

Fox family captivates Upton neighborhood

By Natalie Crosier

UPTON - A family of foxes living at the corner of Old Grafton Road and Fowler Street recently became an unexpected source of joy for a local neighborhood. What started as a wildlife sighting turned into a gathering place where neighbors stopped to watch the foxes and talk with one another. Some people who had never met before started new friendships while standing by the roadside watching the foxes play.

It began in December 2025, when homeowner Lauren Scheuer noticed a male fox, called a dog, hanging around her yard, marking the area around a den. Soon he was barking through the



The family. Posted on Facebook @WildUpton by Lucia Hackett.

neighborhood, likely searching for a mate. Not long after that, a female fox, called a vixen, returned his calls and joined him at the den.

By late March, the vixen appeared with seven baby

foxes, known as kits, peeking out from the den for the first time. Since then, the fox fam-

FOX

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New benches at Mendon's Memorial Park



Earlier this month, new park benches and picnic tables were installed at Memorial Park, according to a Facebook post by the Mendon Highway Depart-

ment, which thanked the Mendon Brothers of the Brush for the donation.

Source: Mendon Highway Department, Facebook

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Busy beavers:

Nature’s engineers are transforming local waterways

By Becky Wetzels, Guest writer

A growing population of beavers is taking up residence in Upton and Mendon’s streams and ponds, doing what beavers do: cutting down trees with their teeth and building dams and lodges. Besides humans, beavers alter their environment more than any other animal on the planet, which is why they are sometimes perceived as a nuisance, and also why MIT chose "nature's original engineer" as their mascot.

There are many reasons beavers are good neighbors, and we should welcome them. Beavers are a “keystone species” because they create habitat that supports countless other species. Beaver ponds create wetlands, which are among the most biologically productive ecosystems in the world.

They dramatically increase plant, bird and other wildlife vari-

ety, improve water quality, recharge aquifers, protect against flooding and wildfires, and increase salmon and trout populations. Beavers also help mitigate climate change by creating wetlands that turn streams into powerful carbon sinks.

Beavers are the largest rodents in North America, usually weighing 35 to 65 pounds. They are monogamous, nocturnal, and live up to 24 years in the wild. Hunted to near extinction in the 19th and early 20th centuries, populations are returning to rivers, streams, lakes and ponds all over New England, where they build their dams and lodges from tree branches, vegetation, rocks and mud. They are herbivores, eating tree bark, twigs, leaves, and aquatic plants like water lilies. They do not eat fish.

Climate change mitigation. Beavers are important in reducing greenhouse gases that contribute the climate

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change. According to a recent UK study, beaver-engineered wetlands can store carbon at rates up to 10 times higher than similar systems without beaver activity. Over a 13-year period, a beaver-created wetland stores an estimated 1,300 tons of carbon, compared to 11 tons in non-beaver-populated areas, the study noted.

Water purification. Beaver dams and ponds trap and strip out pollutants from streams. The algae, plants and sediment in beaver ponds absorb dissolved nutrients, process organic waste, and remove runoff toxins (e.g., heavy metals, pesticides



Beavers on Warren Brook in Upton. Photo by Linda Gay

and fertilizers) from the water. Beaver-engineered wetlands serve as the “earth’s kidneys”.

Aquifer and groundwater recharging. Beaver ponds stabilize the water table and replenish aquifers.

Flood prevention. Beaver dams function as natural sponges that store runoff water and slowly release it, thus reduc-

BEAVERS
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Upton Historical Society to hold bus tour to historic 1788 'Ten Footer' Boot Shop

The Upton Historical Society invites the public to step back in time with a special narrated bus tour to one of Upton’s earliest surviving workshop buildings — the 1788 Seth Wood Boot Shop and the Old First Cemetery founded in 1735. Interpreters will be on site to tell these stories.

The tour will take place on Sunday, May 31, with buses departing from the Upton Town Hall parking lot at 1 p.m. and 2:30 p.m. Each tour will include a short, narrated ride and a visit to the historic building, where participants will learn about Upton’s important role in New England’s



Wood Boot Shop, built in 1788, is a small independent workshop where artisans crafted boots in a structure known as a “Ten Footer.” Measuring roughly 10 feet by 10 feet, these buildings were a defining feature of early New England’s cottage industries. Craftsmen worked close to home, producing goods for larger merchants long before the rise of industrial factories and providing boots to the deep south during the American Ref-ormation following the Ameri-can Civil War.

During the 19th century, Upton was a major contributor to the regional boot and shoe trade, producing a significant portion of the footwear used throughout New England.

The building later took on a second life in 1938, when it

was converted into a blacksmith shop by Clarence Forsberg. The Forsberg family eventually donated the historic structure to the Upton Historical Society, helping preserve this unique piece of the town’s industrial heritage.

Today, the restored shop offers a rare glimpse into the early working life of Upton’s crafts-men and the small structures that supported a thriving local economy.

Tickets for the bus tour are \$5 per person. Because seating is limited, reservations are recom-mended. To reserve a seat, email uptonmahistoricalsociety@gmail.com or call 508-529-6600.

The Upton Historical Society encourages residents and visitors alike to join this short journey into the town’s past and discover



Boot Shop at the corner of Mendon and Chestnut Streets. Circa 1790.
Photo source: Upton Historical Society

how a small ten-foot building helped shape a local industry.

Submitted by the Upton Historical Society

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FOX

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ily has drawn the attention of neighbors, families, and people passing by.

From the kitchen window, Lauren and her husband, Dan, were able to watch it all. “I love how wildlife has put on a show for the whole community,” she said. “It’s bringing everyone together.”

The mother fox has been incredibly attentive, rarely leaving the kits when they were young and keeping them close to the



Two kits playing near their den. Courtesy of John Herendeen

den and out of the road. The father was busy too, often spotted around the neighborhood carrying squirrels as he hunted day and night to feed his large family.

To help protect both the foxes and drivers, Scheuer placed a “SLOW – Fox Family” sign near the street corner. She says neighbors and visitors were respectful by keeping their distance while enjoying the rare chance to see wildlife so close to home.

The father fox has moved on and now the mother appears to be raising the kits on her own, leaving them for short periods while she searches for food. Another fox, nicknamed “Auntie Mange”, is seen regularly watching over the kits. Auntie Mange, possibly a relative, looks pretty scraggly but is clearly welcomed by the mother fox.

Sadly, one day a kit was seen limping. Scheuer watched the mother bring the injured kit to her garden and tend to its injury, carefully licking its leg for extended periods. The situation sparked thoughtful discussions among neighbors about the balance between helping wild-

life and allowing nature to take its course.

Just a few days later, mother fox relocated six of her youngsters to a new den further down Old Grafton Road. The injured kit, unable to make the move, was temporarily left behind—but not abandoned. The mother returned nightly to feed and care for it, while Auntie Mange remained nearby – such an amazing display of motherhood, intelligence, and family connection!

Concern for the injured kit prompted intervention from neighbors and local authorities. The following day, the kit was humanely trapped by the Upton Animal Control Officer and transported to Newhouse Wildlife Rescue in Chelmsford. There, it received fluids and an X-ray to assess its condition. The kit is healing quickly and will be joining other fox babies at Newhouse for their rehabilitation. Staff at the facility have expressed surprise at the outpouring of community concern and are hopeful the fox can be rehabilitated and released back into the same neighborhood later this year.

Scheuer believes protected

land nearby helps make moments like this possible. “When the whole town of Upton was able to save 97 acres of forest and watershed on Mechanic and Fowler Street from an enormous development, it allowed nature to thrive,” she said. “These corridors are incredibly important to wildlife. My husband and I live here in Upton because we enjoy being close to critters.”

For many in town, this fox family has become more than just a wildlife story. It has given people a reason to slow down, enjoy nature, and connect with their neighbors. While the foxes are not as visible anymore, we encourage residents to follow the “Wild Upton” Facebook page to see photos of the foxes, beavers, and other wildlife around Upton and share their own pictures. We also encourage residents to consider donating to Newhouse Wildlife Rescue to support their mission of protecting and healing injured and orphaned wildlife.



The beautiful mother fox watching over her young. Courtesy of Lucia Hackett



Editor’s note: According to @NewhouseWildlifeRescue on Facebook, the injured kit has been rehabilitated and reacquainted with its family.

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Find the Hidden Animals in This Month's Editorial Pages!

There are 10 animals scattered throughout this issue's articles.

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Which retirement plan is right for your business?



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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If you're a local business owner, a workplace retirement plan can be a powerful tool – helping you manage taxes, strengthen employee retention and build personal financial security.

Many in your situation, however, assume retirement plans are complicated or only suitable for large companies. The reality is quite different. Today's retire-

ment plan options encompass businesses of every size, from solo entrepreneurs to companies with dozens of employees.

The key is understanding which plans work best for different kinds of businesses:

Self-employed individuals or businesses without employees. Three commonly used retirement plans:

- Simplified employee pension (SEP) plans are relatively straightforward, low-maintenance, lower-cost and flexible on how much you contribute each year.
- Owner-only 401(k) plans are ideal if you're willing to accept additional cost and complexity in exchange for benefits like higher contribution limits and borrowing options.
- Owner only defined benefit plans work best for owners with high, steady income who want to maximize their retirement contributions and guaranteed retirement income. These plans

come with required annual funding and greater administrative complexity.

Businesses with employees can also consider an SEP plan, although it only allows for employer contributions. Other plan options include:

- The SIMPLE IRA (savings incentive match plan for employees) can work well for companies with 100 or fewer employees seeking a low-maintenance option. Employer contributions are required, and it has lower contribution limits compared to other plan types.
- Traditional 401(k) plans offer maximum flexibility by allowing both employee salary deferrals and employer contributions that can be adjusted based on business performance. These plans have added costs and administrative responsibilities.
- Safe harbor 401(k) plans are ideal if you want to maximize your own retirement contributions without

complex testing requirements and you're willing to make required employer contributions.

- A cash balance plan is often paired with another plan type, such as a 401(k), to allow greater retirement savings. It works well when you have a smaller company with high-earning employees and consistent cash flow, and you're comfortable making required contributions.

Each plan type involves different eligibility requirements, establishment deadlines, contribution limits, complexity and costs. In determining a workplace retirement plan that's right for your business, you'll want to consider your number of employees, desired contribution levels, comfort with required employer contributions and willingness to handle administrative responsibilities. And, of course, the goals for your business and your own retirement are important criteria.

Fortunately, you don't have to

navigate this decision alone. A financial advisor can help you evaluate the trade-offs among different plan types and select the option that best fits your situation. They can explain how various plans work and guide you through the setup process.

Starting a workplace retirement plan is an investment in your future, your business and your employees. With professional guidance, you can find a plan that helps everyone build financial security while positioning your business for continued success.

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

Mark Freeman, CEPA
Edward Jones Financial Advisor
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Upton Town Library Calendar of Events

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By Upton Library Staff

Friends of the Library Booksale!

Friends of the Upton Town Library will host our spring book sale on Saturday, May 16 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. in the Great Room. Come pick up your next great beach read or grab some books to keep the kids busy this summer! Work in a school? Teachers get 50% off! Hardcover \$2, paperbacks \$1, and children's books 50 cents each. All proceeds go to the Friends of the Upton Town Library and support the Museum Pass program and Summer Reading program

Reading with Friends – Thursday, May 28 at 6 p.m.

Join the Friends of the Upton Town each month for a quiet reading group. We'll start with refreshments and then read on our own anywhere in the library. Discuss books or not! It's a silent reading group every month! The next reading with Friends will be



held Thursday, May 28 from 6-7 p.m.

New Museum Pass – Children's Museum of Franklin. Come check out the newest museum pass offered at the library! We now have a pass for the Children's Museum of Franklin, offering half price admission for up to 4 people. This and all other museum passes can be checked out by going to the library website, calling the library, or visiting the circulation desk.

Quilt Raffle – Drawing May 16 The Friends of the Upton Town Library are raffling off a beautiful quilt generously donated by the Thimble Pleasures Quilt Guild. Tickets can be bought at the circulation desk and are \$5 each or 3 for \$10. More info and view the 60" by 60" quilt on display at Upton Library. Drawing will take place May 16 at the spring booksale.

CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS

Drop-In Craft – May 9, 11

a.m.-1 p.m.

Drop in anytime during the listed hours to create a fun spring bouquet craft! We'll be using construction paper, straws, and tempera paint.

ADULT EVENTS

Puzzle Swap – Wednesday, June 3, 3-7 p.m. Ages 16 - Adult Need to swap an old puzzle out for a new one? Bring a gently used puzzle with no missing pieces to participate in our puzzle swap. You will walk away with a new-to-you puzzle of your own! This is a casual drop-in event, so participants are encouraged to stop by anytime between 3-7 p.m. See the Upton Town Library website for more information.

Drum Circle with Dave Curry - Saturday, June 6, 7-9:30 p.m. Ages 8 - Adult

Join facilitator Dave Curry for an evening of freestyle drumming. Instruction and extra drums are provided, but you can also bring your own drums and

percussion instruments. No prior experience is necessary, so the circle is suitable for beginners on up to experienced drummers.

Tabletop Game Night for Adults – Thursday, May 28, 5:15-7:30 p.m.

Join our tabletop game series for adults! Meets every fourth Thursday of the month from 5:15-7:30 p.m. Beginners and experienced players welcome!

Virtual Author Talk Series

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

Author Talk with Smithsonian Curator **Mary Savig**: Your Ticket to the Best State Fair Crafts - Wednesday, June 3 at 2 p.m.

Author Talk with **Matt Diniman**: Apocalyptic Mayhem, Lava-Spitting Llamas, and One Very Sassy Cat - Thursday, June 11 at 7 p.m.

Book Groups

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

Rainbow Readers Book Group NEW! Join us for a conversation on the 3rd Wednesday of

May, August, and November in 2026 to discuss books featuring LGBTQ+ main characters.

Wednesday, May 20 at 6 p.m.: *The House in the Cerulean Sea* by T.J. Klune

Upton Reads Book Group

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

Tuesday, June 16 at 12:45 p.m., and Thursday, 18 at 6:45 p.m.: *The Book Club for Troublesome Women* by Marie Bostwick.

Fic or No Fic Book Group

An adult book group led by Librarian Micaela that alternates fiction and non-fiction selections. Meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, May 27 at 6:45 p.m.: *The Sunshine Girls* by Molly Fader.

Tween Book Club – May 21 at 6:30 p.m.

This club is especially for our middle grade patrons, ages 10 to 14. This group reads popular middle grade titles selected by our members. For our May

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BEAVERS

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ing downstream flooding and erosion.

Drought resilience. Beavers protect against drought by holding water in ponds to better maintain stream flows during droughts. In fact, beavers are being released in drought-stricken areas of US and Great Britain to combat drought conditions.

Habitat creation. Beaver wetlands increase biodiversity for insects and support many birds, fish, and mammals by providing food, shelter and breeding sites. According to research, beaver-created wetlands averaged 19% more species than other types of wetlands. Species that benefit include otters, mink, muskrats, ducks, bats, herons, frogs, turtles, fish, and countless invertebrates.

Conclusion. Beavers are sometimes regarded as pests, but no other species can better benefit our watershed. Although they can present challenges, managing those challenges will help improve the



Beaver Activity on Warren Brook in Upton. Photo by Becky Wetzel

health of our watershed, control problematic flooding, protect against drought, and reap countless environmental rewards.

The author is one of several people working with the Town of Upton to understand the benefits and challenges of beavers in our watersheds, and to develop sensible and humane ways to manage beaver activity.

RESOURCES: *UK beaver study* - <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/weather/2026/03/22/climate-change-study-beavers-have-big-impact/89228448007/>



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Mendon receives fire and life safety education grants

Programs deliver life-saving information to children and seniors

In April, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced \$1.9 million in grants that will help 229 local fire departments deliver vital life safety education to school-aged children and older adults.

The Town of Mendon received a \$1,156.44 SAFE grant, and a \$823.18 Senior SAFE grant.

The grants represent two longstanding fire safety programs coordinated by the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services. The Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) program sends firefighter-educators into schools to deliver clear, consistent lessons to young people, while the Senior SAFE program is geared toward older adults and delivered through senior centers, councils on aging, and home visits.

“No family should have to experience the tragedy of a preventable fire,” said Gov. Maura Healey. “That’s why we’re making sure kids, families, and older adults across Massachusetts have the knowledge and support they need to stay safe at home — working with the firefighters they know and trust. We’re proud to deliver this support to nearly 230 communities and help protect families across our state.”

“Older adults face the highest risk of fire-related injury or death in the home,” said Public Safety and Security Secretary Gina K. Kwon. “The Senior SAFE grants help firefighters reach residents with critical fire and fall prevention education, smoke and carbon monoxide alarm installations, and home safety assessments that save lives and help make communities safer across Massachusetts.”

“Any firefighter will tell you that we’d rather prevent a fire than fight one,” said State Fire Marshal Davine. “And we’d much rather fight a fire than respond after a tragedy. The SAFE and Senior SAFE grants are geared toward prevention but they also help kids and seniors recognize the steps to surviving a fire at home.”

The SAFE program was launched in the mid-1990s after child fire fatalities climbed into the dozens each year. Since then, Massachusetts has experienced some of the lowest numbers on record — including two straight years with none at all. In 2014, the Senior SAFE program was developed to reach older adults, who now account for about half of each year’s fire deaths in Massachusetts and across the nation.

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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 af-

fecting 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.

A later occurrence is posterior 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

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EYE

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UPTON LIBRARY

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meeting, we will be discussing the title *Rebellion, 1776* by Laurie Halse Anderson.

Kids' Book Club – June 3, 4 p.m.

Our book club members explore popular juvenile chapter books on the first Wednesday of each month from 4-4:45 p.m. For our May meeting, we will be discussing the title *The Kids of Mrs. Z's Class: Rohan Murthy Has a Plan* by Rajani LaRocca. This group is for ages 6 to 9.

Monthly Library Events – Register Now!

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

Baby Storytime – Fridays at 9:30

& 10:30 a.m., ages birth to 3

Preschool Storytime –Thursdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m., ages 3 to 5

Saturday Storytime – May 9 at 9:30 a.m., ages birth to 5

Drop-In Storytime - May 11 at 9:30 a.m., ages 1 to 5

Music & Movement - May 20 at 2 p.m. & June 1 at 9:30 a.m., ages 1 to 5

Storybook Art Club – 3rd Tuesday each month at 10 a.m., ages 3 to 5

LEGO Club – 1st & 3rd Wednesdays each month at 4 p.m., ages 3 to 12

Crafternoon – 3rd Thursday each month, 3-5 p.m., ages 3+

Tween Book Club – 3rd Thursday each month at 6:30 p.m., ages 10 to 14

Kids' Book Club – 1st Wednesday each month at 4 p.m., ages 6 to 9

Chess Club – 1st Tuesday each

month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14

Crafting Club – 2nd Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14

Gaming Club – 3rd Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14

Magic the Gathering: Commander – 4th Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 8 to 16

FreeDrum Circle – 1st Saturday each month, 7-9:30 p.m., ages 8+

Tabletop Game Night for Adults – 3rd Thursday each month, ages 16+

Upton Reads Book Group – 2nd Tuesday and 3rd Thursday each month

Fic or No Fic Book Group – last Wednesday each month

Virtual Author Talks – varies, see our website

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

Mendon town-wide yard sale on June 6

One of Mendon's favorite traditions returns! The Friends of Mendon Elders will host another fantastic Town Wide Yard Sale on June 6 from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Donations of new or gently used items will be accepted at the Mendon Senior Center on Saturdays in May from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

You can host your own yard sale by filling out an application and returning it to the Senior Center on Saturday mornings in May. If you'd like to have a space in town, the Senior Center is offering onsite yard sale spaces at the Senior Center for a fee of \$25. Space is limited. For more information, contact friendsofmendonelders2024@gmail.com.



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EYE

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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 diagnostics 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 8.

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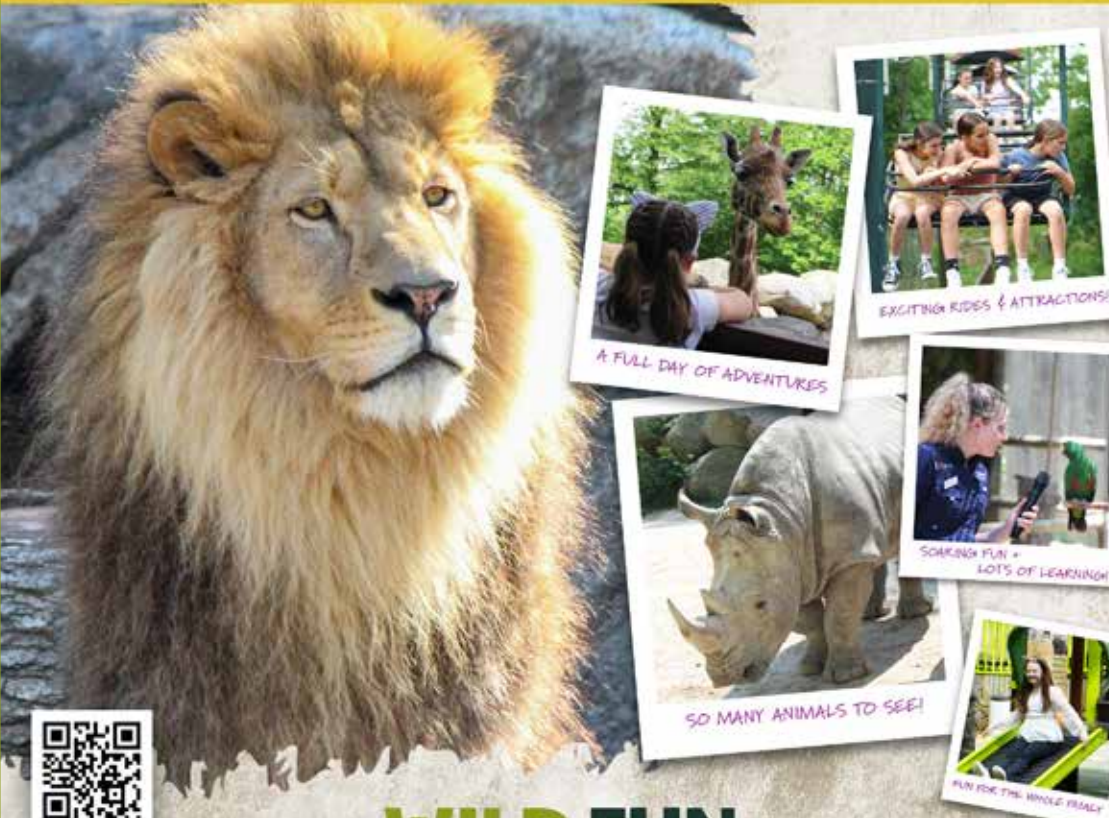
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Friends of Upton Seniors (FUSE) News

Second Annual Senior Soirée

The Second Annual Senior Soirée was held at the Upton Community Center on Friday April 24.

The theme for this year's event was the 1970's. Over 75 seniors danced the night away to disco music provided by a dee jay. Many seniors were dressed in their best 1970's outfits! We had an excellent plated dinner catered by Country Sooper. Dessert was provided by the Bloomer Girls.

The event was sponsored by the Friends of Upton Seniors (FUSE). FUSE would like to thank the Upton Select Board for providing funding from the Knowlton Trust fund and from our friends at UniBank. Elder and Social Services Director Tania Paparazzo and her staff did an amazing job planning this event and making it an incredible night to remember.

Having a group of seniors in their 70's, 80's and 90's dancing and socializing made for a truly memorable night. Most all agreed that this year's dance was even more fun than last year!



From left, Dave and Sue Perry, Eileen and Steven Rakitin. Courtesy photo

Coffee Hour at Milhaus and Coach Road

The Friends of Upton Seniors (FUSE) is hosting a monthly Coffee Hour for seniors at Milhaus. Our last coffee hour was a huge success with over 15 seniors attending. We are hoping that in the future we can relocate the Coffee Hour to the old Senior Center room at Milhaus. Also in April, the new Director of the Upton Housing Authority (Haley Fetrow) hosted a Coffee

Hour for the residents of Coach Road. Over 17 residents attended.

Ms. Fetrow outlined her plans to make drastic improvements to the Coach Road property. She has already arranged to have a dumpster on site for residents to get rid of unwanted items. FUSE is hoping to collaborate with Ms. Fetrow to offer monthly coffee hours at Coach Road.

Recent Home Sales

Date	Mendon	Amount
04/23/2026	24 Talbott Farm Dr.	\$915,000
04/17/2026	7 Jewell Xing	\$1.01 mil
04/13/2026	53 Asylum St.	\$740,000
03/31/2026	6 Barrows Rd.	\$760,000
03/31/2026	14 Kelley Rd. (1.41 acres)	\$200,000
03/31/2026	13 Kelley Rd. (1.6 acres)	\$215,000
03/31/2026	10 Wesley Dr. (1.4 acres)	\$200,000
03/30/2026	8 Washington St.	\$460,000
Date	Upton	Amount
04/24/2026	7 Sawmill Brook Ln.	\$1.76 mil
04/24/2026	29 Cider Mill	\$1.21 mil
04/24/2026	15 Shoemaker Ln. #7	\$699,900
04/22/2026	7 Fieldstone Dr.	\$515,000
04/14/2026	0 East St (2.23 acres)	\$297,000
04/02/2026	8 Maple St.	\$305,000
03/30/2026	13 Jonathans Way	\$820,000

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



The 4-bed, 4-bath, 3,345 square-foot home at 7 Jewell Xing in Mendon recently sold for \$1,010,000. Photo source www.zillow.com

Mendon Digital Equity Survey continues

The Town of Mendon and the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission want to hear from you about your experiences with internet connection, access to devices, digital literacy, and more.

The survey can be found at bit.ly/madigitalaccess.

Your feedback will help officials understand barriers to internet access, affordability, and is crucial to finding solutions for closing the digital divide in Mendon.

Source: www.mendonma.gov



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Upton Senior Center programs and activities, May & June

Silver Sisterhood
3rd Wednesday of the month at 11 a.m. Join the Silver Sisterhood, a fellowship of senior women interested in making new friends and sharing interests, laughter and support. This month, the group will meet on May 20.

Lunch Trip
Friday, May 15 at 11:30 a.m. Weather permitting, join us at George's Surf and Turf in Mendon! Enjoy fresh seafood and delicious menu options while spending time with friends. Sign up by May 13.

Crafts with Betty
Friday, May 15 at 10 a.m. Join us for the last session before we take a break for the summer. We will be painting seashells! Bring your creativity and leave with a hand-made treasure! All materials will be provided. Register by May 12.

Caregiving 101: Estate Planning
Monday, May 18 from 1-3 p.m. Tri-Valley is pleased to host a complimentary personal finance presentation designed to support caregivers with organizing and managing important financial matters. Attorney Elizabeth Newton of MIRICK will provide practical guidance to help caregivers feel more confident and prepared. RSVP by May 13.

How Do Public Health Nurses Improve Community

Health?
Wednesday, May 27 at 1:30 p.m. Join Debra Vescera, MSN, BSN, RN, Public Health Nurse for the Town of Upton, for an informative presentation on the evolution of public health nursing in the US. Discover the vital role public health nurses play in promoting health, preventing disease, and ensuring the safety of the communities they serve. RSVP by May 26.

Upton Police Spaghetti and Meatball Dinner
Thursday, May 28 at 5 p.m. The Upton Police are back to protect and serve... Spaghetti! Join us for the Upton Police Department's Annual Spaghetti and Meatball Dinner. Come enjoy a great meal, connect with your community, and spend time with your local officers. Shuttle service available. Free for Upton Seniors only. RSVP by May 21.

SAVE THE DATES
Immersive Learning Day
Thursday, June 4 from 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. The Mendon-Upton Regional School District offers Immersive Learning Days that connect students with the community. We're excited to welcome Memorial School students to our center for hands-on activities and conversation with our seniors. Rain date June 5. RSVP by May 28.

Healthy Aging Fair
Wednesday, June 10 from 2-5 p.m. Meet local organizations and businesses supporting the health, independence, and well-being of older adults. Explore services for aging in place—home modifications, in-home care, assistive equipment, and more. Free admission, with door prizes available.

Scams Targeting Older Adults Presentation
Tuesday, June 23 at 1 p.m. We are pleased to welcome Kevin Donohue, from the Office of the Worcester County District Attorney and Detective Bergstrom, of the Upton Police Department, for a presentation about common and emerging scams that specifically target seniors and how to protect yourself from becoming a victim.

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

NEW Hours of Operation
Mondays 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Wednesdays 12-3 p.m.
Fridays 10-1 p.m.
Are you unable to come at

these days and times? Transportation or home delivery available on request. Call for more info or to make an appointment: 508-529-4558. The UCC Food Pantry is seeking donations:

- Hearty Soups
- Cereal (except Cheerios)
- Snacks (crackers, cookies, pretzels, nuts, snack packs)
- Condiments (ketchup, BBQ sauce, mayo, mustard, relish)
- Juice
- Chef Boyardee (canned ravioli/pasta & meatballs)
- Canned fruit/fruit cups (peaches, pears, oranges, fruit cocktail)
- Gift cards & monetary donations also accepted

Friends of Upton Seniors (FUSE) News

Craft Fair Coming May 30

FUSE is having a juried craft fair on Saturday, May 30 from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Upton Community Center located at 9 Milford Street in Upton. The Craft Fair will feature unique handcrafted items from several local artisans. We have assembled an exquisite group of artisans who are eager to show off their wares. Admission is free so save the



date – May 30 at the Upton Community Center. Questions email us at friendsofuptonseniors@gmail.com.

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Taft Public Library Calendar of Events

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

ADULT AND TEEN PROGRAMS Upcoming Events:

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

Adult Book Club
The Adult Book Club is led by Library Assistant Kris Heumann. The group typically

meets the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Upcoming book club discussions are as follows: *The Silent Patient* by Alex Michaelides on June 8.

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

Awards Book Club
Hosted by Taft Library Assistant Jane Blackwood, the Awards Book Club meets on a quarterly basis to discuss fiction award winners of the year. Jane

selects from the books that took home the coveted Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the Booker Prize and more! Stop at the downstairs circulation desk to request the latest Awards book for discussion.

The current book in the Awards Book Club discussion series is *The True True Story of Raja the Gullible* by Rabih Alameddine, winner of the 2025 National Book Award for fiction.

Discussion is on Tuesday, May 19 at 7 p.m. Contact the library at 508-473-3259 for further information.

Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club

Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club is back with a whole new slate of books to discuss in 2026! Led by Library Director Andrew Jenrich, the club will be tackling the following upcoming books:

There is No Place for Us: Working and Homeless in America by Brian Goldstone. Discussion on Thursday, May 14 at 6:30 p.m.

A Walk in the Park: The True Story of a Spectacular Misadventure in the Grand Canyon by Kevin Farko.

Material World: The Six Raw Materials That Shape Modern Civilization by Ed Conway.

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

German Conversation Club

Are you looking for a place to practice what German you remember or to improve your German vocabulary? Conversations in German is no pressure, just fun! Lead by Library Assistant (and Mendon resident) Monika Schmid, the group typically meets the last Monday of each month. In May the group will meet on Monday the 25 at 6 p.m. Contact the library at 508-473-3259 for additional details. Registration is required. To register, visit our website!

2026 Challenge Book Club

The library is beginning a new book talk series revolving around a monthly challenge

prompt. Participants are encouraged to share the title or titles (and brief synopsis) of a book they've read or would like to read centered on the prompt. Prompts for the next few months of the club are as follows:

May: A book that made you smile
June: A book set in the summer
July: A book under 200 pages
August: A classic or modern classic

The group typically meets on the last Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

Assistance from Jenna Gouin and the Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health

Jenna Gouin, MBA /MSOL will be on site at the Taft Library on Monday, May 18 from 9-11 a.m. to provide assistance filling out applications for MassHealth, SNAP, WIC, fuel assistance, Medicare, Social Security, Veteran's Benefits, and more. Ms. Gouin can also provide referrals to community organizations, mental health and substance abuse providers and give guidance in obtaining financial resources to address past due bills. Each session is 30 minutes long. Those interested can sign up for a 30-minute block of time by clicking on the Calendar & Events link on the Taft Library website at www.taftpubliclibrary.org.

Friends of the Taft Public Library Meeting

The Friends of the Library meetings are typically held on the last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. downstairs in the Art

TAFT LIBRARY
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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 Betsey 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 possible quality of life, and when the time came, ensuring a peaceful and compassionate passing."

The white tiger was a long-time 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.

Nominations being accepted for 2026 Mendon Senior of the Year

The Mendon Council on Aging is accepting nominations for the 2026 "Senior Citizen of the Year". Since 1978, a deserving person (or persons) has been awarded the annual distinction of Senior Citizen of the Year. The chosen Mendon resident, age 60 or older, generally exemplifies a spirit of public service and has made a positive difference in the community.

Written nominations on forms provided will be ac-

cepted until June 1 and the award will be presented in September.

Nomination forms are available at the Mendon Senior Center or on-line at www.mendonma.gov from the Council on Aging home page.

Drop off or mail nominations to the Senior Center at 62 Providence Street, Mendon. Call Amy Wilson Kent at 508-478-6175 ext. 1 with any questions.

TAFT LIBRARY

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Holmes Community Room, unless it falls on a holiday or during a school vacation. All are welcome (and encouraged) to attend! If you plan on attending, it's always a good idea to call the library at 508-473-3259 or email the Friends at friendsoftaftlibrary@gmail.com to confirm the date and time of the meeting. The group will do its best to post any meeting changes on the Taft Library website.

TAFT CHILDREN'S NEWS MAY 2026

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

Itty Bitty Storytime

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

Story & Craft Time

Join us for Story and Craft Time! Perfect for the preschool-aged child! Join us on May 19 at 10:30 a.m.

Alphabet Storytime

It's all about the alphabet! Each week we will focus on a different letter. We will read a couple of books, sing songs, and learn about the letter of the week! Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Please note there is no Alphabet Storytime on May 27.

Music & Movement with Deb Hudgins

Join Deb Hudgins on Tuesday, May 26 at 9:15 a.m. for a 30-minute music and movement theme-based program which features singing and guitar music for young children (infants and preschool).

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

Join Deb Hudgins on Wednesday, May 27 at 9:15 a.m. for a 30-minute music and movement theme-based program which features singing and guitar music for young children (infants and preschool).

Coffee & Conversations is from 9:45 to 10:45 a.m. on Wednesday, May 27

Join us for an informal playtime where families will be able to build social connections and learn about early childhood de-

velopment and family-friendly resources. The library will supply Muffin House Muffins!

Preschool Kidding Around The BaNannies

The BaNannies are a mother/daughter duo who bring children's songs, both old and new, to life! With their silly and interactive songs, they'll have your littles singing and dancing along! The BaNannies will visit Taft on Monday, June 15 at 10:30 a.m.

Tutors with Tails

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

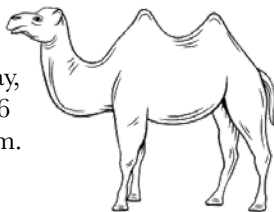
Music at the Blissful

6x Boston Parent Paper Family Favorite and National Touring Musician, Music at the Blissful (Evan Haller) from Boston, Massachusetts comes to the Taft for a high energy, fun-filled, interactive, movement-packed music experience for the whole family. Come join the fun on Wednesday, June 3 at 10:30 a.m. as we sing, jump, shake, laugh and go slow and fast with Music at The Blissful.

Book Clubs

Books are available for pick up at the upstairs circulation desk. Pizza and refreshments will be available.

6-9 Book Club: *The Chicken Squad* by Doreen Cronin will be our next book! Hope you can join us on Tuesday, May 26 at 5 p.m.





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OBITUARY

Christopher C. Crawford
April 18, 1949 - March 11, 2026

Christopher Calvin Crawford, 76, of Gorham, ME and formerly Upton, MA passed away peacefully on March 11 surrounded by family following a battle with pancreatic cancer. He was the husband of 37 years to Elizabeth F. Crawford (predeceased), and father of Meredith C. Scaplen (Gorham, ME).

Born in Detroit, MI and raised in Grosse Pointe Shores, MI and Cincinnati, OH, he was the son of David C. Crawford Sr. and Gloria Jean (Difford) Crawford (both pre-deceased). He attended Cincinnati Country Day School, and is a graduate of University of Cincinnati. Before finishing college he served in the United States Navy for 7 years, attending bootcamp in Quonset Point, RI and aboard the USS Intrepid aircraft carrier. During his time at sea he traveled the globe including crossing the arctic circle.

After receiving an honorable discharge from the Navy he started his career as a graphic designer before pursuing sales and internal business development positions in tech. Many of these positions gave him the opportunity to



travel, and he spoke fondly of trips throughout the United States and internationally especially to Poland and France.

It was not uncommon that neighbors walking by in Upton would get stopped for a chat along the fence, to swap articles or recipes or just to say “hi”. At holidays family and friends would receive something from “Crawford House Comestibles”, made by hand or from his garden. He was a devoted Father and “Poppy” to his three grandchildren and he will be greatly missed.

A memorial service will be held at Cotuit Federated Church, Cotuit, MA on Friday, May 22 at 11 am for both Christopher and his wife Elizabeth (Folkers) Crawford who predeceased him on September 17, 2021. A private burial will precede at Mosswood Cemetery, Cotuit, MA.

Upton Historical Society to host ‘Wanderings with Wayne, World Hiker’ on June 18

The Upton Historical Society will present a special community event, *Wanderings with Wayne – World Hiker*, on Wednesday, June 18, at 6:30 p.m. at Upton Town Hall.

The evening will feature acclaimed world traveler and Upton native Wayne Garland, who will share stories and reflections from his global hiking journeys, bringing audiences along on a vivid exploration of landscapes, cultures, and personal discovery gathered from trails across the world.

Interwoven with the presentation will be a meaningful remembrance of 2nd Lt. Richard Rand of Upton, who lost his life during the Vietnam War. His service and sacrifice will be honored as part of the program, connecting local history with broader global experiences and paying tribute to a member of the community whose legacy continues to be remembered.

This event is designed not only to inspire through travel storytelling, but also to ground those stories in reflection on history,



service, and the individuals from Upton whose lives have shaped the town’s story.

The program is open to the public, and residents of all ages are encouraged to attend this evening of storytelling, remembrance, and community connection at Upton Town Hall on June 18 at 6:30 p.m.

Submitted by Upton Historical Society.



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Mendon Senior Center programs and activities, May & beyond

Senior Van Transportation

Our van service is available Monday thru Thursday for trips to medical appointments, local shopping or just coming down to the Senior Center. Please call Shawna Timperio at the center 508-478-6175 ext. 3 to make your ride reservations, 48 hours or more in advance. Rides are based on availability. Medical appointments take priority. Ride donations are \$1 for local roundtrip rides/\$4 for out-of-town rides.

Need Support? Jenn Can Help!

Outreach Coordinator, Jenn Talamini, offers:

- Free, confidential counseling
- Caregiver support
- Information and referrals on aging issues
- Home visits are available by appointment.

Call Jenn 508-478-6175 ext. 2 for an appointment.

New Players Welcome!

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

- Cribbage - Wednesdays 9:45 a.m. The Cribbage group is always looking for new players, stop in Wednesdays at 9:45 a.m., all levels welcome.
- Hand, Knee and Foot Card game - Tuesdays 1 p.m.
- Mah-Jong - Wednesdays & Thursdays 1 p.m.

Please check our schedule regarding days, times, and availability. We've had a request to offer traditional CANASTA. Please call Shawna Timperio if you are interested.

Tri-Valley Lunch Menu

Thursday, May 14: Garlic Herbed Chicken with Cranberry Stuffing

Tuesday, May 19: Birthday Bash!

Thursday, May 21: Hot Dogs,

Baked Beans & Coleslaw

Tuesday, May 26: Turkey Supreme with Cornbread Stuffing

Thursday, May 28: Greek Chicken with Steamed White Rice

Friendly Reminders! Meals are served at noon. The cost is \$3 donation per meal. Reservations must be made at least 48 hours in advance. Transportation is available. Please call Shawna Timperio to schedule.

SHARING STRENGTH ~ Support Program

The Mendon Senior Center continues to host Sharing Strength; a supportive program led by Counselor Gail Bourassa, LMHC of My Choice Therapy. The group, using everyone's experience, will explore topics re-

lated to health and wellness such as stress, hobbies, coping, routines etc. Upcoming scheduled dates on Thursdays are May 14 and May 28 at 11 a.m. Please contact director Amy Wilson Kent at 508-478-6175 ext. 1, if you are interested in attending this group.

May Birthday Bash

Tuesday, May 19 at noon. This month we're thrilled to welcome Brandon and Steve Hehn, who will entertain with a selection of golden oldies and 'the music of your life.' Before the show, our cooks will serve a hearty meal. Whether you're celebrating a May birthday or simply looking for a cheerful afternoon out, you're warmly invited.

Friends Dine Out

Wednesday, May 20— Empire Buffet, Woonsocket, RI Carpool with friends from the senior center the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. or meet at the restaurant at 12 p.m. The cost of lunch is your responsibility, but the company is free! Please sign-up at the senior center.

Elder Law Program

Wednesday, May 20 at 1 p.m. The Mendon Senior Center will host a statewide program presented by the Massachusetts Bar Association entitled "Taking Control of Your Future: A Legal Checkup." Elder Law Attorney Jack Nealon from Hopkinton will touch on

some important topics in this year's 2026 resource guide (available for distribution) on a wide range of legal issues affecting the lives of seniors including how to protect your home and assets, power of attorney and health care proxies, reverse mortgages, Medicare / Medicaid changes and alternatives to nursing home care. For more information or to register for this free program call the Mendon Senior Center at 508-478-6175.

Special Get Togethers

Senior Tea—Sunday, May 24, 2-4 p.m. Our former pen pals from Mendon Junior Girl Scout Troop #65245 cordially invite you to a special tea on Sunday, May 24 at the Mendon Senior Center. This event will help the girls to develop leadership skills, connect with their community, and understand how to make a lasting impact. Please register at the senior center to attend and wear your finest!

Mendon Senior Center Volunteer Appreciation

Wednesday, May 27 11 a.m. by invitation.

Pen Pal Reveals

Seniors and their Whitinsville Christian School pen pals will have a meet and greet/ice cream social at the Mendon Senior Center on the following dates: 4th Grade - Thursday, May 28 at 1:30 p.m. and 5th Grade - Fri-

day, May 29 at 1 p.m. Please be prompt as our time together will be brief. Reminder—we will not be giving our student pen pal a gift. If something unexpected arises, please contact Cheryl Lemon at 508-685-1419 as soon as possible.

History Series – Mendon's Golden Age

Tuesday, May 26 at 2 p.m. Our April visit to the Ammidon Inn was both eventful and enlightening—an iconic Mendon treasure many of us were seeing for the first time. This month, we gather at the Mendon Senior Center for a fascinating look at Mendon's Golden Age. Local historian Rich Schofield will guide us through the remarkable

era when Mendon stood at the center of the Blackstone Valley towns. Please stop by the center or call 508-478-6175 ext. 3 to register for this program.

Medicare Savings Programs

Apply to Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs) now to save thousands a year on Medicare costs. What are Medicare Savings Programs? Medicare Savings Programs (MSPs) will pay for some or all of Medicare premiums, deductibles, copayments, and co-insurance. Depending on your income, MSPs will pay for your Medicare Part A & B

MENDON SENIOR CENTER

continued on page 16

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Area food pantries offer services to residents

The following food pantries offer services to area residents. Each location has varying hours and requirements so be sure to confirm information before seeking services.

UPTON
Upton Community Center Food Pantry, 9 Milford St.
Hours: Mon. 9:30-11:30 a.m., Wed. 12-3 p.m., Fri. 10a.m.-1p.m.
Services: Residents may access the food pantry one time each week.
Donations: Financial donations can be dropped at the Senior Center desk Mon.-Fri. from 9a.m.-4p.m. www.uptonma.gov/459/Upton-Community-Center-Food-Pantry
United Parish Food Pantry, 1 Church St.
Hours: Every other Tues., May 12, June 9, from 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Services: The Food Pantry serves residents from Upton as well as nearby towns. Proof of income or church affiliation is not required. We offer non-perishable food, toiletries, paper products and infant needs. Donations can be dropped off in our donation shed located outside

the church office on 1 Church Street, Upton.
Congregant dinners: Occur on the third Thursday of each month from Sept. to June.
Donations: Can be dropped off 24/7 at the Barnabas Barn along Church St., please check food for expiration dates. www.unitedparishupton.org/food-pantry
St. Gabriel's Food Pantry, 151 Mendon St.
Hours: Mon. & Wed. 9:15 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Tues. & Thurs. 9:15 a.m.-12 p.m.
Services: Helping parish families in need. www.stgabrielisma.org
Daily Bread Food Pantry, 21 Exchange St., Milford
Hours: Tues. & Thurs. 6-7:30 p.m.
Services: For Milford, Hopedale & Upton residents only; proof of address and household member info required.
Donations: Monetary donations accepted at "donate" tab on website www.dailybreadfood-pantry.org/

Source: www.uptonma.gov
MENDON
Mendon Food Pantry, 62 Providence St.
By appointment only, call 508-478-6175 for assistance.
Services: For Mendon residents in need who receive fuel assistance, SNAP (food stamps), are unemployed, and/or receive aid to dependent children or to those who are disabled and/or unemployed. Referrals from area churches, social agencies, or concerned citizens regarding seniors and families in need will also be accepted. Client names shall be kept confidential.
Donations: Non-perishable food products are accepted (check expiration dates) during Senior Center hours, preferably 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monetary donations (checks preferred) and BJ's gift cards are also accepted. For details, visit <https://www.mendonma.gov/253/Food-Pantry-Thank-You-for-Your-Support>.
Source: www.mendonma.gov

Next Community Supper on May 21

The United Parish Church in Upton offers a community supper on the third Thursday of each month from September through June at 5:30 to 6:30 p.m., which includes a delicious and nutritious meal. The next supper will take place on **May 21** when they will be serving sloppy joe's and cole slaw. Everyone is welcome. RSVP is requested but not required. Please call the church office at 508-529-3192 by May 15 to make your reservation. If you forget to reserve, please come anyway. We always make extra and would love to serve you.

Sponsored by the Faith in Action committee

MERCURY RECOVERY PROGRAM

Mercury is an element that can be harmful to human health and the environment if not disposed of properly.

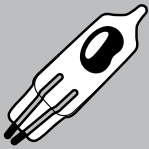
Mercury is found in products such as:



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Thermometers



Mercury Switches



Fluorescent Lamps

Please contact your local Board of Health or Department of Public Works for information on where to safely dispose of these items.

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MENDON SENIOR CENTER

continued from page 15

premiums and cost sharing, or Medicare Part B premium, as well as lower your prescription costs. This is not an insurance plan. There is no asset limit. Who qualifies? Medicare beneficiaries who meet the following monthly income limits: At or below \$2,993 (individual) At or below \$4,058 (couple) Call the Mendon Senior Center at 508-478-6175 to make an appointment with a SHINE counselor for more information!

Having Trouble Making Ends Meet?

The Mendon Food Pantry, located at the Senior Center, is open to Mendon residents in need one Friday per month by appointment. Deliveries for orders are also available for residents with ambulatory or transportation issues. Upcoming dates are June 5 and July 3. For more information or to make an appointment call Amy Wilson Kent at 508-478-6175, ext. 1.

Stroke Awareness ~ Save the date

Thursday, June 11 at 10:30 a.m.
This Stroke Awareness educational program will cover the signs and symptoms of a stroke. Our presenter Elizabeth Ryan, MSN, RN, AGACNP-BC is the Nurse Practitioner/Stroke Program Manager of the UMass Inpatient and Outpatient Neurology.

2026 Sheriff's Annual Senior Picnic

Saturday, June 6, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Sac Park, 438 Lake Street Shrewsbury MA. There will be a BBQ Meal / Lottery

Tickets /Tons Of Giveaways / Desserts / Raffle Bonanza. Must register By May 20. First Come, First Serve! Call 508-796-2638—leave a message with your name, address and phone number OR Register at the Mendon Senior Center.

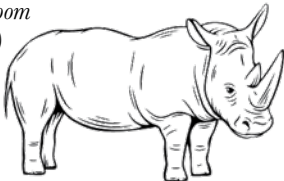
The Mendon Senior Scene

You can access The Mendon Senior Scene newsletter at: <https://mycommunityonline.com/organization/friends-of-mendon-elders-inc>

You may subscribe to the newsletter online and have it sent right to your inbox.

The Plymouth Harbor Cruise ~Pilgrim Belle Tour~ Friday, Aug 7

Join the Mendon Senior Center for a relaxing summer day in Plymouth! Start the day with a delicious buffet lunch at the historic Dan'l Webster Inn. The Inn is recognized as a top 1% restaurant in the country. Next, we head over to Plymouth Harbor for a 75-minute narrated harbor cruise aboard the Pilgrim Belle, a Mississippi-style paddle wheeler. The cost is \$135 per person. Board the Motor-coach at the Mendon Senior Center. Trip Departs: 9:45 a.m. and returns approximately: 6:15 p.m. For reservations, contact Beverly Fior at 508-473-8382 or drop by the senior center to register. Make Checks payable to: Friends of Mendon Elders. Mail to 62 Providence St., Mendon, MA 01756. (Trip is operated by Bloom Tours)



Nipmuc Class of 1966 to hold 60th Reunion

The Nipmuc Regional High School Class of 1966 will hold it's 60th Reunion on Sat., June 20 at 6 p.m. at Red Rock Grill and Bar, 66 West Main St. 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.

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 check-



ups 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>



To meet Big Boy, please visit the Milford Humane Society at milfordhumane.org or call 508-473-7008 for more info

Happenings

Events happening in and around the area

May 14: 5 to 8 p.m. – Milford Public Schools annual district-wide visual arts show, Milford High School Art Gallery, 31 W. Fountain St., featuring art from grades 1-12. Preceded by the NAHS induction ceremony at 6:30 p.m.

May 28: 7 p.m., Medium Jodi St. Onge, Milford Town Library. While not every participant at this event will receive a message from family or friends, Jodi will give as many readings as time allows. Registration required, space limited. <https://milford-townlibrary.assabetinteractive.com/calendar/medium-jodi-st-onge/>

May 30: 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. – Friends of Upton Seniors Summer Craft Fair, Upton Community Center, 9 Milford St., Upton. Free admission.

May 31: 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. – Medway 5th Annual Pride Flag Raising, Choate Park.

SAVE THE DATES:

June 2: 7 to 8 p.m., Knock

on Wood, acoustic folk-rock duo featuring Howie Newman. Milford Town Library, 80 Spruce St. Free. howienewman.com/knockonwood

June 6: 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. – Mendon town-wide yard sale. friendsofmendonelders2024@gmail.com.

June 6: 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. – Franklin PorchFest. Rain date: June 7. franklin.porchfest.info/

June 18: 6:30 p.m., 'Wanderings with Wayne, World Hiker,' a tribute to a local Vietnam War hero, Upton Town Hall.

June 20: 6 p.m. – 60th reunion for Nipmuc Regional H.S. Class of 1966, Red Rock Grill and Bar, 66 West Main St., Upton. Members of, and anyone associated with, the class are invited. For more info contact Larrypearson48@gmail.com.

June and July: MetroWest Regional Fan Zones, locations vary. <https://www.metrowest-visitors.org/world-cup/>

If you have an event you'd like listed in the calendar, send it to editor@uptonmendonfreepress.com

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SPORTS

# At midway point, BVT softball looks strong

Beavers putting emphasis on fun as 2026 season unfolds



Olivia Hall will continue her softball career at Barry University in Florida. Courtesy photo



Brooke Gniadek is one of BVT's captains and a Division I college commit. Courtesy photo

By Chris Villani

The Blackstone Valley Tech softball team entered the 2026 season looking to turn things around after a disappointing four-win campaign a season ago, and head coach Joe Verdini said they have been able to do that by focusing on enjoying the sport.

“It’s been a lot of fun and, even in defeat, they are taking things in stride,” Verdini said.

“We have several come-from-behind wins, so the kids have been gutting it out and playing well, even in the losses.”

BVT hit the midway point of the season with a 6-4 record, already eclipsing the win total from last year. Under their first-year head coach, the Beavers won three of their first four games in the conference.

Verdini gives much of the

credit to his three captains, calling them among the top players in the area. Brook Gniadek, a Division I college prospect heading to New Haven, is a key cog for this year’s team.

“She has been a staple for the past four years, and I am lucky enough to get to coach her for her final season,” Verdini said. “She is a dynamic hitter and she also pitches, she’s just been fantastic.”

Fellow captain Ella Foster is another skilled infielder who may continue her softball career in college, Verdini said, adding that he is familiar with her game from her time with a travel softball club.

Rounding out the captains is Olivia Hall, who handles most of the team’s catching duties and is also planning to play softball in college.

“They have all been stand-

outs,” Verdini said. “It’s been helpful to walk into a program with such a good backbone.”

Verdini said he came into the season with about a dozen different boxes he hoped to check. Among them are getting to a double-digit win total, earning a spot in the state tournament, and (especially) hosting a tournament game.

“That is one of our biggest goals, to host one here in Upton,” he said. “We believe we have a shot if we can continue fighting and grinding out these games.”

Valley Tech has a tough schedule, but the way the team has responded to the challenge is encouraging for the first-year coach.

“We play a lot of good softball teams and, coming in, I thought it was going to be a daunting task,” Verdini said. “But the kids have bought into the whole program.”

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SPORTS

# Nipmuc Baseball handles wild swings in 2026

NHRS looks to put forth complete efforts

By Chris Villani

Anthony Leonelli said his Nipmuc baseball team might be the “most up and down team in America.”

Through the first 10 games of the season, Nipmuc had posted a 7-3 record, and the two closest losses had been by eight runs. The “tightest” wins on Nipmuc’s resume were nine-run blowouts until a 3-2 win over Advanced Math and Science Academy.

“We have some blowout wins against good teams; when we get off to a good start, we are tough to beat,” Leonelli said. “We just can’t give into adversity when things get difficult; that has been our challenge.”

Despite the wild ups and downs in the schedule, Nipmuc has had several steady presences throughout the year. Josh Giancola is the driving force behind the offense.

The Milford Legion



standout hit north of .500 through the first half of the season with 14 RBIs.

“When Josh is locked in, he is as good as anybody,” Leonelli said of the Johnson and Wales-bound player. “And he has been locked in more than not.”

Giancola and fellow senior Cole McGovern have collaborated in a formidable duo on the mound. McGovern did not allow a single earned run through his first three starts, and gave Nipmuc the inside track for a conference title with a victory over Hopedale.

All seven of Nipmuc’s seniors are contributing significantly, Leonelli said, and the juniors and sophomores on the roster have also been integral.

Sean Burchard, a senior, was hitting close to .500 with a pair of home runs at the midway point of the season, with his coach calling him a “real threat in the middle of the lineup.”

Grady O’Neil, another se-

nior, is a two-way threat. He is hitting over .400 and playing well at shortstop.

Leonelli said his team’s first priority this year is winning the conference, especially since it is the team’s first year in the newly formed Central Massachusetts Athletic Conference.

“We want to establish that it runs through us,” he said. “With Hopedale and Blackstone Valley Tech in the conference, there is no shortage of great rivalries.”

The next goal is to be in a position to make some noise in the state tournament.

“We want to get a home game in the playoffs and see if we can do something interesting,” Leonelli said. “It just takes the team that is playing the best right then. We can forget about all of these crazy results if we can put it together in the tournament.”



Nipmuc seniors Sean Burchard and Josh Giancola, the oversized hat is awarded to the game's MVP, while the "grinder" of the day gets the chain. Courtesy photo

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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <p><b>2022 CHEVY<br/>EQUINOX LT</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$74/WK</p> <p>#TM26-286A • ALLOYS, TURBO</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$35,490</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977</b></p>            |  <p><b>2023 KIA<br/>SPORTAGE</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$81/WK</p> <p>#48028 • EX TRIM, NAV, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$35,290</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977</b></p>       |  <p><b>2023 FORD<br/>F-150 XL 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$128/WK</p> <p>#126-068A • 2.7L TURBO, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$46,250</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,977</b></p> |  <p><b>2022 FORD<br/>EXPLORER 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$117/WK</p> <p>#P19083 • XLT, HEATED SEATS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$45,765</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$32,977</b></p>   |  <p><b>2023 JEEP<br/>WRANGLER 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$110/WK</p> <p>#TP7100 • WILLYS 4xe, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$49,810</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977</b></p>  |
|  <p><b>2024 CHRYSLER<br/>PACIFICA</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$106/WK</p> <p>#D15870 • HEATED SEATS, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$55,265</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$29,977</b></p>      |  <p><b>2022 TOYOTA<br/>TACOMA 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$120/WK</p> <p>#TP6960 • SR5 TRIM, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$42,605</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$33,977</b></p>     |  <p><b>2024 DODGE<br/>DURANGO SXT</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$120/WK</p> <p>#D15978 • AWD, 3K MILES, V6</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$48,595</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$33,677</b></p>      |  <p><b>2022 SUBARU<br/>ASCENT</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$110/WK</p> <p>#22P3359 • LIMITED, NAV, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$44,700</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977</b></p>    |  <p><b>2024 TOYOTA<br/>CAMRY SE</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$96/WK</p> <p>#TP6899 • ALLOYS, SIRIUSXM</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$38,625</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977</b></p>       |
|  <p><b>2022 CHEVY<br/>SILVERADO 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$120/WK</p> <p>#48352 • CUSTOM, 2.7L TURBO</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$54,180</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$32,977</b></p>     |  <p><b>2024 NISSAN<br/>ROGUE AWD</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$81/WK</p> <p>#TP6687 • SV TRIM, 18" ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$31,710</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977</b></p>  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|  <p><b>2024 CHEVY<br/>TRAX SUV</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$74/WK</p> <p>#125-500A • RS TRIM, 18" ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$28,565</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977</b></p>         |  <p><b>2024 TOYOTA<br/>TUNDRA 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$170/WK</p> <p>#TP6721 • SR5, ALLOYS, 3.4L V6</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$58,405</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$47,977</b></p> |  <p><b>2022 JEEP<br/>COMPASS 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$74/WK</p> <p>#D15556 • LIMITED, HEATED SEATS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$34,400</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977</b></p>    |  <p><b>2022 HYUNDAI<br/>TUCSON SEL</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$72/WK</p> <p>#24P4399A • 26/33 CITY/HWY MPG</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$36,750</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977</b></p> |  <p><b>2023 TOYOTA<br/>COROLLA LE</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$74/WK</p> <p>#ST1128A • 32/41 MPG CITY/HWY</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$26,569</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977</b></p>  |
|  <p><b>2021 SUBARU<br/>CROSSTREK</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$82/WK</p> <p>#TRB4313A • 17" ALLOYS, CPO</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$34,265</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$22,977</b></p>         |  <p><b>2023 TOYOTA<br/>RAV4 XLE</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$110/WK</p> <p>#TM26-531A • HEATED SEATS, CPO</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$36,160</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977</b></p> |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|  <p><b>2022 FORD<br/>EDGE SEL</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$89/WK</p> <p>#P18939 • NAV, 18" ALLOYS, AWD</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$40,395</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977</b></p>           |  <p><b>2025 VW<br/>JETTA 1.5T</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$74/WK</p> <p>#P18718 • HEATED SEATS, SPORT</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$29,550</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977</b></p>       |  <p><b>2021 LINCOLN<br/>CORSAIR</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$96/WK</p> <p>#P18546A • SUNROOF, LEATHER</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$46,645</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977</b></p>         |  <p><b>2025 FORD<br/>BRONCO 4x4</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$135/WK</p> <p>#P18525 • CPO, BIG BEND TRIM</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$46,995</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$37,977</b></p>     |  <p><b>2024 SUBARU<br/>OUTBACK</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$89/WK</p> <p>#24P6082 • CPO, PREMIUM TRIM</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$34,695</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977</b></p>      |
|  <p><b>2025 MERCEDES<br/>GLA 250 SUV</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$132/WK</p> <p>#25P3938 • 2.0L TURBO, LEATHER</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$50,800</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$36,977</b></p> |  <p><b>2025 HYUNDAI<br/>ELANTRA</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$72/WK</p> <p>#TP6604 • SE TRIM, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$28,686</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$19,977</b></p>       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|  <p><b>2024 CHEVY<br/>COLORADO</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$128/WK</p> <p>#48281 • TURBO, 4X4, ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$44,290</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$35,977</b></p>            |  <p><b>2025 HONDA<br/>CIVIC SPORT</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$96/WK</p> <p>#TP6679 • 31/39 MPG CITY/HWY</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$34,190</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,377</b></p>    |  <p><b>2024 BUICK<br/>ENCORE AWD</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$85/WK</p> <p>#48464 • GX PREFERRED, TURBO</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$32,225</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977</b></p>       |  <p><b>2023 MAZDA<br/>CX-5 2.5 S</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$85/WK</p> <p>#P18804 • AWD, HEATED SEATS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$29,899</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977</b></p>      |  <p><b>2023 BMW<br/>X1 xDrive28i</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$118/WK</p> <p>#25409A • AWD, TWIN TURBO, NAV</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$51,595</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$32,977</b></p> |
|  <p><b>2022 RAM<br/>1500 BIG HORN</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$118/WK</p> <p>#D15893A • 4X4, V8, 20" ALLOYS</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$45,710</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$32,977</b></p>    |  <p><b>2023 TOYOTA<br/>HIGHLANDER</b></p> <p>AS LOW AS \$145/WK</p> <p>#TP6841 • XLE TRIM, SUNROOF</p> <p>NEW RETAIL PRICE: <del>\$45,775</del>   <b>WHOLESALE PRICE: \$40,977</b></p>  |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |

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