

localtownpages

Ashland

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Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

September 1, 2026

MetroWest Humane Society hits major milestone as they celebrate 50 fantastic years

BY BRITTANY AMALFI

Most know about the very special place that we call the MetroWest Humane Society over on Pond Street in Ashland. A place that has long served various cats in search of their forever homes. However, the MWHS is more than just a building that takes in little felines; its mission is to advocate for animal welfare while focusing on the well-being of cats in the MetroWest Boston area, including finding loving homes or providing lifelong care, while educating the community and reducing the feral/stray cat population.



Leslie and Waldo, 1997. Courtesy photo

And now, in 2026, this incredible, volunteer-run organization is celebrating

HUMANE SOCIETY

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Ron Dowd appointed Assistant Director of Athletics

Ashland Public Schools (APS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Ashland resident Ron Dowd, CAA, as the district's new Assistant Director of Athletics, effective Aug. 18, 2026.

The Assistant Director of Athletics is a newly created position designed to support the district's expanding responsibilities for athletic facilities, field scheduling, maintenance, rentals, and athletic operations. Effective July 1, APS assumed responsibility from the Town of Ashland's Department of Public Works for the booking, maintenance, and management of school fields.

The new position is being funded entirely through revenues generated from field and building rentals and will not impact the district's operating budget.

"I would like to welcome Ron to this new role with Ashland Public



Ron Dowd. Courtesy photo

Schools," said Superintendent Jim Adams. "As APS takes on responsibility for booking, maintaining, and managing our school fields, we recognized the need for additional capacity and expertise. Ron brings a unique combination of knowledge in educational athletics, athletic administration, scheduling,

DOWD

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Staff Spotlight:**Ashland Public Library Director Meena Jain**

BY BRITTANY AMALFI

Meena Jain has always had a love for books, but as Ashland Public Library's Director, there is so much more to this incredible role. The connection the library provides is what drives Jain in her day-to-day schedule. She oversees the library's daily operations while helping to create a welcoming space where people of all ages can connect and spend time in the community.

Jain's journey to working in a library began with a degree in social work. She has worked as a librarian since 2005 and said her social work background has been surprisingly useful throughout her career.

"As a library director, I direct all of the operations of the library from staffing, programming, collection development, budgeting, community outreach, to policy—and everything in between," Jain said. "No two days are the same, and I wouldn't have it any other way."

Growing up, Jain moved

around, but has lived in Massachusetts for more than 30 years. Today, she has just a 17-minute commute to work, which she appreciates when those gas prices are high, but it's always a struggle to stop when she's in the middle of a good audiobook.

Before coming to Ashland, Jain worked as a programming librarian in Lexington. Although she enjoyed the position, she missed having a more direct role in the overall operation of a library.

Her connection to Ashland's library actually goes back to 2012, when she was in library school and applied for a teen services position. Former library director Paula Bonetti offered her the job despite Jain having no prior experience. Bonetti considered Ashland a "teaching library," which really stuck with Jain.

When the director position became available following Bonetti's retirement, Jain was excited to take on the role.

Her days now always look different. Jain may be working on the library budget, meeting with staff, presenting to a community organization, helping the Friends of the Library with fundraising, attending trustee or department head meetings, or running a program. She also enjoys interacting with patrons when she gets the chance.

While people often assume librarians spend their days reading, Jain said that is not quite the case. "There's literally no time to read on the job," she said.

What she does have plenty of time for is connecting with people, which she considers the best part of her job. She enjoys watching children discover a favorite book, seeing teens gather in the teen room, helping adults find something to read, and watching people work together on the library's communal puzzle.

Jain also sees the library as an important place for people to connect with one another.

"We're a safe bastion for everyone to gather and get to know their neighbors," she said.

That sense of community is one of the things Jain appreciates most about Ashland. She describes the town as having a small-town feel despite its population of more than 18,000 residents. She especially enjoys the community's diversity, curiosity, and engagement with the library.

One recent experience showed her that connection. Jain participates in the library's monthly cookbook club, where members prepare dishes from a selected cookbook and gather for a potluck. Although she jokingly admits she is not the best cook, she enjoys spending time with the group.

Recently, members told her they had started making plans to go karaoke together outside of the library.

"I was thrilled that they had met through a program at the library and started meeting outside of our programs," Jain said. "It truly is what it's all about."

The Ashland Public Library welcomes between 300 and 400 visitors on a typical day, 500 to 600 on Saturdays, and sometimes more than 1,000 during large-scale programs. Jain said the library serves people of all



Meena Jain. Courtesy photo

ages and backgrounds and offers something for everyone at no cost.

And while her work keeps her surrounded by books, Jain has another interest that might surprise some patrons: she is a self-described nerd who loves comic books, graphic novels, and superhero movies.

Jain believes that the library is about bringing people together, and she is always more than happy to help make that happen every day.

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Ashland High School Class of 1976 plans 50th reunion

The Ashland High School Class of 1976 will celebrate its 50th class reunion on Saturday, Oct. 3, 2026.

The reunion will begin with a cocktail reception at 6 p.m. at Anthony's On the Green at Pinecrest Golf Course, located at 212 Prentice Street in Holliston.

The evening will include heavy appetizers and a cash bar. The cost is \$50 per person.

Classmates can RSVP by Sept. 18. Payment can be made through Venmo using the QR code provided in the reunion announcement, with the name of the person being paid for included in the memo. Checks can also be made payable to "AHS 76 50 Reunion" and



Venmo: AHS7650reunion

mailed to B. Kinney, 44 Skyline Drive, Franklin, MA 02038.

Attendees are encouraged to bring memorabilia to share with classmates. Questions about the reunion can be directed to AHS7650reunion@gmail.com.

Organizers Paulette, Kathi, Ann, and Bobby are looking forward to bringing the Class of 1976 together for the milestone celebration.

Car Show for Cancer: Fourteenth Annual KiddeFenwal Car Show, Sept. 12

September has arrived, and KiddeFenwal is well prepared for its annual Car Show. The show will take place on its spacious grounds at 400 Main Street in Ashland on Sept. 12, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The event, which is in its 14th year, is held to raise funds for cancer research.

“Last year the show attracted over 350 cars and over 900 spectators, our largest turnout to date, and I fully expect to beat that record this year,” said Peter Kamitian, show organizer.

KiddeFenwal, which has produced fire detection, suppression and temperature control equipment for commercial and industrial applications in Ashland since the mid-80’s, is well known for giving back to the community by lending its fields to many of the town’s local youth programs. Over the years, its Relay for Life Team has raised over \$300K throughout the years.

“Car owners and spectators get hooked when they come to our show for the first time, with all types of cars, trucks, and motorcycles dating from the early 1900’s to the latest Lamborghini, all in a family-friendly environment,” said Peter Kamitian. “Attendees will be entertained by music from Jack Leduc, longtime show supporter! and breakfast and



Sat., Sept. 12th

Show 9am - 2pm

Kidde-Fenwal
Car Show



400 Main Street
Ashland, MA 01721



lunch will be available from the Ashland Lions and, of course, the Refreshing Concessions ice cream truck! There is something for everyone.”

Over 100 trophies/awards will be given out to award-winning vehicles, thanks in part to the many Show sponsors.

“I cannot thank our show

sponsors enough, as well as all the people who have attended the show in the past and have donated money to the Cause. We are making a difference,”

added Peter.

If you or your company would like to be a show sponsor, contact Peter Kamitian at 774-279-0497.

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More than just a bench: A lasting and loving tribute

BY HOWARD (HOWIE) AXELROD

I am grieving the loss of my wife. At bereavement groups, we are encouraged to “journal” our actions and feelings. What follows is my first attempt at this.

About me: My name is Howard (Howie) Axelrod, and I've been an Ashland resident for 42 years. I recently purchased and had installed an 8-foot ADA-compliant bench at the corner of Spyglass Hill Drive and Trailside Way, in the Spyglass Hill development where I reside. In the early evening of July 28, 35 neighbors and close friends gathered at the bench for a dedication ceremony. The bench is a memorial and loving tribute to my wife of 33 years, Nancy Stoller Axelrod, who passed away in January after a courageous 10-month battle with pancreatic cancer.



I placed photos of Nancy, a ceramic piggy bank that she made as a child in day camp, one of her favorite hats, and her little gold Buddha on the bench. I had covered the memorial plaque with colorful Buddhist prayer flags. I began a short dedication speech and spread Nancy's ashes in front of the bench. My heart ached beyond pain in that moment, and I felt myself choking up and fighting not to lose control of my emotions. Thoughts raced through my head. Tears welled up in my eyes. “Was I not the most fortunate man on earth to have enjoyed the blessing of this amazing woman for over three decades? Is this what remains of my beautiful Nancy? Ashes? Why was she taken from me? Why did she have to endure such pain and suffering? Why was such a healthy, vibrant, and kind woman cheated out of a full life?” My mind was racing. I felt a deep and confusing sense of both devastating loss and intense anger at that moment. In an attempt to not make attend-

ees uncomfortable, I somehow managed to compose myself and to carry on.

About Nancy: Nancy was a Pediatric Occupational Therapist who graduated from the prestigious Boston University Sargent College of Health & Rehabilitation Sciences and worked for over 35 years in the Lowell Public School System. She was a committed professional, held in high esteem by her colleagues and patients, and improved the lives of over 2,000 children and their parents during her career. Simply stated, she dedicated her life to the well-being of children.

During most of Nancy's illness, she was confined to home and too sick to leave the house. Nancy adored the neighborhood children. I hired a contractor and had a little library built and installed as fast as possible in front of our home so that she could see it clearly from the window in the den. This was to be a “Children's” Little Library. I stocked it with children's books, toys, and sidewalk chalk.



It was an immediate hit, and the neighborhood children flocked to it. Nancy derived great pleasure from watching them pick out and compare books. A few days after installation, the kids got busy with the sidewalk chalk and made a beautiful thank-you mural to us on our driveway. It was so touching for both Nancy and me.

Nancy was a remarkable wife, sibling, daughter, and friend to all, and always put the needs of others ahead of her own. I was always proud of her for being the selfless, caring person she was. For the past 33 years, my world revolved around her love and presence. Throughout those wonderful years together, I always felt that I was the most

fortunate man on earth to be bonded to this remarkable and loving woman. We had an idyllic life together. Her loss has devastated me, and I struggle to get through each day now. The saying we hear in bereavement is that “deep love means deep grief.” Respectfully, reader, I can assure you that this can only be truly understood by one who has been there.

Nancy had many friends in the Ashland community who “stepped up” to support us during the dark days of her illness, and even now during my grieving. I am forever in these people's debt for the love and

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Five questions that could change how you see retirement



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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Saving for retirement is important, but it's only part of the picture. If you're within five to 10 years of your target retirement date, it's time to start thinking about what you actually want your retirement to look like. After all, getting to retire-

ment isn't the end goal — it's what you want to do once you're there that matters.
Start by asking yourself these five questions.

When do you want to retire?
The age at which you retire matters more than you may realize. Retiring early sounds appealing, but it means saving more and having less time to do it. It can also create gaps in health care coverage and income before key benefits kick in. For example, Social Security benefits can begin at 62, but at a reduced amount. Full benefits are available between ages 66 and 67, depending on birth year, and waiting until 70 means the maximum benefit. Medicare doesn't start until age 65, and penalty-free withdrawals from retirement accounts generally aren't allowed until age 59½.
For couples, timing gets even more complicated. Staggering

retirement dates can sometimes maximize benefits; in other cases, retiring at the same time works better.
A financial advisor can help you sort through these decisions and find the approach that makes the most sense for your situation.

How do you want to spend your time in retirement?
Many new retirees are surprised to find that having unlimited free time feels disorienting rather than freeing. Thinking ahead about how to fill the days with meaningful activity — whether that's travel, volunteering, pursuing hobbies or spending more time with family — can make the transition smoother.
It helps to sketch out what a typical week, month or even first year might look like. If there are big gaps, it's worth thinking now about what might fill them in rewarding ways.

Where do you want to live as a retiree?
Some retirees stay put, while others downsize or relocate entirely. Either way, it's wise to consider whether a chosen location will work well as you get older, taking into account factors like proximity to family, access to health care, cost of living and climate.

What will your retirement lifestyle cost?
It's not uncommon for retirees to discover that their travel, entertainment or leisure expenses were higher than expected. The more active and involved you plan to be, the more you will likely need to budget.

Does your retirement involve giving back?
Retirement often brings both the time and motivation to be more generous. Whether the goal is helping family members, donat-

ing to charity or volunteering in the community, it's worth defining those goals and building them into an overall plan.
Now that your vision is taking shape, turn it into a plan. Work with your financial advisor to align your savings with the life you want — and revisit that plan as your priorities evolve so your retirement keeps pace with you.

Contact Mark today to discuss this topic or any of your financial goals.
Mark Freeman, CEPA
Edward Jones Financial Advisor
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BENCH

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compassion that they provided to us when it was so desperately needed. We could never have survived the darkness without the time, energy, love, and encouragement that they willingly provided. These wonderful and caring people will live in my heart forever, and I would do anything in my power to support them if needed. Nancy's illness and passing have made it clear to me that she was deeply loved by so many people in Ashland.
My longtime friend Kenny screwed the memorial plaque

onto the bench. Two of the neighborhood children volunteered to speak to the crowd and said they love the bench and that it has become their new gathering place. If a child was looking for someone in the neighborhood to play with, now he or she only has to go to the bench to find playmates
Now each time I leave home and return and see the bench I think of Nancy and am reminded of how amazing and loving a life we had together, and that nothing can ever replace the home that we still share in my heart. Sometimes I feel joy. Sometimes I feel devastating loss. Sometimes I feel

deep anger. I am a complex switchboard of emotions these days. The therapist's diagnosis of this is called "normal."
The location of this bench was intentional. Although the objective of its placement was to provide a place for the neigh-

borhood children and parents to sit as they wait for the school bus each day, I am delighted that the neighborhood children have adopted it as their rendezvous point. The kids now refer to it as their "clubhouse." As I drove by on my way home yes-

terday, I saw 10 neighborhood children at the bench, setting up a lemonade stand. I became a customer. Watching the children playing and enjoying the bench warmed my heart. This time, my emotion was joy. I believe that Nancy was watching.

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Ashland Garden Club news

It has been a very busy summer for members of the Ashland Garden Club. Although the Club does not meet during July and August, members are busy maintaining their sites and planters around town while working in their own gardens. We also use this time to visit each other's gardens. This summer we had the pleasure of visiting three members' gardens and socializing.

In July, the AGC offered a hands-on workshop, "Growing Food from Scraps," for children and their caregivers. This event was co-sponsored by the Ashland Library. First, the children learned how to grow new food from leftover "scraps". Then they received scraps of their choice to take home and plant, watching them grow. The energy and interest in the topic led to a very interactive and engaging session. Everyone had a lot of fun while learning how to use food scraps sustainably.

The Community Center is my next focus. This garden is the newest in-ground site that the Garden Club plants and maintains. It is what could be called a "Friendship Garden" because the majority of the plants were donated by Gwen



Wan from her own garden. When she needed to move plants from one of her gardens, she contacted me and offered to donate them to the Ashland Garden Club. The minute she offered plants, I thought of adding to the Community Cen-



ter garden. Not only did Gwen offer her plants, but she and her student, Lele, joined me in planning where each plant would go and then they planted them.

For the past two years, Garden Club member Elissa Bilech has been in charge of the Community Center gar-

den. This year she also has the help of Roseangla Wilner. Over time, Elissa has added more perennials and some annuals for color. Please stop by the Community Center to admire Elissa and Roseangla's hard work.

The Ashland Garden Club meets 10-11 a.m. on the second

Saturday of each month, September through June. We meet in the lower-level meeting room at the Library, and all meetings are open to the public.

Check out our Facebook page "Ashland Garden Club of Massachusetts" and our online account at www.ashlandgardenclub.com.



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Greater Ashland Lions Club

Fly the American Flag on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 7

Serving Our Community Together

Did you know that Ashland is fortunate to be home to two outstanding Lions organizations? Both are proud members of Lions Clubs International and District 33K, working side by side to make our community stronger through service, compassion, and humanitarian efforts.

The Ashland Lions Club, chartered in 1967, has been serving our community for nearly six decades. The GREATER Ashland Lions Club, originally founded as the Ashland Lioness Club, was chartered in 1993 with the Ashland Lions Club serving as our proud sponsor. Today, both clubs continue to make a meaningful difference through charitable giving, volunteerism, and support for local and international humanitarian causes. Whether it's helping neighbors in need, supporting youth programs, assisting those with vision and hearing challenges, or respond-

ing to disasters, Lions are dedicated to the simple but powerful mission of serving others.

We are always looking for new members who want to give back, make new friendships, and help expand our impact throughout the community. If you've ever considered volunteering, we'd love to welcome you!

Thanks for your generosity

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who has donated aluminum pull tabs and used eyeglasses. These ongoing collections help support important programs that benefit people both locally and around the world. Please keep those donations coming! Every pair of glasses and every handful of pull tabs helps make a difference.

Visit us at Ashland Day

Be sure to stop by the Greater Ashland Lions Club booth. We'll be raising funds to support children battling cancer, relief efforts for those affected by the Spokane Wildfires, and other important charitable initiatives.

We'd love the opportunity to meet you, share information about our club, and tell you more about the many ways Lions serve our community.

Save the Date – Porchetta Night!

Mark your calendars for our annual Porchetta Night on Thursday, Oct. 15, at the Ashland VFW. Tickets are \$25 each. You don't want to miss this evening filled with:

- Delicious 5 course meal prepared by Marconi's
- Live entertainment
- Exciting Basket Raffles - including a generous raffle donation from Anderson's Jewelers

It's a fantastic night of great food, fun, and fellowship—all while supporting the charitable work of the Greater Ashland Lions Club.

Help keep someone warm this winter

It's never too early to begin collecting clean, gently used coats for our annual Coat for Kids and

Families campaign, beginning in October. You can bring donations to any of our upcoming events, or simply contact us to arrange a convenient pickup. Together, we can help ensure that local families stay warm during the colder months ahead.

Thank you for supporting Lions

Every volunteer hour, every donation, every event attended,

and every member strengthens our ability to serve others. Thank you for being part of a community that cares so deeply about helping neighbors near and far! Together, we can continue to make Ashland—and the world—a better place through service. #kindnessmatters

We are the Lions in Purple. We Serve!
Submitted: Lion Rosalie Porter, 2nd VP

Allegra Commonwealth Singers to hold guest nights in September

Soprano and alto adult singers can attend guest nights for Allegra Commonwealth Singers every Monday in September. The welcoming chorus meets from 7-9 p.m. at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, 3 Maple Street, Framingham.

Singers should be excited to learn a variety of musical genres and be able to read music or have choral experience; those

wishing to join will participate in a relaxed audition.

The chorus rehearses weekly to prepare for upcoming public afternoon concerts on Dec. 5 and 6. Director Brett Abigaña leads the chorus in his second year, and pianist Simonida Spasojevic accompanies. Information is available on the website allegrasingers.org or by emailing info@allegrasingers.org.

DOWD

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and field and facility management. As an Ashland resident who also has professional experience within our schools, Ron understands our community and will be an excellent addition to our athletics team.”

Dowd brings extensive experience in interscholastic athletics and athletic administration. A Certified Athletic Administrator, he served for a decade as Athletic Director for Walpole Public Schools, where he oversaw a 30-team athletic program, managed budgets and operational logistics, supervised more than 70 coaches annually, and worked on major athletic facility projects. His responsibilities also included game and field scheduling, transportation, staffing, equipment and inventory, and field management.

Dowd also brings significant experience collaborating with municipal departments and community organizations on field use and scheduling. While in Walpole, he worked with the Department of Public Works, Recreation Department, and

youth organizations on field scheduling—experience that directly complements APS's new responsibilities.

His career includes extensive coaching and tournament management experience. Dowd served as an MIAA Tournament Director from 2019 to 2025 and has held leadership roles within the Bay State Conference. He also previously coached football, hockey, and baseball in Ashland Public Schools.

Dowd's approach to athletics emphasizes the connection between education and interscholastic sports and the importance of creating programs centered on student development, inclusion, sportsmanship, and school community.

Mr. Dowd will begin his new role on Aug. 18. Ashland Public Schools welcomes Ron to the position and looks forward to his leadership and experience supporting APS athletics, facilities, and the broader Ashland community.

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



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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Why is everyone at b.LUXE?

Inside One of Massachusetts' Highest-Rated Salons

By GINA WOELFEL

September is the Unofficial "Back To Yourself" Season.

After a summer of loose schedules, salt air and increasingly optional beauty routines, September brings the urge to feel pulled together again. That return to yourself is what b.LUXE has always been about.

Meanwhile, at the Studio...

On any given day, more than 30 beauty professionals are cutting hair, mixing color, giving facials, applying makeup, fitting wigs and toppers, consulting with guests and learning from one another. Fifteen years in, hair is still at the heart of b.LUXE. It simply has more company now: advanced therapeutic skincare, private wig and topper services and a new generation of artists building their careers.

More than 1,000 Google reviews have helped make b.LUXE one of the highest-rated salons in Massachusetts. We're proud of that number. Even prouder of what it represents. Each one came from a guest who thought their experience was worth sharing.

It Still Starts with Really Good Hair

Hair has always been the foundation of b.LUXE Studio. Our team specializes in precision cutting, custom color, extensions, smoothing services, scalp care and conditioning treatments. Every b.LUXE artist receives advanced education in cutting, coloring and treatments for all hair lengths and textures, from short hair and long layers to curls, razor cuts and clipper cuts.

Your hair also has to work outside the salon. You shouldn't need three brushes, four products, two free hours and the upper-body strength of a professional athlete to recreate it. Really good hair should still be really good when you're the one doing it.

The Next Generation Is Taking Appointments

September has always carried a certain back-to-school energy, and our apprentices understand that better than anyone. Apprentice Stylists Jenni, Anneliese and Kendall have officially joined our booking menu, offering blowouts, haircuts, color and foiling under the guidance of b.LUXE's experienced mentors and educators. We know a college budget and great hair are not natural allies.

We have a solution.

A model wash, cut and style starts at \$35. Color services start at \$40. Face-frame foils start at \$65, partial foils at \$85 and full foils at \$105! Foiling services include a color balance and blow-dry, too. These are full salon appointments, not practice sessions tucked away after hours. Each includes a consultation, completed service and senior-educator check-ins along the way. It is smart beauty math. For students heading back to campus, families watching fall expenses and anyone who appreciates b.LUXE hair at apprentice pricing, the numbers work.

Extensions Are Not What They Used to Be

The words "hair extensions" once suggested very long, dramatic results. Now, many of our guests choose extensions for reasons other than length. They want

fullness through the sides, added density or the return of volume their hair used to have. We still love a dramatic makeover. Today's extensions can be placed and blended to look completely natural. A consultation covers the method, color, placement and upkeep before a single extension is added.

Wigs & Toppers: BEAUTIFULLY YOU

Our wig and topper services began with owner Heather Cohen, who understands hair loss because she has experienced it herself. She knows that finding alternative hair is not simply a matter of selecting a color and placing an order. You want it to look natural. You want it to feel comfortable. Mostly, you want to recognize yourself again. Our private consultations give you room to ask questions, try different options and receive honest guidance. We work with guests experiencing thinning, alopecia, medical hair loss and changes in density. Consultations are available in person and virtually for our non-local guests. Every piece is selected, fitted, cut and styled with the same care and attention as every b.LUXE hair service. We have also given wigs and toppers a home of their own at bluxewigs.com. Online retail is coming soon!

The Quieter Side of b.LUXE

Beyond the energy of the salon, behind the spa room doors, the pace changes. The light softens, the music settles into the background, and your phone stays blissfully silent in your bag. For once, you have nowhere else to be. Our G.M. Collin Master Certified Estheticians, Corinn



Hair. Skin. Makeup. Wigs. BEAUTIFULLY YOU

THE NEXT GENERATION IS TAKING APPOINTMENTS

KENDALL • JENNI • ANNELIESE

WASH, CUT + STYLE	FROM \$35
COLOR	FROM \$40
FOILS	FROM \$65

SCAN TO VIEW SERVICES + BOOK

bluxe.com

and Monique, offer customized facials, chemical peels, waxing and lash services, with specialized care that includes oncology therapeutic skincare and Reiki facials. You may leave with brighter skin and a better home-care plan. You may also leave wondering why you waited so long to let someone take care of you.

Back to You

September is not about reinvention. It is a return to the routines that make you feel like yourself, just as the busiest three months of the year

begin. Maybe that's why everyone is here. For their hair. Their skin. Their makeup. Their confidence. Turns out, there is more than one way back to yourself. Book your next appointment at bluxe.com, or visit bluxewigs.com to learn more about wigs, toppers and private consultations.

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Your Money, Your Independence

Navigating college admissions with financial planning



Glenn Brown, CFP

If you have a high school junior or senior, the college admissions process can quickly turn into an overwhelming blur of deadlines, application choices, and financial decisions. From understanding application timing to navigating shifting loan rules, every choice you make now directly impacts your family's broader financial plan.

Early Action vs. Early Decision

Let's start with the early application process with various October deadlines, and how choosing between Early Action and Early Decision carries financial implications.

Early Action gives your student an early decision without a binding commitment, letting them apply to several schools and compare actual financial aid offers.

Early Decision is a binding agreement. While it can give an admissions edge at certain selective institutions, it strips away your leverage to negotiate financial aid later. If your family chooses the binding route, merit aid conversations must happen prior, not after the application.

Build Merit-Based Relationships

When targeting merit-based aid, looking beyond "trophy" schools is often where the real money is hiding. Highly competitive universities rarely offer deep merit scholarships because their applicant pools are overflowing.

Instead, consider specialized or regional colleges where your student's academic profile places them in the top 20% of applicants. Encourage your teenager to lead conversations, build relationships with local recruiters, and express genuine interest. Admissions teams want

to hear an authentic student voice—not a sales pitch polished by Mom or Dad.

Manage Your 529 Plan

For families who have spent years funding a 529 plan, junior year in high school is the time to start protecting that growth. Consider shifting a portion of those funds into money market instruments so market dips do not force a bad exit right when tuition bills arrive.

Tax-free withdrawals must go toward qualified education expenses like tuition, mandatory fees, and room and board. If you end up overfunding the account, SECURE 2.0 rules allow families to roll up to \$35,000 of leftover 529 funds directly into a Roth IRA for the student, provided the account has been open for at least 15 years. It serves as a great safety valve that turns unused college money into a head start on retirement.

Fast Track The FAFSA

Make sure to submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as early as possible once it opens in the fall. Prioritizing early completion gives your family first-come,

first-served access to state-level grants, institutional aid, and federal work-study funds that frequently run out before general admissions deadlines.

Sequencing Your Loans

The biggest shift comes from last year's student loan reform, when open-ended federal parent borrowing officially ended. Congress placed a hard annual limit of \$20,000 and a lifetime cumulative cap of \$65,000 per dependent child on Parent PLUS loans. Direct undergraduate student loan limits remain capped at \$5,500 to \$12,500 annually.

Because a four-year university can easily exceed that \$65,000 federal ceiling, families need a proactive borrowing plan:

- Pace the \$65,000 Parent PLUS cap evenly across all four years (\$16,250 annually) rather than borrowing \$20,000 upfront and hitting a wall by senior year.
- Combine lower-interest Direct student loans first, ensuring your teenager maxes out their federal loan eligibility before parents assume debt.
- Target colleges with generous institutional grants, prioritiz-

ing schools whose net price calculators reveal strong aid packages that minimize reliance on parent debt.

Aligning your child's educational goals with a realistic, well-paced funding strategy ensures they get a great degree without compromising your own retirement.

If you are balancing application timelines with your household wealth plan, reach out to your Certified Financial Planner to map out a custom college roadmap.

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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Ashland Food Drive

Help the Ashland Food Pantry fill the shelves of the Ashland Food Pantry! They're collecting non-perishable food and household essentials to support local individuals and families in the community.



Donation Drop-Off Locations:
- Ashland Community Center (162 West Union St., lower rear of building — last door)
- Shaw's Supermarket (Pond Street — donation bin available during regular store hours)

Community Center Donation Hours:
- Mondays: 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
- Tuesdays: 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
- Wednesdays: 11:30 a.m.–6 p.m.
- Thursdays: 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.
- Fridays: 9 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Some of the most needed items:
- Canned pasta, canned chili, canned salmon
- Spam, sardines
- Tomato paste
- Peanut and nut or nut-free butters
- Jelly and fruit spreads
- Flour, sugar and cooking oil
- Paper towels, dish soap, trash bags, toilet paper
- Feminine hygiene products

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LIVING HEALTHY

A new treatment option for dry macular degeneration

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

For decades, telling a patient they had dry macular degeneration meant delivering some of the most difficult news in eye care. I would sit across from patients worried about losing their ability to read, drive, or enjoy time with family, and explain that we had very few treatment options.

The advice was always the same: take appropriate vitamins, don't smoke, maintain a healthy lifestyle, monitor your vision, and come in for regular exams. Beyond that, our approach was largely one of careful observation. We were managing the disease as best we could, but we had little to offer in terms of active treatment.

Today, that paradigm is changing.

A new option for dry AMD
Dry age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the most common form of macular de-

generation, affecting millions of Americans. Unlike wet AMD, for which effective injectable treatments have been available for nearly two decades, patients with earlier stages of dry AMD historically had no treatment specifically designed to address the disease itself. While the AREDS2 vitamin formulation can reduce the risk of progression in certain patients, active treatment options remained severely limited.

However, in November 2024, the FDA authorized the Valeda® Light Delivery System for the treatment of dry AMD. Valeda utilizes a technology called **photobiomodulation (PBM)**, offering a noninvasive approach for appropriately selected patients with intermediate dry AMD before the development of advanced geographic atrophy.

What is photobiomodulation?
While light-based therapies have been used for years in

other medical fields for wound healing and inflammation, its application in ophthalmology is a major milestone.

PBM uses carefully controlled wavelengths of red and near-infrared light delivered to the retina during a series of brief, painless office treatments. The light is absorbed by mitochondria—the energy-producing structures within cells. Researchers believe this process supports cellular metabolism while reducing the oxidative stress and inflammation that drive the progression of macular degeneration.

The standard treatment protocol consists of nine short sessions performed over approximately three to five weeks. Based on clinical trials, additional treatment series may be recommended periodically.

What does the research show?
The LIGHTSITE III clinical trial evaluated photobiomod-



ulation in patients with intermediate dry AMD over two years. The results were highly encouraging:

- **Improved vision:** Patients receiving PBM experienced an average improvement in visual acuity compared to those who received a sham treatment.
- **Measurable gains:** More than 60% of treated eyes gained at least five letters on the standard ETDRS visual acuity chart.
- **Slower progression:** The study suggested that treated patients may experience lower rates of progression to advanced geographic atrophy.
- **Safety:** The treatment was well tolerated with no significant safety concerns identified.

A note of caution: Photobiomodulation is not a cure, and it does not guarantee improved vision for every patient. As an ophthalmologist, I believe in balancing optimism with reality. Patients deserve accurate information and realistic expectations, not exaggerated promises.

Who is a candidate?
Patient selection is critical. Current evidence and FDA authorization focus specifically on patients with **intermediate dry AMD**. Determining whether this treatment is appropriate requires a comprehensive eye examination, detailed retinal imaging, and an individualized evaluation by an ophthalmolo-

gist or retina specialist.

What this means for you
If you were told years ago that there was "nothing to do" for your dry AMD, it is time to have another conversation with your eye doctor. PBM does not replace the fundamentals of care—patients must still take vitamins, avoid smoking, and undergo regular monitoring—but it offers a powerful new tool in our arsenal.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we are proud to be the fourth center in Massachusetts—and the only one in our local area—to offer photobiomodulation therapy with the Valeda system through our Franklin office.

We are also proud to provide comprehensive, on-site retina specialty care through Dr. Alyse Richard, a highly trained retina specialist dedicated to advanced, patient-centered care for complex retinal conditions.

After many years of simply monitoring dry AMD, I am grateful we finally have more to offer. If you or a loved one has been diagnosed with dry AMD, contact Milford Franklin Eye Center today to schedule a comprehensive retinal evaluation.

For more details, see our ad on this page.

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Ashland Lions Club September update

Annual Lions Golf Tournament
Join us for the Ashland Lions 18th Annual Charity Golf Tournament, to be held Monday, Sept. 14, at the Highfields Golf and Country Club in Grafton. There will be golf, a meal, raffles, and a day of fun to support the Ashland Lions and their mission of donating to Eye Research and Local Charities. Sponsorship opportunities available. There's still time to register! For details, visit ashlandlions.org/golf, email us at golf@ashlandlions.org, or visit our Facebook page.

Lions at Car Shows
The Ashland Lions will have their food trailer at the Kiddie Fenwal Car Show on Saturday, Sept. 12, 9 a.m.- 2 p.m. We will

be selling hot food and cold beverages in our bright red trailer. The address is 400 Main Street in Ashland, on the big field. There will be food, fun, music, prizes, and a bunch of great cars! The show is run by the company's Relay for Life team, and proceeds of the show go to the American Cancer Society.

Lions at Ashland Day
Ashland Day is back again this year and so are we! The Ashland Lions will be on hand with their food trailer selling a variety of food and beverages. We'll also have a booth to talk with people about Lions. The event is Saturday, Sept. 19, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at Stone Park in Ashland. We're also bringing back the Golf Ball Drop at Ashland Day.
This is a fundraiser benefiting



the Ashland Lions and the Ashland Fire Dept. Numbered balls (sold for \$5 each) will be dropped from the AFD's tower truck. Tickets (corresponding to the ball numbers) will be available from Lion Julian Doktor at 508-881-4664 or from any Lion member. Tickets will also be available at Ashland Day. A ball in the hole or closest to the hole will win \$250. The ball farthest from the hole wins \$50. You do not need to be present to win.

Ashland Lions Meat Raffles
Ashland Lions Club is kicking off another great year of meat raffles! Our first one will be held on Saturday, Oct. 3 at 12 p.m., at TJ's Food and Spirits in Ashland. As always, there will be great food, fun people, and great meat to choose from. See you there!

Eyeglasses and Cellphone Collection
Our eyeglasses and cellphone collection runs year-round. We collect used prescription and non-prescription eyeglasses, sunglasses, hearing aids, and cell phones.
So far this new Lionistic year, we have collected over 100 pairs of glasses. Thank you to our Lions for your tireless work on this project!

Collection boxes are located at:

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

Stay up-to-date on Lions happenings
To get the latest updates on our events, visit our Ashland Lions Facebook page and click "Like" to receive notifications of any changes. While you're there, be sure to follow Ashland Town News as well!
Lion Dan Mitchell, Ashland Lions Club

Concerns raised about solar agreement

Do you care about protecting our shared forests, wildlife habitat, and trail system—and ensuring that commitments made to our communities are kept? If so, now is the time to speak up.
As neighbors in Ashland and Hopkinton, we are asking residents of both towns to help ensure that commitments made during the approval of the Frankland Road solar project are honored.
In 2020, Seaboard Solar, the original owner of the Frankland Road solar project, committed to protect designated open space as part of a special permit issued by the Hopkinton Planning Board (recorded in the Southern Middlesex Registry of Deeds #80147). The protected land included approximately 1.8 acres in Ashland containing a significant portion of the Hopkinton-Ashland trail system and an important connection for residents who use and enjoy this area.
In 2022, Agilitas Energy acquired the project and became the successor owner. The company has since maintained that the Ashland parcel is "not available" as open space and "outside the scope of the land donation." However, the parcel was spe-

cifically identified as protected open space in the special permit and formed part of the basis on which the solar project received approval.
As successor owner, Agilitas inherited both the benefits and responsibilities associated with that permit. The permit states that the designated open-space land "shall be conveyed" through donation or conservation restriction. The Hopkinton Planning Board and Building Commissioner retain the authority to enforce those conditions and ensure the land is protected as originally intended.
Ashland officials were not informed that the Ashland parcel would be excluded from protection and placed on the market. Ashland's Town Manager, Select Board, Planning Board, Conservation Commission, and Open Space & Recreation Committee have all expressed support for preserving the parcel as open space conservation land. The Hopkinton Open Space Preservation Commission has also expressed support for preserving the land.
While located in Ashland, this parcel provides benefits that extend beyond town boundaries. It contains valuable wildlife hab-

itat, forested open space, and an important link in the trail network shared by residents of both Ashland and Hopkinton. Preserving this land was part of the original commitment associated with approval of the solar project.
If permit conditions can be disregarded after a project is approved, public trust in the permitting process is undermined. Residents who value conservation, public trails, and the integrity of local land-use decisions should urge the Hopkinton Planning Board (planningboard-chair@hopkintonma.gov) and Building Commissioner Christopher McWhite (cmcwhite@hopkintonma.gov) to enforce the Frankland Road solar project's special permit as written, copying the Ashland Select Board (selectboard@ashlandmass.com).
Please take a moment to email them and ask that open-space commitments made as part of the solar project's approval be honored and enforced.
Concerned residents of Hopkinton and Ashland – Tony Quattrone, Susan Thorne, David & Nancy Rosenblum, Kai Wittpenning, John DeGozzaldi, Jin Zhao, Bob Ionta, Matt Winkler, Brian Forestal.

2 FREE ADMISSIONS with this Ad!

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Mini Treatments

Contact Walter
508-460-6656
or waltershowphotoart@gmail.com
HealthAndWellnessShow.net

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September at the Ashland Library

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

The Library will be closed on Saturday through Monday, Sept. 5-7 in observance of Labor Day weekend.

SPECIAL EVENT: In Person - A Book Birthday - Kristan Higgins Discusses "The Me I Used to Be"

Thursday, Sept. 24 from 6-7:30 p.m.

In Person - Psychic Fair at the Ashland Library

Saturday, Sept. 26 from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

An afternoon unlike anything else in the area—this is a rare opportunity to experience three powerful and eye-opening modalities in one event, all under one roof at the Ashland Public Library. This program is brought to us by our friends at With Love And Gratitude.

Whether you are curious, seeking clarity, or simply open to something new, this event invites you to step into an afternoon of meaningful exploration, insight, and discovery.

ADULT - In Person: In Person - Front Street Readers Book Club

Tuesday, Sept. 1 from 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Read *Letters from Skye* by Jessica Brockmole.

In Person - Mah Jongg

Wednesday, Sept. 2 at 6 p.m.

In Person - Historical Fiction Book Club

Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 11 a.m.
Read *The Slow March of Light* by Heather B. Moore.

In Person - Great Decisions: U.S. Engagement of Africa

Thursday, Sept. 10 from 6-7:45 p.m.

In Person - Women's Wisdom Circle

Thursday, Sept. 10 from 6-7:30 p.m.

For this session, we're hosting something a bit different: Divorce - a panel discussion on how to cope with the legal and emotional turmoil.

In Person - Mystery Book Club

Friday, Sept. 11 at 12 p.m.

Read *Love You More* by Lisa Gardner.

In Person - Card Making with Jan Poppendieck

Monday, Sept. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

In Person - Cook Book Club

Tuesday, Sept. 15 at 5 p.m.

Cook from *A Boat, a Whale, & a Walrus: Menus and Stories* by Renee Erickson.

In Person - Bio/Memoir Book Club

Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 11 a.m.

Read *Dirtbag Billionaire* by David Gelles.

VIRTUAL:

Virtual - Founding Writers:

Six Authors with Bill Thierfelder
Tuesday, Sept. 1 from 7-8:15 p.m.

Virtual - Environmental Book Club

Wednesday, Sept. 2 at 6:30 p.m.

Read *Total Garbage: How We Can Fix Our Waste and Heal Our World* by Edward Humes.

VIRTUAL - Romance Book Club

Thursday, Sept. 3 at 7 p.m.

Topic: Trapped!

Virtual - Historical Fiction Book Recs with Bestselling Author, Jane Healey.

Tuesday, Sept. 8 from 6:30-7 p.m.

Virtual - Electing the President with Constitutional

Scholar James Coll.

Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Author Led Horror Book Club with Saratoga Schaefer: "Trad Wife"

Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 7:30 p.m.

The discussion will be moderated by our favorite horror bookstagrammer, Jody Blanchette (@redreadreviews).

Virtual - Photography Critique with Photographer Jim Kahnweiler: Pick Your Summer Favorites.

Wednesday, Sept. 9 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Presidential Series with Doodler Heather Rogers: William Henry Harrison.

Friday, Sept. 11 at 10:30 a.m.

Virtual - Friday Night Film Discussion

Friday, Sept. 11 at 7 p.m.

Watch *Woman at War*.

Virtual - In Conversation with Author Heather B. Moore: "Her America"

Monday, Sept. 14 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Dick Clark and American Bandstand with Clint Edwards.

Tuesday, Sept. 15 from 7-8:15 p.m. More info coming soon (but, you know we love Clint Edwards!)

Virtual - Book Birthday Celebration with Author Maggie Gates: "Blue Jean Summer"

Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 7 p.m.

Virtual - Bill Gette: Exploring Northern Costa Rica.

Thursday, Sept. 17 from 1-2:15 p.m.

Virtual - Mystery/Thriller Book Recs with Bestselling Author, Hank Phillippi Ryan.

Thursday, Sept. 17 from 6:30-7 p.m.

Virtual - Author Heather Wolf Discusses: Fall Bird Migration - Seas, Skies, and Land.

Thursday, Sept. 17 from 1-2:15 p.m.

Virtual - Mystery/Thriller Book Recs with Bestselling Author, Hank Phillippi Ryan.

Thursday, Sept. 17 from 6:30-7 p.m.

Virtual - Author Heather Wolf Discusses: Fall Bird Migration - Seas, Skies, and Land.

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Thursday, Sept. 17 from 6:30-7 p.m.

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

Monday, Sept. 21 from 7-8:15 p.m.

Virtual - How to Season Your Food: Q&A with Chef Helen Rennie.

Tuesday, Sept. 22 at 7 p.m.

Please note that this is a discussion, NOT a cooking demonstration.

Virtual - Friday Night Film Discussion

Friday, Sept. 25 at 7 p.m.

Watch *Mary and Max*.

Virtual - (how to avoid) "Death on Mount Washington" with Author Randi Mine-

tor. Monday, Sept. 28 from 7-8:15 p.m.

Virtual - The Science of Autumn Foliage with David Govatski. Tuesday, Sept. 29 at 7 p.m.

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LEGO Club

Monday, Sept. 21 from 6-7 p.m. For kids in grades K-3. Registration is required and space is limited.

Juntos en la Biblioteca: Actividades en Español en Familia for families | para familias.

Monday, Sept. 28 from 6:30-7:15 p.m.

WEEKLY STORYTIMES: (no registration)

Clocktown Rockers!

For ages 2-5 with a caregiver. Tuesdays at 10:30-11 a.m. Join us for this exciting music and movement program! We'll dance to favorite kids' tunes, have fun with instruments and other props, and read a story, all while building your child's early literacy and executive function skills.

Baby Time

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

This interactive storytime includes sweet stories, fun rhymes and fingerplays, bounces, and so much more.

STEM Storytime

For ages 3-6 with a caregiver. Fridays from 10:30-11:15 a.m.

No registration required.

Saturday Stories

For families with young children. Saturdays from 10:30-11 a.m. Join Miss Kayla for our weekly Saturday morning storytime!

RECURRING WEEKLY PROGRAMS:

Project ABC: Play, Learn & Grow

For ages 0-5. Mondays from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Registration is required and is found on their website: <https://www.projectabc.org/>

TEEN:

Teen - In-Person Creative Writing Club

Thursday, Sept. 3 from 5-6 p.m.

Stop by the Ashland Public Library to do some creative writing. You can continue working on a project or start a new one! There will be optional prompts for inspiration.

Teen Advisory Board Meeting - In Person

Wednesday, Sept. 9 from 4:30-5:30 p.m. Share your ideas, help plan teen events, and make some crafts! This event can be attended for community service hours.



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Town of Ashland and Town Manager Michael Herbert announce mutual decision to conclude tenure

After more than thirteen years of service to the Town of Ashland, including approximately ten and a half years as Town Manager, Michael Herbert and the Ashland Select Board have jointly agreed that the time is right to begin the transition to new leadership. The decision reflects both the natural completion of a significant chapter of work initiated during Mr. Herbert's tenure and Mr. Herbert's decision to focus on his health and other personal and professional interests. Mr. Herbert's service as Town Manager concludes effective Sept. 1, 2026.

"Ashland has accomplished remarkable things over the past decade, and many of the projects initiated and worked on while I was Town Manager have now been delivered or are firmly in place," Herbert said. "That reality, combined with health considerations and my desire to focus on family and other professional interests, made clear to me that this is the right time for the Town to begin its next chapter under new leadership. I am grateful to the Board, the staff, and the community for the opportunity to serve, and I leave with deep confidence in the Select Board, the team, and the institutions we have built together."

Select Board Chair Brandi Kinsman, who has been part of the Select Board since 2019, expressed the Board's appreciation for Mr. Herbert's tenure and work. "Michael has been an integral part of the Ashland community for nearly fourteen years, and his contributions have shaped the Town in lasting ways," Kinsman said. "The Board respects and supports his decision to prioritize his health and family and to focus on what comes next for him professionally. We are genuinely grateful for his years of service, and we wish him well in his next chapter." Mr. Herbert served as Assistant Town Manager and Finance Director from 2013 until his appointment as Town Manager in 2016. During his tenure, the Town accomplished measurable changes in its fiscal position, infrastructure, and community assets.

Major projects completed during this period include the Public Safety Building, the new elementary school, and the comprehensive transformation of downtown Ashland through the \$15 million streetscape project, the renovation of Pond Street, the completion of the Riverwalk, and the restoration of Mill Pond Park. Ashland also preserved approximately 300 acres of open space, completed the Ashland Arboretum on a former brownfield site, and opened a new dog park. The Town earned its AAA bond rating and established reserve, OPEB, and stabilization policies during this period. The Select Board will appoint an Acting or Interim Town Manager to lead day-to-day operations and will begin the search process for a permanent Town Manager in the coming months.

"A transformation like the one Ashland has experienced over the last decade only happens when many people work together for the common good," Herbert said. "The staff, the boards and commissions, the volunteers, the elected officials past and present, and the residents who showed up for their community made this work possible. I am grateful to have been part of it, and I look forward to remaining part of the Ashland community in the years ahead."

Meet Linguini Le Chat & Colette Le Chat

Sweet, shy pair looking for a patient home

Linguini and Colette are a one-year-old brother-and-sister duo who came to us as strays. These two have never been apart and rely on each other for comfort and confidence, so they must be adopted together.

Linguini is a handsome all-black boy who is slowly but surely warming up to the idea that people aren't so bad after all. He can be shy at first, but a few treats go a long way with him. Once he feels comfortable, he is a genuinely sweet and affectionate boy who will seek out his favorite people for attention. Once you find the right spot for a scratch, he melts completely, turning into a happy, purring puddle.

Colette is a sweet girl who is still building her confidence around people. She does best with a calm, consistent environment where she can feel safe and settle in at her own pace. Play is the best way to connect with her. Pull out a wand toy or laser pointer for her, and you will start to see her true personality come out.

Both Linguini and Colette have tested positive for FIV, but FIV-positive cats can live long and healthy lives without needing medication. Our adoption counselors have plenty of information on FIV and can assure



you that both cats have many good years ahead of them. Linguini and Colette would

do best in a calm, quiet home with patient adopters who understand that shy cats often have the most love to give, but they just need a little extra time to show it. They will thrive in a low-stress environment with predictable routines to help them build confidence as they come out of their shells.

Adoptions are by appointment only. If you have an interest in meeting Colette &

Linguine, please fill out our online adoption application

(<https://www.shelterluv.com/matchme/adopt/MWHS/Cat>).

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Ashland local updates

Ashland Day

This year is the 40th year celebrating Ashland Day! Join the Ashland Day committee and countless vendors on Saturday, Sept. 19 at Stone Park from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. to take place in the celebration.

Ashland Day is a fan-favorite community event, combining everything people love about Ashland. Local businesses, community groups, and student organizations this is the perfect event to come and celebrate the town! With opportunities to learn about community groups and help school organizations with

their fundraising efforts by participating in an activity or game. All Ashland Day's activities and entertainment will appeal to a broad range of ages and cultures,

We hope you will stop by Stone Park for the fun and to make great memories and connections!

Dragonfly Street Faire

The Dragonfly Street Faire is back and better than ever! Head to Downtown Ashland on Saturday, Oct. 3 from 1-6 p.m. for shopping, music, entertainment, plus food and beverage. Main Street will be closed to vehicles to create a downtown



Faire not to be missed!

The Dragonfly Street Faire spans from The Corner Spot to the corner of Front Street. The downtown sidewalks will be lined with vendors selling their products, and there will be street performers strolling throughout downtown. This event has been designed for all ages! There will be kids' events and activities, shopping, and food and beverages for all to partake in. If you are interested in popping up as a vendor, please contact events@ashlandmass.com. For more information and to see what's happening, go to www.thecornerpotashland.com.

Plus save the date for FallFest! Coming Saturday, Oct. 24 from 3-6 p.m. at The Corner Spot!

Message from the Building Commissioner

For most people, your home is the most important investment that you make. Many of you have work done on your house over time. It is important for you to understand what happens once you hire a contractor or attempt to work on your house.

Under state law: A homeowner may apply for their own building permit, and a contractor may apply for a permit for your home. It is assumed by the state that the person applying for the building permit is knowledgeable in the various codes and their requirements on what and how you can perform work. This includes applying for permits and getting the proper inspections done.

If you hire a contractor, you should be asking for a copy of the permit before they start work. Permits are required to be posted at the house where work is being performed. It is also recommended that a homeowner not make a final payment until you are shown the permit with a final sign-off, showing the date of the inspection and the signature of the building official.

Posted on AshlandMass.Com under Inspection Services is a list of work requiring a construction supervisor's license and a home improvement license. Our office is here to help you; feel free to email us at Inspection@Ashlandmass.com to ask any questions.

Stone Park Music Festival

The Stone Park Music Festival (SPMF) will return to Stone Park in Ashland on Saturday, Sept. 12, 2026. We invite everyone to join us in experiencing the magic of music in fall!

Founded in 2022, the Stone Park Music Festival was created to bring the joy of music to the community. The SPMF has been inviting distinguished artists to celebrate wonderful music in nature at the heart of Ashland, Stone Park, and

has continued expanding its programs and artists every year to introduce a rich program performed by acclaimed artists including faculty members at New England Conservatory, Boston University, Berklee College of Music, and beyond. Audience members will have the opportunity to hear a wide range of repertoire, from beloved masterpieces to engaging and inspiring works that showcase the richness and diversity of classical music and other musical genres.

This year's festival program includes a piano trio transcription of Schönberg's Verklärte Nacht, performed by the Aegis Piano Trio: Daniel Kurganov (violin), Daniel Lelchuk (cello), and Constantine Finehouse (piano); Jean Françaix's wind quartet and Marcel Bitsch's Divertissement, performed by the wind quartet consisting of Nicholas Brown (clarinet), Amanda Hardy (oboe), Hayley Miller (flute), and Meryl Summers (bassoon); a mix of original material from Lyle Brewer's albums Juno, Get It Together, and Promise Ring, performed by Lyle Brewer (guitar); and an opening performance of Chopin's Fantaisie, performed by Grace Soonjoo Moon (piano).

The Stone Park Music Festival offers a unique concert experience by bringing audiences closer to both the music and the artists, allowing audience members to enjoy live performances up close and meet the performers after the concert. For aspiring musicians and students,

ASHLAND UPDATES

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SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones



HUMANE SOCIETY

continued from page 1

its 50th anniversary.

Board members Maria Balzarini and Carol Shapiro were more than happy to share the story of what is now the MetroWest Humane Society, which began on September 14, 1976, when a small group of devoted animal lovers came together to form the Framingham Animal Humane Society. Their mission was simple: help local cats and dogs in need and find them loving homes. Without a shelter of their own, volunteers opened their basements, attics, and spare rooms to animals in need. It was challenging work, but the commitment of those early volunteers never wavered. By the 1980s, the organization had begun focusing heavily on feral cats, including a large colony rescued from Union Avenue in Framingham in 1985. Volunteers learned as they went, even gathering around Board President Carol Marchione's dining room table to figure out how to syringe-feed kittens. It was, as one longtime volunteer remembered, a true labor of love.

As the number of animals needing help grew, so did the organization. In 1985, FAHS moved into the upper floor of Southborough Kennels, where volunteers carried gallons of water up two flights of stairs because there was no running water. The cages were made of chicken wire, but for the volunteers, this was their first real shelter and a major milestone. Nine years later, the organization purchased a small house in Ashland, raising money through countless events and fundraisers. The cats were housed on one floor, with volunteers building cages themselves from wood and chicken wire. The space quickly filled, sometimes with more than 100 cats in the shelter, but once again, the volunteers made it work. Looking back, those early years were filled with challenges, creativity, and plenty of hard work—but above all, they were built on a shared belief that every animal deserved a chance.

By 2000, the rescue work had expanded well beyond Framingham, and the Board

of Directors decided that a new name was in order. On Jan. 1, 2001, the Framingham Animal Humane Society officially became the MetroWest Humane Society. In 2003, Sheryl Merchant became the Board President and continued to grow the organization.

In 2007, a generous donation, combined with a successful fundraising campaign, made it possible to completely renovate and expand the building at 30 Pond Street, increasing it from one floor to three. The project created the shelter that exists today, including an isolation room, kitten room, an office, a store, and spacious free-roaming areas. The entire third floor was dedicated to shy and feral cats, giving even more animals a safe and comfortable place to heal, grow, and find their way home.

Over the past two decades, MWHS has continued to evolve through changes in leadership, volunteers, and staff. After the unexpected passing of Sheryl Merchant in 2015, her dear friend and longtime Board member Leslie Croci-Reed became Board President and shepherded MWHS into its fifth decade. When Leslie and her daughter relocated out of state in 2022, the Board elected Maria Balzarini as MWHS President.

The organization's incredibly generous donors have helped fund the shelter and program operations every year and always step up whenever there is a special need, such as when an animal requires complicated surgery to recover from a life-threatening injury or condition. The volunteers are the most loving, compassionate individuals who selflessly do whatever it takes to improve the lives of the cats. The dedicated shelter staff keeps the shelter running smoothly and ensures the best quality of life for every cat. Of course, the compassionate veterinarians and their wonderful staffs have supported MWHS throughout the years, and MWHS is most grateful for their work – without them, far fewer cats would have been saved. MWHS Boards of Directors have provided the leadership needed to steer MWHS through a rapidly changing world and has guided MWHS to where it is today.



MetroWest Humane Society in Ashland. *Courtesy photo*



Volunteer playing with kittens. *Courtesy photo*



Ray with kittens. *Courtesy photo*

And of course, MWHS is most grateful for the support from the community. MWHS started with a small dream, has grown through time, and is still going strong because of all the people who have helped.

And for the future? At MWHS, they will continue tirelessly to rescue, trap, foster, spay, neuter, heal, socialize, care for, love, and find homes for cats in need, helping the community. They hope you will continue to support this vital work. MWHS is looking forward to achieving remarkable things together in the next 50 years!

MWHS needs your help!

To commemorate MetroWest Humane Society's first 50 years, they plan to create a "History of the MetroWest Humane Society" page on their website, and they would love your help!

If you have stories, memories, or photographs from your time at MWHS, they would love for you to share them. Please send your stories and/or photos to mwhshistory@metrowesthumanesociety.org. Thank you for helping tell the MetroWest Humane Society story!



Pepper and Maria. *Courtesy photo*

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September 2026 at Ashland Senior Center

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

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

FEATURING:

Free Lunch sponsored by the Ashland Police Department on Monday, Sept. 28, 12-1:30 p.m.

Entrée: meat a vegetable lasagna, garden salad, rolls and butter. Reservations required. Limited seats available. Call to reserve your space at 508-881-0140 ext. 1 by Thursday, Sept. 24 at noon.

Free Lunches Reservation Policy: Reservations for FREE lunch may be made starting on the first day of the month in which the event is held. All reservations are made with the Main office. MAX: 90 attendees. No take-out lunches. Cancellations must be made 24 hours prior to the event so that individuals on the wait list may attend.

No-Shows: If you reserve a spot and do not attend without calling to cancel, you will not be eligible to register for the next free event.

Jimmy Buffet Tribute music by Bill Reidy. Event includes dancing, light refreshments, 50/50 raffle, and lottery tree. Thursday,

Sept.17 from 5-6:30 p.m. – cost \$10 pp Reservations due: Thursday, Sept. 10 at noon. Please use the payment box located outside the Main Office.

American Red Cross Blood Drive Tuesday, Sept. 1, from 12-5 p.m. Location: Ashland Community Center, 162 West Union Street, Ashland. Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter: Ashland to schedule an appointment.

Dine out for a Cause Fund-raiser Tuesday, Sept. 15 from 4-8 p.m. Panera Bread, 400 Cochituate Road, Framingham. 20% of all Dine-in & Take-out sales will go to the Friends of the Ashland Council on Aging to help fund activities and services at the Ashland Senior Center. Use FUND4U code when ordering.

September is NATIONAL SENIOR CENTER MONTH!

Help us celebrate all month long! At the Entrance Information Board, you'll find a large posterboard. We invite you to share a positive experience you've had at the Ashland Senior Center. Your words will help us celebrate the impact of our Senior Center, and we plan to share these wonderful messages with the Massachusetts Councils on Aging (MCOA).

FREE SERVICES

Registrations Required

Transportation FREE transportation for Ashland Residents

60+ to bordering towns of Ashland. Curb-to-curb service and wheelchair accessible.

- Monday & Tuesday, 8:30 a.m.-2 p.m.
- Wednesday 8:30 a.m.-12 p.m.
- Grocery Shopping Trips to Shaw's on Tuesdays 9-10:30 a.m.
- Market Basket on Wednesdays from 9-10:30 a.m.

48 hours' advance notice required. Call 508-881-0140 ext. 1 to schedule.

NEW COMPUTER LAB: Explore the World Virtually

- Watch an interview with author Mel Robbins discussing her book, *The Let Them Theory*.
- View LIVE elephants on the Smithsonian's National Zoo Elephant Webcam.
- Experience *The Beatles'* legendary Rooftop Concert from 1969.
- Listen to an up-to-date Boston Red Sox baseball podcast.
- Learn a new language with Duolingo.
- Stream your favorite movie or TV show for free on YouTube or Tubi.

Instructions and details will be available in the Computer Lab in September. BOSE headsets are available on loan from the Main Office for private listening.

Legal Phone Consultation

Friday, Sept. 11, from 10-11:30 a.m. with Arthur P. Bergeron, Mirick Law. Call to schedule an appointment.

Mobility Equipment Borrow/Loan Program: We offer a variety of gently used, high-quality mobility aids available for short-term loan at no cost to you. Equipment includes: walkers, rollators, canes, manual wheelchairs and transport chairs, shower benches and bath chairs, knee scooters and bed rails. Please call 508-881-0140 ext. 1 to check availability.

SHINE (Serving the Health Insurance Needs of Everyone)

In-person appointments. Thursdays at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., 12 p.m. Appointment required. Please call 508-881-0140 ext. 1.

Veterans Office Hours

Wednesday, Sept. 9 and 23 from 9-11:30 a.m. Appointments recommended. Call 508-429-0629 to schedule.

ing on the first day of the month in which the event is held.

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

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

COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND ENTERTAINMENT

Creative Writing Group with Clara Mott, Romance Writer. Every second and fourth Tuesday of the Month. No experience necessary.

Sept. 8 - What do you enjoy doing in your free time that you don't consider yourself an "expert" at? What have you learned from engaging in that activity?

Sept 22 - If you could have dinner with any three people, real or fictional, who would they be and why? Topics are suggestions. Come in with your own writings.

Downton Abbey Viewing: Season 5, Episode 3 Thursday, Sept. 3 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Tea and coffee provided.

Digital Literacy Class (Computers): Connect Your iPhone or Android Phone to Your Car for Directions with Jonathan Baron. Tuesday, Sept. 8 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Education/History: Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel Ceiling Art with David Bernat, Ph.D. Wednesday, Sept. 9 from 11-12 p.m. Explore the social and historical context surrounding Michelangelo's magnificent Sistine Chapel ceiling paintings.

Fall Container Gardening with Mary Ann Gibbons. Monday, Sept. 14 at 1:30 p.m., cost \$10 pp. Create a colorful, eye-catching, space-saving planter. Bring your own hand spade and gloves.

Discover the Beauty of the Ashland Arboretum on a Guided Trail Walk with Becca Solomon, Town Conservation Agent. Tuesday, Sept. 15 at 10 a.m. (Rain date: Sept. 16 at 10 a.m.) Need transportation? Call to schedule a ride by Thursday, Sept. 10. Limited Seating. Or drive and meet at the trailhead.

Movie with Popcorn: EPIC: Elvis Presley in Concert (2025) Tuesday, Sept.29 from 1-3 p.m.

Follows Elvis Presley, featuring never-before-seen footage and recordings.

Around the World: in 35 Minutes with Howie Axelrod. Wednesday, Sept. 30 from 11 a.m. Light refreshments provided. A traveler, photographer and writer, Howie has traveled to 118 countries on 7 continents. You will journey with photos to the world's most exotic and remote places.

BOARDS, COMMITTEE & COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Ashland Council on Aging (COA) Meeting Thursday, Sept. 3 from 10:30-11:30 a.m. Open to the Public.

Friends of the Ashland Council on Aging (FOACOA) Annual Meeting Thursday, Sept. 3 from 12-1:30 p.m. Open to the public.

Dull Men's Club with Doc Tuesday, Sept. 1: Breakfast at 9:30 a.m. at Sunnyside Cafe (self-pay). Tuesdays at 9:30 a.m., 8, 15, 22 and 29 at Ashland Senior Center. Coffee and conversation. All 60+ men welcome!

HEALTH & WELLNESS

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

Blood Pressure CLINIC

Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m. Walk-ins welcome!

Self Advocacy at Your Doctor's Appointment! with Lyn Croft, Healthcare Advocate. Thursday, Sept.10 from 11-12:15 p.m. Learning how to effectively communicate with medical professionals can lead to better health.

Better Balance & Fall Prevention with Kristen Keane, Mary Ann Morse Home Care. Tuesday, Sept.15 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Learn practical exercises, everyday safety tips and small changes you can make at home to help you stay steady, active and independent.

Caregiver Support Group – Meets second Wednesday of the month. Wednesday, Sept. 9 from 3:30-5 p.m. Facilitated by a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker. Register: email jto-karowski@ashlandmass.com

Clocktown Memory Cafe with Music by Steve McGovern. Tuesday, Sept. 22 from 1-2:30 p.m. Clocktown Cafe provides a welcoming place for individuals with Alzheimer's disease, dementia, or a cognitive impairment accompanied by the caregiver. Light refreshments will be served. Please RSVP to Susan McNulty at smcnulty@ashlandmass.com or

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PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

All Programs & Activities require registration unless noted in specific event description.

To register, call 508-881-0140 ext. 1 or stop by the Senior Center at 162 West Union Street, Ashland.

FREE Programs/Events Reservation Policy: Reservations for FREE events may be made start-

Movie with Popcorn: EPIC: Elvis Presley in Concert (2025) Tuesday, Sept.29 from 1-3 p.m.

SENIOR CENTER

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ASHLAND UPDATES

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it is an inspiring opportunity to connect with accomplished performers, ask questions, and experience the world of classical music as well as other musical genres.

You can immerse yourself in wonderful performances under the open sky in a peaceful outdoor setting and create lasting memories at the Stone Park Music Festival, where music and nature intertwine. Last year, many community members shared how deeply they were touched by the performances after the festival. Some audience members even said that the concert “took them to a different place,” where their souls were lifted. It was very touching to hear their reflections.

The concert is free and open to everyone, regardless of age or background. You can experience inspiring performances, meaningful connections, and the magic of music in one place: the Stone Park Music Festival.

The Stone Park Music Festival is made possible through the generous sponsorship and partnerships of the Boston Athletic Association, Mass



Ashland Public Safety Night. Photos supplied by the Ashland Police Department

Cultural Council, Ashland Cultural Council, Falcetti Pianos, SPS, and the Town of Ashland, who share the festival’s vision of bringing high-quality classical music and different musical genres to the community free of charge. We also thank all the volunteers and staff members who generously provide their time and effort to help make the festival successful.

We look forward to taking you on another amazing musical journey on Sept. 12 at the Stone Park Music Festival! For more information about the festival and artists, please visit the Stone Park Music Festival website. www.stonemusicfestival.com.

By Grace Soonjoo Moon, Director of the SPMF

Ashland Public Safety Night Recap

Public Safety Day is more than just an event—it’s an opportunity to build relationships, strengthen community partnerships, and give residents a closer look at the dedicated men and women who serve them every day. From K9 demonstrations and emergency response displays to interactive activities and local businesses showcasing their services, there was something for everyone to enjoy.

Events like this would not be possible without the teamwork and dedication of so many individuals and organizations work-

ing together behind the scenes. We are incredibly grateful for everyone who helped plan, set up, participate in, and make this event a success.

Most importantly, we want to thank the members of our community who came out to spend the day with us. It was wonderful to meet so many families, answer questions, and showcase the outstanding work of our officers and public safety professionals.

We are grateful for the continued support of our community and are already looking forward to making next year’s Public Safety Day even bigger and better!



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ZONE 2: REACH 104,764
Ashland, Bellingham, Franklin, Holliston, Hopedale, Medway, Mendon, Milford, Millis, Natick, Norfolk, Norwood, Upton & Wrentham

Beginning with the September editions, the five Yankee North and South communities in Zone 1 (denoted by *) transitioned to convenient, high-visibility pickup locations throughout each town.

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SPORTS

Ashland Field Hockey looking to go beyond the first round

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Over the past two seasons, the Ashland field hockey team has reached the postseason, but on both occasions the Clockers were sent home in the first round. Two top-ten teams (Westwood last year and North Middlesex Regional the year prior) have eliminated Ashland, which had earned mid-20's seeds. Coach Molley Foley would desperately like to have her Clockers advance beyond the first round of the tournament this fall.

"This year we have a talented group of seniors coming back with high expectations," the coach said. "There is a lot of skill at forward, midfield, and defense, and when all 11 players on the field find their groove, we will be competitive against the stronger teams in the league."

Foley went on to say that she believes this year's squad to be one of the strongest she's had in some time, and after they qualify for the tournament, she is looking for them to get that win in



Ryan Adorno. Photo supplied by Coach Molley Foley

the first round.

Although the Clockers have said goodbye to Ashley Forester, one of the team's top scorers, they still have enough talent coming back to make a run through the State Tournament. Two years ago, Ashland found themselves in Division 3, were moved up to Division 2 last year, and now have a year under their belt in the new division.

Payten Tripp, a two-time captain for the Clockers as well



Erin Hickey. Photo supplied by Coach Molley Foley



Raina Quitt. Photo supplied by Coach Molley Foley



Hailey Katz. Photo supplied by Coach Molley Foley

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as the team MVP over the last two seasons, will bring her high-scoring attitude to the field once again. Tripp, who is also a two-time Tri-Valley League All-Star, has already committed to play field hockey with Connecticut College.

Two years prior, the Clockers had lost a couple of top-notch defenders to graduation, and the defense came across some struggles at times last fall, but the coach believes that with a year of experience they should be solid this year.

"This year I am looking for those older defenders to step up and guide the younger girls," Foley said. "Last year we had some holes that needed to be addressed so I was forced to move people around, and although it took its toll at the beginning, they eventually settled in."

Hanna Roberts has departed the backfield, but Raina Quitt and Hailey Katz are primed

and ready to take the reins in becoming a solid defensive duo. In the midfield, Alissa Brown will be a key contributor, while Neko Ustaris, who now has two years under her belt, is an interesting piece, and the coach is excited to see what she can bring to the team this year as a junior. Maddie Sanders and Stella Costello saw action last year as freshmen and should bring more stability to the midfield.

Forwards Celia Callahan and Aly Marseglia both had their confidence increase by the end of last season, and along with senior Erin Hickey, they should form an aggressive front. According to the coach, all three are not afraid to step up against top-rated players, and like her midfielders, Foley is excited to see what they can bring to the game after a productive off-season. It should make a big difference in the clockers' attack.

Playing between the pipes for Ashland will be a duo made up

of senior Ruby Kazderian and junior Piper Montesino. The two goalies shared playing time depending on who was playing better before the next game. Foley is looking to do pretty much the same this year with her two keepers.

"Ruby has been playing the position longer and has more experience with great fundamental skills," the Clocker Coach said. "Piper had only begun playing the game as a freshman and needed to learn the game, but she has become an aggressive individual out there on the field."

With her two goalies primed to lead the Clockers into the tough league contests, especially the likes of Hopkinton, Foley is ready for the season to get underway as she prepares the girls for a successful season with hopefully a deeper run through the playoffs.

Ashland will open the season on Sept. 8 at Mansfield.

What’s the benefit of title insurance?



Kim Foemmel, REALTOR®
Real Estate Broker

REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

Title insurance is designed to protect both homeowners and lenders if questions or legal challenges arise over a property's ownership. While it's one of the many documents signed during a real estate transaction, it can provide valuable protection long after closing. But what

exactly does it protect against? There are two types of title insurance: an owner's policy and a lender's policy. An owner's policy protects you if a title or ownership issue surfaces after you purchase your home, covering the purchase price of the property as well as certain legal costs. A lender's policy protects the mortgage lender, covering only the outstanding balance of the loan, with coverage decreasing as the mortgage is paid down. Although not required by law, title insurance offers peace of mind for both homeowners and lenders. If a covered title issue arises, the policy can help pay legal expenses and cover financial losses. Understanding the most common title defects can help explain why this protection is so valuable. Some problems stem from paperwork. Lost, forged or improperly recorded deeds can

create uncertainty over who legally owns a property. Fraudulent documents claiming a mortgage has been paid off also can cause significant issues. Financial obligations can create title defects as well. Mechanic's liens, unpaid contractor bills, overdue homeowner association dues and unpaid property taxes can all become claims against a property. Mortgage or refinancing issues also may affect a clear title. Another concern is encroachments, which occur when a structure crosses a property line. A fence, shed or even a swimming pool may extend onto a neighboring property without anyone realizing it. That's one reason real estate attorneys often recommend a property survey before closing. If an encroachment was missed during the sale, the title insurance company may be responsible for helping resolve the issue.

To reduce these risks, attorneys typically hire a title company to research the property's history. The company reviews decades of ownership records and legal documents to confirm the property was transferred properly and that no outstanding issues remain. For example, if a couple owns a property and the husband passes away, the title company would look for a death certificate. That way, he wouldn't come back to life and claim the property as his. The title company helps provide reassurance the property has transferred legally over the past 50 or 100 years. The title company also checks mortgages and refinances to verify previous loans were fully satisfied. This extra step helps prevent an old lender or unpaid debt from creating problems when it's time to sell the property in the future.

Buying a home is one of the biggest investments most people will ever make and protecting that investment starts with making sure the title is clear. When the paperwork is complete and ownership has been thoroughly verified, the transfer process is smoother and everyone involved has greater confidence moving forward. An experienced real estate professional can help you navigate the process, answer your questions and make sure no important details are overlooked. Kim Foemmel, REALTOR® Real Estate Broker Foemmel Fine Homes 1 Lumber Street, Suite 207C Hopkinton, MA 508-808-1149 Kim.Foemmel@gmail.com FoemmelFineHomes.com *Sponsored articles are submitted by our advertisers. The advertiser is solely responsible for the content of this article.*

Ashland Recent Home Sales

Date	Ashland	Amount
08/14/2026	84 W Union St.	\$735,000
08/07/2026	37 James Rd.	\$2.10 mil
08/07/2026	431 America Blvd.	\$650,000
07/31/2026	35 Orchard Rd.	\$1.23 mil
07/30/2026	157 Leland Farm Rd.	\$504,000
07/30/2026	17 Raymond Marchetti St.	\$605,000
07/30/2026	16 Central St.	\$680,000
07/30/2026	22 Douglas Rd.	\$490,000
07/30/2026	25 Prospect St.	\$520,000
07/29/2026	15 Haven Way	\$688,000
07/27/2026	3 Deer Ridge Rd.	\$1.16 mil
07/24/2026	26 Christy Ln.	\$1.05 mil
07/23/2026	89 Leland Farm Rd.	\$493,000
07/23/2026	33 Birch Hill Rd.	\$730,000
07/23/2026	219 Prospect St.	\$617,000
07/22/2026	217 Meeting House Path	\$495,000
07/22/2026	9 Running Brook Cir.	\$1.00 mil
07/22/2026	10 Roberts Rd.	\$350,000
07/20/2026	4 Indian Brook Rd.	\$1.07 mil
07/17/2026	29 Carriage House Path	\$860,000
07/19/2026	8 Blue Jay Ln.	\$1.24 mil
07/15/2026	74 Oregon Rd.	\$850,000



The 4-bed, 4-bath, 4,002-square-foot home at 3 Deer Ridge Road in Ashland recently sold for \$1,155,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com



49 Indian Brook Rd Ashland, MA \$1,295,000



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SENIOR CENTER

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508-532-7945. Registration: Due by Tuesday, Sept. 15.

Hearing Aid Cleaning with Hopkinton Audiology with Darcy Rapucci, Hopkinton Audiology. Monday, Sept. 21 from 10:30-11:30 a.m.

Respiratory Illness Vaccines & Recommendations for Older Adults with Anne Fitzgerald, RN. Wednesday, Sept. 23 from 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

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

Mindfulness & Meditation with Mary Green. Thursdays at 11 a.m. \$5 pp suggested donation per class.

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

Sound Meditation with Sonia Stingo – FREE. Thursday, Sept.17 from 10-10:45 a.m. Sound vibrations will help to reduce stress & promote harmony. Bring a blanket and small pillow.

ARTS & CRAFTS
Registrations required unless otherwise noted. Call 508-881-0140 ext. 1.

Cook with Chef Lee: Pad Thai Thursday, Sept. 24 from 11-12:30 p.m.

Craft Class with Karen: Stretch Bracelets. Friday, Sept. 11 from 10-11 a.m. Supplies provided.

Craft Class with Elissa: Cookbook or Tablet Stand. Friday, Sept. 18 from 10-11 a.m. Supplies provided.

Craft Class with Milly: Button Flower Arrangement in Tea Cup. Friday, Sept. 25 from 10-11 a.m. Supplies provided.

Intermediate & Advanced Watercolor Class Tuesdays & Wednesdays at 9:30-11:30 a.m. See Instructor for details. Techniques & tools to enhance your paintings.

DROP-IN Knitting & Crocheting Group Second & fourth Tuesday of the Month at 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Bring your current project, share conversations, and enjoy knitting with our group.

Knit Along with Nancy Second and Fourth Thursdays at 1-2:30 p.m. Beginners Knitting Project: Decorative Pumpkin Supplies provided. All levels welcome!

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

FREE Trial Classes Curious about our exercise classes? Join us for a one-time trial session! It's a great way to experience the class,

meet the instructor, and see if it's right for you.

Chair Yoga with Mary Wednesdays at 1 p.m.

Chair Volleyball FREE Tuesdays at 1-2:30 p.m. (*no Chair Volleyball on Sept. 1 or 22*)

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

Line Dancing with Lisa Thursdays at 1 p.m.

Ping Pong FREE Wednesdays at 11 a.m.

Tai Chi with Jon Tuesdays at 11:45 a.m. (*No class on Sept. 1*)

Zumba Gold with Scott. Tuesdays at 9:15 a.m.-10 a.m. (*No class on Sept.1*)

GAMES

Canasta Wednesdays at 1 p.m.

Chess Mondays at 1 p.m.

Cribbage Thursdays at 12:30 p.m.

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

Pitch Card Game Mondays at 1 p.m.

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

Her America in Conversation with Author Heather B. Moore on

Monday, Sept. 14 from 7-8 p.m.

Exploring Northern Costa Rica with Travel Guide Bill Gette on Thursday, Sept. 17 from 1-2:15 p.m.

Fall Bird Migration – Seas, Skies, and Land with Author Heather Wolf on Monday, Sept. 21 from 7-8:15 p.m.

(How to Avoid) Death on Mount Washington with Author Randi Menetor on Monday, Sept. 28 from 7-8:15 p.m.

Meal Programs Reservations required. Dining reservation policy.

Paid lunches: Payment slip and money is placed into the Lunch Payment Box located outside the Main Office. If you cancel, you may either pick up that week or “donate” your lunch.

Entertainment: If you plan to attend but will not be dining, the entertainment fee is \$4 pp unless otherwise noted.

Birthday lunch: Celebrations are held on the first monday of the month. Only members of the Friends of the Council on Aging (FOACOA) will receive a free lunch, cupcake, and a scratch ticket. You must specify on your reservation that it is your birthday lunch.

Free lunches reservation policy: Reservations for FREE lunch may be made starting on the first day of the month in which the

event is held. All reservations are made with the Main office. MAX: 90 attendees. No take-out lunches. Cancellations must be made 24 hours prior to the event so that individuals on the wait list may attend.

No-shows: If you reserve a spot and do not attend without calling to cancel, you will not be eligible to register for the next free event.

All lunches served with dessert. All reservations must be made by noon the Thursday before the scheduled lunch.

Lunch & Learn: “Signs a Spouse or a Friend Needs More Support” with Jennifer Luna plus Birthday Lunch. Monday, Sept. 14 at 12 p.m. - \$7pp. *Entrée:* Hamburger or cheeseburger, french fries, garden salad and ice cream sundae. *Reservations for lunch:* by Thursday, Sept. 10 at noon.

Lunch prepared by July Weiner, The Casual Gourmet. Wednesday, Sept. 16 at 11:45 a.m. - \$7pp. *Entrée:* Pasta bolognese with a garden salad and garlic bread. Reservations for lunch: by Thursday, Sept. 10 at noon.

Lunch & Trivia Monday, Sept. 21 at noon - \$7 pp. *Entrée:* Stuffed chicken with mashed potatoes, roasted vegetables, and rolls. *Reservations for lunch:* by Thursday, Sept. 21 at noon.

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