

Mendon reenacts signing of Declaration of Independence

By Theresa Knapp

Nearly 250 years after the words “all men are created equal” helped launch a new nation, residents of Mendon gathered on Aug. 2 to revisit a moment that connected the town’s history with the birth of the United States of America.

As part of a community commemoration of the anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, 56 Mendon “delegates” took part in a ceremonial reenactment of the signing of it, gathering at Town Hall to put their names to a commemorative copy of the document. After the document was signed, it was given to a waiting horseman to (symbolically) deliver it to Boston.

The event echoed the ac-

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Town of Mendon’s reenactment of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp



Upton to commemorate Declaration of Independence 250th on Sept. 10

Nipmuc students to share research comparing Upton, Mendon documents

Last year, students from Nipmuc Regional High School examined the original handwritten 1776 copies of the Declaration of Independence for Mendon and Upton. Students will present their findings on Sept. 10. Photo source: Upton Historical Society

By Barry Lynn

Join the Upton Historical Society on Wed., Sept. 10, at 6:30 p.m. at the Upton Community Center for a special program commemorating the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.

Joan Burrell of the Upton Historical Society will discuss Elisha Fish, Upton’s first pastor, who had

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Boston Bruins mascot Blades entertains in Upton

Upton Town Library one of 15 chosen statewide for visit

By Theresa Knapp

On July 15, Boston Bruins mascot Blades dropped into the Upton Town Library to entertain the community.

The event was sponsored by the Boston Bruins and the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC).

The afternoon began with UTL's Children & Young Adult Librarian and local organizer Lee Ann Murphy reading Blades' favorite book, "Hockey in the Wild" by Nicholas Oldland, which he then donated to the library.

There were other books on display that represented some of the favorite of the current Boston Bruins players.

"At the Bruins' team signing, they each choose their favorite book," explained MBLC Di-

rector Maureen Amyot at the event. "Our agency works with the Bruins to plan these events every summer...It's a really nice community-building event for the library and for the Bruins to show their support for reading and literature, and how important libraries are for the community."

Massachusetts' libraries must apply to have Blades visit their library.

Rachel Masse, assistant to the MBLC director, said they received over 100 applications this year. "We had so many really great applications...and Upton was one of 15 chosen this summer."

UTL's Murphy said she has applied every year for several years, and said, "We were ecstatic when Upton was picked..."



Blades, the Boston Bruins mascot, stopped at 15 public libraries in the state this summer, including Upton. The event began with the reading of Blades' favorite book, "Hockey in the Wild" by Nicholas Oldland, which he then donated to the library's collection. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp



Karen Leahy and her grandchildren, Cameron and Ella, enjoy a pony bead activity at a recent Boston Bruins Blades event at Upton Town Library. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp

It's great to have community-building programs like this, to welcome people into the library and share our collection."

In addition to the reading, there were several activity tables.

Karen Leahy brought her grandchildren, Cameron and Ella, to the event. "We spend a lot of time at the library; we just love reading and they love to play here," she said as the children crafted with pony beads.

All attendees received a Bruins goodie bag with a "When you read, you score!" goodie theme. The bags included a poster, activity book, pencil, pin, wristband, bookmark, and more. Attendees could also enter a raffle for Bruins tickets and experiences.

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INDEPENDENCE

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tions of the 56 delegates who ultimately signed the official engrossed parchment copy of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Although the document was adopted by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, the parchment copy was signed beginning on Aug. 2, 1776, with additional signatures added later.

Mendon played an early role in the movement toward independence through the Mendon Resolves of 1773, a set of town resolutions expressing opposition to British authority more than two years before the Declaration was adopted. Historians have noted that Mendon's action was among the earliest expressions of resistance by an American town and reflected ideas of liberty and self-government that would later appear in the Declaration itself.

The ceremony was part of Mendon's broader celebration recognizing the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Approximately 250 people attended the afternoon



Mendon "delegates" signed a replica of the Declaration of Independence in a reenactment ceremony on Aug. 2, 2026, in front of Town Hall. Pictured here are (Top left) Joanne Lamothe, (Top right) Justine Brewer, (Bottom left) Kevin Rudden, (Bottom right) Demetra Moore. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp

events.

The Aug. 2 festivities included a gathering at Ammidon Tavern with a historic slideshow, refresh-



Mendon resident John Lamothe, who served as the event's orator, displays the 2026 signed copy of the Declaration of Independence. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp

by the band, to Town Hall where the signing took place. The celebration culminated in a fireworks display that evening.

The event was sponsored in part by the Mendon Cultural Council and donations by others.

To view our photo album from the event, visit us on Facebook @FreePressPapers.

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Celebrate Upton Heritage Day on Sept. 26

By Barry Lynn

The Upton Historical Society invites everyone to celebrate Upton Heritage Day on Sat., Sept. 26, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. throughout the Town Common, VFW Grounds, EMS/Fire Dept and surrounding locations. This annual family-friendly event brings together residents and visitors to celebrate Upton's rich history, local traditions, talented artisans, community organizations, live entertainment, and great food.

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As communities across the nation commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution, Heritage Day is a wonderful opportunity to discover the people, places, and traditions that have shaped Upton while supporting local businesses and community organizations. Through exhibits, educational programs, guided tours, and hands-on activities, the Upton Historical Society helps preserve our town's history and inspires future generations to appreciate Upton's unique heritage.

With activities taking place at several locations throughout town, visitors are encouraged to spend the day exploring all that Upton Heritage Day has to offer, including:

Artisan & Craft Fair, Town Common, 1 Main St. - Browse a wide variety of handcrafted items and unique gifts offered by talented local artisans and craftspeople.

Grange Harvest Fair & Community Organizations, VFW Grounds, 15 Milford St. - Experience Upton's agricultural heritage with farm animals, flowers, crafts, and exhibits. Meet representatives from local community organizations and

learn about the many ways they serve our town.

Library Book Sale, Upton Community Center, 9 Milford St. - The Friends of the Upton Library will host their annual book sale from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Friends of Upton Seniors will also be available to share information about FUSE and the Senior Center. Families can also enjoy the nearby Upton Veterans Memorial Playground.

EMS/Fire Department Open House, Church Street - The Upton EMS/Fire Department will host an open house featuring fire prevention and safety activities, a look at the department's history, and fire truck rides. The Upton Police Department and Department of Public Works will also have vehicles and equipment on display.

Upton Historical Society Narrated Mini-Bus Tour, Town Hall Parking Lot, at 1 p.m. - Take a one-hour guided tour of several of Upton's historic landmarks, including Upton Common, West Upton Center, the 1812 Boot Shop, Heritage Park Cave (circa 1500 A.D.), and the 1935 Civilian Conservation Corps Camp in Upton State Forest. Seating is limited. Tickets



Upton Historical Day will take place on Sept. 26 and will include various events including a one-hour guided tour of several of Upton's historic landmarks, similar to this one. Photo credit: Upton Historical Society

are \$5 per person, and advance reservations are strongly recommended by emailing uptonhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com or calling 508-529-6600.

Town-Wide Yard Sale - Start your day searching for hidden treasures at yard sales throughout Upton. Maps of participating locations will be available for \$3 at United Parish.

Live Entertainment, Town Common, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. featuring the Driveway Chicks, a 4-woman band performing an eclectic spectrum

of music. Throughout the day, Revolutionary War interpreters in period attire will interact with visitors, answer questions, and share stories that bring the American Revolution to life. After Heritage Day, continue the celebration at Rushford & Sons Brewhouse during Uptoberfest, featuring live performances by Jake Dow and Zach Boudrot.

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HERITAGE DAY

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Saving for retirement: Are you guessing or planning?



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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

But when retirement arrives,

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mark Freeman, CEPA
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Mark.Freeman@edwardjones.com

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HERITAGE DAY

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locations - United Parish will be serving hamburgers, hot

dogs, and its famous homemade apple crisp. Rushford & Sons Brewhouse will also host food trucks from Mortar & Pestle and Gasthoff Catering.

Join Us - Whether you're

interested in history, shopping, music, delicious food, or simply spending time with family and friends, Upton Heritage Day offers something for everyone. Admission is free.

For additional information about Upton Heritage Day and other upcoming programs, visit uptonmahistory.org or follow the Upton Historical Society on Facebook.

The Upton Historical Society gratefully acknowledges the generous support of UniBank and Rushford & Sons Brewhouse, whose sponsorship helps make this community celebration possible.

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Upton Town Library Calendar of Events

9 Milford Street, Upton • 508-529-6272 • UptonLibrary.org • HOURS: Tues., Wed. & Thurs. 9-8 • Mon., Fri. & Sat. 9-4 • Sun. CLOSED

By Upton Library Staff
Library Email Newsletter
We're starting a Newsletter! It's a new, easy way to get weekly updates on every program and event happening at the library – delivered right to your email inbox! Sign up through the link on our website uptonlibrary.org or come scan the QR code at the library desk.

Friends of the Library News Museum Passes - Come check out the museum passes, sponsored by the Friends of the Library! We offer 10 different passes to places such as the Boston Children's Museum, Tower Hill, and the New England Aquarium. Passes can be reserved by going to the library website, calling the library, or visiting the circulation desk.

Book Donations - We would love your books in good condition (no magazines or textbooks, please!) Book donations fund our museum pass program. Fall book-sale is coming up on Sat., Sept. 26!

Reading with Friends - Bring the book you are reading and come join the Friends for a quiet reading program. We'll start with light refreshments, then spread out in our lovely library to read on our own. Upcoming date for this is Aug. 27.

CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS
NEW! Family Music & Movement - Sept. 14 at 9:15 a.m., ages birth to 5. Join us as we change our format and time to welcome Brenda Lau from Apple Tree Arts! Singing, moving, and exploring rhythm instruments are all a part of this event. Registration required. *Sponsored by Beginning Bridges CFCE in Uxbridge.*

Sensory Fun - Sept. 5 at 11 a.m., ages 1+. Our new Sensory Fun program allows your child as much or as little time as needed to explore our toys. No registration required. Children must be supervised by an adult. *This program is generously funded by The Friends of the Upton Town Library.*

ADULT EVENTS
Summer Reading Bingo - Now through September. Summer reading isn't just for kids! Pick up a bingo sheet at the library front desk. Return it once you've gotten bingo to enter a raffle for summer reading prizes!

Tabletop Game Night for Adults - Thursday, Aug. 27, 5:15-7:30 p.m. Join our tabletop game series for adults! Meets every fourth Thursday of the month

from 5:15 - 7:30 p.m. Beginners and experienced players welcome!
Virtual Author Talk Series
View free online author talks, either live or recorded. Register and get more information at the library website, or at <https://library.org/uptontownlibrary>
Author Talk with Lucy Foley: High Altitudes and High Stakes: A Miss Marple Mystery - Thursday, Aug. 27 at 2 p.m.

Author Talk with Daniel Kraus: Writing the Nightmare: A Ship Called Sickness and One Unforgettable Space Crew - Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 7 p.m.

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

Upton Reads Book Group
An eclectic mix of contemporary literary fiction with meetings on the second Tuesday afternoon and Thursday evening of each month, with a remote call-in option. Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 12:45 p.m., and Thursday, Sept. 10 at 6:45 p.m.: *How to Read a Book* by Monica Wood.

Fic or No Fic Book Group

An adult book group that alternates between fiction and non-fiction selections. This group meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:45 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 26 at 6:45 p.m.: *A Place Called Yellowstone: The Epic History of the World's First National Park* by Randall K. Wilson.

Rainbow Readers Book Group
NEW! Join us for a conversation on the 3rd Wednesday of August and November in 2026 to discuss books featuring LGBTQ+ main characters. Wednesday, Aug. 19 at 6 p.m.: *The Lilac People* by Milo Todd. **Kids' Book Club** - Sept. 2 at 4 p.m., ages 6 to 9. Our book club members explore popular juvenile chapter books on the first Wednesday of each month from 4-4:45 p.m. For our September meeting, we will be discussing the title *The Story of Gumbuck and the Dragon Eggs* by Adam Rex. Registration required.

MONTHLY LIBRARY EVENTS - REGISTER NOW!

Most programs and events require pre-registration at uptonlibrary.org or call 508-529-6272. Program details can be found on our website on our Event Calendar. *Registrations open the month prior to events.
Baby Storytime - Fridays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m., ages birth to 3.
Preschool Storytime - Thursdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m., ages 3 to 5.
Saturday Storytime - Sept. 5 at 9:30

a.m., ages birth to 5.
Drop-In Storytime - Aug. 24 at 9:30 a.m., ages 1 to 5.
Family Music & Movement - Aug. 3 & Sept. 14 at 9:15 a.m., NEW TIME!, ages birth to 5.
Storybook Art Club - 3rd Tuesday each month at 10 a.m., ages 3 to 5.
LEGO Club - 1st & 3rd Wednesdays each month at 4 p.m., ages 3 to 12.
Crafternoon - 3rd Thursday each month, 3-5 p.m., ages 3+.
Teen Book Club - 3rd Thursday each month at 6:30 p.m., ages 10 to 14.
Kids' Book Club - 1st Wednesday each month at 4 p.m., ages 6 to 9.
Chess Club - 1st Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14.
Crafting Club - 2nd Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14.
Gaming Club - 3rd Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14.
Magic the Gathering: Commander - 4th Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 8 to 16.
Free Drum Circle - 1st Saturday each month, 7-9:30 p.m., ages 8+.
Tabletop Game Night for Adults - 3rd Thursday each month, ages 16+.
Upton Reads Book Group - 2nd Tuesday and 3rd Thursday each month.
Fic or No Fic Book Group - last Wednesday each month.
Virtual Author Talks - varies, see our website.

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



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Thelma, a white rhinoceros at Southwick's Zoo, died in June

A press release from Southwick's Zoo

It is with profound sadness that we share difficult news with our zoo community. On Tuesday, June 30, 2026, we unexpectedly lost Thelma, one of our cherished white rhinoceroses. This loss has deeply affected our animal care staff, zoo team, and all who consider Southwick's Zoo family.

Louise, Thelma's longtime companion, is currently receiving veterinary care and continues to show encouraging signs of improvement. Out of an abundance of caution, she will remain off exhibit while our veterinary team continues to monitor her closely and completes additional testing.

To better understand the circumstances surrounding Thelma's passing, an experienced pathology team from Tufts Veterinary Hospital performed a comprehensive necropsy. We are also grateful for the support and collaboration of veterinary professionals from Capron Park Zoo, Roger Williams Park Zoo, and Dr. Jonathan Bergman. Our own veterinary team, Dr. Samantha King and Dr. Peter Brewer, along with our dedicated hoofstock keepers and the entire Southwick's Zoo staff, have worked tirelessly throughout this process to ensure Louise receives the highest level of care.

As many of you know, our rhinos have played a special role in connecting guests with wildlife through educational experiences offered by our nonprofit conservation partner, EARTH Ltd. Thelma was an extraordinary veterinary ambassador for her species. Through her calm demeanor and gentle personality, she inspired countless visitors to learn about rhino conservation and the challenges wild rhino populations face. The encounters she participated in helped raise meaningful support for rhino conservation initiatives in southern Africa, directly contributing to efforts that protect this remarkable species.

Those who had the privilege of working with Thelma knew her as a mellow, trusting, and gentle animal. She and Louise genuinely enjoyed spending time with their dedicated keepers and encounter participants, often leaning in for scratches and affection that would leave them completely relaxed - even drifting off to sleep. The bond they shared with their caregivers was truly special, making this loss especially difficult for everyone who knew and loved them.

Our hearts are heavy as we mourn Thelma, and our team remains focused on Louise's recovery. We are awaiting the final pathology results, which may provide additional information about the cause of Thelma's passing and help guide Louise's ongoing care. Until our veterinary team is confident that she has been fully evaluated and cleared, Louise will remain off exhibit.

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to the many veterinary professionals, animal care experts, and zoological colleagues who have generously shared their time, expertise, and compassion. We are especially thankful to the teams from Tufts Veterinary Hospital, Capron Park Zoo, Roger Williams Park Zoo, Dr. Jonathan Bergman, and our own veterinarians, Dr. Samantha King and Dr. Peter Brewer, along with our dedicated hoofstock staff. Their countless hours of treatment, consultation, diagnostics, and unwavering commitment to Louise's care have been nothing short of extraordinary. The willingness of so many professionals to come together in support of our animals is a testament to the collaborative spirit of the zoological and veterinary community, and we are sincerely grateful for their dedication during this time.

We appreciate the compassion, patience, and support shown by our guests, members, colleagues, and the zoological community. Thank you for keeping our ani-

mal care team and Thelma and Louise in your thoughts as we work through this heartbreaking time together.

We will continue to provide updates as additional information becomes available regarding the necropsy findings and Louise's ongoing treatment and recovery.

Submitted by Southwick's Zoo



Thelma, a white rhinoceros at Southwick's Zoo, died on June 30. Photo source: Southwick's Zoo

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Give your child the gift of clear vision this school year

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

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

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

The hidden struggle: screenings vs. real exams

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

one 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, headaches, light sensitivity, and neck or shoulder discomfort. Screen concentration reduces our blink rate, drying out the tear film and fatiguing the eyes.

Simple habits help: the 20-20-20 rule (every 20 minutes, look at something 20 feet away for 20 seconds) relaxes focusing muscles. Kids should also blink deliberately, maintain a comfortable viewing distance, reduce glare, and take regular breaks



from devices.

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

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.

Safety and nutrition

This month is also a good time to focus on injury prevention. 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 chil-

dren'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.

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continued from page 1

an influence on the Declaration of Independence.

Last November, students at Nipmuc Regional High School were given a rare opportunity to examine the original handwritten 1776 copies of the Declaration of Independence as recorded in the town record books of Mendon and Upton, the first time the two historic documents had been in the same room since the beginning of the American Revolution.

Through their research, students compared these surviving handwritten copies, revealing how national events were recorded and experienced at the local level in 1776. During the September program, they will share their findings and explore how our neighboring towns responded during the earliest days of independence.

The evening will also feature special guest speaker Andrew Volpe, an artist, printer, and liv-

ing history presenter based in Worcester. In addition to studying intaglio/ copperplate printing from 1450-1800, he works with the Museum of Printing in Haverhill giving presentations, tours and demonstrations, and with the Printing Office of Edes & Gill, where he replicates prints of Paul Revere. He is a member of the American Printing History Association and the American Antiquarian Society.

Volpe will present "Printing Revolution: Declaration Edition," which explores how printing technology, printed materials (e.g., newspapers, broadsides) and the legal battles fought for Freedom of the Press helped build support for American Independence. Attendees will be able to view originals and exact replicas of printed materials related to the talk, including several versions of the Declaration of Independence.

Come discover how the story of American independence unfolded right here in our own communities. All are welcome to attend!

Joan Burrell of the Upton Historical Society will discuss Elisha Fish, Upton's first pastor, who had an influence on the Declaration of Independence.

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Summer cleanout is greener with *Affordable Junk Removal*

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

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

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

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

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate

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

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

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

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

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've

Business spotlight

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

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

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

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

They also have a thriving



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

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

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

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

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Upton Senior Center update

MONTHLY PROGRAMS

Silver Sisterhood

1st and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 11 a.m.

Want to connect with other 55+ women in the community? Join the Silver Sisterhood, to make new friends and share interests, laughter and support. This month, we will meet on Aug. 5 and Aug. 19.

Mindful Meditation

Fri., Aug. 14, at 1 p.m.

Calm your mind and body so you can acknowledge and accept your thoughts, feelings, and sensations without judgment through Mindful Meditation with Robin Natanel.

Powerful Tools for Caregivers

Tuesdays from 1:30–3 p.m.

Aug. 18 to Sept. 22

Register by Aug. 13 at the Upton Senior Center or call 508-529-4558.

Are you caring for a loved one? You don't have to do it alone! Join this free 6-week caregiver workshop, sponsored by Tri-Valley, to gain practical tools, helpful strategies, and the confidence to navigate the caregiving journey while taking care of yourself, too. Participants will receive a free Caregiver Helpbook. You'll learn how to reduce stress, build self-confidence, improve communication, make tough decisions with less guilt, find local resources and support, etc.

Memory Café

Wed., Aug. 19, at 2 p.m.

The Memory Café offers

a safe, welcoming space for people experiencing memory changes and for their caregivers, family, and friends. It's a place to connect, share stories, and enjoy activities together. RSVP by Aug. 14.

Birthday Bash

Fri., Aug. 21, at 12:30 p.m.

Celebrate with us at this month's Birthday Bash! Enjoy pizza from Rosa's Villa followed by cake and ice cream as we honor everyone celebrating this month. Just \$5 per person, free for anyone with an August birthday! Register by Aug. 17.

WEEKLY PROGRAMS

Pitch!

Tuesdays at 10 a.m.

Hand & Food Game

Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m.

Grief Support Group

Tuesday at 1 p.m.

Exercise with Shirley

Tuesdays at 11:15 a.m., Fridays at 9:30 a.m.

Strength & Stretch

Monday, Wednesday, Friday at 10:45 a.m.

Dance Fusion Fitness

Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m.

Line Dancing

Wednesdays at 2:45 p.m.

Mahjong

Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m.

Knit & Crochet Group

Thursdays at 10 a.m.

Practice Mahjong

Thursdays at 11:30 a.m.

Bingo!

Thursdays at 1 p.m.

Scrabble Group

Fridays at 1 p.m.

SAVE THE DATES

Lunch & Learn: Falls Prevention

Wed., Sept. 9, at 12 p.m.

Join Golden Pond Assisted Living and BAYADA Physical Therapist Shannon Allario to discover practical tips to reduce your risk of falls, improve balance and mobility, and stay safe and independent at home. Register by Sept. 3.

Lunch & Learn: Creating an Emergency Folder for Your Loved Ones

Fri., Sept. 18, at 12:30 p.m.

Back by Popular Demand!

Join Attorney Amy Azza to learn how to create an essential Emergency Folder and legacy plan to protect your wishes and give your family peace of mind. Sign up by Sept. 14.

Willie Nelson – Songs and Stories with Matt York

Tues., Sept. 22, at 2 p.m.

Celebrate the life and music of country legend Willie Nelson with musician Matt York. Enjoy Willie Nelson's greatest hits while hearing the stories behind the songs. Register by Sept. 18.

UPTON FOOD PANTRY

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

Hours of Operation:

Mondays 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Wednesdays 12-3 p.m.

Fridays 10-1 p.m.

Are you unable to come at

these days and times? Transportation or home delivery available on request. Call for more info or to make an appointment: 508-529-4558.

The UCC Food Pantry is seeking donations:

- Canned fruit
- Canned vegetables (*carrots, mixed, peas, corn*)
- Instant potatoes
- Mayonnaise
- Shelf stable milk
- Cereal
- Cleaning supplies (*Lysol wipes, cleaning spray, floor cleaner*)
- Gift cards & monetary donations also accepted.

Pets of the month: Rebel & Rascal



Photo credit: www.milfordhumane.org

Rebel and Rascal are irresistibly fluffy kittens with big personalities and even bigger hearts. Learn more about them at uptonmendonfreepress.com

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Taft Public Library Calendar of Events

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

ADULT & TEEN PROGRAMS: Teen Summer Reading

There's still time to sign up! Our Teen Summer Reading incentive program rewards patrons in grades 5 through 12. For every three hours of reading, participants can redeem their hours for a weekly gift card prize. Limit one per week. To register for the program go to www.taftpubliclibrary.org, scroll down to Current Events at Taft and click on the Teen Summer Reading post.

Adult Summer Reading

Why should kids have all the fun? The Taft Library has a Summer Reading incentive program for adults too! Track and log your minutes of reading over the summer and be automatically entered to win gift cards each week. Visit

our website, scroll down to Current Events at Taft and click on the Adult Summer Reading post to register for the program.

Adult Handcrafting Group

Join the Adult Handcrafting Group on Wednesday, Aug. 19 at 2 p.m. downstairs in the library and get your craft on! Bring your own craft project to work on while you visit. Intended for adults. No registration is required. Crafts are NOT supplied.

Adult Book Club

The Adult Book Club is led by Library Assistant Kris Heumann. The group typically meets the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. No book club discussions are scheduled for August. Upcoming book club discussions are as follows:

The Measure by Nikki Erlick and *The Fountains of Silence* by Ruta Sepetys on Sept. 14.

The Woman in the Library by Sulari Gentill on Oct. 12.

West with Giraffes by Lynda Rutledge on Nov. 9

The Extraordinary Life of Sam Hell by Robert Dugoni on Dec. 14.

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

Awards Book Club

Hosted by Taft Library Assistant Jane Blackwood, the Awards Book Club meets on a quarterly basis to discuss fiction award winners of the year. Jane selects from the books that took home the coveted Pulitzer

Prize, the National Book Award, the Booker Prize and more! Stop at the downstairs circulation desk to request the latest Awards book for discussion. The current book in the Awards Book Club discussion series is *Angel Down* by Daniel Kraus, winner of the 2026 Pulitzer Prize for fiction. Discussion will be on Tuesday, Aug. 18 at 7 p.m. Contact the library at 508-473-3259 for further information.

Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club

Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club is led by Library Director Andrew Jenrich. Over the next few months the club will be tackling the following books:

A Walk in the Park: The True Story of a Spectacular Misadventure in the Grand Canyon by Kevin Fedarko. Discussion will be on Thursday, Aug. 27 at 6:30 p.m. downstairs in the library.

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

Dates of discussion for some of the upcoming books are to be determined. The Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club typically meets on a quarterly basis. Those interested can request a copy of the next book at the downstairs circulation desk. The new slate of nonfiction titles for 2026 into 2027 will be decided following the book discussion in August.

German Conversation Club

Are you looking for a place to practice what German you remember or to improve your German vocabulary? Conversations in German is no pressure, just fun! Lead by Library Assistant (and Mendon resident) Monika Schmid, the group typically meets the last Monday of each month. The group will meet next on Monday, Aug. 31 at 6 p.m. Contact the library at 508-473-3259 for additional details. Registration is required. To register, visit our website.

2026 Challenge Book Club

The library has begun a new book talk series revolving around a monthly challenge prompt. Participants are encouraged to share the title or titles (and brief synopsis) of a book they've read or would like to read centered on the prompt. Prompts for the next few months of the club are as follows:

August: Classic or modern classic.

September: Book about school, learning, or growth.

October: Mystery, thriller, or spooky.

The group typically meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 12 p.m.

Friends of the Taft Public Library Meeting

The Friends of the Taft Public Library meetings are typically held on the last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. downstairs in the Art Holmes Community Room, unless it falls on a holiday or during a school vacation. All are welcome (and encouraged) to attend! The group will not meet over the summer. The next meeting of the Friends is Tuesday, Sept. 29 at 7 p.m. If you plan on attending, it's always a good idea to call the library at 508-473-3259 or email the Friends at friendsoftaftlibrary@gmail.com to confirm the date and time of the meeting.

TAFT CHILDREN'S NEWS: Summer Reading 2026

Summer Reading continues in August! Your friends at the Taft have been busy for months putting together a Summer Reading program that is sure to please. For every three hours of reading, children through grade 4 will be able to pick a prize from our treasure chest! To register please visit our website at www.taftpubliclibrary.org.

Wednesday, Aug. 12

Music at the Blissful 10:30 a.m.

Egg Drop Challenge 1 p.m.

Friday, Aug. 15

Last Day to Collect Prizes.



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Area food pantries offer services to residents

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

UPTON
Upton Community Center Food Pantry, 9 Milford St.
Hours: Mon. 9:30-11:30 a.m., Wed. 12-3 p.m., Fri. 10 a.m.-1 p.m.
Services: Residents may access the food pantry one time each week. www.uptonma.gov/459/Upton-Community-Center-Food-Pantry
United Parish Food Pantry, 1 Church St.
Hours: Every other Tues., Aug. 18, Sept. 8 from 9:30-11:30 a.m.
Services: The Food Pantry serves residents from Upton as well as nearby towns.

Proof of income or church affiliation is not required. We offer non-perishable food, toiletries, paper products and infant needs. Donations can be dropped off in our donation shed located outside the church office on 1 Church Street, Upton.
Congregant dinners: Occur on the third Thursday of each month from Sept. to June. www.unitedparishupton.org/food-pantry
St. Gabriel's Food Pantry, 151 Mendon St.
Hours: Mon. & Wed. 9:15 a.m. -3:30 p.m., Tues. & Thurs. 9:15 a.m.-12 p.m.
Services: Helping parish families in need. www.stgabrielsma.org
Source: www.uptonma.gov

MENDON
Mendon Food Pantry, 62 Providence St.
By appointment only, call 508-478-6175 for assistance.
Services: For Mendon residents in need who receive fuel assistance, SNAP (food stamps), are unemployed, and/or receive aid to dependent children or to those who are disabled and/or unemployed. Referrals from area churches, social agencies, or concerned citizens regarding seniors and families in need will also be accepted. Client names shall be kept confidential. For details, visit <https://www.mendonma.gov/253/Food-Pantry-Thank-You-for-Your-Support>.
Source: www.mendonma.gov

Electronics Recycling Day in Milford on Sept. 19

The First Congregational Church of Milford will hold an Electronics Recycling Day on Sat., Sept. 19, from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. All computer monitors, computers, parts and accessories, faxes, copiers,

printers, scanners and TV's can be recycled. Generally recycling fees range from \$5 to \$45 per item, projection and consoles range from \$60-\$80. Cell phones can be recycled at no charge and will be donated to charities that recycle and reuse them. The recycling vendor will erase and shred all hard drives at no additional cost. Cash payments only. For more information contact the church office at 508-473-5259.

Oreo stacking contest winners announced



In the final 15 second lightning round of this year's Taft Public Library Oreo Stacking Contest, Adalynn Cedrone (left) just edged out Juliana Garcia (center) and Matthew Holden (right) by stacking 10 cookies. Juliana Garcia and Matthew Holden (not pictured) stacked each stacked 9. Photo source: Taft Public Library

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WASTE INNOVATIONS

Memories made at Mendon’s annual senior tea

A tea-riific time was had by all

The annual Senior Tea at the Mendon Senior Center on Sun., July 26, honored members who are 85 years of age and older, including several guests from surrounding towns.

Sponsored by the Mendon Council on Aging, the event featured Council member Earl Pearlman on the piano, performing favorites from the Great American Songbook.

Council members Peg Nogueira, Dona Son, and Diane Howell, along with dedicated volunteers, served an elegant assortment of refreshments, including strawberry punch, black tea, cucumber sandwiches, chicken salad sandwiches, homemade scones, cherry squares, lemon pastries, and more.

Each guest received a yellow carnation, a symbol of friendship, as a parting gift.



(L to R) Mendon Senior Tea guests Sandy Barry, Helen “Honey” Vartabedian, Catherine “Kay” Holmes, van driver Wayne Phipps, volunteer Paula Malnati and guest Joan Marino. Courtesy photo

Throughout the afternoon, old friends were reunited, new friendships were formed, and the room was filled with conversation and laughter.

One of the highlights of the event came when another musician, a percussionist, joined Earl

Pearlman for an impromptu performance with his box drum. Soon, another pianist took a turn at the keyboard, and then another, creating a lively musical collaboration that provided the perfect finale to a memorable afternoon.

Recent Home Sales

Date	Mendon	Amount
07/23/2026	220 Millville Rd.	\$835,000
07/23/2026	19a Rawson Farm Dr.	\$1.32 mil
07/15/2026	9 Wood Dr.	\$710,000
07/10/2026	94 Hartford Ave. W.	\$1.20 mil
07/10/2026	13A Asylum St. (2.07 acres)	\$65,000
07/01/2026	9 Jewell Xing	\$950,000
06/30/2026	7 Neck Hill Rd.	\$705,000
06/30/2026	40 Kinsley Ln.	\$650,000
06/30/2026	9 Puffer Dr.	\$1.05 mil

Date	Upton	Amount
07/22/2026	57 Plain St.	\$525,000
07/20/2026	20 Josiah Dr.	\$785,000
07/13/2026	69 Warren St.	\$749,000
07/10/2026	74 High St.	\$766,700
06/30/2006	21 Warren Rd.	\$600,000
06/30/2026	41 Main St.	\$460,000
06/30/2006	3 Jonathans Way	\$850,000
06/30/2006	9 River St.	\$800,000
06/29/2026	3 Ephraims Way	\$855,000
06/29/2026	26 Hartford Ave. N.	\$445,000
06/29/2026	1 Quail Run	\$835,000
06/29/2026	8 Jackson Dr.	\$720,000
06/26/2026	49 Grove St.	\$494,500
06/26/2026	20 Fiske Ave.	\$682,000
06/26/2026	24 Fowler St.	\$765,000
06/26/2026	46 Rockwood Ln.	\$1.10 mil
06/22/2026	154 South St.	\$1.05 mil

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



The 3-bed, 1-bath, 1,140 square-foot home at 26 Hartford Ave. N. in Upton recently sold for \$450,000. Photo source: www.zillow.com

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Mendon Senior Center update

Senior Citizen Day Luncheon - Reserve your space today!

Plan to attend the annual Senior Citizen Day luncheon sponsored by the Mendon Lions Club to honor all Mendon senior citizens, especially Justine Southwick Brewer, this year's Senior Citizen of the Year! The event, scheduled for Sun., Sept. 20 at 11:30 a.m., will be held at the Unitarian Church of Mendon/Uxbridge, 13 Maple St. Mendon. Please call 508-478-6175 or stop by the senior center to register.

New Players Welcome - The Mendon Senior Center offers a variety of recreational activities including:

• **Cribbage**—Wednesdays 9:45 a.m. The Cribbage group is always looking for new players. Stop in Wednesdays at 9:45 a.m. All levels welcome.

• **Hand, Knee and Foot card game**—Tuesdays 1 p.m.

• **Mah-Jong** - Wednesdays & Thursdays 1 p.m.

Please check our schedule regarding days, times, and availability. Don't see your favorite game listed, please let us know what you'd like to see offered!

Dine-Out - This Friends of Mendon Elders sponsored program is open to all. Join us on the appointed Wednesday at either the Senior Center at 11:30 a.m. to carpool or at the restaurant at 12 p.m. Please sign up with the Senior Center. The cost of lunch is your responsibility, but the awesome company is free!

Wednesday, Aug. 19 - Garden Restaurant, Milford.

Wednesday, Sept. 16 - Grumpy's, Bellingham.

Birthday Bash, Tues., Aug. 18, 12 p.m. - A hearty lunch

consisting of Chicken Parmesan, rolls, tossed salad and cake will be served followed by a rousing performance presented by Russ Morency, a professional musician and entertainer specializing in blending classic rock, country, and pop music from the 50s to the 70s.

Ice Cream Social & Entertainment, Wed., Aug. 26, 1 p.m. -

Join us for the keyboard melodies of John Guido followed by a complimentary ice cream social. Please register.

Pen Pals Wanted - This fall we will continue our Pen Pal program with 4th and 5th graders at Whitinsville Christian School where letter writing is part of their curriculum. One letter a month on your part is all it takes. We will do the rest. We ask you to reach out to senior relatives, neighbors and friends who might be interested in joining this endearing program. A sign-up sheet is available at the Senior Center. Feel free to call or text program coordinator Cheryl Lemon at 508-685-1419 or email Cheryl.lemon31175@gmail.com with questions or for more information.

Mendon Minstrels Chorus, singers needed - In the hopes of reviving our Mendon Minstrels chorus for the November Veterans' Appreciation event, we ask anyone who enjoys singing and would like to participate in a half hour choral program, to please contact director Amy Wilson Kent, at 508-478-6175 ext. 1. Rehearsals would take place Monday afternoons with a start date in September.

Fitness Programs, introductory classes and more - Curious about adding a little movement to your week? We'd

love for you to join us! Please call Shawna Timperio at the center for more information or to register for one of our exercise programs.

T'ai Chi - The Senior Center will be offering one Introductory, grant funded, T'ai Chi class for you to try on Tues., Sept. 29, at 10:15 a.m. T'ai Chi, per instructor Faith Kennedy is "meditation in motion" and is gentle for all ages. Please call or stop by the center to register.

Qigong - Qigong, pronounced Chee-gong, is a practice that utilizes gentle stretching and breathing exercises. Upon finishing these seated 45-minute introductory classes, students will feel relaxed yet energized. The Mendon Senior Center will be offering three complimentary, grant funded, classes beginning on Wed., Sept. 30, at 11:15 a.m. (9/30, 10/7, 10/14) Transportation is available for Mendon residents.

Chair Exercise - Tuesday and Thursday 9 a.m. - This popular 60-minute class chair yoga program offers the same benefits as traditional yoga, like boosting strength, flexibility, and mental well-being. The practice is great for older adults, people with health conditions, and those who work at a desk all day. Call Shawna to inquire about availability.

Evening Yoga - Evening Yoga is returning to the Senior Center on a new day and time beginning Mon., Sept. 14, at 6:30 p.m. The cost of this eight-week

session is \$65 per person. Please call or stop by the center to register. Space is limited.

Mendon Senior Center day trips - Trips Operated by Bloom Tours. Please Make checks payable to Friends of Mendon Elders and mail to 62 Providence St., Mendon 01756. For more information, contact Beverly Fior at 508-473-8382.

Sept. 11 - Harbor Lights & Sights Tour, Portland, ME. Motorcoach departs at 7 a.m. from Mendon Senior Center, returns approximately 5:45 p.m. Cost is \$119 per person due in full at time of booking. Experience the iconic lighthouses and picturesque waterway. We'll explore the bustling inner harbor and main shipping channel to get close-up views of civil war era forts and the lighthouses that guide mariners into Portland Harbor. Cruise along Diamond Pass, where you'll witness the meeting of Casco Bay's waters with the Atlantic Ocean. Marvel at the rugged coastline dotted with historic estates and hidden coves. After the cruise you will

have free time to explore and have lunch on your own. Then you are off to Ogunquit Trading Post where you will find a family-owned gift shop offering souvenirs.

Oct. 16 - New Bedford Whaling Museum. Motorcoach departs at 10 a.m. from the Mendon Senior Center and returns approximately 5:15 p.m. Cost is \$139 per person due in full at time of booking. Join Bloom Tours as we travel to the New Bedford Whaling Museum, where you will discover the underwater world of whales, the dramatic story of whaling and its impact, and the maritime history of Massachusetts' south coast. Before the museum, we will have lunch at the Candela Cucina where you will have a choice of Chicken Parmesan, Salmon, or Lasagna - meal choice due at signing. No Refunds after Sept. 16, 2026.

For a more detailed listing, visit us at www.uptonmendon-freepress.com, call 508-478-6175, or stop by the senior center.



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Stepping into Upton's past, one boot shop at a time

Historical Society narrates town tour of boot shop, cemetery



(L to R) Photo dated 1790 of boot shop at the corner of Mendon and Chestnut Streets; Upton Historical Commission members Ed Phillips, Joan Burrell, and Russ Wood at the Old First Cemetery; and current photo of the "ten footer." Photo credit: Upton Historical Society and Theresa Knapp, respectively

By Theresa Knapp

In May, the Upton Historical Society offered the public a ride through more than 250 years of Upton history during the Upton Historical Society's narrated tour of the town's oldest burial ground and the 1788 Seth Wood Boot Shop, which recently had its exterior siding and roof restored.

As the bus rolled through town, guides pointed out landmarks that

helped shape Upton's identity, from its bustling industrial village to its quiet town center.

"Upton Center has always been the peaceful, low-key place where people go to church, visit the library, attend town meeting and the cattle show," explained guide Scott Garland, president of the Upton Historical Society. "West Upton is vibrant, industrial, close-knit and has always

been the busier destination."

The narration highlighted Upton's rich manufacturing history, including the Knowlton Hat Factory, once the world's largest maker of men's and women's hats.

"This is a big hat town," Garland said while wearing one of the last hats produced at the factory before it closed in 1971. "They made hats here from

1866 to 1971, and we still have about 50 or 60 of the originals."

Old First Cemetery

The first stop was the Old First Cemetery, established in 1735, where American flags marked the graves of Revolutionary War veterans. Upton Historical Commission members Ed Phillips, Joan Burrell, and Russ Wood (a descendant of Col. Ezra Wood) welcomed

visitors and shared stories of Upton's earliest residents.

Attendees learned that the town's first meeting house, a modest 30-by-30-foot structure, once stood within the cemetery grounds before disappearing from the landscape years ago.

BOOT SHOP

continued on page 17

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The Yankee Express - North..... Hale S.

Norwood Local Town Pages..... Kelly A.

Norfolk & Wrentham Local Town Pages..... Joseph C.

Natick Local Town Pages..... Meg W.

Medway & Millis Local Town Pages..... Lydia T.

Hopedale Local Town Pages..... Lisa B.

Holliston Local Town Pages..... Alan M.

Franklin Local Town Pages..... Amanda G.

Blackstone Valley Express - South..... April H.

Blackstone Valley Express - North..... Emilia S.

Bellingham Bulletin..... Scott R.

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

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.

BOOT SHOP

continued from page 16

The last burial there took place in 1846.

Seth Wood Boot Shop
("Ten Footer")

The tour continued to the Seth Wood Boot Shop, one of the few surviving "Ten Footers" (measuring about 10 feet by 10 feet) in Massachusetts. Built in 1788, the small post-and-beam workshop represents the cottage industries that fueled New England's economy before large factories became common.

Inside the tiny building, visitors crowded around to learn

about the skilled craftsmen who once made boots by hand.

By 1837, Upton's 23 boot shops produced 109,580 pairs of boots, roughly 25 percent of all boots and shoes manufactured in the region. Census records from 1850 list 85 bootmakers and three tanners living in town.

Garland explained that preserving buildings like the boot shop is becoming increasingly difficult.

"These little buildings were built on rocks without proper foundations," he said. "Most of them just rot away."

He noted that the Historical Society received the boot shop in 1976 "to preserve forever"

and recently completed structural repairs to help it remain standing for future generations.

The shop later served as a blacksmith shop after Clarence Forsberg purchased the building in 1938, giving the historic structure a second life before it was ultimately preserved as a museum.

Visitors also learned that handcrafted bootmaking has become an almost lost art.

"Today, there is literally one expert boot maker in Massachusetts," Garland said. "She was trained by one of the last traditional bootmakers."

For many attendees, the afternoon was a reminder that some of Upton's biggest stories were built inside its smallest buildings.

Garland also reflected on the work required to keep local history alive.

"These little societies survive on three or four active people," he said, encouraging residents to become involved in preserving Upton's past.

To learn more about Upton's town history or to become involved, visit <https://uptonmahistory.org/>.

For our photo album from the event, visit us on Facebook @FreePressPapers.



Tour guide Scott Garland, president of the Upton Historical Society, showcases a boot made in one of Upton's many "ten footer" shops.



Historic tools and boots were on display during a recent tour. Photo credit: Theresa Knapp

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More Families,
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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
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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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SPORTS

Nipmuc crew helps Post 59 to state final

Milford finished second in Mass. state tournament

By Chris Villani

By any measure, Milford Post 59 American Legion baseball put together a summer to remember in 2026, and a group of Nipmuc standouts helped along the way. Milford finished the season with a 26-6 overall record, and a 3-2 mark in the state tournament that it hosted at Fino Field.

Post 59 dropped the opener of the double-elimination tournament, but rallied to blow out three straight opponents before falling to Franklin, 3-2 in extra innings, with the title on the line.

“It was a hell of a ride,” DiVitto said. “To get to the state final after losing on day one, it’s

a tall task and I am proud of the kids for the commitment and sacrifice they made, all season long.”

Post 59 was nothing short of dominant through much of the state tournament, beating three of the top teams in Massachusetts by eye-popping scores of 24-5, 17-0, and 11-3.

“We told them after night one that it’s one game at a time, but don’t tell me you can’t win five games in a row,” DiVitto said. “You’ve done this all year.”

Milford’s roster boasted local talent from a number of area towns, but a contingent from Nipmuc definitely stood out. Josh Giancola, a recent NRHS



Fino Field before the state championship game between Milford and Franklin. Photo credit: Cindy Stulac

graduate, proved himself to be a bona fide ace and started both the first and last games of the state tournament. But he was not the only player from his high school team to make a big contribution. Fellow recent graduate Sean Burchard played in nearly all of Post 59’s 32 games this summer and drove in 17 runs with four extra base hits. Gavin Metcalf made the most of his chances at the plate, batting .467 in 45

at bats for the year.

On the mound, Cole McGovern posted a 4-1 record and pitched the third most innings of anyone on the Milford staff. Nipmuc rising senior Adam Dubowik and Jordan Martorano, a Blackstone Valley Tech graduate, both saw action on the mound as part of a deep and talented Milford pitching staff. That depth helped Milford bounce back from its first loss to Franklin

in the states and march all the way to the final.

“It was such a gritty, gutty performance there throughout the season, but also over the course of the last five days,” DiVitto said following the state final loss. “Obviously, we are disappointed, but I really hope the kids understand that they have to keep their heads high.”

He added, “it was such a fantastic year. Our kids should be proud.”



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SPORTS

Giancola emerged as an ace for Milford Legion

Nipmuc grad pitched team's two biggest games

By Chris Villani

Before pitching in game one of the state tournament, Josh Giancola did his best to stick to his usual routine. He went through his pregame stretches and throwing, just like any other game. He also threw on some music to get himself amped before taking the mound.

But the Nipmuc graduate knew his duel with undefeated Franklin was not like any other game.

"It felt amazing to get the ball, and it was super exciting and definitely a little bit of pressure, especially when the whole town of Milford is there watching you," Giancola said. "But I just kept my composure and tried to treat it like any other game, even with all the pressure and fans there."

Giancola ended up facing Franklin twice during the tournament. He worked into the fifth inning of the state tournament opener. He allowed just three hits and one earned run, but Post 75 pushed across a late run to emerge with a 2-1 victory.

It seemed as though pitch count rules and the short time frame for the tournament would prevent Giancola from making another start; but, thanks to a rain out, he was able to pitch in the state title game, facing Franklin for the second time in five days. Giancola gave up three hits and two runs, just one earned, over six innings. He



2009 - Josh Giancola delivers a pitch during the first game of the state tournament. Photo credit: Ashley Lester

struck out seven and walked one. Once again, however, Franklin scored a late run to take home the title.

Despite the loss, Giancola said he was grateful for the experience ahead of the start of his

college baseball career at Johnson & Wales University.

"Seeing better competition definitely made me grow this year, especially seeing Franklin two times," he said. "That really gave me a challenge, and helped me progress and get ready for college."

Giancola pitched 30 innings for Milford this summer, and his ERA was a mere 1.17. Post 59 skipper Steve DiVitto called Giancola "an outstanding kid who wants to help his team in any way he can."

"He's a bulldog, a pleasure to coach and a gamer," DiVitto said. "He's the true meaning

of a warrior."

DiVitto said he is looking forward to welcoming Giancola back next summer after a year of college baseball.

Coming into the year, Giancola said his goals were to graduate high school, progress as a pitcher, and win a state legion title.

"I accomplished two out of three," he acknowledged. "But I feel like, even though we didn't win the championship, it was still a great year, and there are a lot of good things to take away from the season."

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*Total savings of up to \$2,000 from MSRP or Sticker. On in stock vehicles only. Some exclusions apply. Not to be combined with any other promotional offers, incentives, special internet priced vehicles, or discounts. See dealer for details. SALE ENDS 08/31/2026.

 CAR FAX ONE-OWNER VEHICLES 1020 ONE-OWNER VEHICLES IN STOCK!	2021 CHEVY EQUINOX LT  AS LOW AS \$74/WK #48928A • ALLOYS, TURBO, NAV NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$35,490 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$20,977	2021 JEEP GLADIATOR  AS LOW AS \$113/WK #26251Z • SPORT TRIM, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$49,625 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$31,977	2024 FORD F-150 XLT 4x4  AS LOW AS \$138/WK #C7044 • NAV, TURBO, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$46,250 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$38,977	2021 FORD EXPLORER 4x4  AS LOW AS \$110/WK #P19380 • XLT, HEATED SEATS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$45,765 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977	2024 JEEP WRANGLER 4x4  AS LOW AS \$103/WK #D16311 • 4xe SPORT, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$49,810 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$28,977
2025 CHRYSLER PACIFICA  AS LOW AS \$110/WK #D16491 • HEATED SEATS, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$55,265 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977	2023 TOYOTA TACOMA 4x4  AS LOW AS \$124/WK #TM26-811A • SR5 TRIM, CPO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$42,605 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$34,677	2023 DODGE DURANGO GT  AS LOW AS \$120/WK #D16561 • LEATHER, SUNROOF NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$48,595 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$33,677	2023 SUBARU ASCENT  AS LOW AS \$103/WK #TM26-657A • LIMITED, SUNROOF NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$44,700 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$28,977	2025 TOYOTA CAMRY SE  AS LOW AS \$106/WK #25P1485 • 18" ALLOYS, HYBRID NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$38,625 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$29,977	2022 CHEVY SILVERADO 4x4  AS LOW AS \$124/WK #C48799 • CUSTOM, 2.7L TURBO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$54,180 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$34,977
2024 CHEVY TRAX SUV  AS LOW AS \$78/WK #TP8464 • LS TRIM, 17" ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$28,565 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$21,977	2024 TOYOTA TUNDRA 4x4  AS LOW AS \$163/WK #ST1181A • SR5, ALLOYS, 3.4L NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$58,405 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$45,977	2024 JEEP COMPASS 4x4  AS LOW AS \$78/WK #D16358 • LATITUDE TRIM, ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,400 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$21,677	2022 HYUNDAI TUCSON SEL  AS LOW AS \$78/WK #P19197A • 24/29 CITY/HWY MPG NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$36,750 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$21,977	2025 TOYOTA COROLLA LE  AS LOW AS \$74/WK #TP7218 • 32/41 MPG CITY/HWY NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$26,589 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,677	2024 SUBARU CROSSTREK  AS LOW AS \$89/WK #TRA4405A • 17" ALLOYS, CPO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,285 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977
2022 FORD EDGE SEL  AS LOW AS \$89/WK #P18939 • NAV, 18" ALLOYS, AWD NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$40,395 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$23,977	2023 GMC TERRAIN SLE  AS LOW AS \$89/WK #48637 • AWD, ALLOYS, TURBO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$32,195 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977	2022 LINCOLN CORSAIR  AS LOW AS \$110/WK #P19218 • SUNROOF, LEATHER NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$46,645 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$30,977	2025 FORD BRONCO 4x4  AS LOW AS \$142/WK #P19027 • CPO, BIG BEND TRIM NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$46,995 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$39,677	2023 SUBARU OUTBACK  AS LOW AS \$96/WK #23A7316 • CPO, PREMIUM TRIM NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,695 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$26,977	2025 MERCEDES GLA 250 SUV  AS LOW AS \$124/WK #25P3938 • 2.0L TURBO, LEATHER NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$50,800 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$34,977
2023 CHEVY COLORADO  AS LOW AS \$132/WK #C48652 • TURBO, 4X4, NAV NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$44,290 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$36,977	2026 HONDA CIVIC SPORT  AS LOW AS \$99/WK #P19121 • 31/39 MPG CITY/HWY NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$34,190 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$27,977	2025 BUICK ENCORE AWD  AS LOW AS \$89/WK #48900 • GX PREFERRED, TURBO NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$32,225 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$24,977	2023 MAZDA CX-5 2.5 S  AS LOW AS \$103/WK #TP7142 • AWD, HEATED SEATS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$32,899 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$28,677	2025 BMW X1 xDrive28i  AS LOW AS \$120/WK #48834 • AWD, TWIN TURBO, NAV NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$51,595 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$33,977	2022 RAM 1500 BIG HORN  AS LOW AS \$135/WK #TP7020 • 4X4, V6, 20" ALLOYS NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$50,710 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$37,677
2024 TOYOTA HIGHLANDER  AS LOW AS \$135/WK #TP6877A • XLE TRIM, SUNROOF NEW RETAIL PRICE: \$45,775 WHOLESALE PRICE: \$37,977					

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Mike Penner
Sr. Vice President

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SALE ENDS 08/31/2026. SOME RESTRICTIONS APPLY. THIS OFFER IS NOT VALID ON PRIOR SALES AND IS BASED ON THE MSRP, AND NOT COMBINABLE WITH ANY OTHER DISCOUNT, PROMOTIONS, OR INCENTIVES. PRICE LISTED INCLUDES ALL APPLICABLE MANUFACTURER REBATES (NOT EVERYONE WILL QUALIFY) AND IMPERIAL DISCOUNTS INCLUDING A \$1,000 IMPERIAL TRADE ASSISTANCE BONUS FOR A QUALIFYING 2016 OR NEWER TRADE. SEE US FOR DETAILS. ADVERTISED PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE TAX, TITLE, REGISTRATION, DOCUMENTATION OR ACQUISITION FEES AND CANNOT BE COMBINED WITH ANY OTHER DISCOUNTS OR PROMOTIONS. WEEKLY PAYMENTS CALCULATED WITH AN ESTIMATED DOWN PAYMENT OF \$2,999 CASH OR TRADE. NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR TYPOGRAPHICAL ERRORS. CALL 1-508-488-2382 TO SEE WHICH REBATES YOU QUALIFY FOR.