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January 2021

The Voice of Your Community

Ashland Group, AREA, Promotes Diversity

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

When George Floyd was murdered last spring while being arrested by several police officers, many people were horrified by the callous disregard for his life. Ashland residents Cara Tirrell and Margaret Musoke said, "Mothers everywhere heard their sons crying 'Mama.'" Tirrell and Musoke heard a call to action. They decided they wanted to come together as mothers and friends and make a difference.



Left to right: AREA co-founders, Margaret Musoke and Cara Tirrell. (Photo/supplied)

In June, Tirrell and Musoke invited together other mothers, fathers, friends, and neighbors who wanted to find a way to make Ashland more inclusive. "We invited a group of POC (People of Color), educators, and allies," Tirrell said. "From those first meetings we chose a name for our group, AREA: Ashland Resi-

dents for Equity and Action, and decided on a mission: 'A group of People of Color and their allies in Ashland working together to ensure that their voices are represented in local civic organizations, government, and schools. We support and promote People of Color-run businesses in Metrowest as engines of eco-

nomie development that benefit the community at large. Through community action we want to make Ashland a safe and inclusive community for all."

The group then established two subcommittees, one to

PROMOTES DIVERSITY

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As Students Go Remote, Ashland Nutrition Services Provides Healthy Meals

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Many Ashland working families, like other Americans throughout the country, are being caught in the economic fallout from the pandemic. According to a recent PBS NewsHour/NPR/Marist poll, 40 percent of Americans say they or someone in their household has lost a job or income due to the coronavirus. Local families, too, are losing income and jobs and are facing eviction and food insecurity.

When the coronavirus abruptly closed schools on March 13, 2020, Lisa Beaudin, Director of Nutrition Services for Ashland Public Schools, did not hesitate to act to help stressed families. Less than a week later, on March 19,



she started grab and go meals to provide free breakfasts and lunches for children attending school remotely from home and applied for funding through the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

When students are remote,

NUTRITION SERVICES

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Around Ashland Town News

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

December Town Meeting Results

Eighty-seven residents turned out for the Dec. 8 special town meeting at the Ashland High School gym. The warrant contained articles deferred from June's annual town meeting. Eleven articles passed; articles 7, 8, and 14 were withdrawn. Notably, residents passed article 6, giving the town the go-ahead to take by eminent domain 12-16 Union St., property gifted to the town in 2018 for a public safety building, not yet deeded to the town. The town manager said the town is now looking to go through the eminent domain process to acquire the gifted land and land for an easement requested by the property owner.

Upcoming Special Town Meeting and Election

To fund two proposed building projects, the Public Safety



Mindess School building project is scheduled to break ground in late fall of 2021 and open to students in September 2023. (Photo/Cynthia Whitty)

Building and Mindess School, which require a town meeting and a ballot vote, the town is tentatively planning—at the time of this writing in mid-December—a second special town meeting on Jan. 9 and a special town election, Jan. 13.

The town will offer absentee voting for the election. To obtain an absentee ballot application, visit the town clerk's website, www.ashlandmass.com/219/Elections-Voting, or the Mass. Secretary of State website, www.sec.state.ma.us, or contact the Town Clerk's Office, 508-881-0101, x7127, townclerkoffice@ashlandmass.com. For information on dates and other town meeting updates, contact the

town manager's office or visit www.ashlandmass.com/449/Town-Meeting.

For updates on the public safety building, visit www.ashlandmass.com/756/Public-Safety-Building-Project or www.facebook.com/ashlandpsb, and on the Mindess School building project, visit mindess-schoolbuildingproject.ashland.k12.ma.us or email building-committee@ashland.k12.ma.us.

Downtown Revitalization Project Update

The downtown construction project will begin in early January, according to a town spokesperson. The contractor, P. Gioioso & Sons Inc., will com-



The Public Safety Building (artist rendering) and the Mindess School building project require a town meeting and a ballot vote. (Photo/supplied)

plete the project—from Main/Myrtle Street (Mill Pond Dam) to just beyond Summer/Front streets to Ashland Lumber—in two phases.

The project includes upgrading traffic signals, sidewalks, and crosswalks, resurfacing pavement, and installing trees,

ornamental street lights, underground the utilities (electric, cable, fiber), and removing utility poles. The first phase includes Test Pits and relocating water services, installing electrical vaults (Eversource), manholes for other utilities, and conduits.

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NUTRITION SERVICES

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families pick up the meals, three breakfasts and three lunches for each child, at the high school each Monday and Wednesday, 3 to 5 p.m. The grab and go meals program is open to children age 21 and under, regardless of income level or address, or if they attend Ashland schools. The USDA reimburses Beaudin for each meal she serves.

“So far this school year, Sept. 14 through Nov. 30, we have distributed 24,522 meals through the grab and go program, and provided 28,218 meals when students attended in person. That’s a total of 52,740 meals prepared and served with love by my amazing staff!” Beaudin said.

“At first we thought the closure would be just a couple of days, and then we heard that it would be two weeks. That’s when we started the grab and go program [on March 19],” Beaudin recalled. “As we all know now, our schools closed for the remainder of the 2019-20 school year, so we fed our remote students until June 30.”

Grab and Go Meals Fed Students Throughout the Summer

“In addition, each Wednesday over the summer, we gave out cases of produce and protein, as part of the USDA Farm to Family program. By partnering with the



Nutrition Services staff member Linda Doiron prepares fresh salads for remote students. (Photo/supplied)

Metrowest YMCA Clearbrook Swim Club [120 Parker Road, Framingham], families could pick up the food. The Ashland Lions and Neighbor Brigade delivered meals the Y prepared to around 30 families that could not get to

the Swim Club,” she said.

Beaudin Continues Grab and Go Meals into 2021

“When school started on Sept. 14, we began providing meals again to the in-school students—Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,

Friday—as well as grab and go meals—three days’ worth, two times each week—out of the high school. Initially, the USDA grab and go program was only funded through Dec. 31, 2020, but in October, USDA extended it through the end of the 2021 school year,” Beaudin said. She will continue the grab and go meals through all the school vacations as well.

Beaudin’s staff serves fresh food, not frozen or processed, for both the in-school lunches and the grab and go meals. “We pride ourselves on sending home as much whole food as we can,” she said. “Lots of programs send home processed food because it is easier to store and package. But we make fresh entree salads, sandwiches and wraps, and great, scratch-cooked entrees, like meatloaf, grilled chicken, nachos, chili, and other items that we prepare with whole foods, not processed products. Even our pizza is made

with fresh dough. That’s why we always say we are the best restaurant in Ashland!”

“Because we are reimbursed by the USDA for each meal we serve, we want to encourage all children to take advantage of the grab and go meals program. Since it is not funded by the school budget, the USDA is our only source of income to pay the staff, purchase and maintain our equipment, and buy the food.”

“Although registration is not a requirement, we do ask that families sign up each weekend, for one or both days, online at bit.ly/2Is17Zy so that we know how much food to prepare. Since our meals are fresh, signing up helps us ensure that everyone gets a great meal.”

For more information, contact Beaudin at lbeaudin@ashland.k12.ma.us or visit www.ashland.k12.ma.us/nutrition-services.

PROMOTES DIVERSITY

continued from page 1

address the public school’s curriculum and one to promote representation of people of color on Ashland committees and boards and in local government. The first subcommittee introduced a curriculum in September with the school system that includes anti-racist education and historically accurate information as well as hiring practices for educators who reflect the diverse community at large.

The second subcommittee developed a forum for residents to learn about opportunities for POC to have a “seat at the table.” Tirrell noted, “POC on local boards and committees only further benefits the Ashland community.”

As more Ashland residents have joined AREA, the group has been hosted several meetings with Ashland’s Assistant Superintendent Michael Caira and Warren School Principal Peter Regan. In addition, several members of AREA have researched, attended, or joined town boards, including the Affordable Housing Trust Committee, Parent Teacher Organization, Ashland Education Foundation, Inc., Ashland Cultural Council, and the Dog Park Committee. AREA has also approached the Ashland Business Association, compiled a list of BIPOC- (black, Indigenous and people of color) owned businesses, and will continue to promote these businesses in Metrowest.

“We have reached out to town administration and will

continue to connect with boards and committees to support our mission of inclusivity,” Tirrell said. “AREA plans to pursue 501c3 [nonprofit] status, since obtaining funds and grants will allow more anti-racist programming and education in Ashland.”

The members of AREA include Margaret Musoke, president; Barbra Sekesogundu, vice president; Cara Tirrell, secretary; Moala and Raymond Kitayimbwa; Alan and Sandra Galiwango; Nancy De Romero; Lisa Abbascia; Makeda Keegan; Senti and Susie Kironde; Amaris Pena; Abby Powers; Bernadette Lunkuse; Tonya Yaskovich; Rajashree Ghosh; Claudette Rowe; Serena Lillie; and Ashley Place.

To find out more about AREA, visit ashlandequity.org.

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Do You Have a Good Scenario for Selling Your Home: By John Szolomayer, RE/MAX Executive Realty

If you've ever wondered what the best strategies are to sell a home, you've come to the right place. You'll find tips and strategies used by professionals, average people selling their homes and everyone in between. Some of them may surprise you!

Sell When You Have Equity

Equity, which is the price of the house minus the remaining debt from any loans, is the amount of money you will walk away from the sale with. The more equity, the better, as it can help with the real estate and legal costs involved in selling a home, not to mention helping you pay for your next home.

Sell When Interest Rates Are Low

For instance, now the interest rates on mortgages are as low as they have ever been for quite some time, and they're only going to increase from here. When interest rates are low, it might be time to consider that move you've been thinking about. With low interest rates, it gives a buyer a chance to afford more of a house.

Sell When You Know People Are Buying

This is where a realtor comes in handy. Selling when there are people looking for new homes

in your area is a common-sense decision. The only issue is finding out if or when people are looking in your town to make a home purchase, which is typically where a real estate agent can help.

Sell When Your House Is Too Big for You

If you find yourself with too many rooms to spare, selling a house that's too big and buying a smaller one is a sensible decision.

Sell When Your House Is Too Small for You

Perhaps there is a new baby on the way, or some of your ex-

tended family is moving in with you. Now would be a time to sell if you need a few more rooms to fit everyone.

Sell When the Work on the House Is Done

If you have home-improvement projects taking place, make sure they are finished and the tools put away before listing the house. A house in progress looks like a house unready, and a house that looks like it needs work – even if it's just something cosmetic – is less likely to sell.

Sell When You Aren't Panicking

If you are not in a rush to sell,

then don't act like you are – you will get lower offers if buyers think you're in a hurry to skedaddle. If you are in a hurry to move, try to be patient and wait for the best offer possible. You don't want to miss out on equity because you got caught up in a rush or lowball sale.

For more information on planning the right time to sell your home, please feel free to contact me today.

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 John.Szolomayer.com

Greater Ashland Lions Club

Welcome 2021! We've been waiting for this year to come; 2020 was not the best year, but will be long remembered for many disappointments, anxiety and stress and sadness to too many of us, giving us the ability to survive and create new ways of communication and help those in need.

The Greater Ashland Lions

wish you all the best of Health and a Prosperous new year, again "Thank You" to all our loyal supporters during this most difficult pandemic year whether it be a donation, attending a function or just say HELLO. We are anticipating a productive year with new and innovative and entertaining functions for all to enjoy. Please continue to read this column for

future events that will be in line with safe guidelines, wear a mask and be safe.

International Peace Poster Contest

Congratulations to all students who participated in The Lions Club International Peace Poster held at the Ashland Middle School in November. The names of the winners for the Greater Ashland Lions are: 1st Place Eve Skelton, 2nd Place Abirami Tilak and 3rd Place Zotia Likow-

ska this was the 33rd year that our Lions Clubs have participated and the topic this year was "Peace thru Service" for more information contact Lion Jan Shore.

Youth Speech Contest

The contest between the Ashland Lions and the Greater Ashland Lions was held on Dec. 21st the contest was done virtually and the winners will be announced at a later date. The topic for this contest is 2020-2021 "Is Wining Everything" this

is the opportunity for students to demonstrate their speaking ability in the presence of an audience. For more information contact Lion Margaret 508-881-9861 or Lion Patti 508-881-2034.

Coat Drive

Thank you for your donations of warm winter coats, the last date for donations will be Jan. 10. Contact Lion Deb should you wish to donate 508-881- 2117.

Congratulations Lions!

Lions Club International has recognized the following Lions for their years of commitment and service

With a Milestone Chevron Award to the following: Lion Diane Antonioli, Lion Mary Pimentel and Lion Cheryl Wyrzyk for 10 years of service. Recognizing Lion Mary Lou Hunt for 40 years of service.

Thank you, Lions for all you do.

Would you like to know more about the Greater Ashland Lions contact Lion Mary 508-881-5515 or Lion Ellie at 508-875-4513?

We are collecting eyeglasses, hearing aids, coupons for education tabs from soda, beer, soup and pet food cans. Contact Lion Marj 508-653-6267

Submitted by Lion Ellie Torelli

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Ashland Business Beat

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Association Seeks to Strengthen Ties with Residents

The Ashland Business Association (ABA) is kicking off 2021 with two virtual events: a program for business owners and residents, "How Customers Can Protect Themselves from Cyber Threats," on Jan. 21, 12 to 1 p.m., and business-to-business networking with the Metrowest Chamber of Commerce on Feb. 11 at 5 p.m. For details and to register, visit ashlandbusinessassociation.com/events.

Covid-19 wreaked havoc on many small business in 2021. Some businesses reduced their hours; changed their way of doing business, such as adding curbside pickup or outdoor dining; or closed altogether. In response, the ABA board ramped up its programming, holding an online "office hour" each week from March through June to answer questions and respond to business owners' needs. The association ended the year with a comedy night for the entire Ashland community, featuring veteran comedians, Cory Rodrigues and Kelly MacFarland. The event attracted 200+ attendees. The ABA plans to continue to strengthen its connections between its business members and the community in the coming year.

Mondofora: An Online Shopping Experience

Our retail community is adapting to a challenging world. To support them, the ABA and the town are working with Mondofora.com, a local business that has created an online shop-local marketplace to give our businesses an e-commerce presence and let shoppers conveniently buy locally online.

For information about Mondofora and their ecommerce Marketplace platform, visit bit.ly/3m4jPUU. To view a tutorial to set up an account, visit bit.ly/3qHMvXr.



Dr. Tej A. Shah is opening a dental practice in downtown Ashland. (Photo/supplied)

Microenterprise Business Loans Available

The town's economic development office reports that there is still funding available for the federally-funded Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for microenterprise businesses. Businesses can apply for grants of up to \$10,000 for microenterprise businesses (defined as a commercial enterprise that has five or fewer employees). For an online applicant, visit massgcc.submittable.com/submit. For questions, contact Beth Reynolds, breyolds@ashlandmass.com, 508-532-7905.

Note that business type exclusions to the grant include: real estate rentals/sales businesses, businesses owned by persons

under age 18, businesses that are chains, liquor stores, weapons/firearms dealers, lobbyists or cannabis-related businesses. Businesses must be located in one of the 23 participating communities.

New Businesses

The town's economic development office reports the opening of three new businesses:

The Baker Over Yonder focuses on baked goods where multiple allergens are omitted within each product. Located at 30 Main St., 2nd floor. 508-907-1005, thebakeroveryonder@gmail.com, www.thebakeroveryonder.com

Doragon Provisions is an artisan specialty foods market for small batch, artisan foods, ingredients, and products from around the world. Selections include breads, sweets, spices, teas, frozen meats, and assorted cheeses. Located at 1 West Union St. (Rt. 135, in rear of the building). Hours of operation: Monday-Saturday 11am-7pm / Sunday 12pm-5pm. 508-658-3088, www.doragonprovisions.com

Zen Family Dental is coming soon to downtown Ashland. Dr. Tej A. Shah has created a new facility with Covid 19 measures in place and will soon be ready to welcome new patients. Located at 5 Homer Ave. Expected hours of operation: Friday-Sunday, 9am-5pm. 508-387-3733, info@zenfamily.dental, zenfamily.dental



Doragon Provisions markets small batch, artisan foods, ingredients, and products from around the world. (Photo/supplied)



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Adopt-a-Street Volunteers Provide Ongoing Street Cleanup

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

The GreenUp Ashland (GUA) committee—volunteers who organize the annual, town-wide cleanup usually held in the spring—also coordinates an ongoing Adopt-a-Street cleanup program.

“The program encourages residents and businesses to take pride in their town, as well as be active participants without a huge amount of time commitment,” Jeanne Walker, a GUA committee member said.

Though residents can sign up anytime, adoption clean-up periods generally run from spring to early fall depending on access

to roadside litter due to weather conditions. GUA provides participants special Adopt-a-Street yellow bags during the cleanup months. The participants leave the bags in designated locations where the Department of Public Works (DPW) picks them up or they place the bags in with their weekly trash pickup.



Girl Scout Troop 75356 clean the grounds of the Ashland Community Center last fall. (Photo/Andrew Klay, AHS Student)



Ashland resident Brett Jackson is the primary organizer for the Adopt-a-Street program. She joined GUA in 2019 and is responsible for organizing the program. (Photo/supplied)



Cub Scouts Dens 2 and 8 (“Webelo 1”) clean Gryncel Field in October. (Photo/Andrew Klay, AHS Student)



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“We presently have 35 adopters, including individuals and families,” Walker said. “Adopt-a-Street student clean ups can be used as community service time for Ashland High School students, too.”

“We want to recognize the efforts this past year of the many volunteers from throughout town. These volunteers help keep litter off the streets throughout the year,” Walker noted.

For more information or to sign up to participate in the Adopt-a-Street program, visit www.greenupashland.org/adopt-a-street or the Facebook GreenUp Ashland page.

Clean-up During Covid

GUA committee members along with 46+ residents, using Covid protocols, took to the streets in October to participate in the annual GreenUp Ashland event.

Typically, the town wide cleanup occurs the first Saturday in May. Due to the pandemic, the event was delayed until the fall. According to volunteer Karyn Dann-Barboza, a GUA member, said, “GreenUp Ashland got creative and had all the signups done online, and with the help of some other volunteers, distributed 63 GreenUp Ashland bags to participants.”

“The cleanup involved some wonderful organizations, like the Ashland Lions Club and Workmen’s Circle Group, as well as a few cub and girl scout troops,” Dann-Barboza reported. “Last year also involved Ashland High School students who worked for community service hours. In total, 44 locations around town were cleaned up.”

Discussions are underway for the 2021 town wide cleanup. Follow updates on Facebook @ GreenUpAshland or on the website, www.greenupashland.org.

Your Money, Your Independence

2020 - The Worst Year Ever... Really?

Time magazine declared 2020 the “worst year ever”, drawing a red “X” over the year. If you lost a loved one, had to close your business or a job loss, I understand it was a bad year.

We, like many, were fortunate to only have to balance the stress of the unknown, care for aging parents and school-age kids, ensure continued growth of a business and minimize distractions for work to avoid job loss. Yet, 2020 created several opportunities in areas of financial planning.

Here are a few positive realizations:

Refinancing Boom. Whether it was your house, car or student loans, a prominent theme was refinancing to lower rates and shorter terms. Even if refinanced in 2019, the drop in 15-year mortgage rates was something to be thankful for.

You Can Save More. Notice you weren’t spending as much each month? You weren’t alone, many decided to revisit (or make) a budget, find frivolous expenses and where to cut for good.

Experience Spending. “You don’t know what you’ve got, til it’s gone”, wrote Joni Mitchell

(and later hair-metal band Cinderella). Miss travel, concerts, shows, sporting events and kids activities?

Use this as an opportunity to prioritize your experience spending and thoughtfully plan the vacations, family time and/or seasons for when the time comes.

Planning For The Unexpected. A global pandemic makes people see gaps in estate planning, insurance and access to emergency funds. Add job loss or health changes, updating a trust/will, qualifying for term insurance or obtaining a Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC) can be difficult, thus why critical to execute when times are good.

Still, witnessed estate planning attorneys, insurance agents, local banks and credit unions take proactive measures to help people access, do it safely and gain peace of mind.

Investing. Remember March? Stick with your plan? Or waiting for a crash to invest? What did you do?

As of 12/21/20, US stock market (S&P 500 Index) is over +15% and US Aggregate Bond Index about +7% for 2020, a very good year for those who

knew their risk tolerance, what they owned and why they owned it.

Work From Home (WFH). Something previously available to road warriors and trusted few, WFH was a blessing or curse, pending your child’s school or daycare status. It has led to greater appreciation for our teachers and childcare workers, better technology management and desire for housing with outdoor space as a priority over length of commute.

What will 2021 bring? Who knows.

Focus on treating your family and yourself by developing plans and then be willing to make them evolve.

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



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MassBay Donates Trucks to Keefe Tech Auto Program

MassBay Community College's Automotive Technology program is pleased to support local high school automotive programs by donating six 2019 GMC and Chevrolet trucks that were donated by the General Motors Automotive Service Educational Program (ASEP) to the College. A total of eight trucks worth more than \$360,000 were donated to MassBay, including five Chevrolet Silverados and three GMC Sierras. Two trucks will stay at the College to be used by MassBay Automotive Technology's GM ASEP Associate Degree program.

Six others will be donated to local high school programs, enhancing student's skills in the latest diesel, electronic, and safety technology. The six local high school automotive programs will have the opportunity to train on some of the latest vehicles on the market, perfecting their hands-on skills and expanding their automotive knowledge. The six 2019 GMC and Chevrolet diesel 1500 trucks will be donated to;

Joseph P. Keefe Technical

High School; Minuteman Vocational Technical High School, Lexington; Shawsheen Valley Technical High School, Billerica; South Shore Vocational Technical High School, Haverhill; Weymouth High School, South Weymouth; Whittier Regional Vocational Technical School, Haverhill.

The trucks being donated have original sticker prices of more than \$45K each, very low mileage, and were a part of the General Motors Captured Test Fleet. The donated trucks will provide students with experience working on the latest technology in diesel-fueled vehicles.

"We are grateful for this generous donation from one of our key strategic partners, General Motors," said MassBay President Dr. David Podell. "The vehicles they've provided enable our students to stay current in the latest technological innovations that we see from GM every year. We are pleased to pay it forward by supporting local high school automotive technology programs, helping fill the pipeline of skilled automotive technicians in our region."



MassBay GM ASEP students and instructors with the 6 trucks being donated to the local high school automotive programs, your consideration. Photo courtesy: MassBay Community College.

"General Motors has a long history of commitment to building a solid workforce of automotive technicians throughout the country by providing our students with the latest vehicles to train on, as well as the ability to donate some of these vehicles to local high schools," said MassBay General Motors ASEP Program Instructor, Paul Bresnick. "Their donation of these trucks will enable MassBay and local high school students learn essential vehicle diagnosis and service, and to build the necessary skills to enter the workforce as highly trained technicians, knowledgeable in their craft. We are thrilled to continue our close relationships with these high schools, knowing this will help

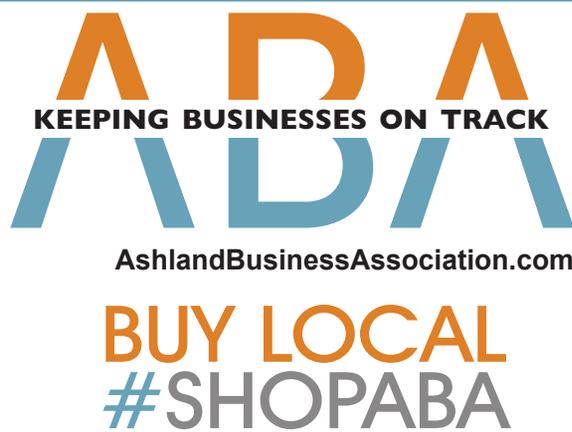
strengthen the local automotive workforce."

"Through the generosity of General Motors, and the thoughtfulness of the MassBay Community College's Automotive Technology program, the automotive instructors of Keefe Technical High School are grateful for the donation of this 2019 truck," said Keefe Technical High School Automotive Instructor, Scott Morvan. "This donation will greatly benefit the automotive students of our program by providing them with an extensive and appropriate example of current automotive technology. This opportunity will insure our graduates will prepare for entry into the marketplace with knowledge of technological innovations appli-

cable to the current automotive industry."

"MassBay's donation of the 2019 GMC Sierra to Minuteman High School gives our students hands-on experience with the latest automotive technology," said Donald Melanson, automotive instructor at Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School. "We are extremely grateful for MassBay Community College's continued partnership, which helps prepare future technicians with rewarding careers in the automotive industry and narrows the skills gap."

MassBay's General Motors ASEP is designed to provide the technical competence and professional level training of the incoming dealership technicians. The ASEP program involves academics as well as automotive lecture/ laboratory instruction focusing on GM products at the MassBay Automotive Technology Center in Ashland. Students are also required to work at a GM dealership as part of the cooperative education phase of their training. The General Motors ASEP Program is a collaborative effort between MassBay and General Motors and is certified by the ASE Education Foundation (formerly the National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation or NATEF) in all eight performance areas.



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Ashland Community Education Programs

Ashland Community Education is offering the following after school programs for the Winter of 2021.

At this time we cannot cross Cohorts so you can only attend an in-person class if your child is in school that day. The Warren School is the only in person classes at this time, so Cohort A & B applies to these classes.

The Mindess Scratch Programming on Mondays (grades 3-5) is Remote and the Thursday App Inventors class (grades 5-7) is Remote so anyone in the grades that apply can take these classes.

Ashland Community Education is offering the following programs for Winter 2021:

Warren: Robotics, Tuesdays Jan. 26 (Cohort A only) (Grades 1-2) in person, limited to 8 students.

Robotics, Lego Club, Fridays starts Jan. 29th (Cohort B only) (Grades 1-2) in person limited to 8 students.

Mindess: Remote Scratch Programming (Grades 3-5) and Remote App Inventors for 5th graders.

Middle School: Remote App Inventors for students in grades 5-7 (in the last email this said Scratch Programming for grades 5-7, that was incorrect, it is Remote App Inventors).

High School: Spring SAT Prep classes done remotely, Driver's Ed. classroom instruction is currently being done remotely.

For more information go to the Ashland Community Education website at: www.ashland.k12.ma.us/community-education or you can call or email Jeannie Young at jyoung@ashland.k12.ma.us or 508-881-0143.

It's Never Been More Important or Easier to Create or Update Your Estate Plan

Estate Planning is more important now than ever before, and luckily it's never been easier to implement an estate plan.

Do you know who would make healthcare or financial decisions for you if you lost capacity? Who would care for your children? These are some of the important decisions an estate planning attorney can help you navigate. And for the first time in Massachusetts, you can complete your estate plan with an attorney virtually, from home.

Under emergency orders issued this spring, law firms in Massachusetts have the ability to witness and notarize estate planning documents virtually, so you can stay warm, safe and healthy and gain the peace of mind that comes with providing guidance, direction and securing your legacy for your family.

After you've reached the age of 18, no one automatically has the authority to make health or financial decisions for you, not even a spouse. It is essential that you have the legal documents in place naming a person or people who can make decisions on your behalf. These disability planning documents, the Durable Power of Attorney, the Health Care Proxy/Living Will, the HIPAA Authorization form an essential part of your estate plan.

Almost half of Americans 55+ don't have a will, and data shows that these Americans are at the greatest risk for serious complications and death from COVID-19. Younger Americans are less likely to have a will, but because the pandemic has impacted people of all ages, its essentials for everyone to create or update their estate plan, no matter your age. Estate planning is essential whether or not there is a pandemic, but they are critical to have now.

Having a will and or trust in place allows you to control who manages your assets and cares for your loved ones if you lose capacity or pass away. You're able to designate guardianship for minor children and provide guidance for their care.

If you have an estate plan in

place, it's essential that you review it and update it to reflect your current wishes and the current law. 86% of estate plans don't work when you need them to. Common reasons are that the plans are outdated, failing to keep up with the law, or failing to have the right people in positions of authority. If your will or trust is 15 years old, just think about all the things that have changed in your life in the last 15 years! Add to that changes

in the law and you're in need of an update for sure.

Our office is offering virtual webinars to learn more about estate planning and how it can help you meet your goals and objectives, protect your legacy and help your family. We also offer virtual (and limited in-person) consultations to understand more about your goals and objectives and implement or update your estate plan.

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Ashland Lions

Another great year of Christmas Trees!

The Ashland Lions had a great year selling Christmas trees and wreaths. The lot opened the day after Thanksgiving, and every tree was sold out in just 16 days! This was an important fundraiser for the Ashland Lions because every other major fundraiser had to be cancelled due

to the pandemic. The Ashland Lions are grateful to the Ashland High football team and Coach McKay for their help unloading hundreds of trees upon arrival, and to Boy Scouts Troop 232 who volunteered every weekend to sell trees and wreaths. The Ashland Lions also thanks its members for their efforts with preparing the lot, covering



every open shift, and cleaning up when everything was done. Most importantly, we would like to thank the people of Ashland and surrounding towns who purchased their tree or wreath from the Ashland Lions tree lot to support a good cause, because 100% of the proceeds from selling trees and wreaths goes to our local community and Lions Eye Research. We hope to see you again next year!

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 17th, 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



Volunteers from Boy Scouts Troop 232 working hard at the tree lot this season.

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.

Happy New Year Ashland!

The Ashland Lions Club would like to thank the Ashland community for all its support again this past year. With your help we had a successful coat drive, and a great year selling Christmas trees. While we weren't able to hold many of the other events we have in the past such as our meat raffles or the concerts in the park, we do look forward to bringing back these things in 2021, along with some new ideas. We hope to see and hear from you soon!

New year, new members

Why not make 2021 your year of service to the community? If you're interested in becoming a member of the Ashland Lions, please reach out to us via email at membership@ashlandlions.org for details.

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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Sports

MADS Gymnastics Enjoys Unusual Season

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

While the Covid-19 pandemic still wreaks havoc amongst sports throughout the country, high schools are trying to get their athletes onto their respective fields so they can enjoy some semblance of a season.

Local gymnastic teams have been given the option to participate in the reduced season in person or remotely. Ashland high school which co-ops with Medfield and Dover-Sherborn to form MADS gymnastics, will be taking part in their contests in person.

"This is going to be a season of unknowns; one in which we are taking it week by week and day by day," MADS Coach Jennifer Libin said. "The meets are determined by the local schools, luckily we will be participating in the in-person meets. Some schools will be going remote where one school will go about their events in their school with a judge. The two scores will then be compared, and a winner decided."

Not actually knowing how your opponent is doing on a specific event has got to be tough. Libin is thankful that her squad will not have to deal with the remote scoring. MADS, who takes part in the South, will have six meets this winter season a home and away against Norwood, Medway, Holliston, Millis (MHM) and Norton.

Last winter, MADS finished fifth in the South Sectionals with a score of 141.975, 4 points off the top spot and a mere .0262 points out of fourth place. The squad also had two girls finish in the top 10 of overall scoring. By finishing in fifth MADS was edged out in earning a spot in the State Tournament. Unfortunately, with the situation at hand, sports will have somewhat of a season, but will not be able to participate in any tournament play this year.

"As of right now, it's a go and ... the season will start in early January. There is no real contact in gymnastics so it will be pretty much the same as in the



past except that the girls will be wearing masks," the Coach said. "We will have a small season with no post-season, which is a huge bummer for the girls but at least we will be having some sort of a season instead of nothing."

According to Libin, COVID-19 is not really going to interfere too much with the team having success, the only thing that will bother the girls is the inability to participate in tournament play. With MADS not really in a league, there is not championship to fight for throughout the season. The only thing they have going for them is the post-season and there will not be any of that this year.

"There will be no light at the end of the tunnel this year," Libin said. "The girls realize that, and they are grateful just to be able to go out and participate in an organized event."

Despite the situation the gymnastic team had a rather strong sign-up this winter. Although there will be a lot of new young new faces this winter, the

coach is very optimistic about the future.

The impending years will look bright, but for the seniors, who have had so much success over the past few years it will be a tough way to end his high school careers.

Senior captains Merritt Sullivan (Dover-Sherborn) and Ella Pezzullo (Medfield) will close out their abbreviated season with MADS this winter while looking to keep the younger girls focused and prepared for the years to come. Sullivan finished in second place at last year's State Tournament on the beam and will look to help the younger squad with her strong competitive natures.

Pezzullo will work her routines on the vault and floor, but what's more important to the team is her cheerleading. According to the Coach, Pezzullo is one of the loudest girls on the squad and installs a breath of fresh air to the rest of the team.

In addition to the two senior captains, MADS is primarily

underclassmen, five sophomores and seven freshman, most of whom bring a lot of talent to the mats and equipment.

DS sophomore Kelsey Chiu, who broke her back last year and was forced to miss the entire regular season before coming back around the Sectionals, is ready to get back to work. Chiu is a four-event athlete with floor being her best and although she was not able to participate last season, she still managed to make each and every practice and event cheering her team on.

"Kelsey was there all the time although she really didn't have to be with all her school work and physical therapy, she prioritized her life so that she could be there to support her teammates," Libin said. "That really says a lot about her character; she's one of those kids that teammates and coaches want on their team. She cares for her teammates and wants to support team in any way she can." Two girls the Coach has yet to see are Medfield sophomore Grace Vuzgo and Ashland freshman Elizabeth Forester. Vuzgo's older

sister Hannah was part of the team last year and is hoping the younger sibling is just as good. As for Forester, the coach is excited to see what the first-time varsity gymnast can bring to the team.

The MADS Coach considers Medfield junior Marina Linnert to be the team's Unsung Hero. During her first season on the squad last year Linnert managed to put up scores high enough to count in the teams scoring. Although not the highest score, she always brought a very solid performance to whatever event she was asked to take part in.

"I could use her anywhere, often in all four events, as she was a very versatile individual," the Coach said. "She was one who could role with the punches even if I told her what event she was doing right before the meet started."

Libin is looking to use this shortened season as a stepping stone to the future with all the younger gymnasts. Hoping that come next winter they will be ready, and the world will be back to somewhat normal.



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The Friends of the Ashland Library held its first-ever "drive buy" book sale on a warm Dec. 13. The group had 427 bundles available by category (Adult Fiction, Biography/Memoir, History/Politics, and so forth) and sold 229 bundles, for just over \$1,200 in sales and donations. All proceed support library programming. Organized by Jan Poppendieck, her volunteers included: Mike Jones, Claire Goss, Christine Poirier, Melinda and Matt Shuhy, Judy and Aiden Javidpour, Paula Bonetti, Kelly Battles, Betsy and Dave Emberley,

Cynthia Whitty, Kathy Goettel, Rob St. Germain and Brett Jackson. (Photos/Cynthia Whitty)





Ashland Library News

Everyone entering the library will be required to properly wear a mask and sanitize their hands upon entering. Masks will be available if you need one. Staff will gladly pull items to be picked up curbside for anyone who cannot wear a mask for medical reasons.

Hours for limited browsing and curbside pickup:

Monday - Thursday
11 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Friday - Saturday 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

When you arrive in the parking lot, please call 508-881-0134 ext. 2 to speak with a librarian in the adult/teen area or ext. 5 to speak with Children's Room staff. You may be asked to wait if the library has reached capacity. Only one family will be allowed in the Children's Room at a time.

While in the library:

You will be allowed 30 minutes for browsing or 45 minutes for computer use per day. Printing fees/per page are .15 cents for black and white and .25 cents for color, payable by cash or check.

- Masks/face coverings must be worn.
- Please use hand sanitizer - dispensers are throughout the building.
- Practice social distancing by remaining 6 feet apart from others.
- Please do not consume any food or drink.

Please continue to return your items outside in the available bookdrop.

Curbside pickup is still available.

Curbside pickup...

Find the items that you want in the catalog (find.minlib.net) and place a hold listing Ashland as your pickup location. If you don't have internet access at home, please call the library at 508-881-0134 for staff assistance to place a hold. Your reserved items will be held for one week. Inter-library loan and statewide delivery have resumed. This service is available to anyone with a valid Minute-man library card.

Pickup hours:

Monday - Thursday
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Friday and Saturday
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

You will be notified when your item(s) are available for pickup. When you arrive at the library, please call 508-881-0134 to let staff know you are here. Your items will be delivered to the table on the library patio (Main/Concord Street entrance) for you to take. If you need assistance, please let library staff know when you are contacted about pickup.

Returning Items:

Please use the library book returns located in the library parking lot and near the main entrance on Concord Street. Please note that only one bookdrop will be available for returns per day to allow for suggested quarantining. All items (including media) may be returned in the same bookdrop. If a bookdrop is locked, please do not attempt to force the slot open to return items. No items will be accepted in person by library staff. Based on CDC guidance

LIBRARY NEWS
continued on page 14

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LIBRARY NEWS

continued from page 13

given to the Institute for Museums and Library Services, any items that get returned will be quarantined. Overdue fines will not be charged while returned items are in quarantine.

Hoopla

hoopla is a groundbreaking digital media service offered by your local public library that allows you to borrow movies, music, audiobooks, ebooks, comics and TV shows to enjoy on your computer, tablet, or phone – and even your TV! With no waiting, titles can be streamed immediately, or downloaded to phones or tablets for offline enjoyment later. We have hundreds of thousands of titles to choose from, with more being added daily. hoopla is like having your public library at your fingertips. Anytime. Anywhere! Sign up using your Ashland Public Library card and download up to 5 items per month.

Introducing Kanopy

Kanopy is an on-demand streaming video service providing access to more than 30,000 films and documentaries from a variety of independent filmmakers and distributors, including the BBC, PBS, A24, and the Criterion Collection. Ashland residents with Ashland Public Library cards will be able to watch 4 films per month. Set up your account at: ashland-mass.kanopy.com Then, download the Kanopy app on any of your devices to begin watching.

Minuteman Mobile App

The Minuteman mobile app puts the library in your pocket! Look for the Minuteman Library Network in the App Store and Google Play and download the app to your smartphone or tablet. Search the catalog, renew items, manage your holds and check out items using your camera's phone or use your digital library card to check out items at one of our staff assisted check-out stations.



Photocopiers

Color photocopying is available on the main level and black and white photocopying is available in the exhibit area on the lower level.

Computers

Several computers are available for public use. There will be a 45-minute limit on computer use until further notice. Printing in color, black and white and scanning are available.

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The library staff would be happy to help you obtain materials from other libraries that are not found in our collection. Delivery is slower than usual because of library closures so please be patient.

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Real Estate Corner

Ashland Resident Named to Foundation for MetroWest Board of Trustees

The Foundation for MetroWest, the only community foundation serving the MetroWest region of Greater Boston, announced today that three community members are joining its Board of Trustees: Charles E. Carter, Jr., Ph.D., LICSW, Senior Evidence Director at Project Evident and Ashland resident; Katherine Garrahan, Partner at Bowditch & Dewey and Framingham resident; and Margaret Kley, community advocate and Wellesley resident. The trio's individual perspectives and collective experience will help the Foundation advance its goal of maintaining and improving the quality of life for all residents of the region.

"Ensuring our Board of Trustees incorporates a broad range of perspectives and reflects the communities we serve is critically important to fulfilling the Foundation's mission," said Judy Salerno, executive director of the Foundation for MetroWest. "Charles, Katherine, and Margaret each bring distinct qualities and important insights that will enhance our organization and help us support the remarkable nonprofits that make MetroWest a great place to live."

Charles E. Carter, Jr. is a Senior Evidence Director at Project Evident, a national organization that harnesses the power of evidence to improve outcomes for communities. He has more than 20 years of experience working with children and families with limited resources and influence. He approaches this work with



equal parts curiosity, humility, passion and humor, aiming to positively impact the systems and organizations that work on behalf of vulnerable populations. Carter was previously Deputy Director and Chief Strategy Officer at the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, where he led the creation of a learning strategy and built the capacity of individuals, organizations, and systems to drive and scale innovation on the ground. He earned his master's degree in Social Work from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and his Ph.D. in Social Work from Boston College. He lives in Ashland with his wife Robyn and their two children.

"The Foundation for MetroWest has proven over 25 years that it is committed to supporting the region's vulnerable residents and connecting our community's needs with the organizations that can help to address them," Carter said. "I have spent my career pursuing this same mission, and I am eager to work with the Founda-



tion to provide help and hope to those who need it the most."

Katherine Garrahan is a Partner at Bowditch & Dewey, LLP, focusing on helping commercial, nonprofit and institutional clients address land-use, zoning, permitting, acquisition, financing, and leasing matters. Her experience bridges many sectors, including schools, clinics, social services, multi-family, and specialty facilities. Garrahan has served on the Board of Directors for MetroWest Legal Services since 2003 and is currently its President. She is a Past Chair of the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce, where she also chaired its Public Policy Committee for several years, and currently serves as General Counsel. Additionally, Garrahan serves as a Board Member of the Alliance for MetroWest Unity and MetroWest Medical Center.

"Having a strong community foundation is essential to the success of any region," Garrahan said. "The Foundation has helped MetroWest improve and grow while ensuring it remains



Kley said. "The Foundation for MetroWest understands how important community engagement and involvement are to overall quality of life. I will work with the Foundation to continue connecting the needs of our neighbors with the people and organizations who seek to meet them."

About Foundation for MetroWest

Established in 1995, the Foundation for MetroWest is the only community foundation serving the cities and towns in the region, encompassing 700,000 residents from Westborough to Waltham and Acton to Walpole. 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 is supported by a wide range of businesses, individuals, community groups and other philanthropic organizations. Since inception, the Foundation has granted \$19 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.

an inclusive, supportive place for all who call it home. I look forward to using my skills to help expand opportunity and prosperity for my neighbors throughout the community."

Margaret Kley has volunteered on the Board of the New England Tennis and Education Foundation and has been a volunteer tutor in Boston Public Schools and at the Sportsmen's Tennis and Enrichment Center in Dorchester, as well as in the town of Wellesley. She graduated from Princeton University with a degree in chemistry and from the University of Pittsburgh Medical School. Kley and her husband live in Wellesley, where they have raised their two college-aged boys.

"MetroWest's deep-seated spirit of volunteerism is a key part of its culture and character,"



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1BR	15	**	30%

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*Income limits apply. Preference for current residents and current employees of the Town of Ashland. Rents, Income limits & utility allowances based on HUD guidelines. Information contained herein subject to change without notice. For more info, language assistance, or reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, please call or email.



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