

Ashland

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MetroWest YMCA plans community resource for generations to come

By BRITTANY AMALFI

Long before construction began on the future Team Hoyt Community YMCA in Ashland, the project was rooted in a simple message that inspired millions: "Yes You Can." Now, MetroWest YMCA leaders, community members, and so many more are working to turn that philosophy into a campus designed to serve children, families and people of all abilities for generations to come.

The new Regional Early Learning Center, expected to open in September 2027, will serve more than 100 children and families and marks the beginning of a larger campus designed to promote inclusion,



Ed Markey and crew celebrate the work done to get the Regional YMCA up and running. Photo supplied by Peter Waisgerber

wellness and community connections.

For Peter Waisgerber, chief development officer for the MetroWest YMCA, the groundbreaking rep-

resents more than the start of construction. "It's exciting," Waisgerber said. "I've

YMCA

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Denny Conklin appointed Assistant Superintendent

The Ashland School Committee has appointed Mr. Denny Conklin as the next Assistant Superintendent of Schools, succeeding Dr. Michael Cairra. Mr. Conklin brings nearly two decades of educational leadership experience, including the past four years as Assistant Superintendent of the Dover-Sherborn Public Schools, where he led districtwide initiatives focused on instructional excellence, curriculum innovation, equity, and professional learning.

Throughout his career, Mr. Conklin has earned a reputation as a collaborative, visionary leader who believes in working alongside educators to improve teaching and learning. As Assistant Superintendent in Dover-Sherborn, he developed and implemented the district's instructional vision aligned with its Portrait of a Graduate, led successful curric-



Denny Conklin. Courtesy photo

ulum reviews in mathematics and literacy, strengthened Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) through districtwide data systems, expanded educator professional learning, and advanced

CONKLIN

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Ashland sends five to New Balance Nationals, sets school record in 4x800

By DERRICK TOUBA JR.

Five Ashland High School girls represented the track and field program on the national stage last month at the 2026 New Balance Nationals Outdoor Championships at Franklin Field in Philadelphia, headlined by a 4x800-meter relay team that placed 21st overall and shattered the school record after already setting a meet record at the Division 4 state championships. The quartet ran a personal-best 9:25.08.

Seniors Madeleine Callahan, Ava Dittenhafer and Sadie Gilhooly teamed with junior Sophia Warnetski to make up the relay, while freshman Leah Dittenhafer qualified individually in the freshman 400-meter hurdles, giving Ashland five representatives at the country's premier high school track and field meet.

"They definitely improved over what they did last year," said assistant coach Emily Reily, who oversees the team's middle-distance and distance runners. "At New Balance, they set the school record, which was great, and they ran faster than they had at the state meet. They really peaked at the right time. They just had an incredible season."

The same four relay runners raced together at every stop of the postseason, from the Division 4 state meet to the Meet of Champions to nationals in Philadelphia, and their record-setting run in June capped a stretch in which the group kept getting faster at exactly the right moments.

Warnetski, the relay's anchor, also qualified individually for the championship 800 meters at nationals. Her breakout season steadily gained momentum throughout the year. She qualified for both the individual mile and the 800 meters at New Balance Nationals Indoor over the winter, then carried that momentum outdoors. At the Division 4 divisional meet, she ran down Northampton's anchor over the final 75 meters to help Ashland set a meet record, splitting 2:13, a personal best at the time. She topped that at Franklin Field with a 2:12 in the championship 800 meters, another personal best.

"As a coach, almost the toughest thing with her is reining her in and making sure she doesn't do too much and burn herself out, because she always wants to be doing more," Reily said.

Leah Dittenhafer, meanwhile, reached New Balance Nationals during both the indoor and outdoor seasons in the 400-meter hurdles, a rare accomplishment for a freshman. She medaled at the Division 4 state meet and

NEW BALANCE
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Ashland High School's representatives (L-R) Ava Dittenhafer, Madeleine Callahan, Sadie Gilhooly, Sophia Warnetski and Leah Dittenhafer pose at the 2026 New Balance Nationals Outdoor Championships in Philadelphia. Photo courtesy of assistant coach Emily Reily



Ashland High School's 4x800-meter relay members (L-R) Madeleine Callahan, Ava Dittenhafer, Sadie Gilhooly and Sophia Warnetski pose alongside the results board after breaking the school record at the 2026 New Balance Nationals Outdoor Championships in Philadelphia. Photo courtesy of assistant coach Emily Reily



Sophia Warnetski poses with the results board after running a personal-best time in the 800 meters at the 2026 New Balance Nationals Outdoor Championships in Philadelphia. Photo courtesy of assistant coach Emily Reily



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Leah Dittenhafer poses after competing in the Freshman Girls 400-meter hurdles at the 2026 New Balance Nationals Outdoor Championships in Philadelphia. Photo courtesy of assistant coach Emily

NEW BALANCE

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qualified for the Meet of Champions outdoors before advancing to the freshman national meet in Philadelphia. She finished in a time of 1:08.73

"She's the kind of kid that we love to have on our team," Reily said. "She works hard, she always wants to be doing more, she's just a good role model for the team."

Reily said what stands out most about this group isn't just the times on the clock.

"They're just great kids. They're fun to be around, they're great to coach, they're such hard workers, and they push each other," Reily said. "If one of them is having a down day, the other ones will bring her along. As a coach, they make it easy."

Reily, who has coached Ashland's middle-distance and distance runners alongside John Brinegar since 2021, said the program's goals extend beyond winning races.

"We're trying to make them into better runners, and we obviously want to win as a program," Reily said. "But they're going to graduate, and we want to help them be better people. The lessons they learn about hard work and leadership and balancing their time, that's the stuff they're going to carry forward in life."

Although the graduation of Callahan, Ava Dittenhafer and Gilhooly marks the end of

one of the program's most successful relay groups, Ashland's performances at New Balance Nationals showed the future remains bright. With Warnetski returning after a breakout junior season and Leah Dittenhafer already making an impact as a freshman, the team is well positioned to continue its success.

Staff Spotlight:
Dan Maurer, Ashland DPW

By BRITTANY AMALFI
Public works has always meant more than maintenance and infrastructure for Dan Maurer. It has always been about serving his community—a place where he has called home for most of his life.

Maurer, who grew up in Sudbury and has spent his life in the MetroWest area, joined the Ashland Department of Public Works in 2016 after building a long career in both the private sector and municipal government. Today, he helps oversee a wide range of projects that keep the town running smoothly.

His professional career began as an auto mechanic and later led to Maurer owning and operating a small landscape construction and maintenance business. His company serviced more than 100 commercial properties, providing everything from lawn care and drainage work



Dan Maurer, Ashland DPW. Photo supplied by Beth Reynolds

to excavation, grading, and winter snow removal. Looking back, he says those years taught him valuable lessons about business and working

with people.
When he and his wife,

MAURER

continued on page 4

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Before serving as Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Conklin was the K-12 History and Social Studies Director for Arlington Public Schools, where he led districtwide curriculum devel-

"Denny brings exceptional instructional leadership, strategic vision, and a collaborative leadership style that will help Ashland continue moving forward," said Superintendent James Adams. "He is a relationship-centered leader who balances district-level strategy with a genuine commitment to supporting teachers, students, and families. His experience leading curriculum innovation, strengthening professional learning, and remaining visible in classrooms

Perhaps the strongest endorsement came from a veteran mathematics coach with more than twenty years of experience, who wrote, "I have never seen one individual make a more meaningful and far-reaching

Mr. Conklin commented, "I am incredibly honored and excited to join Ashland Public Schools as the new Assistant Superintendent. I care deeply about this community and look forward to supporting the district's commitment to academic

Ashland Public Schools remains committed to fostering a collaborative school community focused on academic excellence, equity, and student well-being.

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"Ashland was the right next step," Maurer said. "The

No two days are the same at the Ashland DPW. Maurer's mornings typically begin around 6:30 a.m. with emails, then shift to whatever issue demands immediate attention. One day may involve responding to a communications issue at the water treatment plant or addressing a resident's concern, while another may focus on reviewing plans for capital improvement projects.

One experience that stands out came during this past winter's largest snowstorm,

From living in Sudbury to Framingham, and now Holliston, where he and his wife have raised his two daughters, Taylor and Rylee, and of course, Marley, their boxer, Maurer never would've believed that he would know Ashland as well as he does today. However, that knowledge has been a staple of Dan's life for so long now that he is the perfect fit to serve the Ashland community.

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Your Money, Your Independence

When ‘I think they’re all set’ becomes ‘it’s complicated’



Glenn Brown, CFP

When meeting with new clients, we usually start with family. Conversations about kids bring great enthusiasm, but shifting to aging parents changes the mood instantly.

The responses almost always match the client’s age:

- **30s:** “I think they’re all set.”
- **40s:** “Well... it’s complicated.”
- **50s:** A heavy sigh and, “Yeah, it’s been a struggle.”

Discussing money, health, and estate planning with your parents is daunting. But delaying leaves families unprepared during a crisis, resulting in

quick, sometimes irreversible decisions under emotional stress.

This isn’t about inheritance or taking away control. It’s about protecting their independence so hard-earned assets serve *their* wishes, not a medical crisis, an unwanted lifestyle or excessive taxation (looking at you, Massachusetts estate tax *cough* money grab).

Here is how to approach it in steps.

Rally your siblings first

Get on the same page with your siblings before talking to your parents. Aligning early avoids the too common, “*Your sister knows our plan,*” while telling your sister you do!

Focus on hearing and supporting their wishes, not taking control. Finally, pick a quiet time outside of major holidays with just the adult kids and parents (no spouses) to keep the conversation open and relaxed.

Open the dialogue on wellness

Start the conversation from a place of curiosity and respect. Use “I” statements to share your own thoughts rather than pressing for immediate answers.

Focus first on wellness and long-term care preferences.

Would they prefer to stay in their home with professional support?

Transition to a retirement community?

What about when one passes, what should occur?

Outsource sooner than later

Waiting for a crisis to get outside help is a major mistake. This is true for home maintenance, caregiving, or financial management. Too often, older clients stubbornly insist, “*I’m not paying \$100 for a plow guy and his shovel!*” But shoveling snow, cleaning gutters and pushing a lawn mower in your 70s are wid-owmakers. Is saving a few dollars worth a life-altering event?

This same mindset traps their savings. Without a distribution plan, retirees often freeze and refuse to spend on safety, convenience, or life goals out of fear. A CFP gives them permission to enjoy and spend their money with confidence, while keeping you in the role of a loving child rather than an exhausted caregiver.

Secure essential legal tools

Once preferences are clear, make sure the right legal structures are updated and funded.

A **Healthcare Proxy** names a trusted person to handle medical decisions if your par-ents can’t speak for themselves. Paired with a **Financial Power of Attorney**, daily bills and care choices are managed seam-lessly without costly court inter-vention.

While many assume a Will is enough, a **Revocable Living Trust** offers critical advantages that a Will simply cannot match:

- **Control during life:** A Will only takes effect after death. A Trust works while your parents are alive, letting a successor trustee step in immediately if they become incapacitated.
- **Control over distribu-tion:** Rather than handing heirs a risky, lump-sum inheritance, a Trust can structure payouts over time or at specific milestone ages.
- **Control over privacy & contesting:** Wills go through public, lengthy probate court and can be contested. Trusts remain

completely private and transfer assets smoothly without court delays.

(Did I mention a revocable trust is about control?)

Protecting their independence

Preparing for evolving health needs, or the loss of a parent, spares your family from navi-gating an emotional crisis in the dark. By leading with empathy, collaborating with siblings, and setting up the right legal tools, you protect your parents’ au-tonomy and preserve peace of mind for everyone.

The opinions voiced in this mate-rial 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 Plan-Dynamic, 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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Summer cleanout is greener with Affordable Junk Removal

There are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Maybe walking through your basement has gotten difficult or there is no more room in the attic? Perhaps you are planning to move, and you need to de-clutter before your open house? Figuring out who to call can be challenging. If you contact one of the big haulers, they route you to a phone center where they've never even heard of your town, plus their pricing seems vague and full of extra fees. No wonder you've let the stuff pile up—it's too much of a hassle to get rid of it!

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

Jay Schadler started his business in 2005. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now

he's got a staff of ten, along with eight trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate cleanouts. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting. Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled above-ground pools, hauled away ancient hot tubs, taken down old fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll come for a single item, or they'll clean out an entire house. And they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

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

Working with Affordable

Business spotlight

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

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

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

And speaking of pricing, Jay is upfront about it. His website shows the truck sizes and prices, so you can save time knowing your costs before you call for an



appointment. There aren't any hidden costs or surprise fees with Affordable Junk Removal.

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

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

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He

and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

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

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National Academy of Public Administration's 'Celebration of the American Public Servant' Award

Town Manager Michael Hebert praised the Town of Ashland for being recognized as part of the National Academy of Public Administration's Celebration of the American Public Servant, which honored 250 public service champions from communities across the country.

As part of the year-long celebration, communities were invited to share stories that highlight the unique role local government plays in bringing people together. Ashland's annual Town Hall Trick-or-Treat tradition was selected as one of those stories.

Hebert noted that what began nearly a decade ago as a simple bowl of candy on Town Hall counters has grown into one of

Ashland's most cherished community traditions. Each Halloween, Town Hall transforms into a festive destination for families, with Town staff in costume joined by local businesses, the Ashland Public Library, and the Federated Church to create a fun, welcoming downtown celebration.

Hebert said the recognition extends far beyond a Halloween event. It reflects what makes Ashland special—a community that values connection, tradition, and creating memorable experiences for residents of all ages. He congratulated the entire Ashland community on receiving this well-deserved national recognition.

Rep. Jack Lewis nominates Ashland’s Gabe Mugerian for Honor at Military Appreciation Day

Gabriel Mugerian, an Ashland resident, was honored at the Massachusetts State House at the 2nd Annual Military Appreciation Day ceremony on May 21, 2026. Nominated by Representative Jack Patrick Lewis, Gabe was celebrated for his military service and deep love and commitment to the Town of Ashland.

“I’m proud to recognize Gabe for his decades of service to our country and our community,” noted Rep. Lewis (Framingham). “Because of the efforts and sacrifice of veterans like Gabe, we enjoy an array of freedoms not available to all. Our town is stronger for his commitment to our country, and I am pleased to have nominated him for this esteemed award.”

Gabe Mugerian of Ashland, Massachusetts, age 101, is a proud veteran of World War II, having enlisted in the United States Navy at just 17 years old. As a member of the U.S. Armed Forces, he answered the call to serve during one of the most defining moments in the nation’s history, demonstrating courage, resilience, and unwavering patriotism. Following his military service, Gabe remained a valued member of his community, exemplifying a lifelong commitment to service and integrity.

“The House was honored



Gabe receiving his citation.

to host the second annual Military Appreciation Day in the House Chamber,” noted House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano (Quincy). “This tradition reflects our deep appreciation

for the veterans, service members, and military families who strengthen every corner of our Commonwealth.”

The Massachusetts Legislature has secured several acute

victories for the veterans’ community over the past few years, including the landmark HERO Act in 2024. The legislation broadened the definition of a veteran, increased tax credits and state benefits that veterans were deemed eligible for, and modernized the systems by which the benefits are distributed.

“Military Appreciation Day is about recognizing the people across Massachusetts who step up to serve something bigger than themselves,” noted Governor Maura Healey. “Our veterans, service members and military families strengthen our communities every single day through their leadership, sacrifice and commitment to others. As an administration, we are committed to making Massachusetts the best state in the country for veterans and military families, from transforming care at our Veterans Homes to expanding services and support across the state. We are proud to honor this year’s recipients and grateful for all they have done, and continue to do, for Massachusetts and our country.”

“On Military Appreciation Day, we honor the courage and sacrifice of the brave women and men who have served our nation in uniform,” noted Senate President Karen E. Spilka (Ashland). “As the

daughter of a veteran, I know the deep sense of duty and service that military families carry with them every day. We are also reminded of our solemn responsibility to care for the veterans who have sacrificed so much for our country, and to ensure they receive the support and respect they have earned. On behalf of a grateful Senate, thank you to every active member of the military, every veteran, and every family member who has given their life to service.”

Hosted by the Executive Office of Veterans Services (EOVS) in collaboration with the Massachusetts Legislature, the event recognized the contributions of veterans, active-duty service members, and military families from across Massachusetts. The program also featured a powerful performance of the National Anthem by SGT Amy Fichera, 215th Army Band, MA National Guard. Following the ceremony, honorees and guests were invited to a lunch reception generously donated by the Military Friends Foundation, a Massachusetts nonprofit dedicated to providing support and emergency assistance to military families and families of the fallen.

View a full list of 2026 Military Appreciation Day honorees on [Mass.gov](https://www.mass.gov).

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

15 years later...

Fifteen years ago, we unlocked the doors to a brand new salon with a big dream, a small team, and absolutely no idea how many lives would eventually become part of our own.

Looking back, we've learned something that has very little to do with hair.

People rarely walk through our doors because they simply need a haircut, a color appointment, or a facial.

They come because something in life is changing.

Maybe it's a first date. A wedding. A new job. Senior pictures. A vacation they've been counting down to for months. Sometimes it's after having a baby. Sometimes it's after losing someone they love. Sometimes it's because they've spent months taking care of everyone else and finally decide it's time to do something for themselves.

And sometimes, they simply want to feel like themselves again.

For fifteen years, we've had the privilege of being part of those moments.

People often ask owner Heather Cohen what she's most proud of after fifteen years. Her answer is always the same.

"It isn't the renovations or the awards. It's hearing someone walk out the door saying, 'I feel like myself again.' The smile on their face is the best compliment of all."

Of course, the salon has changed too. Quite a bit, actually.

We've renovated multiple times over the years. First we doubled our space, and after the pandemic we took the biggest leap yet, expanding into the 4,000 square foot studio we call home today. Every time we grew, it wasn't because we wanted a bigger salon. It was because we wanted to create a better experience for the people who trusted us.

Looking back, we never sat down with a master plan that said, "One day we'll be a full-service beauty studio."

Most of what we've become happened because our guests kept asking for more, and we kept listening.

Someone wanted expert

skincare in the same place they already trusted for their hair. Someone else was looking for a makeup artist for a wedding. Curly-haired guests wanted specialists who truly understood their hair texture. Others were looking for extensions, lashes, waxing, smoothing treatments, or a little more time to relax and take care of themselves.

Instead of sending people somewhere else, we kept asking ourselves one simple question.

"Why not offer it here?"

Somewhere along the way, skincare became a big part of our story too. We realized pretty quickly that caring for someone's skin isn't all that different from caring for their hair. It's personal. It's confidence. Sometimes it's simply giving someone permission to slow down for an hour.

One of the most meaningful chapters has been creating our private wig and topper studio.

For women experiencing hair loss from medical treatment, alopecia, hormonal changes, or thinning hair, this work is about so much more than finding the right piece. It's about restoring confidence during a season when confidence can feel hard to find. Every consultation is private. Every solution is customized. Every guest is welcomed with kindness because we know these conversations matter.

Looking back, it's funny. We spent fifteen years growing, but not always in the ways we expected.

Yes, the salon got bigger.

But the best kind of growth has been watching people grow alongside us.

Our apprenticeship program has become one of the things we're proudest of. Every experienced stylist once stood at the beginning of their career, and helping new artists build confidence, learn their craft, and eventually welcome guests of their own has become one of the most rewarding parts of what we do.

There were moments over the years when we had to stop and pinch ourselves.

Editorial photo shoots. National advertising campaigns.



The Stories Behind the Chair

Television appearances. Creative projects that challenged us and reminded us there's always something new to learn.

The best part?

Every bit of that experience came right back into the salon, making us better for the guests sitting in our chairs every day.

Some of our favorite memories haven't happened inside the salon at all.

They've happened throughout our community.

Over the years we've been lucky enough to support local charities, schools, sports teams, community organizations, and businesses that make this area such a special place to live.

We're also honored to continue funding two annual scholarships for students at our sister school, the Martello Beauty Institute in Cancun, Mexico. Helping future beauty professionals begin careers of their own feels like one of the best ways we can give back to an industry that has given us so much.

When we think about the last fifteen years, we don't think first about growing larger or even the milestones.

We think about the bride who trusted us on her wedding day and still comes in for her color every six weeks.

The teenager who nervously sat in one of our chairs before her first school dance and now brings in her own children.

The guest who looked in the mirror after experiencing hair loss and smiled because she finally saw herself again.

The friendships.

The conversations.

The laughs.

The trust you've placed in us.

Those are the things that built b.LUXE.

As Heather likes to say, *"People think we've spent fifteen years building a salon. Honestly, we've spent fifteen years building relationships. The salon just kept getting bigger along the way."*

The walls have changed.

The mirrors have changed.

The heart behind them never has.

To every guest who has trusted us, celebrated life's milestones with us, laughed with us, cried with us, recommended us to a friend, or simply walked through our doors, thank you.

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Here's to the next chapter...and to the countless stories still waiting to walk through our doors.

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.

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Saving for retirement: Are you guessing or planning?



Mark Freeman, CEPA

FINANCIAL FOCUS®

Provided by Edward Jones

Let's say you dream of spending your retirement mornings on a warm beach, coffee in hand, waves rolling in. To get there, you had a simple plan: save \$1 million and buy the beach house you always wanted.

But when retirement arrives,

reality hits. After accounting for keeping your current home, everyday expenses and health care, \$1 million doesn't stretch as far as you thought, and the beach house remains a dream. The problem wasn't your discipline – it was that your number was never really your number. It was arbitrary, not anchored to what your ideal retirement would actually cost.

How can you make sure your retirement number is right for you?

A solid savings goal starts with a clear picture of the retirement you want. Think through where you plan to live, whether you'll keep your current home or downsize, how much you plan to travel, if you'll help children and grandchildren financially and what health care might cost you later in life. Build a realistic monthly budget, then multiply by 12 months to find your an-

nual need. Adjust this amount for inflation until the first year of retirement.

Then, multiply that figure by 25 to get a sense of how much may be needed to save. It's a formula based on the idea of withdrawing 4% annually from your savings, assuming you retire in your mid-60s. If you need \$60,000 a year, your target is around \$1.5 million. You may need more or less depending on your lifestyle, health, unexpected expenses, Social Security benefits and other income. No single rate or strategy will work for everyone. A financial advisor can help you determine your number and strategy.

Once you know your target, the path forward becomes clearer. Here are a few tips for next steps:

Start early. The sooner you begin saving, the more time compound interest has to work in your favor. Small amounts set

aside automatically each paycheck have the opportunity to grow significantly over decades.

Live below your means. Spending less than you earn is one of the most powerful wealth-building habits. When your income rises, save and invest the difference instead of upgrading your lifestyle.

Keep your debt under control. Since credit cards and other high-interest debt can slow your progress, pay off balances monthly when possible.

Invest consistently. If your employer offers a 401(k), aim to contribute at least 10%-15% of your salary, and increase your contributions after every raise. If you max out your 401(k), a traditional IRA or Roth IRA may offer additional tax-advantaged growth (eligibility and contribution limits apply).

Boost your income when you can. Develop new skills, ask for a raise or explore a side income. Every extra dollar saved moves you closer to your goal.

The difference between a retirement you love and one full of compromises often comes down to the planning you do today. Know your real number, build a solid plan and get the right help along the way.

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

Mark Freeman, CEPA
Edward Jones Financial Advisor
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Hopkinton, MA 508-293-4017
Mark.Freeman@edwardjones.com

This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.

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Worcester State University's Spring 2026 Dean's List

At Worcester State University, we recognize students who attain high grades each semester by announcing the Dean's List.

To qualify for the Dean's List, full- and part-time students must earn a grade point average of 3.5 or better for the semester. Courses taken on a pass/fail

basis are excluded from the GPA calculation.

The following students from Ashland, MA, are on the Dean's List:

Kristina R. Dennis
Anna D. Kaufman
Kayleigh A. Masiello
Daniel R. Ryan

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LIVING HEALTHY

Give your child the gift of clear vision this school year

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

As summer winds down, parents are busy checking off back-to-school lists—backpacks, notebooks, pencils, clothes. But one critical factor for classroom success can't be bought in a store: healthy, clear vision.

August is Children's Eye Health and Safety Month, a timely reminder to prioritize kids' visual well-being. Experts estimate up to 80% of classroom learning is presented visually. Whether reading, writing, using computers, or watching the whiteboard, children's eyes work constantly. When they can't see clearly, learning becomes difficult, frustrating, and exhausting.

The hidden struggle: screenings vs. real exams

A common misconception is that children will complain if their vision is poor. In reality, kids rarely realize they have a problem—with no point of

comparison, they assume everyone sees the way they do, and simply adapt to blurry vision or eye strain.

Surprisingly, a child can pass a school vision screening and still have significant issues. Screening typically tests only distance acuity and aren't a substitute for a comprehensive eye exam. Studies show 1 in 17 preschoolers and nearly 1 in 4 school-aged children have undetected vision problems affecting their academic performance. Early diagnosis allows these conditions to be treated before they disrupt learning.

Warning signs to watch for

- Parents should watch for:
- Squinting, eye rubbing, or head tilting
 - Frequent headaches or eye strain after school
 - Sitting too close to the TV
 - Holding books or devices very close to the face
 - Losing their place or skipping lines while reading

ping lines while reading

- Covering or closing one eye to focus
- Excessive tearing, redness, or light sensitivity
- Sudden avoidance of reading or homework

Trust your instincts—if something seems off, schedule an exam.

Digital eye strain

Modern classrooms rely heavily on computers, smartboards, and tablets, which has driven a rise in Computer Vision Syndrome (Digital Eye Strain). Symptoms include blurred vision, tired or dry eyes, headaches, light sensitivity, and neck or shoulder discomfort. Screen concentration reduces our blink rate, drying out the tear film and fatiguing the eyes.

Simple habits help: the 20-20-20 rule (every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds) relaxes focusing muscles. Kids should also blink



deliberately, maintain a comfortable viewing distance, reduce glare, and take regular breaks from devices.

Notably, despite marketing claims, evidence doesn't show blue-light-blocking glasses meaningfully reduce digital eye strain. Proper viewing habits, breaks, and correcting refractive errors remain the most effective strategies.

home, keep hazardous chemicals and sharp tools out of children's reach, and teach basic safety habits like not running with pencils or scissors.

Nutrition also supports growing eyes. A diet rich in colorful fruits and vegetables, leafy greens, omega-3-rich fish, eggs, and whole grains provides the vitamins and antioxidants needed for healthy retina development, tear production, and overall eye health.

A clear path to success

As the new school year begins, remember that clear vision is a cornerstone of your child's success, both academically and beyond. Early detection and treatment of vision problems can improve learning, confidence, athletic performance, and quality of life. Making a comprehensive eye exam part of your back-to-school routine is one of the most valuable investments you can make in your child's future.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, our ophthalmologists and optometrists provide comprehensive eye care for children and adults using state-of-the-art technology. Our Children's Optical Boutique offers eyewear designed for infants, children, and teens, with an in-house lab for quick, precise service.

This school year, give your child the gift of seeing the world clearly.

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Justin Cameron appointed Director of Student Services

The Ashland School Committee has appointed Mr. Justin Cameron as the district's next Director of Student Services, effective Aug. 1, 2026. Mr. Cameron succeeds Ms. Brittany Hawkins, who has served the district with distinction and dedication.

Mr. Cameron joins Ashland Public Schools after serving as Principal of Concord Middle School for the past nine years, where he earned a reputation as an innovative, student-centered leader committed to inclusive practices, instructional excellence, and systems-level improvement. Throughout his career, he has demonstrated a deep commitment to supporting students with diverse learning needs while fostering strong partnerships with educators and families.

Before becoming a principal, Mr. Cameron began his career at a Chapter 766 special education school, where he gained firsthand experience serving students with significant disabilities. He later served as an Assistant Principal overseeing special education programming, worked closely with district student services leadership throughout his administrative career, and taught graduate-level courses in special education, including assessment, instructional methods, and inclusive practices. His leadership has included chairing IEP meetings, strengthening district programming, and expanding inclusive opportunities for students.

Mr. Cameron currently serves as Principal of Concord Middle School, where he collaborated with district leaders to develop an innovative Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) master schedule that expanded access to targeted interventions and strengthened Tier I instruction. The model was later showcased by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as an example of innovative practice. He also led efforts to expand in-district specialized programming, improve collaboration with families, and create more inclusive educational opportunities for students.

Educationally, Mr. Cameron brings a strong academic background to the role. He is a doctoral candidate in Curriculum, Teaching, Learning, and Leadership at Northeastern University, holds a Master of Education in Educational Leadership from Framingham State University, and earned his Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Green Mountain College. His professional experience also includes serving as an adjunct graduate professor, consultant, and educational leader in Special Education across Massachusetts.

"Justin brings an exceptional combination of instructional leadership, special education expertise, systems thinking, and innovative problem-solving that will strengthen student services across the district," said Superintendent James Adams. "His experience leading inclusive programming, supervising special education services, and building strong relationships with students, families, and staff makes him an outstanding addition to our leadership team."

Mr. Cameron's leadership has earned high praise from colleagues and supervisors throughout his career.

Concord Superintendent Dr. Laurie Hunter described him as "a rare combination of visionary leadership, operational strengths, and a commitment to supporting students, families, and faculty," adding, "I have encountered few leaders who possess the innovative leadership and emotional intelligence displayed by Justin Cameron."

Angel Charles, Director of Student Services for Concord Public Schools, wrote, "He does not just manage a building; he develops a community," highlighting Mr. Cameron's ability to create school cultures where students and staff thrive.

Throughout his career, Mr. Cameron has championed initiatives that promote belonging and equity, including expanding specialized programming that allows students to remain in their home communities whenever appropriate, embedding inclusive design principles into school planning, and intro-



ducing Unified Basketball to strengthen school culture and student connectedness.

Mr. Cameron commented, "I am excited to begin this next chapter by listening, learning, and building meaningful relationships with students, families, staff, and community partners. I look forward to meeting the kids and becoming part of the Ashland community."

Ashland Public Schools remains committed to fostering a collaborative school community focused on academic excellence, equity, and student well-being.

Meet Tippy – A loving boy with a heart of gold



Tippy is a 2-year-old boy who was found as a stray. Affectionately nicknamed "Tippy Toes" for his charming white-tipped front paw, he is a very sweet and affectionate cat with a gentle nature and a heart full of love.

He loves being with his people and is happiest when he has company. Tippy enjoys attention and will happily come over for pets, especially chin scratches, which are his absolute favorite. He is also quite happy to accept belly rubs and will quickly reward you with an instant, steady purr. He likes to be brushed and truly enjoys gentle interaction and closeness with his humans.

Tippy is very food-motivated and has a very convincing way of acting like he hasn't been fed, even if he absolutely has. His dishes are mysteriously empty in no time, and he will happily remind you (with his sweet little meow) when it might be time for his next meal. While Tippy adores attention and affection, he firmly believes that food comes first. If you happen to offer pets and dinner at the same time, don't be offended if he chooses the food bowl before coming back for cuddles!

Tippy is also playful and curious, enjoying toys and interactive play with his people. He is just as happy to settle in for some affection. He enjoys being held and cuddled and is always looking for an opportunity to be close to his favorite humans. He has a soft, gentle meow that he uses to ask for attention, food, and companionship. He is an all-around sweet boy who simply wants to be near people and be part of daily life.

Tippy has been diagnosed with hypertrophic cardiomyopathy (HCM), a significant heart condition that requires lifelong medication and regular veterinary monitoring. Because of the severity of his disease, his life expectancy may be shorter than average. He is looking for

a very special family with a big heart, someone who can fully understand, accept, and cherish the time they have together; no matter how long that may be, and focus on making every day safe, loving, and meaningful.

Tippy has been an incredibly good patient and has been very cooperative with taking his medication.

Tippy has been an incredibly good patient and has been very cooperative with taking his medication.

TIPPY

continued on page 12

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August 2026 at the Ashland Library

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

Special Event:

Summer Reading for all Ages ends on Aug. 12! Make sure to log your hours and write reviews on Beanstack! All prizes will be awarded by Aug. 13, and Sub-Zero ice cream coupons must be used by Monday, Sept. 7.

Minuteman Library Crawl 2026 Monday, Aug. 3 - Tuesday, Aug. 4

It's our Sixth Annual Minuteman Library Crawl! We invite you to spend some time visiting local libraries – find out what is special about each and what they have to offer to you and your family. This is an event for all ages – all you need is a love of libraries and a way to get from place to place (on foot, by bike, by car, or by llama).

ADULT In Person:

In Person - Front Street Readers Book Club. Tuesday, Aug. 4 at 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Read *Destiny of the Republic: A Tale of Madness, Medicine and the Murder of a President* by Candice Millard.

In Person - A Walk In Their Shoes: Dementia Simulation, in partnership with The Residence at Valley. Tuesday, Aug. 4 at 4 p.m.

In Person - Mah Jongg

Wednesday, Aug. 5 at 6 p.m.
In Person - Card Making with Jan Poppendieck. Monday, Aug. 10 at 6:30 p.m.

In Person - Historical Fiction Book Club. Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 11 a.m. Read *The Saturday Evening Girls Club* by Jane Healey

In Person - Ice Cream Bar and Summer Reading Discussion. For Adults Only. Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 6-7:30 p.m.

In Person - Great Decisions: Multilateral Institutions in a Changing World Order. Thursday, Aug. 13 from 6-7:45 p.m.

In Person - Women's Wisdom Circle. Thursday, Aug. 13 from 6-7:30 p.m.

In Person - Mystery Book Club. Friday, August 14 from 12 p.m. Read *By Its Cover* by Donna Leon.

In Person - Name That Tune: Songs of Revolution. Saturday, Aug. 15 at 2 p.m.

In Person - Cook Book Club. Tuesday, Aug. 18 at 5 p.m.

In Person - Bio/Memoir Book Club. Wednesday, Aug. 19 at 11 a.m. Read *Paper Girl: A Memoir of Home and Family in a Fractured America* by Beth Macy.

Virtual:
Virtual - Celebrating America's 250th: "The Convention" with author Lars D. H. Hedbor. Monday, Aug. 3 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Environmental Book Club. Wednesday, Aug. 5 at 6:30 p.m. Read *Blown to Hell: America's Deadly Betrayal of the Marshall Islanders* by Walter Pincus.



Virtual - Romance Book Club. Thursday, Aug. 6 at 7 p.m. Topic: Forbidden Love

Virtual - Celebrating America's 250th: "Act Worthy of Yourself" with author Salina B. Baker. Monday, Aug. 10 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Historical Fiction Book Recs with Bestselling Author, Jane Healey. Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 6:30-7 p.m.

Virtual - Inclusive & Diverse Romance Book Recommendations with Read My Lips Boston. Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 6-6:30 p.m.

Virtual - SciFi Book Recommendations with Author Elizabeth Bear. Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 7-7:30 p.m.

Virtual - A Book Birthday Celebration with Romance Author Olivia Dade. Thursday, Aug. 13 from 2-3 p.m.

Virtual - Declutter series with Jamie Novak: Thrifty & Tidy 10 easy ways to organize to save money. Thursday, Aug. 13 from 7-8:30 p.m.

Virtual - Presidential Series with Doodler Heather Rogers: Andrew Jackson. Friday, Aug. 14 at 10:30 a.m.

Virtual - Celebrating America's 250th with Presidential Doodler

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

Heather Rogers. Monday, Aug. 17 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Fantasy Book Recs with Kristen of the Fantasy Cafe. Thursday, Aug. 20 from 6:30-7 p.m.

Virtual - Inclusive and Diverse Book Recs with Bookstagrammer fromsometimestleelynn-reads. Thursday, Aug. 20 from 7:30-8 p.m.

Virtual - Art on Thursday: Through Wind and Storm: The Art of Wild Weather. Thursday, Aug. 27 from 7-8:15 p.m.

Adult Weekly:

- Knit and Crochet Club. Mondays at 6 p.m. Walk-In
- NO Gentle Yoga in August.
- In-person - Mindful Meditation. Fridays from 10:30-11:15 a.m.

CHILDREN Special Programs:

Pokémon Trading Card Workshop. For grades 2-6. Saturday, Aug. 1 from 1-2:30 p.m.

LEGO Club! Thursday, Aug. 4 at 4:30 p.m.

Craftnoon: Flower Pinch Pots. For grades 2-6. Wednesday, Aug. 5 at 3 p.m. Registration is required.

Pebble Pals: Adopt a Pet Rock! For grades K-6. Thursday, Aug. 6 at 4 p.m. Registration requested.

Roarapalooza: Dino Party! For families. Friday, Aug. 7 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. No registration required.

VEX IQ Robotics for Kids! For grades 2-6. Saturday, Aug. 8 at 2 p.m. Space is limited, and registration is required!

Sensory Safari. For ages 1-3 with a caregiver. Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 3-4 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 26 from 3-4 p.m.

Garden Workshop. For grades K-6. Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Registration re-

quested.
Summer Reading Wrap-Up Party with Flying High Dogs! For families. Thursday, Aug. 13 from 5:30-7 p.m. No registration required.

Magic Trunk Theatre. For ages 3-6 with a caregiver. Wednesday, Aug. 19 from 3-4 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.project-abc.org/>

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 Advisory Board Meeting - In Person. Thursday, Aug. 6, 3-4 p.m.

Teen - In-Person Creative Writing Club. Thursday, Aug. 13, 5-6 p.m.



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TIPPY

continued from page 11

ications, showing just how sweet and adaptable he is even with a medical routine.

Because of his condition, Tippy will do best in a calm home where he can avoid stress and continue his medical

routine. He would thrive with someone who can give him consistent love, a predictable environment, and attention to his health needs. Tippy could also do well with another calm, easy-going cat who enjoys companionship without roughhousing. He seems to appreciate having feline company, but because of his heart condition, he should not be expected to keep up with

an energetic playmate or engage in overly vigorous play. A laid-back feline friend who is happy to relax and enjoy each other's company could be a wonderful match for him.

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

Mary Mortensen Award



The Mary Mortensen Award was created in honor of Ashland resident and longtime Board of Health Member, Mary “Penny” Mortensen. Mary Mortensen was instrumental in implementing many Board of Health regulations. This year commemorates the ninth year of the Award.

This year it was awarded to two Ashland residents, Amy Turncliff and Kirsten Quern.

Amy Turncliff’s contribution to Ashland’s public health spans more than a decade and continues to today. She served as Coalition Chair of Decisions at

Every Turn through the coalition’s founding era and under her chairmanship, DAET secured two consecutive five-year Drug-Free Community awards. Amy has convened DAET annual retreats, led cross-board coordination with the Board of Health and Ashland Public Schools, and partnered with Tufts University & MetroWest Substance Abuse Prevention to bring research-grade thinking to local policy.

Kirsten Quern is a Mental Health Clinician with the Ashland Police Department’s Jail

Diversion Program. Kirsten works alongside officers responding to calls involving mental health crises, substance abuse, and domestic violence - she is the compassionate bridge between police officers and those in crisis. She is also a consistent presence in Ashland Public Schools supporting students, staff, and families.

Thank you to Amy and Kirsten for all the work you have done and continue to do for Ashland’s Public Health. Your dedication is extremely appreciated.

Ashland Lions Club August 2026 update

Save the Date: Annual Lions Golf Tournament

Join us for the Ashland Lions 18th Annual Charity Golf Tournament, to be held Monday, Sept. 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 — additional sponsorship details are on our website. Sign up now; space is limited! For registration details, visit ashlandlions.org/golf, 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. So far in our new Lionistic

year, we have already collected over 100 pairs of glasses. Thank you to our Lions for your tireless work on this project! Collection boxes are located 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 LocalTownPages* as well!



Grand Prize Winner enjoys a day at Southwick's Zoo



Grand Prize winner Chelsea T. recently redeemed her four-pack of tickets to Southwick's Zoo, enjoying a memorable day with her extended family. Pictured above, Chelsea is the second from the right.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR GRAND PRIZE & RUNNER UP WINNERS

who correctly identified all 10 HIDDEN ANIMALS in our May newspapers to win general admission tickets to Southwick's Zoo

GRAND PRIZE WINNER - Wachusett Free Press Chelsea T.

Wachusett Free Press.....	Stacy J.	Medway & Millis Local Town Pages.....	Lydia T.
Upton & Mendon Free Press.....	David C.	Hopedale Local Town Pages.....	Lisa B.
Milford Free Press.....	Paulo Sergio P.	Holliston Local Town Pages.....	Alan M.
The Yankee Express - South.....	Emily C.	Franklin Local Town Pages.....	Amanda G.
The Yankee Express - North.....	Hale S.	Blackstone Valley Express - South.....	April H.
Norwood Local Town Pages.....	Kelly A.	Blackstone Valley Express - North.....	Emilia S.
Norfolk & Wrentham Local Town Pages.....	Joseph C.	Bellingham Bulletin.....	Scott R.
Natick Local Town Pages.....	Meg W.	Ashland Local Town Pages.....	Suzanne M.

Thank you to all our readers for your enthusiastic participation in making this contest a fun and successful community event!

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Ashland local updates

News from the Town Clerk's Office:
State Primary Election
The State Primary Election will be held on Sept. 1, 2026, from 7 a.m.–8 p.m. at the Ashland High School (65 East Union Street). Voters will be asked to choose the following:
Senator in Congress (for this Commonwealth)
Governor (for this Commonwealth)
Lieutenant Governor (for this Commonwealth)
Attorney General (for this Commonwealth)
Secretary of State (for this Commonwealth)
Treasurer (for this Commonwealth)
Auditor (for this Commonwealth)
Representative in Congress (Second District)
Councilor (Second District)
Senator in General Court (Middlesex & Norfolk District)
Representative in General Court (Seventh Middlesex District)
District Attorney (Middlesex Northern District)
Register of Probate (Middlesex District)

Choosing Your Ballot for the Massachusetts State Primary Election
In the Massachusetts State Primary Election, voters receive one ballot based on their party enrollment.
Registered Democrats must vote the Democratic ballot.
Registered Republicans must vote the Republican ballot.
If you are unenrolled (often called an "Independent" voter), you may choose one party's ballot at the polling place. You simply tell the election worker which ballot you would like to receive. Choosing a party's ballot for the State Primary does not change your voter registration or enroll you in that political party. After voting, you will remain unenrolled. Remember, you may only vote one

party's ballot in a primary election. You cannot vote in more than one party's primary. If you are unsure of your current voter registration status, please contact the Town Clerk's Office before Election Day. 508-881-0100 ext. 7127 or townclerkoffice@ashlandmass.com. **The last day to register to vote in the State Primary election is Saturday, Aug. 22, 2026.** The Town Clerk's office will be open until 5 p.m., or you may register online.

In-Person Early Voting
In-Person Early Voting will be held at Town Hall (101 Main Street) on the following dates:
Saturday, Aug. 22, 2026 – 10 a.m.–4 p.m.
Monday, Aug. 24, 2026 – 8 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026 – 8 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
Wednesday, Aug. 26, 2026 – 8 a.m.–7 p.m.
Thursday, Aug. 27, 2026 – 8 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
Friday, Aug. 28, 2026 – 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

Vote-by-Mail Information for the Massachusetts State Primary
In advance of the State Primary Election, the Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth mails Vote-by-Mail application postcards to all registered voters. This postcard is an application—it is not your ballot. If you wish to vote by mail, you must complete the application and return it to the Town Clerk's Office. You may also apply online through the Secretary of the Commonwealth's website. Once your application is processed, a ballot will be mailed to you.

Vote-by-Mail Deadlines
Application Deadline: Your Vote-by-Mail application must be received by the Town Clerk's Office no later than 5 p.m. on the fifth business day before the elec-

tion. For the 2026 State Primary, the deadline is Tuesday, Aug. 25, 2026, at 5 p.m.
Returning Your Ballot: Completed Vote-by-Mail ballots may be returned by mail, placed in an official ballot drop box, or delivered in person to the Town Clerk's Office. Ballots must be returned in the official ballot envelope provided with your ballot.

Ballot Return Deadline: If returned by mail, delivered by hand or placed in the ballot drop box your ballot must be received by the close of polls (8 p.m.) on Election Day. DO NOT return the ballot to the polling location.

Helpful Reminders
Carefully read all instructions included with your ballot. Be sure to **sign the ballot envelope** where indicated. Return your ballot as early as possible to avoid postal delays. You can track the status of your Vote-by-Mail application and ballot online through the Secretary of the Commonwealth's voter portal. If you have any questions about voting, please contact the Town Clerk's Office 508-881-0100 ext. 7127 or townclerkoffice@ashlandmass.com. For more information, visit <https://www.ashlandmass.com/219/Elections-Voting>.

Back To School Movie Night and more!
Get ready for a cozy night under the stars at our Back to School Movie Night on Saturday, Aug. 29, from 5:30-9 p.m. at The Corner Spot. Enjoy delicious eats from Lania's Italian American Food Truck, sweet treats from Kona, and beverages from Wine Empire. Plus, Imagine That Face Painting will be on-site, adding a splash of fun for all ages!

Save the dates for even more upcoming community events:
Saturday, Sept. 19: Ashland Day
Saturday, Oct. 3: FallFest

Sunday, Oct. 24: Dragonfly Street Faire
Wednesday, Oct. 28: Downtown Trick-or-Treat
Saturday, Dec. 5: Holiday Stroll & Tree Lighting
Public Safety Night

Ashland Public Safety Day is returning on Tuesday, Aug. 4, from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. This event will be taking place at Ashland Middle School located at 87 W Union St. After the overwhelming success of last year's event, the Ashland Police Department is 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.

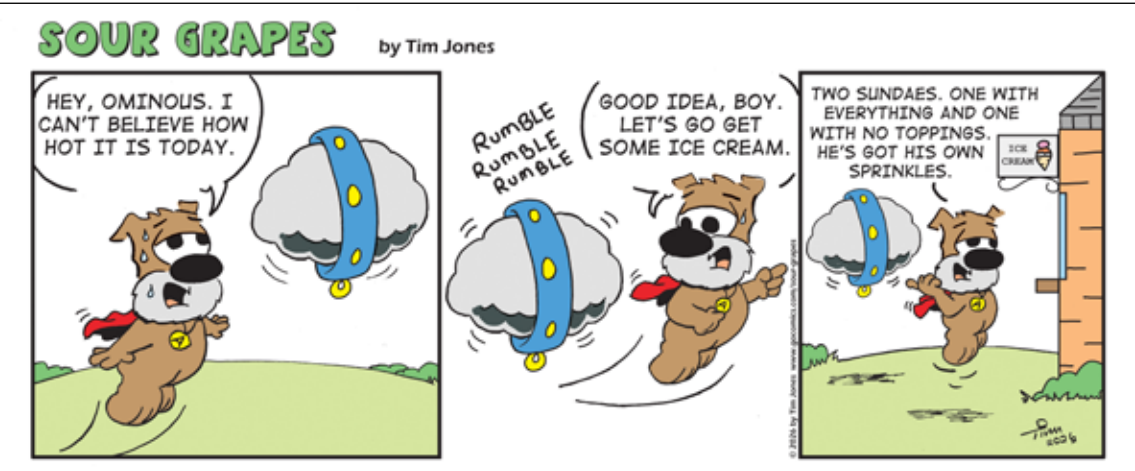
MESSAGES FROM CONSERVATION:

Be a Citizen Scientist!
Spotted Lanternfly has landed in Ashland, and we need your help to find it! Become a citizen scientist and with a few quick steps, you can help Ashland's Conservation Department combat these pesky insects! Simply download iNaturalist on your phone, take a picture when you see Spotted Lanternfly, and upload it with the location tagged. If your photo location is in Ashland, the report will be added to the new Ashland Spotted Lanternfly map, viewable by scanning the QR Code:



Ashland Community Weed Pull

Join the Ashland Weed Warriors on Aug. 22 to pull invasive weeds at the Ashland Arboretum! This pull will focus on Asiatic Bittersweet Vine and Mugwort. No previous experience needed! Help preserve this new community space. Sign up by scanning the QR Code:



One backyard pig roast became one of MetroWest's biggest days of giving: More Pig, Less Cancer returns for its 7th year

What began as friends gathering around a backyard pig roast to support one Ashland family during the fight of their lives has grown into one of the MetroWest community's most unique and impactful fundraisers.

On Saturday, Sept. 12, More Pig, Less Cancer (MPLC) will celebrate its 7th annual event, welcoming hundreds of guests to Pilgrim Day Camp on the Ashland/Framingham line for a day of live music, barbecue, community, and giving—all with one purpose: helping children battling cancer and the families who stand beside them.

The event traces its roots back to the Dahlstrom family of Ashland. After their young son, Lincoln Dahlstrom, was diagnosed with hepatoblastoma (liver cancer) at 7 months old, friends and family wanted to give everyone involved something they desperately needed during months of treatment—a chance to have fun for one day and forget about cancer. They roasted a pig, invited everyone they knew, and created a day centered on laughter, friendship, and hope.

No one imagined that simple gathering would grow into what More Pig, Less Cancer has become today.

Today, Lincoln is 11 years old and doing well, a joyful reminder of the hope that inspired the very first event. While his story sparked the beginning of More Pig, Less Cancer, the organization has since walked alongside many other families facing pediatric cancer. Some of those children are now thriving, while others are remembered by the community that loved them. Their stories continue to fuel the mission behind More Pig, Less Cancer and remind organizers why the work is far from over.

Over the past seven years, More Pig, Less Cancer has raised nearly \$400,000 to support pediatric cancer research and families navigating the unimaginable challenges of a childhood cancer diagnosis. What started as a backyard gathering has grown into an annual tradition that has brought together thousands of support-



EVENT INFORMATION:

More Pig, Less Cancer 2026
Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026

**Pilgrim Day Camp, 1 Badger Road,
Framingham, MA (Ashland/Framingham line)**

**For additional information, interviews, photos, or
media inquiries, please visit www.morepiglesscancer.org**

ers, volunteers, sponsors, musicians, and local businesses—all united by the belief that no family should have to face pediatric cancer alone.

"We started More Pig, Less Cancer because one Ashland family needed their community. Seven years later, we've learned that there are always more families who need people to show up for them. Every September, that's exactly what this community does," said Mike Haverty, Co-Founder of More Pig, Less Cancer.

Unlike many fundraising events, admission to More Pig, Less Cancer includes free live music and all-you-can-eat barbecue. Guests can also purchase activity wristbands for family attractions, participate in drawings and auctions, and make donations throughout the day—all helping fund the organization's mission. The organization's motto says it best: "Eat, Drink & Give Generously."

This year's event is expected to be the largest in the organization's history and will feature multiple live bands, four onsite pig roasts, barbecue from Lucky Pig BBQ, swimming pools, high ropes course,

bounce houses, yard games, video game trucks, craft beverages, and more than \$50,000 in prizes, creating a festival atmosphere unlike any other local fundraiser.

Proceeds from More Pig, Less Cancer benefit St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Haymakers for Hope, which supports pediatric cancer initiatives, and local families battling pediatric cancer, helping ease both the financial and emotional burdens that accompany a childhood cancer diagnosis.

As More Pig, Less Cancer enters its seventh year, organizers hope the event's greatest legacy isn't measured only by the dollars raised, but by the community it has built. What began as neighbors showing up for the Dahlstrom family during one of the most difficult times of their lives has become an annual reminder of what can happen when an entire town—and now an entire region—chooses to show up for others.

Community members interested in attending, volunteering, sponsoring, or donating can learn more and register at www.morepiglesscancer.org.



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August 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.ashland-mass.com/390/Newsletter>, or view it online.

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

NOTE: Ashland Lions' Free Breakfast, Karen Spilka's Listening Hour, Sound Meditation, Chair Volleyball, Ping Pong, Sewing, and Cooking with Chef Lee will resume in September.

FEATURING:

Free Lunch. Sponsored by the Fire Prevention Division of the Ashland Fire Department. Monday, Aug. 10, 12-1:30 p.m. Entrée: Roast Chicken, Mashed Potatoes, Gravy, Vegetables, Rolls and Butter. 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, Aug. 6 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.

Nature Journal. With Autumn Cutting, The Nature Connection. Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. FREE Register: Call 508-881-0140 ext.1

Create your own ice cream sundae. Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 12-1 p.m. FREE. Space limited. Reservations required by Aug. 6.

Dine out for a cause fundraiser. Monday, Aug. 17 from 4-8 p.m. TJ's Food & Spirits, 335 West Union Street, Ashland. 20% of all Dine-in sales will go to the Friends of the Ashland Council on Aging. To help fund activities and services at the Ashland Senior Center. Mention the event to your server.

Iced tea and cookie social. Tuesday, Aug. 18 from 11-12 p.m. FREE. Reservations required by Aug. 13.

Mason jar floral arrangement. Tuesday, Aug. 18 from 9:30-10:30 a.m. FREE. \$3 Recommended donation. Reservations required.

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.-2 p.m. Wednesday 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Grocery shopping trips to Shaw's on Tuesdays from 9-10:30 a.m. and Market Basket on Wednesdays 9-10:30 a.m. 48 hours' advance notice required. Call to schedule.

Legal Phone Consultation.

Friday, Aug. 14 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. Please call 508-881-0140 ext.1 to check availability.

SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone) In-person appointments Thursdays at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 12 p.m. Appointment required. Please call 508-881-0140 ext. 1.

Veterans Office Hours.

Wednesday, Aug. 12 and 26 from 9-11:30 a.m. Appointments recommended. Call 508-429-0629 to schedule.

PROGRAMS & 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.

Community Education and Entertainment: Registrations Required

Creative Writing Group.

With Clara Mott, Romance Writer. Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the Month. No experience necessary. Join us to practice writing and connect with others.

- Aug. 11 - Write a Cultural Snapshot: Pick a significant date in history and write what you remember doing that day, where were you, how did you feel?

- August - What did you want to do when you were a kid? Is it something you eventually did, or did life take you in another direction? Topics are sugges-



tions. Come in with your own writings.

Downton Abbey Viewing:

Season 5, Episode 2. Thursday, Aug. 6 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tea and coffee provided.

Digital Literacy Class (Computers): Empowering Your Wrist: A Senior's Guide to Smartwatches & Online Health with Jonathan Baron. Tuesday, Aug. 4 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Movie With Popcorn: The Greatest Showman. Tuesday, Aug. 11 from 1-3 p.m.

BOARDS, COMMITTEE & COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Ashland Council on Aging (COA) Meeting Thursday, Aug. 6 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Open to the Public.

Friends of the Ashland Council on Aging (FOACOA) Annual Meeting Thursday, Aug. 6 from 12-1:30 p.m. Open to the Public.

Dull Men's Club with Doc. Tuesday, Aug. 4 Breakfast at 9:30 a.m. at 2 Mauro's Cafe (self-pay). Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m. 11, 18, 25 at Ashland Senior Center. Coffee and conversation. All 60+ men welcome!

Town Manager's Coffee Hour. Wednesday, Aug. 19 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. Walk-ins welcome!

Caregiver Support Group.

- Meets Second Wednesday of the month. Wednesday, Aug. 12 from 3:30-5 p.m. Facilitated by a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker. Register by email

[jtokerowski@ashlandmass.com](mailto:jtokarowski@ashlandmass.com)

Clocktown Memory Cafe

with Music by Wendee Glick & Steve Heck. Tuesday, Aug. 25 from 1-2:30 p.m. Please RSVP to Susan McNulty at smcnulty@ashlandmass.com or 508-532-7945. Registration due by Tuesday, Aug. 18.

Hearing Aid Cleaning with Hopkinton Audiology with Darcy Rapucci, Hopkinton Audiology. Monday, Aug. 10 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Emergency Planning for You and Your Pet with Anne Fitzgerald, RN. Wednesday, Aug. 5 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 Aug. 13) \$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.

Skin Care as We Age with Karen Quatrala, Esthetician. Thursday, Aug. 20 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

Planning for your Future:

How Older Adults Can Live Successfully and Safely with Larry Poirier, Outreach Manager, Springfield. Thursday, Aug. 6 from 2-3 p.m. The presentation will cover the following topics:

- Healthy Lifestyle Habits
- Advanced Directives/Estate Planning
- Housing Options: Where do you want to live?
- Establishing a Plan

Participants in the presentation will be entered to win a

SENIOR CENTER

continued on page 20

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A Cappella Singers are no more! We would like to introduce you to... Allegra Commonwealth Singers

On Monday evenings in September through April, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Framingham fills with the familiar sounds of chatter, laughter, and treble voices blending into something bigger than the sum of their parts. For the chorus long known as The A Cappella Singers, those weekly gatherings have always been about more than music alone: they are about community, resilience, and the joy of making harmony together.

Now, the group is beginning a new chapter under a new name: **Allegra Commonwealth Singers**.

President Beatrice Wood says the change reflects both the ensemble's roots and its aspirations. "After extensive brainstorming and then ranked-choice voting, this was the name that prevailed.

We like that the initials stay the same, so it honors who we've been while also describing who we are more clearly," she said. "Allegra carries the feeling of joy and musical energy, and Commonwealth speaks to our Massachusetts home, our broader community, and the shared spirit that connects us as singers."

Roots, Change, and Growth

The chorus, under the direction of Brett Abigaña since last year, has long been part of the MetroWest arts landscape, originating in Natick in 1963 and presenting concerts there and in nearby towns such as Wellesley and Framingham. During the earliest days when the group's name was coined, the chorus performed strictly a cappella pieces. Over the years, the group has adapted to changing schedules,

changing needs, and changing times, and its repertoire today is mostly accompanied by piano.

"The way a cappella music has been presented in recent television vocal competitions and the *Pitch Perfect* movies has created an expectation for our group that is at odds with reality," Wood explained. "We don't know how many singers have ruled out auditioning because of that, but we do know that some singers have been disappointed when they learn in person that we sing with a director in front of us and a pianist at our side. Hopefully, this new name will put an end to any confusion and all singers who love to read music and enjoy being part of a wall of choral sound will give us a try."

According to Wood, there are a couple of other exciting

opportunities on the horizon for the chorus beyond the traditional concerts: planning a 2027 summer tour in Ireland, and a 2028 workshop for young composers of choral music. Community singers interested in joining the trip next year are urged to contact the chorus prior to Aug. 23, 2026.

An Open Invitation

While the name is changing, the heart of the chorus remains the same - a community of singers committed to performing choral music together and sharing that joy with others.

Interested adult voices in the treble range (SSAA) are welcome

to attend guest nights on September 7, 14, and 21, where the December concert repertoire will be introduced. Rehearsals are Monday nights, 7-9 p.m. at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 3 Maple Street, in Framingham. There is no formal audition - singers are heard for voice placement, ability to match pitch, and capability to read music.

The new website is coming soon - until then, the public should continue to use the legacy name and reach out for more information as follows:

- theacappellasingers.org
- info@theacappellasingers.org
- 774-231-8508

YMCA

continued from page 1

worked for the YMCA for more than 30 years, and my journey has really been about bringing new YMCAs to communities. Everything we do is based on the needs of the community, and right now affordable childcare is one of the biggest needs."

The whole project is in memory of Dick, Rick and Judy Hoyt," he said. "Judy really changed the landscape of special education in Massachusetts by advocating for Rick. Because of her determination, he was able to stay in the classroom and went on to graduate from Boston University. "Their mantra of 'Yes You Can' came from their love for Rick and their advocacy for other children with disabilities," he said. "We're excited about leaning into creating an inclusive place."

That philosophy has shaped every aspect of the new YMCA. "Our vision is to create one of the most inclusive YMCAs in the country," Waisgerber said. "When you enter the building, everyone will have the same experience. The main entrance, lobby, elevator and stairs are all designed so people of different abilities feel equally welcome. We want everyone to feel at home and know that this is their Y."

The campus will eventually offer a variety of programs, but leaders chose to begin with early learning because of the growing demand for childcare across MetroWest.

"The need has continued to grow dramatically," Waisgerber said. "We see it every day with the waiting list at our Framingham center, and it's more than childcare. It's early learning and early education with an excellent curriculum and fantastic teachers."

Like all YMCA programs, financial assistance will be available for families who need it. "We don't turn people away," Waisgerber said. "We want to make sure everyone can be part of the community regardless of their financial situation."

MetroWest YMCA will also help address other community needs, including food insecurity. Plans include a kitchen that will support meal programs for families experiencing hardship, while continuing the YMCA's efforts to connect people with additional resources.

"We have amazing staff who build trust with families," Waisgerber continued. "Our goal is always to connect people with the support they need."

The YMCA has always served many families and made an impact far greater than we can believe. Waisgerber believes this

new campus will extend that impact for generations.

"I would go as far as to say we're creating a community resource that will serve generations to come," he said. "The YMCA has been around for 175 years, and we were fortunate to receive this land on the Boston Marathon route before the pandemic. It's been quite a journey."

He credits the project's progress to volunteers, donors and community members who embraced the vision from the beginning. "When good people come together for a great cause, incredible things can happen," Waisgerber said proudly. "I'm so moved by the commitment of the people who live and work in this community. None of this happens without volunteers. They've raised funds, served on committees, and continue to help move this project forward."

With construction now underway, Waisgerber said the YMCA remains focused on opening the Regional Early Learning Center in September 2027 while continuing work toward the full Team Hoyt Community YMCA campus.

"We're excited about what's ahead," he said. "We're continuing the site work and reaching out to people who want to get involved. This is an opportunity to make an impact on generations to come."

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SPORTS

Shooting for back-to-back TVL championships

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Last fall the Ashland foot-
ball team put together a one-
loss campaign, enabling the
Clockers to grab the Tri-Valley
League Championship. In
addition to being the top dog
in the TVL, Ashland earned a
berth in the Division 4 Football
Tournament, where they took
out Danvers in the first round
but fell to Tewksbury Memo-
rial in the Round of 8.

Ashland has consistently
found themselves atop the
TVL throughout the years,
battling for the championship.
Coach Andrew MacKay has
built a culture at Ashland
where they have been able to
play competitively year in and
year out. Last year's league
championship team was very
senior-laden, and the incoming
squad is going to showcase
something different this fall.

"It's going to be different,
but I am super excited for all
the kids who have waited for
their turn behind the talented
seniors on last year's team,"

the Clocker Coach said. "We
have enough talent here and
will once again prove to be a
formidable opponent."

MacKay noted that the
MIAA adjusted the pre-season
this fall across the state, so all
high school football teams will
have less time to prepare than
in the past. Ashland will open
the season with Westborough
on Sept. 11.

Two athletes who did get to
see action last year and will be
returning to take to the field
this fall for Ashland will be
seniors Patrick St. Peter and
Owen Wolfram. Both players
will be playing on both sides of
the ball this year. St. Peter will
play linebacker and lineman
for Ashland; last fall, he re-
corded 35 tackles, 1 sack, and
1 interception. Both St. Peter
and Wolfram were named to
the TVL All-Star team last
year.

"He is the heart of this
team," MacKay said. "He not
only sets the tone for us, but
he is a tough, lead-by-example
player. He is our heartbeat."



As for Wolfram, the now
senior, played safety for the
Clockers last fall, where he
totaled 44 tackles (25 solo)
and had 2 interceptions, but
this season he'll line up under
center as the team's first-year
quarterback. The new Clocker
quarterback is a tremendously
smart individual who should
be able to take the reins and
move the team forward.

"I am excited for Owen
this year as he will finally get
his turn after playing behind
some talented quarterbacks,"
the Coach said. "He'll have
his year, and then we'll have
to go to another quarterback
next year, but that's the nature
of the beast with high school
sports; athletes are only here
for four years, and as a coach
you're rotating continually."

Wolfram possesses the intel-
ligence of a quarterback and
will once again be a top-notch
safety for Ashland while calling
the defensive plays.

Looking at what he has
returning and the possibility
of kids joining the program,
MacKay knows that his team
will definitely be inexperienced
as starters, but having 20 se-
niors gracing the roster who
are ready to make the leap and
take the Clockers to another
league championship.

"It's going to be a great year
watching the younger kids
growing with the team," he
said. "Based on last year, we
will be younger, but these guys
are ready to step up. We built
that competitive culture, and
everyone is looking to keep
this team moving in the right



Photos supplied by the Ashland Football's Facebook Page

direction."

MacKay noted that he al-
ways looks forward to league
games, as they mean so much,
but non-league games are
just as important. This fall,
Ashland has hooked up with
TVL small-school Bellingham,
as well as two higher-division
games with Division 2 schools
Westboro and Algonquin Re-
gional.



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Is underpricing your home a good strategy in today's market?



Kim Foemmel, REALTOR®
Real Estate Broker

REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

Real estate agents have a fiduciary responsibility to act in their clients' best interests and help sellers achieve the highest possible value for their homes. Given that responsibility, why might an agent recommend

listing a property below its perceived market value?

Research and real-world experience have shown that strategic pricing can increase buyer interest and attract a larger pool of potential purchasers. Multiple offers can drive the final sale price above the asking price and, in some cases, beyond what the seller anticipated.

This approach tends to be most effective in markets where buyer demand exceeds the available supply of homes. When buyers perceive a property as offering exceptional value, they are often motivated to act quickly and make stronger offers. This was a great strategy in 2021 and 2022 when we knew we had buyers chomping at the bit waiting for the next house to buy before interest rates were projected to climb over 3.5%. Prices increased in value 26.5% from

2021 to 2022 in Hopkinton.

Today's market is different. Higher mortgage interest rates at 6-6.5% have reduced affordability for many buyers while inventory levels have risen. Buyers now have more time to evaluate their options, taking a more cautious, wait-and-see approach. In this market, pricing a home significantly below value may not create the same level of urgency that sellers experienced just a few years ago.

It's a buyer's market. Underpricing a home in this market is not shown to be as effective to achieve or surpass market value as it was in the previous seller's market. For example, pricing a home \$100,000 below its market value may attract additional attention and increase the number of showings, but the important question is whether buyer demand is strong enough to bring

the final sale price back to and surpass comparable sales.

When buyer demand softens, a home usually sells closer to its list price rather than being driven upward through competing offers. In some situations, underpricing can result in a lower sale price than a seller might have achieved by listing at market value.

The importance of accurate pricing has been highlighted by industry experts. National Association of Realtors chief economist Lawrence Yun has emphasized that underpricing too aggressively can be counterproductive and a mistake if it's done without regard to supply-demand dynamics and long-term market trends. Instead, sellers should aim for strategic, data-driven pricing that reflects both current buyer demand and the potential for future appreciation.

Every home, neighborhood and market is unique. The key is working with an experienced real estate professional who understands local market conditions and can develop a pricing strategy tailored to the seller's goals. Choose an agent you trust, someone who will negotiate effectively on your behalf and help position your home to achieve the best possible outcome.

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Ashland Recent Home Sales

Date	Ashland	Amount
07/15/2026	58 Cedar Hill Rd.	\$640,000
07/15/2026	139 Prospect St.	\$680,000
07/15/2026	25 Nickerson Rd.	\$412,175
07/14/2026	232 Prospect St.	\$625,000
07/14/2026	156 Algonquin Trl.	\$642,000
07/13/2026	31 Waushakum Ave.	\$565,000
07/10/2026	7 Whippoorwill Ln.	\$902,500
07/10/2026	10 Metropolitan Ave.	\$450,000
07/10/2026	7 Hundred Oaks Ln.	\$795,000
07/02/2026	291 America Blvd.	\$620,000
07/01/2026	3 Shady Hollow Path	\$875,000
06/30/2026	77 Leland Farm Rd.	\$480,000
06/30/2026	7 Linden St.	\$490,000
06/30/2026	32 Sherborne Cir.	\$907,500
06/26/2026	73 Independence Ln.	\$1.19 mil
06/25/2026	25 Hardwick Rd.	\$1.48 mil
06/23/2026	47 Cordaville Rd.	\$560,000
06/22/2026	12 Irene Cir.	\$800,000
06/22/2026	205 Union St.	\$315,000
06/22/2026	20 Mulhall Dr.	\$760,000
06/22/2026	62 Voyagers Ln.	\$549,000
06/18/2026	10 Fatima Dr.	\$1.41 mil
06/18/2026	72 Eliot St.	\$730,000
06/16/2026	4 John Hancock Dr.	\$700,000



The 3-bed, 1-bath, 1,403-square-foot home at 232 Prospect Street in Ashland recently sold for \$625,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com



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Senior Sales Associate
Alison@cordaville.com

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

SENIOR CENTER

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raffle prize.

ARTS & CRAFTS

Registrations Required unless otherwise noted. Call 508-881-0140 ext. 1.

Drop-In Craft Class. Tuesday, Aug. 4 from 9-10 a.m. Bring your own Projects, Craft Ideas & Supplies. All levels welcome!

Craft Class with Karen: Mosaic Light Switch Cover. Friday, Aug. 7 from 10-11 a.m. Bring in an unused colorful China Plate and an old Mirror for the craft.

Craft Class with Judy: Fashion Collage. Friday, Aug. 14 from 10-11 a.m.

Craft Class with Elissa: Sun Catcher. Friday, Aug. 21 from 10-11 a.m. Supplies provided.

Craft Class with Milly: Kitchen wall hanging. Friday, Aug. 28 from 10-11 a.m. Supplies provided.

Drop-In Watercolor Class. Wednesday, Aug. 4, 9-10 a.m. Beginners welcome! No instruction. Bring your own supplies and work on your own project. Drop in and paint.

DROP-IN Knitting & Crocheting 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 1:2-3:30 p.m. Beginner Knitting Project: Seat Cushion. Supplies provided. All levels welcome!

EXERCISE

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

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. Per person, per game for players 65 or older: \$5. Check cost with Bowling Alley at 508-376-1101.

Chair Yoga with Mary. Wednesdays at 1 p.m. (No class on Aug. 12.)

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

Line Dancing with Lisa. Thursdays at 1 p.m.



Tai Chi with Karen. Tuesdays at 11:45 a.m. (No class on Aug. 18.)

Zumba Gold with Scott. Tuesdays at 9:15 a.m.-10 a.m. (No class on Aug. 18.)

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 @ <https://www.ashlandmass.com/1224/APL-Calendar>

The Convention with Author Lars D. H. Hedbor - Celebrating America's 250th on Monday, August from 7-8 p.m.

Act Worthy of Yourself with Author Salina B. Baker - Celebrating America's 250th on Monday, Aug. 10 from 7-8 p.m.

A Book Birthday Celebration with Romance Author Olivia Dade on Thursday, Aug. 13 from 2-3 p.m.

Presidential Doodler Heather Rogers - Celebrating America's 250th on Monday, Aug. 17 from 7-8 p.m.

MEAL PROGRAMS: Reservations required. All reservations must be made by NOON the Thursday before the scheduled lunch.

Lunch Prepared by July Weiner, The Casual Gourmet. Tuesday, Aug. 11 at 11:45 a.m. Entrée: Chicken Salad on a Croissant with Cranberries, Radishes and Feta \$7pp Reservations for Lunch: by Thursday, Aug. 6 at noon.

Lunch & Music with Singer Judy Nadel. Monday, Aug. 17 at 12 p.m. Judy Nadel is a rising Senior at Walnut Hill Arts School in Natick, where she studies Musical Theater and

Costume Design. Entrée: BLT Sandwich with a side of Mayo and Potato Chips \$7pp. Reservations for Lunch: by Thursday, Aug. 13 at noon. Free entertainment reservation: Call 508-881-0140 ext. 1.

Lunch Prepared by Senior Staff. Monday, Aug. 24 at 12 p.m. Entrée: Roast Beef Sandwich with Havarti Cheese, Lettuce & Tomato. (With side of horseradish spread) and Potato Chips \$7pp. Reservations for Lunch: by Thursday, Aug. 20 at noon.

Lunch with Trivia. Monday, Aug. 31 at 12 p.m. Entrée: 1/2 Chicken Caesar Salad Wrap plus Potato Chips \$7pp. Reservations for Lunch: by Thursday, Aug. 27 at noon.

Musicologie opening in Ashland

Musicologie, a leader in music education, is opening a new location in Ashland through a partnership with dynamic local couple Ed and Marilyn Fellenbaum.

"Musicologie has always been about fostering a love for music in a welcoming environment," said Joseph Barker, co-founder of Musicologie. "We're excited to partner with Ed and Marilyn who share our vision and values. Together, we're looking forward to supporting more musical talent in the Ashland area!"

As parents and Ashland residents, Ed and Marilyn have been looking for a meaningful way to expand their impact in the community, and opening a Musicologie studio was the perfect fit. Musicologie Ashland is located at 90 Chestnut

Street, Unit B and will open on Aug. 17, 2026.

"We are honored to be part of the Musicologie family and to contribute to its mission," said Marilyn. "Our goal is to create a space where students of all ages can learn and grow through music, and we're excited to bring this experience to people in our community."

The new studio in Ashland will offer simply delightful music lessons through Musicologie's four core programs: Musicologie Junior, Private Lessons, Accelerated Piano Lab and RockStars. Founders Memberships are available now: <https://go.musicologie.com/ashland>

For more information about Musicologie and its programs, please visit <https://musicologie.com>.

FOUNDERS Memberships

FROM

\$112

/MONTH

Only 100 available!

ashland@musicologie.com 508.202.1110