

Ashland

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The Voice of Your Community

Neighbor Brigade Will Deliver Farmers Market Food to You

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Are you age 60 and up and staying close to home during COVID-19? Finding it difficult to obtain fresh, healthy food? The local chapter of Neighbor Brigade (<https://bit.ly/2YtfeZ8>) and Ashland Farmers Market (AFM) are partnering to deliver AFM food each Saturday straight to your door.

To have foods delivered, you must pre-order and pre-pay the vendor directly. An Ashland Neighbor Brigade volunteer will pick up your purchase at AFM and bring it to your home.

Here are some answers to questions about this new program.

How do I find out which vendors are coming each week?

Make sure you receive the weekly AFM e-blast each Tuesday. Email info@AshlandFarmersMarket.org and provide your email to get on the email list.



This season's Ashland Farmers Market, because of COVID-19, is not for lingering and socializing but for accessing essential, healthy local food. (Photo/courtesy AFM)

We Stand Against Racism



Andrea and Chuck Green were among the many residents who committed to make Ashland a safe and welcoming community for all. (Photo/supplied)

MARKET

continued on page 3

RACISM

continued on page 2

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RACISM*continued from page 1*

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Ashland held a virtual vigil to signify that it is a community committed to standing up as allies and advocates for fellow residents and will continue the work to make Ashland a safe and welcoming community for all. From 8 to 8:15 p.m. on June 13 residents throughout town gathered in small groups or stepped out of their homes displaying illumination and signs. Co-sponsors included Ashland Indians Inc., Ashland Democratic and Republican committee, and the Ashland Police Department.

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Ashland Graduating Seniors Awarded Scholarships

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

The list below contains Ashland High School scholarships that are typically awarded at Class Day/Graduation:

- Ashland Business Association: Daniel Ramones, Lucy Watt
- Ashland Youth Basketball: Jack Macken, Ashwin Sandilya, Kayla Madden, Erin Flynn
- Ashland Youth Baseball: Elizabeth Dennis, Jack Reap
- Ashland Fire Department: Brandon Grover, Halle Silver, Kayla Madden, Ryan Dwinells
- Ashland Youth Soccer: Charles Almeida, Alyssa Byers, Lucy Watt
- Driscoll Memorial Fund: Lucy Watt, Joseph Harrington
- Greater Ashland Lions Club: Joseph Harrington

In addition to these scholarships, Lucy Watt was awarded a \$2,500 scholarship from the Massachusetts Bankers Association (MBA) Scholarship Foundation. In addition to submitting GPA, SAT, and ACT scores and extra-curricular activities, the entrants were also required to write an essay discussing their recommendations for banks to attract and retain young customers. The foundation received more than 45 applications. Watt was one of five students in Massachusetts to

win the award.

At a special May 18 online meeting, the Framingham Rotary Club, serving Framingham, Ashland, Hopkinton, and Holliston, awarded 10-\$3,500 scholarships to local high school seniors to

help defray the cost of their first year of higher education. Two Ashland high school students received these scholarships: Kayla Marie Madden and Lorna Kamil Ishak Saied.

Letter from Superintendent James Adams

Dear Members of the Ashland Public Schools Faculty, Staff and Community:

Dr. Paul Vieira, Ashland's Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment has been named the next Superintendent of the Douglas Public Schools effective July 1, 2020. On behalf of the entire Ashland Public School system I would like to thank Dr. Vieira for the four years he has dedicated to the Ashland Public Schools and the numerous curriculum instruction, and assessment initiatives he has led for us. His work has put our district in a much better place than we were four years ago. We wish him well.

With Dr. Vieira's sudden departure and with numerous initiatives on the docket, I feel it is important that we immediately fill this position with someone who has worked closely with Dr. Vieira and is intimately familiar with Ashland, our culture and the path we are on. District-wide initiatives include implementing a K-5 literacy program, preparing for the opening of schools in the Fall of 2020 with the numerous challenges being created by COVID-19, unifying the curriculum and instruction at the David Mindess School, as well as supporting the building of a new Mindess.

While change is difficult and this year has seen more than I care to remember, I believe change also creates opportunity. The timing of Dr. Vieira's departure dictates we move quickly, and with the full support of the Ashland Leadership team, I believe my recommendation to the School Committee is the right move for our school system and the Ashland community.



the most qualified candidate for the position. Dr. Caira is as dedicated to the students and community of Ashland as anyone in the district and his passion and commitment to Ashland will be of great benefit to our students and system.

I will also be taking the opportunity to promote Ms. Claudia Bennett to be the next principal of the David Mindess School. Ms. Bennett has been and continues to be a dedicated and passionate champion for the Mindess students, faculty, and staff. She has not only earned the right to take the reigns at Mindess, she deserves to do so. I could not be more excited for her and I look forward to working more closely with her.

With this stated, I will be recommending to the School Committee that Dr. Michael Caira be appointed as the next Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment on Friday, June 12, 2020. Dr. Caira has shown a tremendous aptitude for curriculum, instruction, and assessment and I feel he is

Be well,
Jim

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MARKET*continued from page 1***How do I pre-order?**

The Tuesday e-blast will tell you how to reach vendors, some by phone, some by email, and some online. Be sure you tell the vendor it is for AFM and the date of the market.

Note that some vendors do not take pre-orders and some do not take payment in advance. You will see the 'order by' deadline, too. If you cannot pay beforehand, the volunteers cannot pay for you, so food from those vendors cannot be delivered.

How do I get a Neighbor Brigade volunteer to deliver my food?

After you order, promptly let AFM volunteer Jeanne Walker know, jnewalker@verizon.net or 508-881-3128, that you are asking for a Neighbor Brigade volunteer to bring your purchases to your home. Give Jeanne your name, address and phone number, the vendor(s) you bought items from, and location where you would like the packages delivered, such as your front door.

Contact Jeanne no later than Thursday at 7:00 p.m. for the Saturday market. A Neighbor Brigade volunteer will call you when they are approaching your home with your order.

What if I am ordering from Upswing Farm?

Upswing Farm's ordering window starts after our cutoff requesting Neighborhood Brigade delivery. So, please let Jeanne know your intention to order from Upswing before Thursday at 7 p.m., and then order and pay between Thursday at 7 p.m. and Friday at 7 p.m.

The all-volunteer Ashland Neighbor Brigade helps individuals in a temporary crisis by providing meals delivered, rides to medical appointments, grocery shopping, trips to pharmacy, light housework, dog walking and help with transportation for children's activities. To volunteer, contact AshlandMA@neighborbrigade.org

AFM is held each Saturday through October 10 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 125 Front Street, on the grass across from the Ashland Public Library. For more information, visit www.AshlandFarmersMarket.org

Ashland Business Scene

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

The Ashland Business Association (ABA) has awarded two \$2020 scholarships to graduating seniors who reside in Ashland: Danny Ramones and Lucy Watt. Ramones plans to study Actuarial Sciences at Bentley University; Watt will study biology at UMass Amherst.

Ramones' volunteer activity included participating in the Ashland High School Make a Wish Club, leading sports teams, and being a photographer for the Front Steps Project. He has worked as a cashier at the Dairy Queen in Ashland, a groundskeeper at the Sudbury River Tennis Club, and a tennis coach at Greenwood Tennis and Swim Club in Sudbury. In his junior and senior years, Ramones was awarded the coaches' award for indoor track and, in his junior year, the TVL All-Star for tennis.

Watt played soccer in high school and was team captain in her senior year. She volunteered at the Ashland Preschool Summer School Program and for youth soccer clinics, worked at Playtown Express, a children's entertainment center; as an Ashland soccer referee; and has been a babysitter for many families in her neighborhood. She has been a member of the National Honor Society since junior year.

Applicants were asked to propose ideas for improving the community, describe their community involvement, work experience and accolades and honors.

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Danny Ramones (Photo/supplied)



Lucy Watt (Photo/supplied)

Culturefest Goes Online, Restaurants Offer Outdoor Seating

The Corner Spot may not look the same this summer, but that doesn't mean the community can't still celebrate its diverse culture through art, music and dance. The Economic Development Office will bring the third annual Culturefest to the community virtually this year with the help of the WACA-TV team, a grant from the Ashland Cultural Council and some wonderful performers. Be sure to tune in Friday, July 24, 6 to 8 p.m. Culturefest will be broadcast live on WACA-TV and the town's social media sites.

The Ashland Select Board voted in June to extend the liquor licenses in town to allow for outdoor seating, allowed in Phase 2 of the Governor's order (www.mass.gov/info-details/reopening-massachusetts). For a list of restaurants that are now open for outdoor dining, visit www.ashlandmass.com/767/Ashland-Restaurant-Directory.

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It Takes a Community: Ashland Celebrates 2020 Graduates

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Graduation plans are up in the air, according to Ashland High School (AHS) officials, who are aiming to hold a ceremony on August 2.

"So much depends on where the state is with opening back up," Kelley St. Coeur, AHS principal, said. "Based on the guidance from the Department of Education, we hope to hold something outside and in person. We will post plans on the AHS website once we have them, hopefully by July 19."

Thirty-two students, out of 216, who could not wait until August 2 because they are entering the military, going out of state, or for other reasons received their diplomas on June 13 in the AHS gym.

The community has come together to do some special things for graduating seniors this year.

The class of 2020, led by the Ashland Police Department, paraded through town on June 11.



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Jo-Ann Cavanagh, pictured with Ryan Dwinells' sign, helped put up the signs. Cavanagh's son Dominic will graduate in August.

Seniors in cars followed a route that took them through the center of town and by each Ashland public school, where teachers and

residents cheered them on. The parade started and ended at the high school.

Earlier in May, Ashland residents Beth Murphy and Lisa Dwinells erected throughout the downtown personalized lawn signs, with each student's first name and photo. Beth's son, Liam Murphy, graduated on June 3 and Lisa's son, Ryan Dwinells, is graduating, COVID-19 guidelines permitting, in August.

Beth and Lisa credited a number of volunteers for the project: "Marina Dintino was the superstar volunteer who spent many



Liam Murphy, who graduated June 3, stands by his sign.



all-nighters organizing the photos. Melinda Moses designed the sign and was in charge of coordinating with the printer. Jeff Troutman was the photo consultant and volunteered to take pictures of anyone who needed one. Ruchi Shandilya led the fund-raising effort by setting up the GoFundMe page. Yasmin Mi-

anda, class of 2020, contacted all of her classmates and kept on them until they responded. She also collected photos as necessary. The Select Board was gracious enough to grant us permission to post on town property. Yolanda Greaves, from the board, met us downtown the day we put up the signs. Elyse Shuster and Betsy Emberley pitched in throughout the process as well."

The coordinators agreed that the most exciting part was watching the support from the community as the donations started rolling in.

Beth said, "This is such a difficult time for everyone. Ashland has pulled together for these kids so many times. They supported our athletes this past fall when EEE prevented evening practices and games. Then they supported them when senior week/graduation plans fall apart. As parents, we are lucky to have such a welcoming and supportive community."

Parade Photos/AHS teachers Mr. Wurster and Mr. Moshkovitz; Cliff Wilson; Lynnel Bienkowski

Lawn Sign Photos/courtesy Beth Murphy and Lisa Dwinells

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Swinging from the (church) rafters

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Entering the Sacred Heart Church in Natick, a visitor with vision sees unconventional potential.

Its pews have long since been removed, leaving behind an empty and cavernous hall where sermon-seeking devotees once congregated.

Yet a sunny day still fills the place with ample light, filtered and colored here and there through a kaleidoscopic collection of striking stained-glass windows.

Now, the 150-year-old church appears poised to be getting a new and unorthodox lease on life. Beneath its high, vaulted-style ceiling, vaults of the kinetic kind are envisioned.

Far below those arches, circus acrobatics are a coming attraction, performers and pupils practicing among the pillars.

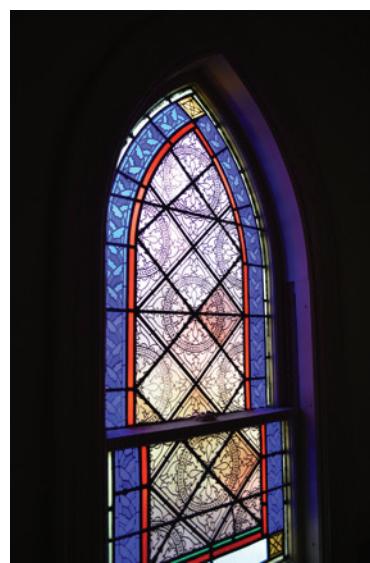
Eastern Acrobatics and Circus is a school and performance center that specializes in those disciplines. The company is based in Ashland, and is in the process

of purchasing the Sacred Heart Church to expand its niche curriculum.

Sacred Heart's sanctuary, the place where priests once stood to ply their trade, floods with a natural light that spills down into the nave. Overlooking that, a balcony looms over the church's front entrance, hosting a colossal pipe organ. The instrument was powered by an air compressor hidden far below, and once upon a time must have echoed throughout the building.

The church's historical designation has made finding a buyer difficult. To retain tax advantages afforded to structures of historical significance, limits are placed on the degree and kind of renovations that may be undertaken. Interest in purchasing and converting the church into residences has waned when prospective buyers learned of such limitations.

Yet the grand hall of the church, its ornate nave, seemed to suit the circus and acrobatic company perfectly. It's majestic and elaborate furnishings are a fitting



setting to ply and promote the performance of their art form.

Randy Johnson is a senior partner at Natick's Resolution Architects, and held part ownership of the church before its sale.

"They are obviously interested in the volume of the building," said Johnson, referring to its spacious hall, its high and beautiful ceilings. "I think it's a great thing for the community."



Jacob Skeffington, founder of Eastern Acrobatics and an instructor there, offered that there are no concrete details yet on plans for renovations, but confirmed the unique features and character of the building as its main charms and selling points.

"As artists, all of these things make it an ideal location to bring people together to learn, create, share with the community and enjoy the craft we love together."

Greater Ashland Lions Club

Already Summer? Where has the time gone? We've been distancing from each other it will be wonderful to get back together soon. I hope you're all starting to resume some normalcy back into your lives

Our Lions Year ended with the induction of our new club officers for the year 2020-2021 on June 23, at Stone Park at the Gazebo with District 33-k Past District Governor Debbie Hayes from the Millis Lions Club officiating the ceremony. The Officers are: Pres. Lion Mary Pimentel, 1 VP Lion Eduardo Murras, 2nd VP. Lion Margaret Kelliher-Gibson, 3rd VP Lion Rosalie Porter, Secretary: Lion Nicole Dwyer, Treasurer: Lion Cheryl Wyrzykowski, Tail Twister: Lion Jan Shore, Lion Tamer: Lion Joshua Eby, LCI Chairperson: Lion Charlotte Peterson, Board of Di-

rectors: Lion Antonino D'Eramo, Lion Jeanette Moran, Lion Josephine Pimentel, Lion Deborah Connaughton and Lion Alexis Christopher, Past Pres. Eleanor Torelli.

Also recognized at this time Lion Kamatachi Vijayakumar, who was installed virtually on June 9, for the 33-k District (this was the first to be done like so many other functions that are being held)

Congratulations! May this be the Best Year for everyone.

Congratulations to the 2020 Graduating Class from Ashland High School and Joseph P. Keefe School and Congratulations to Alejandra Diaz and Joseph Harrington as this year's recipients of the Greater Ashland Lions scholarships.

The Greater Ashland Lions are looking forward to the Rub-

ber Duck Slide (as are the ducks) to take place in August, White Cane Day will be held in September and a Porchetta in early October.

We hope to see you all soon (and please continue to wear masks).

THANK YOU to all our friends, family and supporters during these most difficult times, continue to Stay Safe and Healthy and remember those in need.

We continue to collect eyeglasses, hearing aids, tabs from soda, beer, pet food cans and labels for education for more information, contact Lion Marge 508. 653.6267.

Happy Fourth of July! "We Serve"

Submitted: Lion Ellie Torelli, Past President



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Putting a Face to the Impact of COVID-19 in Ashland

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

The Ashland Emergency Fund (AEF) reported in June that it has provided nearly \$62,000 in assistance to Ashland residents since the beginning of the calendar year and that most financial awards have been since mid-March when COVID-19 began to make an impact.

An client, grateful for AEF support, recently talked about the assistance they received.

Late last year, Pat (not the client's real name) moved to Ashland after accepting a job in the area. After experiencing some life-setbacks, Pat was looking forward to a fresh start and a good-paying job. However, as COVID-19 began to impact Metrowest and the economy shut down, the client found the job they had moved here for go away. As Pat began to get low on funds, a good friend helped out until the friend became unemployed. It was then that Pat learned about the Ashland Food Pantry.

"I was always the one helping with food and clothing drives, so it was humbling for me to ask for assistance," the client said. "I was ashamed, embarrassed, that I needed help. Cara Tirrell [assistant director of Human Services



Cara Tirrell helps residents who need emergency assistance. All inquiries and assistance are confidential. (Photo/supplied)

for the town] made me instantly feel comfortable, that I wasn't any different than anybody else. Cara took the shame away. This was so important to me."

"Cara handed me a packet of information in case I needed anything else. I thought, 'I don't want to take from others, I'm able to work.' After that meeting, I spoke to Cara several times on the phone. I needed help with rent. Cara walked me through the process; she never got frustrated with me. I feel safe in this town."

"I'm proud to be part of a community that cares. In spite of the shutdown due to COVID-19, I feel I am part of a community. I feel lucky to live here."

AEF reports that nearly two-thirds of the support it has provided to date has been related to food assistance, with an additional 25 percent for housing, utilities, and other assistance caused directly by the pandemic. The remaining 15 percent or so is support that is not related to the pandemic.

"Due to the overwhelming support and generosity of the people, businesses, and organizations in this community, AEF is well-positioned to continue our support," AEF Board Chair Ro-

land Houle said. "[However] we anticipate there will be a spike in need in the late summer or early fall as people have depleted their savings and other means of assistance run dry. We will be prepared for this."

"Our all-volunteer AEF staff uses 100 percent of all donations to support clients. We understand some people are reluctant to ask for assistance, but this is why we are here and why our donors donate. Except in rare cases, personal information is never known to anyone aside from the one qualified social worker that helps with the paperwork, and information is never made public. Confidentiality has been an important part of our process for the over 30 years."

For more information, visit www.ashlandemergencyfund.org, contact Tirrell by calling 508-881-0140 x3 or emailing ctirrell@ashlandmass.com. To make a tax-deductible donation, send a check to The Ashland Emergency Fund, P.O. Box 112, Ashland, MA 01721, or donate by credit card on the website.

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Would've, Could've, Should've... But Did You?

And like that... half of 2020 is gone.

What's new? Miss anything?

Yes, that's sarcasm.

Lots happening with honest discussions, realizations and expressions for change, all good things for a society of freedom and opportunity. Being a financial planning column, I wanted to draw a few parallels where action, not just talk, is needed to have meaningful, long-term solutions.

The past few years I've encountered prospective clients seeking help; however, their focus wasn't on holistic planning as it was voicing frustration over waiting. Sitting in large sums of cash waiting for a good time to invest or worse, "when this market crashes".

Why do I say worse?

If equity markets are down 20% or more, there is a reason and it becomes the new shiny object leading to continued analysis-paralysis. Sure enough, in March and April I circled back, none working with a financial planner and responses varied from "too much going on right now", "cash is king", and my favorite, "are you bleeping crazy?"

Few predicted a V-shaped recovery of the US stock market. To be clear, adversity, uncertainties, risks and opportunities continue. The stock and bond markets are voting machines into the future. Instead of talking about how that will turn out, focus actions for the constants of change and time.

Time In, Not Timing - Building income and wealth passively

in markets or actively through a business, time invested is necessary. The further one moves away from entry points or start dates, the less important they become. Focus shifts to plans for what's next and adapting personal and systematic changes.

Bucket Strategy - To increase comfort with volatility and discount bad timing, consider allocating money to timeframes of need and align investment risk accordingly. In simplest form, there are 3 buckets: One is 12-36 months, Two is 3-5 years and Three is 5+ years. It is customizable, one example being Bucket One for income gap not overall expenses for 36 months in cash, as unrealistic and an opportunity cost for most. This strategy requires confidence in planning in-

puts, process and proactive action to Buckets One & Two as things change.

Time Waits For No One - In their 20's, The Stones covered Time Is On My Side, 10 years later Jagger/Richards wrote more telling Time Waits For No One. One a hit, the other a dark reality few like to hear. Procrastination, while easy, makes things harder to solve as it limits both options and opportunities as time marches forward.

Blink and 2021 will be here. Another year older, goals another year shorter.

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 PlanDynamic, LLC,



Glenn Brown

www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a Certified Financial Planner™, Chartered Retirement Planning Counselor and fee-only fiduciary helping clients take control of planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

Kitchen Layout Trends for Today

By JOHN SZOLOMAYER,
RE/MAX EXECUTIVE REALTY

You're probably familiar with the traditional "triangle" layout. You want the things you use in your kitchen to be an easy reach. The sink, the stove and the refrigerator have long made up this triad of important kitchen locals. But you can pursue other options. Consider some of the following popular layout trends.

Reduce Traffic

Because most people tend to congregate in the kitchen, it's important to create a space that reduces rather than exacerbates traffic. If the kitchen is the main entry point for the home, ensure that it has a dedicated space, like a mudroom or even a corner, where your family can remove shoes and hang up coats, so things don't become cluttered.

Kitchen Islands

The kitchen island remains a popular trend for many homes, especially those with an open concept. If you have space for one, an island can increase the efficiency of your kitchen — but only if used correctly. Ample space is needed between the island and the countertops to allow for a person to use both spaces comfortably.

Sink Placement

Where you place your sink is a huge consideration for your kitchen design. Whether it's on the island or the center of your counter, you will spend a lot of time at the sink. Ensure that it is easy to access from your cooking

triangle. If it's not on an island, the most common location for a sink is in front of a window to enjoy a pleasant backyard view.

Keep Storage in Mind

Your kitchen, more than anything, needs to be functional. This

can't be done without ample storage. When designing your kitchen for the perfect layout, consider small appliance storage, a pantry and access to dishes, cutlery and pots and pans. How you organize storage space is as important as

how much of it you have.

Information provided by John Szolomayer from RE/MAX Executive Realty. Each office is independently owned and operated. John can be reached for more information at (508) 259-4788 or JohnSzolomayer.com.

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Volunteers Raise Money for Ashland Emergency Fund

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Volunteers for the Ashland Emergency Fund (AEF) are running an Essential Workers Lawn Sign Project to thank all essential workers and raise money for AEF in this extended time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Even as businesses are starting to open back up, the novel Coronavirus still remains a risk to the many people running essential services and businesses. At the same time, there is record unemployment in the nation and our state and many more residents than usual who are in need of food and supplies. Because of this, Ashland resident Cindy Hoyle was inspired to start the sign project to raise money for AEF.

Hoyle said, "I feel fortunate to be one of the people who can work from home and whose job for the time being is secure, but it meant I would be better able to purchase a sign than make one.

That's when I thought about selling signs and giving all the profits to the Ashland Emergency Fund to support those in town who find themselves without a job and in need right now."

Hoyle reached out to Nadine Nesbitt, an AEF board member, who connected her to volunteers Lisa Price, Rebecca DeBenedictis and Laura Giangiari. Together they designed and printed the sign.

Each sign costs \$10. To place an order, visit the AEF sign project page, www.ashlandemergencyfund.org/sign-project.

A volunteer, wearing a mask and gloves, as recommended by safety protocols, will deliver a sign to your house and put it on your lawn near your mailbox. If you have questions, contact Hoyle at 508-250-7789, preferably after 5 p.m.

Since AEF does not reimburse volunteers for expenses, Hoyle has purchased the signs and will

take payment through Venmo or cash you leave for her at your door. She will then donate all profits to AEF. The group sold over 30 signs in the first 10 days.

Supporting the Ashland Food Pantry

The Ashland Food Pantry, which receives funding from AEF, is now accepting donations of non-perishable items in a marked bin in front of the upper level of the Ashland Community Center, 162 W. Union St. (Rt. 135). For assistance, call 508-532-7946 x42.

The food pantry has created a public Amazon list, like a wedding registry. The food pantry and AEF will add items to the list and the public will be able to view it and order those items to be sent directly to the Ashland Food Pantry. To order, visit <https://amzn.to/3dRPbec>.



Congrats Scholarship Recipients

The Ashland Lions Club awarded four \$2000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors this year. Congrats to the two Ashland graduates and the two Keefe Tech graduates who received the awards this year!

Whodunnit? Murder In Sin City

The Ashland Lions Club is teaming up with Lions Clubs in Sherborn and Bellingham mystery dinner. The event will be Friday, September 25th, 2020, 6pm-10:30pm. Participants will be assigned a role to play in solving

a murder mystery! The event will be held at the VFW, 311 Pleasant St, Ashland. Tickets are available for \$35 on Eventbrite.com under "Murder in Sin City", or call Lion Eileen at 508-861-3226. Ticket price includes admission and an appetizer buffet. There will also be a cash

bar, raffles and prizes. Currently only 150 tickets will be sold (this number subject to reduction as guidelines change for social distancing). All proceeds will benefit local hosting Lions Club charities.

Stay up-to-date on Lions happenings

To see the latest status of our events, please visit our Ashland Lions Facebook page. Click the



Like button and you will be automatically notified of changes or cancellations.

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Ashland High graduating seniors bring a \$1,395 check on June 17 to Cara Tirrell for the Ashland Emergency Fund. After paying for the senior class lawn signs, the students donated the remaining funds from their GoFundMe campaign. Pictured (l to r): Liam Murphy, Rachel Dintino, Dominic Cavanagh, Ryan Dwinnells and Cara Tirrell. (Photo/supplied)

Circle of Love: Let Your Creativity Run Wild

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

The town of Ashland is inviting residents and businesses owners to participate in a community art project called the 01721 Circle of Love. The town will share the artwork on social media throughout the coming months and eventually use it in public spaces, like town hall, the community center, and school buildings. The project is intended to run through the end of the year.

Project coordinator Ashley Place explained the project in a press release, "Help us create a circle of love and kindness in Ashland through the 01721 Circle of Love community art initiative! An exciting aspect of this is that participants do not need to live in Ashland, they could be friends, relatives, and family members from neighboring towns, countries, or even continents. The more love we get from everywhere the larger our circle of love."

Place is providing templates participants can print out to use for artwork, inspirational words, honoring a graduating senior, or

displaying something that is culturally significant. Once the circle is completed, the participant can mail it to the Ashland Town Hall, Economic Development Office, 101 Main St., Ashland 01721, or drop it off at The Corner Spot shed, 6 Cherry St.

For more information, visit the project Facebook page, www.facebook.com/01721circleoflove, or contact Place by calling 508-532-7935 or emailing aplace@ashlandmass.com.



Treating Cystic Acne

LISA MASSIMIANO, LICENSED ESTHETICIAN AND CERTIFIED ACNE SPECIALIST OWNER OF SKIN SMART SALON

Cystic acne is the most visible of all acne types. It appears as large red pustules on the skin and can be painful to the touch. This type of acne may also cause scarring.

What causes cystic acne.

All acne lesions start out as "microcomedones," a tiny seed of sebum and dead skin cells deep inside the pores. As the lesion grows, it develops in one of two ways; it can turn into a non-inflamed lesion (a closed whitehead or open blackhead) or develop into an inflamed pustule or cyst. Cystic acne occurs when a person not only has an inherited tendency for acne, but also

has the inherited tendency for inflammation. The DNA of an individual's skin determines which type of acne will develop.

Treating cystic acne.

Although, cystic acne is the most visible type of acne, the good news is that cystic (inflamed) acne can be easier to clear than non-inflamed acne. It is closer to the surface than non-inflamed acne and responds more quickly to the anti-inflammatory products used to get it under control. With my acne clients, I use a combination of antibacterial and anti-inflammatory topical products to bring down the existing inflammation and keep it from reoccurring.

In addition to the right topical products, there are supplements you can take to help reduce in-

flammation in the skin such as: zinc, omega-3 fish oil and pro-biotics.

Icing your skin is also helpful with cystic acne. I tell my clients to fill a Dixie cup with water, freeze it and after cleansing, roll it over their face for a minute or two. The ice reduces inflammation and redness, and is soothing on inflamed skin.

It is important to get on the right treatment regimen to clear cystic acne. The quicker you bring the inflammation down, the less chance there is of permanent scarring.

Questions about acne? Call me at (508) 881-1180 or email me at skinsmartsalon@aol.com. Visit skinsmartsalon.com for information about my acne program and other services.

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A Thank You Tour – First Responders and Their Best Friends

Ashland MA: Recently Pamela Bathen and Steven Greenberg of Oak Realty, along with Ed Eglitis, owner of the Bagel Table, visited our local first responders to thank them for their ongoing excellence in service for the town of Ashland. We stopped by the police department during morning roll call, visited both the Main Street and Cedar Street fire stations, and concluded with a trip to the DPW. In addition

to bagels and coffee donated by Ed from The Bagel Table, we also distributed our brand-new T-shirts promoting Staying Apart Together, our virtual six-week online “race.” A note of thanks to the participants, who were especially generous while staying active during quarantine. To date, the event has raised over \$2,500 for the Ashland Emergency Fund during a time when our neighbors need it most.



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Profile: Joe Richardson— Maintaining and Reopening Town Properties

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Joe Richardson, Ashland's Director of Public Facilities, oversees the maintenance of all town buildings, and in May, he was asked to coordinate the reopening of town buildings and properties after the COVID-19 shutdown.

Richardson who started his job here in August 2017 is originally from Worcester but settled in Leicester after returning from time in the Navy.

He enjoys fishing and being outdoors. "If I'm not on the water, I can usually be found out working in the yard," Richardson said. "I have a small hobby farm and take joy in getting my hands dirty. We raise heritage turkeys, laying chickens, meat chickens, and ducks as well as many organic garden beds and fruit trees. I'm also a fan of relaxing by my wood smoker and cooking up some great food."

"My partner Sue and I have built a blended family with four kids ranging from 20 down to 7 years of age. There is never a dull moment."

Ashland Local Town Pages recently interviewed Richardson about his role.

What does your job entail?

I work for both the school department and the town. In my roll I have the privilege of leading a dynamic team that ensures schools and municipal buildings are clean, safe, and function as designed. The team is made up of trades people, custodians, maintenance technicians, grounds people, as well as two supervisors.

COVID-19 has refocused the importance of cleaning in buildings. For many years custodial and maintenance service was looked at simply as a cost in both the private and public sector, and as such, budgets and labor operated at a minimum. As standards and requirements come from state and federal bodies, we see that a big part of that is continued cleaning of spaces. So moving forward, I along with leaders will have to find a way to meet those requirements. I've also been asked by the town manager to coordinate and lead the effort in reopening public buildings and spaces in Ashland. That has proved to be a huge undertaking in that we are writing the playbook in the middle of the game.

What prepared you for this job?

My background in the field started a long time ago when at 13 I started working at a campground in Maine doing grounds and maintenance work. I really enjoyed the work and seeing the immediate results of a job well done. After graduating from Saint Peter-Marian in Worcester, I entered the U.S. Navy where I spent 10 years, first as an engineer and then in law enforcement. After leaving the service, I returned to facilities operations as a Chief Engineer for Marriott Hotels, followed by a director's position in long-term healthcare where I eventually became a regional manager with 34 nursing homes from Pennsylvania to Maine. I then moved on to the public sector as the Director of School Building Maintenance for the City of Fitchburg. Along the

way, I completed a B.S. in Occupational Safety & Health Management and a Tradesperson Associate's degree in HVAC&R.

What are some of your accomplishments?

If you enter a building and don't think, "It's too hot (or too cold) in here," "Why is it so dark" . . . and the doors work, the building systems work, and you don't know we are there in the background making it happen—that is the daily major accomplishment that the men and women in facilities do every day.

We have done many capital projects, from new HVAC systems at DPW headquarters to new portable classrooms at the Warren school. Usually if you see a capital project taking place on a building paid for by the tax payer—that is us.

What are your goals?

My goal in Ashland is to move the town forward in establishing a Unified Facilities Department. Currently, I am split between the schools and town as well as the team under me. On the school side we have custodians and maintenance members, on the town side we have two employees that manage all the maintenance and cleaning of town buildings. I would like to see one department that cares for and maintains all buildings. It's a successful model followed by more and more towns every year. My short-term goal—year to year—is to give the tax payer the greatest return on investment I can through proper maintenance and care of the assets they entrust me with.



Joe Richardson is in charge of maintaining, and now reopening, the town's buildings and properties. (Photo/supplied)

It has been a challenge and a joy to work in Ashland. The community is engaged and passionate, and that is not always so in a town. There are forward-thinking people here that support making

it a better town for themselves and their neighbors. The challenge is always how to make their ideas and dreams a reality . . . the joy is that they will step up to help and have your back to get it done.

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Sports

Energetic Connors To Coach Ashland High Cheerleaders

Editor's note: At Local Town Pages' deadline, neither Gov. Baker nor the Department of Education had yet to announce whether schools would open this fall.

BY KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Ashland High's new cheerleading coach is a purebred Clocker.

Hannah Connors not only is an Ashland native, but she also was a two-time captain in cheerleading and played softball for two seasons before graduating in 2014.

The 23-year-old Connors will begin her coaching career next month when she greets prospective candidates during tryouts at pre-season practice. To say she's eager to get started is an understatement because her enthusiasm is off the charts. That quality definitely impressed Athletic Director Stephen Marks.

"We're excited and fortunate that Hannah will be leading our cheerleading squad," said Marks. "Her enthusiasm, energy, and passion for the sport were evident

throughout the hiring process. As this opportunity presented itself, it was a no-brainer."

Connors' goals for her first year are admirable, blending the need to build, bond and trust.

"I want the girls to learn technique and to keep improving their skills," she said. "We'll also aim to qualify for the regional tournament but to achieve that we'll strive to score the necessary points at the Tri Valley League competition. If we get to the regionals, then we'll do our best to execute our routines. It's realistic to get to regionals because only five girls graduated from last year's squad."

Connors' style should help Ashland's program, which has had its ups and downs. The Clockers dominated for a three-year stretch, starting in 2007. The team won the winter TVL competition in 2007, 2008 and 2009, the fall TVL competition in 2009, the State and New England Championships in the winter of 2009, then proceeded to place third at the National Championship in the winter of 2009.

Earlier this year, the cheerlead-

ing team placed third at the TVL meet and qualified for the regionals in the winter. Unfortunately, because of covid-19, the event was canceled.

"I'll be a cheerleader teacher as well as a cheerleader coach," she emphasized. "I want to build trust and I want the girls to know what the expectations are."

Connors knows a thing or two about cheerleading — she was a four-year varsity competitor who captained the Clockers as a junior and senior. At the University of Maine, she was a cheerleader for two years. "I stopped competing after my junior year to focus on a challenging academic schedule in my final year."

Connors earned her degree in communication sciences and disorders and is now working on a masters in speech pathology at Emerson College. For the last two years she's been a speech and language assistant in Ashland's school system.

Her career as a cheerleader at Ashland was solid but the team's results were mixed. She was chosen a TVL all-star as a senior, and during that year the squad finished in the top three at the TVL meet, capturing third-place honors. But, during her four years, it seemed like the program's progress was slow.

"We were always rebuilding," she recalled. "We lost girls to graduation and scheduling conflicts. We also had three coaches in four years and all three had very different styles. We were constantly adjusting and trying to deal with interruptions in continuity."

The third-place finish at the TVL meet, however, was rewarding. And uplifting.

"That was my best moment at Ashland," Connors said. "To place in the top three was our goal and to achieve that took hard work, commitment and bonding. The competition in the TVL is tough. Finishing third produced tears of joy and lots of celebrating."

Connors' top cheerleading thrill, however, dates back to her freshman year. It was her very first competition — the TVL meet.



"Just being on the mat was exciting and it gave me confidence, but I also was very nervous," she noted. "We didn't place but I remember our team got good ratings on our tumbling skills."

Connors' strengths as a cheerleader were linked to her athleticism. She played third base in softball and was viewed as a consistent fielder who also was steady at the plate.

"Mental toughness and resiliency were important for cheering," she said. "I improved as a tumbler and was flexible with stunting. As I gained experience, my skills improved along with my chanting. As a captain, I tried to lead by example and by being responsive and supportive."

Connors likes what she's seen of this fall's captains — juniors Pam DeSilva and Charlotte Perry. "They'll be great leaders," she said. "They're super committed and also willing to give pep talks."

Marie Burke, who coached the squad for the last three years, has helped Connors with her transition. "She invited me to a team meeting when she announced she was leaving," Connors noted. "She brought momentum back to Ashland cheerleading and the guidebook she wrote is very helpful. It deals with the basics, fund-raising and practice regimens."

Marks lauded Burke's contributions. "I'd like to thank coach Burke for all that she did for the program," he said. "She laid a strong foundation for coach Connors to build upon."

When the pre-season schedule gets underway, Connors will be

stressing some key points. "The girls will hear about trusting one another and possessing positive attitudes," Connors emphasized. "I'll also focus on being resilient and sharpening our routines, especially tumbling and stunting."

Connors, who started cheering at age eight in Pop Warner football, plans on having a roster of 20. To make the cut, there'll be some key attributes she'll require. "Commitment to the sport and the team will be a key," she offered. "Athleticism and leadership are important along with being energetic, positive and mentally tough. Accepting constructive criticism will also be an asset."

Connors is acutely aware that practices and competitions will undergo changes because of the coronavirus — like social distancing. "Cheerleading is a contact sport, so there'll be alterations, but cheering at football games shouldn't be a problem because there's plenty of space," she said.

Labeling cheerleading "a sport," Connors knows that's a topic that's discussed often.

"People say what they think," she said, "but the sad part is that the public only sees the squad at football or basketball games. For the most part, they don't see the TVL or regional competitions that require athletic ability, especially in tumbling and stunting. There's pressure to perform and execute at a high level. It's all about being athletic."

Hannah Connors will be a good fit for Ashland High's cheerleading contingent because her enthusiasm and energetic style will be contagious.



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Sports

Baseball in Ashland

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Yes Virginia (and everyone else starved for sports), there will be baseball in Ashland this summer, despite the fact that on May 10, the American Legion program cancelled the 2020 season due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ashland and Natick will be joining the majority of the legions teams from District 6 this summer to form an independent league; the Massachusetts Independent Baseball League (MIBL).

The MIBL will be comprised of a total of 16 teams divided into two 8 team divisions. Each team will play their division rivals twice in addition to two cross over games from the other division. Teams will most likely be finding themselves playing four days a week with the season beginning on July 6 and eight teams will eventually qualify for the district playoffs in August in a double elimination tournament.

"It will basically be the same rules we always abide by but will not be sponsored by American Legion Post 77," Ashland Coach Jake Obid said. "With the American Legion cancelling the season we were given permission to play baseball this summer, we just couldn't use anything associated with the Post."

Currently Obid has been working with Ashland High School baseball coach Matt Messer hoping to use the Clockers uniforms this season. However, if things don't work out, one of the coaches from District 6 has struck up a deal with a store to get uniforms.

With the post not supporting them this summer, Obid is hoping that the team doesn't need to spend any money out of their pockets, but if they have to they need to they will to get the kids back on the field after a lengthy stay away.

Currently Massachusetts is only in early phases of reopening so Obid has his athletes practicing in separate locations with two different



groups. Phase 3 of Gov. Charlie Baker's plan begins in July, which will allow teams to have their full squads on the field at the same time. In the meantime, Obid and his coaches are preparing to get the players some live batting practice.

"The returning players have been working out and ramping up their game to get ready for the season. We have not forced anyone to be there as of yet, but everyone is anxious to get onto the field and play baseball," the Coach said. "With the high school season being cancelled these guys haven't been on a baseball field since last summer. We need to get out there and get them looking at some live pitching."

Obid will have 13 players returning from the Ashland American Legion Post 77 squad last summer that was the State runner-up and although not a typical season on the horizon the Ashland skipper is looking at it as if it were.

"Whatever the season is, we are treating it just like any other. We're looking to take that next step and win a State Championship and get to North Carolina (Legion Championships)," Obid said. "Although there will be no trip south, we're still here looking to play competitive baseball while making the best of the situation."

While everyone was in the same boat, they needed some good news and getting to play baseball this summer is just what they needed.

"With the season cancelled, I felt really bad for these play-

ers, especially the seniors who will not be playing on the next level," Obid said. "I'm only a couple of years removed from my career and if this happened to me, I'm not sure how I would have handled it."

Luckily, Ashland will have a season and allow some of the players to properly close out their careers. According to the Coach, athletes like Dom Cavanaugh, who has been one of the best baseball players in the league over the last three seasons, will have his final season in an Ashland uniform.

"Although Dom is going to play football in college, we as coaches are glad that we could give him this last season playing baseball. It means a lot to us," the Ashland skipper said.

Obid also mentioned that he will have freshman college players in Jackson Hornung, who was batting .600 on the collegiate level when his season was cut short, and Alex Amalfi, who was making big strides in his first year away from high school, returning to play for him once again this year.

In addition, Brandon Grove, Sam Charles, and Owen Radcliffe will all suit up again for Ashland before heading off to college in the fall.

"Being able to have this season will allow these kids to go into college with good preparation," Obid said. "It will help them get ready, but I believe that all three of these guys would have still competed for a spot on their respective teams as freshman next year. Having some form of season is huge."

While it may not be the season that they were hoping for in terms of trying to obtain that Legion Championship they were so close to last year, at least the players will be able to get onto the baseball diamond and play the game that they love; for some one last time in an Ashland uniform.

Fall 2020 Athletics Registration



The Ashland Athletic Department is preparing to offer the following sports for the Fall 2020 season.

PLEASE NOTE AT THIS TIME, we will ONLY be collecting registration information. Payment information to follow as the season gets closer and/or guidelines are provided.

High school registrations are due by noon on Monday, Aug. 17.

- High School Football**
- High School Fall Cheerleading**
- High School Soccer**
- High School Field Hockey**
- High School Volleyball**
- High School Golf**
- High School X-Country**

Middle school registrations are due by noon on Monday, August 31

- Middle School Football**
(Grades 7 & 8 only)
- Middle School Fall Cheerleading**
(Grades 7 & 8 only)
- Middle School Soccer**
(Grades 7 & 8 only)
- Middle School Field Hockey**
(Grades 7 & 8 only)
- Middle School Volleyball**
(Grades 7 & 8 only)
- Middle School X-Country**
(Grades 6, 7 & 8)

Before any student can participate in tryouts, the following requirements must be met:

A parent and/or guardian must complete this online registration.

A student MUST have a valid physical exam on file with the Athletic Office, which can now be uploaded to this registration. Physicals are good for 13 months from the date of the exam. If you are unable to upload the exam, please turn in a copy of the most recent physical to the Athletics office prior to the first day of tryouts/practice. Please note that the Nurse's office and the Athletic office do not share files. Students with expired physicals will not be permitted to participate in practices or games until a new physical is turned in.

A student must submit either a user fee (online payment or check) or the Athletic Fee Waiver to the Athletic office by Monday, Aug. 17.

A parent and/or guardian and the student-athlete are required by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Public Health to complete a head injury safety training annually.

All students and parents should be familiar with the Ashland Athletics Handbook, which can be found on the Ashland Athletics website.

PLEASE NOTE: This registration form must be completed by a parent/guardian.



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Editor's note: This is the most current information as of press time. Please check the town's website for up-to-the-moment information.

Town Ease Into Reopening Phases

Ashland Town Buildings opened beginning last month by appointment only during standard operating hours (unless otherwise posted).

You are encouraged to continue to use online services and the drop box located at town hall for business. However, if you need to conduct business in person, town buildings will reopen to the public this week by appointment only.

Please contact the specific department for the service you request, by calling directly. If you are unsure of the department you need please call the COVID-19 Hotline; 508-532-7900.

Please note that you will be asked pre-screening questions at the time you book your appointment. If you come by without an appointment, we request you call us from outside the building, preferably from inside your vehicle, before entering. All appointments will be logged by staff in a "Visitor's Log".

Please, use the hand sanitizer station outside the building before entering. Please, follow all posted social distancing and hygiene standards when using the building. Wear face-coverings (unless there is a preexisting medical condition) and utilize the hand sanitizer stations throughout the building as well.

Municipal buildings follow the MA Reopening Plan for Office Spaces, requiring an occupancy limit of 25% percent of the listed maximum capacity.

Town Hall

Town Hall is open by appointment only for essential services that cannot be completed electronically.

Please call Town Hall at 508-881-0100, or the COVID-19 Hotline, 508-532-7900, to schedule a time to conduct business that cannot be completed electronically.

As mentioned above, we will ask pre-screening questions at the time you book your appointment. If you come by without

an appointment, we request you call us from outside the building, preferably from inside your vehicle, before entering. All appointments will be logged by staff in a "Visitor's Log".

Please, enter Town Hall from the side door (the door that faces the parking lot), as the Front and Rear doors will be locked. Please, use hand sanitizer before entering, wear a face-covering (if applicable), and maintain social distancing. When using the elevator, please ride the elevator alone or with members of your family. Restrooms are available to the public on the first floor only.

Community Center

Community Center is open by appointment only.

Please call the Community Center at 508-881-0140 to schedule an appointment with the needed service's office. There will be no programs or social gatherings at the center. If possible, please continue to use the online services rather than making an appointment.

As mentioned above, we will ask pre-screening questions at the time you book your appointment. If you come by without

an appointment, we request you call us from outside the building, preferably from inside your vehicle, before entering. All appointments will be logged by staff in a "Visitor's Log".

Please, enter the Community Center's main entrance. All doors will be locked. Please ring the doorbell at the time of your appointment, and staff will let you into the building. Please, use hand sanitizer before entering, wear a face-covering (if applicable), and maintain social distancing.

The Ashland Food Pantry will remain appointment-only with curbside pick-up on Mondays and Wednesdays- please remember to call ahead. Call 508-532-7942 or 508-532-7946. You can also email humanservices@ashlandmass.com.

Department of Public Works

Ashland Department of Public Works (DPW) is open by appointment only.

Please call DPW at 508-881-0120 to schedule an appointment. If possible, please continue to use the online services rather than making an appointment. As mentioned above, we will ask pre-screening questions at

the time you book your appointment. If you come by without an appointment, we request you call us from outside the building, preferably from inside your vehicle, before entering. These appointments will be logged by staff in a "Visitor's Log".

Please, use hand sanitizer before entering, wear a face-covering (if applicable), and maintain social distancing.

Library

Ashland Public Library is using curbside pickup. The library's curbside hours:

Monday- Thursday: 11:00 am- 6:00 pm

Friday- Saturday: 11:00 am - 4:00 pm

The library remains closed to the public.

Staff is available to answer inquiries over the phone:

Monday- Thursday 10 am - 8 pm, Friday 10 am - 6 pm, Saturday 10 am - 5 pm

Curbside Pick-Up Guidelines: Any item that is marked as AVAILABLE in ASHLAND in

REOPENING

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Your Will Does Not Avoid Probate Court

Families often think having a will protects their family from the burden of probate. It doesn't. Why would you want to avoid probate for your loved ones? Because it's expensive and slow. Even if your will makes designations, families can lose about 5% of the assets in court/lawyer fees. In addition, your family will end up waiting months, if not years, for courts to make final decisions.

Many people believe a Living Trust is for extremely wealthy families, but this is not the case. In fact, it's a gift to your heirs and a way to maintain control decisions during your lifetime. Planning your estate with a living trust costs a fraction of the cost of probate. Putting your plan in place, saves time, expense, and heartache. Ultimately setting your family up for success and giving you peace of mind.

Many misunderstand how a Last Will and Testament works. They think having a Will means

their heirs won't have to file a probate in court. However, a Will doesn't automatically transfer assets to heirs. A Will's instructions state what you want to happen and who's in charge of your estate.

During the probate process, the court will formally appoint your selected "executor." Without the court's approval, this person you selected to oversee the estate cannot act.

Probate's time consuming and expensive. It requires constant communication with the court and offers no privacy. The process is public, so that anyone can view your Will, and see the details of your estate.

Probate is avoidable with a good estate plan, specifically a Revocable Living Trust. Couples typically already own property jointly, but when the remaining spouse dies, the children/other heirs must settle the estate. Your home and life savings might be sold or transferred, but not with-

out the burden of Probate Court. The Estate Planning & Asset Protection Law Center of Dennis Sullivan & Associates has been helping families avoid probate for over 26 years. We offer a free estate planning design meeting to help people achieve their goals. Please contact our firm to discuss this process (781) 237-2815.

A Revocable Living Trust has significant value, avoiding the time and expense of probate. With a Trust, assets are titled to you as trustee, which avoids probate. While alive and competent, you manage assets, receive income, pay bills, buy/sell property, etc. When you pass on, or if you become unable to speak for yourself, the successor trustee of your choosing takes over, thus bypassing the entire probate process.

Sponsor: The Estate Planning & Asset Protection Law Center of Dennis Sullivan & Associates

State Fire Marshal Urges Springing Safely into Summer

"The... barbecue may be smaller this year," said State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey, "but we still need to practice safe grilling as we celebrate the unofficial start of the summer season. Take a few minutes for a safety check and inspect grills for leaks and cracks, and teach children to stay three feet away from any grill in use," said Ostroskey. "Follow the Governor's guidelines for social distancing and have a safe Memorial Day," he added.

Grill Fire Facts

In 2019, there were 81 fire and explosion incidents reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS) involving open fired grills. These incidents caused five civilian injuries, one fire service injury and an estimated dollar loss of \$1.4 million. Of the 81 grill fires, 71, or 88%, were gas grills. Solid fuels such as charcoal briquettes were involved in eight, or 10% of these fires.

On September 11, 2019, at 11:21 p.m., the Canton Fire Department was called to a fire in a single-family home. A gas grill on the rear deck of the house started the fire. Alarms were present and alerted the occupants; there were no injuries. The building had no fire sprinklers and damages from the blaze were estimated to be \$1.15 million.

Check for Leaks

"Check to make sure all the connections are tight and secure before firing up the gas grill for the first time this season," said Fire Marshal Ostroskey. "Using a brush, apply a soapy solution made of one part dish liquid and one part water to the tank connection. If the solution bubbles, you have a leak that needs repair," said Ostroskey. He recommended checking for and replacing any cracked hoses.

Rules for Grills on Porches, Decks and Patios

"Grills can only be used on first floor porches, decks, or patios if there is an outdoor stairway to the ground, or the porch is at ground level. Grills are prohibited on any porch, balcony or deck that has a roof, or overhang," said State Fire Marshal Ostroskey. For more information, contact your local fire prevention office.

Safety First

Over the past five years (2015-2019), there were 449 fires involving grills, hibachis and barbecues. These fires caused 20 civilian injuries, five firefighter injuries and \$3.8 million in estimated property damages.

- Read and follow the owner's manual for any cooking appliance.
- Always grill outdoors.
- Keep children and pets three feet away from the grill area. Create a circle of safety.
- Place grills 10-feet away from the house. Make sure they are not under eaves, overhanging branches or against the side of the building. Keep them away from deck railings.
- Grills can be used on open (no roof) first floor porches, decks or patios if there is an exterior stairway to the ground, or it is at ground level.
- Grills should never be used indoors or on fire escapes.
- Never leave a grill burning unattended.
- Keep the grill clean by removing grease or fat build-up from the grills and trays below the grill.
- If you smell gas while cooking, immediately get away from the grill and call the fire department. Do not move the grill.

- If the flame goes out, turn the grill and gas off and wait 15 minutes before relighting.
- Never use gasoline on any grill!
- Shut Off the Gas at the Tank After each use, and before disconnecting the propane tank, be sure to shut off the gas at the tank.

Charcoal Grill Safety

State Fire Marshal Ostroskey also said, "Practice safety around charcoal grills." Once the coals have been lit, never add lighter fluid to the fire – flames may travel up the stream of lighter fluid resulting in serious burns. Charcoal briquettes give off carbon monoxide, a colorless,



odorless gas that can be deadly. "Make sure to always use charcoal grills outside in a well-ventilated area." He added, "Let the coals cool completely before disposing in a metal container." Charcoal grills cannot be used on decks, balconies, or fire escape stairways.

Smoking Fire Safety

There have been so many fires this spring from improperly discarded smoking materials on porches and in backyards. These fires can smolder undetected for a long time and when they erupt into flames, travel fast. If you smoke, put it out all the way, every time. Extinguish smoking materials in a can with sand or water, not in the mulch, leaves grass, a potted plant or other container that can catch fire. Don't snub them out on the porch railing or stairs.

On May 9, 2020, one woman was hospitalized with burns suffered escaping a fire in her 2-family home. The improper disposal of smoking materials ignited the porch fire.

A 58-year old woman died in a May 4, 2020 fire in her home in Hanson when improperly discarded smoking materials ignited a fire on the porch of the 1-family home.

Gasoline and Lawn Mowers

Ostroskey said, "If your older children are learning to mow the lawn, be sure to teach them about gasoline safety at the same time." Gasoline vapors are highly flammable. They stay on your clothing and can ignite if you light a match.

- Store gasoline only in approved containers, outside.
- Keep gasoline away from all heat sources, such as smoking materials, pilot lights, campfires, and grills.
- Fill a cooled lawn mower. Never refill while it is hot.
- Keep hands and feet away from a mower while it's running.
- Never use gasoline to start a campfire.

REOPENING

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Visit the library's website for more information.

Public Parks

Public Parks opened on May 25, and are now open for passive recreation activities including: Walking/ Hiking, Jogging, Running, Fishing, Bird/ Nature Watching, Kite Flying, Dog walking. Organized sports and activities, sports fields, playgrounds, pavilions, and restrooms, remain closed.

Community Gardens may open as members follow state guidelines and the previously established policies created by Community Gardens.

Please maintain social distancing of 6 ft or more and remain within family units, use face masks/coverings, and more importantly, stay home if you feel sick.

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Statement from the Ashland School Committee, June 10, 2020

The Ashland School Committee is saddened and disgusted by the incidents of unjustifiable violence against persons of color, including the senseless killing of George Floyd. These events remind us, in no uncertain terms, of how much work we still need to do to eliminate racism and achieve socioeconomic equity. As leaders in our community with an obligation to the students of Ashland, their families, our employees and the community at large, we feel it necessary to formally and unequivocally re-affirm our support and commitment to ALL students, and to re-commit ourselves and the Ashland Public Schools to continuing and improving upon our efforts to educate and support ALL students. We commit:

To providing an educational and work environment that is not only free from discrimination, but one that affirmatively honors our differences;

To having the difficult and sometimes uncomfortable conversations involved in examining our institutional and personal behavior, to listening and learning and to continuous improvement;

To ensuring the social and emotional well-being of ALL students;

To the academic success of ALL students;

To providing a curriculum reflective of the diverse nature of our community and our world;

To maintaining a zero tolerance for racist behaviors;

To educating ourselves as to how we can better understand and meet the needs of ALL of our students and do our part in rooting out injustice and inequity; and

To providing an education to our students that encourages them to carry this work forward.

We firmly believe that these commitments are critical to the achievement of our Vision for the Ashland Public Schools, which is to be a “forward-thinking district that cultivates the academic and social-emotional growth of each student through a supportive, collaborative, innovative, and challenging environment. Students will develop into self-motivated, resilient, life-long learners, who embrace their role as responsible contributors to a global society.”

In Memory Of: Shirley Morissette, Lifelong Resident

Shirley Anna (Gates) Morissette, 95 died at the Metrowest Medical Center on June 10, 2020, after a long battle with Alzheimer's disease.

A lifelong Ashland resident, Shirley attended Ashland schools and was a graduate of Northeastern University, where she received the Outstanding Woman of the Year award and appeared in Who's Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges in 1947.

Shirley worked at the South Middlesex Opportunity Council until her retirement. She volunteered for many years for the Warren Benevolent Fund and the Ashland Food Pantry and Emergency Fund. She received the Governor's Points of Light Award in 2005 and was chosen as Ashland's Citizen of the Year in 2007. She was very active politically and spent many hours supporting her liberal causes.

In lieu of flowers, donations in her memory may be made to the Alzheimer's Association, 309 Waverly Oaks Road, Waltham, MA 02452 or the Ashland Emergency Fund, P.O. Box 112, Ashland, MA 01721. No services are planned at this time.

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