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July 2021

The Voice of Your Community

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Inside...



'Strong and Deep Roots' Define Ashland High Class of 2021

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Principal Kelley St. Coeur welcomed family and friends on June 6 outdoors at Ashland High School's 2021 graduation for 215 graduates. The event focused on student speeches and performances.

St. Coeur said, "... It is so wonderful to stand here with you for what feels like a 'normal' graduation. This year has been anything but normal. While we are still holding a modified, shortened graduation ceremony it is exciting to be here in the sunshine, with our masks off if we choose, as a united community."

Referring to the uncertainty brought about by the pandemic, St. Coeur thanked all those who made the year a success, especially faculty and staff: "Your willingness to put countless hours into preparing these students for today has

helped to make the Class of 2021 ready to go out into this

As I listened to the lyrics of the song we will hear shortly



AHS Principal Kelley St. Coeur at the microphone.
Photos/Happy Wednesday Photography

quickly changing world."

She went on to say, "Today's ceremony marks the official end of your career as students of the Ashland Public Schools. Ashland is a place that will always be your home.

and read the speeches you are about to hear from your peers I thought 'Your roots are strong.' This year, whether

STRONG
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High-Quality, Discounted Solar, Clean Heat and Cooling Technologies Offered to Residents

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Ashland, Holliston, Framingham, and Natick are launching a new program, MetroWest Solar + Clean Heat Challenge, for residents and small businesses across these four communities. The program was announced in Ashland via email from the town on June 11.

The MetroWest Solar + Clean Heat Challenge is a regional campaign focused on helping residents and small businesses install solar and clean heat and cooling technologies. The program will connect homeowners and business owners to high quality, discounted, clean energy solutions and competitive pricing from installers for solar



MetroWest
Solar + Clean Heat Challenge

MetroWestCleanEnergy.com

panels and clean heating and cooling systems, known as heat pumps. Discounted pricing through the program is available to residents and small-business owners in Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, and Natick through December 2021.

SOLAR
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STRONG

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you know it now or not, has made you stronger and those roots even deeper. The challenges you have faced were hard, but your generation has taken steps to embrace what is hard, not hide from it. Don't let the negative aspects of this year define you, keep looking for the positives, the chances to grow and learn. No matter how far you travel I hope you will always consider Ashland High School your home. This is a year that all of you will tell your children and grandchildren about some day. I hope your stories are about the resilience and strength you gained from perhaps the hardest year of your life thus far."



Gianna Dowd and Elizabeth Mumford



Sarah Fisher, Fiona Vasile, and Patrice Musoke



Caitlyn Blecher and Erica Desiata



John Jimenez, Galwin Willas Gracias, and Keven Xavier



Quentrix Rance in the seniors' parade.



A tradition started in 2020, a graduates' parade through town.

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SOLAR

continued from page 1

Frank Nakashian, Ashland’s Sustainability Coordinator, is one of the project managers for the initiative. Nakashian said, “Ashland was the lead community in developing the original program scope, RFP creation, and RFP management. I worked on this with members of the Sustainability Committee and municipal staff from Natick, Holliston, and Framingham. Now, since we are starting the program, I am involved with vendor management, coordinating outreach, and other program management tasks and am working on this with municipal staff in the three other communities and the Sustainability Committee.”

Nakashian said, “We do not have a specific goal [for signing up a certain number of customers], however, for solar pv [photovoltaics], after 200 kW in combined solar systems are installed in the four communities, base pricing for solar will be lowered for all customers.”

A “Meet the Installers” webinar was held on June 17. Nakashian said they “will hold more informational events as the program moves along. Some of these webinars will be ‘solar 101s’ or ‘air source heat pump 101s’ where the vendors will have a more targeted presentation on the systems. There will be volunteer events promoting the program at farmers markets and other town events. Volunteers will also be hosting solar or heat pump ‘open houses’ where interested residents can meet with a homeowner who has solar or heat pumps and ask questions on topics such as utility costs, maintenance, financing, temperature control and other items.”

Ashland Local Town Pages asked Nakashian how the program came about, how it works, and where residents can find more information.

Whitty: How did this program come about?

“The communities of Ashland, Framingham, Holliston, and Natick all have established climate goals to reduce emissions and promote clean energy technologies. Notably, Ashland passed a Town Resolution calling to get to net-zero emissions by the year 2040. According to the 2017 Massachusetts Green-

house Gas Inventory, 27 percent of statewide emissions comes from residential and commercial buildings, thus encouraging ways to promote clean energy technologies is a priority for Ashland and the three partnering communities. The Ashland Sustainability Committee ran a similar program, the Ashland Solar Challenge in 2014, which was very successful and the MetroWest Solar + Clean Heat Challenge builds off the program’s success. This program is also similar to the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center’s Solarize Massachusetts Plus and HeatSmart Massachusetts programs.”

Whitty: How does the program work?

“The communities issued a request for proposals to competitively select vendors that offer discounted pricing to residents and that also conduct a marketing campaign to increase education and awareness in the municipalities on clean energy technologies. This marketing campaign is done through various events throughout the communities including meet the installer video calls, advertising, clean energy open houses, and other events (stay tuned!). Community volunteers also help drive the program by assisting in outreach by sharing their heat pump and/or solar experience with others, helping out at events, hosting lawn signs promoting the program, and other activities to help spread the word.”

Whitty: How can residents and businesses learn more?

“To learn more about the MetroWest Solar + Clean Heat Challenge and sign up for a no-cost site assessment, visit the program website at www.metrowestcleanenergy.com. Ashland residents can also reach out to me at fnakashian@ashland-mass.com if they are interested in volunteering to help promote clean energy technologies or host a program yard sign.”

What are Heat Pumps?

Frank Nakashian, Ashland’s Sustainability Coordinator provides a primer on heat pumps: Heat pumps work by using electricity to transfer heat from one place to another moving it in or out of a building. This is similar to the way that a refrigerator or air conditioner works, except that heat pumps can move heat in either direction to provide both heating and cooling. It takes far less energy to move heat than it does to create heat, making air-source heat pumps more efficient than fossil fuel heating systems. Homeowners who currently heat their homes with an oil, propane, or electric baseboard system, whose heating system is at the end of its useful life, or who already have solar panels, are good candidates for heat pumps. In the summer for cooling, air source heat pumps work like an air conditioner, using refrigerant to transfer heat out of your home. For heating, heat pumps operate in reverse, providing heating by extracting heat from the outdoor air to heat the space. Air source heat pumps can use existing ductwork or can also provide heating and cooling to an individual room, part of the home, or the entire home by ductless options.

Also known as geothermal, ground source heat pumps are similar to air source heat pumps except they move heat in and out of the ground instead of the outside air through pipes buried underground. Because the ground is more stable in temperature year-round than the outdoor air, ground source heat pumps are more efficient than air-source heat pumps and air conditioners at heating and cooling, making ground source heat pumps overall very efficient systems. Ground-source heat pumps most often pair with ductwork, although there are options available for homes with hot-water based heating systems.

Heat pumps are more environmentally friendly than fossil fuel systems as they run on electricity and do not give off emissions. Every year in Massachusetts, the electric grid gets a higher percentage of power from renewable sources such as solar, wind energy, and hydroelectric. The strategy of building electrification is a key piece of Ashland and the state’s climate goals of reducing emissions.

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Ashland Farmers Market: New Vendor Offers Ready-to Eat Meals, Ayurveda Style

BY ASHLEY THOMPSON AND CYNTHIA WHITTY

The Ashland Farmers Market (AFM) has a new food vendor for its 2021 season: Sethji's Indian and Vegetarian Meals-To-Go, owned and operated by Divya Raghavan Molloy.

Sethji's Indian and Vegetarian Meals-To-Go offers complete vegetarian south Indian meals. The meals are based on a traditional Indian way of eating called a "Thali." Unlike typical American meals that have a main protein, a starch, and vegetables, Thali is a meal consisting of many different dishes on one plate. The meals are based on Molloy's traditional family recipes that have been passed down through generations. The meals take into account the Ayurveda principles of "whole-body" healing, and the flavors are a delicious balance of sweet, sour, heat, and salt.

Molloy grew up in Bangalore, India, and came to Massachu-

setts to get her MBA degree. She worked as an engineer for companies like Yahoo! and ESPN. Two months after graduation in 2016 her daughter was born, and Molloy decided to start her own business, Sethji's Indian and Vegetarian Meals-To-Go, to spend more time at home. Molloy's husband, Seth, encouraged her to make the change, pointing out her passion for cooking and how she would wake up in the morning and began cooking every day. The business is named after him [Sethji].

"I started off wanting to do a mid-week dinner for families and individuals," Molloy explained. "You've run out of groceries, you're working really hard, you don't have time to make your meals. I have that covered for you."

Molloy offers a variety of meals with something new on the menu every week. There are options for gluten-free and dairy-free diets as well.

In addition to AFM on Saturdays, Molloy offers meals Wednesdays through Fridays to customers who order online at www.sethjis.com and pick up at 26 Park St., Medfield. Molloy also offers six-week meal subscriptions; details can be found on her website.

AFM runs every Saturday through October 9, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at 125 Front St., across from the Ashland Public Library. For up-to-date vendor information and to sign up to receive a weekly email, visit AshlandFarmersMarket.org.

AFM Awards Scholarships

AFM congratulates its 2021 scholarship recipients, Rebecca DeBenedictis and Steven Hyland. Each recipient is receiving a \$1,000 award. DeBenedictis has been a long-time AFM teen volunteer. She plans to attend Vanderbilt and study Human/Organizational Development, with a focus on Community

Leadership and Development. Hyland has also been an AFM volunteer. He plans to attend Framingham State University and study Environmental Studies and Sustainability.



Rebecca DeBenedictis



Divya Raghavan Molloy named her business after her husband, Seth. (Photo/AFM)



Steven Hyland

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AHS Student Tends Community Gardens



Ashland High School student Dhruv Chugh volunteers at Ashland Community Gardens (ACG), helping gardeners Eby Kuriakose and Rob Moolenbeek do some early season clean up, weeding, and applying mulch between in-ground beds. ACG is a thriving community spot with 57 garden beds, including one large bed for growing food that is donated to the Ashland food pantry. (Photo/supplied)

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

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 affordablejunkremoval.com.

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Around Ashland Town News

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Town Meeting Recap

Ashland's annual town meeting on June 12 was comprised of 56 voters out of 12,441 registered voters in town. All 10 articles passed. Articles 1-5, 7 and 9 passed unanimously. Article 6 passed with a simple majority. Articles 8 and 10 passed with a 2/3 majority declared by the Town Moderator. For a list of articles and the meeting minutes, visit www.ashlandmass.com/449/Town-Meeting.

Town Election Results

For the annual town election on May 18, three candidates—Yolanda Greaves, Pam McQuillan, and Rob Scherer—ran for two seats on the Select Board, and three—Kathy Bates, Christina Fitanides, and Marc Terry—for two seats on the School Committee. Greaves and Scherer held onto their Select Board seats. For School Committee, Terry was reelected along with newcomer Fitanides. For official election results, visit the town website at <https://bit.ly/3cvNqVk>.

The town announced in June the return-back-to-retirement of Police Chief Vincent Alfano effective July 1. Alfano, was offi-



Police Chief Alfano Retires, July 1

cially appointed on July 24, 2019, after serving as Ashland's interim chief since March of that year. In a social media post, Ashland's town manager said, "Chief Alfano's leadership has been instrumental in navigating the challenges of the last couple of years, not the least of which being a global pandemic. Through

these pressures he has been a big part of Ashland's realization of a new public safety facility, which is no small feat in and of itself."

Residents Invited to Participate in Racial Equity Focus Groups

Over the last year the Town of Ashland through its Racial Equity Steering Group has been committed to gaining a better understanding of the perspectives and experiences of people of color within the community. In an effort to systematically collect this information and data, the Steering Group has contracted with Suffolk University's Institute for Public Service to conduct focus groups and surveys. The Steering Group invites the community to participate and share their experiences, perspectives, and ideas. These focus groups will provide an opportunity for the Town to better understand the equity and racial issues facing our community. To participate, email Jennifer Ball at jbball@ashlandmass.com.



Awards and Recognitions

Police Chief Alfano presented Crossing Guard Barbara Thoresen recently with a plaque



thanking her for her dedicated service to the Town of Ashland. Thoresen retired her post last July after serving for 49 years as a crossing guard. Many of the police department staff remember her safely crossing them to school when they were young.

Fire Chief Robie announced in June this year's recipients of the Massachusetts Firefighter Service Award, which is given in appreciation and recognition of years of dedicated service as a career firefighter on behalf of the citizens of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The recipients were: Firefighter Peter Stone, who just finished 50 years in April; Firefighter Mark Byron, 30 years; and Firefighter David Blake, 25 years.

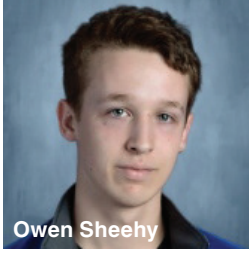
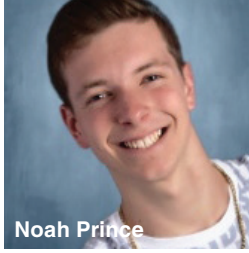
Ashland Senior Center Introduces AIDE for Older Adults

Senior Center staff is introducing a new program, Activities, Internet Connection, Devices, and Education (AIDE), for older adults to connect, engage, and stay active. Qualified Ashland applicants 60+, currently receiving one type of assistance (Fuel Assistance (LIHEAP), SNAP, Medicaid, SSI, Housing Assistance, or VA Pension) will be provided a tablet, internet connection and a Virtual Senior Center with activities and classes. Seniors will be able to listen to music, play a game and more. For more information or to apply, contact Candi Wilson at 508-532-7945, cwilson@ashlandmass.com.

Construction Updates

The town reports that construction work on the Route 126/Pond Street Revitalization Project and Downtown Revitalization Project on Main and Front streets is significantly impacting traffic and asks residents to plan their travel accordingly. Visit the town website for details and to sign up to receive a newsletter at ashlandmass.com/160/Department-of-Public-Works.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR ASHLAND KEEFE TECH CLASS OF 2021 GRADUATES

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More workers are quitting their jobs than at any time in at least two decades.

The Wall Street Journal shared how professionals are burned out from extra pandemic workloads and stress, while others prefer the flexibility of remote work.

Given my recent engagements, there are new perspectives on health, family, and time. Less focus on “earning more, to do more”, but what needs to happen for a new lifestyle while maintaining future goals. Some seek semi-retirement (less pay and responsibilities, more freedoms), others full retirement in their 40’s or 50’s.

Before firing off a resignation, consider the financial and family impact. A few (of the many) items examined:

Employer benefits are left behind and taxation created? Health and life insurance comparisons are important, but a greater impact is on the values



Glenn Brown

and taxation on RSUs, ESPP, pension, and deferred compensation distributions.

Also, bonuses. Is your current firm far-exceeding ‘21 plan and you’ll forfeit by leaving? Will the new firm offer prorated bonus eligibility?

If over 55 but under age 59 1/2 and need income from oversized retirement accounts, pause on rolling over all of your 401(k) until you understand IRS Rule of 55.

Buying a new home or refinancing? When applying for a mortgage, refinance, or HELOC, lenders base decisions on many factors, including consistency of earned income. Witness a few days before closing, they will again ask for a most recent pay-stub.

If you plan to earn less or become self-employed, this can limit your ability to borrow or refinance. Thus, timing is equally important as the desire for a change.

Will the new employer’s grass stay greener? Firms seeking talent are being aggressive with benefits and amenities. Part is due to retention of their own talent, so what do things look like in a year?

Are promotions as frequent? Are “team-building” events still posting every Friday on LinkedIn?

Are you still fully, or partially, remote?

What is your cash flow in 2024, 2026, or with kids in college? Entering investments into a “retirement calculator” is nice, but it’s the equivalent of checking tire pressure and declaring a car will be fine in 5 years.

Want confidence in sending your resignation?

Run various cash flow analyses with a CFP encompassing income, assets (growth, taxation), liabilities (rates, maturity), expenses, taxes, entitlements, and experience spending goals. Add stress tests by planning for the unexpected and sequence of investment returns.

Beyond understanding data, it’s critical all household members are engaged throughout and desire the “why” behind the change.

With cash flow models, family buy-in, and a focus on well-being, now have an honest conversation with your manager. If the firm says, “Sorry, but...”, personally thank your manager and make sure to log off Zoom before playing Johnny Paycheck or the Dead Kennedys cover.

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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'Drive-Buy' Book Sale Raises Money for Library Programming

Eight cars loaded with 560 packages of books lined the Front Street parking lot on June 6. The cars were organized by category. Customers drove down the line and selected packages at \$5 each, which volunteers placed in their cars. All proceeds support library programming. Organizer Janice Poppendieck is hopeful that future book sales will be held in the library community room.

Photos/Cynthia Whitty



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The b.LUXE Beauty Beat

Don't Let Summer Fun Ruin Your Hair

Can you feel it? The shift in the weather, the longer, warmer days, and that sudden urge to go for a swim! Yup...Summer's here!

For many of us, summer is the time to amp up our beachy, blonde highlights or try a lighter, brighter hair color. But, sun and swimming can damage hair and turn your tresses a not so beautiful shade of green.

Pool and well water can wreak havoc on hair color. Most people believe that chlorine is the culprit, but that's only part of the problem. There's a whole gang of harsh metals turning your hair green, and copper's the ring-leader!

Copper's found in most swimming pools, particularly ones filled with well water. It also enters your pool from copper-based algacides. Chlorine oxidizes the metals in the water and binds them to the protein in your hair shaft. With oxidation, copper turns a soft shade of green called a patina. While we love that hue on the Statue of Liberty, it's far less flattering on your blonde hair.

So, saltwater pools are safe, right? Nope. Unfortunately, they're all the same. Instead of manually adding chlorine to balance the pH, salt is added to the pool water, where it runs through an electrically charged generator, converting the salt to chlorine. Your local pool store offers test strips to check your water's metal levels. They can also recommend alternative treatments, metal removers and filters that will keep your copper levels in check.

Here's a few tips for keeping your hair summer sensational.

1. Wet and protect your hair

Wetting your hair down before you swim is key. Hair is porous and when dry, absorbs the minerals and chemicals from your pool. This is where a little hair prep goes a long way. Use filtered or bottled water to wet down hair and comb through a leave-in conditioner like *Kevin Murphy's Staying Alive Treatment*. This will seal your hair and protect it from sun and water damage.

2. Try a swim cap

Yeah, we know, they're not exactly poolside chic, but, if you're a regular swimmer with color treated hair, they're the way to go. They'll protect and hold your hair in place while you get your laps in.

3. Stop using copper-based algacides

Some pool algacides contain copper and yes, they do work, but they could also be turning your hair green. Look for metallic-free algacides or pay close attention to your chlorine levels and don't use algacides at all.

4. Start with healthy hair

The better condition your hair is in, the less likely it is to turn green. Your hair is vulnerable when dry or damaged. Regular conditioning treatments will help repair and seal your hair's cuticle to stop green absorption. We recommend *Brazilian Blowout's Acai Deep Conditioning Masque*.



hair • makeup • skincare • editorial

5. Wash your hair

Shampoo and condition your hair as soon as you're done swimming and once every two weeks, we recommend using *Kevin Murphy Maxi-Wash*, a detoxifying shampoo that removes unwanted build-up and preps your hair to better absorb conditioner.

6. How to fix green hair

Sometimes, even with our best efforts, green hair happens and a trip to the salon is necessary. To rectify those mossy locks, you'll need a *demineralizing treatment* to draw out hard-to-budge deposits and a *glaze* to restore and protect shine and lustre.

With a little prep and care, your color can stay soft, vibrant and most importantly, green-free all summer long!

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Ashland Business Beat

BY CYNTHIA WHITTY

Events for Business Professionals

The Ashland Business Association (ABA) has set its calendar for two summer events. To participate in the July 13 event or attend the Aug. 3 event, visit ashlandbusinessassociation.com/events.

Tuesday, July 13, Concert in the Park: Ashland Businesses have an opportunity to promote themselves at this community event sponsored by the ABA. The event, featuring The Back Pages Acoustic Duo, is open to the public. Admission is free. Business networking and promotion, 6 to 7 pm; concert starts at 7 pm. For \$25, ABA business owners may set up a table to promote their business. Event sponsorships are \$100.

Tuesday, Aug. 3, Annual Members' BBQ: Enjoy the company of friends in a casual setting with food and beverages provided. Invited associations are Ashland and Sherborn business associations and the MetroWest, Marlborough and Hopkinton chambers of commerce. Menu: Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Veggie Burgers, Gluten-free Rolls (optional), and Chips. Drinks:



Rebecca DeBenedictis

Water, Seltzer, Beer/Wine, and ice cream sponsored by Paul Ne-topski, Critical Prism Defense LLC. Free to members.

ABA 2021 Scholarship Winners

ABA Board and Scholarship Committee members, Paul Ne-topski (Critical Prism Defense LLC) and Valerie Gaines (At Peace Reiki) presented Brooke Kulaga and Rebecca DeBenedictis each with a \$1,500 scholarship. As part of the application process, students are asked to come up with an idea for community improvement.

Kulaga will attend Colby College. For a community improvement project, she suggested a self-guided walking trail of Ashland's historical sites. She says, "Ashland has a rich history that



Brooke Kulaga

can be conveyed by the enduring structures which are often passed by without a second thought. By mapping out a walkable path for residents to follow with the purpose of gathering knowledge while enjoying physical activity, the people of Ashland can feel more connected to both their town and their neighbors."

DeBenedictis plans to attend Vanderbilt University to study Human and Organizational Development. Her community improvement project idea is a "skills exchange" program between local Ashland businesses and high school students who are interested in learning more about a certain job field. "The overview of this initiative would involve connecting students who are interested in pursuing careers with similar Ashland businesses (restaurant



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owner, real estate agent, dentist, etc.). The Ashland student will meet with the business owner who will act as a 'mentor,' explaining to the student insights of the job and teaching them skills of that job field."

The Corner Spot Opens for Pop-Ups and Events

The town's Economic Development Office is recently announced that The Corner Spot is open for pop-up businesses and events, including CultureFest scheduled on Saturday, July 24. For up-to-date information on activities and events, visit thecornerspotashland.com/upcomingevents and www.facebook.com/thecornerspotashland.



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Reality Fair Provides Students with Real-Life Financial Decision-Making

By CYNTHIA WHITTY

Ashland High School seniors participated in the second annual Reality Fair on May 28. The event was organized by the Student Council and Council President Kaitlin Merson and overseen by Josh Wiczer, Student Council Advisor. The fair is designed to give students a glimpse into their future personal finances and just how far they might be able to stretch their paycheck.

Prior to the event, students select a career. When they come to the fair they are handed a monthly paycheck along with a credit score and career profile. They navigate over booths staffed

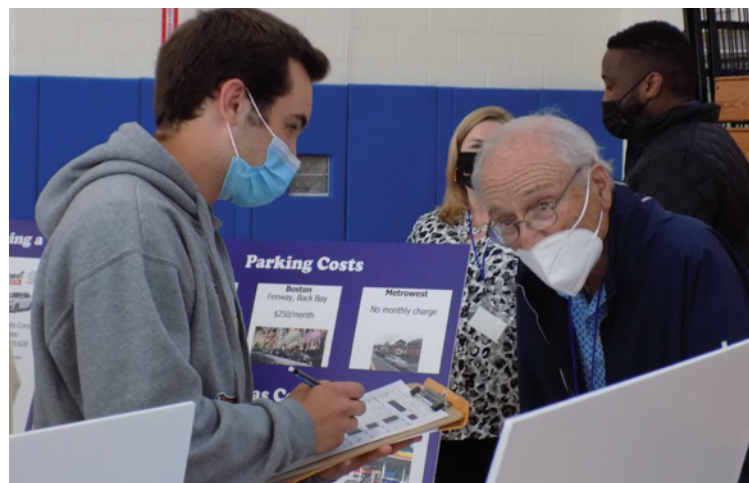
by over 60 local professionals and community volunteers, including from the Framingham Rotary Club and Ashland Business Association. The students then make financial decisions, such as deciding where they will live (at home or rent), whether they will buy a car, purchase health insurance, put some money away for retirement and add to their personal savings. All students are required stop by the “Reality Check” booth where they spun the “Reality Check Wheel” to see what surprise they would have to account for in their budget. (Win bingo? Get \$100! Emergency dental work? Pay \$300!) Students then sit down with a “budget coun-

selor” who reviews their monthly budget to make sure it balances, and if it doesn’t, they are sent back to the booths to adjust some of their financial decisions.

“Students found the experience to be eye-opening in terms of what it would cost to live the life they envisioned and it forced them to make difficult decisions, at times, to ensure their finances would balance,” Wiczer said. “The volunteers were impressed by the mature and fiscally responsible questions the students were asking as they attempt to make the best decisions possible.”

The Reality Fair was funded by a grant from the state’s Office of Economic Development and donations from Umholtz Plumbing and Heating, Denise Montoya Pottery, and WAITT (“We’re All In This Together”).

The Ashland High School Student Council would like to thank all of the volunteers who helped make this event a success and is looking forward to the 2022 Reality Fair!



Andrew Toorock helps Jacob Klay make a decision regarding transportation. Photos/Josh Wiczer



Assistant Superintendent Mike Caira spins the “Reality Check Wheel” for Ryan Boyles.



Lynn Zayac discusses health insurance with Ellie Stevens and Trisha Yadav.



Nutrition Services Director Lisa Beaudin works with Taryn Cavallo to figure out her monthly food budget.

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Ashland History

Frances (Fanny) Wadsworth Valentine

By Cliff Wilson, President, Ashland Historical Society

Fanny Wadsworth Valentine (name on birth record) was born April 5, 1880 on Mt. Bowdoin Terrace in Dorchester, Mass., the daughter of George Albert Valentine and Anna Elizabeth Loring. To simplify matters for the rest of this article, it should be noted that her grandfather

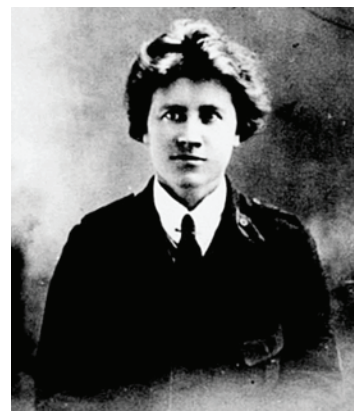
John Tyng Valentine was the 1st cousin of William Price Valentine who at the time of Fanny's birth owned what we now call the Valentine Estate on West Union Street in Ashland.

We don't have much information on Frances' early life, but at 18 years old, she graduated from Girl's Latin School and enrolled at Smith College in Northampton.

Frances was captain of the Pomeroy Delta Sigma basketball team. She graduated from Smith in 1902, and maintained a life-long connection to the school.

In May of 1905, we find her at the Grafton Country Club's horse and hound show along with President Garfield's son and Senator Hanna's son and in April of the same year she is a bride's maid at the wedding of Elizabeth Whitin in Whitinsville. Her father, George, died in 1907. In 1910, she is still living with her mother, brother, and sister-in-law in Boston. In 1912, the family moves to Westerly, RI, where Frances takes up the occupation of farming. By now, you are probably saying, "Ho-hum," what is so fascinating about this woman? Please stay tuned.

In 1914, Frances, at the age of 33 gets a job. She moves to Washington, D.C., and is employed by the US Department of Labor, Bureau of Statistics. She begins to travel the country, gathering information on minimum wages, wages paid to women, health issues, and workman's comp. As the United States enters World War I, Frances is found in Kansas, recruiting women to go to New Jersey to peel tomatoes for the canning industry. But this is evidently not enough support for Frances. In March of 1918, she joins 18 other "Smith Girls" in France driving supply trucks for the ravaged villages. In May of the same year, she was in the Somme district in France, 10 miles from the advancing enemy line. Although ordered to retreat, Frances and her friends felt that they could not leave the peasants alone. They spent two days under fire evacuating villages and bringing the French to safe quarters. In October, Frances and two of her



Fanny Wadsworth Valentine

friends leave the unit and join the American Women's Hospital Service, driving ambulances for the French army.

In 1920, the French government honored Frances with an individual citation, as follows: "Miss Frances Valentine, American member of the American Red Cross of New York: Under shell fire during the offense of March and April 1918, she helped with the evacuation of the sick, aged and children and with the establishment of canteens and rest huts on the Montdidier, Poix, and Beauvais fronts. She has had nearly three years' service and had actual charge of the reconstruction and relief of 30 villages."

After returning from the war, Frances again took up her job with the Department of Labor. In 1922, she went to Pennsylvania to study the living conditions and costs in the coal mining communities.

Ties to Ashland

In March of 1924, Frances bought two parcels of land on West Union Street in Ashland. One parcel contained 12 acres, the other contained 30 acres. She moved into the house across the street from the Valentine estate

and began to farm in Ashland on land that past-generations of Valentines had owned.

In 1927, Frances representing the General Federation of Women's Clubs of America went to Alabama to study the use of hydro-electric power in providing electricity to rural communities. She took special interests in the farms and their use of electricity.

Frances was elected to the executive committee of the American Red Cross, Ashland Chapter in 1929. They had just set up their headquarters at the new Telechron clubhouse on Main Street. That same year she purchased an additional 129 acres of land adjacent to her farm. Today the Ashland Community Center is located on a portion of that property.

Along with her farming, she continued her work with the Department of Labor, supervising many surveys mostly regarding health.

World War II obviously brought many changes to the labor market as many workers joined the armed forces. Farm labor was no exception. The country still needed a food supply. Frances was appointed to represent the Woman's Bureau of the Labor Department on the regional labor supply committee. Recognizing the need to use women in the farm labor force, Frances opened her house to a dozen or more Smith College students and assisted training them in farm work as part of the newly formed Woman's Land Army. She continued her work with the Labor Department trying to determine the fate of the women as the men returned from the war.

Frances continued to live in Ashland until her death on February 5, 1959 at 78 years old.

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Sports

Tennis Player Nair Has Big Plans

By CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY

Ashland's Arjun-Preethi Nair was first introduced to tennis by his father at the early age of 5 years old.

According to the now Clocker senior, tennis has gone back many years in his family, when it started with his great-grandmother playing the sport, so one could say tennis is in his blood.

As his father trained him in the sport Nair eventually got involved with the United States Tennis Association (USTA) where he has continued to play up until this spring. In addition to the competitive platform of USTA, Nair also takes part in the Universal Tennis Rating or UTR.

When he first stepped onto a tennis court with his racket in hand a young Nair was not interested in the nuances of the game but just hitting the ball.

"In the beginning I just liked hitting the ball as hard I could. I really didn't care if it was in or out as long as I was hitting it with all my strength," the senior said. "I had found that hitting the ball hard was good stress relief and now that I am older, I use that to my advantage in a different way on the court."

Along the way to learning the game of tennis, Nair met some coaches who were very instrumental in his acceleration of his game development. Anton Nikolov, a former Ashland High School tennis player who later went onto play at the University of North Carolina, Wilmington, pushed Nair's tennis career forward and grew his competitiveness.

"Anton was a real factor in my growth on the court," Nair said. "But there were also other coaches that taught me how to corral my emotions and accurately pinpoint my shot while gauging where to place it."

Prior to his junior year at Ashland, Nair had found himself on a run in the USTA circuit taking part in four semi-finals and a championship match all being in competitive level 5 tournaments. With his USTA season going quite well Nair decided to join the Clocker tennis team after the urging of the Ashland tennis players.

In addition to the Ashland players assuring him he'd be a

success, Nair believed that he knew had the time to take on the endeavor. Unfortunately, just as his high school career was to begin with his new teammates Covid struck and the season was cancelled before it could begin.

"Up until my junior year, I was very busy trying to improve my ratings. (Nair was currently at a 9 or 10 rating), but I felt at this time I was where I needed to be at the time so decided to tryout for the high school team," he said. "Covid was pretty disappointing as I was ready to play for Ashland and help them become better."

Although he couldn't pick up a tennis racket and participate in any type of tournaments, Nair decided that he would train harder while looking to improve himself physically as well as mentally. He would continue to focus on his studies while working out in his home gym until the Covid pandemic was no longer considered a threat.

With all athletes being sidelined for numerous months Nair was hoping that things would eventually subside, and everyone could get back to taking part in athletics. When and if they did, he would be ready.

Finally getting the chance to play high school level Nair found himself to be more than ready. Coming into his first and only high school tennis season the senior had set some lofty goals for himself as well as the team.

"My number one goal was to become Ashland's number one singles player while going the season undefeated," he said. "I was also looking to help the team win a State Title, which is a very ambitious goal, but you need to set your standards high."

Now that he has seen him play Ashland Coach Mike Roman is sad that Nair didn't get to play for the team last spring.

"I knew that he was a very good player, but I never expected him to be as good as he has been. He's an all-around great player with a strong one-handed backhand," the Coach said.

Mid-way through the Clockers season, Nair found himself with an undefeated record and having to face Dover-Sherborn's senior Dan Pomahac, who was also undefeated. Playing for more than



two hours in 90-degree weather Nair emerged victorious keeping his pre-season goal intact.

"That match he was focused, disciplined and worked extremely hard. His serve was excellent, and he was able to cover the court well," Roman said. "Both players left everything they had on the court; it was one of the best high school tennis matches that I have ever seen."

Coming into the contest, Nair's thought process was bouncing back and forth. The senior found that day to be very nerve racking as he was going up against a strong and undefeated player.

"Will I do well or will he come out and blow me out of the water," Nair thought. "Before the match I was talking strategies with my teammates, and they all assured me that I had this. Although I beat him 6-2, 6-2 the score didn't tell the entire story of the match."

The Clockers' number one singles player had some difficulty in the beginning of the match with Pomahac's intense serve, but as soon as he was able to grasp what the Dover-Sherborn player was doing he was ok.

There are still a handful of matches left for Nair and his Ashland teammates, but when the season ends, he'll get right back onto the USTA and UTR tournament circuit looking to improve his game which he is planning on taking to the collegiate level.

"I firmly believe that my high school experience has definitely helped with my confidence and has furthered my game," Nair said. "I'm hoping to continue playing competitive tennis on the

college level. As a Computer Science major (at the University of Vermont) it will be a great difficulty balancing my school work with tennis, but I'm looking forward to seeing if I can handle my studies while still playing the best tennis that I can."

With his college future still on the horizon, and if he'll be able to handle both his studies and playing tennis, Nair still has things to deal with here in Ashland—like finishing up his only high school tennis season with an undefeated record.



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State Police Colonel, State Fire Marshal Announce Fireworks Enforcement Efforts Have Begun Statewide

Residents are urged not to bring illegal fireworks into Massachusetts even if legally purchased elsewhere

State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey and Massachusetts State Police Colonel Christopher Mason announced today fireworks enforcement efforts have started. The State Police Bomb Squad is part of the Fire and Explosion Investigation Unit (F&EIU) assigned to the Office of the State Fire Marshal, which has already started working with local police and fire departments to enforce the fireworks laws and intercept fireworks being brought into the state illegally.

"It is illegal to bring fireworks into Massachusetts, even if they were legally purchased elsewhere," said State Fire Marshal Ostroskey.

The State Police Bomb Squad had a 63% increase in response to fireworks calls in 2020 over 2019. During the F&EIU 2020 fireworks enforcement operation, there were 47 criminal summonses issued over a 4-day

period. This year's enforcement operation has already started and will last longer.

"In addition to special enforcement efforts to intercept fireworks coming into Massachusetts, troopers and local police will seize illegal fireworks they find during routine traffic stops," said Colonel Mason. "We don't want a repeat of the huge increase in resident complaints we experienced last year."

In communities throughout the Commonwealth, there has been a significant rise in resident complaints regarding fireworks. Complaints to the Boston Police Department increased 1,518% from 1,504 in 2019 to 21,346 in 2020, and in calendar 2020, the Springfield Police Department received 3,504 calls for fireworks. The peak was between May 1 and July 31 when 3,345 calls were received.

Fireworks complaints to the Lawrence Police Department increased 409% in 2020 from 2019, and there were 159 fireworks complaints in 2019 and 810 in 2020. In the summer period (May 1 – August 31), fireworks complaints increased by 420% from 148 in 2019 to 769 in 2020. In Brockton, resident complaints about fireworks to the Brockton Police Department increased 611% from 209 in 2019 to 1,486 in 2020.

"There will be supervised displays of fireworks this year unlike last year, so we encourage you to leave the fireworks to the professionals," said Fire Marshal Ostroskey. "Fireworks are illegal because they are dangerous. Fires started by fireworks in Massachusetts increased 180% in 2020 from 2019."

In the past decade (2011-2020), there have been 941 major fire and explosion incidents in-

volving illegal fireworks reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS). The incidents caused 12 civilian injuries, 42 fire service injuries, and an estimated dollar loss of \$2.1 million, which is high considering most fireworks fires are outdoor brush fires.

Additionally, 32 people were treated at Massachusetts emergency rooms for severe burn injuries from fireworks (burns covering 5% of more of the body) according to the Massachu-

setts Burn Injury Reporting System. This does not include visits to hospital emergency rooms for eye injuries, amputations, puncture wounds or smaller burns. Forty-one percent (41%) of fireworks-related burn injuries reported by hospitals to the Office of the State Fire Marshal in the last 10 years (2011-2020) were to children under age 18. Twenty-six percent, (26%) were children under age 10.



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Greater Ashland Lions Club News

Summer? Where has the time gone? We've missed a whole year, but WE are ready to begin better than ever. First of All, as we start our NEW Lionistic Year (July 1st thru June 30th) with a new beginning and events to please all. HAPPY FOURTH OF JULY celebrate, have fun enjoy family and friends.

Congratulation to the two students who have been awarded the Greater Ashland Lions Scholarships Ruby Martinez (Joseph P. Keefe School) and Emily Flynn (Ashland High School) and best wishes to the CLASS of 2021 in all they pursue for their future.

Join us at the Farmer's Market on July 10th at the community table for information about the Greater Ashland Lions and the events that are scheduled for the near future.

The Annual Rubber Duck Slide Race (the Ducks have been waiting to return for their Annual Swim) will take place in August tickets are available now ADOPT A DUCK, price \$5.00 each or 5 tickets for \$20.00 1st place \$100, 2nd place \$50, 3rd place \$25. (Proceeds benefit High School Scholarships and Community projects) for more info. contact Lion Cheryl (508) 881-7056 or Lion Ro (508) 881-4743.

Reserve Now (it's never too early) order your Holiday Swags and Wreaths contact Lion Cheryl 508 881 7056 or visit us at Farmer's Market July 10th.

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The Greater Lions are accepting donations for Relay For Life should you wish to donate send your check to Greater Ashland Lions Club P.O. Box 41, Ashland Ma. 01721 or contact Lion Ro for more information (508) 881-4743.

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

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Legislature Advances Fair Share Act to 2022 Statewide Ballot

Proposed constitutional amendment would fund transportation and education investments

At a Joint Session of the Massachusetts Legislature, members of the House and Senate last month held a Constitutional Convention where they advanced an amendment to the state Constitution to provide greater investments in education and transportation funding.

The Amendment, which now goes before the people of the Commonwealth for a vote in 2022, establishes a four percent tax on annual taxable income in excess of \$1 million. The revenue generated, estimated by the Department of Revenue to be as much as \$2.2 billion annually, would fund repair and maintenance projects for roads, bridges or public transportation as well as funding for public education, including support for early education and childcare and public higher education.

“As we recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, and prepare for the Commonwealth’s long-term success, we must be bold as we strive to create the future we want to see,” said Senate President Karen E. Spilka

(D-Ashland). “I’m thrilled the Fair Share Amendment has advanced, moving us one step closer to being able to make the critical investments in transportation and education that the public wants and deserves.”

“Massachusetts has a bright future ahead of it and the House of Representatives is committed to a continued focus on education and transportation investments,” said House Speaker Ronald Mariano (D-Quincy). “Today’s vote allows the Fair Share Amendment to be placed on the ballot and put before the people for a vote. This measure is one step in a multi-pronged strategy to make our Commonwealth a more equitable place to live, work and raise a family.”

“When the Fair Share Amendment was first introduced in 2015, there were about 15,000 Massachusetts residents earning over \$1 million a year,” said Representative James O’Day (D-West Boylston), the lead House sponsor of the constitutional amendment. “Now in 2021, there are about 18,000 residents earning over

\$1 million a year. Clearly, there are millionaires and billionaires who can afford to pay their fair share in taxes, which will support our neighbors and local communities with investments in public education and transportation. Thank you to Speaker Ronald Mariano and Senate President Karen Spilka for prioritizing the Fair Share Amendment so early in the session.”

“The Fair Share Amendment once again received strong support from legislators and, in public polling, typically receives support from more than 70% of voters in Massachusetts,” said Senator Jason Lewis (D-Winchester), the lead Senate sponsor of the proposal. “The reason it is so popular is that most people recognize that our wealthiest residents can afford to pay a bit more in taxes to fund investments in public education and improving our transportation infrastructure that will grow our economy, expand opportunity, and make our Commonwealth more just and equitable for all.”

Should voters approve the ballot measure, the income level would be adjusted annually to reflect increases in the cost of living by the same method used to determine federal income tax brackets. This would ensure that,



over time, the additional four percent tax would continue to apply only to the highest earning individuals in the Commonwealth. The tax would apply to all tax years beginning on or after January 1, 2023.

The legislature must approve a constitutional amendment in

two consecutive joint sessions before the question appears on the ballot for voter approval. The Fair Share Act was approved for a first time on June 12, 2019, in a 147-48 vote. This week’s June 9, 2021, vote of 159-41 ensures the proposal will appear on the November 2022 statewide ballot.






Our real estate team is dedicated to giving back to our community here in Ashland. For every home we sell in Ashland this year, a portion of our proceeds will be donated to local non-profits that directly benefit our amazing town.

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Ashland library news

Ashland Public Library is open to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. for limited browsing (30 minutes) and computer use (45 minutes). Everyone entering the library will be required to properly wear a mask and sanitize their hands upon entering. Masks are 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. Curbside pickup will also be available, weather permitting, on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

If you plan to come into the Library, please note that the entrance (Concord Street side) will remain locked and you will be required to call the library at 508-881-0134 ext. 2 for the adult area and ext. 5 for the Children's Room when you arrive in the parking lot. You will be:

- asked health related questions about Covid 19 symptoms and personal or household exposure within the past two weeks.

- asked for contact information for the Town of Ashland's contact tracing needs.
- advised of time you will be allowed in the library (30 minutes for browsing/per day in the adult or children's area, photocopying and 45 minutes for computer use/per day)

You may be asked to wait if the library has reached capacity. Please note that only one family will be allowed in the Children's Room at a time.

While in the library:

- Masks/face coverings must be worn over the nose and mouth the entire time you are in the library.
- Please use hand sanitizer that is throughout the building
- Practice social distancing by remaining 6 feet apart from others
- Please only touch what you need. Any items you touch, but don't check out, should be placed in the quarantine bins located throughout the library.

- No food or drink will be permitted in the building.
- You will be able to check out your own materials with staff assisted checkout, or the Minuteman mobile app, to minimize handling
- Staff is available to answer questions and help you find things, but no one-on-one computer help will be available.

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

Curbside pickup will continue, weather permitting.

Curbside pickup is still available.

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 ser-



vice is available to anyone with a valid Minuteman library card.

Pickup hours:

Monday – Thursday 11 a.m. -6 p.m.

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 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: ashlandmass.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 checkout 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.

Inter Library Loan

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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Sponsor your hometown news sources and receive permanent placement on your chosen town site for 12 months! Tie in your corporate profile, company branding and social media feed into one neat place and reach your target audience with our local service directory. We also include Sponsored Content and Digital Advertising year round. No better way of keeping your company branding top of mind throughout the year!

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