Upton & Mendon FREE PRESS

Vol. 4 No. 11 | *Free to Every Home and Business Every Month* | Nov. 12 - Dec. 9, 2026

Upton Historical Society brings Revolutionary War era to life during reenactment

By Theresa Knapp

The sights and sounds of the American Revolution came to Upton on Oct. 17 as the Upton Historical Society hosted a Revolutionary War encampment, giving residents an opportunity to experience 18th-century life.Held on the grounds of the Upton History Museum at 2 Main St., the event was designed to bring the nation's founding era to life as communities across the country commemorate the 250th anniversary of the American Revolution.



Activities at the Upton Historical Society's Revolutionary War encampment included a cider-making demonstration. *Photo credit: Matt Seaman*

The program featured reenactors demonstrating authentic military drills and period-accurate encampments. Visitors had the opportunity to speak with historical interpreters about military life, the challenges faced by Revolutionary-era residents and the everyday experiences of people living during the 18th century.

Beyond the military

REENACTMENT

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Nipmuc Regional adopts 'Coyote' as new mascot

By Theresa Knapp

The Mendon-Upton Regional School District has unveiled its new coyote mascot, marking the culmination of a multi-year effort to replace its former Native American-themed mascot while retaining the Nipmuc Regional name.

"Choosing the Coyotes is such an exciting step for our district, and it really came together thanks to thoughtful input from our students, staff, alumni, and community members," Mendon-Upton Regional School District Superintendent Maureen Cohen recently told the Upton-Mendon Free Press. "All of our schools are embracing the unifying logo and mascot with enthusiasm. It gives our athletic teams and schools a modern brand to rally around, all while keeping that deep respect and integrity for the Nipmuc Nation."



Image shared at the Sept. 14 meeting of the Mendon-Upton Regional School Committee meeting regarding the district's new logo: the Coyote.

At the Sept. 14 meeting of the Mendon-Upton Regional School Committee, Cohen outlined the

MASCOT

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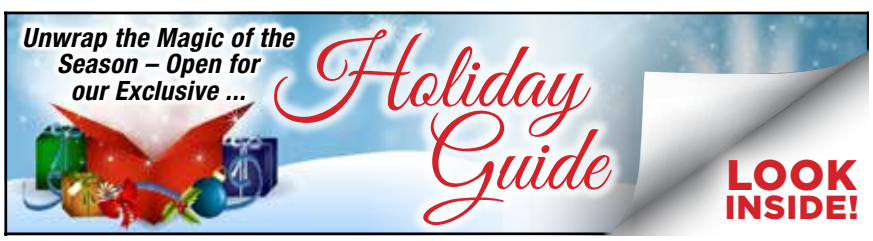




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REENACTMENT

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demonstrations, the encampment highlighted the practical skills and activities that shaped daily life during the period. Demonstrations included traditional cider making, copper plate printing presentation, fife and drum musicians. and much more.

For more photos from the event, visit @UptonHistoricalSociety on Facebook.



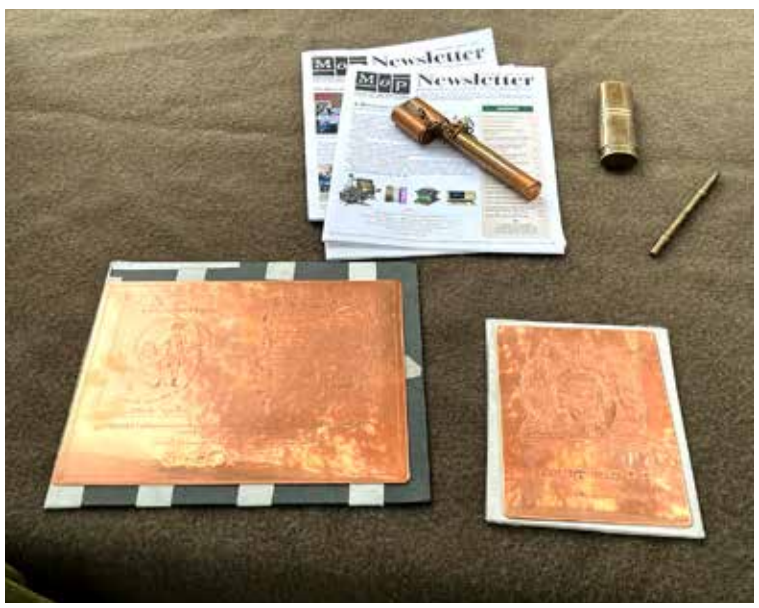
Demonstrations showed how colonists used secret codes to send protected messages and keep information from falling into British hands.
Photo credit: Matt Seaman



Guests visited a Revolutionary War encampment on the grounds of the Upton History Museum on Oct. 17.
Photo credit: Matt Seaman



Fife and drum musicians provided entertainment during the event.
Photo credit: Matt Seaman



A copper plate printing demonstration showed how people could print money at the time. The bottom image on the left says "forty schillings."
Photo credit: Matt Seaman







Mendon Senior Center Director Amy Wilson Kent has retired

On Nov. 6, a celebration was held to celebrate the retirement of Mendon Senior Center Director Amy Wilson Kent. Before she left, she wrote this letter to the community.

A Message of Thanks to the Mendon Community:

It has been my privilege to serve as director of the Mendon Senior Center for more than 18 years. I am truly grateful to each of you for making these years so meaningful. It has been an honor to be part of a community where people come together, support one another, and make a difference in each other's lives.

Looking back, I am proud of the numerous meaningful programs and partnerships we have built over the years, along with many successful grants. All of which would not have been possible without the hard work



Former Mendon Senior Center Director Amy Wilson Kent retired in November. *Courtesy photo*

and dedication of our caring staff and volunteers, as well as our abatement workers. I cannot forget the generosity of the Mendon community. Everyone's time, energy, and willingness to help have made a lasting difference. I have enjoyed working alongside you. I am especially grateful for the support of our Council on Aging Advisory Board. Together, we worked hard to strengthen our department and grow it from a one-person operation into the team we have today.

That said, after more than 18 years in Mendon and 14 years before that in Hopkinton, I have decided it is time to retire and spend more time with my family as I begin this next chapter of my life. Leaving a community that has meant so much to me is certainly bittersweet. I will treasure the friendships I have made, the memories we have shared, and the opportunity to serve each of you and this community. Thank you for your trust, kindness, support, and for allowing me to be part of your lives.

With heartfelt thanks and warmest wishes,

Amy Wilson Kent

Mendon Historical Society to hold Gingerbread House Competition

Deadline to register is Nov. 22

The Mendon Historical Society is hosting a Gingerbread House Competition and invites bakers of all ages and skill levels to participate.

Registration ends Sunday, Nov. 22.

There are four competition categories:

1. Historic Homes of Mendon
2. Holiday Houses
3. Animal Houses
4. The Funny House

The houses will be on display from Dec. 1-15 at Willow Brook Restaurant and Mendon Taft Public Library.



To register, contact Mendonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com for rules and regulations.

Source: Facebook



MASCOT

continued from page 1

process behind the change, which she described as a "deliberate multi-year process" rooted in the district's strategic plan.

Cohen said the district's goal was "to develop and adopt a unified mascot across all MURSD schools to strengthen brand identity, unity and school spirit."

The effort began in 2016 and gained momentum during the 2020-21 school year, when the district began removing Native American imagery. Cohen said the district's decision was also guided by correspondence from the Nipmuc Nation, including letters in 2016, 2020 and July 2021.

In a July 2021 letter, the Nipmuc Nation expressed opposition to sports mascots, nicknames and logos that impersonate Indigenous people, describing them as harmful and rooted in negative stereotypes. The letter read, in part:

"The Nipmuc Nation stans in opposition to all sport team mascots, nicknames, logos that falsely impersonate the lives of Indigenous People. We support legislation that will remove and prohibit those mascots, nicknames, logos and prohibit them in Massachusetts school systems…These mascots, nicknames, logos are derogatory and harmful to our people. They perpetrate negative stereotypes associated with Indigenous People. And despite the claims of their supporters, these mascots, nicknames, logos do not honor us in any way."

Cohen said retiring the Native American imagery while retaining the Nipmuc Regional name allows the district to recognize the tribal nation without engaging in cultural appropriation.

Cohen also noted that legislation addressing Native American mascots in Massachusetts schools is making its way through the State House, making the district's decision a proactive step.

The selection process included community participation beginning in February 2026, when the district solicited mascot ideas and received approximately 200 submissions.

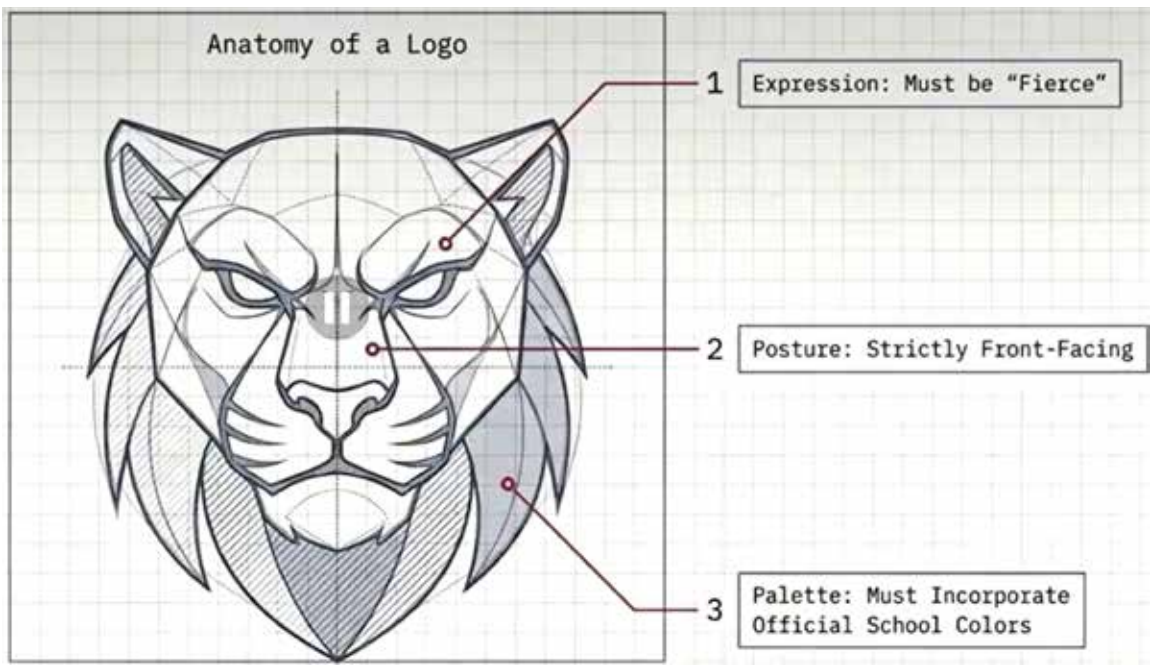


Image shared at the Sept. 14 meeting of the Mendon-Upton Regional School Committee meeting regarding the district's new logo: the Coyote.

After evaluating proposals based on uniqueness, local significance and alignment with district values, officials narrowed the choices to eight semifinalists.

In April, approximately 840 ballots were cast to identify three finalists: bears, coyotes and Nor'easters. The final round generated more than 1,000 votes, including more than 600 student ballots and nearly 400 community ballots. Cohen said the coyote emerged as the clear consensus winner among both groups. The district announced the selection at its May 18 meeting.

"We're learning that not everyone in the community was aware, and I wish I could go back and change something to make more people aware of it," Cohen said of the process. "But our intent was to get it out to as many possible people as we could."

During the summer, the district worked with a graphic designer who is also a Nipmuc alumnus to develop the new mascot image and accompanying logos.

At the September meeting, Nipmuc Athletic Director Chris Schmidt said the new branding will provide a consistent visual identity throughout the district.

"One of the reasons that we liked coyote so much was it was unique. There was no other school in the state, or in the region for that matter, that had coyotes," Schmidt said. He also noted the connection to the Nipmuc People and said the selection made sense for the district.

To watch a recording of the meeting, visit bit.ly/MURSD-SchoolCommittee-09142026 .

An Act Prohibiting the Use of Native American Mascots by Public Schools in the Commonwealth (HD.1791/SD.856) is making its way through the legislature.

The bill would prohibit the use of Native American mascots in Massachusetts public schools. About 25 schools in the Commonwealth currently use such mascots.

Source: https://maindigenousagenda.org/native-mascots

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Debunking five common Social Security myths



Mark Freeman, CEPA

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Provided by Edward Jones

Social Security is often one of the most important income sources in retirement. Yet widespread myths about how it works can lead to confusion, unnecessary worry and poor planning decisions. Here's the truth behind five of the most common misconceptions.

Myth 1: Social Security is going broke. You've probably heard this one, but the full picture is more nuanced. According to the 2026 Social Security Board of Trustees Report, if Congress does nothing, the program would need to reduce benefits starting in 2032, paying roughly 78 cents for every dollar owed.

But that's just one scenario. Congress could raise the combined payroll tax from 12.4% to 16.65%, which the trustees estimate would secure full benefits through 2100. Other options include eliminating the earnings cap subject to payroll tax or adjusting retirement ages. Lawmakers have tools to address this.

Myth 2: Social Security will cover all your retirement needs. Think of Social Security as a financial foundation, not the full building. According to the Social Security Administration, benefits replace only about 40% of pre-retirement income for a median earner. That means you'll likely need to account for most of your retirement income yourself. Building a strong personal savings strategy now can help close that gap.

Myth 3: You lose benefits permanently if you keep working. Not true. Social Security does have an "earnings test" that can temporarily reduce benefits for people who claim early and keep working. If your earnings exceed a set annual cap – which changes each year – Social Security will withhold a portion of your benefits. But once you reach full retirement age, the Social Security Administration adjusts your monthly check higher to repay those withheld amounts over time.

Myth 4: An ex-spouse's benefits come out of your own. If you were married for at least 10 years and are currently unmarried, your former spouse may be eligible to collect on your earnings record, or you may be able to collect on theirs. Divorced spouse benefits can be up to 50% of the other person's full retirement benefit. But those payments don't affect yours. Your monthly benefit is not reduced by anything paid to an ex-spouse or even a current spouse.

Myth 5: Social Security benefits are no longer taxed. Recent legislation caused some confusion here. The One Big Beautiful Bill Act did not eliminate taxes on Social Security benefits. If your combined income exceeds certain thresholds, you'll still owe taxes on a portion of your benefits.

The law also created a temporary deduction (available through 2028) for people 65 and older. Eligible taxpayers can deduct $6,000 per qualifying filer if their modified adjusted gross income is $75,000 or less for singles or $150,000 for couples. The deduction phases out at $175,000 for singles and $250,000 for joint filers.

The more you understand Social Security, the more control you have over your retirement outcome. Grounding your decisions in facts rather than assumptions can make a meaningful difference in your long-term financial security.

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

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

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Gratitude After Gravy Hike

The Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park will host a "Gratitude After Gravy Hike," on Saturday, Nov. 28 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Meet at the Rice City Pond parking lot (bit.ly/ricecitypond) near 390 Hartford Ave. E. in Uxbridge.

This hike is about three miles over a rugged forest surface with moderate inclines.

Programming is subject to change or cancellation. For the most up to date programming information, call 508-278-7604 or visit bit.ly/blstupdates.

Source: Blackstone River and Canal Heritage State Park

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Upton Town Library Calendar of Events

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

By Upton Library Staff

Creative Writing Group, Wednesday evenings

Each Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. at Upton Library. Community event facilitated by author Marcia K. Matthews.

Share your original writing and receive positive and fun feedback. The creative writing group gives you an opportunity to share support, suggestions, and critique. Informal gathering of local writers and poets provides incentive and inspiration to workshop and market our writing.

Holiday Hours

Upton Town Library has the following changes to our hours this month:
Wednesday, Nov. 11 – Closed
Wednesday, Nov. 25 – Open
9 a.m.-2:30 p.m. (Early Closing)
Thursday, Nov. 26 – Closed
Friday, Nov. 27 – Closed
Saturday, Nov. 28 – Open
9 a.m.-4 p.m. (Regular Hours)

Friends of the Library

Thanks to all that shopped the fall book sale and donated books to the Friends of the Library - it was the highest earning book sale ever! Save the date for the spring sale on May 8, and in the meantime, come check out the ongoing sale shelves across from the library circulation desk!

Cooler weather have you looking for more indoor activities? Come check out the great selection of museum passes sponsored by Friend of the Library! Passes can be reserved online or by calling or visiting the library.

ADULT EVENTS

Drum Circle with Dave Curry - Saturday, Dec. 5, 7-9 p.m.

Ages 8 - Adult

Join facilitator Dave Curry on the first Saturday of each month for an evening of free-style drumming. Instruction and extra drums are provided, but you can also bring your own drums and percussion instruments. No prior experience is necessary, so the circle is suitable for beginners on up to experienced drummers.

Tabletop Game Night for Adults – Thursday, Nov. 19, 5:15-7:30 p.m.

Join our tabletop game series for adults! Meets every fourth Thursday of the month from 5:15-7:30 p.m. Beginners and experienced players welcome!

Virtual Author Talk Series

View free online author talks, either live or recorded. Register and get more information at the library website, or at https://libraryc.org/uptontownlibrary

Author Talk with **Helen Scheuerer**: Sparks, Shadows, and Epic Romantasy - Thursday, Dec. 3 at 7 p.m.

Author Talk with **Ana Hebra Flaster**: Exile, Memory, and the Meaning of Home - Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 2 p.m.

CHILDREN'S & YOUNG ADULT EVENTS

Autumn StoryWalk - through Nov. 24, all ages

Stop by the VFW Playground anytime it's open to enjoy the library's Autumn StoryWalk, *"Hello Autumn!"* by Shelley Rotner. A StoryWalk is a self-guided picture book activity, put together with separate story page panels that families can enjoy one at a time with their children. Enter our QR code at the end of the story and enter for a chance to win a copy of the book!

Sensory Fun - Dec. 5 at 11 a.m., ages 1 to 12.

Sensory play is important for childhood development. Our new Sensory Fun program allows your child as much or as little time as needed to explore our toys. Drop in and enjoy the sensory materials we have to offer, including kinetic sand, building blocks, small instruments, fidget toys, balance beams, and more! *This program is generously funded by The Friends of the Upton Town Library.*



Pasta Dinosaur Fossils - Nov. 14 at 10 a.m.

It's Dino-vember at the Upton Town Library! Join us to learn about these extinct creatures and then become a novice paleontologist as we create fossil designs out of pasta! No registration required.

CactusHead Puppets - Nov. 21 at 10 a.m., ages 3+

CactusHead Puppets returns to the library for a puppet presentation of the classic children's tale, The Bremen Town Musicians! CactusHead Puppets brings to life the hilarious tale of four farm animals who set out on the road to Bremen to pursue their dreams of stardom. This production features lovable rod puppets, elaborate shadow scenes, and CactusHead puppets' signature sense of humor. Show length is 35 min. plus Q&A after the show. *Please note:* the Greatroom will be darkened for this presentation, so that the shadow puppets can be seen.

BOOK GROUPS

Monthly book groups are facilitated by Upton Library staff.

We also reserve book copies for local private book groups, contact us for more information!

Upton Reads Book Group

An eclectic mix of contemporary literary fiction with meetings on the second Tuesday afternoon and Thursday evening of each month, with a remote call-in option.

Tuesday, Dec. 8 at 12:45 p.m., and Thursday, Dec. 10 at 6:45 p.m.: *The Book of Lost Hours* by Hayley Gelfuso.

Fic or No Fic Book Group

An adult book group that alternates between fiction and non-fiction selections. This group meets on the last Wednesday of each month at 6:45 p.m.

November – Holiday break, no meeting!

Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 6:45 p.m.: *The God of Small Things* by Arundhati Roy.

Kids' Book Club - Dec. 2 at 4 p.m., ages 6 to 9

Our book club members explore popular juvenile chapter books on the first Wednesday of each month from 4-4:45 p.m. For our December meeting, we will be discussing the title *The Alien Next Door: The Marvelous Museum* by A.I. Newton. At each meeting, we

UPTON LIBRARY

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UPTON LIBRARY

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discuss the book of the month, our love of other books, and always make a bookmark craft. Registration required.

MONTHLY LIBRARY EVENTS – REGISTER NOW!

Most programs and events require pre-registration at uptonlibrary.org or call 508-529-6272. Program details can be found on our website on our Event Calendar. *Registrations open the month prior to events.*

Baby Storytime – Fridays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m., ages birth to 3.

Preschool Storytime – Thursdays at 9:30 & 10:30 a.m., ages 3 to 5.

Saturday Storytime – 1st Saturday at 9:30 a.m., ages birth to 5.

Drop-In Storytime - 4th Monday at 9:30 a.m., ages 1 to 5.

Family Music & Movement - 1st Monday at 9:15 a.m., ages birth to 5.

Storybook Art Club – 3rd Tuesday each month at 10 a.m., ages 3 to 5.

LEGO Club – 1st & 3rd Wednesdays each month at 4 p.m., ages 3 to 12.

Crafternoon – 3rd Thursday each month, 3-5 p.m., ages 3+.

Tween Book Club – 3rd Thursday each month at 6:30 p.m., ages 10 to 14.

Kids' Book Club – 1st Wednesday each month at 4 p.m., ages 6 to 9.

Chess Club – 1st Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14.

Crafting Club – 2nd Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14.

Gaming Club – 3rd Tuesday each month, 4-6 p.m., ages 5 to 14.

FreeDrum Circle – 1st Saturday each month, 7-9:30 p.m., ages 8+.

Tabletop Game Night for Adults – 3rd Thursday each month, ages 16+.

Upton Reads Book Group – 2nd Tuesday and 3rd Thursday each month.

Fic or No Fic Book Group – last Wednesday each month.

Virtual Author Talks – varies, see our website.

For more information or assistance with any Upton Town Library services, call 508-529-6272 or email mbachtol@cwmars.org

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Beyond daily drops: How modern advances are changing glaucoma care

By Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.
Milford Franklin Eye Center

Glaucoma remains one of the leading causes of preventable blindness worldwide. Widely referred to as the "silent thief of sight," this condition typically develops gradually without warning signs. Because vision loss begins in the periphery, many people do not notice changes until significant and irreversible optic nerve damage has already occurred.

Understanding how glaucoma develops—and how modern medical technology has transformed its treatment—is key to protecting your vision.

Understanding the mechanics of glaucoma

Inside the front section of a healthy eye, a fluid called **aqueous humor** continuously circulates to nourish surrounding tissues and maintain internal pressure. In a properly functioning eye, fluid drains out through a specialized mesh network known as the trabecular meshwork.

When these drainage channels become clogged or inefficient, fluid builds up, causing elevated intraocular pressure (IOP). This excess pressure exerts mechanical stress on the **optic nerve**—the biological cable transmitting visual information from the retina to the brain.

- **Open-Angle Glaucoma:** The most common form, where the drainage angle remains open but becomes progressively inefficient over time.
- **Angle-Closure Glaucoma:** A less common, sudden block of the drainage angle that can cause rapid pressure spikes and requires immediate medical attention.
- **Normal-Tension Glaucoma:** Optic nerve damage occurs even when eye pressure measures within standard, normal ranges.

Comprehensive early detection

Because early-stage glaucoma causes no physical discomfort or noticeable blurriness, routine comprehensive eye exams are vital. Modern clinical evaluation relies on multiple diagnostic technologies:

1. **Tonometry:** Measures internal intraocular pressure.
2. **Ophthalmoscopy & OCT Scans:** Optical Coherence Tomography generates high-resolution cross-sectional images of the retina and optic nerve head to detect microscopic nerve fiber loss.
3. **Visual Field Testing:** Maps peripheral vision to identify subtle blind spots.
4. **Gonioscopy:** Directly inspects the eye's drainage angle structure.



Modern treatment paradigms: From daily drops to sustained care

The primary goal of glaucoma management is lowering eye pressure to halt or slow disease progression. Historically, daily prescription eye drops were the standard starting point. Today, frontline care has shifted toward longer-lasting, low-maintenance therapies.

1. Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT) as first-line care

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT) has increasingly replaced daily eye drops as a preferred first-line therapy for open-angle glaucoma. Performed in-office in just a few minutes, SLT applies gentle laser energy to stimulate the body's natural cellular repair mechanism, clearing drainage channels. It is painless, repeatable, highly effective, and eliminates the daily burden of managing medication schedules.

2. Sustained-Release Drug Implants

For patients needing pharmaceutical control, novel sustained-release delivery systems solve the compliance challenges associated with eye drops:

iDose TR: A tiny, bio-compatible ocular implant placed inside the anterior chamber that steadily releases travoprost over many months, maintaining consistent pressure control without daily dosing.

Durysta: A biodegradable implant inserted into the eye that gradually dissolves while continuously delivering a prespecified dose of bimatoprost.

3. Traditional topical medications

When drops are prescribed, several classes exist, each targeting fluid dynamics differently:

- **Prostaglandin Analogs** (e.g., latanoprost, bimatoprost): Enhance fluid outflow.
- **Beta Blockers** (e.g., timolol): Decrease fluid production inside the eye.
- **Alpha Agonists & Carbonic Anhydrase Inhibitors:** Lower production and promote drainage.
- **Rho Kinase Inhibitors** (e.g., netarsudil): Target the trabecular meshwork to lower resistance to fluid outflow.

4. Minimally Invasive Glaucoma Surgery (MIGS)

MIGS procedures have altered surgical glaucoma management. Using tiny microscopic equipment and small self-sealing incisions, devices such as the iStent, Hydrus Microstent, or Xen Gel Stent are inserted to create reliable drainage routes. Often combined with routine cataract surgery, MIGS offers a fast recovery profile and significantly reduced risk compared to traditional surgeries.

EYE

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Firefighter training



In October, Mendon firefighters "took part in a hands-on training focused on operating metal-cutting saws and chainsaws while working on both residential and commercial roof structures," according to a MFD Facebook post on Oct. 16. For more photos, visit @mendonfire on Facebook.

EYES

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5. Advanced incisional surgeries

In severe, advanced cases where non-invasive options fall short, traditional incisional surgeries are utilized to achieve maximum pressure reduction:

- **Trabeculectomy:** Creates a small flap in the sclera (white part of the eye) to allow fluid to bypass blocked channels into a reservoir beneath the conjunctiva.
- **Aqueous Shunt/Tube Implants:** Places a tiny silicone tube that drains fluid into an external reservoir plate implanted under the eye tissue.

Summary and clinical commitment

Glaucoma care has evolved beyond reliance on daily topical drops. Today's patients benefit from a comprehensive toolkit ranging from targeted lasers and sustained-release implants to minimally invasive microscopic stents.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we are committed to providing the latest evidence-based technologies. Our team was among the first in New England to offer DSLT laser treatment for glaucoma and perform the iDose TR procedure at the Cataract and Surgery Center of Milford—an achievement highlighted on local Channel 5 news. Through early detection, personalized treatment, and advanced technology, protecting your long-term sight is more achievable than ever.

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Handbell concert during Celebrate the Holidays on Dec. 6

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Grafton and Upton (UUSG) will offer music, food, and merriment in their historic meetinghouse as part of the town-wide Grafton Celebrates the Holidays event on Sunday, Dec. 6.

All are welcome to stop by UUSGU at 3 Grafton Common between noon and 3 p.m. In the church yard, just across from Grafton Common, grab a s'mores kit and enjoy it while you warm up by the firepit. Indoors, in the Fellowship Hall, there will also be warm apple crisp, cocoa, and coffee for sale, as well as specialty items from select vendors. Children (and fun-loving adults) are invited to participate in a free, five-minute seasonal craft.

At 1 p.m., raise your voice in a community sing-along and enjoy a festive performance by the UUSGU Handbell Choir, as well as a dramatic reading of Clement Clarke Moore's classic poem, 'Twas the Night Before Christmas.



Rev. Daniel Gregoire minister at UUSGU helps decorate the Meeting House 2025 Holiday Season (UUSGU).

For more information, visit uusgu.org .



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Upton Senior Center November updates

The Upton Senior Center will be closed on Wed., Nov. 11 for Veteran's Day and Thurs., Nov. 26 and Fri., Nov. 27 for Thanksgiving and closing at 12 p.m. on Wed., Nov. 25 for Thanksgiving.

Mindful Meditation

Fri., Nov. 13, at 1 p.m.

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

Lunch and Learn: Financial Literacy Workshop Series

Nov. 17 at 12:45 p.m.

Join Milford Federal Bank for a 3-week series designed to help you feel more confident navigating today's financial world. Each week will feature a different financial topic with helpful information you can use in your everyday life. Complimentary lunch provided. RSVP 5 days prior to each session. Understand your personal finances, protect yourself from scams and fraud, learn about different investment options, gather financial tips and resources.

Thanksgiving Day Luncheon

Wed., Nov. 18 at 12:30 p.m. $8 per person.

Come celebrate with your friends at the Senior Center and enjoy a Turkey Dinner with all the fixings, provided by Country Sooper. Enjoy music by PE James. Bring your appetite and holiday spirit. We look forward to sharing this special day with you! Register by Nov. 12.

Dementia Caregiver Support Group

Thurs., Nov. 19 at 10 a.m.

Are you caring for a loved one living with dementia? Caregiving can feel overwhelming, but you don't have to navigate it alone. Whether you're looking for support, resources, practical information, or simply someone who understands what you're going through, our new Dementia Caregiver Support Group is here for you. Join us for a safe and supportive space to share experiences, connect with others, ask questions, and know that you're not alone. This group meets on the first and third Thursday of each month.

Lunch Trip

Mon., Nov. 23 at 12:30 p.m.

Join us for this month's lunch trip to Olive Garden in Worcester. Sign up by Nov. 19.

SAVE THE DATE

Dec. 2: Trip to Mechanics Hall—Jazz with Avery Sharpe. Please sign up for only one Mechanics Hall event to ensure everyone has a fair opportunity to attend. Thank you for your consideration!

Dec. 8: Special Bingo and Breakfast with Representative Muradian

Dec. 16: Trip to Mechanics Hall—U.S. Navy Band Northeast with New England Conservatory Symphonic Winds and Chamber Singers. Please sign up for only one Mechanics Hall event to ensure everyone has a fair opportunity to attend. Thank you for your consideration!

Dec. 17: Carols with the Miscoe Middle School Chorus.

Dec. 18: Yankee Swap and Holiday Luncheon with Victorian Holiday Carolers.



Inside the Upton senior Center.

Dec. 30: Game Day with the Town Library.

Upton Food Pantry

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

Hours of Operation
Mon. 9:30–11:30 a.m.
Wed. 12–3 p.m.
Fri. 10 a.m.–1 p.m.

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

The UCC Food Pantry is seeking donations:

- Sugar-free items
- Cookies
- Ground coffee
- Pancake syrup
- Crackers
- Laundry detergent
- Gift cards and monetary donations also accepted

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Upton Museum to host Holiday Open House on Dec. 19



The Upton Historical Society will hold a festive holiday open house at the Upton Museum, 2 Main Street, on Saturday, Dec. 19, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Community members are invited to stop by, enjoy refreshments, explore the Museum, and discover more about the people, places, and events that have shaped Upton's history. Children's activities will also be available, making this a fun opportunity for families to celebrate the season together.

Whether you are a longtime resident, a newcomer to town, or simply interested in local history, the open house offers a relaxed and welcoming opportunity to visit the Museum and celebrate the season.

Everyone is welcome and the event is free.

Mendon-Upton Regional School District's Director of Learning and Innovation receives 2026 MassCUE Administrator Award

Mendon-Upton Regional School District's Director of Learning and Innovation, Ryan Robidoux, has received MassCUE's 2026 Administrator Award for his visionary leadership in educational technology.

Robidoux was presented with the award at MassCUE's fall conference last week. The Administrator Award honors a Massachusetts school leader who demonstrates vision in leveraging technology to enhance learning while benefiting educators both within their own district and across the Commonwealth.

"Ryan is exceptionally thoughtful about how technology can enhance teaching and learning," said MURSD Superintendent Dr. Cohen. "He asks insightful questions, develops practical tools, and generously shares his expertise with others. We are proud to see his dedication recognized by educators across Massachusetts."

As schools across the Commonwealth navigate the integration of artificial intelligence, Robidoux has been instrumental in establishing guidelines for Mendon-Upton that emphasize student privacy, academic integrity, and critical thinking.

He led a team to develop the guidelines through MassCUE's Partnership for Educators Advancing AI Knowledge (PEA2K), and has led workshops on AI for educators across Massachusetts.

Robidoux has also driven actionable equity in daily classroom instruction. He built the District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP) Planning for All Learners (PAL) tool, which allows teachers to input individual student needs and instantly receive tailored accommodation strategies, which streamlines Tier 1 instructional planning to support all learners.

In another key effort, Robidoux maintains data dashboards that extend beyond traditional measures of achievement. These dashboards provide educators with students' personal narratives, strengths, and reflections linked to the district's Portrait of a Learner. By incorporating qualitative student data directly into district dashboards, teachers can better understand and support the whole student.

Extending his impact statewide, Robidoux served on the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) AI Task Force and the Massachusetts AI Hub education working group, helping shape state policy and practical frameworks for AI adoption. He is also Co-President of the Computer Science Teachers Association (CSTA) Massachusetts Chapter, advocating for equitable computer science education across the Commonwealth.

"This recognition is a direct reflection of our incredible Mendon-Upton students, educators, and leaders who arrive every day eager to collaborate and learn. I am grateful to work alongside colleagues across our district and state who test new ideas and share honest feedback," Robidoux said. "They ensure our technology tools amplify student learning by focusing on learning goals and the needs of our students. I'm grateful for their support and am proud to share this recognition with them."

Submitted by Mendon-Upton Regional School District



Mendon-Upton Regional School District Director of Learning and Innovation Ryan Robidoux received MassCUE's 2026 Administrator Award.
Photo courtesy: Mendon-Upton Regional School Distric

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Taft Public Library Calendar of Events

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

ADULT & TEEN PROGRAM NEWS NOVEMBER 2026

Upcoming Events:

Sheryl Faye presents Helen Keller

Join us on Tuesday, Nov. 3 at 7 p.m. when Sheryl Faye performs Helen Keller. Sheryl reenacts Helen's story from her childhood through her discovery of language and beyond. Sheryl will show the audience how Helen spoke and read in Braille. It's a unique program that helps us to understand and accept the different ways people accomplish similar things. Helen overcame many challenges in her life. See what inspired her to be the best she could be with the talents she possessed. Registration is required as space is limited. Visit us at www.taftpubliclibrary.org and click on the Calendar and Events link to register.

Playful Foundations Parenting Workshop

If you've ever wondered if you're doing enough to support your little learner, you are not alone. Little Learners Parent Academy presents a Playful Foundations parenting workshop where caregivers can discover how purposeful, everyday play builds literacy, math, fine motor skills, and confidence-using materials they already have at home. Participants will explore simple activities then leave with practical ideas, take-home resources, and a new way of thinking about learning through play. Little learners are welcome to attend to play alongside their grown-up! Perfect for home-school families. The workshop will be held at Taft on Thursday, Nov. 5 at 6 p.m. Registration is required as space is limited. The program is funded in part by a grant from the Mendon Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

We welcome back the Cozy Tea Cart!

The Cozy Tea Cart returns with a fall/winter tea tasting on Zoom! Experience four fall and winter teas, capturing the warm spices and cozy sweetness of the season, and learn about their origins and production methods. Danielle Beaudette of The Cozy Tea Cart will appear via Zoom on Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 6:30 p.m. Deepen your appreciation for rich seasonal flavors and the aromas of these vibrant teas. Registration is required and tea kits are limited. Visit www.taftpubliclibrary.org to register.

Medium Ellen Henry Presents Connections with Spirits

Modern-Day Mystic Ellen Henry visits Taft on Sunday, Nov. 15 at 2 p.m. for Connections with Spirit: Messages of Hope and Healing. Ellen delivers messages from your loved ones in the spirit world. Participants who bring a small item from their loved one may have Ellen use it to connect with them. She will also offer soul guidance to anyone with a question they wish to ask in front of the group. ***Note:*** Attendance at a demonstration does not guarantee that all participants will receive a reading. Registration is required as space is limited. This event will fill fast, so register now!

Slow Flow Yoga for Adults and Teens

Join Katie Aissis from Sprouting Tree Yoga for Slow Flow Yoga. This Vinyasa style yoga class links breath to movement in a dynamic sequence of postures. Participants will build strength while also finding moments throughout the practice to quiet the mind and rest the body. This class is appropriate for all levels, and no previous yoga experience is necessary. Please bring your own yoga mat. Join us on Tuesday, Nov. 17 at 7 p.m. Registration required.

Adult Handcrafting Group

Let's get crafty! Join the Adult Handcrafting Group on Wednesday, Nov. 4 and Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 2 p.m. downstairs in the library and get your craft on! Bring your own craft project, whatever it might be, to work on while you visit. Intended for adults. No registration is required. Crafts are NOT supplied.

Mendon in the Civil War Program

On Wednesday, Nov. 18 at 6:30 p.m. Mendon resident and local historian Dennis LaPlante will present Mendon's Response to the War of Rebellion (1861-1865). Join him to learn more about Mendon's response to the Civil War and find out about the town just prior to the war, how it responded to the call for soldiers, how it supported those soldiers and their families, and how it was able to finance the cost. Dennis will give brief biographies of some of the soldiers and will tell the story of the Civil War memorial on Route 16. This is a joint program of the Taft Public Library and the Mendon Historical Society. Register using the Calendar & Events link on the Taft library website www.taftpubliclibrary.org .

Adult Book Club

The Adult Book Club typically meets the second Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Upcoming book club discussions are as follows:

West with Giraffes by Lynda Rutledge on Nov. 9.

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

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

Awards Book Club

Hosted by Taft Library Assistant Jane Blackwood, the Awards Book Club meets on a quarterly basis to discuss fiction award winners of the year. Jane selects from the books that took home the coveted Pulitzer Prize, the National Book Award, the Booker Prize and more! Stop at the downstairs circulation desk to request the latest Awards book for discussion.

The current book in the Awards Book Club discussion series is *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store* by James McBride, winner of the 2024 Library of Congress Prize for American Fiction. Discussion will be on Thursday, Nov. 12 at 6:30 p.m. Contact the library at 508-473-3259 for further information.

Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club

The Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club is led by Library Director Andrew Jenrich. The next book in the series is *Material World: The Six Raw Materials That*

TAFT LIBRARY
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TAFT LIBRARY

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Shape Modern Civilization by Ed Conway. The group will meet on Thursday, Dec. 3 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the book.

The Footnotes Nonfiction Book Club typically meets on a quarterly basis. Copies of the next book, *Outliers* by Malcolm Gladwell, will be available following the Dec. 3 discussion. Those interested can pick up the next book at the downstairs circulation desk.

German Conversation Club

Are you looking for a place to practice what German you remember or to improve your German vocabulary? Conversations in German is no pressure, just fun! Lead by Library Assistant (and Mendon resident) Monika Schmid, the group typically meets the last Monday of each month. The group will meet next on Monday, Nov. 30 at 6 p.m. Contact the library at 508-473-3259 for additional details. Registration is required. To register, visit our website!

2026 Challenge Book Club

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

November: A book that made you think.

December: A cozy or winter-themed book.

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

Assistance from Sheila Elliott and the Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health

Sheila Elliott will be on site at the Taft Library on Tuesday, Nov. 10 from 2:30-4 p.m. to provide assistance filling out applications for MassHealth, SNAP, WIC, fuel assistance, Social Security, Veteran's Benefits, and more. Ms. Elliott can also provide referrals to community organizations, mental health and substance abuse providers and give guidance in obtaining financial resources to address past due bills. Each session is 30-minutes long. Those interested can sign up for a 30-minute block of time by clicking on the Calendar & Events link on the Taft Library website www.taftpubliclibrary.org .

Shine Counseling with Jenna Gouin, MBA/MSOL

Meet with Jenna Gouin in partnership with the Blackstone Valley Partnership for Public Health for information, counseling, and advice on Medicare. Ms. Gouin is a SHINE counselor trained and certified by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Aging & Independence in the various options available to Medicare beneficiaries – including Medicare Parts A & B, Medicare Advantage, Medicare prescription drug coverage (Part D), Medigap, Prescription Advantage, MassHealth, and other programs that help people with limited resources pay for health care costs. Get your Medicare questions answered at one of the following upcoming sessions:
Monday, Nov. 16, 9-10 a.m. or 10-11 a.m.
Monday, Dec. 14, 9-10 a.m. or 10-11 a.m.

To register, click on the Calendar & Events link on the Taft Library website www.taftpubliclibrary.org .

Friends of the Taft Public Library Meeting

The Friends of the Taft Public Library meetings are typically held on the last Tuesday of the



month at 7 p.m. downstairs in the Art Holmes Community Room, unless it falls on a holiday or during a school vacation. All are welcome (and encouraged) to attend! The next meeting of the Friends is Tuesday, Nov. 24 at 7 p.m. If you plan on attending, it's always a good idea to call the library at 508-473-3259 or email the Friends at friendsoftaftlibrary@gmail.com to confirm the date and time of the meeting. The group will do its best to post any meeting changes on the Taft Library web site and the Friends of the Taft Public Library Facebook page.

TAFT CHILDREN'S NEWS NOVEMBER 2026

Registration is required for all programs. Please log onto our website: www.taftpubliclibrary.org and find the events page to register along with more information for the programs.

Itty Bitty Storytime

Itty Bitty Storytime is designed for our youngest patrons birth to 3 years old. Join us for a lot of fun on Tuesdays and select Wednesdays at 9:30 a.m. Please note Itty Bitty will not be held on Nov. 24 and Nov. 25.

Story & Craft Time

Join us for Story and Craft Time! Perfect for the preschool-aged child! 10:30 a.m. each Tuesday unless otherwise noted. Please note there is no Storytime on Nov. 24.

Alphabet Storytime

It's all about the alphabet! Each week we will focus on a different letter. We will read a couple of books, sing songs, and learn about the letter of the week! Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m. Please note there is no Alphabet Storytime on Nov. 25.

Coffee & Conversations and Music at the Blissful with Beginning Bridges, CFCE

Coffee & Conversations

Join us for an informal playtime where families will be able to build social connections and learn about early childhood development and family-friendly resources. The library will supply Muffin House Muffins!

Music at the Blissful

6x Boston Parent Paper Family Favorite and National Touring Musician, Music at the Blissful (Evan Haller) from Boston, Massachusetts comes to the Taft for a high energy, fun-filled, interactive, movement-packed music experience for the whole family.

Join us Wednesday, Dec. 16 at 9:30 a.m. for Coffee & Conversations and 10:30 a.m. for Music at the Blissful.

Lego Club

Back by popular demand!! During this one-hour building session we will be led by the "Lego Lady" Kim Steadman! No need to bring any Legos! This program is great for all ages....as long as you don't eat the Legos! Tuesday, Nov. 10 at 4:30 p.m.

Preschool Kidding Around Yoga

We will learn yoga poses, dance, sing, and meditate. This class is all about fun. All abilities are welcome! Mats are available, or feel free to bring your own. Wednesday, Dec. 9 at 9:30 a.m.

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Recent Home Sales

Date	Mendon	Amount
10/20/2026	8 Vincent Rd.	$785,000
09/30/2026	14A Lundvall Rd.	$1.2 mil
09/30/2026	88 Northbridge St.	$840,000
09/28/2026	3 Leone Ln.	$800,000
09/25/2026	56 Hartford Ave. W	$460,000l
Date	**Upton**	**Amount**
10/30/2026	15 North St.	$599,000
10/30/2026	68 School St.	$449,000
10/28/2026	24B River St.	$670,000
10/22/2026	90 Glenview St.	$590,000
10/14/2026	71 School St.	$515,000
10/09/2026	10 Hopkinton Rd.	$445,000
10/01/2026	11 James Rd.	$735,000
09/30/2026	33 Diary Dr.	$1.10 mil

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



The 3-bed, 1-bath, 1,316-square-foot home at 71 School Street in Upton recently sold for $515,000. *Photo source: www.zillow.com*

Area food pantries available

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

UPTON

Upton Community Center Food Pantry, 9 Milford St.

Hours: Mon. (9:30-11:30 a.m.), Wed. (12-3 p.m.), Fri. (10 a.m.-1 p.m.)

Services: Residents may access the food pantry one time each week.

Donations: Financial donations can be dropped off at the Senior Center desk Monday-Friday from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Requested food donations include coffee, tea, salad dressings, mayonnaise, cooking oil, sugar. Not needed: mac and cheese or pasta. www.uptonma.gov/459/Upton-Community-Center-Food-Pantry

United Parish Food Pantry, 1 Church St.

Every other Tues., Nov. 17 and Dec. 1, from 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Services: The Food Pantry serves residents from Upton as well as nearby towns. Proof of income or church affiliation is not required. We offer non-perishable food, toiletries, paper products and infant needs. Donations can be dropped off in our donation shed located outside the church office on 1 Church Street, Upton.

Congregant dinner, Nov. 19 from 5:30-6:30 p.m., provided by



the Faith in Action Committee. This month's meal will be white bean and chicken chili. Please call the church office at 508-529.-3192 by Nov. 13 to make your reservation. If you forget to reserve, please come anyway; we always make extra and would love to serve you. Occurs on the third Thursday of each month September through June.

Donations: Can be dropped off 24/7 at the Barnabas Barn along Church St., please check food for expiration dates. www.unitedparishupton.org/food-pantry.

St. Gabriel's Food Pantry, 151 Mendon St.

Mon. & Wed. (9:15 a.m.–3:30 p.m.), Tues. & Thurs. (9:15 a.m.–12 p.m.)

Services: Helping parish families in need. www.stgabrielsma.org

MILFORD

Daily Bread Food Pantry, 21 Exchange St., Milford

Tues. & Thurs. (6–7:30 p.m.)

Services: For Milford, Hopedale & Upton residents only; proof of address and household member info required.

Donations: Monetary donations accepted at "donate" tab on website www.dailybreadfoodpantry.org/

Source: www.uptonma.gov

MENDON

Mendon Food Pantry, 62 Providence St. (Senior Center)

By appointment only, call 508-478-6175 (ext. 2) for assistance. Day and evening hours available. Assistance is confidential Delivers are available for residents with ambulatory or transportation issues. Call for an order form.

Services: For Mendon residents in need who receive fuel assistance, SNAP (food stamps), are unemployed, and/or receive aid to dependent children or to those who are disabled and/or unemployed. Referrals from area churches, social agencies, or concerned citizens regarding seniors and families in need will also be accepted. Client names shall be kept confidential.

Donations: Non-perishable food products are accepted (check expiration dates) during Senior Center hours, preferably 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Monetary donations (checks preferred) and BJs gift cards are also accepted. For details, visit https://www.mendonma.gov/253/Food-Pantry-Thank-You-for-Your-Support.

Source: www.mendonma.gov

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Mendon Senior Center November & December events

Tri Valley Lunch, Tuesdays and Thursdays at noon. Join us at the senior center for lunch and friendly conversations. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with fellow seniors, catch up with old friends and meet new neighbors over lunch. Cost: $3 donation. Feel free to call the center or drop in to sign-up for lunch and coordinate a ride on our van if needed.



Inside the Mendon Senior Center.

Coffee with Our First Responders, Nov. 16 at 9:30 a.m. Pull up a chair and join us for this special morning of casual conversation and community connection. Come enjoy a fresh, warm cup of coffee and some delicious treats while getting to know the dedicated first responders who serve the town of Mendon every day. This informal gathering is the perfect opportunity to ask questions, share your thoughts, or simply chat and swap stories with our local heroes.

November Dine Out, Nov. 18, 99 Restaurant, Milford. Carpool with friends from the senior center one Wednesday of each month at 11:30 a.m. or meet at the restaurant at 12 p.m. The cost of lunch is your responsibility, but the company is free. Please call or drop in to sign-up.

Celebrate November Birthdays, Nov. 17 at noon. If you are celebrating a November Birthday or simply looking for a cheerful afternoon out, we will be serving a delicious homemade meal, tossed salad, and of course cake. Lunch will be followed by a performance by Ethan Stone, who is returning by popular demand, after entertaining us last year with his rousing piano skills. We hope you to see you there!

Crystal Bowls and Meditation Workshop, Nov. 30 at 6:30 p.m. Crystal bowl sound healing offers a range of benefits, calming the nervous system, lower cortisol levels and induce deep relaxation, which can help alleviate stress and anxiety. Yoga Nidra offers a range of health benefits including reduced stress and anxiety, improved sleep, and enhanced mental clarity. Cost: $25.

Blood Pressure Clinic, Dec. 1 at 11 a.m. Salmon VNA offers a monthly drop-in clinic at the Mendon Senior Center.

Senior Breakfast Club, Dec. 4 at 10 a.m. Meet at The Spoon, West Main St. Hopkinton. Start your month with good food and great company! Join us the first Friday of each month at a different local restaurant for breakfast. Breakfast cost is your responsibility but the company is worth it!

Medicare Open Enrollment ends, Dec. 7. Now is the time to review your coverage, compare your options and make changes for 2027.

Mendon Senior Center open Fridays through Dec. 18

The Mendon Senior Center's pilot program to have the center open on Fridays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. continues through Dec. 18.

The Senior Center van will be available on Fridays for shopping trips and for transportation to and from the Center. The van will not be available for individual appointments during this pilot period. You must book your ride by Wednesday.

The Center will be closed on Friday, Nov., 27, following the Thanksgiving holiday.





Camera Club to meet in November

The Stony Brook Camera Club meets in-person and/or virtually by Zoom 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, image studies, and discussions of general interest. The club also sponsors a number of photography activities and workshops throughout the year.

SBCC includes and welcomes members of all abilities.

Nov. 12: (Zoom) "How Competition Can Save Photographs" with Essdras Suarez

Nov. 19: (Zoom):"Be in control of Your Camera" with Mollie Isaacs

For more information and additional events, visit www.stonybrookcc.com.

BVT Admissions to hold open house, tours on Nov. 12

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT) will hold an Admissions Open House for prospective students and their families on Thurs., Nov. 12, from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. No registration is needed.

The evening is an opportunity to tour the state-of-the-art facility located at 65 Pleasant Street in Upton and see for yourself how BVT is transforming education and the lives of its students. Meet staff members who will be on hand as a resource to answer questions about academics, student support services, student activities, and the admissions process.

The schedule of events will include mini-sessions featuring the Special Education program and the support available to students at BVT and during the application process. Also, learn more about the Spanish Immersion program and how to enroll.

Virtual Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group to meet Dec. 8

Hearts, Hugs Hope, a virtual Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group sponsored by Cornerstone at Milford, will meet on Dec. 8 at 6 p.m. This month's group for caregivers meets on Zoom. Dealing with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia isn't easy, so it is 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.

Contact Director of Compass Programming Jenn Hozempa at jhozempa@cornerstonemilford.com for more information and for the Zoom link. This group meets on the second Tuesday of each month and is sponsored by Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living and Memory Support Community, 11 Birch Street, Milford.

Pet of the Month: Thirteen





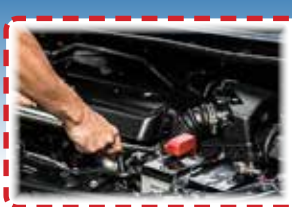
Do you enjoy the sound of a wind chime blowing in the breeze or waking up to birds singing outside your window in the spring? Does the song of the crickets in the evening lighten your heart? Then we would like to introduce you to Thirteen.

Thirteen is a handsome white and orange cat who has the most adorable vocalizations. The sounds are so sweet and varied that you might be able to learn his language and communicate with him.

Thirteen has been a little shy around other cats. Recently he has started following around another male cat, sitting near him and calling out to him. Thirteen also enjoys shadowing the volunteers. He wants to be noticed and have a conversation. We don't think he is interested in being picked up, but petting and brushing are much appreciated.

Can you turn Thirteen from just a number into the luckiest boy in the world?

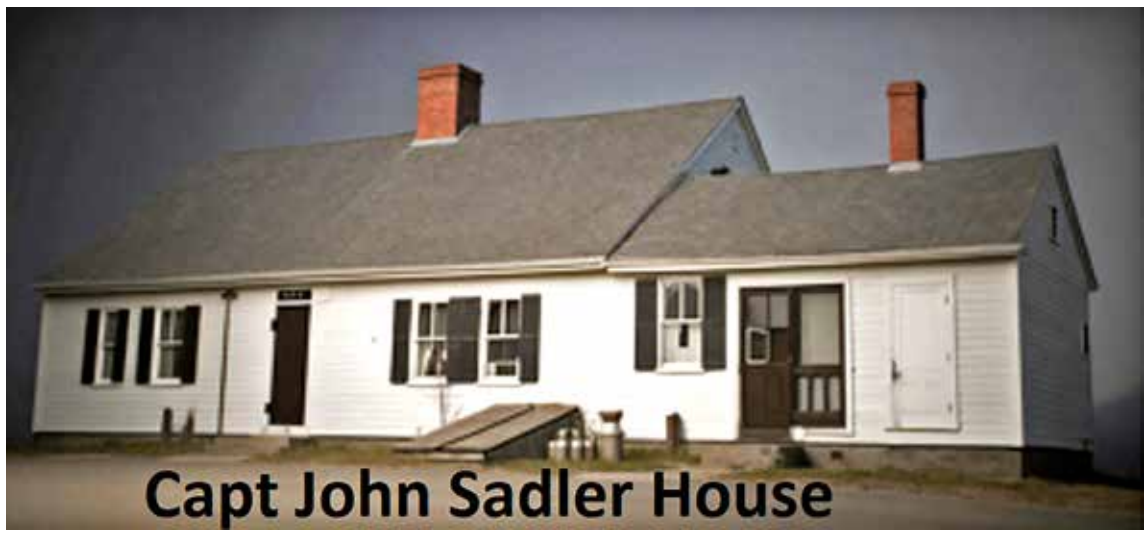
For information on meeting Thirteen or the other cats at the Milford Humane Society, please visit https://www.milfordhumane.org/

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What stories could Upton's oldest homes tell?



By Upton Historical Society

The Upton Historical Society invites the community to explore Upton's rich history at a free public program on Upton Witness Houses on Saturday, Dec. 5, at 2 p.m. at the Upton Community Center.

Witness Houses are homes that stood during the American Revolution and remain standing today. The program will explore the history of these remarkable properties and their place in Upton's past. Attendees will also have an opportunity to hear from current homeowners about what it is like to live in a home that has witnessed centuries of change.



The program has received special recognition. The Upton Historical Society has been chosen by the Blackstone River Valley National Heritage Corridor to receive this year's John H. Chafee Leadership Award for its work on Upton Witness Houses. The Society is honored and grateful for this recognition, which celebrates its efforts to preserve and share the stories of Upton's historic homes.

The program offers a unique opportunity to connect Upton's Revolutionary-era history with the people who preserve and care for these historic homes today.

Everyone is welcome/ Join the Upton Historical Society for this free public program and discover the stories, people, and places that make Upton's history special. Bring a friend and enjoy an afternoon exploring our town's fascinating past. We look forward to seeing you!

Halloween in Upton





Scenes from this year's Upton Town Halloween Parade.
Photo credit: Joshua King

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SPORTS

Young BVT Golf Team shows promise

Beavers earned playoff spot, showed strong depth

By Chris Villani

The Blackstone Valley Tech golf team battled through a tough schedule with seven underclassmen on the roster, and did well enough to secure a postseason spot this year while setting the stage for the future.

"Our kids fought hard in every match," said Head Coach Craig Allen. "This was the first year when I had all 12 kids score in at least one match, which was pretty cool."

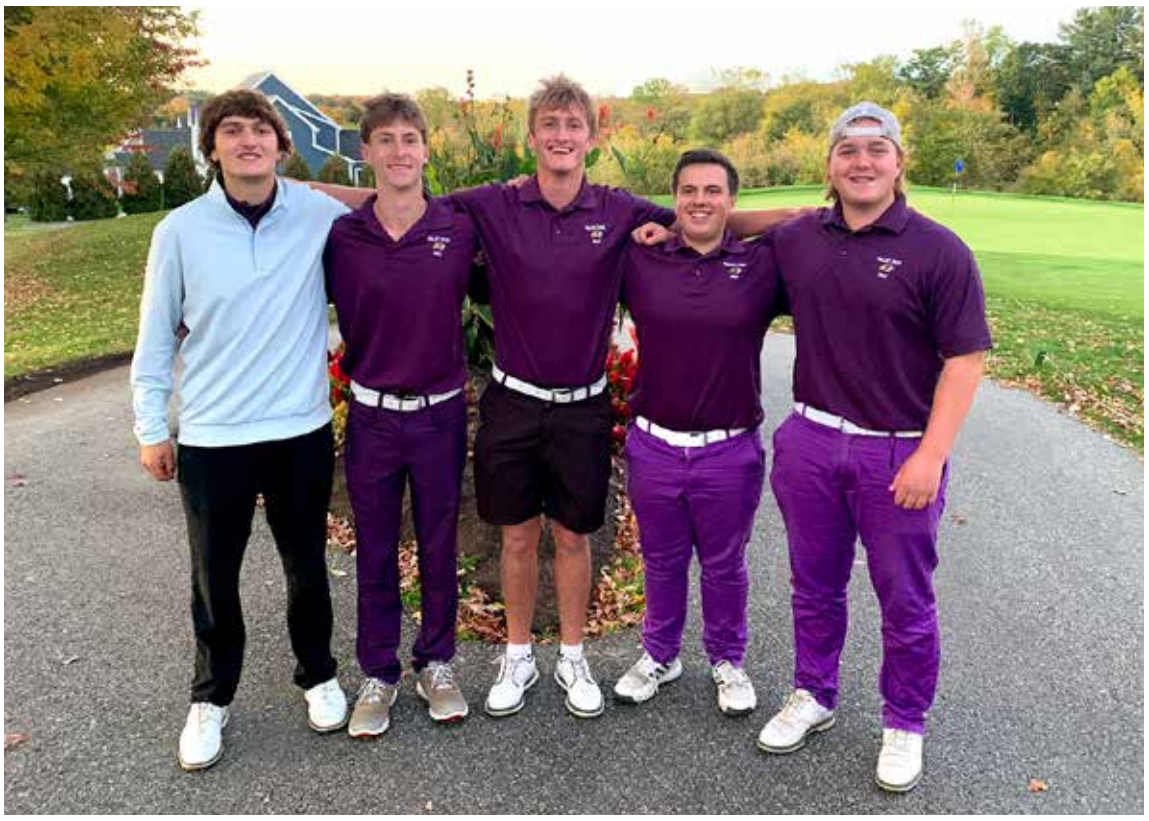
Allen won his 100th career match this fall, and said he was appreciative to this team and all the past squads that helped make that milestone happen.

Senior captain Drew Shanahan was one of the team's most consistent players this fall. He averaged just under 40 per nine-hole match, and earned medalist honors four times. Shanahan scored in 12 of the 13 BVT matches, as did junior Jacob Pitts. Pitts also took home medalist honors twice.

"He took a huge step up this year," Allen said. "I was very pleased with his game, and I am looking forward to him being a leader next year."

In addition to Pitts, Allen said he is excited to see the development of his sophomores and freshmen. Sophomore Ben Albert showed promise this season, Allen said. "He earned a spot on the team during tryouts, and he kept improving as the season went on."

Fellow sophomore Thomas Kavanaugh played in four matches before a season-ending injury, and should be a lift to the team moving forward. The Beavers also welcomed freshmen Johnathan Huntly and Max Seanson, a pair of southpaw golfers from Hopedale.



The senior class of the BVT golf team: (L to R) Tyler Nulty, (C) Drew Shanahan, Colin DeCaire, (C) Nathaniel Nelson, (C) Chase O'Connell. *Photo source: Craig Allen*

"I am hoping they can go out and play and bond together and create a formidable tandem through the next three seasons," Allen said.

The younger players benefited from the example set by Valley Tech's five seniors. Tyler Nulty peaked at the end of the season.

"He was one of the guys who the kids were saying needed to play in the tournaments," Allen said. "He turned his game on in the second half of the season, and he was playing lights out."

Seniors Colin DeCaire, Nathaniel Nelson, and Chase O'Connell also showed strong leadership this year, Allen said. Nelson and O'Connell were team captains.

"Chase is one of the great ones," Allen said. "Other coaches would come up to me and say 'our kids love playing with him.' That's a nice compliment to get."

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SPORTS

Nipmuc Boys Soccer finds its groove

Coyotes bounce back from slow start for playoff berth

By Chris Villani

There was a brief stint at the start of the season when Nipmuc head boys soccer coach Bryan Devenney wasn't sure what the year would hold for his team. The Coyotes dropped the first two matches of the season after graduating more than 10 seniors from last year's squad.

But the team came together, rattled off three straight wins to start October, and earned a spot in the state tournament.

"I think I underestimated what losing that many seniors does to a team, when you take so many personalities out of a team and you're developing younger guys," Devenney said. "It probably took us the month of September to figure out our identity."

Since the start of October, Devenney said it's been fun to see his group come together and show some of its personality.

"It's always good when you have some characters on a team who make everybody laugh, have a good time, and don't take themselves too seriously," he said.

But that doesn't mean Nipmuc isn't focusing on winning.

Senior midfielder Zach Duplessis is one of the team's captains and one of its hardest workers. "He has been throwing himself around the entire season," Devenney said.

Nipmuc's other captain, Adam Dubowik, is a steady and consistent player who Devenney said had earned the respect of the rest of the team.



Ryan McShane is a top scorer for the Coyotes despite being just a sophomore. *Courtesy photo*



Zach Duplessis (#4) is a captain and among the team's hardest workers. *Courtesy photo*

The Coyotes' office has been boosted this fall by sophomore Ryan McShane. "He has been scoring some beautiful goals," Devenney said. "The team really clicks around him and looks to see what level he is playing at, and then they try to join him at that level. He is really a special player to watch."

Vincent Geremia, another senior, is described by his coach as one of the "personalities" on the team. But he also came through with big goals this fall, including a tally that helped Nipmuc pull away from Medway for a late regular season victory.

Nipmuc kicked off November bound for the state tournament, a significant achievement given the uncertainty that hovered over the Coyotes just two short months ago.

"It's huge, that's always a goal at the start of the season," Devenney said. "During those initial games, there was a time when we were concerned about whether or not we'd win any games. To see where they are now has been a great achievement for the boys."

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