

localtownpages Hopedale

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Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

September 1, 2026

Bright Beginnings Center keeps young learners exploring all summer long

The classrooms at Hopedale's Bright Beginnings Center preschool remained vibrant hubs of activity throughout this summer. In early August, BBC wrapped up its annual five-week summer camp, which was dedicated to keeping local preschool students engaged, building school readiness, and preventing summer skill decline.

Meeting three mornings a week for half-day sessions, campers maintained a comforting routine modeled after the traditional preschool day. Daily schedules mirrored the academic

year, blending structured learning with traditional summer fun. Students rotated through interactive learning centers, gathered for morning circle time, enjoyed snack time with classmates, and engaged in active outdoor play. Summer camp at BBC provides a seamless bridge between school years. By keeping children connected to classroom routines, social environments, and fundamental skills over the break, it ensures they return in the fall feeling confident and ready



Preschool teacher Mrs. Smith leads students on a jungle safari during week one's journey to the jungle at BBC summer camp. Courtesy photo

BRIGHT BEGINNINGS

continued on page 5

Eugene Phillips named Interim Town Administrator

Former Town Coordinator returns to office

By THERESA KNAPP

Hopedale Town Moderator Eugene Phillips has been appointed as Hopedale's latest Interim Town Administrator.

Phillips is a longtime fixture in Hopedale town government. In 2013, he left Town Hall after serving for 35 years in various roles.

At its meeting on Aug. 10, the Select Board unanimously approved his appointment.

Select Board Chair Glenda Hazard explained, "Gene is a previous Town Administrator in Hopedale, I believe we called the position 'Town Coordinator' at the time that he served, he actu-



Hopedale Town Administrator's and Town Clerk's office. Theresa Knapp photo

PHILLIPS

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Hopedale new educators orientation focused on community and connection

As summer got underway, the administrative team of Hopedale Public Schools welcomed a new group of educators, teachers and school psychologists to the district during its annual New Teacher Orientation. The day was designed to introduce new faculty members to the district's mission, foster meaningful relationships, and prepare them for a successful school year.

The orientation provided participants with an overview of the district's Strategic Plan, highlighting Hopedale Public Schools' commitment to academic excellence, student well-being, and continuous improvement. New educators also reviewed key district programs, policies, and procedures while becoming familiar with the instructional technology tools that support student learning throughout the schools.

A cornerstone of the orientation was the opportunity for new staff members to connect with their building mentors. New educators were introduced to an experienced colleague who will provide guidance, encouragement, and professional support throughout the school year. These mentor relationships help



ensure that new staff members feel welcomed, supported, and confident as they begin their careers in Hopedale.

The highlight of the day was a narrated bus tour of the Town of Hopedale, led by the district's administrative team. As the group traveled through the community, administrators shared the rich history of Hopedale and its longstanding tradition of educational excellence. The tour offered

new educators a deeper appreciation for the town's heritage while reinforcing the pride that Hopedale Public Schools takes in serving its students and families.

By combining practical prep-

aration with opportunities to build lasting relationships, the New Teacher Orientation reflects the district's belief that a strong start leads to a successful year. Hopedale Public Schools looks forward to the many con-

tributions its newest educators will make as they inspire, support, and empower students in the year ahead.

Submitted by Hopedale Public Schools

Hopedale Day in the Park set for Sept. 19

The Hopedale Cultural Council is busy making final preparations for the 46th Hopedale Day in the Park to be held on Sat., Sept. 19, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on the grounds of the Hopedale Community House.



There will be over 50 booths offering homemade crafts, food, and children's activities. Entertainment includes the following:

- Juried Art Show in the Draper Gym
- Fun and games with DJ Mike Rutkowski
- Rainforest Reptile Show
- Farm Visits Petting Zoo
- Obstacle Fitness Course
- Miniature Figure Painting with the Jolly Good Giant
- Fire Department Vehicles

For a schedule of events, visit Hopedale Cultural Council (Community Organization) on Facebook or email www.hopedaleculturalcouncil@yahoo.com.

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PHILLIPS

continued from page 1

ally retired from that role. And he has stepped up and is willing to help us out until we can find a long-term Town Administrator, and I personally really appreciate that.”

Phillips takes over Hopedale's top administrative post at a pivotal moment for the town, following a rapid series of leadership changes and against the backdrop of unresolved financial pressures and legal disputes. Phillips' appointment was effective Aug. 10. He can be reached at ephillips@hopedale-ma.gov.

Town Administrator Search Committee starts work

Job description to be advertised shortly

By THERESA KNAPP

The Hopedale Town Administrator Search Committee held its first meeting on Aug. 10. Jennifer Newman was elected as chairperson. In August, the committee and Select Board collaborated to finalize the job description to be posted by the end of the month. At the Select Board meeting on Aug. 10, Chairperson Glenda Hazard explained the next steps in the process. “We would post it for a month and the committee would go through the initial applicants and decide who would be viable to interview and start that process for

us; and then eventually present us with a reasonable number of finalists, 3 or 4, to be interviewed publicly.” “Part of the reason that we’re trying to do this in-house is to save the town some money because the search firms are expensive,” said Hazard. “But I think there’s general agreement that, after 30 days, if we don’t have suitable candidates, that we might then discuss bringing on that search committee.” The job description will be posted on the Massachusetts Municipal Association website <https://www.mma.org/municipal-marketplace/job-ads/>.

Hopedale receives \$250k ‘green’ grant

In August, the Healey-Driscoll Administration announced more than \$8 million to cities and towns across Massachusetts to fund energy efficiency and clean energy projects. The Department of Energy Resources (DOER) selected 57 municipalities to receive Green Communities Competitive Grants; Hopedale was one of those municipalities and received a \$250,000 grant. With today’s announcement, DOER will have awarded more than \$208 million to Green Communities in Designation and Competitive Grants since 2010. These funds have helped reduce municipal energy costs by over \$30 million annually and have reduced pollution. “Our administration is committed to helping cities and towns lower energy costs and make public buildings more efficient,” said Governor Maura Healey. “These investments will reduce energy use, save money and help communities make the most of every tax-

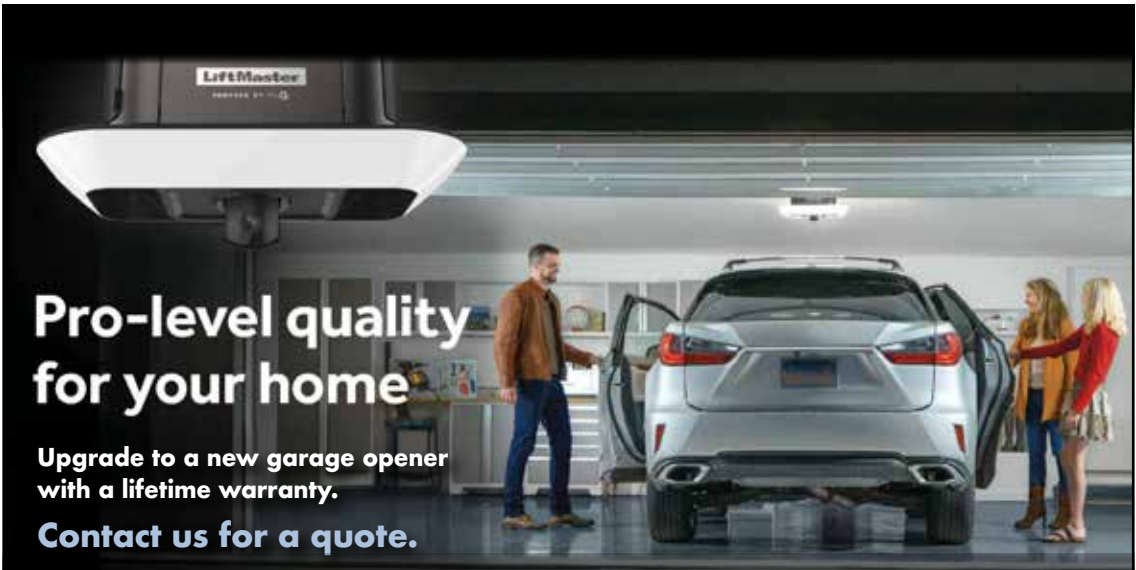
payer dollar.” “Communities across Massachusetts are finding innovative ways to reduce energy use and lower costs,” said Lieutenant Governor Kim Driscoll. “These grants will help local leaders make practical upgrades that improve public buildings and deliver long-term energy savings.” “The important work of these 57 cities and towns demonstrate their commitment to clean energy initiatives that deliver lower costs and energy efficient, climate-resilient buildings for their residents, students and visitors,” said DOER Commissioner Elizabeth Mahony. “We are proud to support our Green Communities with grants and assistance that help make local clean energy and energy efficiency projects possible.” The projects are expected to save about \$701,411 each year in energy costs and leverage \$3.2 million in utility incentives. Annual energy savings of 28,141 MMBtus is equivalent

to the energy use of 320 Massachusetts households. These projects also reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 1,634 metric tons annually, which is roughly equivalent to 3,783 barrels of oil consumed. Eligible projects include installing high-efficiency lighting and building weatherization, upgrading to energy management systems, insulating pipes and attic spaces, and transitioning HVAC systems away from fossil fuels by installing air- or ground-source heat pumps. Under the Green Communities Act, DOER’s Green Communities Designation and Grant Program can make available up to \$20 million annually to qualified cities and towns. DOER accepts competitive grant applications in two blocks annually. Additional information on awarded projects and funding amounts can be found on DOER’s website. Submitted by Mass. Dept. of Energy Resources

State Primary Sept. 1, early voting ends Aug. 28

State Primary Day is Tues., Sept. 1. Voting in Hopedale will take place from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. in the Draper Gym, 13 Dutcher Street. The last day to register to vote has passed. Early voting will take place at the Town Clerk’s office located at 54 Hopedale Street, Suite 10. Remaining hours include: **Thurs., Aug. 27** – 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Fri., Aug. 28** – 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Source: Hopedale Town Clerk





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Town to re-bill 192 police details amid ongoing financial review

Employees at root of problem no longer work for town

BY THERESA KNAPP

At a meeting of the Select Board on Aug. 10, Chair Glenda Hazard gave a finance update of “things that I have found since we have discussed all this.”

The town’s Chief Financial Officer Linda Catanzariti will attend a board meeting in September to give a more complete update.

The issues in question arose after accounting discrepancies were discovered earlier this year. In June, Special Town Meeting made several transfers to cover the “human error.”

At the August meeting, of her update, Hazard said, “It’s kind

of a good news/bad news situation.” She explained that the state-related grants – Chapter 90 (\$11,000 for road paving) and MassWorks (an anticipated \$194,000 for the Route 16 project) – will not be reimbursed because, if a town does not submit for reimbursement, the state assumes the funds are not needed and the money reverts back to the general fund to benefit other municipalities.

She said one of the other smaller transfers (\$6,500) the schools had received for Project Lead The Way would be reimbursed shortly. The town only needed to cover the shortfall during a change in the PLTW reimbursement schedule.

Hazard continued, “As far as ongoing assessments, the CFO is meeting with Tighe Bond and a couple of the people related to the park project to talk about any outstanding bills and to come to a final number of what will be left at the end for us to use elsewhere.”

Regarding police details, “That is still an ongoing process,

partly because every time the CFO delves into that, it leads to the uncovering of other things that need to be corrected, so that’s an ongoing process,” Hazard said.

She further explained that the police department uses one program, Detail Tracking System (“DTS”). for police details and “Town Hall uses a different system, or used to, that was provided by a vendor who suddenly died and our access was cut off to all of those records; and instead of reconciling that in an appropriate way, it went unreconciled for a year or a year-and-half. In spring, we recouped about \$50,000 immediately but, after that, the records just don’t exist. Honestly, the person in Town Hall was doing their own thing and left no records that indicate a trail of who was billed and who wasn’t.”

Hazard said the town is now “completely in sync with the DTS system so that will be the system going forward.”

The town will now go back

through the DTS system to re-bill for past detail work.

Hazard explained, “We’re going to bill all of the people - it’s 192 companies, 192 details - that we aren’t sure whether they paid or not.” The town will ask for payment or proof of payment “instead of trying to go back and figure out what a couple of those Town Hall employees did, the faster method is to go ahead and bill it and then see what the companies can provide us for documentation which will help us in many ways...I’m of the opinion that their accounting process is going to be pretty explicit and they’re going to know that either they sent us a check, and they can verify that they did, or they didn’t.”

Resident Len Guertin asked the board if those employees “are still doing their own thing?”

Hazard said, “No, they don’t work here anymore.”

To watch the full meeting, visit <https://townhallstreams.com>

“Honestly, the person in Town Hall was doing their own thing and left no records that indicate a trail of who was billed and who wasn’t.”

~ Glenda Hazard, Select Board Chair regarding fiscal irregularities

“They don’t work here anymore.”

~ Glenda Hazard, Select Board Chair regarding former employees at root of "human error"

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Motor vehicle larcenies on the rise

The Milford Police are sharing an alert with Hopedale residents regarding several larcenies from motor vehicles. The alert says the thefts are generally overnight and police are reminding residents to secure their belongings and lock their vehicles. If you see any suspicious activity, dial 911.

Source: [@hopedalepolicedept/Facebook](#)

Hodgdon named to Simmons’ Dean's List

Hopedale resident Madeline Hodgdon was named to the 2026 spring semester dean's list at Simmons University in Boston.

To qualify for dean's list status, undergraduate students must obtain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, based on 12 or more credit hours of work in classes using the letter grade system.

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BRIGHT BEGINNINGS

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to learn.

To ensure all students had an equal opportunity to flourish, the camp offered specialized educational services tailored to individual learning needs. Dedicated specialists provided targeted support, including speech, occupational, physical, and behavioral therapies, which were seamlessly integrated into daily camp activities for students who require them. This inclusive approach allowed children receiving individualized education programs (IEPs) to continue making progress on key developmental goals over the break without interrupting their fun or play-based learning.

To keep young imaginations firing, summer camp teachers Elisabeth Reardon and Suzanne Smith designed the five-week curriculum around an adventurous master theme: thematic learning "journeys." Each week transported the young explorers to a new destination, with lesson plans, hands-on crafts, story times, and sensory play tailored to the week's topic. Approximately 30 campers each week attended the sessions throughout the summer to enjoy each learning journey.

Week One, Journey to the Jungle: Campers kicked off the summer navigating lush, imaginary rainforests, discovering exotic wildlife, and learning about biodiversity through sensory bins and vibrant art projects.

Week Two, Journey to the Seashore: Students headed to the coast to explore marine life, practice counting with seashells, and experiment with water and

sand tables.

Week Three, Journey to the Forest: The mid-summer trip took campers into woodland habitats, focusing on native plants, woodland creatures, and nature-based sorting and matching games.

Week Four, Journey to Outer Space: Blastoff week launched campers into the cosmos to build fine motor skills through rocket-crafting, stargazing play, and learning about planets.

Week Five, Journey Back in Time: The season concluded with a prehistoric adventure, complete with dinosaur "fossil" digs, prehistoric footprint matching, and time-travel imagination games.

Essential to the camp's success were the dedicated support staff and instructional aides who worked alongside lead teachers each day. These skilled professionals provided ongoing one-on-one support, led small-group activities, and ensured every child felt safe, included, and eager to participate. From facilitating sensory play to offering encouragement during outdoor games, the staff's hands-on dedication helped maintain an energetic, nurturing environment where young learners could thrive. The summer support staff included regular BBC staff members as well as college and high school students.

By weaving essential early literacy, numeracy, and fine-motor practice into immersive weekly adventures, BBC's summer camp ensured that learning didn't take a vacation, setting its young explorers up for a smooth transition into the upcoming school year.

Submitted by Hopedale Public Schools

Summer Kids Club has another successful year

Summer Kids Club began in 2000 after a group of parents who used the after-school program asked for a full-day childcare option during the summer. The program has run for the past 27 years, except in the summer of 2020. COVID may have prevented an in-person program that year, but virtual offerings, including "a tour of a working farm" and Google Meets sessions to play Scattergories and other group games, provided social connection for some of our students. Summer Kids Club is open to students entering kindergarten through sixth grade. In addition, a CIT (counselor-in-training) component allows students entering grades 7-9 to serve as helpers in the program and learn important job skills.

Summer Kids Club (SKC) offers field trips, themed activity mornings, and recreational afternoons, including swimming trips to Fino Pool in Milford and to Spring Lake in Burrillville, RI. Field trip favorites include Canobie Lake Park, Water Wizz, and Lobster Tales harbor cruise in Plymouth. This summer, two special trips were offered for older students (grades 5-8): one for whitewater rafting and another to Heritage Adventure Park in Sandwich for its ropes and zip-lining course in the treetops.

"Storybook Summit" was the theme of one of the morning activity tracks, where children experienced a "book tasting" and then became authors and illustrators, even binding their own books. The week culminated with a visit from children's author Lynne Morgan, a retired Hopedale Spanish teacher whose career

in our school district spanned thirty years.

Camper's Choice afternoon activities included hikes in the woods behind Prospect Street, walks to the town library, and classic camp fun such as crafting and water play.

Summer Kids Club is one of the childcare programs offered by Hopedale Extended Care. It is fully tuition-funded and overseen by the school committee. Information is available on the Memorial School webpage. Registration typically occurs in March. The program is highly sought after and fills quickly. Karen Daige is the program director. SKC employs a staff of adults who work in the before- and after-school programs and/or serve as classroom aides during the school year.

Submitted by Hopedale Public Schools

Camera club meets on Thursdays

The Stony Brook Camera Club meets in person and/or virtually on Thursdays at 7:30 p.m. from September to June.

In-person meetings are held at the Anglican Church of the Redeemer, 195 Main Street, Franklin. Meetings feature speakers, competitions, and discussions of general interest. They also sponsor a number

of photography activities, field trips, and workshops throughout the year.

SBCC includes and welcomes photographers of all levels. Visit stonybrookccc.com for a calendar of events and member information.



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Pets of the month: Hope and Snow, a found family story

Hope and Snow have chosen each other and now we are waiting for a family to choose them! These girls were surrendered to Milford Humane Society around the same time last year. They lived in separate rooms for the first six months they were with us, only meeting a few months ago when Snow was moved into our Main Room.

Hope was in our Main Room from the beginning. The pretty green eyes under her black masquerade mask showed us just how scared Hope was. She spent her time hiding in her bed and giving a little hiss when we came near. Our volunteers didn't give up on her and Hope, quite literally, slowly began to move forward. She started spending more time at the front of her cage eventually allowing petting and brushing. Then one day she decided it was time to go out and explore. She interacted with the other cats but hadn't made a friend.

Snow is a long-haired black



Hope and Snow are ready for adoption. Photo source: Milford Humane Society

and white tuxedo cat with a perpetually surprised look on her face, that showed exactly how she felt about shelter life. Despite our best efforts, she re-

sisted interacting with the volunteers. Snow wasn't difficult, she just didn't want our attention. We decided it was time to move her to the Main Room in the hope that more exposure to people and cats would bring her out of her shell.

As luck would have it, Snow was moved right next to Hope. As soon as we opened Snow's door to allow her to explore, she hopped right into Hope's cage. It didn't take long for Hope to admit that she'd found her new best friend. Hope and Snow's new goal is to expand their found family. Do you want to be part of their family tree?

For information on meeting Hope and Snow, or the other cats at the Milford Humane Society, please visit <https://www.milfordhumane.org/>



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Get organized: Digital decluttering on Sept. 21

Is your computer, phone, or tablet filled with files, photos, emails, and downloads that are difficult to find?

On Mon., Sept. 21, at 6 p.m., Susan McCarthy of A Less Cluttered Life will share simple, practical ways to organize digital information

and make everyday technology less frustrating. This non-technical program will cover organizing files and folders, managing email, and saving useful information online. Participants will leave with tips they can put to use right away, along with a download-

able handout for future reference.

Registration is required for this free program; sign up through Bancroft Memorial Library's Event Calendar at www.bancroftmemorial-library.org or by calling the Library at 508-634-2209.

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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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, in 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 December 5 and 6. Director Brett Abigaña leads the chorus in his second year, and pianist Simo-

nida Spasojevic accompanies. Information is available on the website allegrasingers.org or by emailing info@allegrasingers.org.

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Bancroft Memorial Library news

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Reminders: Our regular Friday hours (1 p.m.-5 p.m.) resume on Friday, Sept. 11. The Library will be closed on Saturday, Sept. 5 and Monday, Sept. 7 for the Labor Day weekend.

Community Conversations – Wed., Sept. 2 at 6:30 p.m.

Community Conversations will meet in the Program Room for a planning meeting to discuss “Understanding Municipal Government”.

Helen Symonds Book Club – Wed., Sept. 9 at 1 p.m.

The Helen Symonds Book Group will meet downstairs at the Library in the Program Room to review *Buckeye* by Patrick Ryan.

Drop in Cribbage – Fridays 9/11, 9/18 & 9/25 at 1:30 p.m.

Join us in the Program Room where we offer a relaxed, come-when-you-can atmosphere to enjoy friendly games with players of all levels.

NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE HOPEDALE LIBRARY: Hopedale Day in the Park – Sat., Sept. 19 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Stop by the Friends of the Hopedale Library booth at Day in the Park. Browse our selection of books and puzzles for sale, purchase a beautiful 125th Anniversary Glass Ornament, or sign up to become a member of the Friends and support the library throughout the year.

Mindful Mondays: Digital Decluttering with Susan McCarthy – Mon., Sept. 21 at 6 p.m.

Is your computer, phone or tablet filled with files, photos, emails and downloads that are difficult to find when you need them? Susan McCarthy of A Less Cluttered Life will offer practical solutions, focusing on simple ways to organize digital information and make everyday technology less frustrating. This non-technical presentation will cover strategies for organizing files and folders, managing email and saving useful information online. Participants will learn techniques that can be used with almost any device or operating system, along with practical ideas they can put to work at home right away. A downloadable handout will also be provided for future reference. To register for this free program, sign up online through the Library's Event Calendar, stop by the Library or call 508-634-2209.

The Family Letters of Abby Kelley and Stephen Foster – Mon., Sept. 28 at 6:30 p.m.

Join us in the Program Room at Bancroft Memorial Library for a special program cohosted by the Friends of the Hopedale Library and the Taft Public Library in Mendon. Lynne McKenney Lydick and Thomas Lydick bring the Fosters to life through their personal letters, offering an intimate look at their family life and their work as passionate abolitionists and advocates for women's rights. As traveling lecturers for the American Anti-Slavery Society, Abby Kelley and Stephen Foster often spent long periods apart while speaking through-

out the country against slavery. Their letters reveal the personal sacrifices behind their activism, as well as the love and commitment that sustained their family through years of separation. This program offers a unique connection to the history of Hopedale, Mendon, and the surrounding Blackstone Valley. A Q&A will follow the performance. Registration is required.

This program is funded in part by a grant from the Hopedale Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency and the Mendon Taft Memorial Library.

FlowerPower Fundraiser

Please support The Friends of the Hopedale Library by shopping our FlowerPower.com fundraiser through Oct. 15. You can order fall bulbs online and have orders shipped directly to you. The Friends of the Hopedale Library earns 50% which goes right back to the Library! Shop at <http://hopedalelibrary.fpfundraising.com>.

Ongoing Book Sale

Visit the Friends of the Hopedale Library Ongoing Book Sale located downstairs outside of the Program Room. The sale is open when the Library is open and the selection is refreshed weekly! We offer a wide selection of books for adults and children as well as puzzles. All proceeds support Library programs and services. Prices start at 50¢.

The Friends of the Library Monthly Meeting – Wed., Sept. 16 at 6:30 p.m.

The Friends of the Hopedale Library, founded in 1983, is



an active volunteer, non-profit organization with a town-wide membership and a representative executive board. We work with the Library staff and the Trustees to support the Library in providing funds for equipment, materials, and programs not covered by the Library's regular operating budget. The Friends of the Hopedale Library meets the second Wednesday of the month, September through June. New members and ideas are always welcome.

NEWS FROM THE MARJORIE HATTERSLEY CHILDREN'S ROOM: B.A.S.H. (Bancroft After School Hangout) resumes Tues., Sept. 8

This is an after-school, drop in program held Mondays through Thursdays for students in Grades 4-6 from 2:30 to 4 p.m. Play games, use laptops, or do arts and crafts in a safe, social environment. Students must be able to reach a parent/guardian and follow Library rules.

Tummy Time for ages newborn to 18 months – Tuesdays, 9/8, 9/15, 9/22 & 9/29 at 10 a.m.

Welcome parents and newborns! Drop in for some infant fun in our Program Room. Tummy Time will have a story time and free play with developmentally appropriate assorted toys that encourage gross motor development and social interaction.

Toddler Tunes for ages 18 months to 3 years – Thursdays, 9/10, 9/17 & 9/24 at 10 a.m.

Toddlers are full of energy

and this program is perfect for them! Each class we will do an assortment of story time, movement games, parachute fun, ball movement skills, instruments, bean bags, scarves and bubbles. Drop in!

Donations Wanted for the 2nd Annual Bancroft Library Costume Swap

Do you have old costumes or dress-up clothes that you no longer need? We would love to give them a new life! Miss Laura is collecting gently used costumes and dress-up clothes to add to the collection for our 2nd Annual Costume Swap, which will take place on the first Saturday in October. If you are cleaning out a closet, attic, or dress-up trunk, please consider donating your unwanted costumes to the Library. Donation bins are available upstairs and downstairs at the Library.

Holiday Toy Swap

We are planning a Toy Swap on the first Saturday in November, giving families a chance to pass along gently used toys their children have outgrown and discover something new. Participants sign up for free table space to display toys they no longer want and arrange swaps with other participants. At the end of the event, any remaining toys may be taken home or donated to the Library. Donated toys will be offered to local preschools and schools, with any remaining items donated to Savers. The Toy Swap is a fun, community-focused way to give gently used toys a second



Family-run Affordable Junk Removal takes the stress out of cleanups

By CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Whether it's one old fridge in the garage or an entire home of unwanted goods, the team at Affordable Junk Removal offers a cost-efficient, stress-free approach to waste management. "You don't lift a finger," says owner Jason Schadler, who started the company along with his wife Christine in 2005.

The business offers same-day service for both residential and commercial clients across eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island. In addition to junk removal, the company rents 15-yard dumpsters.

As a family-owned and operated company, Schadler says Affordable Junk Removal has lower overhead costs and is more accessible than national competitors. "I answer my phone 24 hours a day," he says. "I was on vacation in Italy and Portugal, and I was still answering my phone on the beach. When you call us, you get me

— not an automated machine!" Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible and properly disposes of non-recyclables. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the backend while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast



forward 21 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place in Holliston, The Corner Market."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time



Christine and Jason Schadler, shown here with their children, started Affordable Junk Removal in 2005.

with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Hopedale in particular, Schadler says they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the area. The Schadlers live in nearby Milford and have coached and sponsored many youth sports activities in both Hopedale and Milford.

One of the best parts of his

job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships with returning customers. "We are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the MetroWest area," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call 774-287-1133 or visit affordable-junkremoval.com.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

BANCROFT

continued from page 8

life while helping families find new treasures without having to buy something new. More information will be forthcoming so keep an eye out!

ROLLING PROGRAMS: Genre Book Club – All ages

Join the Genre Book Club and create your own bookmark with a cable ring. Read any book you choose on your own schedule; after each finished book, stop by the Children's Room to collect a genre badge. The club has no scheduled meetings, is open to all and can be joined at any time.

Reading Dragons: A Card Game Reading Club – All ages

The Reading Dragons program allows kids to earn collectible dragon cards through logged reading time. Every 30 minutes recorded on a Time Tracker earns one card, and

completing two hours earns all four stages of a dragon. As they collect more dragons, they can play the card game with friends. Readers can also share their favorite books by adding recommendations as "Book Scales" to the dragon display in the Program Room.

1000 Books Before Kindergarten

Bancroft Memorial Library offers the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten program for young families and early readers. At registration, you will be provided a starting kit with a library book bag, cable for achievement tags, program information, suggested book list and a log for books 1–100. Every 100 books read earns a tag for the cable, and reaching 1,000 books earns a lawn sign celebrating the achievement.

For updates throughout the month, Like us on Facebook and sign up at www.wowbrary.org to discover the Library's newest books, movies and music.

Our webpage is www.bancroftmemoriallibrary.org

Summer reading results in, 176 participants read more than 110,000 minutes

The Bancroft Memorial Library reports 176 participants ages 0-17 participated in this year's Summer Reading Program. They logged 110,775 minutes of

reading which translates to 1,847 hours or 77 days of reading! According to a library Facebook post, "Our Summer Reading Program was a huge success-we loved

seeing so many kids, teens, and families at the Library...What an amazing summer of reading!"
Source: Facebook @BancroftMemorialLibrary

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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 photobiomodu-



lation 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.

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Winter Stroll & Shop Hop to be Dec. 5

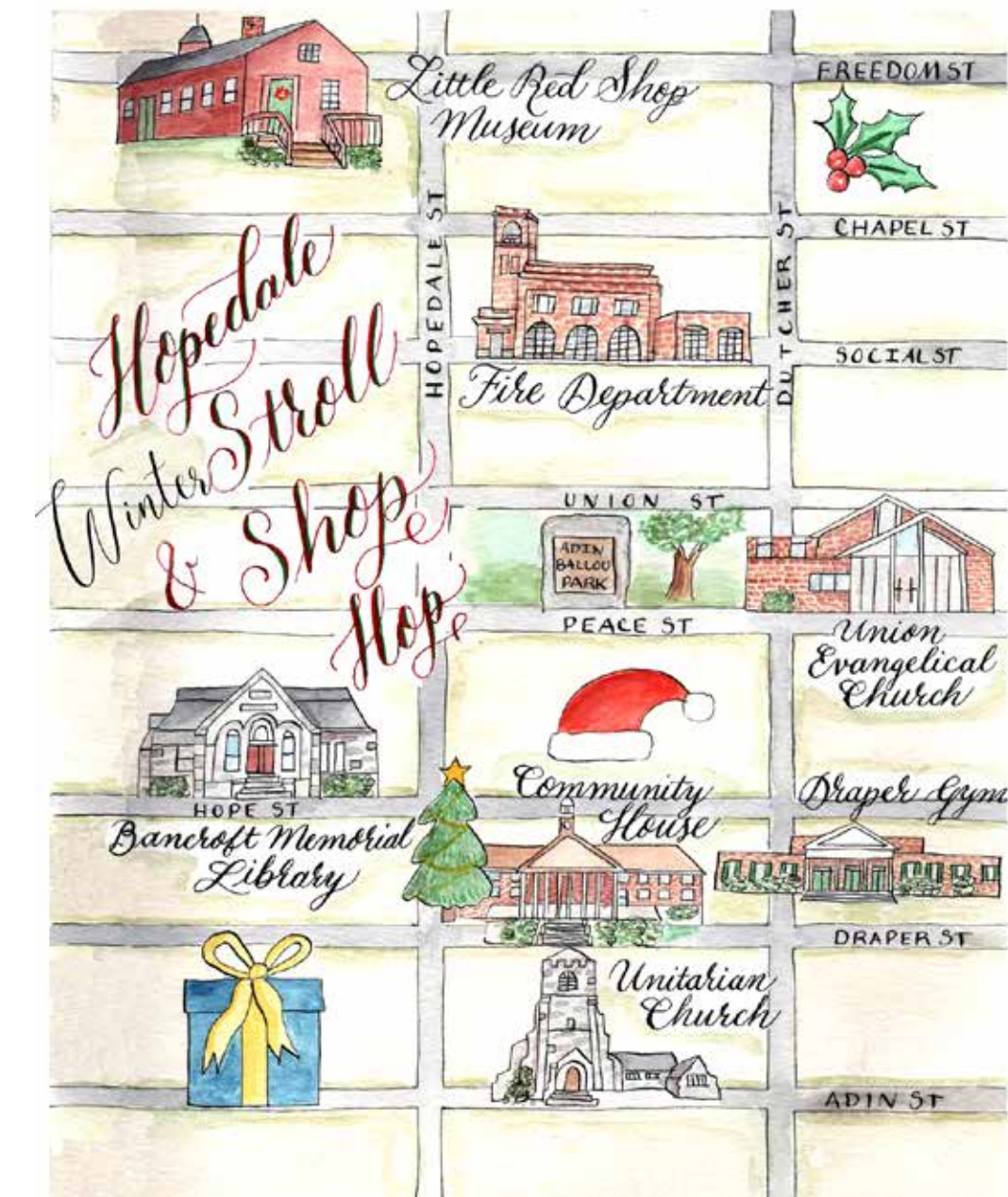


Image source: Friends of Historic Hopedale/Facebook

The 2026 Hopedale Winter Stroll & Shop Hop will take place on Dec. 5 from 12 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Vendor application requests are now being accepted for all vendors. Organizers are looking for handmade, artisan, and vintage goods; food vendors and artists. They respectfully decline direct sales vendors, AI art and 3d printing.

The only way to request an application for this event is by emailing pictures or links to socials to info@friendsofhistoricHopedale.com

Source: Facebook: @FriendsOfHistoricHopedale

The family letters of Abby Kelley and Stephen Foster on Sept. 28

Join us at Bancroft Memorial Library on Sept. 28 at 6:30 p.m. for a special program cohosted by the Friends of the Hopedale Library and the Taft Library in Mendon. Lynne McKenney Lydick and Thomas Lydick bring the story of Abby Kelley and Stephen Foster to life through their personal letters, offering a glimpse into the lives of two people who fought tirelessly against slavery and for women's rights. The program will highlight their connection to Hopedale, Mendon, and the Blackstone Valley.

Registration is required for this free program; sign up through Bancroft Memorial Library's Event Calendar at www.bancroftmemoriallibrary.org or by calling the Library at 508-634-2209. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Hopedale Cultural Council, with support from the Mass Cultural Council and the Taft Library.

New cell phone procedure at Jr.-Sr. High School

By THERESA KNAPP

The first day of school at Hopedale Jr.-Sr. High School is Sept. 1, and things will look and sound a little different this year with a new cell phone procedure in effect.

According to information shared on Facebook by the Hopedale SEPAC (Special Education Advisory Council), "All students in grades 7-12 cannot use cell phones or smartwatches inside the school building between arrival and the end of the school day at 2:05 p.m."

"Students will be expected to keep their cell phone powered off and in their bag or locker but not in their pocket or on their person."

"Students in violation of these procedures will be subject to disciplinary action



as outlined in our student/parent handbook [available on the school's website].

"If a medical exemption is required, please contact Assistant Principal Johnson at tjohnson@hopedaleschools.org"

Source: @HopedaleSEPAC

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Cultural Council applications due Oct. 15

The Hopedale Cultural Council is the local agency of the Massachusetts Cultural Council. Each fall, funds from the state are distributed to the local councils to award grants to support community cultural activities for programs, field trips, concerts, and festivals. Applications for grants for this year are due by Oct. 15. Information about the application process can be found at www.massculture.org under Local Cultural Council Program.

For more information, email the Hopedale Cultural Council at www.hopedaleculturalcouncil@yahoo.com

Library to hold \$5 bag book sale Aug. 31 to Sept. 4

Bancroft Memorial Library for the Friends' \$5.00-a-Bag Book Sale from Aug. 31 through Sept. 4 in the Program Room during regular open hours. Choose from a variety of gently used books for all ages and stock up on your next stack of reading material. Puzzles will also be available for purchase. All proceeds support Library programs and services.

Library auction raises \$3k for programs

The Friends of the Hopedale Library online auction in August raised \$3,000.

"We are absolutely delighted with the response to the auction. Thanks to the generosity and enthusiasm of our community, we raised over \$3000 for library programs and museum passes," said Friends of the Hopedale Library Treasurer Amy Catalagna, while thanking everyone who made the auction a success. "It is a great reminder of how much people value having a strong, vibrant library in Hopedale."

High School ranks 44th best in state

By THERESA KNAPP

This year's "Best High Schools" ranking by U.S. News was released in August, and Hopedale Junior Senior High School ranked 44th in the state (out of 353) and 880th in the nation (out of 17,945). It received an overall score of 95.1 out of 100.

The report states, "Schools are ranked on their performance on state-required tests, graduation and how well they prepare students for college."

Ranking factors included college readiness (56th in the state), college curriculum breadth (39th), state assessment proficiency (66th), state assessment performance (49th), and graduation rate (60th tie).

Hopedale Jr.-Sr. High School includes grades 9-12 with an enrollment of 278 students and a student/teacher ratio of 10:1.

The number one ranked high school in the state, again, is Boston Latin Academy.

To read the full report, visit <https://bit.ly/USNews-BestHighSchools2026Hopedale>.



www.usnews.com

- Hopedale Junior Senior High School 2026-2027 Rankings**
- #880 in National Rankings
 - #44 in Massachusetts High Schools
 - #6 in Worcester, MA Metro Area High Schools
 - #472 in STEM High Schools

Source: www.usnews.com/education/best-high-schools

RANKING FACTORS	NATIONAL	STATE
College Readiness Index Rank ⓘ	#834 (tie)	#56
College Curriculum Breadth Index Rank ⓘ	#554	#39
State Assessment Proficiency Rank ⓘ	#3,332	#66
State Assessment Performance Rank ⓘ	#2,465 (tie)	#49
Graduation Rate Rank ⓘ	#1,766 (tie)	#60 (tie)

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HAPPENINGS

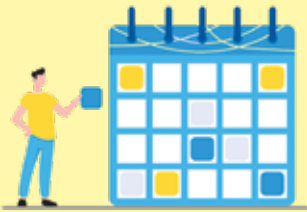
Events happening in and around the area

Sept. 1

5 p.m. to dusk – **Last Cruise Night/Bob’s Car Share**, Upton VFW Post 5594, 15 Milford St. www.UptonVFW.org. Public welcome, no fees. Food available for purchase.

Sept. 10

6:30 p.m. – **Celebrating the 250th anniversary** of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Upton Community Center.



Sept. 12

12 – 4 p.m. – **Farm Fest**, Medway Community Farm. www.MedwayCommunityFarm.org

Sept. 19

8 a.m. to 12 p.m. - **Electronics Recycling Day**, First Congregational Church of Milford, 4 Congress St., Milford. Cash payments only. Questions: 508-473-5259

Sept. 19

10 a.m. **Hopedale Day in the Park**, Hopedale Community House. Rain date: Sept. 20. For more info, visit <https://hopedale-ma.gov/1241/Hopedale-Cultural-Council>. The art show will be in the Draper Gym.

Sept. 26

9 a.m. – **Upton Heritage Day**, Upton Town Common. Vendors, crafters, entertainers, etc., can contact uptonhistoricalsociety@hotmail.com or 508-529-6600.

Sept. 26

10 a.m. – **Coffee and Conversations**, Millis Public Library. Topics range, conversations are moderated to focus less on debate and more on understanding. All political perspectives welcome and respected. Will also meet on Oct. 24, Nov. 21.

10 a.m. - **Holiday Vendor Fair**, Community House, 8 Court St., Uxbridge (behind Town Common). Tables available by contacting dataless1@yahoo.com 508-244-7849.

SAVE THE DATE

Oct. 17

6 p.m. – **Milford High School Class of 1976 reunion**. For details, contact Ann Robichaud at 508-473-0422 or arobichaud1033@gmail.com.

Have an event?

If you have an event you’d like listed in the calendar, send it to editor@hopedaletown-news.com

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Please confirm details before you head to an event.

Hopedale ‘erratic driver’ exceeds 140 mph

By THERESA KNAPP

On Aug. 18, a 27-year-old Hopedale male was arrested and charged with OUI-Liquor or .08%, Negligent Operation of a Motor Vehicle, A&B On a Police Officer, and Disorderly Conduct.”

The following was posted by the Hopedale Police Department on Facebook on Aug. 18, noting “all suspects are innocent until proven guilty.””

“On Tuesday, August 18, 2026, at approximately 0116 hours, Hopedale Dispatch received an E911 transfer from Milford Police reporting an erratic operator traveling on South Main Street toward Hopedale.

“The vehicle, described as a black BMW SUV, was reportedly observed traveling in excess of 140 MPH on Route 495. The vehicle was also reported to have been speeding and committing marked-lane violations on Routes 16 and 140. The three reporting parties stated that an argument had occurred inside the vehicle and that the operator appeared highly intoxicated. Following the argument, the operator stopped and dropped all three parties off on the side of the roadway before leaving the area.

“The registration for the BMW returned to an address in Mendon. Hopedale and Mendon officers canvassed the surrounding area in an attempt to locate the vehicle and identify the operator.

“Mendon officers subsequently responded to the registered owner’s residence and observed the black MBW SUV parked in the driveway. Shortly thereafter, a silver Nissan was observed leaving the driveway. A Mendon officer pulled alongside the Nissan and asked the operator if he was aware of the incident that had occurred in Milford. The operator stated that he was the operator of the BMW involved in the incident and that he had just returned the BMW before taking his Nissan out for a drive.

“While speaking with the operator, the Mendon officer detected a strong odor of an alcoholic beverage emanating from his facial area. Officer Korkansky and Officer Kulesza arrived shortly thereafter to assist.

“When officers required that the operator exit the vehicle, he became increasingly loud and aggressive. The operator refused to participate in the Standardized Field Sobriety Tests (SFSTs)

and was subsequently taken into custody.

“During the booking process at the Hopedale Police Department, the operator became increasingly aggressive. He repeatedly threw himself onto

the floor and appeared to feign a medical emergency. Hopedale Fire Department was requested as a precaution to evaluate the operator.

“During the medical evaluation, the operator spit, striking

one of the officers.

“The operator was subsequently held on \$2,000 cash bail and was arraigned in Milford District Court.”

Source: Facebook @hopedalepolicedept

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Hopedale Public Safety Log

Trash complaints, neighbor disputes, structure fires

Between July 16 and Aug. 15, the Hopedale Police and Fire Departments responded to hundreds of calls, many related to motor vehicle stops, vehicle accidents/crashes, traffic complaints, erratic operators, preventative patrolling, community policing, illegal parking, theft/larceny/forgery/fraud, burglar alarms, lost/found property, property checks, animal complaints, well-being checks, road hazards, soliciting, LTC/FIC (license to carry/firearms identification card) matters, warrant/summons service, suspicious persons/activity, court appearances, 911 hang-ups/open lines, safety detail officers, car seat installation, records requests and general information. .

Hopedale also provided assistance to Bellingham, Mendon and Milford.

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list. Entries of note include:

- July 17** at 4:24 p.m., Mendon St., wires down

July 18 at 7:37 a.m., Freedom St. and Bancroft Park, selective enforcement

July 18 at 10:04 a.m., Freedom & Hopedale Sts., trash complaint

July 18 at 9:15 p.m., Freedom & Progress Sts., motor vehicle stop, arrest. A 76-year-old Hopedale male was arrested and charged with OUI-liquor or .08%, negligent operation of a motor vehicle, and marked lanes violation.

July 18 at 9:39 p.m., Hopedale St., structure fire

July 18 at 11:38 p.m., HPD, escort/transport

July 19 at 12:13 p.m., Hopedale St., investigation

July 19 at 12:40 a.m., Hopedale St., speed sign/message board info.

July 19 at 4:43 p.m., Dennett St., wires down

July 20 at 2:20 a.m., Driftway, animal complaint
- July 20** at 10:47 p.m., Hartford Ave., hit and run past

July 20 at 2:05 p.m., Depot St., trash complaint

July 20 at 2:25 p.m., Greene St., animal complaint

July 20 at 2:39 p.m., Jackson Way, soliciting

July 20 at 4:35 p.m., Mill St., tree damage

July 20 at 10:14 p.m., Dutcher St., fire investigation

July 25 at 7:17 p.m., Ballou Rd., animal complaint

July 26 at 4:28 p.m., HPD, car seat installation

July 27 at 5:56 a.m., Hopedale & Peace Sts., motor vehicle stop, arrest. A 23-year-old Hopedale male had an outstanding warrant.

July 28 at 12:38 a.m., Hopedale Village Cemetery, officer wanted

July 28 at 1:31 p.m., Whitney Rd., fire investigation

July 28 at 6:48 p.m., Hopedale St., disturbance

July 31 at 9:19 a.m., HPD, training



- Aug. 1** at 8:10 a.m., Charlesgate Rd., fire investigation

Aug. 1 at 1:42 p.m., Dutcher St., animal complaint

Aug. 1 at 3:10 p.m., HPD car seat installation

Aug. 3 at 4:45 p.m., Lower Jones Rd., keep the peace/civil standby

Aug. 3 at 11:48 p.m., Bancroft Park, disturbance

Aug. 4 at 4:52 p.m., Business Way, hit and run past

Aug. 5 at 3:06 p.m., Greene St., criminal damage

Aug. 6 at 7:25 p.m., Greene St., soliciting

Aug. 6 at 9:02 p.m., Rockridge Rd., suspicious activity/person/vehicle

Aug. 7 at 9:06 a.m., Hope St.,
- illegal parking

Aug. 7 at 12:35 p.m., Laurelwood Dr., neighbor dispute

Aug. 8 at 11:57 a.m., Hopedale Village Cemetery, trespassing/unwanted person

Aug. 9 at 11:13 p.m., So. Main St., animal complaint

Aug. 10 at 1:20 a.m., Mellen St., motor vehicle lockout

Aug. 11 at 12:07 a.m., Plain St., disturbance

Aug. 11 at 6:43 p.m., Progress St., trespassing/unwanted person

Aug. 12 at 7:12 p.m., So. Main St., disturbance

Aug. 13 at 7:12 p.m., Harmony Trail, trash complaint
- Source: Hopedale Police Department

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ZONE 2: REACH 104,764
Ashland, Bellingham, Franklin, Holliston,
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Fantasy Big Band
concert on Sept. 26

Event will celebrate America's 250th
birthday

A free "Fantasy Big Band
Concert" will be held on the
Community House lawn on
Sat., Sept. 26, from 1 p.m. to
3 p.m. to celebrate America's

250th birthday.
A rain date has been set for
Sun., Sept. 27.
Source: Facebook @Hopedale
Community House

Letter to the Editor policy

Letters to the Editor are wel-
come and encouraged. They
provide readers with an oppor-
tunity to express their opinions
on issues of local interest and
to foster respectful community
discussion.

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SPORTS

Hopedale soccer taking the next step

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The last time the Hopedale girls soccer team captured a State Championship was in 2005; a few years ago Coach Jay Rojee took his team to the Elite 8 and last year they advanced into the Final 4. After securing the number two seed in the Division 5 State Tournament, the Blue Raiders would eventually fall to Hull, the number three seed, 1-0 in the Final 4. This year, Rojee is looking for his girls to take that next step and make it into the Championship game.

“We have 15-16 girls coming back who had gotten a good amount of playing time last year,” the coach said. “Hopefully, they can take the next step and get us to where we need to be.”

Seniors Kiley Tesseo and captain Chloe Westfield will be back on the field protecting the Hopedale defense, while captains Brooklyn McAlister and Analise Pinto - as well as Josie Fleming - will see time either in the midfield or playing striker.

On the offensive side of the ball, Pinto has been the team’s leading scorer over the past two seasons, while McAlister and Fleming kicked in goals in the 20s and teens, respectively. Junior captain midfielder Chloe Carpenter will also be looked upon to score as well.

Now freshman Mackenna Carpenter produced 20 something goals as an eighth grader last fall and the Coach is hoping she can continue to find the

back of the net on a regular basis.

“Obviously it’s going to be tough to put pressure on a freshman to score 20+ goals this year,” Rojee said. “However, with girls like Analise and the others, they should be able to distribute the ball well and Mackenna should be able to accomplish that feat again.”

Rojee noted that having multiple girls who can score will allow the Blue Raiders to spread things out with Pinto being the main contributor. The senior captain, who will control the midfield for Hopedale, will be attending Stonehill University next fall to play soccer.

In addition to Westfield and Tesseo patrolling the defense, Hopedale will also have junior Lucy Mandeville and freshman Breanna Fitzgibbon playing in the backfield. Juniors will be represented by defender Avery Araujo, midfielder Aislyn Butzke (who saw a lot of action last year as a center mid), and Alana Obal, who should be a surprise this fall at her midfield position.

Sophomore Maddie Carpenter, who split time last fall as one of the team’s goalies, will hold down the position outright this year.

Hopedale will also have four other freshmen, in addition Carpenter vying for playing time this upcoming season. Those freshmen pushing for playing time include Grace Rojee, who contributed 18 assists last year; Kaylei Apicella,



Hopedale Soccer takes a time-out during the 2026 MIAA Division 5 Championship: Hopedale vs Drury last season. Photo source: YouTube, MyFM Media

a dynamic player off the bench who will play up top; Avery Faron and Vienna Butzke.

Rounding out the team at this point is eighth grader Josie Keyes, who played sparingly last year.

Depth being the team’s ultimate strength leaves the coach to believe he is set up for success this upcoming season.

“Having depth is important and with the talent that we have allows it to be spread out,” Rojee said. “You want to stack your spine right up the middle and I believe that we have the talent there.”

Hopedale will open the season at Worcester South on Sept. 9.

Alzheimer’s support group to meet Sept. 8 in person

Hearts, Hugs & Hope, an Alzheimer’s support group, will meet on Sept. 8 at 6 p.m. in person at Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living and Memory Support Community, 11 Birch St., Milford.

Dealing with Alzheimer’s disease and related dementia

isn’t easy, so it’s helpful to share your concerns and personal experiences with others who completely understand what you’re going through. You will also learn about proven strategies to help you better care for your family member. This month’s guest speaker will be Mithun

Pasham from Seniors Helping Seniors.

For more information, contact Director of Compass Programming Jenn Hozempa at jhozempa@cornerstonemilford.com. This group meets on the second Tuesday of each month.

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 REAL ESTATE CORNER

Recent Home Sales

Date	Hopedale	Amount
08/14/2026	9 Gannett Way	\$785,000
08/04/2026	12 Whitney Rd.	\$690,000
07/31/2026	2 Northrop St.	\$600,000
07/30/2026	25 Warfield St.	\$755,000
07/24/2026	55 Hill St.	\$400,000
07/23/2026	204 Laurelwood Dr.	\$449,900
07/23/2026	6 Forest Path	\$965,000
07/16/2026	10 Gannett Way	\$800,000

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



The 4-bed, 2-bath, 2,288-square-foot house at 25 Warfield Street in Hopedale recently sold for \$755,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com



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