

Free Press Seeks to Connect Communities and Fill a Gap

The untimely passing of respected community and business leader, Alfred (Al) Holman left a void in the Milford community. Al along with his wife Marilyn, published the *Milford Town Crier* for many years. Readers relied on the paper for news, town and school updates, and a sense of community and connectivity.

Chuck Tashjian, a local publisher who worked with both of the Holmans over the past ten years, has offered to bring the community a new monthly publication, the *Milford Free Press*.

The goal of the *Free Press* is to be a resource and to continue the tradition of letting residents know what's going on in their community. The new paper will be direct-mailed, free of charge, to all households and businesses in Milford.



Free Press staff members: Wendy Watkins, Graphic Design; and Shelley Ryan, Editor. Photo by Sarianna Theall

This publication is a way for readers to stay abreast of all their town has to offer.

We look forward to celebrating your special moments, events, town news, school news, sports teams and accomplishments, both big and small. Two members of the former *Town*

Crier staff have joined the *Free Press*: Wendy Watkins, Graphic Design; and Shelley Ryan, Editor. Both are local area residents. Coming soon is the *Free Press* website, milfordfreepress.com.

If you have story ideas, please email them to editor@milfordfreepress.com.

Making New Year's Resolutions Stick



An outdoor yoga session led by The Yoga Exchange at Stoddard Park in Holliston. Contributed photo

By Linda Chuss
Staff Writer

Over 4,000 years ago, as part of an annual planting celebration, some Babylonians made vows to repay debts or return borrowed items. Today, about forty percent of people ritually make New Year's resolutions, with nearly half of them seeking more physical activity. According to Strava, an exercise tracking service, only ten percent will meet their goal and maintain it for two years. Most people quit in the first month, with January

weather a contributing factor in Massachusetts.

Studies have shown how to make it more likely to fulfill a resolution:

- Only commit to one resolution.
- Understand the reasons behind the goal. What improvement will it bring? Why is that important?
- Make the goal challenging but achievable, defining specific

RESOLUTIONS

continued on page 12

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Alzheimer's Support Group

Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living and Memory Support Community, 11 Birch Street, Milford, is pleased to announce that they will now host an in-person support group every month at their facility. Hearts, Hugs and Hope is the name of the group which is geared toward families and caregivers dealing with Alzheimer's

disease or related dementias. There are many challenges related to a dementia diagnosis, so it is helpful to share your concerns and personal experiences with others who completely understand what you are going through. This group will also help attendees to learn about proven strategies to help better care for your family member.

The support group will be held on the second Tuesday of the month, at 6 p.m., at Cornerstone in Milford. Light refreshments will be served.

Call 508-473-0035 to RSVP or please contact Director of Compass Memory Support Programming Jenn Hozempa at jhozempa@cornerstonemilford.com for more information.

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Welcoming
NEW
Patients

Milford Senior Center

The Milford Senior Center is open to the public for monthly and weekly classes and activities for those interested. Hours of operation are Monday through Thursday, from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Friday, from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Closed Saturday and Sunday. Contact Senior Center staff for more information at 508-473-8334.

Tuesday, January 17

Book Group, 10 a.m., free
Writers Group 11 a.m., free

Wednesday, January 18

Stillwater Movie of the Month, 1 p.m., free

Monday, January 24

Fortune Cookie Club, 11 a.m., free

Wednesday, January 25

Trivia, 1 p.m., free

Thursday, January 26

Men's Group, 10 a.m., free

Weekly Fitness Schedule:

Mondays

Gym/fitness equipment, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Dance Fitness (Instructor Jenny Barrett), 9 a.m.
Strength & Fall Prevention (Instructor Andrea Longo), 10 a.m.
Low Impact Fitness (Instructor Shirley Areano), 1 p.m.

Tuesdays

Gym/fitness equipment, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Pilates (Instructor Marcella Pannenberg), 8:20 a.m.
Step & Strength (Instructor Jean Gillis), 9 a.m.
Total Body Conditioning (Instructor Robin Johnston), 9:30 a.m.
Chair Yoga (Instructor Marsha Mancuso), 10:30 a.m.
Tai Chi (Instructor Jeanne McGowan-Boucher), 1 p.m.

Wednesdays

Gym/fitness equipment, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Gentle Yoga (Instructor Jean Gillis), 9 a.m.
Strength & Fall Prevention (Instructor Andrea Longo), 10 a.m.
Groove & Sculpt (Instructor Andrea Longo), 11 a.m.
Muscle & Mat (Instructor Robin Johnston), 12 p.m.

Thursdays

Gym/fitness equipment, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Barre (Instructor Marcella Pannenberg), 8:20 a.m.
Yoga (Instructor Marsha Mancuso), 9:15 a.m.
Fun & Functional (Instructor Christine Bositis), 10:30 a.m.
Low Impact Fitness (Instructor Shirley Areano), 1 p.m.

Fridays

Gym/fitness equipment, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Cardio Strength Circuit (Instructor Jean Gillis), 9 a.m.
Groove & Sculpt (Instructor Andrea Longo), 10 a.m.
Fit Ball Strength & Stretch (Instructor Andrea Longo), 11 a.m.

Luncheon Helps Grieving Mothers Move Forward

By Grace Allen
Staff Writer

A yearly luncheon hosted by Gilly's House attempts to acknowledge and address the profound grief mothers feel after losing a child. Held each November, the luncheon is an opportunity for mothers to gather, reflect, and learn how to move forward.

"Everybody grieves differently, but I've met so many mothers who have lost a child and are stuck in their grief process, even years later," said Barbara Gillmeister. She decided to hold the annual event as a way to help local mothers shift their approach to grief.

Gillmeister, along with her husband David, founded Gilly's House in memory of their son Steven, who passed away from a heroin overdose in 2016. Gilly's House, located in Wrentham, is a sober home for young men who have completed treatment but now need a place to continue their recovery.

Eighty women attended this year's event, which was held on November 14 at the Chabad Jewish Center in Milford. Mothers who lost a child from any cause were welcome.

The luncheon is free, with all the food provided by the center's leader, Rabbi Mendy Kivman, and his wife Rochy. Mrs. Kivman cooks the meal, while beverages, goody bags, and door prizes are donated by sponsors.

Each year, the luncheon features speakers who demonstrate how they have found new purpose after losing a child. Becky Savage, who lost two sons in one evening to an oxycodone overdose, spoke at the Nov. 14 lunch. She and her husband started the



From left, Becky Savage of the 525 Foundation, with Barbara Gillmeister and Maureen Cappuccino of Gilly's House. Contributed photo

525 Foundation, an Indianapolis-based organization dedicated to raising awareness about the dangers of alcohol and prescription drug abuse.

"We try to present people who have done something in honor and memory of their children," said Gillmeister. "It doesn't have to be a big thing, but it hopefully gives these mothers ideas on how to find a purpose to help them move forward."

The luncheon also provides camaraderie for grieving mothers, many of whom have lost a child to substance use disorder. The shared experience can be very powerful, said Gillmeister.

"You're with a group of people that totally understand you," she explained. "Everybody cries and laughs together and there's no judgement of whether you were a good parent or not. It's comforting to be with other

people who you don't have to explain your feelings to."

Gillmeister says the luncheon is always held in November, before Thanksgiving, for a reason.

"It's the beginning of the holiday season, and the empty chair at the table is really hard," she said.

Lynn Wencus lost her son Jeff in 2017 to a drug overdose. The Wrentham mother has attended the Gilly's House luncheon the past two years. It's comforting, she said, to be around other mothers who are going through the same experience, and to hear the inspirational stories of the speakers.

"I think, for a mom, the worst thing that can happen is to lose a child," said Wencus. "You carried them for nine months and fell in love with them before they even came into this world. While it doesn't give you peace,



Rabbi Mendy Kivman, leader of the Chabad Jewish Center in Milford, addresses the mothers. Contributed photo

it's nice to be around people who get the grief and pain."

After Jeff died, Wencus became involved in advocacy work with Team Sharing, a national organization of parents who have lost a child to substance use disorder.

Rae Finn, the owner of Hogwash 'n Rhinestones, was a special guest at the luncheon. Her Metrowest-based organization upcycles clothing and accessories, providing used items with new life. The theme "tattered and relentless" was presented to the mothers as a tangible way to acknowledge they are not the same persons they were before. Like Finn's upcycled items, they can reinvent themselves and find new meaning in life. For an icebreaker activity, Finn provided the attendees with lapel pins and letters they could personalize with their child's name or a mes-

sage such as Strength or Hope, for example.

Gillmeister says feedback from the luncheon is uniformly positive, despite how emotionally difficult it can be for some to even walk through the door. The experience can be draining yet cathartic, and she hopes the yearly gathering can help mothers find a purpose to help them on their grief journey.

In her welcome address to the mothers, Gillmeister said, "Our children would not want to see us stuck, unable to move from that awful moment in time that changed our lives forever. We need to take our memories, hold them tight, and move forward with our lives."

For more information about Gilly's House, or to be put on a mailing list for next year's luncheon, visit gillyshouse.com or call 508-384-2251.

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The Milford Town Clerk's Office Update:

The Annual Street Listing/Annual Town Census will be mailed to households in January 2023.

It's important to return your Annual Street Listing every year even if there are no changes to the form. Years from now, you may need to prove that you or your children lived in Milford or resided in Massachusetts during a certain time period and the street list for that year is the proof of residency. You can return the Annual Street Listing to our office by using the enclosed envelope, faxing your form to 508-634-2324, or by email to MilfordAnnualCensus@townofmilford.com.

What do I need to do with the form?

Please look over the names

listed on the form. If there are no changes to the pre-printed information, simply sign and date the form and return it to the Town Clerk's office. Add any new people who reside at your address and indicate with a "M" (Moved) or "D" (Deceased) if someone has moved or passed away. Students living away at school and residents who are in a nursing home or away in the military are still considered residents of Milford and can remain on the census. Check to see that the date of birth is correct for each person and correct it if it is not. Please list a contact phone number for the household and indicate if it is public or unlisted. Please add or correct the "Occupations" column listed on the form and list what grade if a child is in school. The "Voter" column tells you what each person's voter registration status is. "U" stands for "Unenrolled" which means not enrolled in any particular political party. This is what most people mean when they say "Independent." Other designations are: "D" for Democrat or "R" for Republican and if there is no letter in the "Voter" column means the

person is not registered to vote in Milford.

To make any changes to your voter information on the street list, you would need to sign the bottom of the form in order for the change to be processed. No changes to voter information can be made without the voter's signature. To register to vote you need to complete a Voter Registration Form. Please call the Town Clerk's office if you need one, or you can download one from our website (www.milfordma.gov).

What happens if I don't return the form?

Registered voters who do not return the Annual Street List Form and do not respond to a follow up mailing will be designated an "Inactivate" voter on the street/voter list. Such persons will only be eligible to vote after they fill out an "Affirmation of Current and Continuous Residence" the next time they come to vote. Every household that fails to complete the form has to be contacted a second time, which takes additional time, paper and postage.

Last year I indicated that someone moved out, so why are they are still on the form?

A registered voter who moves and does not register to vote in another community cannot be removed from our street list until they have not voted in two consecutive state elections (which may be why you may have told us someone moved but they still appear on your form). If you have a forwarding or new address for these individuals, please provide their new address to us so we can mail them paperwork to be removed or you can tell them to register in their new MA community. When they do, their name will be removed from our records.

Who should complete the street list/census form?

Any adult residing in the home can complete and sign the form.

Dog Licenses:

Dog licenses are issued at the Town Clerk's office. Our licensing period runs from April 1–June 30 each year. If you return the insert portion in the Annual Street Listing to register your dog, we will hold the form until April 1 to do so. Please make sure to send a valid rabies certificate to our office by mail, or email it to MLaughlin@townofmilford.com. If you have a new puppy/dog, please register the puppy/dog after it receives its rabies vaccination (you will need to provide our office a copy of the rabies certificate). Copies of spay/neutering certificates will also be required for all new puppies/dogs if applicable. Those pet owners who are renewing their dog licenses from the previous year will only need to present a spay/neutering certificate if the surgery for spay/neutering was done after you have registered your dog in 2021. We will also need a new/valid rabies certificate if it has expired. If you are unsure, you can always call our office to verify what documentation may be needed. If you no longer have a dog at your residence, you can call or email the office so that we can remove you from our dog list.

Town Election:

Nomination papers will be available Tuesday, January 3, 2023 for all elected offices, including Town Meeting Members. The following people are up for Re-Election in 2023:

Thomas J. O'Loughlin, Select Board, three-year term
Amy E. Hennessy Neves, Town Clerk, three-year term
Scott Crisafulli, Highway Surveyor, three-year term
Steven L. Borges, Board of Assessors, three-year term
Leonard A. Izzo Sr., Board of Health, three-year term
Edward Bertorelli, Library Trustee, three-year term
Ann Ragosta, Library Trustee, three-year term
Paul J. Braza, Park Commissioner, three-year term
Leonardo L. Morcone, Sewer Commissioner, three-year term

Charles E. Reneau, Tree Warden/Gypsy Moth Supt., three-year term

Jennifer Parson, School Committee, three-year term
Michael Aghajanian, School Committee, three-year term
Scott Crisafulli, Trustee Vernon Grove Cemetery, three-year term
Robert E. Rogers Jr., Trustee Vernon Grove Cemetery, three-year term

Other Offices on the 2023 ballot:

Planning Board seat, five-year term
Planning Board seat, three-year unexpired term
Water Commissioner, three-year term
Water Commissioner, two-year term
Water Commissioner, one-year term
Town Meeting Members Precincts 1–8 (top 30 vote getters will fill seats)

Please contact the Town Clerk's Office if you are interested in obtaining nomination papers so we can get them prepared in advance.

Vote by mail will be available for this election, please complete an application for April 4, 2023 if you wish to vote by mail at <https://www.milfordma.gov/town-clerk/files/2023-vote-mail-application>.

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Special Delivery



Lyla Fasulo from Girl Scout Troop 65017 and Payton Fasulo from Girl Scout Troop 65217 on Christmas helping CCC with their Christmas dinner deliveries. Contributed photo

Childbirth Education Classes Resume at Milford Regional

Milford Regional Medical Center is pleased to announce that in-person and virtual childbirth education classes will once again be offered to expectant parents beginning in January 2023 and running through the end of the year.

Each session will walk parents through the last weeks of pregnancy discussing discomfort, exercise and nutrition. Sessions will also focus on birth plan options, stages of labor, comfort measures during labor, cesarean births, immediate postpartum, newborn care and much more.

Classes will be given by instructor Laura Laird, a certified and experienced Childbirth Educator (BCCE) whose goal is to help expectant parents feel prepared and supported during their last weeks of pregnancy, labor and delivery and postpartum.

“We are thrilled to once again be offering these very informative childbirth education classes at Milford Regional,” said MRMC’s Director of Maternal Health Rose Galimi-Hayes. “Laura comes

to Milford Regional as a highly recommended childbirth educator whose experience, knowledge and warmth will help parents through the final stages of their pregnancy journeys, as well as the beginning of life with their newborns.”

Milford Regional is offering several childbirth class options including an in-person, four-week session at Milford Regional on Wednesday evenings, from 7 to 9 p.m., a virtual four-week session on Monday evenings, from 7 to 9 p.m., and in-person weekend sessions at the hospital that cover everything over a two-day period on Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 1

p.m. and Sundays, from 12 to 4 p.m. A tour of the Maternity Center will be provided for in-person sessions. Masks are required for all in-person sessions.

Participants do not have to be delivering at Milford Regional to participate in these classes. It is recommended that participants register no later than their 36th week.

The fee is \$200 per session. Space is limited. To register, view milfordregional.org and click on “Classes and Events.” For questions, contact Michelle Sanford, Public Relations and Community Benefits Manager, at 508-422-2827 or msanford@milreg.org.

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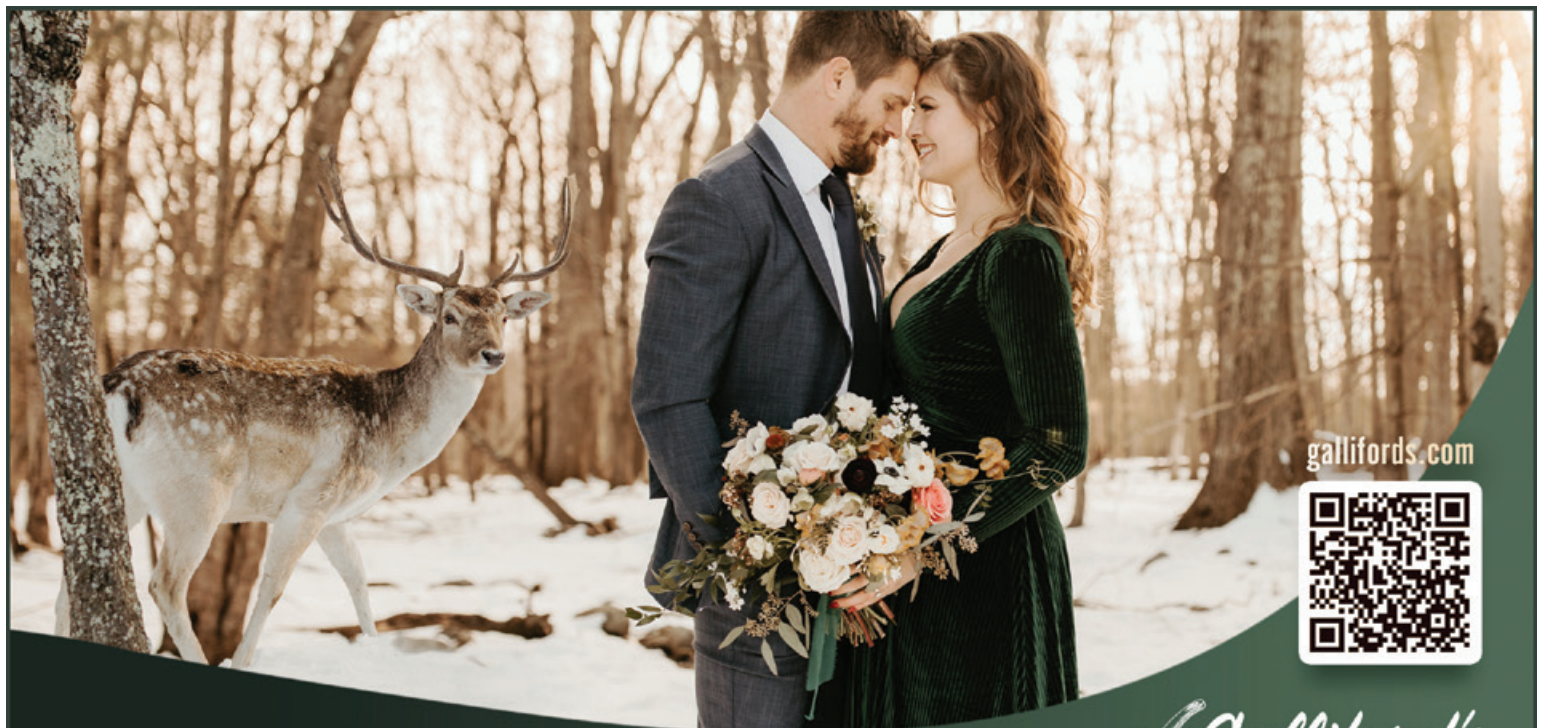
Need a warm coat?

The Sacred Heart Church Coat Closet, 11 East Main Street, will hold its next Free Coat Giveaway day on Saturday, February 4, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Have a warm coat you don't need?

Donations of coats in good condition are accepted in the collection bins in front of the Parish Center, 11 East Main Street. No “dry clean only” fabrics, please.

For more information, contact ccdoffice@sacred-heartmilford.org or visit <https://bit.ly/3jEQ4P3>.



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Milford Seeks Combined Economic Development Director and Assistant Town Administrator

By Theresa Knapp
Staff Writer

At its meeting on Dec. 19, the Milford Select Board discussed hiring an Economic Development Director who would also serve as a part-time Assistant Town Administrator.

“This individual could focus, at the beginning, on downtown; this position and this person would be focused on that,” said Town Administrator Richard Villani. “I think it’s time to also think about an Assistant Town Administrator on a part-time basis.”

Select Board Chair Tom O’Loughlin agreed downtown should be a main focus. “There’s nothing better than a vibrant downtown... This is very, very important to this community.”

According to the three-page

job description in the Select Board’s Dec. 19 packet, the previous draft of the Economic Development Director job description was revised on Dec. 15 to “Assistant Town Administrator/Economic Development Director” with the objective of performing “administrative, planning, and technical work in the coordination and management of Town government as chief staff officer to the Town Administrator.”

A Bachelor’s degree is required with at least three years of experience; a Master’s degree is preferred. There are also numerous “mental requirements” listed.

The job description was forwarded to the town’s Personnel Board for approval.

For the full job description, visit <https://bit.ly/3YVXGg1>.

Thanks to Yanks Gives Back



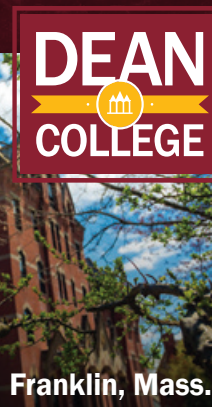
Pictured are Jacob, Maggie, Ellie, Logan, and Connor McIsaac, as well as Mike Shain, founder and president of Thanks To Yanks, a local charity dedicated to supporting those who serve in our military. Recently, the charity made a \$500.00 donation to the Italian American Post # 40, in support of their dedication of service to others. For more information on Thanks to Yanks, please like them on Facebook. Photo by Gavin McIsaac



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- Information Session II: May 3, 2023, 6–7 p.m.

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JULY 30–AUG. 4, 2023

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Annual Mitten Tree was a Great Success



Milford Town Library annual Mitten Tree. Contributed photo

By Theresa Knapp
Staff Writer

The annual Milford Town Library Mitten Tree was hands-down the most successful holiday program in 2022.

“The big success of the season was the Mitten Tree,” reported MTL Information Services Supervisor Anne Berard. “The Children’s Librarian said we had over 200 items, mostly mittens and gloves but people also gave scarves, hats and some socks.”

Berard said some of the items were purchased but many were

hand-knitted or crocheted and donated by volunteers who work on the project throughout the year.

For more than 30 years, a Christmas tree has been set up in the Children’s Room which is “decorated” with donated warm winter accessories that are then distributed to local charities.

This year, items were shared with Children Across America, Thanks To Yanks, and the Sacred Heart Church Coat Closet for its January and February giveaways.

Stockings for Seniors a Milford Holiday Tradition

Nine years ago, Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living came up with a way to give back to the community during the holidays. Stockings for Seniors, is a program that joins together area businesses and organizations to create holiday gifts for Milford area seniors. “Each year, we are inspired by the generosity of so many in our community, who come together to help make this tradition possible,” said Jared Pearson Director of Community Relations for Cornerstone at Milford Assisted Living.

With the help of local businesses, organizations and eldercare professionals, Cornerstone was able to donate more than 250 stockings. Each stocking was filled with items like socks, mittens, beauty care products, stamps and gift cards to the Milford Senior Center, who helped distribute the stockings to seniors.

Cornerstone would like to say a special thank you to the following individuals, local businesses and organizations who donated time, funds and materials: Milford Senior Center, Tri-County Regional Chamber, Bellingham Senior Center, The Enclave of Franklin, Countryside Health Care of Milford, Franklin Senior Center, The Aging Space, Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center, Legacy Office Solutions, Inc, Local Business First, Suburban Lifestyle Real Estate, Vivilicious Treats, The Wine House, Staples, New Hope, Inc, Central One Federal



Jared Pearson, Kim Cookson, Marcia Lombardo, and Courtney Riley. Contributed photo

Credit Union, Tri-Valley, Inc. AlcComply, Aligned Nutrition Counseling, Inc., Bright Insurance Agency, DaiNell Consulting & Bookkeeping, Shawon Davis, LLC

“Stockings for Seniors brings together families and friends, partners and vendors, co-workers and neighbors, to bring joy to those in need,” Pearson added.

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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 Milford. 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 in-

vited 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 Boston 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 vitreoretinal 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



Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.



John F. Hatch, M.D.



Bryan Hong, M.D.



Michael R. Adams, O.D.



Shalin Zia, O.D.



Donald L. Conn, O.D.



Dr. Mai-Khuyen Nguyen, O.D.



Dr. Purvi Patel, O.D.



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EYES

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Thoreau Foundation Scholarship Applications due February 1

The Henry David Thoreau Foundation is a charitable trust that propels environmental leadership across disciplines. Through scholarships and grants, it strengthens the ability of undergraduate students and professors to pursue collective study of environmental issues and promote more creative action.

Applications are due Feb. 1. Applicants must reside in Massachusetts and be in their final year at a Massachusetts high school; plan to enroll in college in the year the scholarship is awarded; and demonstrate strong academic qualifications and a commitment to an environmental field.

Since 1999, the Thoreau Foundation has provided more than \$7 million to support envi-



ronmental work. Each year we award scholarships to outstanding Massachusetts high school seniors – the next wave of environmental leaders who will pursue interdisciplinary environmental studies in college and beyond. We also fund visionary programs at U.S. colleges and universities, forging alliances with professors, strengthening our environmental network, and extending our impact.

For more information, including the online application, visit www.thoreauscholar.org/
 Editor's note: Do you know a Thoreau Scholar who would like to share their story? If so, contact editor@milfordfreepress.com.

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unopened diapers and training pants, and new hygiene items. They do NOT accept toys or baby gear of any kind (stuffed animals, play structures, strollers, car seats), bathing suits, costumes, bedding, bicycles or ride-on toys, books and clothing with family-related messaging ("I Love Mommy," "Daddy and I"), cribs of any kind, DVDs/CDs/VHS tapes/computer games, electronics, furniture and household goods/items, and more.

For a full list (including what to do with items C2C cannot accept), visit <https://bit.ly/3Ie5aW6>. Area bins can be found in Bellingham, Wrentham Village, Patriot Place, and at the Auburn Mall. Please do not leave donations outside of

donation bins even if the bins are full. For more information, including donation guidelines, visit www.cradlestocrayons.org/boston

EYES

continued from page 8

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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Recent Home Sales

Date	Milford	Amount
12/28/2022	14 Carroll Street	\$410,000
12/27/2022	8 Shadowbrook Lane #14	\$210,000
12/23/2022	66 Mount Pleasant Street	\$480,000
12/22/2022	3 Y Street	\$480,000
12/21/2022	28 Haven Street	\$590,000
12/21/2022	74 High Street	\$433,115
12/20/2022	24 Woodridge Road	\$619,000
12/19/2022	49 Prospect Street	\$430,000
12/15/2022	16 S Main Street	\$401,500
12/15/2022	137 Beaver Street	\$540,000
12/14/2022	18 Stallbrook Road	\$435,000
12/09/2022	45 Jillson Circle	\$550,000
12/08/2022	15 Sumner Street	\$599,900
12/07/2022	42 Harding Street	\$495,000
12/06/2022	2 Manguso Court	\$489,900
12/02/2022	18 S Main Street	\$330,000
12/01/2022	21 Country Club Lane	\$353,000

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages



24 Woodridge Road in Milford recently sold for \$619,000. Photo credit www.zillow.com

Three Generations Dance The Nutcracker

By Theresa Knapp
Staff Writer

Paula Cerulli Lock of Hopedale has been dancing for more than 60 years. She started when she was seven years old and has not stopped since.

Cerulli-Lock, 68, spent many years sharing her love of dance, both personally and professionally. She has taught dance at various levels and she has danced in various productions all over New England.

In December, she performed once again in *The Nutcracker*, produced by Miss Georgia Deane's School of Dance in Milford, along with her husband, daughter, and grandchildren.

"My grandson Ryan Croeber, age 9, played the Lead, Fritz, and a Mouse; my granddaughter Kailyn Croeber, age 12, played a Party Girl, Soldier, and Chinese Corps; my daughter, Stacey Croeber, age 41, played a Party Parent along with my husband Douglas Lock, age 69, and myself," said Cerulli-Lock.

"Having three generations on stage at the same time in Act 1 is a blessing for me. I have danced since I was 7 and to have my



Three generations performed together in the 2022 production of *The Nutcracker* produced by Miss Georgia Deane's School of Dance in Milford. Pictured here are Paula Cerulli Lock and Douglas Lock of Hopedale, and daughter and grandchildren, Stacey, Ryan and Kailyn Croeber of Milford. Contributed photo

family share my love and passion for ballet is a Christmas gift in and of itself," she said before the performance.

Her daughter danced in her teens and in college, and her grandchildren are both on the dance team at Express Dance & Acrobatics in Milford.

Cerulli-Lock says, "As a mother and a grandmother, I hope to leave a legacy for my children and grandchildren, and I have multiple things in my life that I'd like to leave, but most of all is my love of ballet," adding that her mother had also been a dancer.

The 2022 production of *The Nutcracker* was the 41st year Miss Georgia's had performed the classic ballet based on the 1816 short story "The Nutcracker and the Mouse King."



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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 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

Business spotlight

to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Milford, the Schadlers have been residents for over 20 years. Their four kids have gone to Milford schools. In addition to living in town, they are proud investors in the community. They sponsor and coach several sports teams, volunteer at the schools, and own both commercial and residential properties.

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 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 affordable-junkremoval.com.

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

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RESOLUTIONS

continued from page 1

results to attain. For an exercise resolution, choose something enjoyable.

- Identify near-term steps to take, including how to address foreseeable obstacles.
- Rely on supportive resources.
- Don't give up, even after a slip-up.

Following is an example that anyone who wants to be more physically active can draw from.

Chris wants to get back into running. It will make climbing stairs easier, decrease fatigue, and set a good example for Chris's children. Completing Milford's Hot to Trot 5K race in July is a realistic target. To make time for the workouts, Chris plans to run while the children are at their own sports programs. Chris will look for other runners to get advice from and sometimes run with. Through the winter, Chris will use a treadmill at the nearby gym, starting with one mile three times a week and increasing the distance every week. From April until the event, Chris will instead run on the paved trail in town. After the race, Chris will set a new goal.

There are considerable local resources for getting exercise. Trails, for instance, are free, scenic, and serene places for walking, running, biking, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. They can be even more enjoyable with family, friends, or a dog along. In Mendon, the Town Forest offers easy, thirty-minute walks and longer routes that are also good for biking. Milford boasts the Upper Charles paved trail and the

renowned New England Mountain Biking Association wooded trails, named Vietnam.

In Upton, the State Forest has many paths, ranging from wide and flat to narrow and hilly, with unique structures as well. As Joyce Sandvik of Sutton says, "The trails at Upton State Forest have historical significance. The park was built by the Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) and is the last remaining CCC headquarters in Massachusetts." Remains from structures built in the 1930s are still visible from the trails. Trail maps can be found online or via free apps like Open Street Map.

For using the trails with others, there are groups such as the Hopkinton Trails Club and the Upton Recreation Department, which have Facebook pages listing their events, and the Mendon Senior Walking Group, which follows different area routes three times a week.

Taking classes at a gym can make it easier to keep a commitment, like those at CrossFit in Mendon. While Planet Fitness has a Milford gym, their thousands of other locations can be used with the membership, allowing workouts near home and work, and when traveling. There are some businesses that provide fitness facilities and classes on site.

The Milford Community School Use Program has classes for fitness and yoga, plus a pool for aqua aerobics and lap swimming. Upton's Recreation Department sponsors weekly volleyball at the Nipmuc gym, and later in the year has an outdoor pickleball program. Ponds can be used for ice skating in winter, and for swimming in summer, like at the town



Bill Taylor, President of Friends of Upton State Forest, points out a waterhole built nearly a century ago to a hiking group. *Contributed photo*



Bike tracks and footprints in the snow show the trails at the Upton State Forest are well used even in winter. *Photo by Linda Chuss*

beaches in Mendon and Upton; plus there are two free public pools in Milford.

Yoga, known for improving strength while decreasing tightness and stress, can be done alone at home or in a class. JTB in Uxbridge or The Yoga Exchange in Holliston have introductory rates and provide options for more experienced students. According to Melanie Harrington, who owns and leads classes at The Yoga Exchange, "We help students practice yoga with mindfulness, compassion, and gratitude." Doing yoga at home just requires floor space, but is easier when following a video, like on the "Yoga with Adriene" YouTube channel. Benefits from karate also extend beyond fitness. In Milford, American Karate aims to develop discipline and instill confidence through their classes. For something daring, there's paintball at Friendly Fire in Upton or axe throwing at PiNZ in Milford.

With far more resources than the Babylonians had and practical tips to achieve goals, anyone stands a good chance of fulfilling their New Year's resolution to exercise more.



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Milford Families Supported



More than 30 volunteers (some pictured here) contributed to the success of this year's food and gift distribution at the Medway Village Church Food Pantry. *Contributed photo*

By Theresa Knapp
Staff Writer

On Saturday, Dec. 17, the Medway Village Church Food Pantry set a record when it fed 563 people (230 children, 310 adults, and 23 senior citizens) from 146 households, and distributed toys and gifts to more than 250 children and teens. Food Pantry Director Susan Dietrich says that includes more than 1,100 pounds of produce from The Greater Boston Food Bank (GBFB), Medway Community Farm, and Broken Fork Farm featuring Mel's Plant Stand.

"We used to have 35 families a week, 140 families a month; we just had 146 families in one day and that change has just happened over the last 12 to 18 months, since the height of the pandemic," Dietrich said, noting clients are mostly from Medway, Milford and Bellingham, but they also serve families from Hopedale, Millis, Upton, and beyond. Toy and gift donations came from Cub Scout Pack 748, BSA Troop 367, Saint Joseph Parish's giv-

ing tree, Vivint Home Security, Dollar Tree in Franklin, and several other private donors. The Saint Joseph Parish Middle School Youth Group also donated Mason jar cookie kits for food pantry patrons.

The food pantry also gave out \$6,000 in gift cards, each valued at \$40 for either Shaw's or Stop & Shop. Dietrich said the gift cards were provided by the Greater Boston Food Bank during previous months but local organizers decided to hold them until December when they realized Christmas fell on a Sunday, meaning the food pantry would be closed and their clients would have to go two weeks without visiting. She noted the GBFB was able to give gift cards at Thanksgiving but was not able to do so at Christmas due to increased costs. "We have seen tremendous inflation in what we have been spending in order to keep our shelves stocked," she said.

Pre-pandemic, they would pay approximately \$700 for 2,000 to 2,500 pounds of food from the GBFB twice a month;

now they pay approximately \$2,500 for 4,500 pounds of food twice a month. Medway Village Church Food Pantry relies on private donations plus state grants and programs to stock its shelves. Dietrich said some programs are ending at a time when community demand is increasing.

"For several families, it is a devastating moment for them to walk through the door because they can't believe they're here," Dietrich said. "We work hard to make them feel welcome and comfortable, and that's one of the reasons our pantry is set up to be 100% choice. It is a 'shopping' experience, it is not 'here is a prepacked bag of goods;' they get to choose what they need."

The Medway Village Church Food Pantry is now accepting donations to restock its shelves, particularly personal hygiene items (toothbrushes, toothpaste, larger sized diapers, baby wipes), paper towels, toilet paper, laundry detergent, etc.

For more information, visit them on Facebook @Medway Village Church Food Pantry.

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Keeping Watch from High Above



Two bald eagles photographed in central Mass in the fading twilight. Photo by local photographer Alice Gentili

SPORTS

Experience a Strength for Milford Girls Hoops

By Chris Villani
Sports Writer

Over the past couple of seasons, Milford High head girls' basketball coach T.J. Dolliver has had to rely on some of his younger players to lead the way. But this year, those younger Scarlet Hawks are now in their junior or senior seasons, and Dolliver said the experience will aid the team's success this winter.

"I have a good group of kids; the girls are great and I have a mix of all ages," Dolliver said. "My two senior captains have been on varsity for four years. We definitely have experience, and experience can take you a long way."

Emily Croteau and Brook Ferreira anchor the Hawks as team captains this winter.

"They bring a lot of experience and a lot of leadership," Dolliver said. "They are great kids and they do a great job as captains in helping the younger girls on the team."

Junior Erin Michelson played a big role last season, and is playing an even bigger

one this year. Dolliver said he noticed from an early point in the season that she had worked hard during the offseason and came in stronger and improved in all facets of her game. She proved him right with double-digit scoring performances early in the schedule.

"She does a lot," the coach said. "She is very versatile."

The Scarlet Hawks do not have a lot of height on the roster, but senior forward Aliza Syed is the exception. At 5-foot-10, she is the tallest player on the team, and Dolliver said she is primed to have a good senior year and be an impact player. Milford is also seeing contributions from junior guard Maeve Driscoll.

"She played off the bench last year but she is a starter this year," Dolliver said. "She does a lot of good things on the wing, she plays good defense, and she is always in the right spots on the court. She is also a competitor. Day-in and day-out in practice, she is focused and ready to compete and she gets better every day because of

that attitude."

Sisters Olivia Baglione, a sophomore, and Ava Baglione, a freshman, are two more rotation players for Milford. Dolliver praised their work ethic and their desire to get better and help the team win.

Dolliver is hoping the mix of experience and skilled younger players helps the Scarlet Hawks get back to the postseason for the first time since 2018. Back then, 10 wins was enough to qualify for the tournament. It is unclear how many victories it will take this year due to the new statewide tournament and the ratings system that factors in strength of schedule — something that should play to the Hawks' advantage given their position in the ultra competitive Hockomock League.

"I think we can get there this year, but we are going to have to get better on a daily basis and grind out some close games," Dolliver said. "If we do things the right way and follow our principles offensively and defensively, I think we have a pretty high ceiling this year."

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SPORTS

MHS Boys Basketball Young, but Experienced



MHS Boys Basketball team. Contributed photo

By Chris Villani
Sports Writer

Milford had the youngest boys' basketball team in the Hockomock League a season ago, and this year the Scarlet Hawks may once again be among the league's youngest squads. But MHS has significantly more varsity experience this winter and head coach Paul Seaver is hoping it will pay off.

"We are still super young but we had a great offseason and we have a lot of guys returning, a handful of new guys in the fray, and a big roster," Seaver said.

Many of the Scarlet Hawks were seeing their first varsity action last winter for a team that won only twice. But this year Milford has enough experience that Seaver refuses to use youth as an excuse. Senior Wyatt Zagami is a captain and one of the top three scorers returning. He's someone MHS is counting on scoring again this year.

Junior Jake Soares is another captain and was Milford's leading scorer as a sophomore, before an injury cut his season short. Milford is also getting a lift from Ryan Franklin, a 6-foot-3 forward who notched a double-double in his first game of the season.

Senior Joey Buckley, a 6-foot-5 senior, fellow senior Guy Saintyl, and junior Nick Araujo are three more veterans who the Hawks are looking to for leadership. Seaver took sol-

ace in Milford's start to the season, which included a win and a pair of single-digit losses against strong league competition.

"Those types of things are going to happen," he said. "We are in the process of learning how to rebuild and how to compete, and we are doing a good job of competing. We need to turn that into learning how to win and that's only going to come with time and adversity and some growing pains."

Sophomore Andrew Rivera is a key offensive cog for the Scarlet Hawks and has put up multiple double-digit scoring performances. Freshman CJ Farrell is another skilled offensive player who has also been able to get into double figures despite it being his first season.

"They are both guards who are scoring and really pacing

us," Seaver said.

Sophomores Gus Coutinho, Luca Testa, and Tyler Ballard are also providing contributions for MHS, and senior captain Jacob Ligor is recovering from an injury and aiming to be back before the end of January.

"We are relying wholeheartedly on a lot of guys who are still young," Seaver said. "But there have been some encouraging signs."

The most encouraging sign has been the uptick in offense relative to last season. But Seaver said his team is still turning the ball over too often, but he said the mistakes he is seeing now are fixable.

"In the long run, I think things are encouraging," he said. "We are the youngest team in a very, very tough league, but that's not an excuse."



Jake Soares, Wyatt Zagami, Jacob Ligor (3 Capts) and Head Coach Paul Seaver (who is also an MHS Alumni). Contributed photo

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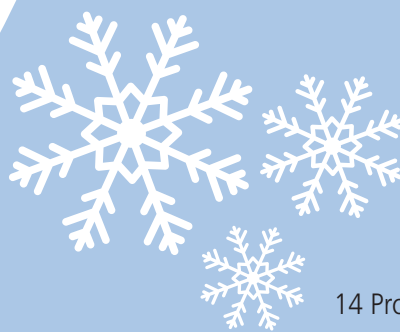
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