

localtownpages 

Hopedale

Vol. 13 No. 1

Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

May 1, 2026

Hopedale's Bright Beginnings Center hosts annual art showcase

The hallways of the Bright Beginnings Center were a scene of color and imagination on the evening of April 1st as the school hosted its annual Art Show. The event, which has become a favorite amongst families and staff, saw the preschool transformed into a vibrant walk-through gallery, inviting families and the community to witness the creative milestones of its youngest learners.

From floor to ceiling, the scene inside the school building was redefined by the colorful work of its three- to five-year-old students. Cardboard paper rolls were transformed into birds and simple shoe boxes were reimagined as habitats of



Salt dough donuts created by Mrs. Hughes' preschoolers.
Photo source: Hopedale Public Schools

wild animals, proving that in the world of a preschooler, there is no such thing as "just a craft."

Unlike a typical classroom

SHOWCASE
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Annual election on May 12

Hopedale's annual town election will take place on May 12 from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the George A. Draper gymnasium.

The last day to register to vote in the election is Saturday, May 2, at 5 p.m.

The last day to request mail-in ballot (absentee or early) is Tuesday, May 5, at 5 p.m.

A sample ballot can be found at www.hopedale-ma.gov and on page 5.

Seats available include Board of Health (3 years), Housing Authority (5 years), Library Trustee (3 years), and Park Commission (3 years).

The races for Library

Trustee, Planning Board, and Road Commissioner are uncontested.

There is no one on the ballot for the seat on the Housing Authority, but write-ins are accepted.

The following races are contested:

Select Board: Scott M. Savage (Candidate for Re-Election), Carole K. Mullen

Board of Health: Tara M. Costanza, Andrew Francis Finlay

Park Commissioner: Mark Wyspianski (Candidate for Re-Election), Michael Thomas Mazzeo

ELECTION
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'Soccer's Big Event' is coming to 'Boston Stadium'

Two million people will be looking for things to do in surrounding towns

By THERESA KNAPP

Editor's note: Due to copyright issues, the more commonly known name for the football/soccer matches cannot be used by publications outside of the official association. We are calling it "Soccer's Big Event."

The most popular sport in the world is football (or "soccer" in the U.S.) and this year several matches of the global soccer tournament – or "Soccer's Big Event" – will be played in June and July in Massachusetts.

Boston is one of 16 cities across North America that will host matches. Specific dates for the Boston area will be announced closer to the event, but will be between June 13 and July 9.

At a recent Tourism Summit and Legislative Breakfast hosted by the MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau, state and local officials explained how Massachusetts is preparing for the event.

The main speaker at the conference was Greta Teller of "Bostonfwc26," the group that is overseeing local logistics for the world organization. She said there are many ways MetroWest communities can provide experiences for the millions of visitors

who are expected to flood the area.

"Two million people are coming, and there are only 740,000 tickets," Teller said. "And many of those people are coming without tickets and will need things to do."

There are opportunities for communities all around Eastern Massachusetts, and beyond, to join in the festivities and revelry, Teller said, adding fans just want to be in Massachusetts to support their team, which is an opportunity for local fan festivals, fan marches, fan zones, pep rallies, watch parties, and more.

The event, Teller said, will provide a significant boost to hotels, restaurants and other local businesses; and the Bostonfwc is encouraging towns to organize fan festivals and cultural celebrations in the area, and to promote those events through the organization's website and the MWVB (for free).

At the summit, it was noted that MetroWest has the largest population of Brazilians outside of Brazil, Brockton has the largest Cape Verde population outside of Cape Verde, and Worcester is home to a large Ghana population – all of which

can be a consideration when organizing activities around Soccer's Big Event.

MetroWest Visitors Bureau Executive Director Stacey David said local towns and organizations should think about experiences visitors might enjoy and market them accordingly – anything related to arts, culture, living history, outdoor activities (trail systems) - will be a big draw.

"Think about what you have in your town, and let the MetroWest Visitors Bureau help promote it," said David.

However, the very first action anyone should take, she said, is to change all website references from "Gillette Stadium" to "Boston Stadium," which is what visitors will be searching for when planning their trip.

When creating watch parties and other events, organizers should consult the organization's public viewing regulations, including broadcast licenses, branding, etc., which can be found at <https://bit.ly/FIFA-publicViewing>.

The MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau is available to provide assistance to local organizations. The organization



"Soccer's Big Event" is coming to "Boston Stadium" in June and July. Image created by Theresa Knapp using ChatGPT

promotes travel and tourism throughout the 19 towns of the MetroWest region, which include Ashland, Bellingham, Framingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopedale, Hopkinton, Hudson, Marlborough, Medway, Milford, Millis, Natick, Northborough, Sherborn, Southborough, Sudbury, Wayland, and Westborough, according to www.metrowest-visitors.org.

Many visitors know they will not get a ticket but they want to be in Massachusetts to support their team, which is an opportunity for local fan festivals, fan marches, pep rallies, watch parties, and more.

~Greta Teller, Bostonfwc26 <https://bostonfwc26.com>

For more information, visit www.ffa.com or <https://bostonfwc26.com>

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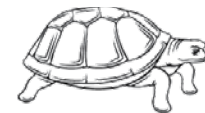
Annual Town Meeting set for May 19

The Town of Hopedale will hold its Annual Town Meeting on Tuesday, May 19 at 7 p.m. in the Hopedale Junior-Senior High School auditorium.

at the Annual Town Meeting is Saturday, May 9, at 5 p.m.

The warrant was not available at press time but can be found at www.hopedale-ma.gov.

The last day to register to vote



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SHOWCASE

continued from page 1

display, the Art Show was set up to reflect a year-long journey of learning and discovery. Teachers worked alongside students to prepare the exhibits from fall through spring. Not only do the pieces reflect the themes and curriculum of the school year but they also show the growth of students from the first day of school through many months of learning.

The "gallery walk" format allowed families to move at their own pace, often guided by the students themselves. The sense of ownership was palpable; students could be overheard explaining their choice of "sparkly blue" or why a particular dinosaur required three tails. "I loved attending the Art Show," said BBC parent Jackie Gould. "It was heartwarming to see my child's creativity on display. Watching her beam with pride as she showcased her work made the show even more special."

The Bright Beginnings Center views the annual show as a culmination of their hands-on learning philosophy. While the

final results are undeniably charming, the school emphasizes the cognitive benefits behind the art. Art engages the senses- sight, touch, and sometimes even smell or sound, which stimulates various parts of the brain simultaneously. When a child experiments with how a crayon feels on paper versus a brush on canvas, they are strengthening synaptic connections. The public display of work validates the child's effort and fosters a sense of pride and confidence.

"During the week of the Art Show there is a sense of excitement in our building from both students and staff," said BBC Principal Kristen Poisson. "Everyone is so proud of the amazing work being shown and proud to welcome in our school community to be part of the evening."

As the event concluded, the "gallery" returned to being a school, but the impact remained. The event served as a colorful reminder that in Hopedale, the next generation of thinkers, builders, and dreamers is already well on its way!

Submitted by Hopedale Public Schools

Hopedale water ban in effect

In March, the Town posted this water ban notice on its website.

"Due to a Level 3 (Critical Drought) declared by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, the Town

of Hopedale is mandated by the state to implement a mandatory ban under our DEP Water Management Act Permit.

"All nonessential outdoor water use is prohibited [including] lawn and landscape

watering; sprinklers and irrigation systems; washing vehicles (except commercial car washes); filling swimming pools; and washing driveways, sidewalks, or exterior surfaces."

Source: www.hopedale-ma.gov

Nipmuc Class of 1966 to hold 60th Reunion

The Nipmuc Regional High School Class of 1966 will hold its 60th Reunion on Sat., June 20, 2026, at 6 p.m. at Red Rock Grill and Bar, 66 West Main Street in Upton.

The class held its 55th there and had such a great time, they decided to go there again for their 60th. Outdoors, casual, and like last time, everyone orders for themselves off the

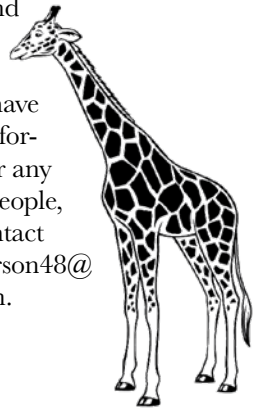
menu and pays their food and drinks.

No reservations and no advance collecting of money. If you are a class member or have any association with Class of 1966, just show up.

There are a few classmates for whom they have lost contact over these 60 years, including Bernard Koenig, Linda Miller, Norman Ricard,

Marcia Shapley, Barbara Taft, Marcia Tobey, Patricia Wadsworth, and Theresa Whitney.

If you have contact information for any of these people, please contact Larrypearson48@gmail.com.



An outer space mural painted by Mrs. Fitzgibbon's pre-K class. Photo source: Hopedale Public Schools



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ENTER TO WIN TICKETS TO SOUTHWICK'S ZOO!

Find the Hidden Animals in This Month's Editorial Pages! There are 10 animals scattered throughout this issue's articles. Scan the QR code below and submit the list of animals you have found for your chance to win a Grand Prize of a Family 4-pack of general admission tickets to Southwick's Zoo during the 2026 season. Multiple runner-up 2-pack general admission tickets will be awarded. Submit by June 12, 2026 to be included.



Hopedale Senior Ari Levine honored with Statewide Leadership Award

Hopedale Junior-Senior High School senior Ari Levine has been recognized for an exceptional year of leadership and service, earning the prestigious Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) President's Award for Leadership.

Each year, M.A.S.S. presents its Senior Student Leadership Scholarship Award to an outstanding student from the district led by the organization's current president. This year, the scholarship was awarded in honor of Hopedale's own superintendent, Karen Crebase, making the recognition especially meaningful for our community.

"Ari exemplifies what it means to be a student leader," said Crebase. "His voice, commitment, and integrity have made a lasting impact on our schools."

Throughout the 2025-2026 school year, Levine has served as the student representative to the Hopedale School Committee, where he played a vital role in bridging communication between students and district leadership. In that role, he contributed to important district initiatives, including participation in school council efforts, NEASC accreditation tours and presentations, and the superintendent search process through tours, focus groups, interviews, and site visits.

Beyond his formal leadership



Hopedale's Ari Levine has been recognized for an exceptional year of leadership and service, earning the prestigious Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) President's Award for Leadership. Photo source: Hopedale Public Schools

roles, Levine has been involved in the school community. He serves as president of LOOP, vice president of the Spanish Honor Society, and is an active member of both the National Honor Society and Math National Honor Society. He has also dedicated time to tutoring fellow students, further demonstrating his commitment to supporting his peers.

Levine's leadership extends beyond Hopedale as well. He has represented the community as a member of State Senator Ryan Fattman's Senate Youth Council, engaging in civic discussions and state-level initiatives.

In addition to his academic and leadership accomplishments, Levine has built an

extraordinary athletic career as a standout member of the Hopedale track and field team. A team captain, he is a four-time school record holder, three-time team MVP, four-time Field Athlete of the Year, and a ten-time conference champion. His achievements have earned him recognition as a multiple Daily News All-Star, three-time Central Mass All-Star, and more than a dozen conference All-Star selections. His athletic accomplishments have not gone unnoticed. Levine has been featured in the Milford Daily News and recognized on Channel 5 News.

In announcing this year's scholarship recipients, M.A.S.S. Executive Director Mary



Ari Levine, Hopedale Junior-Senior High School, was one of three recipients of a \$3,000 college scholarship from the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents. Source: www.massupt.org

Bourque praised the honorees: "Our work is ultimately about ensuring student success. We are thrilled to support outstanding graduates from the Class of 2026 with these scholarships. They have demonstrated impressive leadership skills in their schools and in their communities, and we look forward to seeing what they will accomplish in the future."

As he prepares to graduate and attend West Point, Ari Levine leaves behind a legacy of service, excellence, and leadership that will continue to inspire future generations of Hopedale students.



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Published Monthly Mailed FREE to the Community of Hopedale Circulation: 2,576 households & businesses

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9 Industrial Road, Suite 107 Milford, MA 01757

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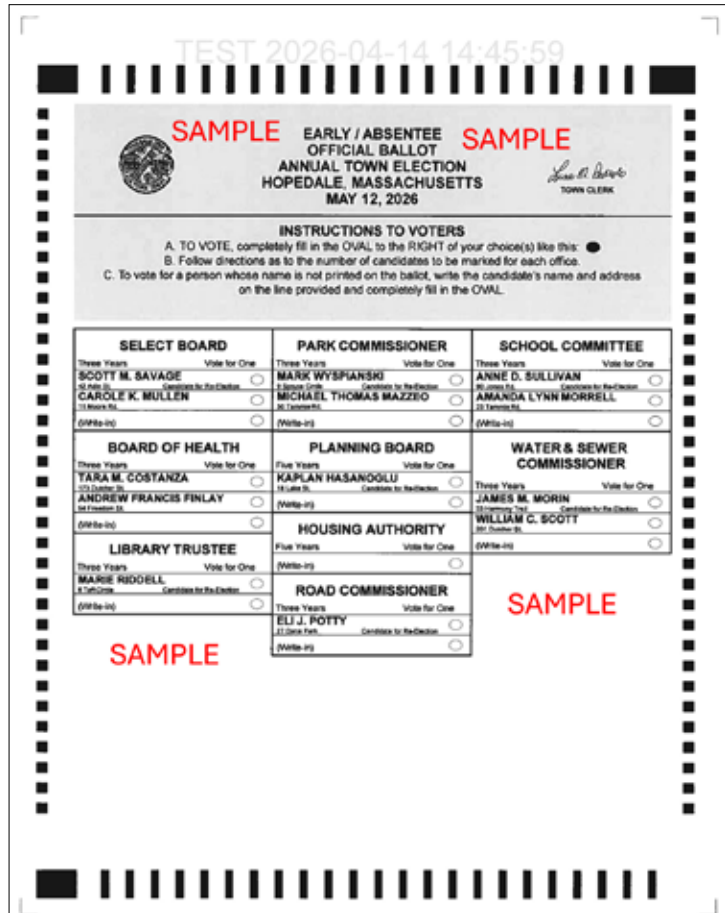
ELECTION

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School Committee: Anne D. Sullivan (Candidate for Re-Election), Amanda Lynn Morrell

Water & Sewer Commissioner: James M. Morin (Candidate for Re-Election), William C. Scott

Source: www.hopedale-ma.gov



Hopedale Annual Town Election
Tuesday, May 12, 2026

BVT students earn 81 medals at SkillsUSA District V competition
33 gold, 27 silver, 21 bronze

Students from Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) earned 81 medals at the annual SkillsUSA Massachusetts District V Competition held March 11. A total of 198 students from BVT competed against career and technical education students from six vocational high schools in events designed to test technical knowledge, workplace readiness and safety practices in a variety of trades and leadership categories. BVT students earned 33 gold, 27 silver and 21 bronze

medals and swept two competition categories. In total, 118 student-competitors from BVT qualified to advance to the SkillsUSA Massachusetts State Leadership and Skills Conference, which will be held May 1 at BVT. Hopedale students included gold winners: Nicholas Abbruzzese, Internet of Things; Joseph Bache, Television (Video) Production; and Ryan McGovern, Television (Video) Production. The complete list of medalists is available at www.valleytech.k12.ma.us/skillsusa.

Carpenter Ants: A Serious Threat to MetroWest Homes



Jim Maxxuchelli, owner, WPC Pest and Termite Control

In Massachusetts, homeowners face unique pest challenges due to our changing seasons and moisture prone climate. While many people dismiss ants as a minor annoyance, carpenter ants are one of the most destructive pests affecting homes in the MetroWest Area. We regularly see carpenter ant infestations throughout MetroWest—and the damage they cause can be extensive if

left untreated. Said, Jim Maz-zuchelli from WPC Pest and Termite Control, Inc., **Warning Signs Home-owners Should Watch For**

- Large black or reddish ants, often active at night, inside your home
- Winged ants (swarmers) appearing indoors in spring
- Piles of sawdust like debris near baseboards or windows
- Faint rustling sounds inside walls
- Ant trails from basements, kitchens, or exterior siding
- These signs should never be ignored—especially in homes with moisture issues or older construction.

Why DIY Treatments Often Fail

Over the counter sprays and baits may kill visible ants but rarely address the nest hidden deep within walls or structural

wood. In many cases, improper treatment allows infestations to spread and continue causing damage. Effective carpenter ant control requires professional experience, proper identification, and targeted treatment. At WPC Pest and Termite Control, Inc., we understand the specific pest pressures MetroWest homeowners face. Our experienced technicians use proven methods to locate carpenter ant nests, eliminate infestations at the source, and help prevent future problems. If you suspect carpenter ants—or want peace of mind before damage worsens—don't wait. Contact WPC Pest and Termite Control, Inc. today for a FREE professional carpenter ant inspection and protect your home from hidden structural damage. WPC Pest and Termite Control, Inc. 508-366-1820. Nobugsnopests.com

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Make Room for Spring with Affordable Junk Removal

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

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

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

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

Affordable Junk Removal spe-

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

Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled above-ground pools, hauled away ancient hot tubs, taken down old fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll come for a single item, or they'll clean out an entire house. And they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

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

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

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway



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

Jay and his team beat the big waste haulers on both price and customer service. When you call Affordable Junk Removal, you aren't connected to an anonymous call center. Your phone call goes right to Jay.

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

Affordable Junk Removal is fully licensed and fully insured, and they'll treat your property with care and respect.

They also have a thriving



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

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

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

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

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Alzheimer's support group to meet on May 12

Hearts, Hugs & Hope: An Alzheimer's Support Group at Cornerstone at Milford will meet on Tuesday, May 12, at 6 p.m. at Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living and

Memory Support Community, 11 Birch Street, Milford. This group for caregivers meets in person.

Dealing with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia

isn't easy, so it is helpful to share your concerns and personal experiences with others who completely understand what you're going through. You will also learn about proven strategies

to help you better care for your family member.

Our guest speaker this month will be elder law attorney Jay Marsden, PC. Call 508-473-0035 to RSVP or contact Direc-

tor of Compass Programming Jenn Hozempa at jhozempa@cornerstonemilford.com for more information.

This group meets on the second Tuesday of each month.

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Your Money, Your Independence

Grads: Don't Pay the Comfort Tax, Invest in the "Struggle"



Glenn Brown, CFP

Every commencement season, a familiar debate plays out: move back home to save money or head to a cramped apartment on a diet of ramen and determination?

On a spreadsheet, the live-at-home option looks like a win. By eliminating rent and utilities, the theory suggests you can save \$20,000 to \$40,000 in your first year.

Sorry Grads, but this premise rarely becomes reality. It's ironic: you rolled your eyes at professors steeped in abstract theory, yet here you are committing the same nonsense.

The Myth of Boomerang Savings

When the Bank of Mom and Dad subsidizes your life, psychological urgency evaporates. Without the boundary of a rent check, savings leak into high-end gyms, trips, subscriptions and tech. The justification is: "I'm suffering enough by living at home; I deserve this." Instead of a surplus, you entrench expensive habits you can't afford once you leave.

To build financial independence, you first need to take flight. Just as a plane needs the resistance of wind to generate lift, you need the friction of real-world expenses to get off the ground. Living at home removes headwinds and leaves you idling on the runway while your peers are taking off.

The Geography of Opportunity

High-rent brain-hubs trigger the Agglomeration Effect, forcing you into a network of mentors and peers that hometowns lack. Research shows physical proximity leads to faster promotions and better career matching. You can't effectively network from your basement with AI;

career-defining windows of opportunity open when you are present, both at work and socializing outside of it.

Furthermore, roommates are a masterclass in negotiation. Sharing a kitchen, bathroom and utility bills teaches conflict resolution and accountability. These soft skills create an independence gap between those who handle their own friction points and those who have them smoothed over by parents.

The Real Cost of Entry-Level

Manage your burn rate without suffocating your future. Aim for the 30% Rule: keep all housing costs under 30% of your gross income. In the Boston-area, this means Davis Square or Allston/Brighton, not splitting a Seaport two-bedroom.

Parents, if your graduate is complaining of costs and can't get ahead, don't pay their rent as it kills urgency. Instead, offer a one-time "get out of jail" card for a true crisis. This provides security without removing the daily incentive to work hard to change outcomes.

Independence is a Habit

Living at home for "just a year" often turns into three. Grads, when you live like Boomers in a cozy setup, you lose the primary engine of growth: discontent. If you aren't bothered by your surroundings, you won't hunt for a promotion or take a career risk. The most effective career coach is a little room you're desperate to leave; that daily friction creates an obsession with progress and a determination to never return.

Advice to Class of 2026

To the parents: Supporting independence means letting them struggle. The best gift this May isn't their old room back (or worse, refinishing the basement); it's the belief that they are capable of building their own independence.

To the graduates: The money you think you'll save at home comes at the cost of your ambition. Renting a room you can barely afford in a city

that excites you is a form of aggressive investing; you are betting on your own ability to grow into future expenses.

Go find the cramped apartment. Deal with noisy roommates. The struggle of your 20's is how you get a 2X-5X return in your 30's. Financial independence isn't something you're given; it starts by choosing to outgrow the Comfort Tax.

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.

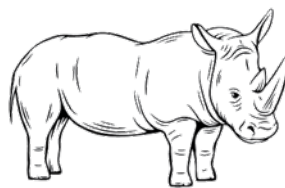
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kbethel-penny@cwmares.org
www.bancroftmemoriallibrary.org

For more information on any programs or to register, please call 508-634-2209 for assistance or check the Event Calendar at www.bancroftmemoriallibrary.org.

LIBRARY NEWS

The Library will be Closed on Saturday, May 23 and Monday, May 25 for Memorial Day.

Helen Symonds Book Group – Wednesday, May 6 at 1 p.m.

The group will be discussing *The House of Eve* by Sadeqa Johnson.

Community Conversations – Wednesday, May 6 at 6:30 p.m.

Community Conversations will meet to discuss “The Iran War.” This meeting can be attended via Zoom; email kbethel-penny@cwmares.org to

request the link.

Get help with Jenna – Tuesday, May 12 from 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Need help with applications or support services? Jenna, a Community Health Worker with the Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health, can assist with MassHealth, Fuel Assistance, Medicare, past-due bills, and more. She works with the Hopedale Board of Health and has extensive healthcare experience. Schedule a free 30-minute appointment via the Library’s online Event Calendar or call 508-634-2209 for assistance.

Drop in Cribbage – Fridays 5/1, 5/8, 5/15, 5/22 & 5/29 at 1:30 p.m.

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

BVPL Cribbage Tournament – Wednesday, May 13 at 5:30 p.m.

Represent Hopedale at the

next Blackstone Valley Public Libraries Cribbage Tournament at Shrewsbury Public Library! Registration is mandatory, please call the hosting Library to register.

Maker Monday – Monday, May 18 at 6 p.m.

This month the adult crafting workshop will be making a Rag Wreath. This wreath is a simple, no-sew decorative wreath made by tying fabric strip - often scraps or rags - onto a wire or foam frame. Registration is required.

NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE HOPEDALE LIBRARY:

A Special Fundraising Event: Medium Ellen Henry – Saturday, May 16 at 2 p.m.

Join us for a mediumship demonstration with Ellen Henry. Ellen will discuss the nature of mediumship and share messages with the group. Please note that attendance does not guarantee a personal reading. Tickets are required for this event and are \$20 each. Tickets may be purchased in person at the Library, or online through the Library’s website. To buy tickets online, visit the Event Calendar and click on the specific event date; the purchase link will be included within the full event listing. PLEASE NOTE: This event will be held at the Hopedale Unitarian Parish at 65 Hopedale Street. Attendance is limited to 100 people.

Dairy Queen Fundraiser – Thursday, May 28 from 5 - 8 p.m.

Ice cream for a cause! Stop by Dairy Queen at 190 West Street in Milford between 5 – 8



p.m., grab your favorite cold treat, and 10% of the proceeds will go to the Friends of the Hopedale Library. Sweet treats, sweet support!

Free Seed Library!

Stop by and get free seeds from our Seed Library. There is no limit! If you don’t need a full packet, there are smaller envelopes available to take what you need. Sponsored by The Friends of the Hopedale Library.

Ongoing Book Sale

Support the library by shopping our ongoing sale located downstairs outside the Program Room. We offer adult and children’s books, as well as puzzles. All proceeds fund library programs, museum passes, and other expenses not covered by the regular budget.

Commemorative Glass Suncatchers

Celebrate the Bancroft Memorial Library’s 125th Anniversary with a handcrafted suncatcher by Becker Glass. These are available in blue or clear for \$15 (cash or check). They make excellent gifts for Mother’s Day and upcoming graduations.

About the Friends of the Library

Founded in 1983, the Friends

of the Hopedale Library is a volunteer non-profit that supports the Library by funding equipment, materials, and programs beyond the regular budget. We meet on the second Wednesday of each month, September - June, at 6:30 p.m. New members and ideas are always welcome!

NEWS FROM THE MARJORIE E. HATTERSLEY CHILDREN’S ROOM:

SAVE THE DATE! Summer Reading 2026 registration begins Monday, June 1! We will officially kick things off with a petting zoo on Monday, June 22. For full details, check out the Event Calendar on the Library website.

May Craft – Saturday, May 2 from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Drop in the Library to make a bouquet of paper flowers for Mother’s Day!

Family Support Night – Monday, May 11 6:30 - 7:30 p.m.

Family Support Night is a program intended to help families navigate and use the resources we offer in ways that support, enrich, assist and/or entertain

LIBRARY

continued on page 9

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SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones



LIBRARY

continued from page 8

our patrons. This event will focus on Beating the Summer Slump and we will explore resources available through the Library website, such as Bookflix, Scholastic GO!, Scholastic Teachables, Pebble Go!, Gale Children, Educate Station. This is a drop in program and is intended for parents only.

Tummy Time Play – Tuesdays 5/5, 5/12, 5/19 & 5/26 at 10 a.m., ages 0-18 months

Join us for some infant fun in a safe environment! There are fun, developmentally appropriate toys that encourage gross motor development. Drop in!

Toddler Tunes – Thursdays 5/7, 5/14, 5/21 & 5/28 at 10 a.m., ages 18 months – 3 years

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

Builder Saturday – Saturday, May 9 from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

If you love Legos, we've got thousands to play with! Use our Legos to create a masterpiece that we can put on display for all to see. Drop in and all ages welcome.

Sunny the Reading Dog and Mrs. Poisson – Monday, May 18 3 - 4 p.m.

Visit with Sunny the Reading dog and Mrs. Poisson from BBC, the human he has claimed! Drop in for a story and read a story to Sunny too. All ages are welcome!

Genre Book Club – All ages

Join the Genre Book Club and create your own bookmark with a cable ring. Read any book you choose on your own

schedule; after each finished book, stop by the Children's Room to collect a genre badge. The club has no scheduled meetings, is open to all and can be joined at any time.

Reading Dragons: A Card Game Reading Club – All ages

Reading Dragons allows readers to earn collectible dragon cards through logged reading time. Every 30 minutes recorded on a Time Tracker earns one card, and completing two hours earns all four stages of a dragon. The card game can be played with friends as additional dragons are earned. Readers are invited to add book recommendations as "Book Scales" to the dragon display in the Program Room. The program runs on a rolling basis and can be joined at any time.

1000 Books Before Kindergarten

Bancroft Memorial Library offers the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program for young families and early readers. At registration, you will be provided a starting kit with a library book bag, cable for achievement tags, program information, suggested book list and a log for books 1-100. Every 100 books read earns a tag for the cable, and reaching 1,000 books earns a lawn sign celebrating the achievement. This program runs on a rolling basis and can be joined anytime.

For updates throughout the month, Friend us on Facebook and sign up at www.wowbrary.org to discover the Library's newest books, movies and music. Our webpage is www.bancroftmemoriallibrary.org



Bridging the gap: Hopedale Jr. Sr. High hosts successful Industry Partners Breakfast

The morning air at Hopedale Jr. Sr. High School was filled with more than just the aroma of fresh coffee one day last month; it was filled with the sounds of collaboration. Local business leaders, entrepreneurs, and educators gathered for the Industry Partners Breakfast, a landmark event designed to strengthen the ties between the classroom and the professional world.

The primary goal of this initiative is to expand meaningful, real-world learning experiences for our students. In a rapidly changing economy, academic excellence must be paired with practical insight. By opening our doors to industry professionals, we aim to ensure that our curriculum remains aligned with current workforce needs and that our students graduate with the "durable skills" necessary for success.

We truly appreciated our partners taking the time to connect, share their insights, and learn more about how we can work together. Their perspective on industry needs and workforce skills are incred-

ibly valuable as we continue to build a pipeline from Hopedale to the professional sector, said Career Pathways and Work-based Learning Coordinator, Mrs. Ingemi.

The breakfast was not just a celebration of past support, but hopefully the beginning of future collaboration. We are looking for dedicated partners to help us provide students with a glimpse into their potential futures. Industry partners can get involved in a number of ways:

- **Join a Career Talk or Classroom Visit:** Share your personal career journey and industry insights directly with students.
- **Host a Field Trip:** Welcome a group of students to your workplace to showcase your industry in action and explain how different departments function.
- **Participate in Job Shadow Day:** Provide a student with a "day-in-the-life" experience, helping them understand the realities of specific roles.
- **Offer Internships:** Support our upperclassmen through

hands-on, skill-building experiences that provide a competitive edge for college and career applications.

- **Serve as a Mentor or Project Partner:** Give professional feedback on student work, participate in a career panel, or present real-world challenges for our classes to solve.

When schools and industries work together, the entire community wins. These partnerships provide students with a sense of purpose in their studies and help local businesses cultivate a pool of talented, local, and motivated future employees.

Hopedale Jr. Sr. High School extends a sincere thank you to all who attended. We look forward to seeing the incredible projects, internships, and mentorships that will grow from the seeds planted at this event. If you are interested in becoming a partner, please contact Mrs. Ingemi at lingemi@hopedale-schools.org.

Submitted by Hopedale Jr. Sr. High School Principal Derek Atherton.

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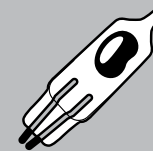
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Devon Thomson named Worcester County Superintendent Scholar

Hopedale Junior-Senior High School senior Devon Thomson has been selected as a Worcester County Superintendent Scholar, a prestigious recognition awarded annually to one or two students from each high school in Worcester County. The honor celebrates students who represent the very best of their schools and communities, not only through their achievements, but through their character, leadership, and commitment to others.

Thomson has distinguished himself as a leader through music, service, student government, and the arts. A dedicated member of the school's music program since freshman year, he currently serves as President of the Tri-M Music Honor Society and has performed at both the Central District and All-State Chorus Concerts in 2025 and 2026. His involvement spans Senior High Chorus, Concert Band, and the A Cappella Ensemble, along with numerous community performances including CanJam concerts, the Hopedale Tree Lighting, and events at Atria Draper Place. In theater, Thomson serves as Vice President of the Hopedale Drama Club and has taken on leading roles such as Danny Zuko in Grease and Reverend

Shaw Moore in Footloose, and who can forget his role as Harry Bright in MAMMA MIA!. These are just a few of the roles in which we have seen Devon shine throughout his years in Hopedale. He has further honed his craft through training and performances with the Hanover Theatre Conservatory and regional theater groups.

In addition to his artistic accomplishments, Thomson is a committed student leader. As Treasurer of the Hopedale Student Council, he has played an active role in organizing and supporting community initiatives including Trunk or Treat, the annual Turkey Dinner, food drives, and the Walk for Hunger. He has also represented Hopedale at district and state leadership conferences, where he both participated in and led workshops, earning the Commonwealth Award for his service and dedication.

With more than 400 hours of community service, Thomson's leadership is grounded in a deep commitment to helping others. Guided by his philosophy of saying "yes" to new opportunities and leading with kindness, he has made a meaningful impact both within the school and throughout the broader com-



munity. In recognition of his leadership and service, he was also named a George Eastman Young Leader Award recipient.

The Worcester County Superintendent Scholar program highlights students whose accomplishments are matched by their integrity and compassion. For Hopedale, Thomson's selection reflects both his individual excellence and the values that define the school community. As he prepares for graduation, Devon Thomson leaves behind a lasting example of what it means to lead with purpose, serve with humility, and embrace every opportunity to make a difference.

Southwick's Zoo announces passing of Taj, beloved white tiger



Southwick's Zoo is saddened to share the passing of one of its most cherished residents, Taj, a white tiger who had been under veterinary care.

At 18½ years old, she had reached the later stage of her natural lifespan. In recent weeks, her quality of life had been declining, as she had stopped eating and was becoming increasingly arthritic and weak. Following ongoing monitoring and consultation with veterinary specialists, the difficult decision was made to humanely euthanize her to prevent further discomfort and any suffering.

Over the past few months, she received attentive medical care to manage age-related conditions, including arthritis and joint discomfort, as well as evaluation of a growth on her eyelid. Throughout this time, her dedicated team of keepers and veterinary staff remained by her side, closely monitoring her health and prioritizing her comfort.

"She was truly special to all of us," said Betsy Brewer from Southwick's Zoo. "Our team formed a deep bond with her over the years, and it is never easy to say goodbye. Our focus was on giving her the best possi-

ble quality of life, and when the time came, ensuring a peaceful and compassionate passing."

The white tiger was a longtime resident of the zoo and a guest favorite, admired for her beauty, presence, and the connection she created with visitors. She also played an important role in helping educate guests about wildlife conservation and the importance of protecting threatened habitats.

Southwick's Zoo extends its gratitude to its animal care team and veterinary partners for their dedication and compassion, as well as to the community for their ongoing support during this time.

For more information about Southwick's Zoo, please visit www.southwickzoo.com.

Southwick's Zoo, located in Mendon, MA, is the largest zoo in New England and is home to over 900 animals representing more than 150 species from around the world. Our team is passionate about education, committed to conservation, and dedicated to providing exceptional animal care, all while creating unforgettable experiences for guests of all ages.



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Hopedale 100 years ago: doll carriage parade, sports wins

Series looks at Hopedale in 1920s

By DAN MALLOY
SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

Many of the kinds of stories that appeared in local newspapers a century ago would rarely be published now. Improvements in medicine, technology, and everyday life have changed what papers print these days. The following items are from the Milford Daily News in 1926.

- Before antibiotics became available, what would now be a minor matter could be deadly: Mrs. Lucy (Noble) Peters, wife of Rev. Richard Peters, formerly of this town, died suddenly of blood poisoning, which developed from a sliver in her thumb.
- In a 12-inning game at Medway Saturday the Hopedale High School nine defeated Medway 5 to 4 and captured the Tri-county league championship with 12 consecutive victories.
- At the high school graduation last Thursday for the class of 20 seniors, Principal W.A. Dennett presented the diplomas. Chester Goodnow gave

an essay. Pearl Sniderman was the winner of the Sons of the American Revolution medal.

Ringling in false fire alarms was a common prank years ago, especially on the Fourth of July:

- During the holiday two false fire alarms were sounded from Box 64 in Spindleville, Saturday, and from Box 39 on Dutcher Street Extension on Sunday night.
- The annual “night before” celebration in conjunction with tomorrow’s field day of the Draper employees will attract a large number of visitors tonight. The parade will start from the Union Church at 7 p.m., led by a drum corps, and at the close, five prizes for decorated doll carriages, three for floats and three for costumes and bicycles will be awarded. A moving picture will be shown on a screen on the rear of the main office building.

Dan Malloy is the founder of www.hope1842.com, a website devoted to the history of Hopedale.



A crowd turned out to see a movie projected onto a screen attached to the Draper Main Office, August 1929.



Lined up for doll carriage parade, at Main Office, 1929.



Doll carriage parade lined up by a long-gone restaurant on Dutcher Street. 1923



Aug 12, 1921

Kids with decorated bicycles on Dutcher Street for the night before the field day parade. Photo source: Dan Malloy, www.hope1842.com







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LIVING HEALTHY

Over 50 and Tired of Reading Glasses? Refractive Lens Exchange May Be for You

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

If you are over 50 and constantly reaching for reading glasses, you are not alone. Age-related vision changes, especially presbyopia, make it harder to focus up close. Refractive Lens Exchange, or RLE, is an advanced surgical option that can significantly reduce or eliminate your need for glasses for both distance and near vision.

What is presbyopia?

Presbyopia is a natural part of aging in which the eye's lens gradually loses flexibility. This reduces the ability to focus on close objects, especially when reading, using a phone, or working on a computer. It typically begins in the early to mid-40s and progresses over time, often leading to increasing

dependence on reading glasses or bifocals for nearly all near tasks.

What is Refractive Lens Exchange?

Refractive Lens Exchange is a procedure in which the eye's natural lens is removed and replaced with an artificial intraocular lens, commonly called an IOL. The procedure is essentially the same as modern cataract surgery, but it is performed before a cataract becomes visually significant.

Unlike LASIK or PRK, which reshape the cornea, RLE works inside the eye and corrects vision by replacing the lens itself. This allows correction of distance, intermediate, and near vision, depending on the lens selected.

Who is a good candidate?

RLE is most often recommended for individuals over 50



who are frustrated with glasses or contact lenses. Ideal candidates have difficulty with near vision due to presbyopia and

may also have farsightedness, nearsightedness, or astigmatism. It is also an option for patients not ideal for LASIK because of thin corneas, dry eye concerns, or higher prescriptions.

Candidates should have healthy eyes without significant retinal disease, uncontrolled glaucoma, or other major ocular conditions. They should also understand realistic expectations, including that some patients may still need glasses for fine print or low light tasks after surgery.

Benefits of RLE

One major benefit of RLE is freedom from reading glasses. Modern intraocular lenses can provide a full range of vision, including distance, intermediate, and near, depending on the chosen lens.

The results are long-lasting because the artificial lens does not age or change. Since the natural lens is removed, patients will not develop cataracts in the future, eliminating the need for cataract surgery later in life.

Many patients report improved clarity, brightness, and contrast with modern lens technology. Daily activities such as driving, reading, computer use, and travel often become easier

and more convenient without glasses or contact lenses.

Insurance coverage

In most cases, Refractive Lens Exchange is considered elective and is not covered by insurance. This is because it is performed to reduce dependence on glasses rather than to treat cataracts. If a cataract is present and affecting vision, insurance may cover part of the procedure like cataract surgery. However, premium lenses and advanced technology upgrades are usually out-of-pocket expenses. Patients should review benefits in advance so they clearly understand expected costs and options.

Risks and considerations

RLE is a safe and commonly performed procedure, but it carries some risks as with any eye surgery. These include infection, inflammation, or swelling, though these complications are uncommon with modern techniques.

There is a small risk of retinal detachment, particularly in highly nearsighted patients. Some patients may notice glare, halos, or starbursts at night, especially with multifocal lenses.

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'Guess Who?' Memorial students try to identify teachers from old photos

Walking through the hallways of Memorial Elementary lately, you might notice a curious new addition to the walls. What started as a simple display has turned into a school-wide sensation: the "Guess Who?" initiative.

For the past few months, faculty members have been dusting off their old yearbooks to share their own school-age photos with the student body. From grainy Polaroids to the vibrant (and often questionable) fashions of the '80s and '90s, these portraits are first revealed anonymously during the virtual morning announcements, sparking a daily wave of detective work across the classrooms.

While the students certainly enjoy a good laugh at the vintage hairstyles, neon wind-breakers, and oversized glasses of decades past, the project serves a deeper purpose: Seeing a teacher as a nervous third-grader or a wide-eyed kindergarten helps bridge the gap between the front of the classroom and the desks.

"It makes them feel more human," one staff member noted. "It's a reminder that every adult in this building once sat exactly where they are sitting now."

By sharing these images, teachers are opening up about their own academic journeys. Many have paired their photos



A photo wall at Memorial Elementary School where students try to identify faculty members through old photos.
Source: Hopedale Public Schools

with short stories about their favorite childhood books, the subjects they found difficult, or the teachers who first inspired them.

The reaction from the students has been overwhelmingly positive. Every morning, the halls buzz with theories, and as students pass the photo wall, they stop to try their hand at identifying the "mystery" MES staff.

With more than 80 staff members participating, the "Guess Who?" project hasn't just connected teachers and students, it has brought the staff closer together as well.

The hallways are now filled with the sound of laughter as colleagues marvel at how much—or how little—they've changed since their elementary school days.

It also serves as a gentle, playful reminder that education is a lifelong cycle. It reinforces the idea that today's students are tomorrow's leaders, innovators, and perhaps even the future teachers who will one day hang their own 2026 school portraits in the halls of MES.

Submitted by Hopedale Public Schools



EYE

continued from page 12

rior capsule opacification, a mild clouding behind the implant that can develop months or years later. This is easily treated with a quick, painless laser procedure.

Alternatives to RLE

Other options depend on age and vision needs. LASIK and PRK effectively treat distance vision but do not correct age-related reading vision loss after the mid-40s or early 50s.

Implantable lenses are typically used in younger patients

and do not address presbyopia. Monovision, where one eye is corrected for distance and the other for near, can work well for some patients, but others may not adapt comfortably or may notice reduced depth perception.

Final thoughts

Refractive Lens Exchange is a proven option for patients over 50 who are tired of glasses. By replacing the natural lens with a customized artificial lens, it is possible to restore a broad range of vision and improve quality of life.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we use advanced di-

agnostics and modern surgical techniques to achieve precise outcomes. All procedures are performed in an accredited surgery center under topical anesthesia with anesthesia professionals present for safety and comfort.

If you are over 50 and frustrated with reading glasses, RLE may be worth considering. A consultation can help determine the best approach for your vision and lifestyle goals.

For more details, see our ad on page 12.

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Hopedale PD welcomes Officer Basquiat



On March 30, the Town of Hopedale welcomed Officer Jalen Basquiat to the Hopedale Police Department, according to a social media post on the Hopedale Town Administrator Facebook page.

"Officer Basquiat comes to us from Westborough and joins a team of exceptional men and women who serve this community across our public safety departments," read the post.

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Pet of the Month: Big Boy



They call me Big Boy and I am definitely above average! I have a big appetite for life and for food! I like to explore and I am pretty athletic. I also excel at chilling out and I am a certified napping expert.

I really do need to go on a diet but it's so hard when my roommates leave their food lying around. Speaking of roommates, I think I am ready to move out of this apartment into a home of my own. If your home is missing a cat with big personality, come visit me at the Milford Humane Society - I'll be waiting at the door for you!


Please note: Big Boy is FIV+ and in very good health. Cats with FIV can lead normal lives, both in quality and duration. They should be monitored closely for infections and dental issues. Regular veterinary checkups and a high-quality diet are recommended to ensure that Big Boy remains healthy.

For more information on Big Boy or the other cats at The Milford Humane Society please visit <https://www.milfordhumane.org>



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Library to host fundraiser on May 16 with medium Ellen Henry

An Afternoon of Love, Connection & Messages with Medium Ellen Henry will take place on May 16 from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Hopedale Unitarian Parish, 65 Hopedale St, Ellen has studied with some of the leading mediums of the 21st century at renowned institutions for the advancement of mediumship, including the Arthur Findlay College and the Omega Institute.

Ellen will perform a mediumship demonstration and discuss what mediumship is, how it differs from a psychic reading, and how she receives messages; she will also share messages with the group. Please note that attendance does not guarantee a personal reading.

This program is limited to 100 attendees, and tickets are \$20 each. A limited number of tickets will be available for



The Bancroft Memorial Library will host a fundraiser on May 16 with Medium Ellen Henry, pictured. *Courtesy photo*

purchase at the Library (cash or check payable to the Friends of the Hopedale Library). Tickets may also be purchased online by visiting the Event Calendar at www.bancroftmemorial-library.org and following the instructions provided.

HOPEDALE SPORTS

New coach taking over girls lacrosse team

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

When Maddy Brennan decided to step down as the Hopedale girls lacrosse coach, Athletic Director Stephanie Ridolfi had to start looking for her replacement. Under Brennan's guidance, the Blue Raiders went 13-5 last year and earned themselves a spot in the Division 4 State Tournament where they unfortunately fell to Westwood in the first round.

While Ridolfi was searching for Brennan's replacement, Brian O'Neill, a former football and soccer player at Uxbridge who had coached his oldest son's soccer team, was thinking about the position.

When O'Neill's son decided to make the transition from soccer in Uxbridge to the Northbridge Youth Lacrosse League he wasn't prepared to coach a sport he knew nothing about. However, when all the teams had coaches except his son's, he decided to coach even if he had no idea what he was doing.

"If I hadn't stepped up the kids wouldn't have a season," O'Neill said. "I had never played the sport nor knew anything about it. Another dad reached out to help but he also knew nothing about the sport."

While O'Neill's son would

only play lacrosse for two years, his daughter started taking up the sport. O'Neill served as assistant coach at the beginning and last year took over as the team's head coach. With his daughter enjoying the sport, Uxbridge formed a co-op with the Hopedale girls lacrosse team, and this is where O'Neill found out about the opening.

"I had heard that they were looking for a varsity coach and I figured that if I applied, they would move the JV coach into the varsity position," he said. "However, I soon found out that Hopedale didn't have a JV coach either and I just couldn't let a bunch of kids not have a season, so I talked to Stephanie."

O'Neill's opening line to the Hopedale AD was, "I'm probably not the right person, but I'd try." Ridolfi saw something in O'Neill and hired him as the girls varsity coach for the upcoming season.

"The game on the varsity level is very different to me, and it was an eye-opening experience and had me wondering how I could actually help this team," the new coach said. "They are a great family unit at Hopedale and, although I didn't have a lot of history, the girls were a very good team



New LAX Coach Brian O'Neill.
Courtesy photo

thanks to last year's coach Maddy Brennan." They were a very cohesive unit, which O'Neill thought would be a blessing in the long run.

When O'Neill first met with the team, he had them go home and write down their goals. The majority of the girls came back with wanting a winning record, one better than last year's 13-win season. They also wanted to make it back to the state playoffs and grab at least one win and hopefully

make some noise. Finally, they wanted to grow as a team.

Having lost six seniors to graduation and not knowing their skill set, O'Neill was unaware of what was lost by their departure. As he has gotten to know the team, he has realized this group of girls do not have one major star – instead, they are a top to bottom team that plays as a cohesive unit.

"There has been no complaining, the girls are always working hard, and the leadership has been phenomenal so far, so I am just letting them do their thing; Stephanie [Hopedale AD Ridolfi] had played lacrosse in college, and she has been helping me with resources," the coach said. "I feel pretty good about the team and am hoping that we can surprise some teams that don't see us coming."

While he has minimal experience, especially on the high school level, O'Neill has told the girls that if they work hard he will work hard for them.

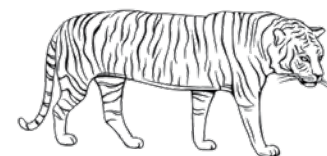
Some of the girls who have had a tremendous influence thus far have been tri-captains Catherine Bisson, Alli Pearlman and Morgan Charbonnier, who have stepped up to help the new coach guide the team. The younger athletes on

the team are also continuously looking up to them. Bisson will play defense; Pearlman, who is headed to Assumptions University next year, will be protecting the goal; and Charbonnier, who will be heading to an undecided college next year, will be one of the team's attack players.

Although the team does not have a lot of varsity subs on the sidelines, the junior varsity athletes will find themselves getting filtered into games on occasions.

"The starting 12 is one heck of a group," O'Neill said. "The entire team has fully impressed me, and they have all worked together so well. I am here to boost their level of play and help make them better."

O'Neill says he fully believes the team's three goals are achievable, and he is hoping he can replicate last year's success while looking to better it. The first-year coach believes that Brennan left him in a good spot and the team should be able to get to the playoffs and make some noise.



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New passes to Patriots Hall of Fame, The Trustees of the Reservations

Bancroft Memorial Library is excited to offer two new museum passes to the community: the Patriots Hall of Fame in Foxboro and The Trustees of the Reservations, the nation's oldest regional land trust and Massachusetts' largest nonprofit conservation organization.

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04/15/2026	16 Heron Ln.	\$833,000
03/31/2026	7 Dana Park	\$375,000
03/31/2026	279 S Main St.	\$560,000
03/19/2026	147 Laurelwood Dr.	\$415,000

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



The 3-bed, 2-bath, 1,589-square-foot house at 279 S. Main Street in Hopedale recently sold for \$560,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com

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