigating bacterial cells. Courtesy photo

The three-day experience included morning lectures detailing Dr. Paul's and Richards' research into microbial symbiosis and bacterial infection, wet labs where students collected samples from local beaches to observe under microscopes, and a tour of MBL's Marine Resources Center. Students even had the opportunity to hold a genuine Nobel Prize while visiting MBL's Rare Books collection. The program culminated in an afternoon of presentations, during which students showcased their data on the impact of various changing conditions (light-exposure, salinity, and temperature) on the spread of viruses. They were also able to present photos and data from their own experiments, which involved bacterial cultures grown from sources of the students' choosing.

Students were excited to be involved in, and learn about, such groundbreaking research. MHS junior Hannah Roman said, "It was eye-opening to see the process [behind scientific research] and to get to work with such knowledgeable people."

Ben Vaccaro, another MHS junior, reflected, "It was an awesome experience because we were placed in an environment that was really conducive to curiosity."

"The High School Science Discovery Program at MBL was an amazing, hands-on learning experience for our students," commented environmental science and anatomy teacher Erin Cheney. "My favorite part of the trip was the tour of the Marine Resources Center. I loved watching the students' expressions while they held various sea animals--especially the huge horseshoe crabs."

Sports

Medway boys basketball coach leads by example

By Matt Hylen

No matter what sport it may be, the players are only as good as the coach they have guiding them. Talent can be possessed and chemistry can exist, but it is how a coach uses their team's potential to get the most out of their players on and off the court.

This is no different for Medway High School Boys Basketball Head Coach, Shane Jackson. Jackson has been coaching for 17 years through the high school and collegiate level, but found a home leading Medway Boys Basketball.

"I began as an assistant coach for Dean College Women's Basketball before joining Medway as the JV coach in 2016," Jackson said. "That same year, Dean made the national tournament for the first time in school history, and my first son was born. That was a turning point for me — I knew it was time to step away from college coaching and pursue my long-term goal of becoming a high school boys varsity coach."

Jackson, who also teaches the 5th grade at Woodland Elementary School in Milford, has a type of experience that is unique to what typical high school coaches possess. "Growing up, I spent a lot of time around basketball watching my father coach at Dean College while also serving as the athletic director," he explains. "I truly believe teaching and coaching go hand in hand. Both of my parents were educators, so that mindset was instilled in me early on."

Coming into the season, Jackson and the team were hoping to start the season off fast. "I have high expectations every season, and this group was no different," he details. "Our goal is always to push players to reach their full potential."

Medway High School Boys Basketball Head Coach Shane Jackson (right) leads by example. Photo credit: Tim Rice Photo

Medway's season thus far has not always been smooth sailing. "We faced a challenging stretch where we dropped to 5–8 after four straight tough losses," Jackson explains.

However, led by Jackson's unique coaching approach, he helped his team stay focused and ultimately began to turn their season around.

"A big part of that turnaround came from conversations around mental toughness, confidence, and mindset. We conducted a mid-season player survey that gave us valuable insight into where we could improve, and that shift in mindset helped spark a big road win at DS," Jackson explained. Since that moment, Medway began a 4-game win streak as February approached.

Despite the early struggles, Jackson always knows what he is getting out of his players. He notes, "They show up every day ready to work, and they've continued to push through challenges without backing down. That resilience has defined this season."

Of course, on-court success is one of the main goals, but one of Jackson's biggest goals as a coach is to teach his players how to be good players but even better men.

"I hope they take away the importance of belief — belief in themselves, in their teammates, and in the process," Jackson explains. "I want them to understand that growth comes through effort, accountability, and resilience, and that those lessons extend far beyond basketball."

A great aspect of what makes a great coach in Jackson's mind is also, as a coach, learning from his players. He believes, in order to best connect with the players, a coach needs to be open to feedback and open to learning about themselves through those he coaches.

"If you're doing it right, you're always learning from

> "I hope they take away the importance of belief — belief in themselves, in their teammates, and in the process. I want them to understand that growth comes through effort, accountability, and resilience, and that those lessons extend far beyond basketball."
>
> *-Shane Jackson, Head Coach*
> *Medway High School Boys Basketball*

SPORTS *continued on page 19*

Sports

The U.S. Economy Will Gain Steam This Year

Bigger tax refunds and resilient consumers will keep the economy humming in 2026

By David Payne

DAMON FINANCIAL, LLC

The economy will pick up the pace a little bit in 2026, with some help from Washington. However, it will have to overcome some mounting headwinds.

Look for Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth of about 2.5% this year, a little better than 2025's 2.1%. A few factors look set to give inflation-weary consumers a boost while encouraging businesses to ramp up spending.

Bigger tax refunds will hit bank accounts after the filing season opens late this month. Changes in the tax code enacted in last year's tax overhaul should translate into

$65-$100 billion more in refunds. Much of that extra money will be spent on things like car down payments, along with smaller purchases and, in some cases, paying down debt or extra savings. For lower-income households dealing with high prices, a bigger refund is no panacea, but it certainly helps. Refunds aside, consumer spending is strong, despite surveys showing consumers in a sour mood.

The wealthy in particular will keep spending, buoyed in part by hefty gains in their investments and their home values. Total household net worth is up 26% from three years ago, to $180 trillion.

And the Federal Reserve is going to trim interest rates a bit more this year, on the heels of last year's cuts, making credit a little bit cheaper for many borrowers.

Other positives are linked to the economy's underlying fundamentals. Productivity growth is perking up after many years of stagnating at low levels. Economists aren't sure why, exactly, but output per worker is rising by about 2% now. Capital investment is climbing, driven in part by the tax law's extension of 100% bonus depreciation, plus the continued frenzy of data center construction.

It won't all be smooth sailing, though. Most obviously, hiring is way down and shows little sign of rebounding. There's no sign of an outright jobs contraction, but monthly job creation is likely to bump along near December's level of 50,000 new jobs. Employers aren't laying off workers in large numbers, but they aren't hiring eagerly, either.

Some are using AI to make do with less. One recent survey showed that 17% of businesses reported using AI for at least one function. For unemployed folks, it's a daunting job market, and that's something people with jobs are well aware of. If layoffs do mount, many workers will up their saving and spend less in response. Spending by

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SPORTS

continued from page 18

your players," Jackson claims. "They've taught me to continue trusting them, to keep investing in what they want to improve, and to never count them out."

Along with his open-minded coaching style, Jackson's ability to get feedback is something that he never shies away from, but rather embraces in order to put his team in the best position to win.

"We use Google Classroom to gather player feedback through forms, surveys, self-scouting, and even favorite drills," he said. "That feedback helps everyone feel invested, regardless of minutes played. In addition, we make a point to check in with players individually throughout the week to maintain open communication."

Coach Jackson is the type of coach and person any player would want to play for. He believes in his players and trusts in their ability to fight through adversity and stick together through the highs and lows.

Jackson said, "Belief in your players is one of the most powerful tools a coach can have. When players know you believe in them, they give it back in return. I couldn't be more proud of this group, and I'm grateful for the opportunity to continue coaching them for as long as this season allows."

Millis Cultural Council Announces 2026 Grant Recipients

Millis, MA - In 2026, the Millis Cultural Council awarded 12 grants totaling $7,400 for cultural programs in Millis. The MCC received 22 grant applications with a total request of $36,850.

The Millis Cultural Council would like to congratulate the following FY2026 grant recipients:

- Friends of Niagara, "Niagara Coffee Haus"
- Jaime Staraitis, "Latin Dance Class for All"
- Millis Community Garden, "Fairy Houses in the Garden"
- Roger L. Tincknell, "From Ireland to America"
- Jay Mankita, "Chain Reactions & Creative Contraptions"
- Piti Theatre Company, Inc, "Story Wizards"
- Kerry Consentino-Vilorio, "Pebble Art & Sea Glass Design Workshop"
- Amy Adams, "Painting with Amy"
- Charles River Sinfonietta, Inc., "Recital with an accompanist and one other musician at the Church of Christ in Millis"
- Millis Community Theatre, Inc., "Spring Broadway musical - Charlie & The Chocolate Factory"
- KevTech Services, Inc., "Digital Art and Photography Classes"
- Becky Fong Hughes, "Chinese Cooking Classes - That's a Wrap!"

Decisions about which activities to support are made at the community level by a board of community volunteers appointed by the Millis Select Board.

The Millis Cultural Council is currently seeking new members! To encourage diversity and new volunteers, each member can only serve on the council for a maximum of six years. The Millis Cultural Council is open to all Millis residents – no artistic talent required!

More information about the annual grant funding and the MCC can be found at www.mass-culture.org and on the Millis town website at www.millisma.gov under boards and committees.

The Millis Cultural Council would also like to encourage residents to save the date for the annual Millis Cultural Council Arts Festival, Saturday, June 13, 2026, from 12-3 p.m., at Millis Public Library. The event will include live performance, crafts, interactive art, and local artists are encouraged to share their work.

Anyone interested in joining the Millis Cultural Council or participating in the festival may email milliscultural council@gmail.com for more information.

Mass Cultural Council

Friends of the Millis Library scholarship application opens March 13

The Friends of the Millis Public Library are proud to once again offer its annual scholarship to a deserving high school senior. All graduating seniors residing in Millis who will be attending a college or university are eligible for this scholarship. Emphasis will be placed on library volunteerism and efforts to promote literacy/reading.

To apply for the scholarship, Millis High School seniors should visit hs.millisps.org to access the scholarship link. Students from other schools should contact their Guidance Office for more information and to obtain an application. Millis High students can start using the scholarship website and students from other schools can begin to apply for the scholarship through their schools on Fr., March 13. The deadline for applications is Sun., April 26.

The Friends of the Millis Public Library is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting and enhancing library services.

Local 'No Kings' peaceful rallies to be held on March 28

The Medway Democrats and Millis Democracy Advocates invite the public to attend 'No Kings 3' peaceful rallies on Saturday morning March 28.

The Medway standout will be held on Route 109 by Choate Park from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m., after which many will attend the Boston march.

The Millis standout will be in front of Town Hall on Route 109 from 10:30 a.m. to noon, with speakers at 11:30 a.m.

For details visit mnwactionhub.blogspot.com. Register at www.nokings.org.

A photo from the Oct. 18 'No Kings 2' rally in Millis. Photo source: Millis Democracy Advocates

Real Estate Corner

Recent Home Sale

The 2-bed, 3-bath, 2,306-square-foot unit at 18 Lansing Way in Millis recently sold for $765,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com

Real Estate Corner

Recent Home Sales

Date	Medway	Amount
02/12/2026	7 Hill St.	$740,000
02/11/2026	10 Prospect St.	$430,000
01/29/2026	1 Walnut Ln.	$990,000
01/23/2026	85 Fisher St.	$660,000
01/22/2026	5 Fales St.	$890,000
Date	**Millis**	**Amount**
02/13/2026	60 Spencer St.	$530,000
01/30/2026	27 Richardson Dr.	$935,000
01/29/2026	18 Lansing Wy.	$765,000

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

Pet of the Month

Meet Carlos Despacito Meowiguez, your quiet cuddly companion

Carlos Despacito Meowiguez (aka Carlos) is an 8-year-old sweetheart with a calm, gentle soul who's ready to settle into a peaceful home of his own. He has an extremely easygoing nature, making him the kind of companion who seamlessly fits into your life.

Carlos loves affection and doesn't hesitate to show it. He enjoys scratches and will happily climb right into your lap when he's ready for cuddles. He's quiet, loving, and content to spend his days curled up for cozy naps and soaking up affection from his favorite people.

A little more about Carlos: Carlos has a heart condition (cardiomyopathy) that is currently stable and not affecting his day-to-day happiness. He doesn't need medication at this time and continues to enjoy a comfortable, good quality of life though this will need to be monitored with a veterinarian. He also has a history of stress-related urinary issues, which are currently well managed with a special diet and a calm environment. Carlos will thrive with someone who understands that peace, routine, and consistency mean everything to him. With proper care, he continues to enjoy life at his own relaxed pace. We're happy to talk more about his needs when you come meet this sweet boy.

He would do best as the only pet in the home, where he can soak up all the attention without competition. Carlos is looking for a calm, loving home that will appreciate his gentle heart and cherish the quiet bond he offers. If you're searching for a devoted lap cat who will provide plenty of affection and quiet companionship, Carlos may be the perfect match.

Adoptions are by appointment only. If you have an interest in meeting Carlos, please fill out our online adoption application at https://www.shelterluv.com/matchme/adopt/MWHS/Cat.