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January 2023

Santos Selected Coach of The Year in the CAA

BY KEN HAMWEY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Ricky Santos earned a variety of awards during his career at quarterback for the University of New Hampshire and at Bellingham High, where he led the Blackhawks to a pair of Super Bowl championships.

Now, after his first season as UNH's head coach, the 38-year-old Santos has added more hardware to his trophy case. Leading the Wildcats to a 7-1 record in the Colonial Athletic Conference (CAA) and finishing as co-champions, Santos was named the conference's Coach of the Year. The season ended with an 8-3 overall record and marked the most victories and the first playoff berth since 2017. The CAA title was the university's first since 2014.

The CAA pre-season poll had UNH finishing ninth.

Santos reflected on the award and the playoff berth



Ricky Santos speaks to Bellingham football fans at Anderson Field when his number was retired.

by crediting his former coach, Sean McDonnell, for the team's success.

"It means everything," Santos said. "This program's been my entire life. I've got to give credit to Sean McDonnell. A

Hall of Fame coach, I know his career didn't end the way he wanted it to. A lot of this is for him. He was a part of

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How to Get Rid of an Old Mattress – and Other Textiles, Now

BY MARJORIE TURNER HOLLMAN,
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

You may (or may not) know that a new law took effect in Massachusetts November 1, 2022 that changes what must be recycled rather than be thrown out and becoming part of what is called the "Waste Stream." This change in the law concerning recycling will

affect how you dispose of some items. We will only address textiles, including mattress disposal, in this article. Mattresses, other textiles, and food waste were specifically addressed in this updated recycling law, but commercial

DISPOSAL
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Textiles, defined by Mass.gov as bedding, clothing, curtains, fabric, footwear, towels, and similar items, are among items named in a new Massachusetts law aimed at reducing the "waste stream." These items, if clean, should now be recycled instead of thrown away.

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SANTOS

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this. Most of our players came here because of coach Mac. For us to go from 3-8 to 8-3, I'm just so proud of the resolve of these young men."

UNH took care of business in the first round of the playoffs. Dylan Laube ran for three touchdowns and hauled in an 87-yard touchdown pass to lead the Wildcats to a 52-42 win over Fordham in the Football Championship Subdivision playoffs. However, a 35-19 loss to Holy Cross eliminated the Wildcats.

"We played our best football towards the end of the season," Santos noted. "And, it was rewarding to qualify for the playoffs. UNH football is back, and our goal every year will be to be ranked as a top 25 team in the FCS."

Santos served as associate head coach to McDonnell. A losing season in 2018 ended the playoff runs and was followed by a 2019 season when McDonnell was out on a medical leave and Santos, as interim head coach, led the team to a 6-5 record.

Then COVID-19 hit. The 2020 season became a one-game campaign in the spring of 2021. In the fall of 2021, the Wildcats started fast under McDonnell and won their first three games, but then dropped their last eight.

McDonnell retired after the season ended, and Santos took over, becoming UNH's 20th head coach.

While playing at UNH, Santos rewrote the university's record book at quarterback. He led the Wildcats to four straight playoff berths and after his collegiate career, he played pro football in Canada.

Santos was a hall of fame inductee at both Bellingham and UNH, and his number (2) was retired at both venues. At UNH, he earned all-America honors and won the Walter Payton Award (the 1-AA equivalent of the Heisman Trophy).

Santos finished his UNH career with 123 touchdown passes. He threw for 165 yards and a touchdown in the Hula Bowl and during his 2004 rookie season at UNH, Santos was named the ECAC Rookie of the Year and the Atlantic 10 co-Rookie of the Year. He holds UNH career

records in pass attempts (1,498), completions (1,024) and passing yards (12,189).

At the high school level, Santos was a dominant competitor in football. He was a two-time Tri-Valley League MVP, was twice named the Division 5 Player of the Year, a two-time Metrowest Player of the Year, and, as a senior, won all-State honors.

In November 2002, during the annual Thanksgiving Day game against Norton, he threw for seven touchdowns. He played forward in basketball on the 2002-03 Blackhawks squad that won a state championship.

When Santos took the head-coaching reins last year, quotes from his news conference provided plenty of insight that success might be just around the corner.

"I'm humbled and honored to be named head coach for such a storied program and at such a prestigious institution," Santos said. "We believe great teams are built on toughness, grit, and a family atmosphere. We will work hard to instill these qualities in our young men and cultivate an environment where our leaders thrive."

Hartford Ave. Subcommittee to Meet January 12th

The Hartford Avenue Subcommittee will be meeting on Thursday, January 12, 2023 at 5:30 pm in the lower level conference room at the Bellingham Town Hall.

He also emphasized the importance of being surrounded by good people.

"The foundation of any great program or organization is the people," he said. "When you look at what makes our team and this university special, it's everyone involved. From the administration, the assistant coaches, players, training staff, strength staff, equipment staff, faculty and the entire Durham community. Everyone shares the same vision in making sure we develop our student-athletes and help them reach their full potential."

Santos, who lives in Madbury, N.H., with his wife and two children, emphasizes UNH is his home away from home. "I have so much passion and appreciation for this place and the program," he said. "It's all so special."

The Bellingham native also cherishes the people and the town where his gridiron career began. "The people in Bellingham have always supported me, and it's a special place," he emphasized. "People have always reached out and showed appreciation for the success I've had. The town has a family atmosphere."

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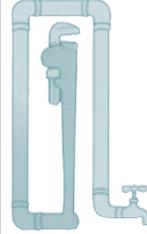


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DISPOSAL

continued from page 1

food waste disposal is a whole other topic.

First—what does the law mean by “textiles”? According to the mass.gov website, “For waste disposal-ban purposes, textiles are defined as bedding, clothing, curtains, fabric, footwear, towels, and similar items. Virtually any textile can be reused, repurposed, or recycled if clean and dry. Even worn, torn, and stained items have recovery value.”

This addresses some, but certainly not all the questions surrounding this new recycling regulation. According to www.recyclesmart.org an education initiative funded by Mass. DEP, “If you’ve got clothes that are covered in paint, grease, or mold, they should also be disposed of with regular trash pickup.”

Mass DEP Commissioner Martin Suuberg stated, “Recovering textiles is an excellent opportunity for our cities and towns to reduce trash disposal from their residents at the same time as they get paid for the valuable textiles that they recover. We are pleased to partner with this burgeoning industry to remove these valuable materials from the waste stream and put them back to work.”

What many do not understand is that recycling textiles is a money-making proposition. Companies such as Simplerecycling (which has a contract with Franklin and nearby Milford as well as other area towns) accept textiles for recycling for free. The company serving Franklin is a for-profit company. By recycling your textiles, you not only save your town money by reducing costs for waste disposal, you will also be supporting local industries that are working to develop this market of recycled textiles.

According to https://recyclesmartma.org/faq/ “One of the biggest misconceptions about donating clothing and textiles is that items must be in good condition. It ends up, clothing and other textiles (bedding, towels, table linens, etc.) are still useful, even if they are stained, ripped, missing buttons, or have broken zippers. As long as items aren’t wet, moldy, or soaked in oil or hazardous materials, they can be donated.

If they are unable to be sold for reuse locally, they may be baled and sold to export markets, made into industrial wiping cloths, or converted to fiber for insulation, carpet padding or sound-proofing material.”

Franklin’s Environmental Coordinator, Derek Adams, who manages the town’s recycling center, noted that Franklin has been recycling textiles since he started his position with the town in 2020. Franklin has a system, through https://simplerecycling.com/ for curbside pickup.

Bellingham’s Town Administrator Denis Fraine said, “Bellingham accepts textiles at our Recycling Center on S. Maple Street and has a container for them.”

So, what are you supposed to do with old mattresses? If you are purchasing a new mattress, you can request the seller take your old mattress for recycling. If it’s in good condition you may be able to donate it. Franklin’s recycling center accepts mattresses except those made of foam. Mattresses must be delivered to the Franklin Recycling center on Beaver Street. A valid recycling sticker is required for Franklin residents to access the recycling center.

In Bellingham, the waste disposal company E.L. Harvey & Sons will pick up mattresses curbside for residential custom-

ers, but you must call in the request to E.L. Harvey prior to putting the mattress and/or box spring out. There is a \$150 fee for pickup of all mattresses and box springs, including foam mattresses. Town Administrator Denis Fraine noted that “Residents can inform the mattress collector of the condition (bed bugs or soiled mattress) so they understand there will be a challenge, but residents will be assessed a fee by whoever collects it. For pickup, check the town’s website for details or call E.L. Harvey & Sons at 1-800-321-3002.

Franklin’s Recycling Center is on Beaver Street, almost directly across from Beaver Pond and is open in winter on Friday and Saturdays 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Sundays 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and additionally from April to November from Noon to 3 p.m. Bellingham’s recycling center is at 119 S. Maple Street. During winter (when the clocks are on standard time) the Bellingham recycling center is open only on Saturdays from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Summer hours include Sundays, same times.

To learn more, a number of websites offer Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), contact information to learn more if your concerns are not adequately addressed, and resources for how you can dispose of unwanted items. Check out these links:

- https://www.franklinma.gov/2022-waste-bans/pages/recycling-center information specific to Franklin residents
- https://www.bellinghamma.org/departments-public-works/pages/curbside-pickup-solid-waste-recyclables Information specific to Bellingham residents
- https://simplerecycling.com/ Here’s one option for towns to sign up for free textile recycling
- https://recyclesmartma.org/ state guide to information about recycling
- https://www.mass.gov/guides/textile-recovery#-consumer-textile-donation-&-recycling- includes information about Nov. 1 ban

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BHS Students & Bellingham Seniors Talk about Stress

By DAVID DUNBAR

Local senior citizens and eighth grade Bellingham High School students – about two dozen in all -- gathered last month to talk about stress.

Specifically, the subject was “Managing Holiday Stress”, but it broadened to include all kinds of stress including how to define it and ways of dealing with it.

“It’s a continuation of our intergenerational initiative at the high school,” explains Carlos

Manuel Costa of the BHS Wellness Department. “Students have indicated that they learned from the seniors and have realized that they have common ground when it comes to identifying healthy lifestyles.”

Costa moderated the stress conference and arranged the attendees at tables where students and seniors could speak together. He began by asking about powers of observation. “How many sides on a pencil?”

A student answered correctly. “Whose face is on a dime?” A senior answered correctly. Then, a few more questions and answers. (What color is the top stripe on the American flag?)

“And what did you learn?” he asked the group. Student Vrushin Shah offered that he learned that an elder at his table “drives a golf cart around in her garden.”

Observing what causes stress came next and responses included: “Christmas shopping.” “Peer pressure.” “Money.” “Decorating for the holidays.” “Dealing with people,” who student Lucas Lahousse noted, “don’t always get along.”

What can be done about these, and other, stressors? Solutions came from the young and the old: “Talk with people.” “Go to the beach.” “Learn how to let go.” “Take a walk.” “Nap.” “Listen to music.”

Costa handed out a four-page flyer. Page one was about techniques to relieve stress including deep breathing, progressive



Students from the eighth-grade BHS class visited the Senior Center to talk about stress. Jeremiah Allen, Charlie Baker, Carlos Rivera, Jackson Cinq-Mars, Brandon Garner, Vrushin Shah, Aida Robinson, Caleigh Hayes, Julia Magill, Mia Bartucca, Reagan Young, Lucas Lahousse, and Abraao Goncalves.



Carlos Manuel Costa of the BHS Wellness Department talks to the group of old and young offering ideas about how to identify and deal with stress.

muscle relaxation, and guided imagery. Page two was about ways to reduce or prevent stress including physical activity, time management, and talking about it. The other two pages offered positive ways to cope with stress including Relax, Refocus, Recharge, Reconnect, and Mindfulness (there was space next to each for attendees to fill in their own thoughts).

After the meeting, Costa said, “I think the most important thing was the exchange of ideas between generations... realizing that they are not that different, disconnected. The kids will be able to use these ideas.”

Over the past year, “exchanges have been in the form of motivational letters and poems, yoga activities, and even a domino tournament conducted by the students,” says Costa.

“The experience by both young and old has been very positive,” Costa continues, “and the feedback indicates that everyone has gained a great deal from the interaction.”

The topic of Managing Holiday Stress is “very much in line with the curriculum of the health education classes at Bellingham High School which focuses primarily on social-emotional health.”



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Family-run Affordable Junk Removal takes the stress out of cleanups

By CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Whether it's one old fridge in the garage or an entire home of unwanted goods, the team at Bellingham-based Affordable Junk Removal offers a cost-efficient, stress-free approach to waste management. "You don't lift a finger," says owner Jason Schadler, who started the company along with his wife Christine in 2005.

The business offers same-day service for both residential and commercial clients across eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island. In addition to junk removal, the company rents 15-yard dumpsters.

As a family-owned and operated company, Schadler says Affordable Junk Removal has lower overhead costs and is more accessible than national competitors. "I answer my phone 24 hours a day," he says. "I was on vacation in Italy and Portugal, and I was still answering my phone on the beach. When you call us, you get me — not an automated machine!"

Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible, properly disposes of non-recyclables and resells many items at the Schadlers' secondhand store, Resellables. "We opened that store in Bellingham because we hated to see things thrown away," Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around



and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

The Schadlers say that Bellingham has been an excellent hometown for both Affordable Junk Removal and their Resellables shop, and they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the area.

One of the best parts of his job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships with returning customers. "We

Business spotlight

are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the MetroWest area," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call (774) 287-1133 or visit affordablejunkremoval.com.

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Christine and Jason Schadler, shown here with their children and dog, started Affordable Junk Removal in 2005.

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Santa a Hit at Bellingham PD

The Bellingham Police Department hosted its Munchkins with Santa event on Saturday, December 3, 2022. The event was a hit, with children eager to meet St. Nick and parents ready with cameras in hand. Children enjoyed refreshments, crafts and music, while they interacted with friendly officers in their community.



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Bellingham Business Runs Collection for Deployed Soldiers

Frank Webb Home in Bellingham recently ran a collection in support of those who are currently serving. In this picture Michael Shain of Thanks To Yanks, Kelly Givani Regional Showroom Manager of Frank Webb Home and John Milot a local veteran and advocate for veterans are seen holding some of the donated items that will be sent to those currently deployed, For more information on Thanks To Yanks, please like them on Facebook.



Mr. Steve: A Creative, Entertaining Children's Librarian

By KEN HAMWEY,
BULLETIN STAFF WRITER

Mention the name "Steve Fowler" to young parents in Bellingham and the reaction probably would be a pause and some head-scratching. But, say "Mr. Steve," and the reaction likely would produce smiles and some wide-eyed grins.

The 43-year-old Fowler, better known as "Mr. Steve," was Bellingham's children's librarian for the last 11 years. The Montville, Conn., native resigned from that role last November, leaving behind a legacy that enriched the lives of countless children who not only admired his uplifting character, but also his relentless and sincere desire to entertain them.

Fowler, his wife Angelica, and their nine-month-old daughter Eliana have moved to Summerville, S.C., a community 20 miles west of Charleston with a population of 50,000.

"We prefer a warmer climate, and we found a neighborhood that provides the type of lifestyle I want for my family," Fowler said. "I'll miss Bellingham. I gave 100 percent to the role I had, and I received so much more in return. I'm grateful for the support of the families, the community, the library staff and its trustees."

Before arriving in Bellingham in July, 2011, Fowler was the children's librarian in two Connecticut communities — first in West Haven and then in Thomaston. Innovative and creative, Fowler introduced many activities while in Bellingham, but two of the most popular were Alphabits and the Cart-



Steve Fowler made Alphabits a popular activity during his 11 years as Bellingham's children's librarian.

wheel Book Awards.

"Alphabits is a weekly story time that involves a letter of the alphabet," he noted. "So, on a particular week we'd focus on the letter 'I' for example. We'd talk about things like ice cream and ice skating. Then, our activities and crafts (paper exhibits) would deal with ice cream and ice skating."

The Cartwheel Book Awards was a program whose name was derived from the library's outdoor statue (a girl doing a cartwheel with her books on the ground).

"The program was for kids 8-12 years old," Fowler said. "I'd choose 10 books to read through the course of a year. We'd then vote for their favorite book, the book with the best ending, the one with their favorite characters and the best-written book."

"When the results were in, we contacted the winning authors, who later sent us video acceptance speeches and thank yous. We also videotaped an assembly of the kids announcing the awards. Our thanks go to Lynn Scornavacca of Silver Lake Productions for taping that program."

Fowler's future will not be a fourth stint as a children's librarian. He's got three different avenues to pursue.

"I want to be flexible and be able to spend time with my family," he emphasized. "I plan to write children's books, entertain at children's birthday parties, and I want to offer the Alphabits activity to families at the national level." Fowler's website is: abcswithmrsteve.com.

The children of Bellingham, the community and Fowler combined to form a very caring partnership. That was obvious and also quite visible.

"I appreciated the community because it cared so much about education and the li-

brary's role in fostering education," he said. "And, I liked being around children, because you never know what to expect. There's no pretense with kids, you know what's on their minds, and they're fun to be around."

"I also liked watching kids grow and seeing them in different facets of their lives. It was fun to see them transition from story time to craft programs and then to book clubs."

One very pleasant memory "Mr. Steve" has of his 11-year stay at the library involved a two-year old boy named Aaron. "He came up to me after story time and asked me what I do for work," Fowler recalled. "I appreciated the question, because

what I did at Bellingham's library never felt like a job."

After graduating from Montville High, Fowler enrolled at Eastern Connecticut State where he earned a bachelor's degree in English. His master's degree is from Southern Connecticut State where he majored in library science.

Fowler demonstrated a genuine passion as Bellingham's children's librarian. Children and their parents not only enjoyed his talented style, but they also admired him because of his caring nature.

"Mr. Steve" may be in South Carolina but he'll always be remembered in Bellingham.

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- **WHY YOU NEED A HEALTH CARE PROXY**
A health care proxy names someone you trust as your agent to express your wishes and make health care decisions for you, if you are unable.
- **WHY YOU NEED A DURABLE POWER OF ATTORNEY**
A durable power of attorney gives extensive power to your chosen agent to act on your behalf, in case you are incapacitated. Without it, a family member or loved one would have to petition the court for that right.

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From the Town Clerk...

With the new year comes the annual census, which you should be receiving in the mail during mid-January. The census is a legal document the must be submitted annually. It is important to Bellingham, as it is used to determine the amount of State tax dollars that are returned to the Town. Please fill out and return your census promptly so that Bellingham gets its fair share!

There are two Town Meetings and one Town election scheduled in 2023. That dates are as follows:

- Annual Town Elections – May 2, 2023
- Annual Spring Town Meeting – May 24, 2023
- Annual Fall Town Meeting – November 15, 2023

Deadline dates regarding the above will be forthcoming as soon as they are formulated.

At the Annual Fall Town Meeting held in November of 2022, an updated version of Bellingham's Bylaws was approved. The dog licensing bylaws were significantly affected by the update as follows:

- Chapter 55 § 55-4:

In accordance with MGL Chapter 140, any owner or keeper who fails to license a dog before May 1 of the current year, said owner or

keeper will pay a late fee of \$25 per household kennel. Further, if said owner or keeper does not license a dog by June 1 of the current year, that owner will be issued a citation by the Animal Control Officer in amount of \$50, plus the late fee as stated above. If, after 21 business days, the owner or keeper has not yet paid the license fee, late fee and cited fine, the matter will be forwarded to the Magistrate of District Court for adjudication.

To simplify, the annual dog license is due for renewal on April 1 (bills are sent out in January with the annual census). There is a one-month grace period until May 1, at which time late fees are assessed (\$25 per household). If not paid by June 1, a citation of \$50 per household is issued. This is a change from the past cumulative fines that could reach into the hundreds of dollars. Please send in your dog license payments, accompanied by rabies certificates by April 1 to avoid any late fees or citations.

Beginning in January, filing for marriage intentions will take place Mondays through Thursdays from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.; Fridays by appointment. Please contact the Town Clerk's office for availability, and check the Town website for more specifics.

Wishing everyone a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year!

Bellingham High School Receives \$150,000 in Skills Capital Grants

On December 13th, 2022, State Representative Michael Soter (R-Bellingham) announced that Bellingham High School will receive \$150,000 in funding from the recent Skills Capital Grant Program. This funding will go to Bellingham High School's Innovation Pathway Manufacturing Program and Innovation Pathway Healthcare and Social Assistance Program. Skills Capital Grants are competitive grants awarded to educational institutions across the Commonwealth to update equipment and expand student enrollment in programs that provide career education.

"We are excited to receive these funds through the Skills Capital Grants program to support our initiative of Innovative Pathways. This will allow us to continue to create possibilities for students to participate in a pathway that will lead to a career. We are thankful to our State Representative, Mr. Michael Soter, for his continued support in providing the best educational opportunities for the students in Bellingham.," said Peter Marano Ed.D., Superintendent of Bellingham Public Schools

"The Innovative Pathways Program is vital to the success of future generations. I am excited to see how these grant funds will help students in Bellingham to achieve their dreams. I applaud Bellingham for doing everything to make sure that students can achieve these dreams.," commented Rep. Soter

Per the state website, since 2015, with these awards, the Workforce Skills Cabinet Skills Capital Grant Program has provided over 500 grants totaling more than \$200 million. The Massachusetts Workforce Skills Cabinet (WSC) was created by an Executive Order of Governor Charlie Baker on February 26, 2015. The Cabinet aligns the Executive Offices of Education, Labor and Workforce Development, and Housing and Economic Development toward a comprehensive economic growth agenda. The Cabinet is charged with creating and implementing a strategy to ensure that individuals can develop and continuously improve their skills and knowledge to meet the varying hiring needs of employers in the Commonwealth.

Greetings...

There is no better time than the holidays to express my sincere gratitude to the residents of Bellingham for allowing me to continue being the #1 Realtor[®] in our great town.

May all the best the season has to offer be yours throughout the upcoming new year.

Happy New Year!
from my family to yours!

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Your Money, Your Independence

New Year, New You... Not True?



Glenn Brown

Making New Year's resolutions to improve your financial wellness in 2023?

Let's help you start by recognizing questionable resolutions, including three destined for failure plus what should be considered for successful planning outcomes.

Bad Resolution: *Need to start buying "X" to grow my money.*

If you started 2022 with FOMO (Fear Of Missing Out) or based new investments chasing 2021 performance, how did that work?.

Yes, momentum, innovation, social & macro themes, niche, value and/or low-beta (risk)

could be part of your investing strategy, but let's back up - do you have a strategy?

Is a core of low-cost, diversified index funds present to allow for explore ideas like X? How does X correlate with what is already owned? Impact on overall risk? Without mentioning performance, can you articulate why you own X and when wouldn't own X?

Better Resolution: *Need to save ___% and take ___ risk with investments to reach ___ goal.*

To truly build assets, you need to save a specific percentage each year, take opportunistic or measured risks AND invest towards your established goal, not an investment benchmark or The Joneses.

Bad Resolution: *Pay down debt.* Sounds important, but is it? It depends. Tax deductions, interest rates, duration, fixed or variable, inflation, deflation, and depreciation ensure all debt is not equal.

Better Resolution: *Execute a debt reduction plan.*

Access all debt, then prioritize on high-interest debt, variable rates, and unsecured. If down to a 3% or lower mortgage, 2% auto loans, and a MassSave at 0%, then maintain required payments, reap benefits of low, fixed

rates in an inflationary environment and allocate towards investments outpacing those rates over time.

An exception, if not at ~40% home equity ownership, can make a case to get there and open a HELOC. Beyond flexibility to access equity built and lower total interest paid, can eliminate the opportunity costs of a large cash position for the "what ifs" in life.

Bad Resolution: *Do more for my retirement.*

Buy a lottery ticket, as greater chance of success than this vague "lose weight" resolution tossed by January 10th.

Better Resolution: *How do I retire at 55 or semi-retire in 5 years.*

Now you're analyzing cash flows, balance sheet, contribution rates, investment allocations, taxation, work benefits, college funding, planning for the unexpected and desired lifestyle with expenses in retirement. You'll establish a set of base facts, allowing to then create scenarios, see projections, reverse engineer action steps, and track goals within timelines.

Aggressive timelines creates urgency, leading to actions that bring you closer the ultimate retirement accomplishment - choice.

Now ask yourself, are your resolutions the same as last year?

What different actions are you going to take to make a difference?

Know what Einstein said about doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

Maybe it's time to socialized your goals, set monthly action items to create fresh start moments and leverage an accountability partner (i.e. Certified Financial Planner) to make your 2023 resolutions happen.

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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Winter Candyland Fair Great Hit

It's hard to say what was more popular...the kids' area, craft table, sweet shoppe or the raffles. All the kids' games were a hit, especially the pick-a-pocket, fishing and season games. The Nativity scavenger hunt was so much fun, and children got to bring their own nativity that they made home!

The adults had a great time choosing gifts for Christmas and playing the different raffles, including the main raffle with prizes drawn after the 4 p.m. Mass. Over 50 prizes awarded in all raffles. As usual, the kitchen

supplied a tasty variety of food enjoyed by many visitors! The Money Raffle will be drawn on January 8th (after the 10 a.m. Mass), and tickets are still available after all the Masses until then.

The committee co-chairs, Sue Garten, Diane Gaughran and Mary Tucker, want to thank all who attended the fair to support St Blaise parish. Thank you also to all who donated raffle gifts and to the volunteers for their time and work which made this fair possible.

Bellingham Garden Club to Offer Grant-Writing Workshop

Beneficial Virtual Workshop, January 21, 2023, 11 a.m.

Would you like to learn about successful grant writing tips, do's and don'ts and what grant reviewers might be looking for and ways to write a grant to be proud of? Come join us for this virtual event presented by the Bellingham Garden Club of MA. Registration via email by contacting us at: RSVP req by: 1/16/23

bellinghamgardenclubofma@gmail.com

<https://forms.gle/cyoEphBxD7p5joev7>

For additional details and a link to attend, email us above.

Bellingham Garden Club of MA

<https://bellinghamgardenclubofma.com>



Diana McDonald, Beverly Sherrill and Murielle Cyr at "Saint's Sweet Shoppe" bake table



Co-chairs Mary Tucker, Sue Garten and Diane Gaughran pose with Santa and Josie, his helper elf.

Bellingham Garden Club of MA
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**Annual Percentage Rate (APR) effective as of 11/8/22. Minimum loan amount is \$10,000. Maximum loan amount cannot exceed 80% of the home's current appraised value less any existing mortgage liens. If loan is higher than \$250,000, a full appraisal is required. Offer applies to new loans only and is valid on owner-occupied 1-2 family residential properties and 1 unit second homes. Homeowners insurance is required. Flood insurance may be required. Monthly payment example for a \$10,000 loan is \$189.90 for 60 months at 5.250% APR. Payments will not include taxes or insurance; these will be the responsibility of the borrower. No closing costs (unless a full appraisal is needed or other fees are required outside of standard bank fees). Subject to our normal credit approval requirements. Offer is subject to change without notice.

Bellingham Youth Baseball Registration Now Open

Bellingham Youth Baseball, Inc. (BYBI) announces winter training as well as spring registration is currently open at www.bellinghamyouthbaseball.com. Winter Training is for boys and girls, all ages 4-18, Spring Baseball is for ages 4-18 plus our Challenger division for players with disabilities. Please see the website (www.bellinghamyouthbaseball.com) for any eligibility issues. Early Bird discount ends Jan. 31, 2023, and payment plans are available.

There is a Winter Training in January for children ages four through second grade, plus any new-to-baseball third graders. Please sign up online at www.bellinghamyouthbaseball.com. Sessions are four Saturday mornings (does not conflict with Swish Kids Basketball) that begins January 14th.

There is also a league for children with disabilities, please register for Challengers through the website or email Kerry Farrell for any questions at BYBIinformation@gmail.com.

WINTER TRAINING is an ice-breaker program for ages 4 – 7 and is held in the Stallbrook Gymnasium over four Saturdays beginning Jan. 14. The program's focus is on fundamentals and having fun. We work around the SWISH KIDS basketball program with 4-year-old and kindergarteners from 8:15 to 9:15; 1st graders from 9:30 to 10:30; and 2nd graders and new-to-baseball 3rd graders from 10:40 to 11:40. There is also a Winter Training for ages 8-18, please check the website

for dates and times and to register.

SPRING SEASON is our largest program. Challenger Division (various ages/abilities between 5 – 22), Li'l Sluggers (4 year-olds play each Saturday with no practices), Tee-Ball (ages 5 and new 6's play up to two games per week), Instructional (returning 6's and 7's play up to two games per week), Junior (ages 8 and 9 play two or three games per week), International (ages 9 – 12 play three games per week), Major (ages

10 – 12 play three games per week) and Senior (ages 13 – 15, 16 – 18 play two or three games per week). While players 7 and younger are placed on teams, an evaluation process, scheduled for 8 – 17-year-olds not already on a Major League team, will be held at the high school gym Saturday, March 18.

BYBI is a local success story, but you can't be a part of it if you aren't registered! Register early to lock in discounts; installment payments are available.

Updates from the Office of Jake Auchincloss

Congressman Speaks on Climate, Housing and January 6th Committee Findings

On December 19th, Congressman Jake Auchincloss (D, MA-04), released the following statement in response to The January 6th Committee making criminal referrals against former President Donald Trump:

"The bipartisan January 6th Committee has affirmed, via thorough and transparent fact-finding, that Donald Trump committed insurrection. The Department of Justice should prosecute him. Congress should enact the Electoral Count Act Reform to prevent another constitutional crisis.

"And the American people, of all political persuasions, should heed Abraham Lincoln's warning: 'If destruction be our lot we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen we must live through all time or die by suicide.' Donald Trump tried to be the 'finisher' of our democracy. He must never again hold public office."

HUD

The day after the midterms, Congressman Auchincloss hosted an affordable housing conference in Attleboro with his friend and partner, Juana Mathias, HUD regional administrator. They spoke with housing officials and developers across the district about the programs and funding available for affordable housing development.



Shown, Congressman Jake Auchincloss speaks at an affordable housing conference he hosted with HUD officials in Attleboro last month.

Climate

Last month, Congressman Auchincloss hosted a conference on climate action and clean energy at Olin College of Engineering in Needham. Across three panels of experts, participants covered Massachusetts policy & industry; clean energy science and technology; and international affairs.

For updates on what Congressman Jake Auchincloss is doing, visit <https://auchincloss.house.gov> or connect with him on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or YouTube.

Bishop Feehan Announces 1st Quarter Honor Roll Students

Honor Roll is a recognition of high performing students based on the student's overall average in any given quarter, regardless of the levels of their classes. Bishop Feehan has three levels of Honor Roll. First Honors is awarded to students whose overall average in that quarter is grade 93.00 or higher; Second Honors is grade 90.00 or higher; and Third Honors is 85.00 or higher, with no individual grade below 80.

Read more here. <https://bishopfehan.edlioschool.com/apps/news/article/1694168>



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Decades of Service to the Community Welcoming 2023

BY: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.
MILFORD FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

Milford-Franklin Eye Center has been providing excellent eye care to the community for decades. With much excitement, we are happy to announce that we have grown to a dedicated group of 8 physicians and Optometrists in our state-of-the-art medical offices in Franklin, Milford and Millis. We are a group of eye physicians/ surgeons and optometrists offering the latest in comprehensive and surgical eye care for the entire family. 2023 is here and we would like to welcome the entire community to our offices and surgery center.

With offices located in Milford, Franklin and our new office in Millis, our own award-winning surgery center in Milford and a support staff of 50, we are proud to be the leading medical and surgical eye care center in the area and one of the major eye care centers in the State. We are also one of the rare ophthalmology practices to own and operate our own surgical center, the Cataract Surgery Center of Mil-

ford. No longer need to travel miles and hours to have cataract surgery! Three experienced eye physicians/ surgeons and 5 optometrists are here to provide comprehensive and excellent eye care for the entire family. If your eyecare provider is still asking you to travel faraway to secure eye treatments, call us for a second opinion.

Dr. Roger Kaldawy is an experienced eye physician and surgeon and the area's only full-time specialist in corneal diseases. Having completed his training in Ophthalmology at University of Rochester and his fellowship in Cornea and Refractive Surgery at the prestigious Department of Ophthalmology of the University of Iowa, Dr. Kaldawy served as Assistant Professor of Ophthalmology at Boston University where he was Director of the Cornea and External Disease program and trained fellows and residents in Ophthalmology. Some of his trainees are now in academic and private practices in Massachusetts and around the world. Dr Kaldawy published research articles in peer-reviewed

academic journals and has been invited as a guest speaker to many prestigious academic programs in the US and around the world including University of New York, Stanford University and University of Wisconsin, Madison. Dr. Kaldawy is proud to be the first surgeon in central Massachusetts and among a handful of surgeons in the State to have performed DSAEK corneal transplantation. With special interest in cataract surgery, Dr Kaldawy has performed over 30,000 procedures and surgeries and was the first surgeon in the area to offer the highly advanced accommodating implants. Dr Kaldawy was the first surgeon in the area to offer bladeless laser-assisted Femto cataract surgery. This laser procedure is offered locally at the Cataract and Laser Surgery Center of Milford.

Dr. John Hatch is the only fellowship trained pediatric ophthalmologist in the area and is a skilled surgeon with training in the latest techniques for straightening misaligned eyes. Dr. Hatch earned bachelors and master's degrees in engineering from Bos-



ton University and Dartmouth College. He completed his medical degree at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in 1988, followed by residency in Ophthalmology at Yale-New Haven Hospital and fellowship in Pediatric and Neuro-ophthalmology at Duke University. Returning to his home state in 1993, Dr. Hatch joined the Milford-Franklin Eye Center where he focuses on comprehensive pediatric and adult ophthalmology and adult strabismus.

Dr. Bryan Hong is our practicing vitreoretinal specialist. Dr. Hong is a graduate of Yale College and Yale School of Medicine. He completed his ophthalmology residency at the University of Southern California Eye Institute and the Doheny Eye Institute in Los Angeles, CA. He then went on to complete an intensive vitreo-retinal disease fellowship at the Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia, PA. Dr. Hong will be providing retina care in our practice starting September 2022, and specializes in eye surgery, laser surgery, and diseases of the retina, including macular degeneration, macular diseases, vitreo-macular interface abnormalities, retinal vascular diseases, diabetic retinopathy, trauma, retinal detachments, uveitis, and cataract complications. His research interests include retinal imaging, novel surgical techniques, and medical cost-efficacy analyses.

Dr. Adams, graduated from John Carroll University, Bachelors of Science, summa cum laude, in 1995. He completed his Masters in Biochemistry from The Ohio State University in 1997. In 2003 he received his Doctorate from the New England College of Optometry. Dr. Adams has advanced training in corneal pathology, specialty contact lenses, ocular disease and laser refractive surgery.

Dr. Mai-Khuyen Nguyen joined Milford-Franklin Eye Center from the New England

Carpenters Benefit Fund – Vision Center, where she served as Head of Optometry. She has over 10 years of experience in comprehensive eye exams for adult, geriatric, pediatric, and special needs populations. Her experience includes performing contact lens fitting and managing contact lens complications. Dr. Nguyen is also experienced in glasses fitting and lens edging. Her charitable activities include participating in Boston Cares program and the Boston Special Olympics.

Dr. Donald L. Conn is a comprehensive optometrist offering the latest in comprehensive eye care for the entire family. Dr. Conn earned his Bachelor of Science from College of the Holy Cross in 2016. He then went on to earn his Doctor of Optometry degree from New England College of Optometry in 2021. He has completed a residency in ocular Disease and Primary care at the Bedford VA in June 2022. His clinical experience also includes clinical rotations at Lahey Hospital & Medical Center, Boston Medical Center and South Boston Community Health Center. Dr. Conn will join our team in August of 2022. He is experienced in providing care to patients of all ages including adults, geriatrics and pediatric populations. Outside of work Dr. Conn enjoys long distance running and spending time with friends and family.

Dr. Purvi Patel, OD originally from the tri-state area, received her bachelor's degree from The College of New Jersey in 1996 and her Doctor of Optometry from the State University of NY College of Optometry in 2000 through a joint accelerated B.S.-O.D. program. She then completed a residency in Ocular Disease and Special Testing. In 2003, Dr. Patel joined the New England College of Optometry as Clinical Assistant Professor. Through her role as Director of Eye Care Services at Whittier Street Health Center and then The Dimock Center, one of the largest community health centers in Boston, Dr. Patel brings with her teaching and leadership experience. She is a Fellow of the American Academy of Optom-



MILFORD - FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

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|  |  |  |  |
| Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D. | John F. Hatch, M.D. | Bryan Hong, M.D. | Michael R. Adams, O.D. |
|  |  |  |  |
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Ninety-two 2023 Adams Scholars Announced at BVT

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School has announced the Class of 2023 John and Abigail Adams four-year scholarship recipients.

The John and Abigail Adams Scholarship provides a tuition credit for up to eight semesters of undergraduate education at a Massachusetts state college or university. Eligibility to earn a John and Abigail Adams Scholarship is based on students' first-time scores on high school

MCAS tests. The scholarship only covers tuition and must be used within six years of a student's graduation.

The following Bellingham students have earned a John and Abigail Adams Scholarship:

Bellingham

Nicholas Cummings, Advanced Manufacturing & Fabrication; Rudolph Patete, Engineering & Robotics; and Sarah Trumm, Dental Assisting.



About Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School (BVT):

Blackstone Valley Regional Vocational Technical High School serves the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas,

Grafton, Hopedale, Mendon, Milford, Millbury, Millville, Northbridge, Sutton, Upton, and Uxbridge. Located in the heart of the Blackstone Valley, BVT creates a positive learning community that prepares

students for personal and professional success in an internationally competitive society through a fusion of rigorous vocational, technical, and academic skills.

EYES

continued from page 12

etry, with a history of publishing, presenting and lecturing. During the last 10 years, Dr. Patel has transitioned to direct care and worked in collaboration with ophthalmology. Most recently, Dr. Patel completed a postdoctoral certificate for the treatment & management of glaucoma. Dr. Patel has clinical interests in diabetes, glaucoma, community-based eye and vision care, public health & epidemiology. Dr. Patel currently lives in Dover, MA with her husband and 3 daughters. She enjoys traveling abroad, reading and tennis.

Dr. Shalin Zia, O.D. received her Bachelor of Science degree from Purdue University in 2014 and her Doctor of Optometry from Indiana University in 2018. She moved to Massachusetts from the Midwest after getting married. She is a comprehensive optometrist with solid experienced in providing optometric and medical eyecare to patients of all ages. In her free time, she enjoys working out, listening to podcasts, and spending time with family.

Milford-Franklin Eye Center realizes you have choices when it comes to eye care. We are different. We focus on excellent and advanced eye care and treat our

patients as if each and every one is family. We have surgical results that rival those of major centers in Boston- we can prove it. We are from the community, most of us live in the community and our focus is to serve the community. You will see us in the office, at the local supermarket and in the ER at 1 AM if there is a need for our care. Our focus is you, your vision and excellent results. We are available, in your backyard and proud to offer world class cataract surgery closer to home: Here in Milford! Our optical shop has its own dedicated lab and can cut and finish your glasses while you wait. We offer after-hours, same day emergency appointments and Saturday appointments. We have great management focused on quality customer care. 90% of our staff has been with us for over 5 years! Excellent retention of staff means outstanding loyalty and training. Eight providers dedicated to the best in eye medicine and surgery closer to home. Is your eyecare provider still recommending you travel hours to other practices and remote surgery centers? Call us: We are available to help and again in 2023 like ever before.

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Operation Graduation Plans Purse Bingo Feb. 9th

Bellingham's Operation Graduation held its fundraiser craft fair on December 3, 2022 at Bellingham High School. The Operation Graduation committee would like to thank all 113 vendors who participated in this year's event, as well as everyone who shopped. It was a wonderful turnout and a great day, despite the rain. We would also like to thank the many parent volunteers who helped make the event successful, our student volunteers, our custodial staff and Santa!



One of our next events will be purse bingo. We will hold bingo, where the prizes are de-

signer handbags like Coach, Michael Kors, Tory Burch and Kate Spade. This event will be held at the Miller-ville Mens Club, 8 Lloyd Street, Blackstone, Mass., on February 9th at 6 p.m., bingo will begin at 7 p.m. We will have food for purchase, raffles, and a cash bar. Tickets are \$35 prior to the event, and \$40 at the door.

About Operation Graduation
Operation Graduation is a Bellingham tradition. It is an Parent-run, self-funded, adult-supervised event held graduation night. It is an overnight event of food, fun, and surprises for our Graduates. It provides a save environment for them to celebrate all their hard work as they move on to the next chapter in their lives. Parents who want to get involved are encouraged to join the private Facebook page at "BHS Class of 2023 Operation Graduation".



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Meet Toby – Baypath Shelter Pooch of the Month!

Toby is a handsome man, looking for a home with rot-tie experience! This handsome gentleman is looking to relax and soak up all the love in an adult-only dog only household. He is SUPER smart and loves to do training! Sit, paw, touch – he knows it all! No food puzzle has yet to stump him! He loves to go on walks and explore his environments. He is also always ready for chin scratches and rubs!

If you think this handsome man could be for you, please start the process today by going to: <https://www.shelterluv.com/embed/animal/BPHS-A-14658>

Baypath Humane Society of Hopkinton is dedicated to providing shelter, care, humane treatment, and loving homes for stray or unwanted companion animals. We seek to serve our community by fostering relationships, promoting education, and making a positive impact on pet overpopulation. To learn more, visit <https://baypathhumane.org>, find us (@BaypathHumane)



Toby, 5-Year-old Male

on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Pinterest.

We are currently closed for public drops ins. That said, we are actively taking in, caring for and rehoming cats and dogs.

We answer phones between the hours of 9 and 5 on weekdays and 10 and 4 on weekends. Reach us at (508) 435-6938.

Franklin Church Announces Parent Support Group

Support Group for Parents of Children Struggling with Mental Health, Autism, ADHD, or other Challenges:

Love Parenting is a 6-week series created by Collette Potts, who also created the Love First children’s curriculum that we use. Rev Kathy will moderate this group on Thursdays, Jan 12-Feb 16, 2023. Contact her if you are interested.

<https://lovefirstresources.com/loving-parenting/>

For more information:

Call (508) 528-2387, email Rector@StJohnsFranklinMA.org, like us on Facebook and Twitter, or visit www.stjohns-franklinma.org



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Bellingham Firefighter Graduates from Firefighting Academy



 Massachusetts Firefighting Academy
Career Recruit Class #306 Graduation • November 28, 2022

Bellingham Firefighter James Abbott was among 24 firefighters who've recently graduated from the 50-day Career Recruit Firefighting Training Program.

"First responders are on the frontlines protecting their communities, and these newest firefighters are needed now

more than ever," said State Fire Marshal Ostroskey. "The rigorous professional training they've received provides them with the physical, mental, and technical skills to perform their jobs effectively and safely."

The recruits of Class #306 represent the fire departments

of Andover, Barnstable, Bellingham, Hingham, Hudson, Lawrence, Medford, Medway, Milford, Plainville, Shrewsbury, Tewksbury, Walpole, Winthrop, Woburn, and Wrentham.

Basic Firefighter Skills

Students receive classroom training in all basic firefighter skills. They practice first under non-fire conditions and then during controlled fire conditions. To graduate, students must demonstrate proficiency in life safety, search and rescue, ladder operations, water supply, pump operation, and fire attack. Fire attack operations range from mailbox fires to multiple-floor or multiple-room structural fires. Upon successful completion of the Recruit Program all students have met the national standards of National Fire Protection Association 1001 and are certified to the level of Firefighter I and II,

and Hazardous Materials First Responder Operational Level by the Massachusetts Fire Training Council, which is accredited by the National Board on Fire Service Professional Qualifications.

Today's Firefighters Do Far More than Fight Fires

Today's firefighters do far more than fight fires. They train to respond to all types of hazards and emergencies. They are the first ones called to respond to chemical and environmental emergencies, ranging from the suspected presence of carbon monoxide to fentanyl overdoses or a gas leak. They may be called to rescue a child who has fallen through the ice or who has locked himself in a bathroom. They rescue people from stalled elevators and those who are trapped in vehicle crashes. They test and maintain their equipment including self-contained breathing ap-

paratus (SCBA), hydrants, hoses, power tools, and apparatus.

At the Massachusetts Firefighting Academy, they learn all these skills and more, including the latest science of fire behavior and suppression tactics, from certified fire instructors. They also receive training in public fire education, hazardous material incident mitigation, flammable liquids, stress management, and self-rescue techniques. The intensive, 10-week program for municipal firefighters involves classroom instruction, physical fitness training, firefighter skills training, and live firefighting practice.

The MFA, which marked its 50th anniversary last year, provides recruit and in-service training at three separate campuses in Stow, Springfield, and Bridgewater. To date, nearly 14,000 firefighters have graduated in more than 450 classes.

A Novel Occasion, January 28, 2023

Tickets for the 3rd annual "A Novel Occasion" are on sale now. This fundraising event,

hosted by The Friends of the Millis Public Library, is on Saturday, January 28, 2023, from

12 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. ET.

At this virtual live experience, an interactive Zoom event,

guests will hear bestselling authors, receive a book from the event-featured author of their choice, and participate in two intimate author roundtables.

This year's bestselling authors include: Alka Joshi, Brendan Slocumb, Fiona Davis, Hank Philippi Ryan, Jamie Brenner, Jeanine Cummins, Julie Clark, Piper Huguley, Tia Williams, Viola Shipman (Wade Rouse).

Tickets are available now to this amazing one-of-a-kind event (early bird \$60 per person through January 13, 2023) after the 13th of January, tickets are \$75 per person until sold out. Purchase tickets for this fundraiser at <https://www.anoveloccasion.com/>

Storm Drains are NOT for Dumping!

Have you ever wondered what happens to the water flowing down a storm drain after a storm? Stormwater, the runoff water after it rains or snows, flows from parking lots and streets into storm drains so that the pavement won't be flooded. Underground pipes then channel the stormwater directly to the nearest waterway, usually with little or no treatment. So whatever flows down a storm drain comes out in a nearby waterway, such as a wetland, stream, pond, or the ocean.

Please help keep our local waters clean:

- Never dump anything down storm drains – this includes litter, sand, leaves, pet waste, motor oil, or paint.
- Clear sand, leaves, litter, debris, and snow away from storm drains.
- Support municipal efforts to conduct regular street sweeping and catch basin cleaning.
- Participate in a neighborhood cleanup or storm drain marking project.

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Bellingham Public Library News & Events for January

For updates to library programs and services, please see www.bellinghamlibrary.org.

Winter Hours

Monday - Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday & Saturday 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The library is closed January 1-January 2 for the New Year's Holiday. Happy New Year!

The library is closed on Monday, January 16 for the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

Special Programs

Virtual 50+ Job Seekers Networking Group - January Topics:

- Self Assessment & Networking Skills, Wednesday, January 4th, from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. or Wednesday, January 11th from 6-8 p.m.
- Create Your Career Story Pitch - Wednesday, January 18th from 9:30 am to 11:30 am or Wednesday, January 25th from 6-8 p.m.

This program will continue through June with two new topics each month.

The Massachusetts Library Collaborative 50+ Job Seekers Group meets on the above days/times, via Zoom. If you are unemployed and actively looking, underemployed, seeking a new career director, re-entering the job market after a long employment gap, or recently retired and looking for your "Encore Career", this networking group program is perfect for you! Remember, 85% of jobs are found through networking!

Join us in a professional forum for networking with peers in a safe and comfortable environment conducive to developing new relationships and developing skills and strategies to help in your career transition.

Meetings are facilitated by Deborah Hope, MBA, PCIC, an experienced executive career coach, former Fortune 500 executive, investment banker and entrepreneur.

To register for each workshop, go to the library calendar, select the workshop date and click on the link to register directly via Zoom. This group is sponsored by more than 60 Massachusetts public libraries.

Bellingham History Discussion Group

Saturday, January 14th at 10 am at the Bellingham Historical Museum

Join the authors (Cecily Christensen, Marjorie Turner Hollman, Pam Johnson, and Bernadette Rivard) of *Bellingham Now & Then: Celebrating the 300th Anniversary of Bellingham, MA* for the first of what the Historical Commission hopes will be quarterly discussions of Bellingham History. This event will be held at the Bellingham Historical Museum, 3 Common Street. The authors will lead a group-led discussion. Stop by for coffee, donuts and a great discussion!

If you would like to read the book in advance, you can either purchase a copy at the museum or on Amazon.com, or borrow it from the library. Copies will be for sale at the museum on the discussion day for \$20. Snow date: January 28th.

Open for Business Grant Kick-Off Event

Turning Your Passion into Your Profession with Jeff Belanger

Monday, January 23rd at 6:30 p.m.

The Bellingham Library has been awarded a grant to assist Bellingham area businesses with meeting the challenges of the 21st century by offering resources, courses, and business counseling from experts on the topics the business community identifies as important to their success. This Kick-Off Event will feature Jeff Belanger speaking about how to turn your passion into your business.

Jeff Belanger is an author, podcaster, storyteller, adventurer, and explorer of the unexplained. He's turned his passion for chasing legends into his career. He's the award winning, Emmy-nominated host, writer and producer of the New England Legends television series on PBS and Amazon Prime and is the author of over a dozen books (published in six languages).

Registration preferred so we can plan refreshments! Snow date January 30th

This program is made possible by a federal Institute of Museum and Library Services grant through the Library Services & Technology Act. The grant is administered by the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners.

Ongoing Children's Program Schedule

We hope to have a new Children's Librarian on staff by the end of January. In the meantime, the library will offer the following programs for children ages 0-12.

Sensory Story Time with Miss Melissa - Mondays & Wednesdays at 10:30 to 11:45 a.m.

Join us for stories, songs, crafts and open play! Similar to a traditional story time, with movement breaks and supports built in. For children ages 2-5 of all abilities. Registration is limited, so please register early!

Magic: The Gathering Club - Mondays at 2:30 p.m.

For grades 4-8. The Magic: The Gathering Club at the Bellingham Library welcomes all 4th to 8th graders to join each Monday after school from 2:30-4:30 p.m. Magic is the ultimate tabletop game, combining the skills of strategy, probability, reading, math, bluffing and more for a fun and engaging experience like no other. Please sign up for each meeting you plan on attending!

Ring a Ding - Tuesdays and Fridays at 10 a.m.

For ages 0-5. Songs, a story, music, instruments, and beach balls = a lot of noisy fun! Join us! No registration required. PLEASE NOTE: For the foreseeable future there will only be one session of Ring a Ding on each day.

All Things STEAM - Thursdays at 4 p.m.

Join Miss Melissa for the STEAM Project of the Week. For Grades 1-3. Please register for each week you plan to attend.

Baby Time - Fridays at 11:15 a.m.

For children under 2, older siblings welcome. Songs, stories, and play/discussion time for you and your baby/toddler. Drop in!

After School Programs

We have two programs for kids in grades 4 and up. Both programs are Monday through Friday. Even though the library closes at 3 p.m. on Fridays, the Community Room will be open on Fridays after school for Fun Fridays!! Miss Amanda and Miss Diane will stay until 5 p.m. at the latest. They will be planning activities for this time so check the library calendar for details.

- After School Kids (ASK) - for grades 4-6. When school is in session, ASK meets Monday-Thursday from 2:30-4:45 p.m. Questions? Contact Diane Nelson, dnelson@cwmar.org. Parents/caregivers of all registrants are signed up for our Constant Contact Newsletter.

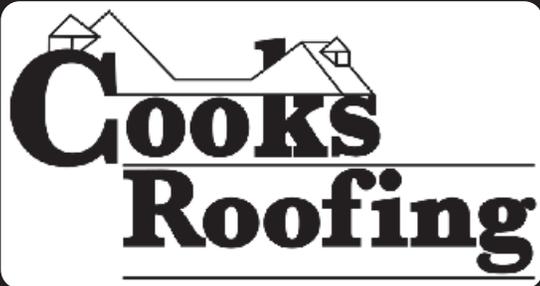
- Teen Room Activities - for grades 7-12. When school is in session, Teen Room Activities are available Monday-Thursday from 2 -4:45 p.m. There is no registration needed to attend this program. Questions? Contact Amanda Maclure, amaclure@cwmar.org.

Other Adult Programs

Additional details of these programs are available on the library calendar (<https://bit.ly/3xMECCt>)

- Book Club generally meets on the first Monday of the month, email Reference Librarian Cecily Christensen atchriste@cwmar.org for details.
- Friends of the Library generally meet on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. Email library@bellinghamlibrary.org for details.
- The Library Board of Trustees generally meets on the second Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. Email library@bellinghamlibrary.org for details.
- Adult Writing Group will now meet at the Bellingham Historical Museum on the second Thursday of the month at 6:30 p.m. Email marjorie@marjorieturner.com for details.

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Hockomock Area YMCA Offers Free Program to Cancer Survivors

Since 2010, The Hockomock Area YMCA has been facilitating the LIVESTRONG at the YMCA program and they are pleased to announce new classes for 2023.

LIVESTRONG at the YMCA is a no-cost 12-week program designed for cancer survivors and their families seeking to regain health, build strength, and connect with other cancer survivors. Our goal is to help participants build muscle mass and muscle strength, increase flexibility and endurance, and improve functional ability. Certified YMCA fitness instructors give personal individualized instruction and are trained in the elements of cancer, post rehab exercise, nutrition, and supportive cancer care.

New Classes Announced for LIVESTRONG at the YMCA at the Hockomock Y starting January 9th:

Bernon Family (Franklin) Branch

45 Forge Hill Road
Franklin, MA

Day & Time: Mondays and Wednesdays: 6--7:30 p.m.

Day & Time: Mondays and Fridays: 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Invensys Foxboro Branch

67 Mechanic Street
Foxboro, MA

Day & Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

Day & Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 6-7:30 p.m.

North Attleboro Branch

300 Elmwood Street
North Attleboro, MA

Day & Time: Mondays & Wednesdays: 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.

A survivor is defined from the point of cancer diagnosis through the balance of his/her life. Are you a cancer survivor or know someone who is?

Cancer survivors are encouraged to visit www.hockymca.org/new-livestrong-classes or contact Jackie Robison, Program Coordinator at (508) 772-1310 or JackieR@hockymca.org for more information and to enroll.

Part of the Hockomock Y's commitment to strengthening community through healthy living, the program offers adults affected by cancer a safe, supportive environment to participate in physical and social activities focused on strengthening the whole person. The Hockomock Area YMCA is enrolling now for upcoming LIVESTRONG at the YMCA sessions at their branches in Foxboro, Franklin, and North Attleboro. Participants receive a free family membership to the Hockomock Area YMCA during the program.

For more information about the Hockomock YMCA, visit hockymca.org.

New Members Invited to Charles River Chorale Open Rehearsals

The Charles River Chorale will begin rehearsals for its spring 2023 season and is actively recruiting new members who are seeking a new community and musical opportunity.

The non-audition chorale group will begin open rehearsals on Tuesday, January 17 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ, 142 Exchange St., Millis. Three additional open rehearsals will take place on January 24, 31, and February 7 to allow interested new members an opportunity to explore what the chorale has to offer.

Under the leadership of director Ashley Nelson-Oneschuk, the Charles River Chorale is in its 39th year as a non-profit 501(c)3 chorale. Nelson-Oneschuk, a music professional in her 7th year with the Charles River Chorale, is also the choral director for Medway High School. She says the pandemic put a lot of things in perspective for music educators. "More than ever, I am focused on cultivating

a joyful community first, with excellent musical experiences as the vessel to achieve this," she said.

Charles River Chorale members hail from many area communities, and they range in age from high school students to octogenarians. The group typically holds winter and spring concerts, with the spring 2023 concert planned for Sunday, May 4.

The Charles River Chorale rehearses on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ in Millis. Membership dues for the non-profit organization support operating costs. There are no dues for high school students, and scholarships based on need are available. There is also a separate children's choir for children in Grades 2 through 6.

For more information about the organization and the upcoming open rehearsals, visit <https://www.charlesriverchorale.com>. Sponsorships and advertising opportunities are available.



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Attend one of our FREE virtual information sessions to learn more:

- Information Session I: April 11, 2023, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
- Information Session II: May 3, 2023, 6-7 p.m.

We offer two one-week sessions for each program:
JULY 23-28, 2023
JULY 30-AUG. 4, 2023

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Local Charter School to Hold Informational Event

The Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School will be holding two enrollment information sessions for families interested in learning more about the school. BFCCPS is a regional public charter school for students in Kindergarten through Grade Eight.

Information sessions and building tours will be held on January 21st and February 11th from 10 to noon. Speakers will include members of the BFC-CPS Administration, parents of students at the school, teachers, and alumni. Building tours will be led by BFCCPS alumni and

current middle school students. Due to the pandemic, these sessions have been held virtually the last two years, so we are thrilled to welcome families to meet with us in person again this winter!

BFCCPS is located at 500 Financial Park in Franklin, please note that all traffic must arrive at the property via the entrance on Washington Street and Financial Park (there is no access to the property from the gate at Grove and Financial Park.)

Families can also learn more about the school's mission, history and enrollment process on the website at www.bfccps.org.



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Coming Up at the Bellingham Senior Center

The Bellingham Senior Center is located at 40 Blackstone St., Bellingham. Reach them at (508) 966-0398 or visit www.bellinghamma.org.

SMOC FUEL ASSISTANCE: Please note that we are still taking appointments. Call the Senior Center to schedule an appointment. Many who are approved for fuel assistance also qualify for SNAP food assistance. Please inquire as we can assist you in applying.

HOW A MASSACHUSETTS SODA FOUNTAIN BECAME AN AMERICAN ICON: Friday, January 27 at 1 p.m., join Anthony Mitchell Sammarco, noted historian and author of over 70 books on the history and development of Boston, for a history of Howard Johnson's.

SENIOR DRIVE-BY LUNCH PROGRAM has been discontinued until March/April depending on the weather.

OPTIMIZE YOUR TAX STRATEGY AND GAIN CONTROL OF YOUR TAXES IN RETIREMENT: January 24, at 11 a.m., Retirement Advisors at Financial Square will present a one-hour free seminar at the Senior Center. Call (508) 770-0207 to register.

LINE DANCING: Tuesday, Jan. 3, at 11:30am (\$5/class). Continues weekly.

BEGINNER DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY: Bring your digital camera and learn when and how to use its special features. Also covered will be basic composition and best use of light for different situations. Join Steve McGrath in a five-week series for beginners starting Tuesday, January 3, at 1 p.m. \$50 for the entire series, minimum of eight participants needed to run.

Please call the Senior Center to reserve your space. (508) 966-0398

VALENTINE PARTY: Tuesday, February 14 the COA & BESG will host a joint Valentine party for seniors at 12 p.m. and all will enjoy delicious soup, sandwiches, dessert, and beverages. \$7 per person. Please call the Center and reserve your seat!

WE NEED HELP: We have many seniors calling the Center asking for help with shoveling/plowing. This is a definite need, and we don't know how to help except to ask you to check on your neighbors, and if they aren't cleared out after a snowfall perhaps you or someone you know could help them and clear a path so they can get out of the house and at least get the mail as many seniors get medications via mail. Thanking you in advance for any help you can give!

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November Saw Decrease in Overall Norfolk County Real Estate Activity

Norfolk County Register of Deeds, William P. O'Donnell, reported that Norfolk County recordings for the month of November 2022 indicate a significant decrease in overall real estate activity, particularly mortgage activity and the average sales price for residential and commercial property, as compared to the November 2021 numbers.

In November, there were 9,015 documents recorded at

the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, a 37% decrease from November 2021 and virtually no change from October 2022.

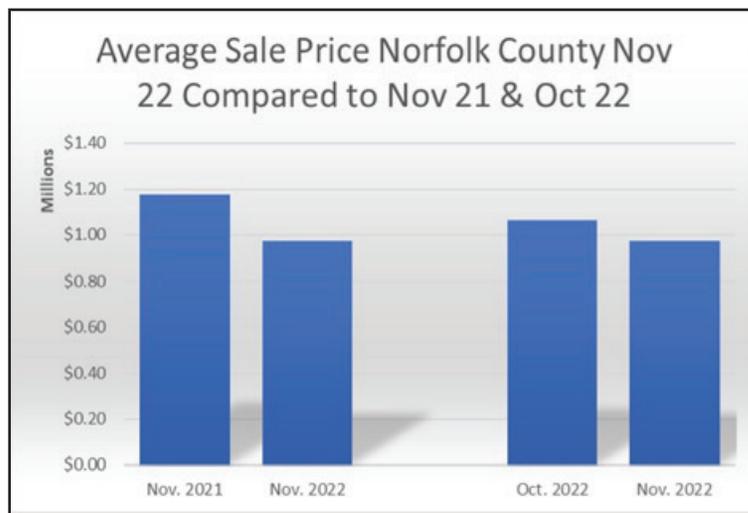
"The real estate market is showing the strains of continuingly rising interest rates and inflation, which is putting a damper on the amount of money consumers can save," said O'Donnell. "Total document volume is down significantly compared to November,

2021, but shows a lesser decrease when compared to last month's statistics in October 2022. One of the components of document volume, the number of deeds recorded, indicates a decrease in property sales from last year."

The number of deeds for November 2022, which reflect real estate sales and transfers, both commercial and residential, show a decrease of 27% from November 2021 and a decrease of 7% from the previous month of October 2022.

Sale prices for November appear to have dropped significantly compared to November 2021. The average sale price in November was \$973,133, a 17% decrease from November 2021 and a 9% decrease from October 2022. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is down, decreasing 42% from one year ago and decreasing 18% from last month.

"Consumers seem to be less willing to borrow with interest rates approaching and exceeding 7%, and the drop in average sales prices indicates sellers are adjusting prices to compensate," noted O'Donnell. "According to the numbers we are seeing at the Registry, we are recording well under half the number of mortgages compared to November 2021."



Overall lending activity showed a continued downward trend for the month of November. A total of 1,357 mortgages were recorded this month, 58% less than a year ago at the same time and down 8% from last month.

"The rising cost of living and increasing interest rates that the country is facing now are having an impact on the local real estate market," noted O'Donnell. "A continuing cause for concern in Norfolk County is the number of pending foreclosures. While the number of notices to foreclose have come down slightly from last month, they are still significantly higher than in November 2021," said O'Donnell. "This indicates that more of our neighbors are facing financial challenges going forward. O'Donnell continued, "We will continue to track these numbers."

For the past several years, the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has partnered with Quincy Community Action Programs (617-479-8181 x376)

and NeighborWorks Housing Solutions (508-587-0950) to help anyone facing challenges paying their mortgage. Another option for homeowners is to contact the Massachusetts Attorney General's Consumer Advocacy and Response Division (CARD) at (617) 727-8400.

"If you are having difficulty paying your monthly mortgage, please consider contacting one of these non-profit agencies for help and guidance," said Register O'Donnell.

Register O'Donnell concluded, "Property sales prices appear to be dropping as a result of consumers not willing to purchase property with mortgage rates above 7%."

To learn more about Registry of Deed's events and initiatives, like us on Facebook® at facebook.com/NorfolkDeeds or follow us on Twitter® at twitter.com/NorfolkDeeds and Instagram® at Instagram.com/NorfolkDeeds. Learn more at www.norfolkdeeds.org.

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Milford Regional's Annual Tree of Life Benefit Raises Nearly \$18,000 for Oliva Fund

A warmer than average December evening brought out a crowd of local residents and members of the Milford Regional Medical Center community for the hospital's Tree of Life fundraiser, held on December 5. The annual event raised nearly \$18,000 this year and is hosted by the Milford Regional Healthcare Foundation. This is the most funding raised since the event began in 2003.

The Tree of Life honors and pays tribute to those who have been affected by cancer and benefits the Oliva Fund. Established in 2007, the Oliva Fund has been providing resources to support patients being treated at Milford Regional and the Dana-Farber/Brigham & Women's Cancer Center at Milford Regional and their families.

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Tree Lighting Ceremony Honors Memory of Roland Arcand



(Left to Right): Mike Soter, Alexis Kraal, Tom Kraal, Joanne Arcand, Tammy Kraal, Roland Arcand Jr., Zack Krall

Bellingham Town Common's Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony took place on November 26, 2022. The guest of honor was Mrs. Joanne Arcand, to light the tree in honor of her late husband, Roland Arcand, who was a long time Bellingham Parks Department – Superintendent,

and was usually responsible for setting up the holiday decorations on the Common. The night was enjoyed by all, with holiday music and carols, served with Hot Chocolate, Candy Canes, and holiday novelties, concluding with a visit from Santa.

Houses Passes Bipartisan Resolution to build on 20-Year-Old McGovern-Dole Food Program

Last month, Congressman Jim McGovern, Chairman of the House Rules Committee, led the passage of a bipartisan resolution with Republican Congressman Tracey Mann, calling on Congress to build on the 20 years of success of the George McGovern-Robert Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program.

The program, named after former senators George McGovern and Bob Dole, has provided life-saving meals in a school setting to over 31 million of the world's most vulnerable children and is one of America's signature child nutrition and food security programs. Congressman McGovern led a bipartisan charge 20 years ago to establish the program in the 2002 farm bill.

"McGovern-Dole represents the very best of this country," Congressman McGovern said. "I've visited places like Colombia and Kenya and saw its impact firsthand, reducing hunger and increasing school enrollments, attendance, literacy, and the support of families and communities for education, especially for girls. It is an important example of what can be accomplished when Members of Congress put partisanship aside and make the welfare of children and families their number one priority and sends a powerful message to the world about who we are and what we stand for."

More information about the George McGovern-Robert Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program can be found here (<https://www.fas.usda.gov/programs/mcgovern-dole-food-education-program>).

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HCA Announces Winter Gallery Exhibitions

The Hopkinton Center for the Arts (HCA) located at 98 Hayden Rowe St, is excited to announce its next two gallery exhibitions.

To kick-off 2023, the HCA will begin with its popular annual members show. This is the one exhibition a year when we invite our over 200 active members to submit an original piece of artwork. The result is always an impressive display of local talent.

The HCA Members Show exhibition will be on display in the Lotvin Family Gallery Through January 26.

Following the Members Show in January, the HCA will partner with the Michael Lisnow Respite

Center for a special ten-day exhibition dedicated to the artwork created by adult artists with disabilities. Now in its 25th year, the Respite Center is a place that provides emotional and physical support for individuals with disabilities and their families.

The HCA is pleased to provide visual arts and ceramics classes for the Respite students throughout the year, as well as give them the opportunity to display their work in the Lotvin Family gallery. The exhibition will be on display from February 1-10th. Don't miss it!

The Lotvin Family Gallery exhibitions are always free for



Michael Lisnow Respite Center artist Jeff Cole

visitors to tour. Complimentary docent talks for community groups, schools or private groups are available upon request.

HCA Lotvin Family Gallery
98 Hayden Rowe St, Hopkinton MA 01748

Gallery Hours: Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Sat. & Sun., 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

The HCA is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization serving the Metrowest region. HCA develops artistic skills, offers outstanding performances and art exhibitions, and enables visitors to experience art in all forms. Under one roof, we celebrate art through classes and events in visual art, theater, music, dance, ceramics, writing, and film.



"The Lost City" by HCA Member Carl Ristaino

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Milford Regional Hospital Gets National Kudos for Teaching, Patient Safety

Milford Regional Medical Center was recently recognized as a 2022 top teaching hospital in the nation by the Leapfrog Group, an independent national watchdog organization committed to healthcare quality and safety for patients. Milford Regional also received a Grade "A" in patient safety from Leapfrog for the ninth consecutive time.

Top Teaching Hospital Distinction

Milford is one of only two hospitals in Massachusetts, five in New England and 58 across the country to receive Leapfrog's Top Teaching Hospital honor. Milford Regional serves as a teaching hospital for the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School in Worcester. Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston, two hospitals in Maine and Hartford Hospital in Connecticut

were among the others honored in New England.

To qualify for a top distinction from Leapfrog, hospitals must rank highest among peers on the Leapfrog Hospital Survey, which assesses the quality of patient care across many areas of hospital performance including infection rates, practices for safe surgery, maternity care and preventing medication errors.

"Milford Regional Medical Center is proud to be recognized as one of the top teaching hospitals in the country and the region," said Milford Regional President and CEO Edward J. Kelly. "Our team at Milford Regional takes great pride in maintaining the highest standards of care as we care for our community and have a hand in training current and future generations of medical professionals."

Leapfrog Awards Milford Regional with Grade "A" for Patient Safety

Milford Regional also received an "A" in the fall 2022 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade; a national distinction recognizing the hospital's achievements in protecting patients from accidents, injuries, errors, and infections. This is the ninth consecutive "A" Milford Regional has received from Leapfrog. The Leapfrog group's patient safety grading comes out twice annually.

"This distinction is a testament to the diligence of our clinicians and staff who ensure safety as a top priority at Milford Regional," said Vice President and Chief Quality Officer Bert Thurlo-Walsh.

KUDOS

continued on page 26

Sports

Kwatcher: BHS Six to Rely on a Competitive Nature

BY KEN HAMWEY,
BULLETIN SPORTS WRITER

Brad Kwatcher's second year as head coach of Bellingham High's ice hockey team should be better than his rookie season that left the Blackhawks with a 1-17-2 record. An assistant for five years at BHS, Kwatcher knows the learning curve won't be as steep.

"I was an inexperienced head coach last year," he said. "It took time to get the right kids into the right positions. And, when you're an assistant, you rarely deal with referees, the school, the boosters and parents. I now have a better idea of what to expect. Practice plans will be more organized, and both the players and I are more familiar with each other.

Seven seniors, five of whom were starters, have graduated but the 2022-23 squad has some noteworthy strengths.

"Our work ethic is good," Kwatcher said. "Our technique and skills are decent, but we still need to improve. We've got speed and quickness, and our defensemen and forwards have experience."

The 39-year-old Bellingham native has set three goals for his squad, and he firmly believes they're realistic. "We want to develop solid team chemistry, be competitive in the Tri Valley League Small Division and qualify for the state tourney," said Kwatcher, who started for BHS for four years on defense.

The last time a Blackhawks' sextet competed in the playoffs was in 2014 when coach Ken Bertoni's team was eliminated by Dartmouth. The new playoff format, which gives weight to strength of schedule and margin of wins/losses could be a factor

this season.

What will definitely be a factor is Kwatcher's leadership team that consists of co-captains Liam Keating (senior forward) and Ayden Guilmain (junior forward) and assistant captains Jack Baker (junior forward) and Brady Pelletier (junior defenseman).

"Liam is a strong skater who's got a high hockey IQ," Kwatcher said. "He's quick, aggressive, and has a good shot. Ayden's hockey IQ also is high. He knows the game, is well-skilled, and can shoot. We're looking for Liam and Ayden to provide offense."

The assistant captains are capable skaters who are key parts of the Blackhawks' nucleus. "Jack is a team-first player who works hard, is fast and aggressive," Kwatcher said. A play-making forward, he passes effectively. Brady is versatile, able to play either forward or defense. He's aggressive when needed, and he's a stand-up defenseman who's got good instincts."

Two sophomores and a junior are playing on a line that should get results. Junior Sean Brown is at right wing, sophomore Nathan Gervais is on the left side and sophomore Colin Sherman plays center.

"Sean is tough in the corners," Kwatcher said. "His aggressive style will create opportunities. He's quick, works hard and has a good hockey IQ. Nathan is a good skater, has strong hands and a hard shot, and he maintains puck control. Colin is effective on faceoffs, gets position and keeps it. His hockey IQ is high and he's aggressive, able to take a hit."

Freshmen Connor Reilly and Max Henchey and sophomore



Bellingham coach Brad Kwatcher is hopeful his Blackhawks will be an improved hockey team.

Jack Pirrong join Pelletier, giving Kwatcher a young but capable defensive corps.

"Connor relies on intelligence and instincts," Kwatcher noted. "A phenomenal skater, he's small, but he can hit and also take a hit. Jack has good size and a strong shot. His work ethic is an asset. Max is in his first year as a starter, and I expect good things. He rushes the puck well and can stop an opponent at the blue line."

Freshman goalie Liam Gregg, who was on the squad last year as an eighth grader, watched as seniors Connor Henchey and Shawn Rafus alternated in goal. This year, the job is Gregg's, and Kwatcher likes what he brings to the table. "Liam is sound technically, has good skills, and is instinctive and quick," said Kwatcher. "He'll improve once

he gets more game experience."

The Blackhawks are basically a co-op team, able to get players from Blackstone-Millville and Millis. Gregg is from Millis and Guilmain and Gervais hail from BMR.

Kwatcher's on-ice style will be deliberate. "We'll dump the puck into our opponents' zone, then forecheck and try to score," Kwatcher offered. "It's not a race to the puck, but it's a more controlled attack."

Kwatcher's competitive philosophy focuses on reaching one's potential and having fun in athletics, where "winning will be the by-product," he emphasized, adding "life lessons I hope our players learn from sports are how to be a good teammate and have a sense of family. Players can also learn accountability, how to lead and how to overcome adversity."

Kwatcher, a 2003 BHS graduate, started playing hockey as a seven-year-old in a youth league. He played for the Tri Valley Indians and later was on Bellingham's varsity as an eighth grader. Kwatcher is in his 17th year as a firefighter, currently in Bellingham, where he's a lieutenant. He and his wife Marina reside in Blackstone.

Brendan Park, a former BHS player, is Kwatcher's varsity assistant.

Kwatcher is eager to reverse Bellingham's hockey fortunes. The last eight years have been sub-.500 campaigns. "We need to retain our hometown players and we need to establish a winning culture again," he said. At the Bulletin deadline, the Blackhawks were 0-1, losing their opener to Norton, 6-2.

Brad Kwatcher isn't making any guarantees about this season, but he expects to field a more competitive team in his sophomore season at the helm.

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Sports

Bellingham Wrestling, the Message Remains the Same

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The Bellingham co-op wrestling team lost a handful of athletes from last year's team to graduation, but Coach Tom Forbes had an influx of numbers come out for this season's squad. In addition, Bellingham also will be having a lot of returning grapplers take to the mat, and as it has been in the past, the message from the coach is always the same.

"My goals year to year usually doesn't change. I tell them that I am not all that concerned with wins and losses," he said. "The main goal is to get better each time you step onto the mat; learn and hone your skills. If you do this then you should be able to make it into the tournament, and once there, you just have to see what the road brings you."

Leading the Blackhawks onto the mats this year will be tri-captains Zach Mantegani Dylan Costa and Ethan Silva. Costa, a youth wrestler in Milford, is a workaholic and the senior was fortunate to place in the Sectionals last year as an alternate to the State Tournament. Silva, another senior, is the favorite to wrestle in the 195 lb. weight class for Bellingham this winter. A football player, who steps onto the mat

with no fear and according to his coach is an absolute beast.

Mantegani is the only junior captain and will wrestle at 126 lbs. this season. The junior comes from a wrestling family and both his older brother and father help out with the program. Forbes believes that he should be able to qualify for the States this year.

Freshman Tyler Campbell (106 lbs.) is a newcomer to the sport, but he has already shown that he is very much into the sport.

"Tyler loves to learn and is picking things up very quickly," Forbes said. "He's built like a fire hydrant and brings an aggressiveness and energy to the mat."

Looking to find time in the 112 and 120 lb. weight class will be Joel Puri (112), a student of the sport that takes part in wrestling year-round. His talent got him to the States last year. Sophomore Josh Suaz is a first year wrestler with a background in martial arts and that should come to his aide on the mat while Dominic Quintino is another first year athlete to the program and although he has youth experience Forbes doesn't know much about him as of yet.

Most likely seeing action at the 126-weight class will be Charlie Leighton. The freshman, who was pretty much born into



Bellingham wrestling coach Tom Forbes will aim for his diverse group of competitors to strive to improve each time they're on the mat.

the sport as his father wrestled in high school and college, is back for his second season with the Blackhawks.

Ryan Cochran, a sophomore wrestling at 132, will practice along side Mantegani and Leighton, and all three should push one another. Another sophomore, Hunter Knox is hoping to get onto the mat at 145 lbs. Last fall, he saw a lot of action with the junior varsity squad, and this year, he happened to injure his knee prior to the season. Forbes is hoping Knox will be back a few weeks into the season.

Tim Gauntlett will be participating in his fifth season with Bellingham, and after working hard and lifting during the off-season, the senior will be wrestling at 152 this winter and is a perfect example of the coach's philosophy of improving.

"We're bumping him up to 152 this year, and he'll be able to handle himself at that weight class," the Bellingham Coach said. "Each year, he has moved up a weight class, so it's been hard for him to get a foothold on one class."

Forbes has two athletes wrestling in the 160/170 range. Sophomore Corey Phillips and Jack Davidson. Davidson was a State qualifier last year as a first year participant in the program, while Phillips, who has the ability and the talent, is somewhat of a question mark for the Coach at this time. He is a hard worker and could be a big solid anchor in the Bellingham lineup.

At 182 lbs., senior Paul Grieco, junior Griffin Bealeur and freshman Michael Sharp will be battling it out to wrestle with the varsity squad. Grieco, the odds on favorite, was a State qualifier last year; Bealeur was with the JV the majority of the season and Sharp is green, but tough.

"I am expecting really big things from these three," Forbes said. "We will have wrestle-offs

prior to each match, and the best wrestler will be with the varsity team. You need to beat the best if you want to take part in the varsity matches."

Looking to surpass the captain (Silva) at 195 will be sophomores Aiden Smith and Ella Costa. It's a learning curve for Smith, while Costa has wrestled in the past and has the potential, but this is her first year on the team.

The most open weight class is 220, with three year participant Connor Prentice, Abeas Shaa, Alex Lavallee and Landon Coutinho all challenging for the opportunity to wrestle for the varsity squad. Rounding out the weight class will be heavyweight Landry Fitzgerald. The second-year wrestler is an animal, according to his coach and last year as a first year participant, he was a sectional winner and State qualifier.

As he mentioned earlier, Forbes is not focusing on winning as much as he is in improving.

"We will be climbing the mountain all year long, while the athletes develop character, discipline and toughness," the Bellingham Coach said. "If they go out and wrestle their best when February comes around that will be ready for the Sectionals. If they can do that, then I've done my job."

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Sports

Bellingham Cheer Falls Short of State Title but Wins Bid to Nationals

BY CHRISTOPHER TREMBLAY,
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

For the first time in school history Bellingham captured the Division 4 State Cheerleading Championships last year, and under the guidance of Coach Tracey Elliott and her assistant Reymi Vargas (a member of the Framingham State Cheer team) the Blackhawks completed another competitive season.

Enroute to last year's State Championship, Bellingham first captured the Tri-Valley League Title and then took home the trophy for the South Division before eventually grabbing the ultimate title.

"We've finished in second place a couple of times before, but we'd never won the States," the seventh year Bellingham Coach said. "To do so was pretty exciting."

Following their State Championship, Bellingham was able to attend the Nationals in Florida, where they finished fourth. At the prestigious event, Bellingham was able to see teams that were much higher than their Division 4 status.

This year, the Blackhawks competed without half of the squad that accomplished the first time happening, but according to Elliott that's nothing new. Having such a small team to begin with year in and year out, the Coach expects to lose a good number of her athletes on a regular basis.

"Cheer is not a high priority sport in Bellingham, but I also set very high expectations and goals each year," Elliott said. "Coming into the season, it's not what a lot of them expect when they join. We don't just cheer for football

and basketball – it's a lot more than that. We compete with a jampacked 2 ½ minute routine that not only has cheering, but tumbling, dancing, and stunting. We go out and do the best that we can with what we have."

Co-Captains senior Julianna Buckley and junior Madison Elliott lead the team on and off the court. Both are members of the National Honor Society and are strong captains using what they learned from past captains.

High in the air beside Elliott, freshman Abigail Walker will be the team's other flyer. Other girls competing on the mat for the Blackhawks are freshman Sierra D'Arrigo (base and tumbler), junior Nicole Thomas (base), junior Taylor Lavallee (blackspot), senior Reilly Sousa (base and tumbler), freshman Natalie Doran (front base and tumbler) and sophomore Marissa Dell (base and tumbler). Lavallee and Doran were both named to the TVL All-Star team last year.

Alternate athletes for Bellingham are Molly Leonard, Lily Crawford, Josie Shoaf and Kiera Daly.

Since she became the Bellingham cheer coach, Elliott has looked for her teams to improve and take their competing to the next level.

"I've tried to slowly build this team each and every year since I took over," the Coach said. "During that time, we've won 6 TVL Championships, and now a Division 4 State Championship. We go up against some very tough teams each year, and we're hoping to match up with them on a regular basis."



BHS Cheer might have placed 5th in States this year, but they took second in Regionals, missing first place by two-tenths of a point. Their high score in the state competition has earned them another spot in Nationals, which will take place in March.

Thus far this year, Bellingham has done quite well in their competition; they finished second at

Milford, took third in Billerica, grabbed the TVL League Championship once again and finished

in first at Sheppard Hill, where they also were named the Grand Champion (posted the highest score of all 30 plus teams in all divisions).

On November 5th, the team placed second in the Regionals with the highest score in Bellingham High School cheer history, missing first place by a tenth of a point. Following that competition, they returned to the State Tournament, but this year placed 5th among fierce competition, with the top five teams all placing within three points of each other.

"Unfortunately, you can't control the scoring – you can just go out and do your best," said Elliott. "That's what they did. They were amazing. They got a very high score, and they got their bid to nationals, which will take place in March."

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Blackstone Receives \$96,720 in Community Compact Cabinet Information Technology Grant Funding

On December 6th, 2022, State Representative Michael Soter (R-Bellingham) and State Senator Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton) announced that the town of Blackstone was a recipient of the FY23 Community Compact Cabinet Efficiency and Regionalization grant program. The Town of Blackstone was awarded \$96,720 for the implementation of an e-permitting system.

Per the state website, the IT grant program is a competitive program focused on driving in-

novation and transformation at the local level through investments in technology. By using the power of IT, the Commonwealth looks to drive innovation, make government more efficient, save taxpayer money, and make it easier for residents to interact and transact with their local government. Grants support the implementation of innovative IT projects by funding related one-time capital needs such as technology infrastructure or software. Incidental or one-time costs related to the

capital purchase such as planning, design, installation, implementation and initial training are eligible.

“I applaud the Town of Blackstone for their work in securing this funding to help make our communities more efficient.,” State Representative Michael Soter commented. “These funds are critical for ensuring that taxpayer money is not wasted, and all residents are able to interact with their local government.”

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Thanks to Yanks Donates to Italian American Post #40

Pictured are Jacob, Maggie, Ellie, Logan and Connor McIsaac, and Mike Shain, the founder and president of Thanks To Yanks, a local charity dedicated to supporting those who serve in our military. Recently, the charity made a \$500 donation to the Italian American Post #40 to support their dedication too service to others. For more information on Thanks To Yanks, please like them on Facebook.

Photo by Gavin McIsaac

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KUDOS

continued from page 22

The Leapfrog grade uses up to 22 evidence-based measures of patient safety, including ICU physician staffing, nurse communication, doctor communication, staff responsiveness and discharge information. Leapfrog

calculated a numerical score for all eligible hospitals in the county. The numerical score was then converted into one of five letter grades, with “A” representing the best grade followed by “B,” “C,” “D,” and “F.” The Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is the only hospital rating focused exclusively on hospital safety

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Calendar

January 4

Franklin Art Association meeting, 6:30 p.m., Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., Franklin, www.franklinart.org or find them on Facebook

January 7

19th Annual Gary Mirliss Memorial Foundation Blood Drive, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., King Philip Middle School, 18 King St., Norfolk, https://donor.kraftfamilyblooddonorcenter.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/3118

January 11

Franklin Newcomers & Friends meeting, 7 p.m., Escape Into Fiction Book Store, 12 Main Street, Franklin, more information at <https://www.meetup.com/Franklin-Newcomers-Friends> <https://facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersFriendsClub>

Hartford Avenue Subcommittee meeting, 5:30 p.m., lower-level conference room at the Bellingham Town Hall

January 14

Bellingham History Discussion Group, 10 a.m., Bellingham Historical Museum, 3 Common Street. Join the authors (Cecily Christensen, Marjorie Turner Hollman, Pam Johnson, and Bernadette Rivard) of “Bellingham Now & Then: Celebrating the 300th Anniversary of Bellingham, MA” for the first of what the Historical Commission hopes will be quarterly discussions of Bellingham History. Snow date: January 28th.

January 17

Charles River Chorale non-audition chorale group open rehearsal, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ, 142 Exchange St., Millis. New singers encouraged to come.

January 21

Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School enrollment information session, 10 a.m. – noon, 500 Financial Park, Franklin (traffic must arrive via entrance on Washington St. and Financial Park), www.bfccps.org

January 23

Open for Business Grant Kick-Off Event: Turning Your Passion into Your Profession with Jeff Belanger, 6:30 p.m., Bellingham Public Library

January 24

Charles River Chorale non-audition chorale group open rehearsal, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ, 142 Exchange St., Millis. New singers encouraged to come.

January 31

Charles River Chorale non-audition chorale group open rehearsal, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ, 142 Exchange St., Millis. New singers encouraged to come.

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Clearing out closets and drawers to accommodate the influx of holiday goods? Or, getting ready to do a big clean-out over holiday break? A new statewide ban on the disposal of textiles, including clothes and shoes, may have you wondering what to do with those items you no longer need. Cradles to Crayons® has a solution right here in Bellingham with a donation bin located at:

- Bellingham Xfinity Store, 245 Hartford Avenue

Cradles to Crayons donation bins, located in dozens of Massachusetts communities, provide a convenient option to donate gently-used children’s clothing and shoes, which can be given a second life and reused by a family in need. Further details on accepted items can be found here (<https://www.cradlestocrayons.org/boston/take-action/donate-goods/items-we-accept/>), and all locations can be found here (<https://www.cradlestocrayons.org/boston/take-action/donate-goods/find-local-drop-off/>)

“While some families are wondering what to do with items that have been outgrown or gone unused - other families are desperate for these items, with household budgets stretched extremely tight this winter,” said Aubrey Henderson, Executive Director of Cradles to Crayons Massachusetts. “As a community we can help one another and the environment at the same time,” she added.

Record inflation and increased energy costs have stretched family budgets to the limits this winter. Affording clothing, coats, gloves, and boots for growing children has become harder than ever. Cradles to Crayons® is working to provide nearly 150,000 packages of winter essentials to children living in low-income and homeless situations across Massachusetts. Thousands of families rely on Cradles to Crayons to keep their kids warm during New England’s harsh winter weather. There has never been a more vital time to help.

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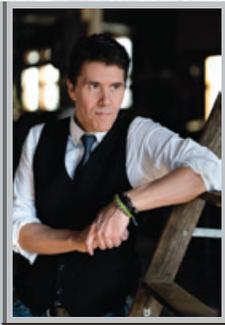


Bellingham Public Library



Bellingham Businesses - we need your input about which workshops, resources, and trainings will best help you!

January date to be determined. Check the library calendar.



The Open for Business Grant Kick-off Event
Monday, January 23rd at 6:30pm featuring **Jeff Belanger**, discussing how to turn a passion into a profession!



Upcoming topics include:

- Social Media for Business
- Conducting Business in a Virtual World
- Google Workspace
- Microsoft Office
- Business Resources

Questions? Contact Bernadette Rivard
brivard@bellingshamma.org
508-657-2776

Zoom Into Health & Fitness!

Classes start in January

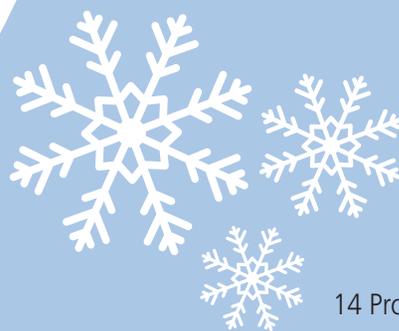
This winter, Milford Regional is offering live-streamed wellness classes to enjoy from the comfort of your own home.

Class Options:

- Therapeutic Qi Gong
- Core & More
- Ease into Fitness
- Zumba Toning®
- Cardio, Core & Conditioning
- Mindfully Mixed Yoga
- Pilates Barre Fusion
- Shape Up!

For More Information/To Register:

Visit milfordregional.org & select "Classes and Events."



Milford Regional

Medical Center

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Milford Regional Medical Center is committed to providing exceptional healthcare services to our community with *dignity, compassion* and *respect*.

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