

localtownpages Franklin

Vol. 17 No. 6

Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

August 1, 2026

History repeated in Franklin, and throughout Mass.

Historic document delivered as part of nation's 250th anniversary

By J.D. O'GARA

On Wednesday, July 1, 2026, Rep. Jeff Roy delivered a hand-printed copy of the Declaration of Independence to Franklin officials on the Town Common at the beginning of the town's annual 4th of July festivities. As part of Revolution 250's "Declaration Delivery Day" initiative, all 351 cities and towns across Massachusetts received one of



On July 1, 2026, Massachusetts State Rep. Jeff Roy delivered a hand-printed copy of the Declaration of Independence to Franklin town officials as part of Massachusetts' "Declaration Delivery Day." From left, Rep. Jeff Roy, Town Clerk Nancy Danello, and Town Council members Jane Callaway-Tripp, Michael LeBlanc, and Maxwell Morrongiello. Photo by Alan Earls.

HISTORY

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Families received free car seat fittings from local police and fire personnel during last year's community baby shower, while the SAFE Coalition donated car seats to families. The service will return this year, with car seat availability dependent on grant funding. (Metacomet Public Health Alliance)

Community baby showers aim to connect growing families with resources

Showers planned for August 18 and 25

in Wrentham and Norfolk

By GRACE ALLEN

They say it takes a village to raise a child. For new and expectant families, finding that village, and knowing where to turn for help, can be just as important as support itself. Recognizing that need, the Metacomet Public Health Alliance is bringing together local organizations and resources through two community baby showers designed to connect families with the services available to them.

Last year, the organization launched its first community baby shower. This year, the event is expanding to two loca-

BABY SHOWER

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BABY SHOWER

continued from page 1

tions with more vendors, offering parents and caregivers essential baby supplies and educational resources in a celebratory, supportive environment.

“We have concentrated primarily on the elder population,” said public health nurse Jeanine Murphy of her organization. “But it has become apparent that in the communities we serve, younger residents are in need of services and resources, too.”

Two community baby showers are planned for this month. On Tuesday, August 18, a shower will be held at the Wrentham Senior Center from 4 to 6 p.m., and on Tuesday, August 25, a second shower will be held at the Norfolk Public Library, also from 4 to 6 p.m.

The Metacomet Public Health Alliance serves residents in Franklin, Norfolk, Wrentham, but the community baby showers are open to everyone, not just residents of those three towns.

Murphy described the events as welcoming “new and expectant moms, dads, young families, grandparents, aunts, uncles — really anybody.”

The showers combine educational resources with practical assistance. At least eleven orga-

nizations are expected to participate in person, while additional organizations that cannot attend will provide information for a resource table. There will also be raffle prizes for attendees.

Among the participating organizations are the SAFE Coalition, WIC (Women, Infants and Children), local police and fire departments, pediatric specialists, a postpartum doula, a birth doula, a lactation consultant, a family medicine physician, representatives from Abbott, a Montessori school and the Newborn Hearing Screening Program.

Police and fire personnel will also provide car seat fittings for families.

Last year, SAFE Coalition donated 30 car seats to the shower and provided every attendee with a bag containing diapers and wipes. Whether car seats will be available this year depends on grant funding, Murphy said.

The two events also rely on community donations to provide some of the essential items for families. Through mid-month, residents can drop off donations at the libraries, pediatricians’ offices, and the senior centers, as well as Franklin, Norfolk, and Wrentham town halls. Supplies needed include diapers, wipes, formula, baby food, bottles, feeding supplies, pacifiers, baby toiletry items, new and gently used infant clothing and bed-



Last year’s community baby shower connected new and expectant families with local organizations offering education, support, and essential baby supplies. (Metacomet Public Health Alliance)

ding, baby toys, and personal care items for new mothers. New car seats are also welcome, but used car seats cannot be accepted because their safety history cannot be verified.

Murphy said formula, particularly specialty formula, remains one of the greatest needs because of its cost.

The baby showers also bring together multiple generations of the community. Last year, local senior citizens created baby

shower favors by arranging infant socks into flowers. Others crocheted and knitted blankets and hats for families.

“The seniors’ contributions were a huge hit,” Murphy said.

The inaugural community baby shower attracted public health nurses from other communities looking for ideas to bring back to their own municipalities, noted Murphy.

Community baby showers became a modern public health

and social initiative starting in the 2010s. Hosted by healthcare networks or local governments, they are viewed as a valuable way to reach new and expectant families to let them know about resources available to them, as well as providing education, contacts, and baby supplies.

Murphy emphasized that one of the primary goals of a community baby shower is making families aware of services they may not know exist. “It’s really just educating the public on what’s out there to help,” she said. “Depending on a family’s circumstances and where they receive care, they may not always learn about services such as birth doulas or lactation consultants, for example. We want families to know those resources exist.”

She hopes that increasing families’ awareness of available programs and services will encourage them to seek help early, improving outcomes for children.

“By connecting people and services, we hope to close developmental gaps and reduce the need for special education,” Murphy said. “It’s about empowering families by helping them understand what resources are available so they can get the support they need.”

For more information about the baby showers or the Metacomet Public Health Alliance, visit metacometpha.org.

HISTORY

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these special reproductions, echoing the exact journey the document took nearly 250 years ago.

According to Roy, historian and printer Gary Gregory me-

ticulously handcrafted these copies at the Museum of Printing in Haverhill, using a reproduction “Franklin-style” printing press and over 10,000 individual pieces of type painstakingly set by hand. The ink was specially formulated to match the Revolutionary era, and the linen/cotton paper, from Twinrocker

Paper, was made sheet-by-sheet, by hand, to feel exactly like the original copies did in 1776.

In July 1776, after the Declaration was signed, Massachusetts was the only state to distribute copies of the Declaration to every single town, over 300 copies, asking ministers to read it from their pulpits and town

clerks to handwrite the text into the Town’s Record Books, said Roy.

“It was the exact moment our revolution transformed from a political debate into a shared public commitment,” said Roy, “Keeping that exact tradition alive 250 years later, Massachusetts is once again the only state in the U.S. to distribute an authentically printed Declaration to all 351 of its cities and towns through the ‘Declaration Delivery Day’ initiative.”

“It was an incredible honor

to deliver a remarkable piece of living history to the Town of Franklin...” said Roy, adding, “We presented this copy to Franklin so it may be recorded into our town history, displayed for our residents, and used to inspire the generations to come. May it serve as a daily reminder of our shared commitment to liberty and equality. Our hope is that this beautiful document will be kept safe and utilized every year for generations to come as we commemorate our nation’s founding moment.”

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Children's Museum of Franklin & MBTA celebrate new transportation exhibit feature

BY JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

On Wednesday, July 8, the Children's Museum of Franklin held a special ribbon-cutting celebration for a brand-new interactive, fully functioning railroad grade crossing signal, designed and built by the MBTA's Signals Department and the newest addition to the museum's train exhibit. The interactive signal enhances the exhibit, where children learn about trains and view trains operating on the Franklin Commuter Rail Line pass outside of the museum.

The event featured representatives from the MBTA, local officials, community leaders, Museum supporters, and families.

Executive Director & Co-Founder of Children's Museum of Franklin, Erin Gallagher not only celebrated the exhibit addition, but also a larger sense of connection. "Research shows that children learn best through play, but we have discovered that the real magic doesn't just

the MBTA does, too ... Every day the MBTA helps people get to work, to school, to visit family, explore places and to build relationships. They make connection possible, that's why this partnership feels so natural to us here at the museum. We may go about it differently, but our organizations share the same purpose, and that's to bring people together," she said.

Gallagher's partner, Meg Hagen added that trains have been a popular part of the museum since the museum was "a mobile museum, traveling throughout our community with hands-on exhibits, packed into a 20-foot U-Haul..." Hagen showed attendees a photo showing "a grandfather and his grandson, lying on the floor, heads together, completely absorbed in building a train track. Around them was the excitement of a busy community event, but for those two, the rest of the world disappeared. They

ficer Ryan Coholan spoke of his childhood love for trains, something he hopes the hands-on exhibit will foster in young visitors, as well as give them a better understanding of how crossing signals keep people safe.

“My fascination as a kid turned into a lifelong passion – nothing fancy, nothing beyond that. I was a kid who liked trains,” he said. The project, he explained, allowed him to “reconnect with the kid in me,” inspiring excited discussions among his colleagues of “what else can we do” in creating the exhibit feature. He hoped such enhancements as a simple red button on the signal would inspire children visiting the museum to become the future MBTA Chief Operating Officer, or a train engineer, signal expert, conductor, and other transit professional.

"We're incredibly grateful to the MBTA for creating a feature that helps children make meaningful connections to the world around them through play," said Gallagher.

Since opening in September 2025, Children's Museum of Franklin has welcomed nearly 60,000 visitors from more than



Young visitors to the museum's transportation exhibit are able to use the signal to predict just when to look out the window to see the train passing by. They can even press the big red button to operate the lights.

happen through a kiddo and the exhibit, it happens between people. It happens when a parent kneels down next to their kiddo to play here in the museum, or when a grandparent shares a story, when siblings or friends solve problems together or when a caregiver pauses a busy day to be present and explore with a child. These moments of connection are why this place exists, and in so many ways, it's why

were simply together, deepening their connection, this cross section of generations connecting,” she said. The MBTA, she said, shares that mission of bringing generations together, “with kids riding the same train lines that their parents and grandparents have taken for generations.” The exhibit, she noted, “teaches children about railroad safety in ways that are engaging, interactive and memorable.”

MBTA Chief Operating Of-



Children's Museum of Franklin founders, shown here with MBTA and Franklin town officials, including MBTA Chief Operating Officer Ryan Coholan celebrated the installation of an interactive, fully functioning railroad grade crossing signal custom-designed and built by the MBTA.

600 towns across Massachusetts, Rhode Island and beyond. The Museum's beloved Transportation Area was made possible by the generous support of Venedetti Motors.

Next month, adults can awaken their inner child at the Children's Museum of Franklin's fundraiser, A Night at the Museum, on September 18, from 7-10 p.m. The \$100 ticket will include catered food from Rail Trail Flatbread Co., beer, wine and signature drinks, great

music and dancing, prizes and surprises throughout the night, and a color celebration, where folks are invited to wear their favorite shade of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, or purple to fill the Museum with every color of the rainbow. Find tickets and sponsorship information on the museum's website at www.childrensmuseumfranklin.org. Also, coming up in October, the museum's Scary Scurry 5K & Fun Run will reappear.



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The Together Trail: Local group aims to build community one walk at a time

By JESS OMMEN

In a time when many people say they feel increasingly disconnected from one another, a new grassroots community group is hoping to bring neighbors together through a simple idea: spending time together.

The Together Trail, a Franklin-based community organization, is working to create opportunities for local residents to connect through monthly nature walks, volunteer projects, and social events such as cooking classes and craft nights. The group, which is still in its beginning stages, invites people from Franklin and surrounding communities to participate.

When Franklin resident Paige Pielocik organized the first Together Trail nature walk in July 2025, only one person showed up. Today, that person is one of her closest friends and has become a pivotal member in supporting The Together Trail’s mission.

Together with help from her friend and volunteer Michelle

Tokar, Pielocik has expanded the organization’s offerings to include activities such as cooking classes and craft nights. She also hopes to organize larger community initiatives, including shop-local campaigns, volunteer projects and even a community cookbook featuring recipes from local residents.

Pielocik said she founded the organization after noticing increasing social and political division in her community, reflecting a trend that is plaguing communities across the country. She believes local communities can help address these challenges by creating opportunities for people to simply spend time together.

“Everything feels so politically charged,” she said. “I wanted to create a space where people who may not have a lot in common could still come together, connect as neighbors and build friendships.”

Her view is supported by research linking strong social connections to improved physical

health, mental well-being and civic engagement.

She also wanted to create an alternative to hobby- or sports-focused organizations.

“There are plenty of groups centered around a specific interest,” she said. “I wanted something where people could simply get together for the sake of community.”

Pielocik also noted she does not want cost to be a barrier to participation. Unlike many organizations, The Together Trail has no membership fees or requirements. However, some specialty events—such as cooking classes—may have a registration fee to cover costs.

The group’s signature event—the monthly nature walks—are completely free of charge and are designed to be welcoming and accessible for all ages and fitness levels. They welcome families, individuals, friends, and even four-legged companions.

Organizers also aim to select locations that are accessible for

wheelchairs and strollers. The Holliston Rail Trail was chosen for July’s Nature Walk in large part for its accessibility.

The August Nature Walk will once again take place on the Holliston Rail Trail. Participants can meet at the Cross Street parking lot at noon on Sunday, August 30.

Additionally, the group will be hosting a craft event in the greenhouse at Fairmount Fruit Farm in Franklin on Saturday, August 15. Guests are welcome to come and go anytime from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available at www.thetogethertrail.org.

The Together Trail welcomes anyone looking to meet new people, volunteer or spend time outdoors. Monthly nature walks are free, require no registration, and are open to individuals, families and dogs. All you have to do is show up!

As Pielocik’s first Together Trail event demonstrated, sometimes just one person showing up can be the beginning of something truly meaningful.



Founder of The Together Trail Paige Pielocik poses with daughter Maisse and friend Michelle Tokar at a cooking class in July. Photo used courtesy of The Together Trail

Looking ahead, Pielocik hopes to expand The Together Trail into neighboring communities by encouraging local residents to start their own chapters.

For those interested in becoming involved, or to learn more about the organization and upcoming events, visit www.thetogethertrail.org or follow The Together Trail on Facebook.

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Caleigh Keating Named 2026 Commonwealth Heroine by MA State Women’s Commission

BOSTON, MA - Franklin resident Caleigh Keating was recently honored as a 2026 Commonwealth Heroine by the Massachusetts Women’s Commission. Nominated by State Representative Jeffrey N. Roy (Franklin-D), Ms. Keating was recognized alongside other distinguished women from around the Commonwealth at the State House on June 24, 2026.

Caleigh is the heartbeat behind the Children’s Programming at the Franklin Public Library. She holds the title of Youth Services Librarian and has been in that position since 2016. In her time there, Caleigh has transformed

the public meeting rooms into an enchanted space where thousands of children look forward to summer reading, Saturday music classes, practicing public speaking in front of therapy dogs, engaging in baby-wearing dance parties, and feeling connected to their community. Under Caleigh’s thoughtful leadership, the Franklin Public Library has over 10,000 visitors annually and has lending opportunities for all learners. In addition to her time spent in the library, Caleigh has created a mobile program for those homebound, multi-language, and is the visiting librarian for each of the public schools.

“I’m honored to nominate Caleigh Keating as a 2026 Commonwealth Heroine,” said State Representative Jeffrey N. Roy. “Her never-ending work at the Franklin Public Library creates a safe and engaging learning environment that is open and accessible to all the young people in the community. Her efforts have cemented her status as an upstanding pillar of the community and displays a perfect representation of a Commonwealth Heroine.”

“The Commonwealth Heroines are women who don’t make the news, but make all the difference in their communities,” said MCSW Chairwoman Mary-dith Tuitt. “Thousands of women in every community across the Commonwealth perform unheralded acts on a daily basis that make our homes, neighborhoods, cities, and towns better places to live. Commonwealth Heroines use their time, talent, spirit, and enthusiasm to enrich the lives of others in their community. They are mentors, volunteers, and innovators - they are the glue that keeps



a community together.”

This year, the Class of 2026 Commonwealth Heroines is comprised of a historic 145 women from across the state, the largest class awarded to date by the MCSW. These women are leaders in industry, business, nonprofit, advocacy, and more, and their work truly makes a difference in our local communities all across the state. Elected officials are encouraged to submit one woman from their constituency as a means of recognizing their invaluable efforts and extraordinary acts of service, who are making a big difference in their communities but not necessarily making the news.

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Memorial scholarship created in honor of teen bicyclist hit



Fifteen-year-old Oliver James Lewis, of Franklin, was lovingly remembered last month after a tragic bicycle accident took the Bishop Feenan High School rising sophomore's life on June 23 at

the intersection of King Street and Interstate 495 North off-ramp. Shown is a roadside memorial to "Ollie."

Oliver's family has established a memorial scholarship at Bishop Feenan High School, from which Lewis would have graduated in 2029. "Friends, family, and all those whose lives were enriched by Oliver are invited to celebrate his memory by supporting a school that meant so much to him," it reads, "Your generosity will help ensure that Oliver's spirit of kindness, friendship, and community continues to inspire Feenan students for years to come."

To donate, visit <https://tinyurl.com/OliverLewisBF-Scholarship>.

-J.D. O'Gara



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A Kickoff for Kickball



On Sunday, June 14, Dads from all over town flocked to Beaver Pond for the first Eddie Grant Memorial Kickball Tournament, an initiative of the civic and social group, Franklin Fathers. The event honors Franklin native Eddie Grant, a Major League Baseball player and World War I soldier killed in action in 1918, for whom Franklin American Legion Post 75 is named. The group plans a couple socials this summer and in the fall, wellness talks. Find Franklin Fathers on Facebook and Instagram. Photos by Dan Brown of Kapitol Photography, <https://kapitolphotography.com>.



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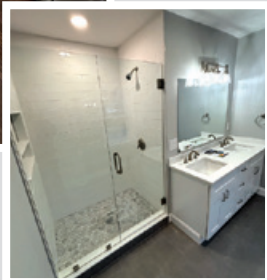
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Her style goes a long way for senior center gift shop

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

Like to shop for treasure? Head down to the Franklin Senior Center. Thanks to Colette Ferguson, who took the reins of Ben's Bounty Gift Shop (named for Ben Franklin) in October of 2024, locals can peruse a distinctive display of quality wares and gently-used clothing any fashionista would be glad to have, at thrift store prices.

Ferguson studied design in Ireland, transformed the drab store as soon as she took over.

"There was not much floor to ceiling, maybe a couple display cases. I figured there was a lot of potential. You have to have a lot of storage in the shop display area," says Ferguson.

Next, she worked on the variety, and she's particular. "You have to have something for everyone to have interest," she says. The shop boasts clothes, jewelry, pocketbooks, a children's corner, a vintage corner, and house goods, many in like-new condition. "That's really, I think, how it's gotten off the ground so well," says the shopkeeper.



Colette Ferguson's styling finesse has tripled the profits at Ben's Bounty Gift Shop at Franklin Senior Center, and that means more funding for programs.

The feedback has been very positive, and sales have tripled.

"Clients are thrilled," she says, because they "can find anything and everything in the store now. You don't have to go to Marshalls. It's serving the community, and it's serving the Senior Center. In this kind of unsure financial climate we're in, (customers) absolutely love coming in and getting something. I keep the

prices very low for that reason. I don't have any overhead; I'm getting the donations for free."

According to Franklin Senior Center Director Sarah Amaral, any profit Ben's Bounty takes in goes straight back to funding Center programs. "That can range from Supportive Day, to our café, to lectures, fitness classes, because we don't have any municipal funding for our

programs. It's all based on fees and our gift shop, with help from the Friends of Franklin Elders," says Amaral, who has nothing but praise for Ferguson's merchandising skills. "She just has a vision for it, and she's meticulous about what she takes," she explains.

Donations come from Franklin and surrounding towns.

"There's a lot of downsizing going in the community as well, so why not support your own community first rather than Savers. Recycle and repurpose, and if you can get a toaster for \$3-\$4, why not do that than go to a store and pay \$25," says Ferguson. Any donated products that aren't new are cleaned, and that includes jewelry "especially the earrings, they're all sterilized, and if there's something that doesn't look like it should be presented in the shop, we have a free table, and I put things out there as well."

Going through donations is a lot of work, and Ferguson is thankful, she says, for "the help and assistance I get from the office staff and the volunteers,

they come in every day. I have four different people coming in every week to cover their shift, a huge commitment, and I'm very grateful for that."

In addition to ensuring a tasteful breadth of offerings, the merchant also has a way with her customers. "Colette gets to know the clients and what they're looking for," says Amaral, "She's transformed the gift shop to really like a boutique. Even the staff are coming in and buying things all the time."

"You'll find a little bit of everything here, and not just adults, kids too," says customer (and donor) Tracy, who encourages other local residents to come down to the Franklin Senior Center to check out the merchandise, but advises, on the good stuff, "If you don't buy it on that day, it's going to go."

Ben's Bounty Gift Shop is located at the Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin MA. Store hours are Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Donations to the gift shop are accepted Mon-Fri from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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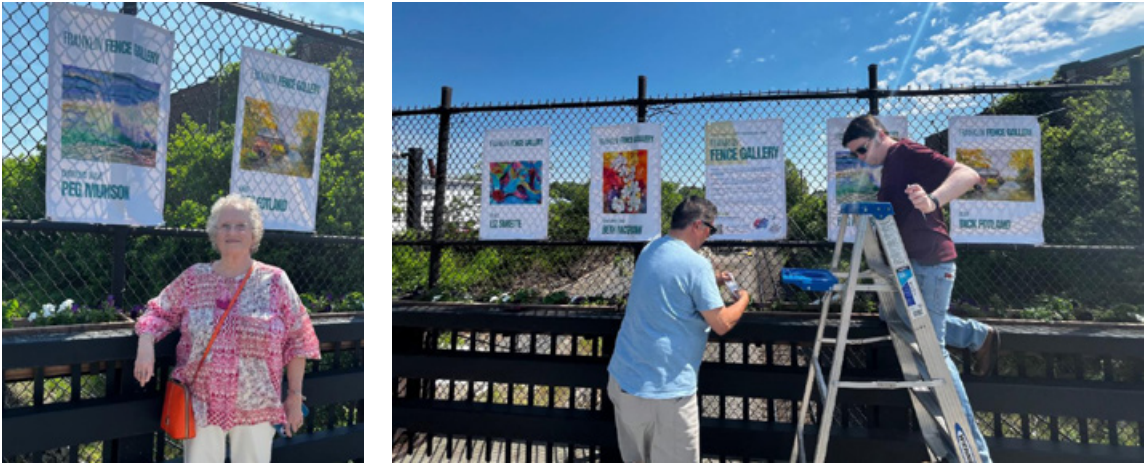
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Stop by the Franklin Fence Gallery!

Located on the downtown bridge, as well as the fence in front of the Davis Thayer building, the Franklin Fence Gallery is a new public art initiative that brings creativity out into the

showcases artwork by artists from across the Franklin area. Installed along prominent fences and public pathways throughout downtown Franklin, the gallery will feature rotating exhibitions

ability and exploration, and create new opportunities for artists to share their work with residents and visitors alike. By activating underutilized spaces with creativity and storytell-



Left: Artist Peg Munson, a member of the Franklin Art Association, stands by an image of her work at the Franklin Fence Gallery.
Right: A project of the Franklin Cultural District and Franklin Art Association, the fence gallery will feature rotating exhibitions by local and regional artists, photographers, students, and community creatives.

open—turning everyday fence space into a vibrant, outdoor gallery for all to enjoy. Presented by the Franklin Cultural District in partnership with the Franklin Art Association, this project

by local and regional artists, photographers, students, and community creatives. The Fence Gallery aims to bring vibrant visual art into the public realm, encourage walk-

ing, the Franklin Fence Gallery continues the Cultural District’s commitment to making arts and culture visible, inclusive, and woven into the fabric of daily community life.

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Annual Franklin 4th of July and Bluesfest a steamy celebration

The heat finally broke on the evening of July 4, 2026 as the annual Franklin 4th of July Festival was coming to a close during its annual Mike Crandall Blues Festival. Here are a few shots from the event:



Above: Sugar Ray & the Bluetones brought dancers to their feet with their Chicago-style blues at the Mike Crandall Blues Festival. Below: The weather became cool as legendary Texas blues singer and harmonicaist Darrell Nulisch and his band took to the stage.



Franklin 250th Celebration Committee held a table at the Franklin 4th of July celebration this year, showing off Franklin-centric merchandise. Check out the wares and progress at www.Franklin250.org.



The masterminds of the event, the Franklin 4th Coalition! Support the 100% privately-funded effort at www.franklin4th.com or text franklin4th to (508) 501-7173.



Many hands made light work at the Franklin Rod & Gun Club's popular fried dough booth. www.franklinrodandgun.org

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FAMILY OWNED AND OPERATED

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, Mas-

sachusetts 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 widowmakers. 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 parents can’t speak for themselves. Paired with a **Financial Power of Attorney**, daily bills and care choices are managed seam-

lessly without costly court intervention.

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 distribution:** 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 navigating an emotional crisis in the dark. By leading with empathy, collaborating with siblings, and setting up the right legal tools, you protect your parents’ autonomy and preserve peace of mind for everyone.

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

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of 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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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 sk-

incare 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.



b.LUXE
hair makeup skincare editorial wigs

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.

You are the reason we've never stood still.

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.

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

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Franklin Town Hall: Community Highlights & Updates, August 2026

Community Choice Power Supply Program Enrollment Update

Beginning July 16, eligible National Grid and Eversource Basic Service customers will receive a Community Choice Power Supply Program consumer notification letter and opt-out card by mail. Eligible customers will be automatically enrolled in the Town's Standard Program unless they choose to opt out by August 19, 2026.

The program affects only the electricity supply portion of a customer's bill. Electric delivery service, billing, and customer protections will not change. Learn more on the Town's website: www.franklinma.gov

Community Came Together for Two Days of World Cup Celebration

The Town of Franklin welcomed the world to the community during two successful days of FIFA World Cup 2026™ Community Watch Parties, bringing together residents, families, and visitors for a fun-filled celebration of soccer and community spirit. The family-friendly event featured live match broadcasts, entertainment, food, and activities, creating a vibrant atmosphere that showcased Franklin's welcoming spirit and brought the community together in celebration.

Town Welcomes Family to Newly Restored Historic Old South Church

The Town of Franklin and Old Colony Habitat for Humanity recently celebrated the completion of the historic Old

South Church's transformation into a permanently affordable single-family home. The project preserves the 1856 landmark while expanding Franklin's affordable housing inventory, and the Marmol family has officially become the home's first residents.

Explore Career Opportunities with the Town of Franklin

The Town of Franklin is currently seeking qualified candidates for several employment opportunities across municipal government. Interested applicants can learn more about each position, including qualifications and application requirements, by visiting the Town's employment webpage at www.franklinma.gov/228/job-opportunities

Stay Informed: Franklin First Newsletter & Town Updates

Residents are encouraged to stay up to date with Town news, highlights, and important announcements by reading the monthly Franklin First Newsletter. Read the latest edition: <https://www.franklinma.gov/1139/Franklin-First-Newsletter>

Residents can also follow the Town of Franklin on social media for timely updates, reminders, and community news.

Subscribe for Town news and announcements: <https://tinyurl.com/FranklinNewsandAnnouncements>

Lend a hand: volunteers needed at the Franklin Food Pantry

Demand for food assistance in the Franklin community is at an all-time high. As the need grows, so does The Pantry's reliance on dedicated volunteers to keep operations running smoothly. The Franklin Food Pantry is currently seeking energetic individuals to support weekday operations. Vol-

unteers must be comfortable with physical tasks, including lifting and moving heavy boxes, and possess the stamina and strength required for an active, fast-paced shift.

Volunteering at The Pantry is incredibly rewarding. You'll see the immediate impact of your hard work on your neighbors'

lives and connect with your community. To join our volunteer team, please visit our website (www.franklinfoodpantry.org/volunteer) and complete an application, or email Laura Doherty, Associate Director, at Ldoherty@franklinfoodpantry.org.

More Families, Fewer Resources:

A New Reality for Our Local Food Pantries

Before leaving for summer break, a local first-grader was asked what she would miss most about school. Her answer was simple: *"I will miss the blue bags."*

Each Friday, those blue bags are filled with food donations and sent home with students in need, ensuring they have something to eat over the weekend.

Hunger continues to be a crisis throughout our state. According to the 2026 *Massachusetts Food Access Report: Hunger on the Rise* from The Greater Boston Food Bank and Mass General Brigham, a record 40 percent of households experienced food insecurity in 2025. Furthermore, child-level food insecurity rose from 33 percent to 37 percent within the last year.

For thousands in our communities, local food pantries are a lifeline providing essential food assistance to those affected by job loss, seniors on fixed incomes, veterans and people with disabilities. Working families also rely on food programs to make ends meet.

The high cost of groceries, skyrocketing rents and cuts to federal programs are driving more residents to seek food support, placing unprecedented strains on local food pantries already working to meet a growing demand.

This was underscored during a summit on food insecurity hosted by UMass Memorial Health — Milford Regional Medical Center's Community Benefits Committee, where

local food pantry leaders shared firsthand insights into the challenges facing their organizations.

Pantry leaders noted significant cyclical declines in donations following the holidays, with challenges becoming heightened after January and particularly during the summer months, because school-based food drives come to a halt.

Another key takeaway from the summit was the profound impact of community contributions. Food donations are always needed and critically important. However, financial contributions provide pantries the flexibility to meet their community's most pressing needs, including offering healthy options.

Food assistance programs not only put meals on the table but help ensure that children have access to the same support they rely on during the school year. Every child deserves to spend their summer feeling carefree and having fun and not worrying if there will be enough to eat tomorrow.

A record 40% of households experienced food insecurity in 2025.



Learn more about your local food pantry's needs by visiting "About Us" at ummhealth.org/milford-regional and viewing "Community Benefits" or scan the QR code.

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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 real-

ity, 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
- 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, head-



aches, 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.

The natural remedy: sunshine and outdoor play

One encouraging development is growing evidence that natural daylight helps reduce the risk of myopia (nearsightedness). Outdoor light exposure supports healthy eye growth, and outdoor activities encourage distance focusing rather than the near-focus demands of books and screens.

Experts recommend at least one to two hours outdoors daily—biking, playing soccer, swimming, or walking. This supports visual development while boosting physical fitness and emotional well-being. Digital devices are valuable educational tools, but shouldn't replace active outdoor play. Encouraging kids to disconnect and spend time in natural light is one of the simplest ways to promote lifelong eye health.

Many sports-related eye injuries can be avoided with protective polycarbonate eyewear during practices and games. At 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.

For more details, see our ad on this page.

Safety and nutrition

This month is also a good time to focus on injury preven-

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Historic Old South Church given new life through community partnership

FRANKLIN, Mass. — On Thursday, June 25, the Town of Franklin and Old Colony Habitat for Humanity celebrated the transformation of the South Franklin Congregational Meeting House, known as the Old South Church, into a permanently affordable single-family home. The historic landmark, which has stood in Franklin since 1856, welcomed the Marmol family as its first residents, marking a new chapter in the building's history.

What began in 2022 with the Town's effort to redevelop the historic property has become a lasting investment in Franklin's future. Through its partnership with Old Colony Habitat for Humanity, the Town preserved an important piece of Franklin's history while creating a permanent affordable home where a family can build a future.

"When the Town began exploring the future of the Old South Church, we knew we had an opportunity to preserve one of Franklin's historic landmarks while creating a lasting benefit for our community," said Town

Administrator Jamie Hellen. "Thanks to our partnership with Old Colony Habitat for Humanity, that vision became a reality. We're proud to welcome the Marmol family to Franklin and celebrate the beginning of a new chapter for both this historic building and the family who now calls it home."

Old Colony Habitat for Humanity was selected through a competitive redevelopment process to lead the renovation with the support of volunteers, donors, local businesses, architects, contractors and community partners.

Following Habitat's homeowner selection process, the Marmol family, including a mother who works in Franklin, was selected to purchase the home. Like every Habitat homeowner, the family completed hundreds of hours of sweat equity alongside volunteers before receiving the keys to their new home.

The home will remain deed-restricted as affordable housing in perpetuity, permanently expanding Franklin's affordable

housing inventory while returning the historic property to productive residential use. The unit qualifies toward the Town's Chapter 40B percentage.

"When I first learned that we had been selected for Habitat for Humanity, it felt like a dream," said new homeowner Sally Marmol. "Standing in front of this beautiful home, that dream has finally become a reality. We are excited to become part of the Franklin community, to be good neighbors, and to give back whenever we can, just as so many people have given to us. From the bottom of our hearts, thank you to Old Colony Habitat for Humanity, every volunteer, every sponsor, the Town of Franklin and everyone who believed in us. We promise to cherish this home and all that it represents."

The Town of Franklin extends its sincere gratitude to Old Colony Habitat for Humanity and the many volunteers, donors, businesses, architects, contractors and community partners whose collaboration helped bring this transformation to life.



The Town of Franklin, Old Colony Habitat for Humanity and community partners welcome the Marmol family to their new home. Photo used courtesy of the town of Franklin.

"This project represents everything Habitat for Humanity stands for—bringing people together to create strength, stability and hope through homeownership," said Old Colony Habitat for Humanity CEO Kim Thomas. "We are incredibly grateful to the Town of Franklin, our sponsors, volunteers, tradespeople and community partners whose unwavering support made this extraordinary project possible. Transforming this historic building into a beautiful, welcom-

ing home while preserving its incredible character has been a truly remarkable journey. The outpouring of generosity and collaboration has been inspiring, and we couldn't be happier for the Marmol family as they begin this exciting new chapter in a home built with love, care and an entire community behind them."

The Town proudly welcomes the Marmol family to Franklin and wishes them many years of happiness in their new home.

Thanks for (saving!) the memories

This article first appeared in and is used courtesy of The Franklin Observer (www.franklinobserver.town.news)

By ALAN EARLS

The Mary C. Morrissey Olsson Historic Preservation Award was established in 2024 by the Franklin Historical Commission, in honor of former chairperson, Mary Olsson, who passed away in 2024, a tireless advocate for historic preservation, as a non-monetary award to recognize an individual or organization that has made an important contribution to preserving, protecting, or communicating the history of Franklin.

By vote of the Commission, the third such award was formally bestowed on Old Colony Habitat for Humanity for its imaginative embrace of historic preservation and adaptive reuse and for shepherding a challenging project to comple-

tion, namely the circa 1856 Old South Congregational Meeting House at 762 Washington Street. Donated to the town for use as a museum in the early 1970s, it served in that role until about 20 years ago and has since been vacant. A beautiful landmark was starting to succumb to the effects of time and climate, and no one had succeeded in finding a way to properly preserve and reuse the structure.

The award was given out during dedication ceremonies marking the completion of the Habitat for Humanity project and the handover of the completed home to the Marmol family Thursday morning.

"Habitat for Humanity found a way, and we hope this will be an example to others of what can be done with historic structures with a little imagination and grit," said Historical Commission Chair Alan R. Earls.

The former church is now an affordable, single-family home that will be maintained under a state supervised Historical Preservation Restriction, that will maintain the

familiar look of the landmark building, while providing a family with a safe and modern dwelling in which to live. The structure will remain an affordable home in perpetuity.

More information about Old Colony Habitat for Humanity is available at <https://oldcolonyhabitat.org>.

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Choosing your college major

“What do I want to major in?” is one of the most common and lingering questions for college-bound students. For some, the answer comes easily. But for many, it doesn’t -and that’s okay. In fact, nearly 20% of first-year students enter college as “undeclared,” making it one of the most popular choices on many campuses. On average, students change their major *three times* over the course of their college career.

The good news? With a little reflection and planning, students can make more informed decisions that align with both their interests and the ever-changing demands of the job market

Start by assessing interests

Exploring your interests is a productive and worthwhile investment. Tools like free personality and career assessments, such as BigFuture, YouScience, Focus2Career, or 16Personalities, can help you begin to connect your preferences to potential majors.

Personality assessments are a great starting point, but they

should only be the beginning. Talk to professionals, shadow someone for a day, attend a summer program, volunteer, or work a part-time job related to an area you’re considering. You don’t need to figure it all out immediately - but you do need to be curious and proactive.

Meet with your college academic advisor (first month at college!)

Academic advisors are often one of the most underutilized resources on campus. They are there to help students explore majors and minors, choose the right courses, stay on track to graduate in four years, and even discover opportunities outside the classroom. Students should plan to meet with their advisor within their first few weeks on campus - and return regularly as interests evolve.

Focus on transferable skills

In today’s rapidly shifting workforce, especially with the growing influence of AI and automation, having a major is helpful, but not everything. What’s becoming essential is

the development of transferable skills that technology struggles to replicate - the abilities that apply across careers and industries, regardless of your major. Skills such as, critical thinking and problem-solving; communication and collaboration; creativity and adaptability; emotional intelligence and ethical decision-making; and digital literacy and data fluency.

Whether you study computer science, English, psychology, or engineering, your focus should be on how your major helps you build these essential skills. Even liberal arts graduates are finding success in tech, marketing, and user experience design - not because of the specific content of their major, but because of how they learned to think, communicate, and solve problems. One of my former students majored in English but is now excelling as a manager at a high-tech AI company.

Research career demand

While passion matters, it’s also wise to consider job outlook and salary trends. For example, the



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a 40% growth rate for nurse practitioners over the next eight years - while jobs in journalism are expected to decline by 9%. Students can explore detailed job outlooks at www.bls.gov/ooh.

That said, remember: the jobs of tomorrow may not exist today. Many careers emerging over the next decade will be shaped by technology we’re only beginning to understand. That’s why developing adaptable, human-centered skills is so important.

Try internships - and learn from all of them

Once you have a potential major in mind, internships are an excellent way to test the waters. They provide real-world experience, build your résumé, and offer networking opportunities. Most colleges offer support through their career services office to help students find internships during the academic year

or summer.

And if an internship *doesn’t* go well? That’s still useful information. Ruling out a career path can be just as helpful as discovering one you love. Every experience adds clarity.

Preparing to leave for college without a declared major can feel overwhelming - but it doesn’t have to be. Use your time wisely. Start exploring interests. Talk to people. Be open to the process. The key is not just choosing the “right” major - but choosing experiences that help you grow into a thoughtful, adaptable, and skilled individual.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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Franklin Rotary awards 4 scholarships at Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) conference

The Rotary Club of Franklin MA is proud to announce that they have awarded four scholarships to this year's Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) Conference held on June 26th -28th. The lucky scholarship winners are Chloe Bowser, Sunny Yuan, Shreedhar Rao and Saanvi Reddy.

"We selected these candidates based on their good citizenship characteristics, and their powerful desire to attend and benefit from the Rotary RYLA conference," said Diane Padula, Rotary President, RYLA Committee Chairperson and RYLA Volunteer.

The chosen students were among the almost two hundred Massachusetts high school sophomores who attended this year's RYLA Conference. RYLA is an intensive 3-day, 2-overnight leadership training program, designed to foster personal growth and team building through seminars and outdoor activities, at Fitchburg State, with a Family

Reception and Closing Ceremony.

Rotary also congratulates Syed Azhar, one of last year's RYLA scholarship recipients, who was invited back this year to serve as a Group Facilitator. The Rotary District 7910 RYLA Committee selected him for his leadership skills, dedication to RYLA, and service as current president of Rotary Interact. His application stood out among many from former RYLA attendees across Massachusetts. During the weekend, Azhar led a group of five to seven RYLA participants.

RYLA concentrates on developing the leadership potential of young men and women, and features thought-provoking events including interactive Leadership Labs, exciting guest speakers, and challenging mental and physical activities that provided the participants with

a chance to excel amongst and with their peers. Topics included decision-making, critical thinking, communicating effectively, ethics, and public service.

Congratulations from the Rotary Club of Franklin MA to this year's scholarship winners and their families!

We will be seeking rising Junior's and notifying school counselors in January 2027. If anyone interested in learning more about how their student can become a RYLA 2027, reach out to: RotaryClub-franklinmarotary.org or RYLA 2027, visit www.ryla7910.org/ or contact: Diane Padula, RYLA Chair at rotaryclubof-franklinma@gmail.com.



Franklin Food Pantry team gearing up for 2026 ASICS Falmouth Road Race



Members of the Franklin Food Pantry's Falmouth Race Team gather at a fundraising event at La Cantina Winery ahead of their August 16 challenge. Back Row (L-R): Jim McGillis, Jack Coughlin, Michael Arthur, Amber Baur. Front Row (L-R): Chris Cuniff, Leila Frankina, Cathy Cosgrove, Oona Harrington, and Amber Baur (Team Captain)
Photo by: Steve Sherlock

Demand for food assistance is at an all-time high, but an incredible team of eight local runners is ready to lace up and give back. On Sunday, August 16, the Franklin Food Pantry race team will take on the iconic, scenic 7-mile Falmouth Road Race from Woods Hole to Falmouth Heights. Their goal is to raise \$20,000 to support

food assistance programs and services at the Franklin Food Pantry. To help them reach the finish line, please consider making a donation on the team's fundraising page at www.franklin-foodpantry.org/falmouthroadrace/, or scan the QR code here. Thank you for supporting our runners and the Franklin Food Pantry.



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

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GRAND PRIZE WINNER - Wachusett Free Press Chelsea T.

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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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FREE PRESS

MetroWest Regional Fan Zone welcomes thousands over five days of World Cup™

FRANKLIN, Mass. - For five days in June, MetroWest became a place where the world came together—not only to watch soccer, but to celebrate cultures, communities and the universal language of sport.

More than two years in planning, the MetroWest Regional Fan Zone initiative generated 16,437 advance registrations for five days

of free World Cup celebrations in Marlborough and Franklin. As one of only a handful of officially licensed FIFA World Cup™ watch party experiences in Massachusetts, the initiative transformed two communities into vibrant gathering places where thousands experienced the excitement of the tournament together. Attendees watched matches on giant LED

screens while enjoying live music, local food and beverages, family activities, and dozens of local vendors, nonprofits and community organizations.

The events were free to everyone thanks to more than \$200,000 in privately raised cash and in-kind contributions, along with \$170,000 in state grant funding through the Sports & Entertainment

Events Fund Grant administered by the Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism.

“Watching thousands of people from different countries, cultures and communities celebrating side by side was a reminder that sports have a remarkable ability to bring people together,” said Stacey David, Executive Director of the MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau. “We set out to create places where people could experience the excitement of the World Cup together, and what we witnessed over those five days exceeded every expectation. We couldn’t be prouder to have welcomed the world to MetroWest.”

In Franklin, the celebration took place June 24-25 at the Franklin Town Common and adjacent Hayward Manor, where nearly 4,000 people attended on Wednesday and an estimated 3,400 attended on Thursday following more than 7,700 advance registrations.

By kickoff, Hayward Manor had transformed into a patchwork of national colors. While the games captivated adults, the Common belonged to the kids. Soccer balls rolled across the grass in every direction as children challenged each other at Franklin Youth Soccer’s kick walls, posed for photos with New England Revolution’s defender Andrew Farrell and mascot Slyde, and raced to be first in line for the giant inflatable obstacle course, forming a queue almost as soon as it finished inflating. Kids cooled off with ice cream while adults relaxed with wine slushies from La Cantina Winery in the Michelob Ultra Beer Garden. Fifty-three vendors, including restaurants, breweries, retailers, nonprofits and community organizations, kept the festival buzzing throughout both days.

One of the event’s most memorable surprises greeted organizers on the morning of June 25, when they discovered that members of Scotland’s famed Tartan Army had “coned” the Ben Franklin statue outside the Franklin Public Library overnight—a lighthearted tradition that has become synonymous with Scottish soccer supporters around the world.

The Fan Zones were designed not only to create memorable World Cup experiences, but also



to encourage visitors to discover everything MetroWest has to offer. Throughout both events, attendees explored local businesses, attractions and communities before and after the matches. One attendee shared that he went to Marlborough for the United States match because he didn’t want to watch the game alone in his living room. Two weeks later, he returned to Franklin with Ecuadorian and German friends so they could cheer on their teams together—a moment that perfectly captured the spirit of the MetroWest Regional Fan Zones.

“That’s exactly what we hoped these Fan Zones would become,” said Stacey David, “places where people could celebrate with friends, neighbors and even strangers while exploring MetroWest.”

The MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau extends its sincere appreciation to the City of Marlborough, the Town of Franklin, the Marlborough Economic Development Corporation, the Marlborough Regional Chamber of Commerce, the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce, the Anglican Church of the Redeemer who owns Hayward Manor, municipal staff, public safety personnel, volunteers, community partners, media partners, and the many organizations whose collaboration, generosity and countless hours of work brought this ambitious regional initiative to life. Special thanks also go to sponsors Michelob Ultra, Southwick’s Zoo, Dean College and Brazilian Times, as well as partner Lawson’s Finest Liquids, for helping make these free community celebrations possible.

For more information on the MetroWest Boston Visitors Bureau, please visit the MBVB website at www.metrowestvisitors.org.

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What’s coming up at Franklin Senior Center

The Franklin Senior Center is located at 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin. Reach them at (508) 520-4945.

Following are some highlights of the month:

Summer Concert Series:
Bring a chair or blanket and enjoy!

Monday, August 3, Ukulele Friends Orchestra, 7 p.m.
Monday August 10, Bluegrass & Hillbilly

Joe Landry Talk on Franklin trivia, Wednesday, August 5, 1 p.m.

Flower Arranging Class, Friday, August 7, 1 p.m., sponsored by Care One at Sharon

The Party Pigs, Tuesday, August 11, 1 p.m., live animal demo

Trust Fall Writing, Wednesday, August 12, 1 p.m., creative writing workshop with Brittany

Capozi

Monthly party, Friday, August 14, 11 a.m., “A Sicilian Get-away,” \$10 a ticket

50+ Job Seekers: Resumes & Cover Letters, Monday, August 17, 1:30 p.m.

Memory Café, with Kalifornia Karl performing, Wednesday, August 19, 1 p.m.

Seashell Decoupage, Thursday, August 20, 1 p.m., \$6

Lunch & Learn: Informed Decisions, Friday, August 21, 12 p.m., presented by United Senior Advisors and Cornerstone

at Milford

Medicare Supplement vs Medicare Advantage, Thursday, August 27, 10 a.m.

Eat around the World: Philippines, Friday, August 28, 11 a.m., \$10

Franklin Cultural District seeks volunteers for upcoming events!

Looking to get involved in the community? The Franklin Cultural District is seeking enthusiastic volunteers to help make our upcoming fall and winter events a success!

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

Franklin Downtown Partnership Harvest Festival, ‘Cultural Hub’ volunteers! September 26. Help welcome visitors, assist with event activities, provide information, and support event operations throughout the day.

A Wreath of Franklin – December (Final Date TBD). Join us for one of Franklin’s favorite holiday traditions! Volunteers will assist with event setup, guest support, activities, and more. The official event date will be announced soon.

Whether you can volunteer for one event or several, we’d love to have you as part of our team.

To be added to the Franklin Cultural District volunteer communication list and receive updates about upcoming opportunities, please email Cory Shea, Director of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy, at cshea@franklinma.gov.

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SPORTS

Franklin American Legion Post 75 team made impression from the start

By Christopher Tremblay,
Staff Sports Writer

After the majority of your players have been involved in a high school season, some going deep into the State Tournament, summer coaches never know what to expect from them. Such was the case with Franklin American Legion Coach Tyler Pasquarosa when Franklin American Legion Edward L. Grant Post 75 got together this summer.

“Coming into the season, you never know what you’re going to get in summer ball,” the Franklin Coach said. “They only thing I knew was that I had a good number of Franklin High School athletes, and Coach Zach Brown is one of the best in the state and has his kids prepared and ready to go. They play hard and have success.”

Pasquarosa also noted that some of these kids are seniors getting ready to go onto college. Playing in 95-degree weather is not a priority, but many of them still continue to come to the field and play hard, and in doing so, the

younger players follow in suit.

Two of Franklin High School’s senior captains, Sean Kryzak and Jack Sullivan, have been providing that sort of leadership for Post 75, leading the team to an undefeated season at the time of this writing. Kryzak is Franklin’s centerfielder and bats second, where he is hitting .391 with 2 home runs, 9 RBI and 9 runs scored. His counterpart, Sullivan, is the team’s shortstop is hitting .481 with 13 RBI, 15 runs scored and 10 stolen bases. The duo has been a major part to Franklin’s undefeated season thus far.

Other Franklin athletes who are contributing at the plate are junior Joe Goguen (batting .421), junior Henry George (.45 with 12 RBI and 12 runs) and sophomore Patrick Luizzi (.455).

First-year player, Owen Miller, from St. Johns of Shrewsbury, has truly made a mark on the team and has impressed the coach with his playing ability behind the plate. Miller will be attending Salve Regina University in Newport.

“He is a hell of a player

back there behind the plate,” Pasquarosa said. “He has already thrown five guys out, and no one is stealing on him. He stepped right in and is like having another coach out there on the field.”

Another first-year player for Franklin is Bellingham’s Andrew Hosford, who just completed his inaugural season with Lasell University out of Norton. Hosford has scored 12 runs while bringing a mature approach to the game.

“He absolutely works his butt off and does everything that is asked of him each and every game,” the Legion Coach’s said. “He didn’t come in thinking that just because he was already in college that he was better – he is a team-first player.”

On the mound, Franklin is going with two aces: Colin Mont, Xaveria and DJ Silverstein, Franklin. Mont is 2-0, having pitched 12.0 innings with 1 save while striking out 12 and walking 4 and allowing only one earned run. Silverstein is 3-0, pitching in 16.2 innings, striking out 22 and walking 6, also only



The Franklin American Legion team had a strong mix of athletes this year. Junior Harry George, shown, is among them. Photo provided by Coach Tyler Pasquarosa.

allowing one earned run. The duo has been tremendous on the hill for Franklin, a team that has only allowed seven runs through their first nine games. Four of those seven runs came against Hyde Park.

Other pitchers taking the ball for Franklin have been Brody Short (2-0, 11 innings), Ethan Edmunds (1-0, 6 innings) and Owen Lewis (1-0, 6 innings). At the time of this writing Franklin’s team ERA is 0.51.

While still undefeated, Pasquarosa is expecting his team to continue to play hard, tak-

ing it one game at a time, while focusing on each game, inning and pitch every night. Last year, Franklin finished second in District 6, where they eventually lost in the Regional Finals to Sandwich.

“When you’re building a Legion team, you never know how the kids are going to interact with one another coming from different towns,” the Franklin Coach said. “However, honestly, after our first game, I felt that this team had already meshed so well together that I wasn’t really worried.”

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SPORTS

MA American Legion Softball makes history with 1st ever All-Star Game

What began as one woman’s dream has grown into an eight-team league serving 120 student-athletes across Central Massachusetts.

Now in its third season, the Massachusetts American Legion Softball League reached another milestone on July 13, 2026, when it hosted the first Massachusetts American Legion Softball All-Star Game at Slater Field in Webster.

The East vs. West showcase celebrated more than outstanding play on the field. It honored the leadership, sportsmanship, teamwork, dedication and positive attitudes of the young women who have helped shape a growing program and create new opportunities for female athletes across the Commonwealth.

The league began with the vision of Jodie Pajak, Chairman of the Massachusetts American Legion Softball Committee. Pajak spent years working to bring American Legion Softball to Massachusetts, believing young women deserved the same opportunity to compete

and represent their communities that American Legion Baseball has provided for generations.

That vision took a major step forward in 2023 when Mark McCue approached Sue Sears, president of the Leicester Girls Softball League, about forming a team through Cherry Valley Post 443.

Cherry Valley became the first team to commit, although there were not yet any other teams available to play.

Sears selected Jessica Parker to coach the first Cherry Valley team. Together, Sears and Parker used their softball connections throughout Central Massachusetts to recruit players, coaches, volunteers and communities interested in helping build the new program.

Their efforts, combined with Pajak’s leadership and the work of the Massachusetts American Legion Softball Committee, helped turn the idea into a functioning league.

The league began play with four teams in 2024, expanded to six teams in 2025 and grew to eight teams and 120 athletes



in 2026. Sears and Parker now serve as liaisons to the Massachusetts American Legion Softball Committee and continue to work tirelessly to promote the program and expand opportunities for young women.

In June 2026, Sears received the American Legion Department of Massachusetts Youth Programs Outstanding Service Award in recognition of her dedication, leadership and service to fastpitch softball and youth programs.

The league’s growth was on full display during the inaugural All-Star Game.

These players were selected by their coaches because they embody the values the league is built on: sportsmanship, lead-

ership, teamwork, dedication, respect, integrity, and pride in representing both their team and the American Legion. They compete with heart, support their teammates, and represent their posts and communities with character both on and off the field. For one evening, regular-season opponents became teammates as the East and West squads came together to celebrate the league’s progress and its first class of All-Stars.

2026 Massachusetts American Legion Softball All-Stars from Franklin Post 75 include:

Emersyn Smart — Class of 2028

Isabella Barbato — Class of 2029

Elizabeth Burkeholder — Class of 2029

Chloe Rowe — Class of 2029

The first Massachusetts American Legion Softball All-Star Game marked far more than the conclusion of another summer event. It celebrated a league that has grown from four teams to eight in only three seasons and recognized the athletes, coaches, volunteers, committee members and American Legion representatives whose commitment made that growth possible. Most importantly, it celebrated 32 young women who earned the distinction of becoming the first Massachusetts American Legion Softball All-Stars.

Franklin teacher selected for Jack Miller Center American Civic Tradition Fellowship

PHILADELPHIA, Penn. - The Jack Miller Center (www.jackmillercenter.org) a civic education non-profit, announced Mark Terra-Thomas, a teacher at Franklin High School, is among the 15 teachers from across the country chosen for its American Civic Tradition

Fellowship, a yearlong program for middle and high school teachers designed to deepen their understanding of key American historical texts and strengthen their use of primary sources in the classroom.

The program kicked off with an in-person institute in Phila-

delphia in July and will continue with virtual sessions for the next year. At the summer institute, seminars focused on American documents and primary sources let the teachers be students again, learning from the faculty and one another. Throughout the academic year, the cohort

will participate in virtual sessions where each fellow presents a new lesson built from the summer readings, and the group will discuss testing new materials and share their successes and challenges.

Lauren Altobelli, Director of the Founding Civics Initiative

at JMC, noted, “Fellows will return to their classrooms in the fall with deeper knowledge, new teaching strategies, and more confidence to educate students in American history and civics.”



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Aug. 2026 Calendar Sponsored by Notturmo Home Services

August 3

Mobile Mini Golf, 1 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult

Summer Concert Series: Ukulele Friends Orchestra, 7 p.m., Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin, bring a blanket or chair and enjoy

HCA Summer Concert Series: Stoney's Wicked Din, 11 a.m., Hopkinton Center for the Arts, 98 Hayden Rowe, Hopkinton, www.hopartscenter.org

August 4

Community Closet open, 12-2 p.m., Franklin UMC, 82 W. Central St., Franklin, shop for gently used clean clothes at no charge, donations gratefully accepted

Voice of Franklin Toastmaster, 7:30 p.m., hybrid meeting, Franklin TV & Radio, 23 Hutchinson St., Franklin, visit <https://voiceoffranklin.toastmastersclubs.org/>

Franklin Rotary Club meeting, 5:30 p.m., The Rome Restaurant, 4 E. Central St., Franklin, contact rotarycluboffranklinma@gmail.com to join for a meeting.

Family Night at the Bandstand: Brass Attack! Sounds of Chicago, Blood Sweat & Tears and more, Corner of Congress & Walnut Streets, Milford

August 5

Veterans Coffee Social, 10 a.m., Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin, several Franklin Purple Heart recipients to be recognized for Purple Heart Day.

ABMI-TV Concerts on the Grass, 6:30 -8:30 p.m., Mendon Town Beach, 45 Taft Ave., Mendon, Vinyl Echo (power trio), 6:30-7:30 p.m. pony rides.

August 7

Franklin Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., Franklin Town Common, 2-3 p.m. sensory friendly hour

Franklin Concert on the Common Series, 3-5 p.m., Alex Fradkin; 5:30-730 p.m. Karate Show, sponsored by Franklin Recreation Dept.

August 8

Concert: Sharks Come Cruisin', 3 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

August 9

Second Sunday Speaker Series: 'Franklin's Connection to the Atomic Bombing of Nagasaki', 1:15 p.m., Franklin Historical Museum, 80 W. Central St., Franklin, featuring Com-

missioner Scott Mason will on the story of Charles William Sweeney, a WWII US Army AF officer who flew Bockscar , the B-29 aircraft carrying the Fat Man atomic bomb on 9 August 1945.

August 10

Summer Concert Series: Bluegrass & Hillbilly, 7 p.m., Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin, bring a blanket or chair and enjoy

August 11

Community Closet open, 12-2 p.m., Franklin UMC, 82 W. Central St., Franklin, shop for gently used clean clothes at no charge, donations gratefully accepted

Family Night at the Bandstand: Carolyn Rae & The Rumors, 7 p.m., Corner of Congress & Walnut Streets, Milford

August 12

ABMI-TV Concerts on the Grass, 6:30 -8:30 p.m., Mendon Town Beach, 45 Taft Ave., Mendon, Alexander's Jazz-time Band, 6:30-7:30 p.m. pony rides.

Summer Sounds: Off Campus, 5 p.m., Bellforge Arts Center, Bellforge Arts Center, 45 Hospital Rd., Medfield, free but please register, www.bellforge.org, Three rising Massachusetts bands.

August 13

Wildlife Out Your Window, 6:30 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, With wildlife ecologist and nature author Brad Timm.

August 14

Franklin Public Library Book Sale, 1-5 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, All books \$1

Franklin Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., Franklin Town Common, 2-3 p.m. sensory friendly hour

Franklin Concert on the Common Series, 3-5 p.m., Bus 14; 5:30-730 p.m. The Reminiscent, sponsored by Franklin Recreation Dept.

August 15

Franklin Public Library Book Sale, 9 a.m. – 12 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, all books \$1, Bag sale 1-4 p.m., \$5 per bag.

Messtival! 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, with ooblek, bubbles, sensory bins and more. Change of clothes recommended. Family program.

August 16

Franklin Rod & Gun Club all-you-can-eat breakfast, 7:30-11 a.m., 53 Florence St., Franklin, \$10 adults, \$5 kids

August 18

Community Closet open, 12-2 p.m., Franklin UMC, 82 W. Central St., Franklin, shop for gently used clean clothes at no charge, donations gratefully accepted

Voice of Franklin Toastmaster, 7:30 p.m., hybrid meeting, Franklin TV & Radio, 23 Hutchinson St., Franklin, visit <https://voiceoffranklin.toastmastersclubs.org/>

Franklin Rotary Club meeting, 5:30 p.m., The Rome Restaurant, 4 E. Central St., Franklin, contact rotarycluboffranklinma@gmail.com to join for a meeting.

Family Night at the Bandstand: The Claflin Symphony Summer Winds, 7 p.m., Corner of Congress & Walnut Streets, Milford

August 19

Franklin LGBTQ Alliance Book Club, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Franklin TV and Radio, 23 Hutchinson St., Franklin, Woodworking by Emily St.James.

August 21

Franklin Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., Franklin Town Common, 2-3 p.m. sensory friendly hour

Franklin Concert on the Common Series, 3-6 p.m., Heather Deary, sponsored by Franklin Recreation Dept.

August 24

Teen and Adult Summer Reading Raffle Drawing! 4 p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, for teens and adults who've participated in library's summer reading program (submit completed form by 8/20), literary-themed prizes.

Community Canvas: Flower Field, 1p.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin, Design and decorate your own unique flower & add it to the field. Family program.

August 25

Community Closet open, 12-2 p.m., Franklin UMC, 82 W. Central St., Franklin, shop for gently used clean clothes at no charge, donations gratefully accepted

August 28

Franklin Farmers Market, 2-6 p.m., Franklin Town Common, 2-3 p.m. sensory friendly hour

Franklin Concert on the Common Series, 3-6 p.m., Kaye Kelly, sponsored by Franklin Recreation Dept.

August 29

SAFE Coalition International Overdose Awareness Day (IOAD) events, 9-11 a.m., town commons and

town hall lawns in Franklin, Medway, Norfolk, Wrentham and Millis. Anyone can attend and plant flags. Sign up at safecoalitionma.org/iodad.

Summer Reading Wrap-up! 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, 118 Main St., Franklin

Community Cookout, 5-6 p.m., Franklin UMC, 82 W. Central St., Franklin, free hamburgers & hot dogs on front lawn, Community@FranklinUMC to view all of our free to the community programs.

August 31

Exsultet! auditions, 7 p.m., First Congregational Church, 725 Washington Street, Holliston, elite women's chorus draws from local area, find audition piece to rehearse at www.exsultet.us.

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SAFE to Host Overdose Awareness Day Events August 29

FRANKLIN, Mass. — SAFE Coalition will hold flag placing events in five Massachusetts towns to remember community members lost to overdose and mark International Overdose Awareness Day.



The public events will take place Saturday, August 29th from 9 to 11 a.m. on town commons and town hall lawns in Franklin, Medway, Norfolk, Wrentham and Millis. Anyone can attend and plant flags, a powerful gesture that helps show support and dismantle the stigma and isolation of overdose loss. Those interested can sign

up at safecoalitionma.org/ioda. The annual event arrives amid news that the state experienced a 27% drop in opioid-related deaths in 2025 from the previous year. It is also the first time the annual total has fallen below 1,000 since 2013, with an estimated total of 978 deaths, according to the state Department of Public Health. Fatal opioid overdoses have declined nearly 60% since a record high of 2,364 deaths in 2022. “The news of the fatal overdose decrease in Massachusetts signifies real progress,” said Jen Levine, SAFE’s chief executive officer and co-founder. “It gives us hope, but it doesn’t mean our work is finished. Every flag placed is a reminder that we are far from done.” International Overdose Awareness Day, established in 2001, is a worldwide event held each year to remember those who have died or suffered because of overdose and to reduce the stigma associated with



drug-related deaths. Thousands of communities are expected to participate this year. Massachusetts’ declining fatal overdose number reflects the value of SAFE’s work in the community. Founded in 2015 as a community response to the opioid crisis, SAFE provides free, judgment-free support for substance use and mental health concerns through support groups, educational courses, community and school events, family services, counseling, Narcan training and more. For more information or to volunteer, visit safecoalitionma.org/ioda.

Franklin Art Association to welcome oil painter Rose Wang Sept. 2

The Franklin Art Association warmly welcomes the public to its meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the Franklin Senior Center on Wednesday, September 2. The program will feature Rose Wang, a classical oil painter based in Massachusetts, specializing in portraiture, still life and landscapes.

Rose enjoys sharing her passion for painting through demonstrations and community art events. She is inspired by the beauty of everyday life - people, flowers, landscapes and quiet moments that often go unnoticed. The evening’s program will feature Rose sharing her portrait painting techniques by painting a model from the audience. All programs are free and

open to the public. Coffee and snacks will be served at the intermission, where you will have a chance to meet and speak with the artist.



The Art Association is supported by grants from the Franklin Cultural Council, which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, and the Franklin Cultural District.

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Franklin Knights present three 2026 scholarships

Each year, The Knights of Columbus Sacred Heart Council in Franklin present three scholarships to graduating seniors from the St. Mary Parish Community. Two of the schol-

ing to our Council.

This year we are proud to announce that the 2026 Simmler Scholarships awarded to Charlie Nash (\$3,000) and Matthew Colford (\$1,500) who graduate

achievements were especially noteworthy among the many talented candidates who applied for the 2026 awards.

We wish Charlie, Matthew, and Jack the best of luck as

they begin their studies this fall. Charlie will be at Boston College and Matthew at Providence College, respectively. Jack will attend Villanova.

In this way, we honor the memory of two fine gentlemen who were active in the Knights, St. Mary Parish, and the Franklin community. We have no doubt that these fine young awardees will make their own contributions to their own communities and parishes in the years to come.

If you are interested in joining or want more information about the Sacred Heart Council, please visit our website at www.kofc1847.org



From left: Matt Colford, Charlie Nash and Jack Baribeau

arships named in honor of Robert Simmler, Past Grand Knight, and given to Franklin graduating seniors. The third given in the name of Robert Catalano, a long time Knight and parishioner. This award is to a child or grandchild of a Knight belong-

from Franklin High School. The 2026 Robert Catalano Scholarship (\$2,000) award to Jack Baribeau, a graduate of Medway High School.

All these accomplished students are active members of their Parish Community. Their

Rotary Club of Franklin MA 34th Annual Pasta Supper September 15

The Rotary Club of Franklin MA is happy to announce that we have scheduled our 34th Annual Pasta Supper to take place on September 15, 2026, at 5 p.m., at 1000 Central Park Terrace, Franklin.

All Senior Citizens and residents of the Franklin Housing Authority are welcome to attend this annual event and as always, it is completely free. Rotary's Head Chef Joe Collins will lead fellow Rotarians in preparing the meal of homemade tomato sauce and over 300 hand rolled meatballs. Rotary is planning some surprises that will include some very special guest helpers again this year, and we urge folks to sign up, so that they don't miss out!

As people of action, Rotarians look forward to providing a home cooked meal each year and work together to make it a memorable event for Franklin's Senior Citizens and Residents of

the Franklin Housing Authority.

Sign-up sheets may be found at the following locations:

Central Park Terrace, 1000 Central Park Terrace, Franklin, Mass.

Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill Street, Franklin, Mass.

The Rotary Club International is a non-profit organization made up of a diverse group of men and women "who come together to create positive, lasting change in our communities and around the world." <https://www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary>

Franklin Rotary members meet the first and third Tuesday of each month, at The Rome Restaurant, 4 E. Central St., Franklin, Mass., and welcome you to join them for dinner and see what they are all about. Email rotarycluboffranklinma@gmail.com to be their guest.

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Franklin Food Pantry Honored by Greater Boston Food Bank

BOSTON, Mass. - On June 11, The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB), New England's largest hunger-relief organization, honored the individuals and organizations that demonstrated extraordinary leadership in 2025

in support of its anti-hunger mission at its GBFB Awards event.

As part of this year's celebration, GBFB honored the Franklin Food Pantry with the Agency Partner of the Year Award, which recognizes an emergency feeding program that has gone above and beyond in fulfilling GBFB's mission. The Franklin Food Pantry serves more than 1,200 individuals each month and distributed 495,000 pounds of food through its partnership with GBFB in 2025, playing a critical role in expanding access to food in the region.

The organization stands out for its focus on providing nutritious, balanced food and a client-centered experience. Recognized in 2025 as a Healthy Pantry Leader, the designation reflects Franklin's commitment to increasing access to nutritious foods through intentional sourcing, distribution, and programming. The pantry offers a wide variety of produce, dry goods, meat, and dairy with a focus on nutritious options, and operates a market-style



Amber Baur, Chair of the Franklin Food Pantry Board of Directors, speaks after her organization received the Agency Partner of the Year Award from The Greater Boston Food Bank in June.

distribution model designed to provide a dignified and accessible experience for clients. During the summer months, the pantry also partners with local gardeners to provide additional fresh produce to the community.

"We are deeply honored to be named the Greater Boston Food Bank's Agency Partner of the Year," said Amber Baur, Chair of the Franklin Food Pantry Board

FOOD PANTRY
continued on page 25

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to the corporate sponsors and residents that donated to this year's 44th annual Franklin July 4th celebration.

Every dollar that is collected is used to pay for the fireworks show, live music, Police and Fire/EMT details, insurance, patriotic bunting/decorations, porta potties, dumpsters, etc. Prior to the creation of our Coalition in 1982 the Town of Franklin funded this event, but over the past 44 years we have been self-funded. This event would not exist without your contributions.



We are still paying invoices for this year's event so if you would like to make a tax deductible contribution please visit our website at www.franklin4th.com and click on the Donate Now button or scan the QR code. You may also mail a check payable to the Franklin July 4th Coalition to:

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FOOD PANTRY

continued from page 24

of Directors. “Food insecurity is at an all-time high and continues to rise. The Greater Boston Food Bank’s leadership and ongoing engagement help make our daily work of meeting the need for food assistance in the Franklin community possible, and we are incredibly grateful for their partnership.”

Food insecurity remains an urgent and widespread challenge in Massachusetts. GBFB’s sixth annual Massachusetts Food Access Report, released in April 2026 in collaboration with Mass General Brigham, revealed that a record 40% of Massachusetts households experienced food insecurity in 2025, increasing from 37 percent in 2024 and doubling since 2019.

“The Franklin Food Pantry is a trusted resource for so many families, and its impact is felt every day in the community it serves,” said GBFB President and CEO Catherine D’Amato. “At a time

when more households across Massachusetts are facing impossible tradeoffs to afford basic needs, partners like Franklin Food Pantry are helping us keep pace with rising demand and ensure consistent access to nutritious food in their community. This pantry is a model for responsive, community-driven hunger-relief, and we are honored to recognize their leadership this year.”

GBFB also recognized Garelick Farms as Food Donor of the Year after donating more than 380,000 pounds of nutritious dairy products in 2025. Takeda was named Corporate Partner of the Year for contributing nearly \$6.5 million and volunteering more than 800 hours over a two-decade partnership. Attorney General Andrea Campbell was honored as Advocate of the Year for leading a coalition of 26 states in a landmark lawsuit against the USDA and mounting a decisive legal defense of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) during the fall government shutdown.

Call for Artists & Writers!

Cultural District Guide: Fall/Winter Featured Artists

Be Featured in the Franklin Cultural District’s 2026 Seasonal Fall/Winter

Deadline August 31st, 2026

The Franklin Cultural District Committee is excited to invite visual artists and writers to submit original work for inclusion in our upcoming printed marketing guides for Fall/Winter 2026! These guides celebrate Franklin’s creative economy, cultural happenings, and seasonal community spirit—and we want your voice and vision to help bring them to life.

Who We’re Looking For:

Visual artists: illustrators, painters, photographers, print-makers, digital artists, muralists.

Writers: poets, lyricists, flash fiction authors, and storytellers

Open to creatives who live, work, or create in Franklin or nearby communities.

What We’re Looking For:

Artisans that have a Franklin Connection! Examples of Franklin connection: work here, from here, took classes here, married someone from here, favorite shop is here etc. and include your Franklin connection in your submission.

Artwork or short written pieces (poems, lyrics, or very short stories) that reflect the essence of Franklin—its community, creativity, culture, seasons, and shared spaces.

Themes can include nature, community connection, public gathering, small-town life, cultural expression, or the passage of seasons.

Selected Creatives Will Receive:

- Featured placement in the seasonal printed guides
- Artist/writer credit and short feature with your name and contact/social info + artist

statements

- Promotion via Franklin Culture’s digital platforms

Timeline:

Submission Deadline: August 31st

Printed Guide Release: October 2026

How to Submit:

Email 3–5 art samples (JPEG or PDF) or 1–2 written pieces (under 250 words each), along with a short bio and why you’d like to participate and an artist statement/bio (whatever feels more relevant to the work), the Director of Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy Cory Shea, Cshea@franklinma.gov with the subject line: FCD Creative Submission

Whether your tools are a paintbrush, a camera, or a pen—we’d love for you to help us showcase the talent and spirit of Franklin in our Cultural District guides.

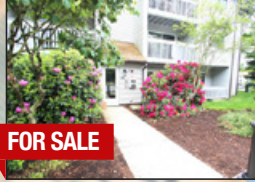
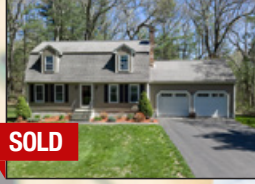
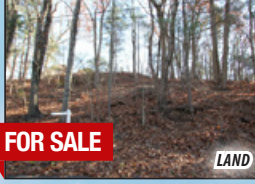
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Franklin Veterans' Services - August 2026 notes

August 4 - U.S. Coast Guard's 236th Birthday

August 5 - Veterans Coffee Social - 10 a.m. at the Senior Center. In honor of National Purple Heart Day, we will recognize several Franklin Purple Heart recipients.

August 7 - National Purple Heart Day - The Purple Heart is a distinguished military decoration awarded in the name of the President to those who have been wounded or killed as a result of enemy action while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces.

Please let our office know if you or a family member (residing in Franklin) is a Purple Heart recipient, and we will add them to our database.

August 20 - Veterans Council



Army Veteran Gerry Bradie, left, is the new Commander of VFW Post 3402. He succeeds Navy Veteran Ernest Carruthers (right) who is now the Post's Quartermaster. Well done, Ernest, and Best of luck to Gerry!

Meeting - 7 p.m. at the Senior Center. All Franklin residents welcome.

August 29 - Marine Corps Reserve 110th Birthday

TUNE IT OUT GUITAR LESSONS FOR VETERANS WILL NOT MEET IN JULY AND AUGUST. Classes will resume Tuesday, September 15 with an Open House at 5:30 p.m. at the Senior Center. Any Veteran interested is welcome. There is no fee for lessons, and we provide guitars! Call our office for details.

WARRIOR WITHIN YOGA FOR VETERANS AND FIRST RESPONDERS WILL NOT MEET IN JULY AND AUGUST. Classes will resume in the fall.

Veterans Memorial Walkway - The next engraved brick installation will be in November to coincide with Veterans' Day. Veterans need not be from Franklin to be honored with a brick. All members of the U.S. military are eligible. Brick order forms are available in the Town Hall and Senior Center lobbies and on the Veterans' Services page on the Town website.

Visit <https://www.franklinma.gov/335/Veterans-Services> to learn more.

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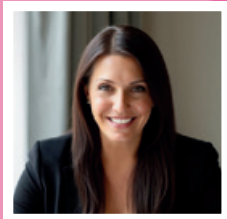
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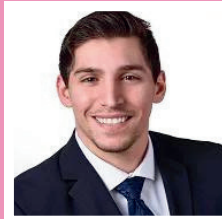
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