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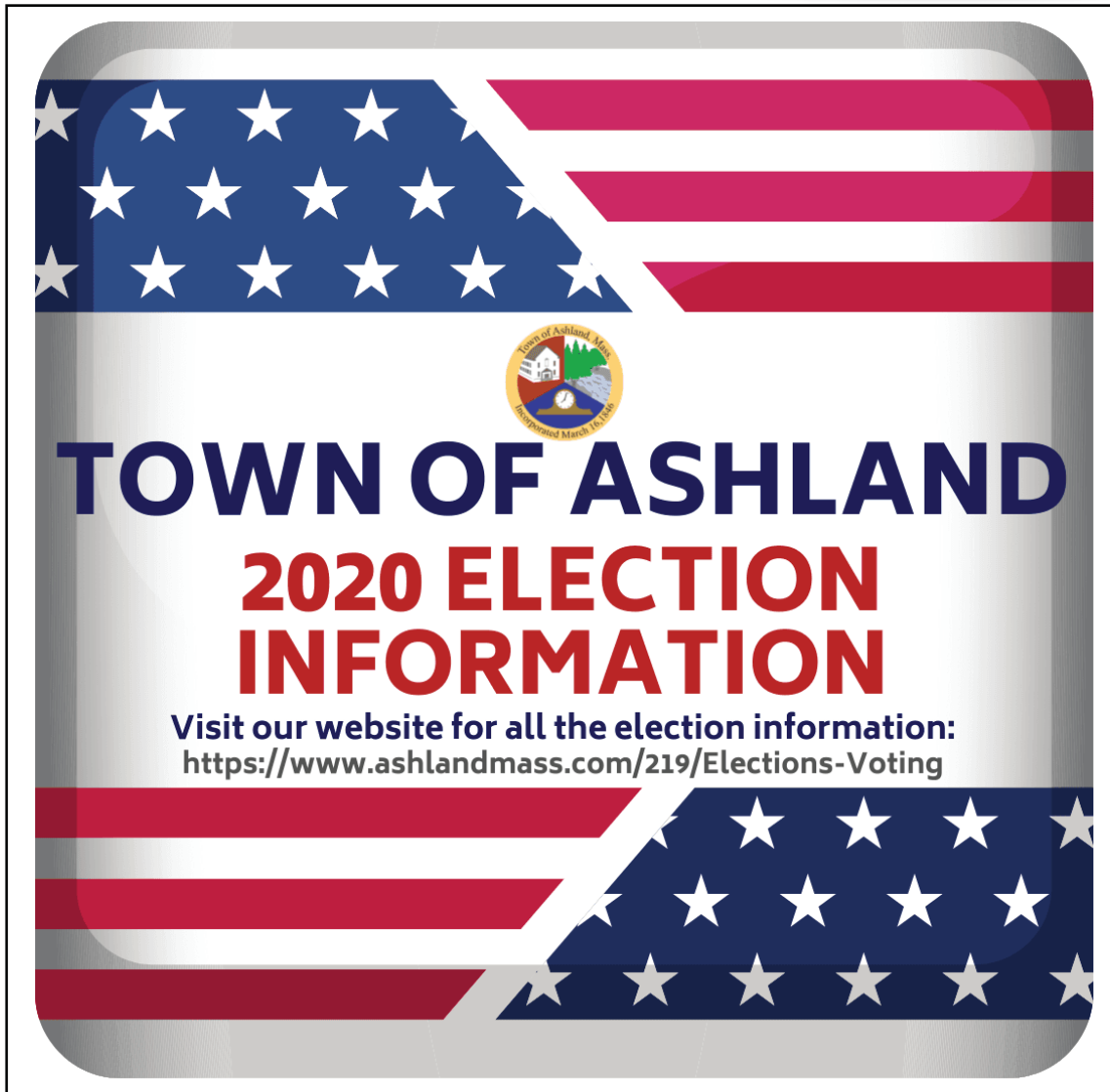
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Vol. 8 No. 4

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November 2020

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**TOWN OF ASHLAND**  
**2020 ELECTION INFORMATION**

Visit our website for all the election information:  
<https://www.ashlandmass.com/219/Elections-Voting>

## Four Recruits From Ashland Graduate Firefighter Recruit Classes

State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey and Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA) Director David C. Evans announced the graduation in October of the three classes that completed the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy's 50-day Career Recruit Firefighting Training Program. Class #285 trained at the Stow campus, Class #S17 trained at the Springfield campus and Class #BW04 trained at the Bridgewater campus.

"This rigorous professional training provides our newest firefighters with the basic skills to perform their jobs effectively and safely," said State Fire Marshal Ostroskey. The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA), a division of the Department of Fire Services, offers this program

tuition-free. The ceremony took place at the Department of Fire Services in Bridgewater, Mass.

**Class #285:** 15 Graduates from 6 Fire Departments: The 15 graduates represent the six fire departments of Ashland, Devens, Littleton, Plymouth, Wilmington, and Winthrop.

**Class #S17:** 15 Graduates from 6 Fire Departments: The 15 graduates represent the six fire departments of Chicopee, Dudley, Holyoke, Ludlow, Springfield, and Wayland.

**Class #BW04:** 16 Graduates from 10 Fire Departments: The 16 graduates represent the 10 fire departments of Avon, Belmont, Bourne, Dennis, Marshfield, Sharon, Somerset,

### FIREFIGHTERS

*continued on page 2*

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## FIREFIGHTERS

*continued from page 1*

Wrentham, Whitman and Yarmouth.

“First responders are on the frontlines protecting their communities and these newest firefighters are needed now more than ever. We have taken advantage of technology, reduced class size to increase social distancing, implemented daily screening, and required mask-wearing to keep our instructors and students as safe as possible during these uncertain times,” said MFA Director Evans. The MFA, a division of the Department of Fire Services, offers this program, tuition-free.

### Today's Firefighters Do Far More than Fight Fires

Today's firefighters do far more than fight fires. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies, ranging from the suspected presence of carbon monoxide to a gas leak. They may be called to rescue a child who has fallen through the ice

or who has locked himself in a bathroom. They rescue people from stalled elevators and those who are trapped in vehicle crashes. They test and maintain their equipment including self-contained breathing apparatus (SCBA), hydrants, hoses, power tools, and apparatus.

At the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, they learn all these skills and more from certified fire instructors who are also experienced firefighters. Students learn all the basic skills they need to respond to fires, to contain and to control them. They also receive training in public fire education, hazardous material incident mitigation, flammable liquids, stress management, confined space rescue techniques, and rappelling. The intensive, 10-week program for municipal firefighters involves classroom instruction, physical fitness training, firefighter skills training, and live firefighting practice.

### Training Safely During Pandemic

In response to the pandemic, the 10-week curriculum was reorganized to take advantage of online learning technology while ensuring plenty of practical skill experience on-campus with instructors. Students alternated between the virtual



**Four Ashland recruits graduated on Oct. 9: Ryan Phelan, Kyle Hallisey, Curtis Mogren, and Steven Mulone.**  
(Photo/supplied)

classroom for two weeks, on campus for practical training (using special safeguards and social distancing) for four weeks, back to the virtual classroom for a week, returning to campus for two weeks and finishing the final week in the virtual classroom.

### Basic Firefighter Skills

Students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions. To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water sup-

ply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple-room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Recruit Program all students have met the national standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001 and are certified to the level of Firefighter I and II, and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operational Level by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications.

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9:00 AM – 2:00 PM

### Saturday, November 7

Federated Church of Ashland  
118 Main Street, Ashland MA

### Our Annual Church Fair

has been cancelled due to the pandemic.

We hope to see you next year!

Please stay safe and be well!

## localtownpages

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# Around Ashland News

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

## Special Town Meeting

The special fall town meeting has not yet been scheduled, as of this writing. A sub-committee is working on the logistics and date. For up-to-date information, visit the town website, [www.ashland-mass.com](http://www.ashland-mass.com).

redevelopment project came in over \$3 million more than the estimate provided by the engineers from BSC Group, according to Town Manager Michael Herbert.

“Strategies to reduce this gap include removing some items from the scope of work and performing them in-house, similar to what we did with Mill Pond



Artist rendering of Ashland's proposed public safety building.

## Ashland's Public Safety Building Design

The Public Safety Building Committee (PSBC) met in early October with consultants and Bill Savage of the Design Review Committee. The purpose of this meeting was to review construction plans.

The building concept has a traditional design, similar to Southborough's public safety building. The building materials include light red masonry brick for the lower portion, with lighter red brick throughout the remainder of the building. Metal standards will also be used throughout the building, along with black trimmed windows.

According to the town manager, the PSBC was dismayed to learn that Fafard Real Estate has still not transferred the deed for the donated property to the town, despite the town meeting all of its obligations under the Gift/Donor Agreement signed in 2018 and accepted by town meeting in November of that same year.

Select Board member Steve Mitchell said he anticipates the PSB to be on the upcoming town meeting warrant. For updates, search @ashlandpsb on Facebook.

## Joint Public Forums Held

The Public Safety Building Committee and the Mindess School Building Committee held a joint public forum on Oct. 10 at the Stone Park Pavilion to discuss building updates. This was the second forum to be held. For more information on the public

a performance space, a farm-to-table homestead and restaurant, a bed-and-breakfast, and a community farm. “After costing out alternatives, these plans are prohibitively expensive for the Town of Ashland to do alone, as just restoring the property structurally would be a multi-million dollar endeavor,” Herbert said in a written statement.

The committee will try to put together a public/private partnership, joining with the not-for-profit or for-profit sectors to create a viable and self-sustaining community asset. To that end, the committee will enlist the help of Assistant Town Manager Jenn Ball and Economic Development Director Beth Reynolds to draft a request for proposals to see if there is interest from outside entities to help develop the partnership.

“As practically all the proposed uses are commercial and educational, the property will require a zoning change as the current zoning allows residential only,” Herbert said. “An ‘overlay district’ for the Valentine property is being drafted to help achieve that vision. Both the zoning change and potentially the disposition of the property will require town meeting votes.”

**YARD WASTE PICK UP**  
**OCTOBER 5th - NOVEMBER 23rd**

## Yard Waste Pick-Up: Through November 23

Waste Management will pick up yard waste (grass clippings and leaves) on Mondays from the homes of Ashland residents that are enrolled in the town's solid waste and recycling pick-up program. Collections begin on Monday, Oct. 5 and end on Monday, Nov. 23.

Yard waste should be placed in brown paper leaf bags or barrels that are clearly marked “YARD WASTE” and should be out at curbside by 7 a.m. on the morning of collection.

## Downtown Construction Begins in November

Over the summer town officials have been working on closing a significant funding gap when bid proposals for the downtown

Park,” Herbert said. “We are also looking at non-taxpayer funds to help close this gap. One of those funding sources is an additional MassWorks grant, which we submitted earlier in the fall and which we hope will be funded later in October or November. Our state delegation consisting of Senate President Karen Spilka and State Representative Jack Lewis are important allies in this endeavor, and I want to recognize and thank them for their support of this project.”

Herbert added, “Our target is to still break ground on the undergrounding part of the project in November. While weather is always a factor during the colder months, the reduction in traffic due in part to COVID make it the ideal time to do this work as it will have minimal impacts to both residents and businesses.”

**Correction**  
 The picture on the front page of the October 2020 edition of a volunteer picking up trash for GreenUp Ashland is Jan Poppendieck, not Janet Gamache.

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# Circle of Love Final Installation at the Corner Spot

Beginning in May the 01721 Circle of Love art initiative invited residents of all ages to design an 8-inch diameter circle for an art installation. The project originated to help the community while it was experiencing isolation during the Covid-19 pandemic. The goal of the project was to bring the community together and envelop the town with love.

The Circle of Love team collected nearly one hundred circles between May and October. Individuals including a 4-year-old artist, Annemarie's Dance Center students, artistic adults, and seniors at Ashland Community Center submitted their circles.

Each circle, which used paints, stickers, crayons, markers, pencils, was featured on the 01721 Circle of Love Facebook page, for each artist to proudly see their work shared with the community before the final installations. Artists Visi Tilak and Raji Iyer also included their circles during the Culture Fest at Home Edition artist spotlight this past July.

The Circle of Love Team installed the first round of circles on the first floor of Town Hall in September. Additionally, three feet diameter circles representing the Corner Spot and Town Hall

are also displayed at their respective locations.

Residents are encouraged to visit the final 01721 Circle of Love illuminated public art display at the Corner Spot until Jan. 1.



*In Loving Memory of*  
**T/Sgt. John C. Tulli**



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# Community Ties and a Commitment to Customer Service: Affordable Junk Removal

There are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Maybe you're planning to move and need to clear out the basement and attic before your open house. Maybe you've spent way too much time at home lately and are feeling the need to declutter.

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

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

Jay Schadler started his business in 2003. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with ten trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate cleanouts. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting.

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

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

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard dumpster for a week and chucking up



to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates that tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

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

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

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

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



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

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston as well as Resellables, a thrift store in Bellingham. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

For more information, contact Jay Schadler at (774) 287-1133 or visit Affordable Junk Removal online at [www.takeawayjunk.com](http://www.takeawayjunk.com).

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# Top 10 Health Concerns of Baby Boomers, Part 2

BY DENNIS SULLIVAN & ASSOCIATES

As baby boomers navigate aging, caregiving and trying to stay healthy, common health concerns arise. Top Concerns 10-6 were covered last issue and can also be found on our blog: [www.DSullivan.com/blog](http://www.DSullivan.com/blog).

Research has shown that people who stay active, eat healthy and avoid tobacco can lower their risk of developing chronic health conditions. Baby boomers are more health-conscious than the generations that came before them. Nevertheless, they face significant health challenges. Here are the top five:

## 1. Type 2 Diabetes

According to the CDC, the population of adults with Diabetes has more than tripled in the last 20 years. Diabetes increases the risk of serious health problems, including high blood pressure, vision loss, kidney disease, nerve damage, foot problems, amputation and cardiovascular

disease. Lifestyle changes and proper medical care can manage diabetes and its associated risks.

## 2. Heart Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for those over 60. After age 45, the risk of developing heart disease increases significantly. Some risk factors (age or family history) are not in your control, but lifestyle changes and medical intervention can help you lower your risk. Exercise, diet and tobacco-free living will help limit your heart disease risk.

## 3. Cancer

Cancer affects everyone at any time of life, but for most cancers, aging is the most important risk factor according to the CDC. Cancer screenings are crucial as we age, they are routinely used to detect cancers at early stages, possibly before you can feel symptoms. Cancer-related deaths are declining, and if you contract cancer, your chances of surviving

are now higher than they were in the past.

## 4. Depression

Depression can happen at any age, but often begins in adulthood, according to the National Institute of Mental Health. Depression, particularly in adults can co-occur with other medical illness, including cancer, heart disease, diabetes and Parkinson's. Depression often causes the other conditions to worsen. Dr. Reyzan Shali of Scripps Coastal Medical Center Vista says, "It is important for both physicians and patients to recognize that depression is not a normal process of aging.

Unfortunately, many patients feel uncomfortable with the subject of depression. Many feel that seeking help is a sign of weakness. It is very important for you to accept that you need help. Your primary care physician is a great start for help."

## 5. Eye Problems

Get your annual vision screening. Over 20.5 million Americans are affected by cataracts, this number grows every year. Advancements in the safety and precision of cataract surgery result in faster surgeries, shorter and easier recoveries, and improved vision.

Many baby boomers feel the stress of being the sandwich generation, as well as the host of medical issues that come with aging. Don't struggle through this alone, reach out to your doctor for support and guidance. As you tackle the medical issues, make sure you also consider who can make medical decisions for you and speak with your friends and families about decision-making.

*Dennis Sullivan & Associates has been assisting families in Massachusetts to protect their homes, families, health, legacy and life savings, for over 27 years to discover more, attend a free online discovery seminar and find more information at [DSullivan.com](http://DSullivan.com).*

## COVID-19 Rental/Mortgage Assistance Program Assists Ashland Residents

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

In response to the loss of income to households due to COVID-19, the town has created a Rental/Mortgage Assistance Program. The program is funded by the CARES Act and granted to the Town of Ashland and the Affordable Housing Trust, which will use their Community Preservation Act (CPA) funds.

Applicants are eligible for up to three months rental or mortgage assistance. Assistance can be used to pay current and future rent, or pay rent that is past due since March 1, 2020. The town started processing applications in early July.

"The program is temporary and does not have a set end date," Emma Snellings, Assistant Town Planner, explained. "The Town of Ashland and the Ashland Affordable Housing Trust will be evaluating the need for the program and program funding at regular intervals, and will set an end to the program based on those factors."

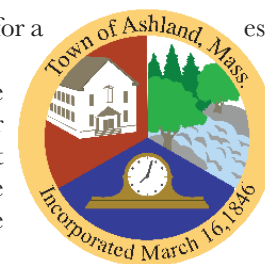
Available amounts are:

- \$1,200 / month for an efficiency/studio
- \$1,400 / month for a 1-bedroom
- \$1,600 / month for a 2-bedroom
- \$2,000 / month for a 3+ - bedroom

\$2,000 / month for a 3+-bedroom

If the assistance amount is greater than the rent amount, only the rent amount will be granted.

For a paper application or to set up an appointment to drop off your application at Town Hall, contact Emma Snellings, Assistant Town Planner at



[esnellings@ashlandmass.com](mailto:esnellings@ashlandmass.com) or 508-532-7930.

To submit an application by mail, mail the application and supporting documents to Ashland Town Hall, Attn: Emma Snellings, 101 Main Street, Ashland, MA 01721. For general information, visit the program page on the town website, <https://bit.ly/38QPSTL>.



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### ASHLAND COVID-19 RENTAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

In response to the loss of income to households due to Covid-19, this program has been created and funded by the CARES Act funds granted to the Town of Ashland and the Affordable Housing Trust utilizing their Community Preservation Act funds. This program seeks to be efficient and responsive. It is temporary in nature. Applications will be processed on a rolling basis beginning July 7, 2020.

Applicants are eligible for:

- Up to three months rental or mortgage assistance (future or arrearage payments beginning 4/1/20).
- Amounts available are:
  - \$1200 / month for a efficiency/studio
  - \$1400 / month for a 1- bedroom
  - \$1600 / month for a 2- bedroom
  - \$2000 / month for a 3+ - bedroom

An eligible household is one that:

- Has reduced income because of Covid-19.
- Earns less than 80% of Area Median Income.

Please note:

- Households currently receiving government-funded rental assistance such as Section 8, MRVP or RAFT are not eligible.
- Households living in units subsidized with Project Based Section 8 shall not be eligible.

Submit applications by:

- Emailing Emma, [esnellings@ashlandmass.com](mailto:esnellings@ashlandmass.com)
- Drop it off to Town Hall by setting up an appointment with Emma
- Mail in to Town Hall c/o Planning Department 101 Main St.

Visit our website [here](https://bit.ly/38QPSTL) for application materials or contact:  
Emma Snellings, Assistant Town Planner  
Email: [esnellings@ashlandmass.com](mailto:esnellings@ashlandmass.com) | Call: 508-532-7930

*Your Money, Your Independence*

# Your HS Junior know EFC, NPC or Merit? They should.

As if there isn't enough going on, now is the time for your high school junior to start their financial aid process for college.

Each year, October 1 is a critical date as high school seniors can apply for FAFSA, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form. So why the focus on junior year?

While many look at deadlines, when it comes to college planning and maximizing opportunity for "first come, first serve" grants and merit scholarships, completing the FAFSA on October 1 should be a data entry formality.

Especially if a student is leveraging binding Early Decision (ED) or non-binding Early Action (EA) admission processes, as those applications are due as early as November 1. Schools will ask if you need financial assistance, and

if so, the amount not covered by financial aid.

But let's back up, as getting ahead of ourselves.

To build your teenager's school "wish list" during junior year, you need to understand a student's true costs and analyze return on investment (ROI) per degree and school. Beyond expectation setting, this seeks to avoid your kid graduating with a mountain of debt and entering a profession challenged to pay back.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC), used in FAFSA, is a calculation to estimate how much the student's family will be expected to contribute. EFC changes each year, given that incorporates family tax returns 2 years prior along with assets, titling, income, debts and other factors.

Equipped with EFC, now

your student can use a school's Net Price Calculator (NPC). This incorporates many factors, including for merit scholarship purposes, GPA, test scores, class rank and activities. Comparing NPCs of various schools is an outstanding practice in selecting colleges for application.

As a parent, by understanding how EFC is calculated, you can take action to potentially reduce EFC and increase financial aid eligibility or greater merit. There are trade-offs and implications to asset titling, control, gifting and taxes. However, as a parent of a high school junior now, you have until December 31 to impact your student's sophomore year college FAFSA application. Wait until this January, any actions won't make an impact until junior year college. For the real

go-getters, parents of high school sophomores, you can act now to reduce EFC for FAFSA freshman year college.

Consider the government's [collegecost.ed.gov](http://collegecost.ed.gov), fee services like College Board's [bigfuture.collegeboard.org](http://bigfuture.collegeboard.org), or a coach, counselor and certain Certified Financial Planners who specialize in helping clients through the college admissions and financial aid processes.



Glenn Brown

*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, [www.PlanDynamic.com](http://www.PlanDynamic.com).*

*PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.*

## Greater Ashland Lions



At 508-881-2117 for pickup and information. Remember Anton Cleaners will be cleaning each article for distribution and the need is in demand more than ever, mens, womens, childrens and infants warm winter coats new and gently used, NO rips or tears missing buttons or broken zippers will be accepted.

### Pumpkin Patch

Thank you to ALL that participated on October 30, at the Corner Spot for our First Pumpkin

Patch decorating and carving contest the winners will be announced in the next issue, the Corner Spot had many pumpkin entries that were illuminated with lights for all to enjoy.

### Holiday Wreaths and Swags

It's never too early to purchase your holiday decorations, the Wreaths and Swags will be arriving between Thanksgiving week and the First week of December Lion Cheryl will contact everyone when they arrive. Lion Cheryl 508-881-7056.

### Peace Poster

The 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual International Lions Club Peace Poster is in the final stages and the Participants will be announced in the near future. The theme this

year was "Peace thru Service", the theme is decided by an international committee, history has shown that all too often peace is not guaranteed, while this is unfortunate, it also allows students the opportunity to find out how to achieve peace, individually and in our communities. Who knows better to do this than our own youth at the Ashland Middle School through drawing with pencil, crayons and paints and their imagination? For more information contact Lion Jan 508-881-3910.

### Dates to remember in November

**November is Diabetes month**

**Nov. 3: Election Day**

**Nov. 11th: Veterans Day**

**Nov. 26 : Thanksgiving remember family**

Would you like to know more about our Greater Ashland Lions Club? Contact Lion Mary

508-881-5515. We are accepting used and non-prescription eye glasses, hearing aids, coupons for education and tabs from soda, beer, soup and pet food can. Contact Lion Marj. 508-653-6267

*Submitted by Lion Ellie Torelli*

Thank you, Ashland, for your support during these most difficult times (of being confined to our homes, wearing masks and social distancing), this is our new normal and hopefully the future will improve. The Greater Ashland Lions continue to support and serve the community, with delivering meals, shopping for others, donating to the Food Pantry, the Emergency Fund,

Back Packs for students and School supplies.

### Coat Drive



The Annual Coat Drive started on Sept. 28, and will continue thru

Jan. 10, 2021.

Coats will be accepted by contacting any Greater Ashland Lion Member or calling Lion Deb

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# Profile: Meet Ashland's Library Director, Paula Bonetti

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Ashland's public library is often described as the town's educational and cultural hub. Up until March 2020, when Covid-19 hit, hundreds of library patrons of all ages streamed in and out of the Carnegie-style building at 66 Front St. for workshops, concerts, films, art exhibits, and more. These days, keeping basic services accessible is what occupies Library Director Paula Bonetti and her staff. Bonetti has been described by many patrons as warm, friendly and helpful, a key person in creating the community feel that residents treasure. In this interview, Bonetti, who has held her position since January 2002, talks about her role.

## What attracted you to this job?

After completing my MLS in 2000, I decided to look for an administrative position. I was looking for a position in a small library within a reasonable commuting distance.

## What is your job like?

When I started in Ashland in January 2002, both the community and the library were very different than they are today in 2020 . . . even without the curveball that Covid-19 threw our way. The constants are the overall administrative duties of overseeing the day-to-day operation of the library. I am responsible for the budget, and I do all of the purchasing for the adult collection. The variables are the changing interests and needs of the community as it continues to grow and evolve. Since we aren't serving one target group in the community, it's always a challenge to meet the needs of such a wide variety of people.

## What do you like most? What do you like least?

The best part of my job is my interaction with our users. I love reading and listening to books and talking about them. I love that the community values the library and considers it an important town service.

My least favorite parts of the job are the administrative tasks . . . budget, reports, meetings. We've



Ashland Library Director Paula Bonetti and her staff are keeping basic library services accessible to patrons during Covid-19. (Photo/supplied)

had some rough years during economic downturns and managing and planning was difficult. Covid-19 has presented new challenges, and we are working hard to provide the most services that we can without compromising the health and safety of the staff and our users.

## What have been your greatest challenges and accomplishments?

Clearly, the building renovation/expansion [completed in 2005] was my greatest challenge, and my greatest accomplishment. I was only on the job three months when I got a call from the state saying that our wait-listed project would be funded. Looking back, we had amazing community support to move the project forward and a knowledgeable and dedicated Building Committee that ensured a quality building completed on time and under budget!

## What are your professional goals?

My immediate goals are re-

lated to keeping staff and patrons safe while using the library. At the top of the list is figuring out how we can manage curbside pickup when the days get shorter, colder and perhaps snowy. I'm also looking at ways to keep the community engaged during these pandemic times. I expect we will shift more of our budget to electronic items to ensure that if we face any additional stay-at-home orders we can continue to provide cultural, recreational, and educational opportunity to the community.

## What are your interests outside of work?

Reading, listening to audio books. I like to craft, knit and crochet, but I'm clearly an amateur at all of these. I like all kinds of games and to entertain. A couple of years ago I started country line dancing for the exercise and socializing that goes along with it. I was getting pretty good at it but that's another activity that ended with Covid-19. I like to be outside so I'm an avid walker and biker. Someday I hope to be on a

bike path in Ashland! I'm fortunate to have great neighbors and friends to socialize with.

## What are your personal plans?

Outside of work, I like to travel and stay active. About 10 years ago my husband and I decided to commit to two trips per year, one road trip and one air trip. We love our road trips! My husband is much more adventurous than I am, and more than once has opted to take us down a road less travelled. It's given us some great stories. We've made some great friends on cruises and bus trips, and hope to see more of the U.S. and the rest of the world soon.

Post Covid-19, I'm looking forward to once again visiting museums, consignment and antique stores, and other impromptu stops that generally involve lunch or dinner . . . just because I can!

I have two sons that live fairly close by and one granddaughter, who has been such a positive presence during these crazy times.

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# John Szolomayer: A Trusted RE/MAX Executive Realty Professional Who Will Exceed Your Expectations

By DEBORAH BURKE HENDERSON,  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Long-time Ashland resident, John Szolomayer offers a unique perspective to new and existing real estate clients.

Satisfied, repeat clients say that whether they are in the market to buy or sell a home, they trust John Szolomayer of RE/MAX Executive Realty to exceed their expectations and take them to a successful closing.

A full-time realtor with 17 years' experience, Szolomayer has sold over \$150 million in New England residential real estate. Services cover the gamut from buying and selling luxury homes to multi-family residences, condominiums, and townhouses in MetroWest and beyond.

His high level of customer service, coupled with a depth of expertise in the industry and strategic marketing, makes a formula for success.

"I like being involved from the beginning of the real estate process to the closing table," Szolomayer said. "I am with my clients every step of the way."

Szolomayer is a full-time Realtor with RE/MAX Executive Realty, with headquarters at 22 South Street, Suite 203, in Hop-

kinton. However, he makes it a point to visit one-on-one with clients in their homes to discuss strategies, define the market analysis process, and explain his marketing plans.

Designated as a Certified Buyer Representative, Szolomayer ensures clients never overpay for a property. He excels at identifying the pros and cons of each house and knows what it would take to fix problem areas if the customer were to move forward with the purchase. Clients have noted his knowledge and professionalism, friendly and patient demeanor, impeccable communication, responsiveness, and attention to detail. Szolomayer understands a home is typically an individual's biggest investment and wants to ensure the transaction is stress-free, with a win-win outcome for everyone.

Sellers can expect Szolomayer to work with a professional interior designer, the necessary stagers, and a professional photographer – all at his own expense – to capture the most memorable impression of a property.

He creates a professional, full-color multi-page marketing brochure, highlighting key features of the home and, as an additional enhancement, develops

## Business spotlight

a customized property website. This includes the MLS listing, a YouTube video showcasing a virtual walkthrough, a listing of local attractions, and restaurants and links to relevant resources such as the town's school system.

His latest professional designation, one of which he is most proud, is American Warrior Real Estate Professional (AWREP). Only a handful of real estate agents in Mass. have obtained this moniker.

"As a Vietnam Era Veteran having served in the U.S. Navy, I find it so rewarding to give back in this way and help other veterans achieve their own piece of the American dream," Szolomayer added.

Szolomayer loves what he does and is honored to say that many of the people he has represented have moved beyond the client relationship to that of being a friend. Szolomayer is a member of the National Association of Realtors, the Greater Boston Real Estate Board, and the American Legion. Tradition-



Trust John Szolomayer of RE/MAX Executive Realty to provide a knowledgeable, friendly, and seamless real estate experience.

ally each year, Szolomayer can be found at the Boston Marathon start where he serves as an Ambassador and Start Marshall, helping organize qualified runners.

Married for 44 years, Szolomayer and his wife, Cheryl, have made Ashland their home for more than 25 years and raised a family of three here. Through

the years, Szolomayer has enjoyed assisting with Little League, Babe Ruth baseball, and youth soccer.

Whether customers are in the market to buy or sell, Szolomayer promises the transaction will go smoothly.

Discover more at [www.JohnSzolomayer.com](http://www.JohnSzolomayer.com) or call 508-259-4788.



## Ashland's National Merit Commended Students Announced

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Ashland High School Principal Kelley St. Coeur announced on Sept. 29 the students who have been named Commended Students in the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program. Due to Covid-19, St. Coeur notified the student via email rather than calling them down to the front lobby to present them certificates. "I wanted to let you know of this honor in writing and will present your certificate when I see you during your in person school days. You have so much to be proud of!" she said in her email.

The following students have been named: Rebecca DeBenedictis, Mary Esenther, Helen Varughese, and Derek Wang.

A Letter of Commendation from the school and National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), which conducts the program, was presented by the principal to these scholastically talented students throughout the week of Sept. 29.

A press release said: "About 34,000 Commended Students throughout the nation are being recognized for their exceptional academic promise. Although they will not continue in the 2021 competition for National Merit Scholarship awards, Commended Students placed among the top 50,000 scorers of the more than 1.5 million students who entered the 2021 competition by taking the 2019 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualify-

ing Test (PSAT/NMSQT)."

"Those being named Commended Students have demonstrated outstanding potential for academic success," a spokesperson for NMSC commented. "These students represent a valuable national resource; recognizing their accomplishments, as well as the key role their schools play in their academic development, is vital to the advancement of educational excellence in our nation. We hope that this recognition will help broaden their educational opportunities and encourage them as they continue their pursuit of academic success."

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# Tree on Library's Front Lawn Dedicated to Lois Bennett

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Members of the Ashland Garden Club, several town officials, and others gathered on Oct. 4 on the Ashland Library's front lawn to dedicate a newly planted native pink dogwood tree to a former club member, Lois Bennett.

Lois and her husband Stan moved to Ashland in 2009 and both quickly became integral members of the community. Sadly, Stan passed away suddenly in 2013; Lois succumbed to cancer on January 24, 2019.

At the ceremony, one garden club member, Florence Seidell, described the couple's contributions, which involved Warren Woods, Ashland Community Gardens, the Ashland Farmers Market and public plantings around town: "Both Stan and Lois were strong supporters of the purchase of Warren Woods. Stan was an original member of the Land Stewardship Committee charged with tending to



Because Lois Bennett was a friend to many, the marker says "In Loving Memory of Lois Bennett, Friend, Master Gardener." (Photo/supplied)

Warren Woods, and he designed the beautiful sign that one sees up against the woods upon entering the driveway. There is a dedication to him on that sign."

"Lois and Stan became gardeners in the Ashland Community Gardens during its second year in 2010. It didn't take her

long to convert a common area prone to flooding into two beautiful butterfly gardens. She eagerly taught all the gardeners about pollinator plants to support monarch butterflies, and ultimately she earned us the certification for a Monarch Butterfly WayStation. Lois taught other gardeners how to maintain the butterfly gardens. It is now called the Lois Bennett Butterfly Gardens, an attractive, flourishing place of pride for community gardeners. Lois never missed an opportunity to teach children and adults about the plight of the monarch butterfly, the thrill of growing sunflowers from seeds, or the joy of raising your own organic vegetables."

"... The Town of Ashland is more attractive, more nature oriented, and more community-minded because of their too short time here. I am delighted that we are marking this tribute to Lois Bennett today."

Ashland Garden Club President Gretchen Bravacos said: "... I know that when we think of Lois, we remember her high energy level, her enthusiasm, her optimism and most of all her resiliency. She had a lot of interests and loved to be on the go." Bravacos went on to describe the many projects around town that Lois initiated, like teaching chil-



Because Lois Bennett was a friend to many, the marker says "In Loving Memory of Lois Bennett, Friend, Master Gardener." (Photo/supplied)

dren about pollinators and their role and digging up and planting a garden around the post office.

"Lois had always wanted the garden club to plant a tree on the library's front lawn," Bravacos said in an email. "I approached the library director and trustees, and they gave their approval. Lois wanted a native pink dogwood

but was too ill to go with me to choose one. Once the tree was planted [in September 2018], my husband and I took her to sit by the library gardens and she enjoyed seeing the newly planted tree. Sadly, she passed away in January 2019. We would have held this dedication last spring but for the pandemic."



A tree dedication ceremony honors the contributions of Lois Bennett. (Photo/supplied)



The Ashland Community Gardens butterfly garden, which Lois initiated, thrives today. (Photo/Cynthia Whitty)

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# Sports

## MIAA: Soccer has Regular Season, No Tournament Play

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Prior to the fall season getting underway, it looked as though the Ashland boys' soccer program was going to have a record number of athletes coming out for the teams.

However, with the Covid-19 pandemic still swirling around things things didn't remain when the actual season got going.

"It looked as though we were going to have three teams (Varsity, Junior Varsity and Freshman) for the first time in as long as anyone can remember," Ashland Coach Tiago Mota said. "Unfortunately, due to Covid, kids dropped out and were back to two max teams (20 on the varsity and 23 on the JV squad)."

With Covid still on many people's minds the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) decided that it was going to split the Tri-Valley League (TVL) up into two divisions based on geography for shorter bus rides. Ashland will suit up against Hopkinton, Holliston, Medway, Bellingham, and Norton. Teams will play four 20-minute quarters each game over a 10-game season with those games being played on the weekends in a home/away format.

Following the regular season there will be no tournament play this fall.

"The kids are ready to play, they did a good job to get in shape and are prepared to play the season. They are excited to get onto the field and play a real game," the Ashland Coach said. "The rule changes on paper are scary and poses difficulties but I think that everyone will be happily surprised once we start playing."

Some of the changes that will be enforced this season are no hanging around by the water cooler; no throw-ins, everything will be kicked; no heading the ball; no walls can be created for free kicks and the goalies can not kick or throw the ball past midfield. Heading the ball seems to be the biggest concern Mota has for his players, but the team is adapting well to the new rule and the team has been policing itself so far.



Although having lost 6 seniors (2 of which were captains that saw extensive action) to graduation, Mota believes his team is ready to challenge for the TVL title.

"We will be looking for success while growing the program. The biggest thing this year is that the kids get to go out and play the game," the Clocker coach said. "With the returners we have coming back we should be in good shape. The core of the team was sophomores last year and as juniors this season, they should adapt well giving us a strong nucleus."

Leading the Clockers onto the field will be tri-captains Shea Donovan on defense and Galwin Willasgracias and Luiz Manhaes, a junior. Willasgracias and Manhaes will rotate between midfield and forward, thus giving Ashland a leader at all three areas of the

field while setting the tone for the rest of the team.

Donovan will be in the communicator in the backfield, while Mota will be looking for Willasgracias (4-year player) and Manhaes (2<sup>nd</sup> year player and first junior captain at Ashland) to bring their A-game offensively.

Chris Kourtelidis, a senior forward, was able to find the back of the net four times last year on a team that didn't score all that much. Mota is looking for a lot from his senior in terms of offense. Kourtelidis has come into camp with a strong shot and in shape.

Another senior, Ben Lymburner-Jensen, will cover the defensive midfield and play center back for the Clockers. After suiting up for Ashland his freshman and sophomore year, Lymburner-Jensen left his junior campaign, but has

decided to come back this season. He is a year-round soccer player who should be a key contributor in helping the squad distribute the ball, especially with the keepers having to keep their kicks and throws before the mid field stripe.

Sebastian Ortiz will be playing in his first season with the Clockers after transferring in from New Jersey. According to the Coach, the NJ transfer is a solid player who will roam the middle of the field for Ashland and likes to play the game with simple, but fast-moving passes fitting right into the Clockers style of play.

Looking to keep the opposition balls out of the net will be junior keeper David Skorodumov.

"He's one of the best goalies that I've seen around the MetroWest area. He has great hands, but will have some difficulty coming out of the net and not being able to slide tackle to break up plays. (Slide tackling will also be disallowed this season)," Mota said. "He also has a great leg, but unfortunately will not be able to use it to get rid of the ball from our end, instead he will have to be the initial distribution of the ball to move it up field."

Despite all the new rule changes initiated by the MIAA to keep athletes safe from Covid-19, Ashland looks primed and ready to take on its 2020 divisional opponents of the TVL in hopes of capturing a Championship.

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# Ashland Business Celebrated at Annual Manufacturing Award Ceremony

The Massachusetts Legislature Manufacturing Caucus hosted its 5th Annual Manufacturing Award Ceremony virtually on Oct. 7. The ceremony honored manufacturers from across the Commonwealth, showcasing their innovative and revolutionary manufacturing capabilities and products.

This year Ashland-based MatTek Life Sciences was nominated by Rep. Jack Patrick Lewis (7th Middlesex District-Ashland/Framingham). Founded in 1985 at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), MatTek employs over 75 people at 200 Homer Ave.

“MatTek is a wonderful example of a local business adapting to meet our community and Commonwealth’s needs in this

unprecedented moment,” Rep. Lewis noted. “Their innovative approach to in vitro science has made MatTek an integral piece of our local and national approach to combating COVID-19. It was a great honor to nominate them as a Manufacturer of the Year.”

MatTek started their work on in vitro science by producing human tissue models as reliable replacements for animal testing. Their intestinal, ocular, oral, skin, and respiratory tissue models are used to assess safety and efficacy throughout the cosmetics, chemical, pharmaceutical, and household product industries. These advanced tissue models have been vital in assisting companies in achieving their goals of non-animal testing while lowering testing



labs into the production of 80% alcohol hand sanitizer formulated according to World Health Organization guidelines. The company has been donating large amounts to hospitals and first responders across New England states and has made the hand sanitizer available for purchase by the public on their website.

As part of the Baker-Polito Administration’s Manufacturing Emergency Response Team (M-ERT) initiative, MatTek has also transformed some local operations to produce viral transport media, a critical component of COVID-19 testing, to support the Commonwealth’s ongoing response to the COVID-19 public health emergency.

“As scientists and researchers, we are always trying to do things to make the world a little better and felt that we could make a difference in the fight against COVID-19 as well,” Causey added. “Massachusetts has always been a leader in science and biotechnology, and we are proud to be a part of that culture and contribute Massachusetts-made products that advance human-relevant science worldwide.”

Formed in August 2014, the Manufacturing Caucus includes more than 60 legislators from around the Commonwealth. Lawmakers focus on training for manufacturing employees; encouraging innovation by helping start-ups access resources; and expanding apprenticeship opportunities in key manufacturing sectors.

costs and providing human-relevant results. The company has expanded its offerings to include cultureware, primary human cells and media, 3Diy kits, and testing services in support of its mission to advance innovative in vitro science through the production of synergistic life science products and services.

“It’s an honor for MatTek to be nominated for the Manufacturer of the Year Award,” Kevin Causey, Vice President of Business Development, said. “MatTek was born out of labs at MIT and has been producing advanced life

science technology in Massachusetts for worldwide use for over 30 years.”

In response to COVID-19, several of MatTek’s products, including EpiAirway, EpiOral, and EpiIntestinal, are being actively used in research to study infection replication rates as well as potential prevention strategies and therapies. These tissue systems have provided researchers with reliable, human-based data much faster than would be possible using traditional animal methods or human clinical studies. MatTek has also pivoted some of its

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# Ashland Lions



for unused and ask your friends and neighbors to do the same. The weather is getting colder and this is a good opportunity to help those in need. The coats can be for children or adults and must in good condition—that means gently worn, no rips, tears, broken zippers or permanent stains. Coats may be dropped off at any Anton’s Cleaners or at Cleaner’s Choice, 193 Main St. Ashland, MA.

We are happy to announce that 34 coats were collected on Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>, by Lions at the Ashland Fire Station on Cedar St. as part of the Fire

## Whodunnit? Murder In Sin City

The Ashland Lions Club is teaming up with Lions Clubs in Sherborn and Bellingham mystery dinner. The event has been moved to Saturday, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 6:30pm-11:00pm. 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.

*Lion Dan Mitchell*

## Golf Ball Drop

The Golf Ball Drop fundraiser to support Ashland Lions and Ashland Firefighters was held on Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup> at 3pm. The golf balls were dropped from AFD truck Tower-1. This fundraiser was a huge success, and thanks to all who participated. Profits will be shared between Ashland Firefighters and Ashland Lions, and Ashland Lions proceeds will go to Lions Eye Research and to support our community. Congrats to the winners, Susan Manna of Framingham, and Lt. Anthony Duca of Ashland.



## Coats for Kids

Lions Club District 33K clubs are partnering with Anton’s Cleaners again this year for their annual Coats for Kids drive! Please search your closets

Department’s open house. A collection box for coats will remain at the fire station for the community to drop of coats at other times.

## Christmas trees are coming!

It’s hard to believe that Thanksgiving is only a month away. But do you know what opens right after Thanksgiving? The Lions Christmas Tree lot! While the Lions have had to cancel every other fundraiser this year, we will still be bringing Christmas spirit and raising money for our community. We will be following all health and cleaning guidelines for COVID to ensure the safety of our volunteers and customers. Please consider buying your fresh Christmas tree from the Ashland Lions this year and donate to a great cause. Remember, Lions give back 100% of fundraising to eye research and the local community. Hope to see you soon!



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- ◆ 126 Self Storage
- ◆ AdviCoach, Ken Erdelt
- ◆ Ashland Pet Concierge
- ◆ Habitat for Humanity
- ◆ Metro West Bookkeeping & Tax Service Inc
- ◆ Modelville Hobby
- ◆ Platinum Physical Therapy/Ashland PT
- ◆ Protegro Inc., Wendy Pyne

**@ASHLANDBUSINESSASSOCIATION**

# Attorney Amanda Shuman of DangerLaw, LLC Named Super Lawyer

DangerLaw, LLC, of Newton, announced that attorney Amanda Shuman has been named a Massachusetts Super Lawyer and a Rising Star in the Family Law category.

Each year, no more than 5 percent of the lawyers in the state are selected as Super Lawyers, based on their high degree of peer recognition and professional achievement. Moreover, just 2.5 percent are named Rising Stars, based on their being 40 or younger or having a maximum of 10 years of experience.

A member of the DangerLaw, LLC team since 2016, Shuman helps her family law clients with a wide range of issues, from ending their marriages and navigating property division, to child support, custody, visitation, and prenuptial/postnuptial agree-

ments. She is trained in mediation and the Collaborative Law process, and is often able to help her clients through these methods of alternative dispute resolution. In cases where issues remain unresolved, Shuman advocates on their behalf before family court judges.

Shuman, who also focuses on small business law, represents clients throughout Eastern Massachusetts. She is especially passionate about helping strong women “find their superpowers” and is a member of the Center for Women & Enterprise (CWE) Central Massachusetts Advisory Board.

An Ashland resident, Shuman earned a J.D. from the University of Massachusetts School of Law in Dartmouth, and a B.A. in political science and En-



glish writing from the University of Pittsburgh.

Super Lawyers, a Thomson Reuters business, is a rating service of outstanding lawyers from more than 70 practice areas. Its selections are made through peer

nominations and evaluations, along with independent research.

About DangerLaw, LLC

Headquartered in Newtonville, with additional offices in Waltham, Ashland, Worcester and Gloucester, Mass., Danger-

Law, LLC focuses on family law, asset protection, estate planning, post death administration, small business/entrepreneurship advising, and Collaborative Law. The firm’s diverse client base includes the LGBTQIA+ community, communities of color, people who are divorcing or starting a business, unmarried couples, women-headed households, and those who are aging without the support of family and friends.

With documents in “ordinary English,” a 5-percent discount for clients who make the attorneys laugh, and a holistic, team-based approach to maximize results, DangerLaw, LLC is “different and unique”. The firm can be contacted at 617-340-3231 and [Attorney@DangerLaw.com](mailto:Attorney@DangerLaw.com), or see [DangerLaw.com](http://DangerLaw.com).

## Foundation for MetroWest Launches ONEmetrowest

For 25 years, the Foundation for MetroWest has served as a connector, partner, and resource for the 33 cities and towns that make up the region. Today, the Foundation launched ONEmetrowest, its most ambitious year-end campaign to date aimed at engaging 1,000 donors who are “all in” for the Foundation’s mission by December 31.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Foundation quickly pivoted its work and efforts to address the pressing needs in MetroWest. From food insecurity to personal hygiene to

basic needs, the Foundation was there for its neighbors during the most critical time in its history, granting nearly \$3.5 million in emergency relief funding to date. Though the Foundation was able to mobilize resources and quickly distribute funding to the region’s most vulnerable neighbors, there is still more work that lies ahead, as we move into the fall and beyond. Donors to the ONEmetrowest campaign can show they stand by their neighbors in need and understand the importance of their community foundation during this challenging time.

“MetroWest is comprised of many distinct towns and cities, yet we all walk the same streets, share the same soccer fields, and shop at the same stores,” said Judy Salerno, executive director, Foundation for MetroWest. “Our community has turned to the Foundation for support during the good times and the unprecedented ones. Now, we’re leaning on our community to ensure we can sustain our work for many years to come. ONEmetrowest is about more than raising dollars for our annual fund—it is about ensuring everyone in this region

feels united, responsible for each other’s well-being, and vested in the vitality of our communities because we are stronger together.”

ONEmetrowest will engage the Foundation’s longstanding supporters as well as community members who are new to the organization’s mission by collectively exploring the issues, opportunities, and voices that unite the 33 cities and towns of the region. The campaign will mobilize neighbors to increase engagement throughout the region, create new connections to foster important discussion and debate, and strengthen support for the organizations and nonprofits that contribute to MetroWest’s unique community and character.

The campaign is an extension of the Foundation’s 2020 key initiatives, including emergency relief efforts, celebrating its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and revitalizing Impact MetroWest with additional data on race and equity indicators in the region. Additionally, the Foundation’s new series, “Voices of MetroWest,” will amplify diverse voices with unique perspectives and convene community members in a series

of virtual town hall events aimed at elevating meaningful and impactful discourse.

“As a community foundation, we have proven the importance of our existence over the past 25 years, especially through our recent emergency relief work,” said Jay Kim, Chief Operating Officer, Foundation for MetroWest. “While this has certainly been a highlight in our history, it is important that we are around for the next 25 years and beyond to continue this important work for our friends, families, and neighbors who rely most on the resources we provide. We are asking our community to show that it is ‘All in for ONEmetrowest’ by giving to our annual fund by December 31.”

For more on ONEmetrowest and information on how to donate, visit [www.foundationmw.org/onemetrowest-campaign](http://www.foundationmw.org/onemetrowest-campaign). About Foundation for MetroWest Celebrating 25 years of service to the MetroWest region of Boston, the Foundation for MetroWest, the only community foundation serving the region, is embarking on its most ambitious



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**ONEMETROWEST**

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# Real Estate Corner

## Spilka, Lewis letter regarding post office

**Dear Representative Clark and Senators Warren and Markey,**

We are writing to you today in support of the Ashland Select Board's September 6, 2020 letter regarding the delayed clean up and reopening of the Ashland Post Office Building located at 205 Main Street.

Ashland's post office has now been closed for ten months, and there is still no sign of work getting underway for its reopening. This post office is a vital service for the community and for the local economy. The long-term, unplanned closure of this post office has made an already challenging year even more difficult for residents. We urge you, the members of the United States Congressional Delegation from Massachusetts, to lend your sup-

port so that much-needed construction work can be started immediately and Ashland's post office can be reopened as soon as possible.

Last fall, after being determined to be a safety hazard, Ashland's post office was closed due to mold. Necessary repairs were never started, and reopening timetables were repeatedly pushed back. In February of this year, the United States Postal Service announced that work to repair the office would begin in May. Since February, Ashland officials have not received any further updates and repairs to the unused building have still - 10 months later - not even begun, leaving it as a safety hazard. We understand that the pandemic has made it necessary

to reevaluate outstanding projects through a heightened lens of public safety. However, to put this project - which should have been a priority even before the pandemic - on indefinite hold without notice is

egregious. Safe and socially distanced construction work is well under way across much of Massachusetts and the country. Construction needs to begin; Ashland deserves a post office.

Thank you for your considering this request for support. We are grateful for the support that you all have demonstrated for the U.S. Postal Service this year, and we ask you that extend that to advocacy for this specific case. We are happy to talk further about this issue or answer any questions, so please do not

hesitate to get in touch via our respective offices.

We wish you a safe and productive remainder of 2020. Best wishes,

*Senate President Karen E. Spilka, Second Middlesex and Norfolk*

*Representative Jack P. Lewis, Seventh Middlesex*



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# Ashland Business Beat

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

## Shop Ashland This Holiday Season

The Ashland Business Association (ABA) wants residents to know that many of the 400+ businesses in town are ABA members and can help make holiday shopping easy. Members include restaurants, fitness and dance centers, and flower and gifts shops. For a list of products and services, visit the online directory, [ashlandbusinessassociation.com/directory](http://ashlandbusinessassociation.com/directory).

## Need Social Media?

The ABA will match up Ashland High School students who are proficient in using social media with ABA member businesses that need help with their social media outreach. The program provides businesses with help in effectively using social media advertising and students with business experience. For more information, contact [president@ashlandbusinessassociation.com](mailto:president@ashlandbusinessassociation.com).

## Covid-19 Re-Opening Consult

Owning and operating businesses during Covid-19 is not easy. The town is here to help.

Sgt. Ed Burman, Ashland's Covid task lead, will come to a business and help it work through workplace standards. To set up an appointment, contact Sgt. Burman, 508-532-7988. For town Covid case and other related information, visit [www.ashlandmass.com/765/Coronavirus-2020](http://www.ashlandmass.com/765/Coronavirus-2020).

## New Businesses in Town

Ashland's economic development office reported the following new businesses have opened on Pond Street (Rt. 126):

**Mama's Bakery** serves authentic Brazilian cuisine including pizza, sobremesa, and paes. 67 Pond St. 508-872-3003, open Monday-Saturday 10am-10pm, Delivery is available. Follow them on Instagram: @mamasbakeryforyou

**Ashland Nutrition** serves healthy protein smoothies, energizing metabolism boosting teas and protein coffees. 61 Pond St. Follow them on Facebook and Instagram: @ashlandnutrition. 774-389-8582, [ashlandnutrition@gmail.com](mailto:ashlandnutrition@gmail.com)

**Mama Samia's Bakery**, 119 Pond St. (Excel Gas Station)



Image/Shelby Hinchy

## ONEMETROWEST

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annual fund campaign yet—ONEmetrowest. Though the region is comprised of a multitude of towns and cities, we are stronger when we come together as one. The Foundation promotes philanthropy across the area, helps donors maximize the impact of their local giving, serves as a resource for local nonprofits and enhances the quality of life for all our residents. The Foundation wants to ensure it can continue doing this work for 25 more years and beyond. Since inception, the Foundation has granted \$23 million to its nonprofit partners and currently stewards more than \$26 million in charitable assets for current needs and future impact. To learn more, please visit <http://www.foundationmw.org/> or call 508-647-2260.

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Our Ad & Editorial Deadline is the 15th of each month, for the following month's issue.