

Ashland

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Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

July 1, 2026

Construction begins on Team Hoyt Community YMCA in Ashland

BY BRITTANY AMALFI

ASHLAND — The MetroWest YMCA officially broke ground Friday on a new Regional Early Learning Center, marking the first phase of the future Team Hoyt Community YMCA planned for Memorial Drive.

The town was happily overwhelmed as more than 75 supporters, elected officials, community leaders, donors and members of the Hoyt family gathered at the site to celebrate the milestone, which comes after years of planning and fundraising.

The early learning center is expected to serve more than 100 children and families when it opens in September 2027. MetroWest YMCA



Construction of the MetroWest YMCA Regional Early Learning Center in Ashland officially broke ground last month, with help from federal, state and private funds. Photo supplied by Michael Henrich

officials say the facility will help address the growing demand for affordable and accessible child care and early education across the MetroWest region. Afford-

able and accessible child care and education are vital for the younger generation,

YMCA

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Ken Hamwey, in Memoriam

He wrote about the good

BY JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

Ken Hamwey never missed a deadline, and he had a passion for telling a good story. Getting the word out about something or someone inspirational, conveying its importance, meant the world to him. That kind of drive, a level of investment scarcely seen in the world today, deserved your full attention. Our Town Publishing didn't just lose a sportswriter when we lost Ken Hamwey, we lost a lion-hearted wordsmith who cared deeply about the people he wrote about, and their moments of glory.

"Ken Hamwey was an amazing sportswriter and a consummate professional," said Jen Schofield, owner of Our Town Publishing, "He was someone I truly enjoyed talking with, listening to his stories, and his passion and dedication for covering high school sports was unmatched. He genuinely cared



Ken Hamwey October 14, 1943 - May 25, 2026

about the athletes, teams, and communities he wrote about, which was evident in his work."

HAMWEY

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Ashland Garden Club's summer news

BY GRETCHEN BRAVACOS

As the Ashland Garden Club prepares to close out its 2026 season and break for the summer, I wanted to focus on the garden area around the Memorial site. This beautiful Memorial is facing Main Street on the corner of Main Street and Front Street. It lists the names of Ashland residents who served and died in WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm. This site is highly visual and is an important representation of the work the Garden Club does to beautify our Town.

The garden area around the Memorial is planted and maintained by Ashland Garden Club members Karin Oleski and Carol Tyler. They have chosen to plant perennials that function best in an environment with partial sun throughout the day. They also plant seasonal sun-tolerant annuals on both sides of the sidewalk leading to the memorial from the sidewalk on Main Street.

When the Library garden was featured in the May issue of the Ashland Town News, my photograph included what appeared to be a dead shrub. In my article, I mentioned the condition of this shrub and promised to share a photograph of it later in the season. The photograph I took recently shows a beautiful tree peony with yellow flowers. Sometimes gardeners pull out or cut back plants too early in the season, without giving them time to start growing again. The learning here is to wait long enough to see what develops!

The Ashland Garden Club meets the second Saturday of each month, September through June, and all meetings are open to the public. Although the Ashland Garden Club does not meet during the months of July and August, members are busy maintaining their sites and planters around Town while at the same time working in their own gardens. We also use this time to visit



Peony in March.

each other's gardens. Several members volunteer each summer to host a members-only Wine in the Garden event that often includes a pot-luck lunch or dinner.

On Saturday, July 11, 12-1 p.m., the Library and the AGC are offering a workshop for children and their caregiver, "Growing Food from Scraps".

Watch the Library's website for information about



Peony in full bloom.

registering for this event. The AGC will host the Community Table on Saturday, August 29, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. This event offers a great opportunity to stop by

to learn more about the Club and meet some of the AGC members.

We wish everyone a safe and healthy summer!



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Photos supplied by Gretchen Bravacos

HAMWEY

continued from page 1

“Ken was very dedicated in getting the stories,” added Chuck Tashjian, who worked with Ken for many years as former publisher of Our Town Publishing, “He went above and beyond, especially with championship games. He really loved what he did. He loved writing, and he loved sports.”

“He just cared about the kids. If there was anything that stood out about him it was his passion for what he did ... He cared so much about making everyone look good, and that was such a good trait, and the way he'd remember things,” said Bellingham High School Football Coach Dan Haddad, who added both he and Ken were motivated by “love of the kids.” Student athletes Ken interviewed would tell the coach that Mr. Hamwey was “probably the nicest guy I've ever met.”

“What was unique about Ken was how he wanted to learn about me personally and what life experiences led me to where I am rather than other reporters who would just ask about jobs and responsibilities listed on a resume,” says Bellingham Town Administrator Joseph Laydon, who says he truly appreciated this approach in Ken's regular Municipal Spotlight column for the *Bellingham Bulletin*.

Just 24 in 1967 when he entered the field of journalism, the young graduate of Natick High

and Babson College began his career at *Framingham News*, now known as the *MetroWest Daily News*, covering the small-town beat of Millis. Ken would get the opportunity of a lifetime a year later, covering the Celtics' defeat of the 76ers in Philadelphia to win the Eastern conference one day after Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated. In a lifelong story of his own he'd often tell, the late, great Celtics coach and general manager, Red Auerbach, in fact, held up the press corps bus so young Ken could call in that story. Ken would move on in 1973 to the Pulitzer Prize winning *Providence Journal*, and after 35-plus years as the Night Sports Editor, he received a citation from the Rhode Island State Senate honoring his excellence as a journalist.

For many years, Ken would follow the trajectory of local sports heroes' stories in a *MetroWest Daily News* column called "Yesterday's Heroes." In semi-retirement, Ken would continue to cover high school sports for local papers such as *Bellingham Bulletin* and *Local Town Pages* papers.

Ken was immensely proud of the recognition he received for his efforts. He was inducted into the Millis Athletic Hall of Fame in March 2022, and later, into the Bellingham Athletic Hall of Fame, and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association selected him for its Distinguished Friend Award in 2010.

“High school sports lost a

legendary storyteller with the passing of Ken Hamwey,” wrote Millis Athletics on X, “For nearly six decades, Ken dedicated his life to highlighting the achievements of local student-athletes, beginning with his very first varsity football story in Millis back in 1967.” Dover Sherborn Basketball also lauded his “passion and dedication for covering sports in our area...RIP.”

Ken Hamwey once told Dan Haddad, “I want to write about the good.”

In his own life, Hamwey, the beloved husband for 36 years of Pauline A. (Allard) Hamwey and the late Martha (Loan) Hamwey, and the loving father of Travis M. Hamwey and his wife, Katie, aspired himself to be the best person he could be, volunteering time as a coach and library trustee, devoting himself to his faith, and valuing each individual with whom he interacted. He once told me how much it meant to him that his coverage of young athletes might help them make it into college. He had an energy that drove him to weave a story of pride and potential that would shine a light on and lift up his subject. He offered such respect that you wanted to rise to be worthy of it.

“Ken was kind, dependable, and always willing to go above and beyond. Even shortly be-



In 2010, Ken received the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) Distinguished Friend Award.

fore his passing, while battling illness and facing deadline pressure, he completed his last three stories—a testament to his remarkable work ethic and commitment to journalism,” said Schofield, adding, “He

was a one-of-a-kind colleague and friend, who will be deeply missed by everyone in his Our Town Publishing family. His legacy will live on through the countless stories he told and the many lives he touched.”





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Staff Spotlight:

Julie Tokarowski of the Department of Prevention and Human Services

BY: BRITTANY AMALFI

Before joining the Town of Ashland's Department of Prevention and Human Services, Julie Tokarowski built her career on a passion for helping others navigate life's most difficult challenges. As a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker (LICSW), Julie brings extensive experience in domestic violence prevention, advocacy, and social justice work, which is expertise that continues to shape her approach to supporting Ashland residents every day.

Growing up outside of Worcester, Massachusetts, Julie knew early on that she wanted a career focused on helping people. Her passion for domestic

violence prevention led her to social work, and that is where she found meaningful opportunities to advocate for survivors and connect individuals with critical resources. Before starting in Ashland, she served as a Domestic Violence Prevention Specialist with the Brookline Police Department, assisting survivors with restraining order paperwork, navigating police involvement, and accessing mental health support.

When it came time for her next chapter, Ashland felt like the perfect fit. "I really enjoyed working within a municipality and appreciated the diversity of clients and community members I was able to serve," Julie said. "Ashland offers a diverse population while still maintaining that small-town charm."

Today, Julie's role focuses on case management and connecting residents with resources such as housing assistance, mental health services, and other community supports. No two days are exactly the same. She may spend part of her day meeting with residents in their homes, collaborating with community partners, attending meetings, or building relationships with regional service providers. Through it all, her work centers on prevention, advocacy, and ensuring residents know they are not alone when facing challenges.

However, the most rewarding part of the job for Julie is connecting with people.

One of her favorite experi-

ences since joining the Ashland has been helping facilitate the monthly Caregiver Support Group, which meets on the second Wednesday of each month from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. The group provides a supportive clinical space for residents caring for aging relatives. "It's been a special opportunity to connect residents caring for aging relatives," Julie shared.

Her professional background reflects a strong commitment to community service, but there is another side to Julie that might surprise people. She spent two years living in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where she earned a certificate in Ayurvedic Hatha Yoga!

Julie recognizes that Prevention and Human Services typically operates at the intersection of crisis response and community building. The department serves individuals from all walks of life, offering support during some of the most stressful and uncertain moments people may encounter.

According to Araya Landry, Director of Prevention and Human Services, Julie has quickly become an invaluable member of the team.

"We are incredibly grateful to have someone like Julie on our team," Landry said. "Her experience in social work, domestic violence prevention, advocacy, and social justice brings a unique and valuable skill set to her role. Julie is adept at navigating the wide range of needs our residents face and



Julie Tokarowski. Photo supplied by Araya Landry

consistently approaches her work with patience, kindness, and compassion. She is an excellent listener and has been instrumental in strengthening and completing our department's ability to provide comprehensive support to the community. We are fortunate to have her serving the residents of Ashland."

Julie Tokarowski goes out of

her way to practice a mission of compassion with the people she works with day in and day out. From connecting residents with resources to facilitating support groups to just being a support system, Julie embodies the strong character it takes to help people feel supported and safe as they navigate challenging times.

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Four stages of raising confident, money-smart kids



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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Good financial habits are a little like brushing your teeth. When you learn them early, they become second nature, and you carry them with you for life. And while money can feel complicated, especially today, the foundation starts simply.

Parents can begin the conversation with very young children, and young adults can build on those basics as they take on more responsibility. Step by step, these habits create confidence that helps build longterm financial security and a more fulfilling life.

The following are the four key stages of financial growth.

Stage 1: For very young children, the goal is to make money feel simple and manageable. A great place to start is with three jars labeled “Spend,” “Save” and “Share.” When kids can actually see their money grow or shrink, the idea starts to make sense. Saving also introduces them to goalsetting, and working toward paying for a small toy or outing teaches patience. Most important, you’re helping your children see money as a tool they can understand easily and use with confidence.

Stage 2: If you have tweens

(children roughly 9 to 12 years old), they’re usually ready for slightly bigger financial ideas. This is a great time for them to earn money through chores or small jobs, helping them see the connection between effort and reward and building a sense of ownership. Conversations about needs versus wants also become more meaningful, because kids are now making real choices with money they earned themselves. Your tween may be ready for a simple savings account to watch their savings grow, or a reloadable cash card for spending.

Stage 3: By the time teens reach high school or young adulthood, budgeting becomes essential. This doesn’t need to be overly strict or complicated. A simple system that helps them track deposits and withdrawals can make all the difference. Whether they use an app, a paper notebook or

a spreadsheet, the real goal is awareness. Teenagers also benefit from learning how credit works. Understanding how to build a healthy credit score and how to use credit wisely protects them from costly mistakes in later life.

Stage 4: Then come the early working years, when habits shift from learning to building. One of the smartest steps at this stage is paying yourself first. Automatic transfers to savings or retirement accounts help establish stability without extra effort. Even small retirement contributions matter more than most people realize, because time allows compounding to do the heavy lifting. This is also when young adults can start organizing their money into different buckets for rent, automobile payments, emergencies, retirement and everyday spending. These habits help lay the groundwork for financial free-

dom down the road.

Throughout every stage, the theme is confidence. Each small success creates a sense of control and each good habit makes the next one easier. Over time, these habits turn into a lifetime of financial security and fulfillment. When you start strong and stay consistent, money becomes a tool that helps your children support the lives they want.

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

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Unearthing history – Central New England Relic Hunters

BY JUDITH DORATO O’GARA

Is it a trinket or is it a treasure? With the new friends they’ve made, the knowledge they’ve gained, and the chance to spend a lot of time out in the natural world, Jim Riendeau and Joe Bustamonte have certainly stumbled upon a priceless gold mine. In January, the two brothers-in-law, Bellingham residents, started a regional metal detecting club, Central New England Relic Hunters, that meets at the Bellingham Sportsman Club every second Monday, from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Each month, they show off what they’ve found, vote on their favorites, hold a raffle and even conduct a food drive for Loaves & Fishes Pantry in Bellingham. To date, over 49 “detectorists” have joined, some local, and some from places as far as New Hampshire and Connecticut.

“It is such a really cool hobby. It’s lots of fun and great people,” says Riendeau, who got his brother-in-law Joe, president of the club, hooked on the hobby. The group, says Riendeau, has found relics and coins from around the area, involving historical societies and the local coin shops in identifying finds.

One member, he says, “found a coin worth over \$50K (an Oak Tree Shilling, a very valuable and rare coin minted in Massachusetts Bay Colony issued from 1660 to 1667, according to Numismatic Guaranty Company NGC®, www.ngccoin.com), and we also have found some George Washington buttons (made for Washington’s inauguration in 1789), worth around \$5K.”

The value is beside the point for many, however, says Riendeau. “We all do it for the love of history of what we find and also the history of the towns we find stuff in,” he says.

The group conducts about three or four outings together each year, careful to be sure to get permission, to pick up trash along the way, and to leave no trace of digging. The effort is worth the occasional brush with poison ivy.

On their first outing this year in Wellesley, John Silva, of Attleboro, found a Mexico Colony Spanish 8 Real, minted when Mexico was a Spanish colony (<https://bullionexchanges.com>).

There’s more to it than just wandering around waiting for machines to beep. Bustamonte explains the detectorists will

drive around and look for stone walls in historic areas.

“That’s all boundary lines, so you go onto the old maps, and you try to research what was there 100 years ago, 200 years ago. It’s a lot of checking war sites, Puritans, colonists.”

Buried metal objects turn up in unlikely spaces, he says, “You never know where you’ll find it. You don’t know if there was a horse rider and it fell out of his pocket.”

A simple beep from the metal detector opens up a meandering path of investigation. The items found may be historic in nature, but modern technology plays a big role in identifying both sites to search as well as the unearthed finds.

“If it’s public, we research (the land) through apps,” says Bustamonte, adding, “We do a lot of computer work.”

Oxford resident Robin Rivera, who’s pursued this hobby for about 16 years, explains the apps use LiDAR (Light Detection and Ranging), which uses pulsed laser light to produce 3D information about an area. “We use it in grayscale. It shows you indentations in the land, so if there is an old foundation in the



Members of Central New England Relic hunters meet monthly in Bellingham, but go on group outings a few times a year. Here they are at Wellesley Town Forest.

middle of the woods, you’re apt to see a black square there.”

Rivera, who lives behind historical Main Street in Oxford,

has had the opportunity to metal

RELIC HUNTERS

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Community gathers to honor Nancy Stoller Axelrod

Family, friends, neighbors, and community members gathered for live jazz, delicious food, and remembrance at the Ashland Senior Center on the evening of June 4 to celebrate the life of Nancy Stoller Axelrod, who passed away in January following a courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. Balloons, flowers, photographs of Nancy and her husband throughout the years, and Buddha statues adorned the room.

Organized by her husband, Howard, the event brought over 100 people together from nearby and across the country who had been touched by Nancy's life. Friends traveled from as far away as California, New Mexico, Florida, and four other states to attend, joining local friends and residents in remembering a woman who left a lasting impression on the lives of those around her.

Howard credited the Ashland Senior Center staff for helping make the gathering possible. "The Senior Center was so generous in allowing us to use their facility and managing the logistics," he said. Additionally, in his introduction, he honored five members of the audience who he said were "difference makers" in his and Nancy's lives.

The celebration fulfilled a wish Nancy had expressed before her passing. "My wife wanted a celebration of life; not a funeral," Howard said. "She envisioned that maybe 10 or 12 friends would gather at our house to share a meal, but she deserved so much more." For Howard, the event was an opportunity to show the breadth



of Nancy's impact. "I wanted people to know that as a Pediatric Occupational Therapist she made an incredible and lasting difference in the lives of over 2,000 children and their families. She was a remarkable professional by every imaginable measure," he said. "Additionally, she was generous with her time, a friend to all, and supportive

of anyone in need. I learned so much from her and her presence. I miss my Nancy deeply. She was my North Star and the highlight of my life."

Much of Howard's attention that evening was focused on making sure everything ran smoothly, distributing programs and preparing name tags, arranging for timely delivery of

food and refreshments, and helping the band with the sound check. What stood out most, however, was seeing people connect and share memories. "It felt great that people mingled and talked," he said. "People got up and met one another. I am astounded by the level of support I have received from everyone over the past 14 months. I thank each of these people from the bottom of my heart."

Howard passed around a "Photographs and Memories" album with pictures and mementos of the life the couple shared together over the past 33 years. Additionally, all of Nancy's jewelry was offered to the woman, with the request to "take as many pieces as you wish, but only what you will wear, and when you do, feel Nancy's endearing spirit in your heart." What was left will be given to the Ashland Senior Center store and a local thrift shop that donates 100% of its profits to the American Can-

cer Society Research Fund. Although not a fundraiser, the event raised a significant amount of money for the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network. PanCAN is an organization that provided comprehensive support and prudent guidance to Nancy and Howard throughout Nancy's ten months of illness.

Howard continues to share Nancy's legacy through many other local projects, including personally funding an international travel scholarship (the Nancy Stoller Axelrod Memorial Travel Scholarship Program) for four Ashland High School students, as well as funding an effort to bring here an Ethiopian citizen whose dream is to visit America. "Going forward, I hope to find individual and corporate sponsors to expand this program." He is also funding the restoration of a healing garden in Ashland, potentially

STOLLER AXELROD

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Your Money, Your Independence

Ignore at your peril: Why fund a Trump Account for your child



Glenn Brown, CFP

Save yourself the political angst, as I'm going to educate as a fiduciary on why you should open and fund a Trump Account for your child. Let me repeat: "educate as a fiduciary."

Building generational wealth via disciplined investment, forward-thinking tax planning, and unapologetic pragmatism shouldn't be partisan. Parents and grandparents need to look past political branding and understand this financial opportunity starting July 4 through the U.S. Treasury via IRS Form 4547, then deployed to major institutions, including Schwab, Fidelity, and Vanguard.

Reality Beyond Reels

Media outlets and social influencers are hyper-focused on flashy elements: the narcissistic naming, Michael Dell's \$6.25 billion gift, and the one-time \$1,000 newborn cash seed funded by the U.S. government for 2025–2028.

This noise has millions of parents completely ignoring the program, assuming their older children aren't eligible or out of political disdain. What a massive financial planning error.

The truth is any U.S. citizen under 18 with an SSN qualifies for a parent or grandparent established Trump Account. The real opportunity is investing up to \$5,000 annually tax-deferred, which transitions directly into a Traditional IRA in the child's name at age 18. Free of spending restrictions, this complements a 529 plan.

Doing 10-year-old math

Say you have a 10-year-old and max contribute \$5,000 prior to each December 31 deadline until they turn 18. Your total out-of-pocket investment over those eight years is \$40,000.

Treasury mandates require these funds to be placed in di-

versified, low-fee index funds mirroring benchmarks like the S&P 500 (which has averaged 10.5% historical annual return since its 1957 inception). Assuming a 10% annualized return over that eight-year window, this 10-year-old's account grows to \$62,897 by age 18—meaning \$22,897 is investment growth.

The age-18 IRA handoff

At age 18, regulations dictate the account must transition directly into a Traditional IRA under the child's control. Because your original \$40,000 in contributions was made with after-tax dollars, it carries over into that Traditional IRA as a non-deductible basis, meaning the principal can eventually be withdrawn tax-free. Why is this important?

The Roth conversion strategy

Instead of leaving this IRA to compound for a massive tax bill down the road, the optimal wealth-building move at age 18 is a full Roth IRA conversion. As a student entering adulthood with little to no earned income, they can exploit their standard

deductions and baseline federal tax brackets to effectively neutralize the conversion tax.

Due to pro-rata rules governing Roth conversions, your 18-year-old will owe ordinary income taxes only on the converted growth portion (\$22,897) on their own tax return, not yours.

Consider an 18-year-old Massachusetts student with zero personal income:

- **Federal Tax:** Standard deduction shields the first \$16,100 of growth. The rest falls into the 10% bracket, resulting in a \$680 tax bill.
- **State Tax:** Massachusetts applies its \$4,400 personal exemption, then levies its flat 5% tax for a \$925 obligation.

For \$1,605 paid in taxes, this Massachusetts 18-year-old has converted the entire \$62,897 into a Roth IRA. So, what now?

A \$3.4 million Roth IRA by age 60

If this Roth IRA is left untouched to compound at 10% annually with \$0 further added, the account will swell to over \$3.44 million by age 60—en-

tirely tax-free upon distribution.

The truth is \$3.4M today isn't the same as \$3.4M in 50 years. However, by demonstrating the power of compounding through incremental investment, you lay the behavioral foundation for your child to keep saving and investing during their career.

Ignore at your own peril, but be prepared in 20 years for: "Mom, Dad, what happened? Why didn't you choose to do this?"

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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Middlesex Sheriff's Office warns of ongoing scams

BILLERICA, Mass. – The Middlesex Sheriff's Office (MSO) is warning residents of continuing arrest and warrant scams targeting Middlesex County residents.

Between May 14 and June 8, the MSO received 28 reports of individuals posing as deputies and trying to scam residents out of money via phone. In four instances, residents reported being scammed out of a total of \$12,500.

Losses in the four cases ranged from \$500 to \$7,000.

In each of the cases in which losses were reported, the victims were told they had missed either state or federal jury duty and were required to pay fines in order to avoid arrest. In three of the cases, individuals were directed to cryptocurrency machines to make the payments, while the fourth victim was told to set up a digital checking account.

"The Middlesex Sheriff's Office will never threaten arrest over the phone, by text or via email," said Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian. "And we will never, ever demand payment for outstanding fines or fees using cryptocurrency, gift cards or other similar forms of payment. These are tell-tale signs of scams, and we want you to hang up right away and report it to authorities."

The cryptocurrency kiosks located in communities throughout the Commonwealth have become favorite tools for scammers who frequently direct targets to the machines to make payments for fake fines and fees. Legislation supported by Sheriff Koutoujian is currently pending that would ban the kiosks in Massachusetts. The Middlesex Sheriff's Office will not direct individuals to pay fines through cryptocurrency.

Anyone who may have lost money in a similar scam involv-

ing individuals posing as members of the Middlesex Sheriff's

Office is encouraged to notify the MSO at 781-960-2800.

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Your Summer Beauty Capsule: less fuss, more fun

BY GINA WOELFEL

Summer has exactly zero patience for complicated beauty routines. Neither do we!

That's why we created the **b.LUXE Summer Beauty Capsule**, a collection of services and products designed to help you look polished and confident all season long.

From low-maintenance hair color and beach-proof lashes to glowing skin and simplified routines, we've rounded up our warm-weather favorites.

Think of this as your cheat sheet for an easier summer. Less time getting ready. More time enjoying everything that makes summer, summer.

Lash Lift and Tint: the best decision you'll make before you hit the beach

No mascara. No smudging. No standing in a beach bathroom trying to fix what the ocean already ruined. And no going without the look of thick, full lashes! A lash lift and tint works with your natural lashes, lifting, curling, and deepening them so beautifully that you will genuinely forget you are not wearing a thing. Results last six to eight weeks, which in summer math translates to basically the whole season. It's easy to see why this service is a summer staple for so many of our guests.

Brow Tint: five minutes, a whole summer of payoff

Pair your lash lift and tint with a brow tint and your face is simply done for the day. Defined brows have a remarkable way of pulling everything together, and

this quick service delivers weeks of low-maintenance payoff. It's quite possibly the most underrated five minutes you will ever spend in the studio.

Waxing: because summer is too short for shaving

Summer was made for spontaneous plans, not daily shaving. Professional waxing offers weeks of smooth skin without reaching for a razor. Few services deliver such a big payoff with so little upkeep. Brows, lip, chin, arms, legs, bikini, you name it. One appointment and you're free to enjoy every spontaneous sundress moment the season has in store.

Low Maintenance Hair Color: sun kissed without the upkeep

If your current color requires a standing appointment every few weeks, summer is gently suggesting you reconsider. Balayage and softly blended highlights are everything warm weather hair color should be: beautiful on day one, even more beautiful as they grow, and wonderfully low demand. Our color specialists will work with your natural tones to create something that looks as though the sun itself did the work (and only you'll know the truth!)

Air Dry Products: your blow dryer has earned a vacation

Nobody should be standing over a heat tool when it is 85 degrees outside. The right air dry products change everything, enhancing your natural texture, taming frizz from humidity,

and turning what used to be a frustrating hair day into a rather good one. Wavy, curly, or somewhere wonderfully in between, our stylists will match you with exactly the right products and send you home with simple techniques that work. Your hair and your sanity will both benefit.

The Power of 3 Facial with dermaplaning: because your skin deserves a moment

Our Power of 3 Facial is a results-driven treatment that combines dermaplaning, a customized brightening peel, and a soothing mask. Together, these three services gently remove dead skin cells, fine vellus hair, and surface buildup that can leave skin looking dull. Sun exposure, humidity, and heat are not exactly your complexion's best friends, making this treatment the perfect summer reset.

The result? Smoother, fuzz-free, radiant skin with no harsh chemicals, no downtime, and no discomfort. Even better, your skincare products absorb more effectively, helping you get the most from your at-home routine.

If you're curious about professional skincare but aren't sure where to begin, this is an excellent place to start. Our skincare team is always happy to answer questions and help you find the treatments that make the most sense for your skin.

Tinted SPF by G.M. Collin: never face the sun without it

If daily SPF is not already part of your routine, we say this with complete affection: it needs to be! G.M. Collin's tinted sun



we've got your summer beauty capsule

protection is an award winning industry favorite that earns every bit of its reputation. It evens your skin tone, softens imperfections, and protects you from harmful rays all in one effortless step. It's the kind of product that makes you wonder what you did without it!

Ready to build your Summer Beauty Capsule?

Your Summer Beauty Capsule does not have to include everything on this list. It just has to include what works for you. And the b.LUXE team is here to help.

If you're not sure where to start, our team is always happy to help. Visit us at b.LUXE Hair & Makeup Studio in Medway or learn more at bluxe.com.

Because summer should be

spent making memories, not standing in front of the mirror. b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio, Medway. Visit us at bLUXE.com or call 508-321-1624

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Ashland Lions Club July 2026 Update

What a great Lionistic year!

It was a great (and busy) Lionistic year (Sep-Jun) for the Ashland Lions Club. Here are some highlights of our activities from this past year:

- Food Trailer at Ashland Day 2025
- Kidde Fenwal Car Show
- Annual Charity Golf Tournament
- Sold Out at Christmas Tree lot

- Coat Drive for Kids & Families
- Great year of Meat Raffles at TJs
- Drug Take-back Days
- Shred-it Day for Ashland Residents
- Ashland Food Pantry Collection
- Toy Boat Regatta fundraiser
- Supported Special Olympics
- AHS Lions Speech Contest

- Little Library at Post Office
- Senior Breakfasts
- Eyeglasses Collection
- Green Up Ashland Day
- Leos Club at Ashland High School
- College scholarships for Ashland residents
- And much more!

Thank you to our hard-working Ashland Lions and our community for supporting us!

Become a Lion and Give Back

If you enjoy giving back to your community while meeting new people and having fun, consider joining the Ashland Lions!

For more information, contact Membership Chairperson IPP Betsy Andersson at membership@ashlandlions.org, or message us on Facebook. You

can also find several Lions members at Honeydew on West Main Street most weekday mornings.

Save the Date: Annual Lions Golf Tournament

Join us for the Ashland Lions Annual Golf Tournament, to

LIONS CLUB

continued on page 9

STOLLER AXELROD

continued from page 6

refurbishing a local playground, and having another Children’s Little Library built and installed. Other endeavors in progress include having two memorial benches constructed in Nancy’s memory and turning his own yard into the “Nancy Stoller Axelrod Memorial Garden,” which will be open to friends, family, and neighbors to enjoy. “Nancy loved our beautiful garden with its endless variety of trees, plants, and flowers, and the birds, bees, and butterflies that it attracted. Last year I made a commitment to making it more beautiful than in any previous year. Unfortunately, by that time Nancy was bedridden and

unable to enjoy the garden.

The celebration brought great joy and comfort, but Howard acknowledged that the following days were difficult. “The days afterward were extremely lonely and depressing. The celebration of life galvanized the realization that my wife is gone, and I have since cried a thousand tears,” he said. “It was an inflection point for me, and I hope it will ultimately help me with the seemingly impossible task of moving forward with my own life.” He knows that Nancy would want him to continue living fully. “Nancy wanted me to be happy,” he said. “But it’s an endless struggle because we had such a great marriage and were so very much in love. We had a wonderful, idyllic life together, and she was an incredible

and wonderful woman. For this I will be eternally grateful.” Nancy was the highlight of my life, and I will never let the love we had for one another go. I will continue to honor her in every way I can. She was my music.”

Howard said he remains deeply thankful for the support he and Nancy received throughout her illness. “So many people in this community “stepped up” and helped us,” he said. “Neighbors, acquaintances, townspeople, friends driving up from the Cape to stay with her for an afternoon, people flying from New Mexico, Florida, North Carolina, and Ohio to take care of her and comfort her, and so much kindness and love. The neighborhood children made get-well cards for Nancy with crayons, brought balloons and flowers to the house, and cre-



ated artwork messages on our driveway with colored chalk.” “Get well soon, Nancy.” “We love you, Nancy.” “It was unbelievable.” Others who barely knew the couple reached out with offers of assistance. “People from the community who were just acquaintances would call and say, ‘Whatever you need, we

are here 7x24 to help.” Howard said. “I feel good about the connections.”

Though he still mourns his wife every day, Howard said he will always be grateful for his life with Nancy and for the generous support shown by friends, family, neighbors, and the Ashland community.

RELIC HUNTERS

continued from page 5

detect some of her neighbor’s properties for years. She recently found a small metal bird, and after researching, she discovered it was a sewing bird women used in the 1850s to hold fabric onto

the sewing table, so their hands could be free.

Most of the items Rivera finds on the private properties the owners don’t want, but in one case in which the property was owned by successive generations of a family, Rivera found a pocket watch. The property owner was able to find an old

photo of an ancestor with that watch, so that item still remains with the family.

Many in the club enjoy it so much they join several metal detecting clubs. Marty Conceicao, of Carver, is one of them. He joined this one to meet new peo-

ple interested in metal detecting, “and to metal detect areas I haven’t done before.” His friend, Steve Hassell, of Brockton, also belongs to a few clubs. “It’s a fun time to be out and great people,” says Hassell.

Bustamonte concurs, saying

the club is about “Friendships, laughter, and amazing finds. We’re bringing history back to life, one hole at a time.”

Find out more about Central New England Relic Hunters or reach out to them on their public Facebook page.

LIONS CLUB

continued from page 8

be held Monday, September 14, at the Highfields Golf and Country Club in Grafton. There will be golf, a meal, raffles, and a day of fun to support the Ashland Lions and their mission of donating to Eye Research and Local Charities. Sponsorship opportunities available.

For details, email golf@ashlandlions.org or visit us online at ashlandlions.org.

Eyeglasses and Cellphone Collection

Our eyeglasses and cellphone collection runs year-round. We collect used prescription and non-prescription eyeglasses, sunglasses, hearing aids, and cell phones.

Since September, we have collected over 2000 pairs of glasses. Thank you, Lion Warren Wales, for your tireless work on this project!

Collection boxes are lo-



cated at:

- Ashland Post Office
- Ashland Senior Center
- Old train station – Ashland
- Moody Optical – Ashland
- Middlesex Bank – Ashland
- Fayville Post Office
- Studio Optics – Framingham
- Southborough Senior Center
- Southborough Post Office (Route 85)
- TJ’s Food and Spirits
- The Residence at Valley Farm

Stay up-to-date on Lions happenings

To get the latest updates on our events, visit our Ashland Lions Facebook page and click “Like” to receive notifications of any changes. While you’re there, be sure to follow Ashland Town News as well!

Lion Dan Mitchell, Ashland Lions Club



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LIVING HEALTHY

Understanding macular degeneration:

Causes, symptoms, and new treatment options

By ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.

What is macular degeneration?

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is one of the leading causes of vision loss in adults over the age of 50. The disease affects the macula, the central portion of the retina responsible for sharp, detailed vision needed for reading, driving, recognizing faces, and performing daily activities. Although AMD usually does not cause total blindness, it can significantly impair central vision and reduce independence and quality of life if not diagnosed and treated early.

AMD develops from aging changes within the retina combined with genetic and environmental factors. Over time, retinal tissues become less efficient at clearing waste products, leading to deposits called drusen

beneath the retina. Several risk factors increase the likelihood of developing AMD, including advancing age, family history, smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, ultraviolet light exposure, and poor nutrition. Because early AMD can progress silently, routine eye examinations remain essential for early detection.

Common symptoms of AMD

Patients with macular degeneration may experience blurred central vision, distortion of straight lines, difficulty reading, trouble recognizing faces, dark or empty areas in central vision, reduced color sensitivity, or an increased need for brighter lighting. Symptoms may develop gradually or suddenly depending on the type of AMD involved.

There are two primary forms of AMD: wet macular degen-

eration and dry macular degeneration. Although both affect the same part of the retina, they behave very differently and require different treatment approaches.

Wet macular degeneration: the more serious form

Wet AMD is less common but far more aggressive and dangerous. In wet AMD, abnormal blood vessels grow beneath the retina and leak blood or fluid into the macula, causing rapid and potentially permanent vision loss if treatment is delayed. Patients may suddenly notice

wavy vision, blurred central vision, distortion, or dark spots that worsen over days or weeks. Because vision can deteriorate quickly, wet AMD requires urgent evaluation and treatment.

Fortunately, major advances in retinal medicine have dramatically improved outcomes for patients with wet AMD through the use of intravitreal injections. These specialized medications are injected directly into the eye and work by reducing abnormal blood vessel growth and leakage. These treatments have revolutionized wet AMD care and have helped many patients stabilize or even improve their vision.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, patients with wet AMD have access to advanced retinal diagnostics and modern injection therapies using the latest evidence-based treatments available today. Early diagnosis remains critical because time equals vision.

Dry macular degeneration: the most common form

Dry AMD accounts for approximately 85–90% of all cases of macular degeneration and progresses more slowly than the wet form. In dry AMD, retinal cells gradually deteriorate over time, leading to progressive central vision loss. Although it is generally less aggressive than wet AMD, dry AMD can still significantly affect quality of life and independence.

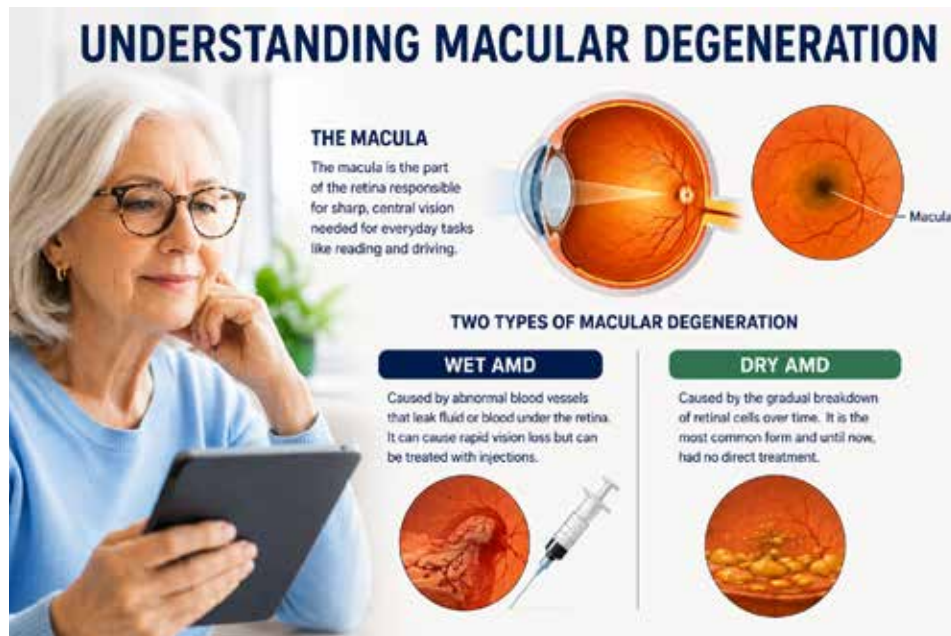
Traditionally, ophthalmologists often had difficult

conversations with patients diagnosed with dry AMD because there was no direct treatment available for the disease itself. Patients were commonly told, “You have the dry form of macular degeneration. Unfortunately, there is no treatment available.” While vitamins, lifestyle modifications, smoking cessation, and monitoring could sometimes slow progression, there historically has been little available to directly target the disease process.

A new breakthrough: PMB therapy for dry AMD

That is now beginning to change with the emergence of PMB therapy, one of the most exciting recent advances in ophthalmology for dry macular degeneration. PMB represents a promising new treatment option that offers hope to patients who previously had limited choices beyond observation and supportive care. This innovative technology may help slow disease progression and preserve functional vision in patients with dry AMD.

Milford Franklin Eye Center is proud to be among the first practices in Massachusetts to offer PMB therapy and currently remains the only practice in the area providing this advanced treatment option for dry AMD patients. This reflects the practice’s commitment to bringing state-of-the-art retinal care



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EYE

continued on page 11

Ashland resident honored at children's mental health fundraiser

The Baker Center for Children and Families held its 20th Annual Golf Tournament at the Walpole Country Club, raising over \$140,000 in support of its range of programs and services focused on improving the mental health and well-being of children and families. Over 20 years, this tournament has raised over \$1.5 million in direct support for children and families in need.

At the event, participants took part in a full day of golf, contests, and on-course activities, along with a raffle and reception bringing together supporters of children's mental health across Greater Boston.

This year, Ashland resident David (Dave) J. Martens, Managing Director of Investments for Boston College's endowment and Second Vice Chair of The Baker Center's Board of Directors and Chair of its Finance Committee, was honored with the Thanda Fields Brassard Changing Lives Award. The award is presented in honor of Thanda Fields Brassard, a longtime trustee and advocate for children's mental health who passed away in 2024.

Brassard served as Clerk of the Board of Trustees, chaired the Governance and Nominating Committee, and co-chaired the annual golf tournament. Her leadership and dedication continue to shape The Baker Center's work today.

Martens was recognized for his longstanding leadership and commitment to advancing The Baker Center's mission, including his governance support and financial stewardship helping the organization expand access to evidence-based care for children and families.

Programs supported through the event include:

Center for Effective Therapy (CET), an outpatient mental health clinic serving clients aged 2-22 facing mental health challenges and learning difficulties such as trauma, depression and anxiety. It focuses on short-term, high-quality, evidence-based treatment.

The Manville School, a therapeutic special education day school

Camp Baker, a summer treatment program designed as a fun camp for children struggling with ADHD and related



L to R: Rick Breed, Jim Brown, Laura Barooshian, Rick Renwick, Jay Weber, Matt Giorgetti, Stephanie Massey, Christopher Cabral.

challenges, who may struggle in neurotypical programs

Next Step: College Success & Independent Living, a college prep program for teens with social language challenges and social anxiety

The Baker Center is a nationally recognized nonprofit dedicated to improving children's mental health and special education through short-term, science-backed care that is proven to work. All programs are rooted in evidence-based practices, meaning approaches that are tested, grounded in science, and designed to deliver measurable, lasting improvement for children and families.



David (Dave) J. Martens accepts Thanda Fields Brassard Changing Lives Award.

EYE

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and innovative technology to the community.

On-site retina specialty care

Milford Franklin Eye Center is also proud to provide on-site retina specialty care through Dr. Alyse Richard, a highly trained retina specialist dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of retinal diseases including dry and wet macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, retinal vascular disease, retinal tears, and other complex retinal conditions.

Dr. Richard combines advanced subspecialty expertise with compassionate, patient-centered care and is committed to helping patients preserve their vision using the latest evidence-based treatments available today. Having on-site retina specialty care allows patients to receive comprehensive retinal evaluations, advanced imaging, injections, monitoring,

and ongoing treatment in one convenient location.

Early evaluation can preserve vision

Macular degeneration remains one of the leading causes of vision loss in older adults, but advances in retinal care are rapidly transforming outcomes for patients. Early evaluation and treatment can make a meaningful difference in preserving vision, maintaining independence, and improving quality of life.

If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with dry AMD, now is the time to learn more about this exciting breakthrough in treatment. Patients are encouraged to contact Milford Franklin Eye Center for immediate appointments and second opinions regarding this revolutionary new technology that is changing the future of dry macular degeneration care.

For more details, see our ad on page 10

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July 2026 at the Ashland Library

The Library will be closed on Friday and Saturday, July 3-4, in observance of Independence Day.

Summer Reading is ongoing for kids and teens. New this year is Adult Summer Reading from July 1 - August 12. Check our calendar for more details.

Visit our Website Calendar for Additional Info & Registration links: <https://tinyurl.com/apl-calendars>

ADULT

In Person:

In Person - Front Street Readers Book Club Tuesday, July 1 at 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Read *Young Mungo* by Douglas Stuart.

In Person - Mah Jongg Wednesday, July 1 at 6 p.m.

In Person - Celebrating America's 250th: Colonial Cooking & Everyday Life: From Hearth to Table Wednesday, July 8 from 6-7:45 p.m.

In Person - Women's Wisdom Circle Thursday, July 9 from 6-7:30 p.m.

In Person - Great Decisions: Ukraine and the Future of European Security Thursday, July 9 from 6-7:45 p.m.

In Person - Mystery Book Club Friday, June 12 at 12 p.m. Read *Pieces of Her* by Karin Slaughter.

In Person - Card Making with Jan Poppendieck Monday, July 13 at 6:30 p.m.

In Person - Historical Fiction Book Club Tuesday, July 14 at 11 a.m. Read *The House of Lincoln* by Nancy Horan.

In Person - Cook Book Club Tuesday, July 21 at 5 p.m. Cook from *The Complete Summer Cookbook* by America's Test Kitchen.

In Person - Bio/Memoir Book Club Wednesday, July 22 at 11 a.m. Read *Solito* by Javier Zamora.

VIRTUAL:

Virtual - Environmental Book Club Wednesday, July 1 at 6:30 p.m. Read *House of Many Gods* by Kiana Davenport.

Virtual - Celebrating America's 250th: Iron in the Water with Adventurer in History Kiersten Marcil. Monday, July 6 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Romance Book Club Thursday, July 9 at 7 p.m. Topic: Fish Out of Water.

Virtual - Declutter series with Jamie Novak: Camp Tidy: a summer decluttering adventure. Thursday, July 9 at 7-8:30 p.m.

Virtual - Presidential Series with Doodler Heather Rogers: Andrew Jackson. Friday, July 10 at 10:30 a.m.

Virtual - Friday Night Film

Discussion Friday, July 10 at 7 p.m. Watch *Sabrina* (Bogart/Hepburn)

Virtual - Celebrating America's 250th: The Two Nerdy History Girls Discuss Everyday Life in 1776. Monday, July 13 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Historical Fiction Book Recs with Bestselling Author, Jane Healey Tuesday, July 14 from 6:30-7 p.m.

Virtual: Horror Book Recs with Bestselling Author Sam Rebelein Tuesday, July 14 from 7:30-8 p.m.

Virtual - Bill Gette: Alaska: Remote Places - Nome and Utqiagvik. Thursday, July 16 from 1-2:15 p.m.

Virtual - Women's Fiction Book Recs with Bestselling Author, Kristan Higgins Thursday, July 16 from 6:30-7 p.m.

Virtual-Celebrating America's 250th: The Black experience of the Revolution w Herstorian Gracia Rich. Monday, July 20 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Book Birthday Celebration with Authors Jeaniene Frost and Melissa Marr Wednesday, July 22 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Friday Night Film Discussion Friday, July 24 at 7 p.m. Watch *Funny Face* (Hepburn/Astaire)

Virtual - Celebrating America's 250th: The Escapes of David George with author Gregory E. O'Malley. Monday, July 27 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Art on Thursday: As American as Apple Pie: Rockwell's Images of Sports and Leisure. Thursday, July 30 from 7-8:15 p.m.

ADULT WEEKLY:

Knit and Crochet Club. Mondays at 6 p.m. Walk-In.

Gentle Yoga. Tuesdays at 6 p.m. Registration Required.

In-person - Mindful Meditation. Fridays from 10:30-11:15 a.m.

CHILDREN: Special Programs

Sensory Safari For ages 1-3 with a caregiver. Wednesday, July 1 from 3-4 p.m. Wednesday, July 22 from 3-4 p.m.

Garden Workshop For grades K-6. Wednesday, July 1 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 15 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Wednesday, July 29 from 4:30-5:30 p.m.

For more events go to ashlandmass.com/184/Ashland-Public-Library



Registration requested.

America's 250th: Block Printing with Old Sturbridge Village For grades K-6. Thursday, July 2 from 3-4 p.m. Registration is required.

Summer STEM For grades K-6. Thursday, July 2 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 16 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Thursday, July 30 from 6:30-7:30 p.m. Registration required.

Family Board Game Night For families with children only. Wednesday, July 8 from 6-7:30 p.m. Registration is requested.

Rainforest Reptiles Show For families. Thursday, July 9 from 3-4 p.m. Registration is required.

Flicknic: Zootopia 2 For families. Friday, July 10 from 12-2 p.m.

Buildwave® | A Hands-On Building Game! For ages 5+ Friday, July 10 from 2-2:45 p.m. Friday, July 10 from 3-3:45 p.m. Registration required.

Ashland Garden Club: Growing from Scraps. For families. Saturday, July 11 from 12-12:45 p.m. Registration required.

PokéPalooza For grades K-6. Tuesday, July 14 from 3-4:30 p.m.

Magic Trunk Theatre For ages 3-6 with a caregiver. Wednesday, July 15 from 3-4 p.m. Wednesday, July 29 from 3-4 p.m.

LEGO Club! Thursday, July 16 at 4:30 p.m. For kids in grades K-3. Registration is required, and space is limited.

Flicknic: Wicked. For families **Elephant & Piggie Ice Cream Party!** For families. Saturday, July 18 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Registration is requested.

Storytime with Maudie the Chicken For ages 5-12. Friday, July 24 from 11-11:45 a.m. Registration is requested.

Flicknic: Hoppers. For families. Friday, July 24 from 12:30-

2:30 p.m.

Meet Gilbert the Party Pig! For families. Saturday, July 25 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Registration is requested.

Stuffy Vet Clinic & Visit with a Therapy Dog For families. Tuesday, July 28 from 10:30-11:15 a.m. Space is limited and registration is requested.

Tie Dye Workshop For grades 2-6. Tuesday, July 28 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Space is limited, and registration is required.

Paw Patrol Party For families. Friday, July 31 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

Flicknic: How to Train Your Dragon (2025) For families. Friday, July 31 from 12:30-2:30 p.m.

WEEKLY STORYTIMES (no registration):

Clocktown Rockers! For ages 2-5 with a caregiver. Tuesdays at 10:30-11 a.m.

Baby Time For ages 0-3 with a caregiver. Wednesdays from 10:30-11 a.m.

Make Me a Story For ages 3-7 with a caregiver. Thursdays from 11-11:45 a.m.

ABC Adventures For ages 3-6 with a caregiver. Fridays at 10:30-11 a.m.

Saturday Stories For families with young children. Saturdays from 10:30-11 a.m.

RECURRING WEEKLY PROGRAMS:

Take & Make Kits For families-Mondays through the summer.

Project ABC: Play, Learn & Grow *For ages 0-5. Mondays from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Registration is required and is found on their website: <https://www.projectabc.org/>



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LIBRARY

continued on page 13

Ashland Bark Park

The Ashland Bark Park, a community-driven project, is now nearing completion on Memorial Drive. Situated on approximately .46 acres, the thoughtfully designed park preserves much of the site's mature trees and natural landscape while providing separate fenced areas for large and small dogs, ADA-accessible pathways, and parking for visitors. Designed with both safety and conservation in mind, the park will operate year-round from dawn to dusk, with rules intended to create a clean and welcoming environment for dogs and their owners.

With construction entering its final stages, the site is expected to be ready for public enjoyment by the end of June. Final paving is scheduled for next week, along with the installation of benches and water fountains and the completion of the fencing, while plans are underway for a grand

opening celebration later this summer.

The project has been funded by a combination of Stanton Foundation support, Community Preservation Committee grants, local business partnerships, BAA grants, and countless community donations and events. Scout troops, volunteers, and local businesses have all contributed to the park's progress, while a newly formed stewardship program will help maintain the park for years to come. As the finishing touches are completed, the Ashland Bark Park is poised to become a lasting example of grassroots collaboration, persistence, and the community's shared commitment to creating a welcoming public space for both residents and their dogs.

Residents interested in learning more, volunteering, or donating can visit Ashland Bark



Park and find more details at the Ashland Bark Park website, ashlandbarkpark.org; follow on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/AshlandBarkPark>, on Instagram [AshlandBarkPark](https://www.instagram.com/ashlandbarkpark/) www.instagram.com/ashlandbarkpark/ or reach out via email at abpsubcommittee@gmail.com.

Press release and photo from Ashland Town Manager Newsletter

Meet Sox: sporting adorable white socks and a big personality!

Sox is a handsome Bengal boy with adorable white paws that make it look like he's always dressed for a special occasion. His cute little socks are impossible to miss, but it's his personality that really steals the show. Sox is sweet, social, and full of personality. He is the kind of cat who will quickly make himself at home and find a special place in your heart.

Sox can be a little shy when first meeting new people, but give him some time, and he will come around. Once he feels comfortable, his true personality shines through. He is affectionate, curious, and vocal when he wants your attention. He isn't shy about making his feelings known once he trusts you, and he will happily let you know when he wants some company.

As a Bengal, Sox is an active and intelligent cat that thrives with plenty of playtime and enrichment. He would do best in a home that is ready to keep him engaged with interactive toys, climbing spaces, and regular play sessions. When he isn't busy socializing, you might find Sox



tucked away underneath his bed or blankets for a cozy nap.

Sox is looking for a patient, attentive home that is okay with a little extra noise and a whole lot of love. Give him the playtime, the attention, and a little patience up front, and he will

reward you with loyal, loving companionship.

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

LIBRARY

continued from page 12

Tinker Together For ages 2-5 with a caregiver. Thursdays from 3-4 p.m. No Registration, Just Walk-In! Our Tinker Group is brought to you by the Metrowest YMCA, the same people behind our fan-favorite Project ABC!

TEEN:

Teen - Summer Reading Friday, June 12 - Wednesday, Aug. 12. Join the Teen Summer Reading Challenge on Beanstack! Log your hours, write reviews and more to win prize pods and earn raffle tickets. Plus everyone who completes

the challenge will receive a gift card for a free ice cream!

Teen - Virtual Paint Night Thursday, June 18 - Thursday, July 17.

Teen Advisory Board Meeting - In-person. Wednesday, July 8, from 4:30-5:30 p.m. This event can be attended for community service hours.

Teen - In-person Creative Writing Club Thursday, July 9, from 5-6 p.m.

Teen - In-Person Craft Night Thursday, July 30, from 5-6 p.m. Stop by the Ashland Public Library for a fun night of crafts! The theme will be gardens and nature crafts, but you can use the supplies to make any craft. It's a night of creativity!

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Ashland local updates

Ashland Public Safety Day Aug. 4 at Ashland Middle School 4-8 p.m.

The Ashland Police Department is proud to announce the return of Ashland Public Safety Day for its second consecutive year. After the overwhelming success of last year's event, we are excited to once again bring together public safety agencies, local businesses, vendors, and community members for an afternoon focused on connection, education, and fun.

Ashland Public Safety Day is more than just an event — it is an opportunity for members of the community to interact directly with the police department, fire department, emergency responders, and local organizations in a welcoming and family-friendly environment. Our goal is to strengthen relationships, build trust, and demonstrate our ongoing commitment to keeping Ashland a safe and connected community.

This year's event will feature something for everyone, including local food trucks, face painting, balloon art, comfort dogs, K9 demonstrations, fire department demonstrations, public safety vehicles, and interactive activities for children and families. Guests will have the opportunity to meet officers, firefighters, and first responders while learning more about the important work being done every day to serve the community.

One of the highlights of the event is the opportunity for residents to engage with first

responders one-on-one outside of emergency situations. Events like this allow us to listen to our community, answer questions, and create positive interactions that strengthen community partnerships. Public safety is most effective when agencies and residents work together, and Ashland Public Safety Day is a reflection of that shared commitment.

We are also grateful for the support of the many local businesses and vendors that continue to participate and help make this event possible. Their involvement demonstrates the strong sense of community that makes Ashland such a special place to live and work.

Families are encouraged to attend and enjoy an afternoon filled with entertainment, demonstrations, educational opportunities, and community engagement. Whether you come to meet our K9 teams, explore emergency vehicles, support local businesses, or simply spend time with neighbors, there will be something for everyone to enjoy.

Please continue to check the Ashland Police Department Facebook page for updates on participating businesses, vendors, activities, and event information as the date approaches.

We look forward to seeing everyone at this year's Ashland Public Safety Day and continuing to build strong relationships within the community we proudly serve.

Corner Spot Happenings:

Looking for something fun to do on a Thursday evening? Come



These photos are from are from last year's Public Safety Night. Photos supplied by Clara Mott

on down to The Corner Spot for Open Mic Nights! Hosted by Danny Silverman, who guarantees to keep the good vibes going, anyone interested in singing, doing spoken word, or telling a few jokes is welcome to come up to the mic. Open Mic Nights are on July 9, 16, and 23, starting at 6:30 p.m..

Also happening at The Corner Spot this summer is Tot Spot hosted by the Ashland Moms Club! Come on down to participate in fun activities geared towards your toddler. This is a great way to connect with other parents and for toddlers to connect with other children their age. Tot Spot will take place every Thursday in July from 10-11 a.m.

Did you know you can also just hang out at The Corner Spot? Come take advantage of this open space! There are picnic tables, wooden bench swings, a big blue chair and even a brand new water fountain. Bring your reusable water bottles to stay hydrated!

Ashland Boy Scouts help the Ashland Community Gardens

Fifty-eight Ashland families grow organic vegetables and some flowers in raised beds and in-ground beds on a former tennis court in Ashland. Since 2009, the Ashland Community Gardens at Stone Park has grown to include a certified monarch butterfly waystation; shared shade, herb and flower gardens, and an



Ashland Boy Scouts help community garden. Photo supplied by Clara Mott

Asian Pear Tree Guild installed with the help of Wellesley College. Now Ashland's Boy Scout Troop 232, led by Eagle Scout candidate Kameron Turncliff, has created a major upgrade of the grounds. Under Kameron's leadership, they have cleaned up and reseeded a section of the garden, built a large bin to contain organic waste and provided rabbit fencing around part of the perimeter. Kameron and his team completed the project in time for the growing season. For more information about the Ashland Community Gardens, please contact Rob Moolenbeek at moolenbeek@gmail.com.

Ashland Arboretum - Now Open!

The Ashland Arboretum held its official ribbon-cutting on June

9, 2026, with over 40 people attending to celebrate the momentous occasion. From residents to former Town of Ashland staff who got the project started to current staff who have been working hard to get ready for this day, this ribbon-cutting was truly a special one. Thank you to everyone who made this project possible and a special thanks to Ed Hart for all he has done to make the arboretum what it is and will continue to be.

The Ashland Arboretum serves as a living museum with over 80 plant species growing. Take a walk along the trail, sit on one of the benches, and enjoy some time in nature.

ASHLAND UPDATES

continued on page 17



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YMCA

continued from page 1

and the YMCA has always prioritized just that.

“This groundbreaking represents much more than the start of construction,” said MetroWest YMCA President and CEO Rick MacPherson. “It is the beginning of a new chapter for children, families and communities across MetroWest.” Not only is this a new chapter, but it is an exciting one as more opportunities will arise for children and families.

The future Team Hoyt Community YMCA is named in honor of Dick, Rick and Judy Hoyt, whose commitment to inclusion and perseverance inspired people around the world. The planned YMCA campus will be built on 12.5 acres along the Boston Marathon route and is intended to reflect the Hoyt family's belief that everyone should have the opportunity to participate, belong and reach their full potential.

“Seeing construction begin on this future Team Hoyt Community YMCA is an inspiring milestone for our family,” said Russ Hoyt. “We are excited about the impact this community pillar will have on people of all abilities for generations to come.”

The ceremony also highlighted the partnerships that helped advance the project, including a previously announced \$5 million federal funding award for the Regional Early Learning Center. The project has also received support from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the Town of Ashland, and a number of corporate, foundation and individual donors.

Sen. Edward J. Markey, who helped secure the federal funding, said the investment will help expand access to early education and child care for families throughout the region. “Every dollar we invest in education pays dividends for generations to come,” Markey said. “At a moment when families across Massachusetts need greater access to affordable, high-quality childcare and early education, I am grateful to have partnered with Senator Warren, Congressman McGovern, and our state and local partners to make this center a reality and create opportunities for children throughout MetroWest to learn,



EARLY LEARNING CENTER INTERIOR



EARLY LEARNING CENTER EXTERIOR

grow, and thrive.”

U.S. Rep. Jim McGovern said the center will support working families while providing children with a strong educational foundation. “It is especially meaningful that this center honors Team Hoyt, whose story continues to inspire people across Massachusetts and beyond,” McGovern said.

Massachusetts Senate President Karen Spilka called the project an important investment in children, families and the future of MetroWest communities. Access to quality early education gives children a strong foundation for learning while helping parents balance work and family responsibilities. The new center is expected to expand child care options in the region and support families facing a shortage of affordable early education programs.

MetroWest YMCA officials said the future Team Hoyt Community YMCA is being designed to serve residents of Ashland, Framingham, Hopkinton, Holliston and Sherborn. They described the groundbreaking as the result of years of work by staff, volunteers, donors and community partners.

“As the need for affordable, accessible early education continues to grow, this Early Learning Center will help provide families with the strong foundation they need,” MacPherson said. “Our work creating a more connected community is just beginning.”

The center’s mission includes a full-day early learning center and a state-of-the-art wellness center, indoor running track, outdoor trails, group exercise studios, meeting and gathering spaces, STEM and technology areas for youth, child watch/kids adventure space, full-size gymnasium, community kitchen, aquatics center, and an outdoor recreation space.



Construction of the MetroWest YMCA Regional Early Learning Center in Ashland officially broke ground last month, with help from federal, state and private funds. It will be part of the future Team Hoyt Community YMCA planned along the Boston Marathon route. Photo supplied by Michael Henrich



Sen. Markey celebrates the construction with Team Hoyt members. Photo supplied by Michael Henrich



For more information about the Team Hoyt Community YMCA project, visit metrowestymca.org. About the MetroWest YMCA

The MetroWest YMCA is a cause-driven nonprofit dedicated to creating healthier, connected communities through youth development, healthy living, and social responsibility. The MetroWest YMCA provides inclusive programming that strengthens the body, mind, and spirit of more than 25,000 community members annually at every stage of life—including early learning and childcare, before- and after-school programs, summer camps, fitness and wellness classes, aquatics, sports, enrichment activities, and health intervention programs. Eliminating financial barriers to engagement, the MetroWest YMCA (EIN 04-2281530) ensures everyone in the community has the opportunity to grow, learn, and thrive. Visit metrowestymca.org for more information.

Happy July 4th

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July 2026 at Ashland Senior Center

Details of programs and activities can be found in our monthly newsletter. Sign in to this link to receive the newsletter by email: <https://www.ashlandmass.com/390/Newsletter>, or view it online.

PLEASE NOTE: Programs and events frequently alter after we produce our schedule. We try our best to provide accurate information. We appreciate your patience!

The center is closed on July 3 for the Independence Day long weekend.

NOTE: Ashland Lions' Free Breakfast, Chair Volleyball, Ping Pong, Sewing, & Cooking Class will resume in September.

FREE SUMMER BBQ PARTY

Sponsored by Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis' Office, including local students participating in his Summer Seminar. Senator President Karen Spilka will provide dessert. Monday, July 6, 12-1:30 p.m. Entrée: cheeseburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, watermelon, and dessert. Tickets for sale for raffle basket chances. **Reservations required.** Limited seats available. Call to reserve your space at 508-881-0140 ext. 1 by Thursday, July 2 at Noon. **Free lunches reservation policy:** Reservations for FREE lunch may be made starting on the first day of the month in which the event is held. All reservations are made with the Main office. Max: 90 attendees. No take-out lunches.

Cancellations must be made 24 hours prior to the event so that individuals on the wait list may attend. **No-shows:** If you reserve a spot and do not attend without calling to cancel, you will not be eligible to register for the next free event.

FREE AMERICAN REVOLUTION PRESENTATION

With Julie Hefferman, Educator from The Concord Museum. Wednesday, July 1 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

FREE SERVICES (Registrations Required)

Transportation: Free transportation for Ashland Residents 60+ to bordering towns of Ashland. Curb-to-curb service and wheelchair accessible. Monday and Tuesday, 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. Wednesday 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. 48 hours' advance notice required.

Legal Phone Consultation: Friday, July 24 from 10-11:30 a.m. With Arthur P. Bergeron, Mirick Law. Call to schedule an appointment.

Mobility Equipment Borrow/Loan Program: We offer a variety of gently-used, high-quality mobility aids available for short-term loan at no cost to you. Equipment includes: walkers, rollators, canes, manual wheelchairs and transport chairs, shower benches and bath chairs, knee scooters and bed rails.

SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone):

In-person appointments. Thursdays at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 12 p.m. Appointment required.

Veterans Office Hours:

Wednesday, July 1, 15, and 29, from 9-11:30 a.m. Appointments recommended. Call 508-429-0629 to schedule.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

All Programs & Activities require registration unless noted in specific event description. To register call 508-881-0140 ext. 1 or stop by the Senior Center at 162 West Union Street, Ashland.

FREE programs/events reservation policy:

- Reservations for **FREE** events may be made starting on the first day of the month in which the event is held.
- All reservations must be made by the deadline date provided for each program.
- If the minimum number of participants is not met, the event/program will be canceled.
- Cancellations must be made 24 hours prior to the event so that individuals on the waitlist may be contacted.
- No-shows: If you reserve a spot and do not attend without calling to cancel, you will not be eligible to register for the next free event.

This policy does not apply to the Lions Free Breakfast. **CANCELLATIONS:** Call Dena Porter at 508-881-0140 ext. 1

COMMUNITY EDUCATION & ENTERTAINMENT (Registrations Required)

Creative Writing Group With Clara Mott, Romance Writer. Begins Tuesday, July 14, 9-10 a.m. Every second and fourth Tuesday of the month. No experience necessary. Join us to practice writing and connect with others.

- July 14– write a short bio about your life
 - July 28– Write on a childhood memory you still see clearly
- Topics are suggestions. Come in



with your own writings

Downton Abbey Viewing:

Season 5, Episode 1. Thursday, July 2 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tea and coffee provided.

Digital Literacy Class (Computers): How to Use Google Calendar with Jonathan Baron. Tuesday, July 7 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Movie With Popcorn: *Waking Ned Devine* (1998) PG Comedy.

Tuesday, July 21, from 1-2:35 p.m. The lucky winner of the national lottery, Ned Devine, dies from the shock of the news! When the lottery officials close in to confirm the prize, Ned's closest friends scheme to keep the prize money close to their Irish village. The plot twists humorously!

BOARDS, COMMITTEE & COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Dull Men's Club With Doc

Tuesday, July 7 at 9:30 for Breakfast at *The Bagel Table* (self-pay) Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m., July 14, 21, and 28, at Ashland Senior Center. Coffee and Conversation. All 60+ men welcome!

Town Manager's Coffee Hour Wednesday, July 15 from 10-11 a.m. All are welcome!

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Registrations: Call 508-881-0140 ext.1. Unless otherwise noted.

Blood Pressure Clinic

Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. (No Blood Pressure on July 29) Walk-ins welcome!

Caregiver Support Group

– Meets second Wednesday of the month. Wednesday, July 8 from 3:30-5 p.m. Facilitated by a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker. Register: email jtkarowski@ashlandmass.com.

Clocktown Memory Cafe

with Music by Rick Ferreira. Tuesday, July 28, from 1-2:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Susan McNulty smcnulty@ashlandmass.com or 508-532-7945. Registration due by Tuesday, July 21.

Hearing Aid Cleaning

with Hopkinton Audiology. With Darcy Rapucci, Hopkinton Audiology. Monday, July 13, from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Beating Insomnia: The Secret to Better Sleep with Anne Fitzgerald, RN. Wednesday, July 22 from 11 a.m. -12 p.m.

Mindful Coloring First and third Thursdays of the Month at 1:30 p.m. Walk-ins welcome!

Mindfulness & Meditation with Mary Green. Thursdays at 11 a.m. (No class on July 2, 16, or 23) \$5 pp suggested donation per class.

Parkinson's Boxing with Tessa Herbold - FREE. First and third Wednesday of the Month at 1:30 p.m. Equipment provided.

Self-Advocacy at Your Doctors Appointment with Lyn Croft, Healthcare Advocate. Thursday, July 16, from 11 a.m. -12:15 p.m.

Sound Meditation Journey with Sonia Stingo. Thursday, July 23, at 10 a.m. \$5 pp suggested donation per class. Bring a blanket & a small pillow.

ARTS, CRAFTS, SEWING & COOKING Registrations required

SENIOR CENTER

continued on page 20

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ASHLAND UPDATES

continued from page 14

**New Home, A Stronger Community
The New Home of Ashland
Food Pantry and Prevention &
Human Services Department**

On June 10, 2026, the Ashland Food Pantry and the Prevention & Human Services Department officially opened their new shared space in the newly renovated wing of the Ashland Community Center.

Located on the lower level of the Community Center at 162 West Union Street, the new wing brings both programs together under one roof in a space designed to improve operations, expand accessibility, and better serve Ashland residents.

A Long Time in the Making

This project was years in the making and was made possible through the support of the Town of Ashland and the collaboration of multiple departments working together toward a common goal. The new space reflects the Town's commitment to meeting evolving community needs and aligns with feedback received from residents through community planning efforts,

which highlighted the importance of accessible support services and resources.

The renovation was funded through a combination of capital projects, legislative earmarks, insurance recovery funds related to water damage, and grant funding. Together, these investments helped transform the facility into a more functional, accessible, and welcoming space for residents.

We are grateful to everyone who contributed to making this project a reality.

**The Ashland Food Pantry:
Built to Serve Better**

The Ashland Food Pantry underwent a significant organizational transformation as part of the move. New shelving systems and updated equipment have created a more efficient and welcoming environment for both volunteers and staff who prepare and pack orders for our residents.

These improvements were supported in part through a Greater Boston Food Bank Community Investment Grant received through the pantry's partnership with the Ashland Emergency Fund (AEF). The renovated space allows volunteers and staff

to move more efficiently throughout the pantry while increasing the ability to serve residents with dignity and care.

Since reopening on June 10, the Ashland Food Pantry has continued to provide curbside pickup by appointment only. Pantry hours are Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Wednesdays from 11:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Donations are also accepted during these hours.

Residents can learn more, sign up to receive food, complete an online order form, or make a donation by visiting <https://www.ashlandmass.com/440/Ashland-Food-Pantry>. The Food Pantry Coordinator, Yucchi Cote, can be reached at 508-532-7949. Questions related to Human Services may be directed to humanservices@ashlandmass.com.

Prevention & Human Services Bringing Prevention and Human Services into the same location has created new opportunities for collaboration and service delivery. Staff from both programs now work side by side, making it easier to connect residents with a broader range of resources



Ashland Arborterium ribbon cutting ceremony. Photo supplied by Clara Mott

and support, making it easier to identify and respond to needs that might otherwise go unaddressed.

Whether a resident first contacts the Food Pantry or Human Services, the co-located model helps ensure that additional needs can be identified and addressed quickly and efficiently. We look forward to putting the new space to work for the Ashland community.

Looking Ahead

This new wing represents more than a renovated space—it represents an investment in the well-being of Ashland residents and the future of human services in our town.

Residents can access services through the Ashland Food Pantry and Prevention & Human Services at the Ashland Community Center, Lower Level, 162 West Union Street. For information about food pantry services, volunteer opportunities, and donations, please contact Food Pantry Coordinator Yucchi Cote at 508-532-7949 or email humanservices@ashlandmass.com.

We would like to thank every partner, volunteer, donor, department, and community member who helped make this project possible and look forward to serving Ashland residents in this new space for years to come.

Update on Ashland Middle School sports by the Superintendent

Dear Ashland Community,

At its June 10 meeting, the Ashland School Committee approved the Athletic Director's recommendation to realign the Ashland Middle School athletics program beginning in the 2026–2027 school year.

As part of this change, Ashland Middle School will discontinue the following sports:

- Boys Soccer
- Girls Soccer
- Boys Basketball
- Girls Basketball
- Baseball
- Softball

These sports were selected because comparable opportunities already exist through established Ashland youth athletic programs that serve the same age groups during the same seasons.

This decision was informed by participation trends, the need to sustain and strengthen high

school athletic programs, facility and scheduling demands, and a review of athletic offerings across the Tri-Valley League. In recent years, Ashland High School has sought waivers in certain sports to allow middle school students to participate and field teams. Additionally, many neighboring districts have reduced or eliminated middle school athletic programs, even though strong community-based alternatives exist.

Importantly, this change does not reduce students' athletic opportunities. The decision was developed in collaboration with Ashland's youth sports organizations, and all program leaders confirmed they have the capacity and commitment to accommodate student-athletes who would otherwise have participated through the middle school program.

We recognize that middle

school athletics play an important role in helping students build friendships, develop leadership and teamwork skills, and strengthen their connection to school. We also understand that this change may be disappointing for some students and families. This decision was not made lightly, but reflects our commitment to aligning school and community resources, strengthening the overall athletic pathway for students, and ensuring the long-term sustainability of athletic opportunities in Ashland.

We appreciate the continued partnership of our families, coaches, student-athletes, and community youth organizations as we work together to support all Ashland students. Should you have any questions, please get in touch with Mr. Peter Connery, Athletic Director, at pconnery@ashland.k12.ma.us



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ASHLAND SPORTS

Ashland captains are doing their job and doing it well

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

After falling in the Division 3 State Baseball Tournament last year in the preliminary round, Ashland knew they were better than that performance and wanted to prove it this spring. Despite playing in Division 3 last year, the Clockers were moved up to Division 2 this spring. Head Coach Matt Messer was looking to his senior captains, Oli Lareau and Chris Bratica, to get the team prepared.

The duo came up together four years ago as freshmen pitching for the Clocker varsity team. According to the Coach, it was very rare for freshmen to pitch on the varsity level, but both athletes did whatever was asked of them and never complained. Lareau is a three-sport athlete (baseball, football and a 100-point scorer in hockey), while Bratica was the TVL's Pitcher of the Year last spring and batted .389 as Ashland's top hitter.

Through the years, Bratica stuck with pitching while Lareau gravitated toward the outfield, where he is better suited.

"Chris is a pitcher through and through and will be taking his talents to UMASS Dartmouth next year. He is also one of our better hitters," Messer

said. "Oli, on the other hand, likes to run around in the outfield calling off his left and right fielder to make the play. He loves diving all over the place to make the catch."

Coming into the season as captains, Lareau and Bratica's goal was to get the team back into the playoffs despite the team being moved up from Division 3 to Division 2. Lareau had seen a lot of potential in the incoming team and believed that if they stepped up, Ashland could definitely make the tournament.

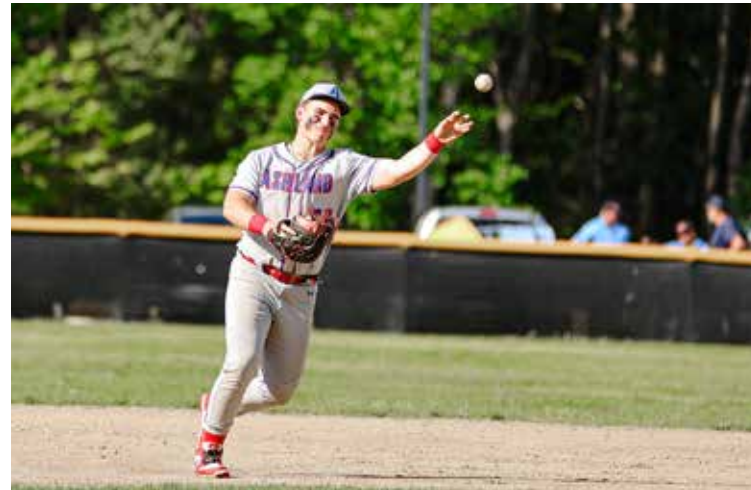
"I was looking to help the newcomers improve their play and gain confidence while still having fun," Lareau said. "Early on everyone seemed to click and over the year I've found that this is one of the best teams in terms of chemistry."

Bratica also saw something in this year's squad. The future college pitcher noted that he knew the Clockers could have a very successful season with younger athletes coming in to fill the open vacancies.

"I had faith in the younger guys coming in and knew that they would settle in and get their game flowing," he said. "I had no doubt in them after seeing the way they were playing and adjusting to the varsity



Senior captain, Chris Bratica. Photos supplied by Oli Lareau and Chris Bratica



level of play."

With the first-year players taking to the game and the returners doing their thing, Ashland was poised for yet another year in which they earned a tournament berth. The Ashland baseball team had made the tournament for the past 14 straight years, and the Clocker captains were primed to make it 15.

In the past, the Clockers usually found themselves opening the season slow and putting themselves in a hole, but this year was different. Ashland opened the season with a big win over Hopkinton, and, according to Lareau, it brought



Senior captain, Oli Lareau. Photos supplied by Oli Lareau and Chris Bratica



the team closer together and gave them the confidence to compete with the top teams. The Clockers would go 3-1 to begin the season and find themselves finishing 11-9 and earning a spot in the State Tournament with another 37 teams.

"By going 3-1 to open the season, it gave the team the confidence to play well," Bratica said. "We didn't really have a streak but continued to win the weeks throughout the year and put us in a good position playing good baseball."

Individually, the two wanted to be a big part in producing for the team as well as guiding the younger players. Both Bratica and Lareau were named to the TVL All-Star team this year.

As they get ready to take on Mansfield in the State Tournament, both captains are sure this team can put forth a productive

run through the tournament.

"I believe that we can beat any team that we get paired up with in the tournament," Bratica said. "I expect that this group can play good baseball and that will bring them confidence for the next year."

Lareau noted that the team has been swinging the bats really well near the end of the season, and if they continue to field well, they should be able to make some noise.

"We have a great 1-2 punch on the mound, and our bullpen has been great," said Lareau. "I really believe that if we get the timely hitting that we've lacked the past few years with the younger kids stepping up, we can go all the way to Polar Park."

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REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

If you're getting ready to sell your home, don't overlook one of the most powerful tools for attracting buyers: curb appeal. A welcoming exterior can help

draw more interest, create stronger first impressions, and even increase your home's selling price.

Curb appeal is all about how your home looks from the street — and buyers often form opinions before they even step inside. A tidy landscape, inviting entryway, and well-maintained exterior can instantly make a property feel cared for and move-in ready. On the other hand, overgrown shrubs, peeling paint, or cluttered walkways can leave buyers wondering what maintenance issues might be hiding inside.

The good news? Creating curb appeal doesn't have to require a major investment. Small updates can make a surprisingly big impact. Start with the essentials: power wash siding and

walkways, trim hedges and trees, freshen mulch beds, and neatly store garbage cans, hoses, and other outdoor clutter. Updating house numbers, light fixtures, and door hardware can also give your home a more polished, modern look.

A freshly painted front door and shutters can make a strong first impression. In New England black continues to be one of the most popular choices, pairing well with many exterior colors and architectural styles while creating a clean, classic appearance. Seasonal flowers, potted plants, or a cozy seating area can also help create a warm and inviting atmosphere.

Lighting is another often-overlooked detail. Attractive outdoor lighting not only improves safety and visibility but also makes a

home feel welcoming during evening showings. Decorative touches such as birdhouses, stone accents, or tasteful garden décor can further enhance the overall presentation when used sparingly and in a way that complements the home's style.

Today's buyers often begin their home search online, meaning exterior photos may determine whether they schedule a showing at all. The more appealing your home looks at first glance, the more likely buyers are to stop, tour the property, and ultimately make an offer. Increased interest can even lead to multiple offers and a stronger final sale price.

Looking for inspiration? Websites such as HGTV and The Home Depot offer countless ideas, tutorials, and DIY tips for

landscaping, lawn care, and simple exterior upgrades.

Investing a little time and effort into curb appeal can pay off in a big way. While every market is different, real estate experts often estimate that strong curb appeal can increase a home's value and sale price by anywhere from 3% to 15%.

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Ashland Recent Home Sales

Date	Ashland	Amount
06/15/2026	38 Bay Colony Dr.	\$915,000
06/12/2026	72 Fruit St.	\$755,000
06/11/2026	222 Oak St.	\$950,000
06/09/2026	44 Carriage House Path	\$798,000
06/08/2026	22 Braeburn Ln.	\$765,000
06/05/2026	75 Hilldale Rd.	\$675,000
06/05/2026	32 Waterville Ln.	\$1.21 mil
06/01/2026	15-17 Church St.	\$799,400
06/01/2026	111 Leland Farm Rd.	\$495,000
05/29/2026	196 Algonquin Trl.	\$564,900
05/29/2026	71 Pennock Rd.	\$1.03 mil
05/29/2026	196 Algonquin Trl.	\$564,900
05/28/2026	41 Leland Farm Rd.	\$485,000
05/27/2026	16 Fox Hill Rd.	\$1.05 mil
05/26/2026	19 America Blvd.	\$675,000
05/22/2026	89 Trailside Way	\$490,000
05/21/2026	30 Birch Hill Rd.	\$560,000
05/20/2026	7 Deer Ridge Rd.	\$1.30 mil

The 4-bed, 2-bath, 2,400-square-foot home at 15-17 Church Street in Ashland recently sold for \$799,400.

Image credit: www.zillow.com





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SENIOR CENTER

continued from page 16

unless otherwise noted.

Craft Class with Sherry: Wire Bracelets . Tuesday, July 7 from 9-10 a.m. Supplies provided.

Craft Class with Karen: Bring your grandchild & make Stretch Bracelets. Friday, July 10, from 10-11 a.m. (Grandchild age 5 – 12) Supplies provided.

Craft Class with Elissa: Decoupage Vase. Friday, July 17, from 10-11 a.m. Supplies provided.

Craft Class NEW! Drop-in Craft Class Tuesday, July 21 from 9-10 a.m. Bring your own projects, craft ideas and supplies.

Craft Class with Milly: Flamingo Plant Stakes. Friday, July 24, from 10-11 a.m. Supplies provided.

Drop-In Watercolor Class Wednesdays 9:30-11:30 a.m., July - August. Beginners welcome! No instruction. Bring your own supplies and work on your own project. Drop in and paint.

Drop-In Knitting & Crochet-ing Group Second and fourth Tuesday of the Month at 11 a.m. -12 p.m. Bring your current

project, share conversations, and enjoy knitting with our group.

Knit Along with Nancy Second and fourth Thursdays at 1-2:30 p.m. Beginner Knitting Project: Loose Weave Beach Bag. Supplies provided. All levels welcome!

EXERCISE All classes have a suggested donation of \$5 per person, unless otherwise indicated

As of July 1: the recommended donation for our exercise classes will increase from \$4 to \$5. This adjustment is necessary due to uncertainty about future State funding, which helps support many of the programs and activities we offer our community. Your continued support and generosity help us maintain quality programming, wellness opportunities, and engaging activities for older adults in our community. We appreciate your understanding and ongoing participation.

FREE TRIAL CLASSES

Curious about our exercise classes? Join us for a one-time trial session! It's a great way to experience the class, meet the instructor, and see if it's right for you.

Bowling – Ryan's Amusement, Millis. Tuesdays at 9 a.m. Check cost with Bowling Alley. Per person, per game for player 65 or older: \$5. 508-376-1101

Chair Yoga with Mary Wednesdays at 1 p.m. (No class on July 1, 15, or 22)

Exercise with Joni Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 9:30 a.m.

Line Dancing with Lisa Thursdays at 1 p.m.

Tai Chi with Jon and Sub Karin Tuesdays at 11:45 a.m. (No class on July 7)

Zumba Gold with Scott Tuesdays at 9:15-10 a.m.

GAMES

Canasta Wednesdays at 1 p.m.

Chess Mondays at 1 p.m.

Cribbage Thursdays at 12:30 p.m.

Mahjong Fridays at 10:30 a.m. for all levels

Pitch Card Game Mondays at 1 p.m.

VIRTUAL PROGRAMS (*Registrations Required*) In collaboration with the Ashland Public Library. Register at <https://www.ashland-mass.com/1224/APL-Calendar>

Iron in the Water with Adventurer in History Kiersten Marcil. (Celebrating America's 250th)

Monday, July 6, 7-8 p.m.

Everyday Life in 1776 with The Two Nerdy History Girls. (Celebrating America's 250th) Monday, July 13, 7-8 p.m.

Alaska: Remote Places – Nome and Utqiagvik with Bill Gette. Thursday, July 16, 1-2:15 p.m.

The Black Experience of the Revolution with Historian Gracia Rich. (Celebrating America's 250th) Monday, July 20, 7-8 p.m.

The Escapes of David George with Author Gregory E. O'Malley. (Celebrating America's 250th) Monday, July 27, 7-8 p.m.

LUNCH

Lunch Prepared by July Weiner, The Casual Gourmet

Wednesday, July 8 at 11:45 a.m. Entrée: Tortellini Carbonara with Ham and Peas, Rolls, and Garden Salad. \$8 per person. Reservations for lunch by Thursday, July 2 at noon.

Lunch & Learn: Overview of Services of Seniors Helping Seniors with Samantha Maddox. Monday, July 13, at 12 p.m. Entrée: Italian Sandwich on a Bulky Roll with Dressing, Potato Chips and a Pickle. \$7 per person. Reservations for Lunch: by



Thursday, July 9 at noon. Sign up for Presentation Only.

Lunch & Learn: Veteran and Spouse Benefits with Kathleen Lang. MetroWest Veterans Services. Monday, July 20 at 12 p.m. Entrée: Gazpacho Soup and Grilled Cheese Sandwich \$7 per person. Reservations for Lunch: by Thursday, July 16 at noon. Sign up for Presentation Only: Call 508-881-0140 ext. 1

Lunch with Trivia Monday, July 27, at 12 p.m. Entrée: 1/2 Cape Coddah Wrap: Chicken Salad, Cranberries, Walnuts & Lettuce, plus Potato Chips. \$7er person. Reservations for Lunch: by Thursday, July 23 at noon.

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