



Miss making music? Dust off that old trumpet or flute and come make music and friendships with the Southern Massachusetts Community Concert Band, now seeking new members.

## Musicians Wanted!

### Southeastern Massachusetts Community Concert Band Starts New Season

By JANE LEBAK

A fixture of the local music scene is reaching out to potential new members as it launches the 2023 season.

John Crowley says, "We are the Southeastern Massachusetts Community Concert Band. Since 1976,



we've been very active, performing eight to ten concerts a year." In 2022, the SMCCB performed in Ashland, Medway, Franklin, Wrentham, Hopkinton, Bellingham, Millis, and Attleboro.

The band consists of woodwinds, reeds, brass, and percussion instruments.

"We're all local musicians from the surrounding towns," says Crowley, a percussionist. "Our members range in age from people in their twenties to people in their eighties. We have people who played in high school or college and then put the instrument away, and we have people on the other end who have been professional music educators for their career."

#### MUSICIANS

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## Franklin Veterans Services to Host Virtual Career Fair

Feb. 8th Event, Open to All, Will Also Link Vets to Resources

Shannon Nisbett, Franklin's Veterans Services Officer, wants veterans to know about the resources available to them through the Franklin Veterans Services Office, located within the Franklin Senior Center, as well as local veterans' organizations and other resources. This month, in collaboration with Masshire, the Franklin VSO will host a Virtual Career Fair, open to anyone from the community on Wednesday, February 8th, with access to the career fair for veterans at 3:30 p.m. and for the community at large at 4:30 p.m. The event will conclude at 6:30 p.m.

"Several months ago, Masshire reached out to me to discuss the vast resources and services they provide for veterans. I was very impressed with their work and wanted to find an engaging way

for veterans to access all they have to offer. Masshire stepped up to host this Virtual Career Fair, which is easily accessible to veterans with busy schedules and home lives," says Nisbett. "The employers at this career fair are enthusiastic about hiring veterans, recognizing their unique skills, strong work ethic, and leadership capabilities." Nisbett explains that veterans face unique challenges, including translating military job duties into civilian terms, and, for Reservists and National Guard members, the possibility of being deployed.

Nisbett explains that the Franklin Veterans Services Office already refers Franklin veterans to Masshire and other partner organizations when they are seeking

#### VETERANS

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MUSICIANS

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Laura Logan plays tenor sax, and her husband Mitchell Schwartz plays trombone. She joined the band in 1990. Logan says, "This band is a wonderful, comfortable, safe, and welcoming place for musicians to come together to create music. I'll play there until I can't play anymore."

The band plays a wide variety of music. "Big band music, show tunes, patriotic music, a lot of popular music, even soundtracks from movies," says Crowley. "Every concert in the summer starts with The Star Spangled Banner and ends with The Stars and Stripes."

As a testimony to how much fun and community the band members have with one another, some of the band's founding members are still participating. "It's an enthusiastic group," Crowley says. "We have members who've been in it from day one."

Their conductor for the past ten years is Bruce Houston, who has directed bands in the Massachusetts public schools for the past thirty-five years. He plays trombone professionally himself and holds degrees from Syracuse University, Harvard University, and Southern Oregon University.

Crowley says of Houston's conducting, "Every rehearsal, it's like two hours of instruction. He's familiar with everything."

The band members are all volunteers. Crowley says, "We do it for the love of music." Moreover, all the concerts are free to the public. "We're hired a lot by the towns to play in their summer concert series. We play in the gazebos and town squares, and we also do a fair amount of playing in senior centers." This past December, the band gave three holiday concerts.

Band member Julie Samia has been playing flute and piccolo with the SMCCB since 1988. Samia says, "The SMCCB is special to me, because it is a place



The Southern Massachusetts Community Concert Band meets on Monday nights at Medway Community Church.

where every musician is accepted regardless of musical ability. There is no anxiety-inducing audition process, and we don't deny anyone based on full sections. Members have a commitment to provide live, free, good-quality, wholesome entertainment at a time when so little of that exists anymore."

Crowley encourages anyone who has a clarinet (or a trumpet, or a saxophone, or a flute...) aging in the closet to consider dusting it off and reviving their musical skills. "I don't want anyone to shy away from it just because they haven't played in twenty years. The bulk of us are people who played long ago and

then decided they want to get back to it."

Anyone on the fence about joining can call ahead and attend a rehearsal as a test run.

Crowley says, "I love music. I think our audiences appreciate hearing a large repertoire of familiar tunes. They're out there, stomping their feet, and everybody knows the tunes. It's a shared experience for us performing it and for the people listening to it."

Logan adds, "You can tell that people really enjoy live music. At one concert last summer, I noticed a lot of chair dancing. I'm also the announcer, so when I got up to announce the next piece, I

said—clearly and dramatically—"The dance floor is open." And that's all it took. Two women came up to dance. They didn't even know each other. They started dancing, which encouraged other people to let loose and come up and dance. At the end of the concert, they'd made new friends. Music does wonderful things."

Rehearsals take place on Monday nights at the Medway Community Church. For more information about performances or joining the band, call (508) 877-0635 or visit their website at https://smcws.org.

Circle of Friends Welcomes Tracy Grammer February 25th

The Circle of Friends Coffeehouse is continuing its 33rd season in Franklin with three concerts this winter/spring.

February 25 Tracy Grammer with special guest Hana Zara

April 1 SheGrooves - Boston's premiere female contemporary band featuring Franklin's own Kaye Kelly.

April 29 John Gorka - Tracy Grammer returns to the Circle of Friends Coffeehouse stage on Saturday, Feb 25th at 8 p.m. She is a nationally touring multi-instrumentalist and singer who has accompanied and opened

for Joan Baez and recorded with Mary Chapin Carpenter. Grammer has become one of folk music's most beloved artists. Renowned for her springwater-clear alto, perfectly intoned violin, and guitar playing that is by turns percussive and delicate, Grammer is also a masterful storyteller with an ease and charisma on stage as well as a riotous sense of humor. http://tracygrammer.com/

"One of the finest singers and musicians anywhere in folkdom." - Boston Globe

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The Circle of Friends Coffeehouse is a non-profit organization affiliated with Franklin's First Universalist Society. Concerts are held in the Society's Meetinghouse located at 262 Chestnut St. Please visit http://www.circlefolk.org/ for tickets and more information.



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**VETERANS**

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help with employment.

“Masshire has a Veterans’ Employment Representative, Jack McKenna, at their Norwood Career Center,” says Nisbett, “Other partners we work with include VA Vocational Rehabilitation Specialist John Silva, New England Center and Home for Veterans, and Veterans’ Inc. We’re also connected with non-profits who provide training and support for veteran entrepreneurs.”

In addition to employers seeking veterans, there will be resources for veterans including local VSO’s, veterans’ organizations, and Veterans Administration (VA) representatives. These groups will provide information about VA benefits, VA health care, VA education benefits, housing, mental health, and the state Chapter 115 financial safety net program for veterans.

Surviving spouses of veterans may also be eligible for some of these programs.

Nisbett wants to highlight that her office is available to assist veterans in town in various capacities.

“We continue to provide case management to any Franklin veteran we refer (to Masshire) and assist them with other areas such as VA claims, VA Health Care, Chapter 115, public housing applications, and property tax exemptions for veterans with service-connected disabilities,” says Nisbett. “If a veteran from another town comes to us, we refer them to the VSO in their community of residence. We also host social and patriot events throughout the year, including a monthly Veterans’ Coffee Social and monthly Veterans’ Council meeting. We work closely with American Legion Post 75 and VFW Post 3402. Visiting our office is a great way to get connected and involved with the veteran community!”

Anyone from the Franklin and surrounding community, including our veterans, can register here: <https://app.premiervirtual.com/events/6559fc74-7755-4e57-8ad5-444371e042fe/greater-franklin-virtual-job-fair/attendee> (PLEASE NOTE- All attendees must also be registered in Mass JobQuest as you need your JobQuest Job Seeker ID to complete your registration. Please visit: <https://jobquest.dcs.eol.mass.gov/jobquest/LandingPage.aspx> to register.) You may also call or email the Franklin Veterans’ Services office, (508) 613-1315 or [snisbett@franklinma.gov](mailto:snisbett@franklinma.gov), for registration information.

Any veterans with questions or concerns can contact: Shannon Nisbett, Veteran Services Officer, Town of Franklin: [snisbett@franklinma.gov](mailto:snisbett@franklinma.gov) or Jack McKenna, DVOP, MassHire Career Centers: [John.McKenna@detma.org](mailto:John.McKenna@detma.org)

# Seeking Franklin Korean War Vets



## Contact Franklin Veterans Service Office by Feb. 28th to Be Nominated for Quilt of Valor

The Franklin Veterans Services Office is looking for Franklin Korean War Veterans who would like to be nominated for a Quilt of Valor. A Quilt of Valor is a handmade quilt that is awarded to a U.S. Service Member or living Veteran who has been touched by war. For more information about Quilts of Valor, go to: <https://www.qovf.org/>

The quilts will be presented to the veterans at the July 5th Veterans Coffee Social at the Franklin Senior Center to coincide with Korean War Veterans Armistice Day which is on July 27th.

Theresa Perreault, Massachusetts Regional Coordinator for the Quilts of Valor Foundation, will present the quilts. If a veteran is unable to attend the social, Theresa will make arrangements to present their quilt to them at home.

Franklin Korean War Veterans should contact John at: (508) 528-7578 by February 28th to be nominated.

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Any veterans with questions or concerns can contact:  
Shannon Nisbett, Veteran Services Officer, Town of Franklin: [snisbett@franklinma.gov](mailto:snisbett@franklinma.gov)  
Jack McKenna, DVOP, MassHire Career Centers: [John.McKenna@detma.org](mailto:John.McKenna@detma.org)

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- If you have already participated in a Premier Virtual Event:
  - o Your profile will be saved and just needs to be updated.
- If you have not participated in a Premier Virtual Event:
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Once registered in Premier, a MassHire Representative will be in touch with all event details including the complete list of participating employers!

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# Franklin Veterans’ Services Office - February 2023

**February 1 - Veterans’ Monthly Coffee Social** – 10 a.m. at the Franklin Senior Center. All Veterans are invited for coffee and conversation. Refreshments will be provided by Starbucks!

**February 8 – Greater Franklin Virtual Career Fair with Franklin Veterans’ Services Office and MassHire Career Centers.** Veterans have early access to this online career fair beginning at 3:30 p.m. Career seekers of all backgrounds, vets and non-vets invited. Call the VSO for registration information.

**February 16 - Veterans’ Council Meeting** - 7 p.m. at the Senior Center. All Franklin residents interested in veterans’ activities and events are welcome to join us!

The **Tune It Out guitar lessons program** for veterans meets on Tuesdays at 5:30 p.m. at the Se-

nior Center. There is no charge for lessons and no guitar experience is required. Call the Veterans’ Services Office at (508) 613-1315 for details.

**May 2023** - The next engraved brick installation on the Veterans Memorial Walkway is scheduled to coincide with Memorial Day. An engraved brick makes a great birthday or Mother’s or Father’s Day gift for your special veteran or current military service member. Order forms are available in the Town Hall and Senior Center lobbies as well as on the Veterans’ Services page (<https://www.franklinma.gov/veterans-services>) on the Town website. Deadline for ordering bricks for the May installation is April 1, 2023. Thank you to all who have supported the Walkway Project!

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# Student Spotlight: The Tyler Morrill Story

This article first appeared and is used courtesy of Pantherbook ([www.franklinpanthers.us](http://www.franklinpanthers.us)), a publication by and for Franklin High School students.

By RYAN MARTIN, PANTHERBOOK EDITOR

You're in the championship. With the gold medal on the line, the score is tied. As the clock winds down the few seconds it has left, your teammate zips a pass in your direction. You nail the shot as the buzzer sounds, sending everyone into a frenzy: You are a champion.

The narrative has been dreamed of and practiced by countless kids on turf fields, ice rinks, and courts around the world. For Franklin's Tyler Morrill, the moment came to fruition last June as he was a part of the Franklin Unified Basketball Team. Morrill's buzzer-beater in the Special Olympics final crowned Franklin the Gold medalists.

"I was so confident I was going to make that shot!" Morrill said, grinning.

That confidence not only helped Morrill in the gold medal game, but it has also led him to so much more as a high school student. In his third year at Franklin, Morrill can now be seen walking the halls in between classes and attending sporting events with the school's biggest smile, dishing out high-fives left and right to his friends. The energy and passion Morrill exudes are infectious to see, but that confidence and joy weren't always there before he became a Panther.

### Coming to Franklin

Prior to moving to Franklin, Morrill and his family lived in the Dorchester area where he attended an integration school. Living there until the family's pandemic move in 2020, Morrill was subject to bullying and harassment from his middle school peers.

"It was supposed to be the best in Massachusetts for integration," Morrill's mom, Erin Gately, said of the school, "but [Tyler] would come home almost every day with different stories... of being bullied."



Franklin Unified Basketball's Tyler Morrill celebrates winning the Gold Medal last June by jumping into his stepdad's arms. (Erin Gately)

Knowing a change was needed, the family enrolled Morrill at Franklin High School. Morrill's stepdad, Jared Gately, graduated from Franklin High in 2005 and knew the town would be more accepting of his son.

"I got nervous at first," Morrill admitted of the new school, "... but then it was just excitement."

That excitement was shared by Morrill's family and new home: Tyler quickly acclimated himself to Franklin High, while his energy and passion rubbed off on peers and faculty.

"I never thought it would turn out the way it did," Gately said, "It really changed not just Tyler's

life, but mine, my husband's, my daughters'. Everybody welcomed him with open arms."

While meeting new friends in the classroom, Morrill also formed new connections through the extracurriculars he took part in, including Franklin's Unified Basketball Team.

### Winning Gold

After becoming the first team from Massachusetts to qualify for the Special Olympics, Morrill and the Panthers' Unified Basketball Team worked their way up to the gold medal game against Team Oregon this past June. In Orlando, Florida, Franklin found themselves down two points with less than a minute left to play.

Morrill, who was dubbed the team's "Michael Jordan" before the competition, scored the final four points for Franklin to win the gold medal. Morrill's mom, dad, and 20 other family mem-


### MORRILL

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Morrill (middle) hugs his teammates in jubilation after winning Special Olympics Gold Medal in 2022 (Erin Gately)

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**MORRILL**

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bers were in attendance to see it all play out.

“It was like a movie watching it happen,” Gately recalled.

After receiving their well-earned medals, the team returned home to a hero’s welcome: Morrill and teammates had a police escort back to the school, where hundreds of supporters and members of the Franklin community threw a parade to celebrate their accomplishments.

“Everyone was hugging me and so happy for me when I got off the bus... it makes me feel happy and [emotional] sometimes,” Morrill said.

“I knew that Franklin was very supportive in general, but they really blew it out of the water to see all the support and love... It made our hearts so full.” his mom added.

Fast forward seven months, and Morrill is still making waves on the basketball court. After being back in action with the Franklin Unified team this past fall, Morrill now finds himself in his latest role: Manager of the Franklin girls’ varsity team.

**A New Title**

After coaching Morrill as part of his work with Franklin’s unified team, Franklin Girls’ varsity basketball coach John Leighton wanted Morrill’s energy on the bench for his Panthers team this season.



Morrill with mom, dad, and sister in Orlando, Florida during the 2022 Special Olympics (Erin Gately)

“[Tyler] had also developed a good friendship with several members of the team,” Leighton said, “I thought inviting Tyler to be our manager was a natural fit.”

For Morrill, the proposal was easy to accept

“I wanted to manage the team because I want to help other people.” Morrill said proudly.

As team manager, Morrill is routinely at practice, bringing his love and excitement for basketball while competing with the girls in different drills.

Much like his presence in school, Morrill’s passion for help-



Morrill (far right) stands with the FHS girls’ varsity basketball team prior to their game against Wachusett

ing the team has become a driving force for players this season.

“I have spent a lot of time with Tyler at Unified Basketball over his past two years in Franklin; It’s easy to observe his unde-

niable passion for basketball,” Franklin senior captain Katie Peterson explained, “The whole team is motivated every day by

Tyler’s positive energy.”

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# College Talk: Grades, Courses, and Activities

While colleges review an applicant's complete file, grades, course rigor and committed interests are the three most important factors in determining the admissions decision. We recommend high school students to periodically reevaluate their progress in these areas throughout the year. How are they doing academically? Have they joined activities that they enjoy? And, are they selecting courses that are aligned with their goals? Using a checklist can help in this assessment process:

• **How do you get good grades?**

- **Stay positive:** Getting good grades takes effort and focus, don't get down on yourself if you receive a bad test grade. Identify strategies on how to improve on future tests. Staying positive and having a plan will keep you motivated.
- **Stay organized:** Strong organization skills will result in better preparation and better outcomes. Create a dedicated work space and keep it neat. It saves time when your notes and assignments are easily accessible.
- **Super tip:** Use any type of planner to keep track of your homework, projects, and tests and their due dates. Good organizational skills can be life changing.

- **Homework:** Make your daily school work a priority. Determine a good schedule and block the time on your calendar. Challenge yourself to put your phone away - checking messages during study breaks. You will get your homework done faster!

- **Take notes in class:** Good note taking can help you become an active listener, understand concepts better, and in turn, earn better grades.

- **Ask for help:** If you are struggling, reach out to your teacher immediately- you will feel so relieved. Many schools offer free tutorial services through their honor society programs. Hiring a tutor is also an option.

- **Schedule breaks:** Take a 10-15 minute break from your studies- check your phone, get a snack, run around the block for exercise! It will refresh your mind and body and help you refocus.

- **Take care of yourself:** Eat right, exercise, and try to get 8 hours of sleep - good for your mind, body, and grades!

• **How do you select your high school courses?** Selecting the right courses is not about enrolling in the hardest courses. It is a balance of



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

the course rigor, your interests, mental health, and time constraints.

- **High School Curriculum Requirements:** Every high school has course requirements that must be completed to graduate. Make sure you are on track.

- **Balanced course schedule:** Take courses in all of your core courses: English, Math, Science, Social Sciences, and a foreign language. Many colleges have specific admission requirements that include the number of years per subject. Research the colleges you are most interested in and determine if you meet their minimum course requirements..

- **Progression:** Colleges like to see a continued progression in the rigor of the course

and grades through your high school years. This does not mean choosing all AP courses. We advise our students to select course levels that will push them, but not shove them. For example, if a student takes 2 years of CP math and received an A both times, we would recommend taking an Honors math the following year.

- **Reflect on your goals:** Many students do not know what their major will be, but they generally know their interests. Pay attention to your goals and select your courses accordingly. For example, if you love math and you would like to end up in AP Calculus - plan the path that will get you there.

- **Do what you love:** We encourage students to follow their passion. However, enroll in classes for the right reasons. As an example, if you love fashion, and design clothes in your free time, take the Fashion Design Course. However, if you are taking it at the expense of a more challenging course that is more appropriate for you - reconsider your choice.

- **Seek guidance:** Keeping your work/life balance is important. Consult with a guidance counselor or a teacher regarding the appropriate course selection for your interests and overall goals.

• **How do you select the activities that are right for you?**

- **Enjoyment:** Engage in activities and hobbies that interest you and where you enjoy spending time. Ultimately, you will want to commit more of your time.

- **Depth:** Colleges would prefer to see depth and commitment to a few activities rather than joining many activities where you don't have time to participate. Engage in a meaningful way. Tip: Sign-up as early as possible, but remember that it's never too late to join.

- **Qualities:** Colleges look for students who demonstrate leadership, initiative, community service, good work ethic, and social responsibility. Review your current activities and ask yourself - what is missing? Could you help with a local charity or apply for a part-time job? Perhaps you can run for an office in one of the school clubs, or teach young students art? There are many organizations that offer internships that focus on specific interests. There are too many opportunities to list here! **FREE** resource: send me an email, and I will provide our google doc of possible activities to explore.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

College 101 Admissions Consultants LLC. Website: [www.mycollege101.com](http://www.mycollege101.com). Email: [tracy@mycollege101.com](mailto:tracy@mycollege101.com). Phone: 508-380-3845.

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Your Money, Your Independence

# Secure Act 2: Electric Boogaloo?



Glenn Brown

Sometimes it's best to not have a sequel.

Still, Congress delivered us one with "Secure Act 2.0" in December.

The original Secure Act was released three years ago. It began with 417-3 House vote in May 2019, advanced by the Senate cramming into the 2020 budget and concluded with Congress cheerleading the delay of Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) by 18 months to age 72 and providing greater access to 401(k) for part-time employees.

Those are good things, but hidden in plain sight was the dismal plot - the death of 'stretch' IRA and creation of the 10-Year Rule, which included liquidating inherited non-spousal (children) Roth IRAs.

See Congress had wanted to speed up tax revenues. What better way than forcing a 25 year old, regardless of financial situation, to liquidate mom or dad's inherited IRA or Roth IRA by age 35 instead of during their retirement years.

How does this help secure retirement for future generations? Or benefit hardworking Americans who sacrificed, saved, planned and proactively paid taxes years, in some cases, decades sooner than needed?

So, with this precedent, how does their latest Secure Act 2.0 look?

In a word: better.

Here are some early awards:

**Most Widespread Impact** - RMDs from retirement accounts increase to age 73 from 72 beginning January 1, 2023. It will increase to age 75 in 2033. That said, just because you can delay doesn't mean you avoid being required to take greater amounts

later. In fact, it can accelerate and put some into higher tax brackets without planning.

**Most Significant Benefit** - Roth, Roth, and more Roth. These changes all appear to be good news for those seeking planning opportunities.

Creation of SEP Roth IRAs and SIMPLE Roth IRAs as well as employer contributions (aka 401(k) match) will be permitted to deposit matching and/or nonelective contributions to employees' designated Roth accounts. There is a caveat, the match would be included in the employee's income in the year of the contribution. Ditto for amounts deposited into SEP Roth IRAs and SIMPLE Roth IRAs. Still, great to have choice.

**Surprising 2024 Newcomer** - In 2024, "high wage earners" will be required to use Roth option for catch-up contributions to 401(k), 403(b), and 457(b) plans, but not for IRAs.

What's Congress's definition of a high wage earner here?  
 \$1,000,000?  
 \$400,000?  
 Nope, here it's \$145,000.

A caveat if you're self-employed individual (sole proprietors and partners) it is specific language of wages (which you don't earn), thus it appears can still make pre-tax catch-up contributions if income from self-employment is over \$145,000.

**Future Star** - After 15 years of a 529 plan being opened, unused assets can be rolled over to a Roth IRA for the beneficiary (child). Now, it is subject to annual Roth contribution limits and an aggregate lifetime limit of \$35,000. Still, this is a great idea, as you can help a young adult grow a Roth IRA, while they use funds for other savings or pay off liabilities.

**Closing Credits** - Secure Act 2.0 has dozens for nuances and benefits for student loans, emergency savings in DC plans, au-

tomatic enrollment, annuity options, qualified charitable distributions, solo 401Ks, surviving spouse benefits and more. Best to consult your Certified Financial Planner to learn more.

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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# FPAC to present *Something Rotten*

The Franklin Performing Arts Company (FPAC) will present the hilarious musical comedy *Something Rotten!* March 10-19 at THE BLACK BOX. Set in the 1590s, brothers Nick and Nigel Bottom are desperate to write a hit play, but are stuck in the shadow of that Renaissance rock star known as "The Bard." When a local soothsayer foretells that the future of theatre involves singing, dancing, and acting at the same time, Nick and Nigel set out to write the world's very first musical. But amidst the scandalous excitement of opening night, the Bottom Brothers realize that reaching the top means being true to thine own self, and all that jazz.

The production directed by FPAC Artistic/Executive Director Raye Lynn Mercer will feature choreography by Broadway legend Tyler Hanes. Hanes was only 17 when he was discovered by Ann Reinking while attending Broadway Theater Project



in Tampa, Florida. She cast him in the first national tour of the Tony Award winning musical, *Fosse*. Following the tour, he attended Carnegie Mellon University, leaving after a year to make his Broadway debut in the 2002 Broadway revival of *Oklahoma!* Soon after, he appeared in the

original Broadway companies of *Urban Cowboy*, *The Boy From Oz*, *The Frogs*, the 2005 revival of *Sweet Charity*, and as Larry in the original revival company of *A Chorus Line*. Hanes also appeared in the Broadway companies of *Hairspray* and the 2014 revival of *On The Town*. He starred as Rum Tum Tugger in the highly anticipated Broadway revival of *CATS*, which he was nominated for a Chita Rivera Award for Outstanding Male Dancer in a Broadway show.

The Franklin Performing Arts Company at THE BLACK BOX is a professional Equity theater producing musicals, plays, and more, featuring Broadway stars, professional and regional performers, and emerging artists.

For tickets and more information for *Something Rotten!*, visit [THEBLACKBOXonline.com](http://THEBLACKBOXonline.com) or call the box office at (508) 528-3370.

# Dean College Presents: *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play*, February 23-26

The School of the Arts at Dean College will perform *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* from Thursday, February 23 through Sunday, February 26.

Permeated with the idea that we turn to art in times of immense difficulty, this 2013 black comedy by Anne Washburn tells the story of a group of survivors shortly after a global catastrophe. As a way of making sense in a world that no longer makes sense, they recreate their vanished world through storytelling (some of it featuring Bart Simpson) and turn pop culture of one era into the mythology of another.

*Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* is presented by arrangement with Concord Theatricals on behalf of Samuel French, Inc.

The Dean College production of "Mr. Burns" will take place in the Main Stage in the Dr. Paula M. Rooney Student Center at Dean College, 109 West Central Street, Franklin at 7:30 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, with 2 p.m. matinees on Saturday and Sunday.

Dean College welcomes children and families to all of our performances, provided patrons have complied with all safety guidelines. However, infants and children under 2 years of age are not allowed in the theatre, and children under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. All patrons must have their own ticketed seats; lap sitting is not permitted.

To learn more about the show and to purchase tickets, visit [www.dean.edu/boxoffice](http://www.dean.edu/boxoffice).



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# The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

## Galentine's Day - February 13th

BY GINA WOELFEL

February 13th is National Galentine's Day! Ok, ok...not officially, but UNOFFICIALLY, Galentine's Day is celebrated on February 13th, the day before Valentine's Day.

February is the month of love and Galentine's Day fits right in! We shower our significant others with gifts and cards on the 14th, but 24 hours earlier is all about our equally important relationships: our girlfriends! Galentine's Day brings together the ladies in our lives we love and lean on the most - our ride or die BFF's (you know who you are...)

You may recall that last year's Beauty Beat focussed on self-care. Well, we've made the executive decision that hanging with your besties is the best self-care there is!

We were actually inspired to write a Galentine's Day Beauty Beat when two best friends recently booked a facial day together at our b.LUXE studio. Estheticians, Colleen and Monique took such great care to pamper and beautify these two lovelies, the smiles on their faces said it all. They'd thoroughly enjoyed a day of self-care made all the more amazing by doing it together.

This holiday is the perfect opportunity to indulge in the YOU-time you need with the people who always have your back, the people who keep you laughing and who never let you down. Whether you're single or in a relationship, the best things in life are better with friends, and isn't that worth celebrating?

As much as we'd love to, not all of us are in the position to book a crazy girls trip to Paris (sorry SJP) or even a weekend away, but there are many fun and unique ways to celebrate your friendship that, with a little planning, can be almost as fabulous as Paris!

Here are a few ideas for you and your queens to kick up your heels and celebrate!

- Mimosas and pancakes - Have all the toppings and break out the crystal!
- Slumber party - Tell the gents they need to scoot and queue up your favorite films.
- Plan the perfect hike - Map out a new and exciting route and pack a lunch of your favorite munchies to snack at the summit.
- Zoom Happy Hour - No time to go out? Put the kids to bed and dial in!
- Friends Facial Day - Well, of course this is a b.LUXE favorite!! Our spa loves when friends book together! Facials are so great, why not bring a friend?? Tandem facials are a double shot of fun and leave you feeling like you're taking care of yourself, as well as your bestie!

### POP UP PROMO ALERT!

On February 13th, for one day only, get a \$50 Galentine's Day Spa Gift Card for only \$40! 12 hours only, from 9AM - 9PM, online purchases only. Buy as many as you like, but only one Galentine's Spa Gift Card per appointment. Scan QR code to be brought to our website and click "E-Gift Cards" from the menu to purchase.

Read on about our other spa special that's happening for this month!

### The Red Envelope Event!

For the entire month of February, every client with a booked facial or spray tan will receive a red envelope at their appointment and surprise...

### EVERY ENVELOPE'S A WINNER!

Prizes include b.LUXURY Facials, facial add-ons, spa products, spray tans and coupons! There's even a grand prize, golden ticket winner! Don't miss out and book today, space is limited.

(\*Red Envelope prizes must be used on the same day as your booked service, they're non-transferable, and have no cash value.)

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Now, of course we haven't forgotten about you, February 14th! Our gift cards are always available for easy purchase online and are the perfect way to say Happy Valentine's Day to all your special someone's. You all know how much your wives, mothers and significant other's LOVE them! So, grab your honey the gift they really want. Hint! Hint!

We hope Galentine's/Valentine's Day finds you celebrating with all the people and things that you love and wish you a joy-filled February filled with love, light and magic! (And pancakes and mimosas...)

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# Living Healthy

## Home Remedies for Simple Eye Problems

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

Many eye problems need an ophthalmologist's medical knowledge. But there are eye problems that you can treat safely at home, as long as they are simple. Here are a few problems that can respond to home treatment, with tried-and-true remedies.

### Black eye

You can usually treat a black eye at home. But if there are more serious symptoms of black eye, see an ophthalmologist. These signs include: blurred/double vision; blood in the eye; or an inability to move the eye.

To reduce swelling and ease pain the first day, apply an ice pack to the eye for 15 to 20 minutes at a time, once every hour. If you don't have an ice pack, use a bag of frozen vegetables or ice cubes wrapped in cloth. The cloth protects your skin from

freezing. Don't put a raw steak or other raw meat on your eye. Despite what you've seen on television and in the movies, there's no scientific basis for this. In fact, the bacteria in raw meat poses a high risk of infection.

### Pink eye (also known as conjunctivitis)

A virus causes most cases of pink eye. These cases don't respond to antibiotics. Viral conjunctivitis will disappear on its own. Have your ophthalmologist diagnose your particular case. Reduce the discomfort of conjunctivitis by applying cool compresses to the eye.

If your conjunctivitis is bacterial, follow your treatment plan. This usually involves antibiotic eye drops. In either case, you should take steps to reduce the chance of passing the problem on to someone else. Conjunctivitis is highly contagious. Follow these tips to prevent the spread:



Don't share towels, handkerchiefs or cosmetics. Change pillowcases frequently. Wash your hands often.

### Eye allergy and seasonal allergy

Just as you can get nasal allergies, you can get eye allergies that leave your eye red, itchy and teary. Limiting your exposure to the source of your allergy — whether it's pollen, pets or mold — can help relieve symptoms. If

you can't remove the source entirely, there are ways to reduce its effect with eye allergy treatments.

If pollen bothers you: Don't use a window fan, which can draw pollen into your house. Wear sunglasses when you go outside.

If dust is the problem: Use allergen-reducing covers for your bed. Use artificial tears, which temporarily wash allergens from your eyes. Use over-the-counter anti-allergy eye drops to lessen the symptoms.

### Stye (also called hordeolum)

While a stye may look nasty, it's usually harmless and goes away within a week. You can treat it at home by running a washcloth under warm water, wringing it out and placing it over your closed eye. When the washcloth cools, repeat the process several times, up to four times a day for at least a week. The heat will help unblock the pores in your eyelash area. Don't wear eye makeup or your contact lenses while you have a stye. And don't pop or squeeze the stye. Doing so can spread infection to surrounding areas of your eye. Shampooing with tea tree shampoo can also help.

### Eye strain

Many people have symptoms of eye strain, because of long hours of computer use, reading and driving every day. In most cases, there are simple things you can do at home, work, and while driving to ease eye strain symptoms. These include: resting your eyes, using artificial tears, wearing computer glasses, and wearing sunglasses.

### Bags under the Eyes

What we often call "bags under our eyes" is actually sagging skin under the eyes. It is a common complaint, and one that often accompanies the aging process. As we grow older, tissues around the eye gradually weaken and sag. This loss of skin tone allows fat to shift forward into the lower eyelids, making them look puffy and swollen. Fluid can also pool in this area and contribute to the puffy appearance.

Certain home remedies can help lessen or eliminate the puffiness of under-eye bags and the appearance of shadows. Wet a clean washcloth with cool water. Place the damp washcloth around your eyes for a few minutes, applying very gentle pressure. Do this while sitting upright. Make sure you get enough sleep. Sleep with your head raised slightly. Try to avoid drinking fluids before bed, and limit salt in your diet. That can help reduce fluid retention overnight that can lead to bags under your eyes. Quit smoking. Try using makeup concealer to cover shadows under your eyes.

### Use Common Sense for Your Eye Health

With any of these conditions, see your ophthalmologist right away if the symptoms worsen or don't go away, or if your vision is affected.

Some eye problems you should never treat on your own.

If you experience any of these, you should seek medical attention right away: Blurriness. Double vision. Pain in your eye. Serious eye injuries.

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 are from the community, most of us live in the community and our focus is to serve the community. As with any medical problem, the sooner you seek medical help,



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EYES

continued on page 13

# Living Healthy

## Record Number of S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE Fire Safety Grants Awarded in FY 2023

The Baker-Polito Administration announced last month that 266 municipal fire departments will receive \$1.9 million in grants to fund fire and life safety education for children and older adults, setting a new record for the Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) and Senior SAFE programs. The previous record of 253 communities was set in FY 2018. Bellingham Fire Department, for example, will receive S.A.F.E. grant of \$4381 and a Senior SAFE grant of \$2,277. Franklin Fire Department will receive a \$5,481 S.A.F.E. grant and a Senior SAFE grant of \$2,477.

“For more than 25 years, the S.A.F.E. grant program has provided hundreds of thousands of

Massachusetts students with fire and life safety lessons that last a lifetime,” said former Governor Charlie Baker. “We are glad that this year’s awards will support consistent, statewide, professional safety education in a record number of communities.”

The average number of children who die in fires annually has dropped by nearly 80% since the S.A.F.E. program began in FY 1996, and Massachusetts recently went nearly three years without losing a child to fire. The Senior SAFE program was launched in FY 2014, funding fire safety education for another vulnerable population – seniors, who face a disproportionate risk of dying in a fire at home.

“The Senior SAFE grants support home visits, smoke and CO alarm installations, and fire safety presentations delivered by firefighters in partnership with service providers,” said former Lt. Governor Karyn Polito. “This valuable program gives older adults the tools, knowledge, and strategies to stay safe and independent at home.”

This year’s awards will provide \$1,103,488 in S.A.F.E. funding for 262 fire departments; \$562,194 in Senior SAFE funding for 265 fire departments; and \$252,783 for regional trailer props used by multiple fire departments to teach and demonstrate fire safety skills. Every department

that applied for a grant received funding.

“The S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE grants represent a smart investment in fire safety,” said Secretary of Public Safety and Security Terrence M. Reidy. “Youngsters and older adults are historically at greater risk in house fires, but that risk can be reduced through the targeted outreach, education, and awareness programs like these.”

“The S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE programs bring trained firefighter-educators together with children and older adults to deliver age-appropriate fire and life safety lessons,” said State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostrosky. “Fire service programs

like these are part of the reason Massachusetts is one of the most fire-safe states in the nation, and I’m very glad that more communities than ever applied for this year’s grants.”

The S.A.F.E. and Senior SAFE grant programs are funded through legislative earmarks to the Executive Office of the Public Safety & Security, and they are administered by the Department of Fire Services. A full list of recipient departments and their awards is attached. For more fire service grant opportunities, visit <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/grants-for-fire-departments>.

## Flu Shots Still Available at Big Y Pharmacies

### No Appointments Necessary

Big Y Pharmacy and Wellness Centers have administered over 30,000 flu shots this year, a record number for the chain. Health officials continue to make another urgent push to encourage the public to get vaccinated. In the US, this flu season has been one of the most significant in recent memory with nearly 20 million illnesses, 210,000 hospitalizations and 13,000 deaths from flu so far, according to CDC estimates. Experts say it’s not too late to get vaccinated. Each Big Y Pharmacy location

still offers flu vaccines, no appointment is necessary.

In addition to their flu vaccinations that continue to increase daily, Big Y Pharmacies have also set records from last fall’s Big Y Big Vax Week. This second community wide event spanned every one of Big Y’s 73 locations throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut through a combination of their pharmacy locations and on-site clinics for all customers, employees and their families. While clinic locations offered

seasonal and high dose flu as well as COVID-19 vaccines, in-store pharmacies offer a variety of additional vaccines such as Pneumococcal (pneumonia), Shingrix (shingles), Tdap (Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis), Hepatitis A and B, Meningococcal (Meningitis), MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella), Gardasil (HPV). Big Y Pharmacy teams administered almost 16,000 vaccines evenly split between flu and COVID-19 vaccines during their 2022 Big Y Big Vax week.

### EYES

*continued from page 12*

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# FSPA Musical Theater Students to Present *The Addams Family*

The Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA) will present *The Addams Family*, featuring an all-student teen cast on February 10 and 11 at 7:30 p.m. at THE BLACK BOX.

*The Addams Family* is a comical feast that embraces the wackiness in every family, features an original story and it's every father's nightmare: Wednesday Addams, the ultimate princess of darkness, has grown up and fallen in love with a sweet, smart young man from a respectable family—a man her parents have never met. And if that wasn't upsetting enough, Wednesday

confides in her father and begs him not to tell her mother. Now, Gomez Addams must do something he's never done before—keep a secret from his beloved wife, Morticia. Everything will change for the whole family on the fateful night they host a dinner for Wednesday's "normal" boyfriend and his parents.

FSPA's youth musical theater students will present a musical revue entitled "Family Reunion" on February 11 at 2 and 4 p.m. at THE BLACK BOX.

With extensive programs in music, dance, and drama all housed under one roof, FSPA is

uniquely positioned to offer an immersive interdisciplinary musical theater experience. Younger students explore the exciting world of musical theater with an introduction to basic skills in singing, acting, and dancing, while older and more advanced students build upon this foundation with increasingly challenging repertoire, technique, and scene work. Musical theater history and audition technique round out the department's hands-on, multi-disciplinary opportunities. Alumni of FSPA's Musical Theater program have gone on to perform on Broadway, in na-



tional tours, regional theater, TV/Film, cruise ships, and other venues around the world.

Enrollment at FSPA is ongoing; prospective students are invited to stop by 38 Main Street

for a tour, complimentary trial class, and more information. For tickets to *The Addams Family* and more information on FSPA's offerings, visit [www.FSPAonline.com](http://www.FSPAonline.com) or call (508) 528-8668.

# Stewards of America's First Public Lending Library Bring Era to an End

## Historic Franklin Library Association Releases History Book, Organizes Seminar on Role of the Library in American Democracy

In 1858, a group of public-spirited citizens banded together as the Franklin Library Association (FLA) to ensure the care of the books originally received by the town as a gift from Ameri-

ca's founding father, Benjamin Franklin.

In a historic 1788 vote, the town selectmen had voted to make the books available for borrowing by any resident—creating the first public lending library in the nation. An early beneficiary of this policy was a poor boy named Horace Mann, who would eventually become known as the "Father of American Public Education," and as a Congressman and college president. But by the 1850s, the book collection was suffering from neglect with no permanent home.

That's when the Franklin Library Association stepped up, raising funds, hiring a librarian, and providing a place for the public to access the books. Indeed, for more than a century, the Association was a primary funding source for the library, intimately involved in managing it in the interest of the town.

With the Franklin Public Library now well supported by state and local funds and housed in a handsome, twice-expanded facility, the Association has decided to cease operations, having gradually disbursed most of its funds for library preservation and restoration projects in recent years.

One of its last projects has been the creation of a history of the organization and of the Franklin library from its inception. The published, 160-page book was introduced to the public at a special reception at the

Franklin Public Library on Benjamin Franklin's birthday, Jan. 17, 2023. Shortly afterward, the Association, in cooperation with the Library, held a panel discussion, *Ben's Donation at 245 - an Exploration of the Role of Libraries in America's Democracy, Then, Now, and in the Future*.

The Panel was moderated by FLA president Scott Nolan. Scheduled panelists included:

- James C. Johnston, Author, Historian, and Former Franklin Selectman
- Patricia Saint Aubin, a PhD candidate with expertise in the history of the Ben Franklin-inspired Providence Library Company.
- R. A. Lawson (Ph.D., Vanderbilt, 2003) is professor of history and Director of the Honors Program at Dean College.

The panel was broadcast by Franklin TV. For more information on the book, the panel, or the Franklin Library Association, please contact Scott Nolan at [scott39@comcast.net](mailto:scott39@comcast.net)

### About the FLA:

*The Franklin Library Association is a 501 (c)3 organization, Scott F. Nolan is the President, Armand Fernandez Treasurer, Ed Padden, Secretary. Other board members include Nancy J. Rappa, Maryjane Whiton, Beth A. Mucciarone, Joan McGuire, Greg Dellorco, and Shirley Borruso*

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## Franklin Rotary Plans 4th Annual Valentine's Brunch Feb. 11th

The Rotary Club of Franklin MA is proud to announce that their annual Valentine's Brunch is back after a two year hiatus. The event will take place on February 11, 2023, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 Noon, at Central Park Terrace Hall, 1000 Central Park Terrace, Franklin.

All Franklin Seniors and residents of Franklin Housing Authority are welcome to join The Franklin Rotary Club as their special guests, for their 4th Annual Senior Valentine Brunch where seniors will be treated to a delicious, homemade Valentine's brunch.

Seniors are urged to enter their names on a sign-up so that no one is left out.

### Sign-up sheets may found at the following locations:

- Central Park Terrace, 1000 Central Park Terrace, Franklin, MA

- Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill Street, Franklin, MA

The Rotary Club International is a non-profit organization made up of a diverse group of men and women "who come together to create positive, lasting change in our communities and around the world." <https://www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary>

If you would like more information about our organization or interested in attending a meeting, please contact Diane Padula at [padularotary@gmail.com](mailto:padularotary@gmail.com), and she will make arrangements for you to be a guest at one of Rotary's upcoming meetings. Rotary members meet the first and third Tuesdays of each month, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. at The Rome Restaurant, 4 East Central Street (Rte. 140), Franklin, MA. You may also visit our website: <http://portal.clubrunner.ca/3689>.

## FISH of Franklin Seeks Volunteers

### Nonprofit Offers Rides to Medical Appointments for Franklin Residents

FISH of Franklin has gone back to its mission – helping Franklin residents get to their medical appointments – but of late, the need has been higher than the ability to meet it. Current requirements to use FISH for a ride include:

- all clients must be fully vaccinated and finished with the two-week waiting period following vaccination in order to receive a ride;
- all drivers will also need to be fully vaccinated and finished with the two-week waiting period;
- drivers and clients will be required to wear masks;
- clients must be able to walk and to enter and exit vehicles and doctors' offices without assistance.

Originally founded in England, the Franklin chapter of FISH was created in 1973 after

a meeting of townspeople at the Federated Church. It is a non-profit organization run completely by volunteers. People give their time to either drive or answer telephone calls. They schedule and arrange for drivers to transport clients to and from appointments. They have driven as far as Boston and Providence, and locations in between such as Milford, Upton, Walpole, Wellesley and Norwood Hospital.

The name comes from the ichthus - the ancient Greek symbol used by early Christians. In those early times, the fish symbol was a secret sign for a safe haven.

The organization's number of volunteers has dwindled in the past year, and so the organization could use several more hands. Volunteers are needed to drive and to help with the phone lines.

"We don't have a live phone line," says Oliveira, "We have a line where people who need a ride leave a message." Every week

day, Monday through Friday, a volunteer checks the phone line to see if someone has requested a ride. If there are requests, they try to arrange the ride from available transportation volunteers. Each volunteer, whether a driver or a phone volunteer, is asked to contribute one day each month.

Oliveira adds, "Every week, there's also a coordinator who keeps an eye on everything that's going on to make sure there's communication between one volunteer and the next and to assist the volunteers as needed."

Those requesting rides can request up to two rides to medical appointments per month, and the names of all those requesting rides are kept confidential.

If you are interested in volunteering for FISH, call Chris at (508) 553-3023.

If you are a Franklin resident who needs a ride to a medical appointment, call FISH at (508) 528-2121.

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## Coming Up at the Franklin Senior Center

The Franklin Senior Center is located at 10 Daniel McCahill Street, Franklin, Mass. Reach them at (508) 520-4945.

Take a look at our February Senior Connections Newsletter (<https://www.franklinma.gov/franklin-senior-center/pages/connection-newsletter>) to see all the fun happenings at the Franklin Senior Center!

- Interested in acting or backstage work? Join our Senior Players, our extraordinary acting group every Tuesday at 10 a.m.
- Come to receive a bag of stable items, choice of proteins, and dairy items at the Mobile Food Pantry: Wednesday February 8th at 11 a.m.
- Talk with Franklin's Conservation Department about the resident survey and Open Space Plan on Wednesday, February 15th at 11 a.m.
- Pizza and Movie Night: Thursday, February 16th at 4:30 p.m. to watch *The Butler* starring Forest Whitaker, in honor of Black History Month & President's Day. \$3/person. Must call to register by 2/15
- Eat Around the World: China on Friday February 24th at 11 a.m. Come to learn about the country of China and try out its delicious cuisine. Limited spots, so call to register now!
- MARDI GRAS Monthly Party with Live Entertainment: Monday, February 27th at 11 a.m. \$6/person. Please call to register by Thursday, February 23rd.
- Interested in learning CPR? Our public health nurse and fire department are teaming up to provide a Hands Only CPR class on Tuesday, February 28th at 1 p.m.

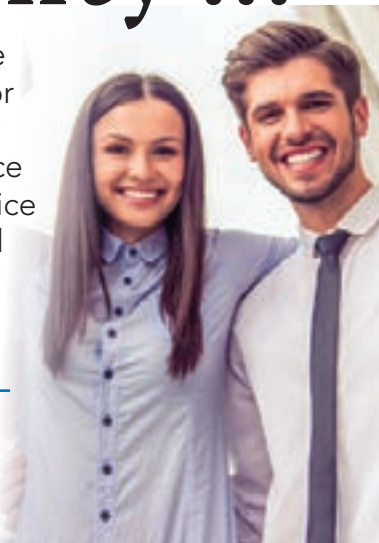
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## New Members Welcome to Charles River Chorale Open Rehearsals in January

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.

## Join Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School for *The Lightning Thief*, *The Percy Jackson Musical* March 3&4

The Fine and Performing Arts Department at the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School is pleased to announce upcoming performances of "*The Lightning Thief*, *The Percy Jackson Musical*" to be held in the school's Learning Commons at 500 Financial Park in Franklin.

Performances will be held on Friday, March 3rd from 7-9:30 p.m. and Saturday, March 4th from 2-4:30 p.m. and March 4th from 7-9:30 p.m. The public is invited and welcomed to attend the show! Tickets are priced at \$17 for adults and \$13 senior citizens and students. Tickets are available online at [www.bfccps.org](http://www.bfccps.org).

"As the half-blood son of a Greek god, Percy Jackson has newly-discovered powers he can't control, a destiny he doesn't want, and a mythology textbook's worth of monsters on his trail. When Zeus's master lightning bolt is stolen and Percy becomes the prime suspect, he has to find and return the bolt to prove his innocence and prevent a war between the gods. But to succeed on his quest, Percy will have to do more than catch the thief. He must travel to the Underworld and back; solve the riddle of the Oracle, which warns him of betrayal by a friend; and come to terms with the father who abandoned him. Adapted from the best-selling book *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan and featuring a thrilling original rock score, '*The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*' is an action-packed mythical ad-



venture "worthy of the gods" (Time Out New York).

The production is under the direction of BFCCPS's Fine and Performing Arts Director Mr. Christopher Heater with a cast comprised of 32 students in grades

Six through Eight. The cast is supported by a live orchestra and a dedicated 23-member backstage student crew.

The Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School has been in operation since 1995 and provides a well-rounded, rigorous academic program designed to educate the whole child. BFCCPS's educational philosophy, which is centered around strong core academic subjects, as well as yearlong courses in art, music, languages, technology, and physical education, integrated character education and community service, and strong parent partnerships, has led to local, state and national recognition.

If you'd like to learn more about the educational mission of the Benjamin Franklin Classical Charter Public School please contact the school's Marketing Coordinator, Joanne Basile, at [jbasile@bfccps.org](mailto:jbasile@bfccps.org) or (508) 541-3434 x140.



# Tri-County RVTHS Students' Art Brings Life to New ThermoFisher Lab

ThermoFisher Scientific recently opened a 290,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Plainville, MA. The new facility will be used for manufacturing life-saving gene therapy products that will impact patients all over the world. In order to decorate the Quality Control (QC) testing hallway, ThermoFisher created a SmART Contest open to students ages 13-18 and Tri-County students answered the call.

Science-themed artwork created by contest winner Sinead Bergeron of Medway and runner-ups Catriona Keefe of Wrentham, Morgan Fleury of North Attleboro, and Alexander Vasilyev of Walpole line the QC Hallway and have also been utilized as decals to add color throughout the lab. The students

were tasked with creating either computer generated graphics or hand-drawn images and explaining how the artwork displays "science" to them.

The students and their guardians were invited to the ribbon cutting ceremony in August to celebrate the official opening of the new facility. Attendance at the ribbon cutting included: former Gov. Charlie Baker, Attleboro area Congressman Jake Auchincloss, Senator Becca Rausch, and State Representative Shawn Dooley. During the ceremony the four Tri-County students were honored for their works of art which reflect the company's research efforts.

"Our students utilized the skills they have gained from Graphic Communications to

clearly portray their idea of 'science.' It is interesting to see the range of ideas that were born for the open-ended contest," said Linda Thompson, Graphic Communications instructor.

The state-of-the-art site was purpose-built for large-scale manufacturing. It will offer a flexible and scalable configuration of laboratory and production suites co-located with adjacent warehousing and office space.

"All 16 of the Career Majors offered at Tri-County have a foundation in STEAM education. The incorporation of critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving helps prepare our students to be innovators and combine left and right brain thinking. It is an honor to have our students' artwork hanging



in the halls of a state-of-the-art facility for a worldwide leader in the pharmaceutical industry," said Dr. Karen Maguire, Superintendent/Director, Tri-County RVTHS.

# Franklin Historical Society Second Sunday Speaker Series

February 12, 2023, Dean College Professor  
Rob Lawson

History is everywhere around us—we all know that. However, we often focus on that which is most easily seen: a monument, an historic site, a holiday marking an historical anniversary. Inspired to find social connections and foster historical curiosity during the Covid-19 pandemic, two editors at the *New England Journal of History* (who happen to also be Dean College professors) developed a citizen-historian video series entitled *History in Your Backyard*. The goal was to get people looking for—and sharing—the history in our communities. Dean College and the Town of Franklin offer plenty of opportunities to explore local history. Some of it is well known, such as the story of Horace Mann, or the edifice of Dean Hall that reminds us of another important Franklin native, Oliver Dean. But what else can be found? It turns out there are sparkling gems of history at Dean still waiting to be mined and polished. Join Prof. R. A. Lawson as we dig for the hidden jewels of Dean's past and learn about the treasures of history hidden in our "backyard." Sponsored by Humanities in Action at Dean College.



R. A. Lawson is a historian of American culture with wide-ranging interests in the arts, both performative and material. Dr. Lawson earned his Ph.D. in History at Vanderbilt University in 2003 after taking a bachelor's degree from Louisiana State University. His signature work is *Jim Crow's Counterculture: The Blues and Black Southerners, 1890- 1945*, which won the Gulf South Historical Association's Thomason Prize for book of the year in 2011. Dr. Lawson has won the Hicks-Kennedy Award for service to the New England History Teachers Association for his role as associate editor of the *New England Journal of History*. He re-

cently earned the Excellence in Teaching Award from the National Society of Leadership and Success for his work at Dean College, where he has been on the faculty since 2003. In addition to being a co-founder of the *History in Your Backyard* series, Dr. Lawson also serves as co-producer and writer for *The Boatbuilders*, a documentary series celebrating the history and state of the art of boatbuilding in New England.

Join us Sunday February 12th. Doors open at 1 p.m., presentation starts at 1:15 p.m. We are ADA-accessible, and admission is always Free!

For more information, visit: <https://www.nejh.org/history-in-your-backyard>

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 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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# Historical Museum Fights Inflation with Silent Saturdays

## Silent Saturdays – February 18 and February 25, 2023

The Franklin Historical Museum will take a wild and hilarious trip back in time to the heyday of silent films in the 1920s with movies by Harold Lloyd – the great comic genius. And they will save you money, too. When Harold Lloyd films were shown in Franklin a century ago, a ticket cost a quarter – but at the Franklin Historical Museum,

the showing is FREE. If you've never experienced the fast-paced and sophisticated humor of the silent era, you are in for a treat at this FREE, all ages show. Kids and adults will be entranced! The Museum opens at 10 a.m. on Saturday, and the film will be shown starting at 11 a.m. and finishing by about 12:30 p.m. The museum closes at 1.

Showing on Saturday, Feb. 18, **Safety Last!**, (73 minutes) a 1923 American silent romantic-comedy film starring Harold Lloyd. It includes one of the most famous images from the silent-film era: Lloyd clutching the hands of a large clock as he dangles from the outside of a skyscraper above moving traffic.

Showing Saturday, Feb. 25, **The Freshman**, (76 minutes) a 1925 American silent comedy film that tells the story of a college freshman trying to become popular by joining the school football team. It stars Harold Lloyd, Jobyna Ralston, Brooks Benedict, and James Anderson. It remains one of Lloyd's most successful and enduring films.

Be sure to enjoy these School Vacation week treats!



# Franklin Art Association Welcomes Local Scholar Sardella

At the Franklin Art Association monthly meeting on Wednesday, February 1, Dennis Sardella, author of the book *Visible Image of the Invisible God: An Introduction to Russian and Byzantine Icons*, published by Paraclete Press, will present an illustrated lecture entitled "Russian Icons: Art As Revelation." Byzantine and Russian icons are the art of the Christian East, a living tradition that spans nearly two millennia, from the Roman Empire to the twenty-first century. The talk

will explore their history, their symbolic language, and their role in the liturgical and spiritual life of the Eastern Church. It will also give an overview of the major types of icons, including those of Christ, the Mother of God, saints, and feasts, and the steps that go into their creation.

Sardella has been a docent at the Museum of Russian Icons in Clinton, MA, since 2010, where he leads gallery tours and introduces visitors to the world of Byzantine and Russian icons. He



also writes and speaks regularly to civic and church groups on the

topics of religious icons and the role they play in Eastern Christian spirituality.

From 1967 until 2012 he was a professor of chemistry at Boston College. In 1990, he became the founding director of the Boston College Presidential Scholars Program, a university-wide co-curricular honors program, and directed it until 2010. As part of the Program, for 17 years he and his wife Marjorie, a fine art photographer, led groups of Boston College Presidential Scholars on

month-long study trips to France, which stimulated his interest in the subject of religious icons.

This meeting will be held at the Franklin Senior Center at 6:30 p.m. on February 1st. The public is invited. The Franklin Art Association is supported in part by the Franklin Cultural District and the Franklin Cultural Council and can be found at [www.franklinart.org](http://www.franklinart.org), and on Facebook and Instagram.

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## Not Just for Newcomers . . .

Come join your Franklin friends and neighbors at the Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club February Meeting. Club member Gloria Lee, a licensed acupuncturist, is going to share information about her field. She'll be happy to answer any questions you may have about acupuncture. Join us at Escape Into Fiction Book Store, 12 Main Street, Franklin on Wednesday, February 8th at 7 p.m. Light refreshments will be served.

Come early and browse/shop the store or grab a bite beforehand nearby. No need

to be a newcomer to the area, come make connections in your community. We are a multi-generational, member-driven organization, offering a wide range of activities, and are always excited to welcome new faces and new ideas. Residents of Franklin, or any surrounding town that doesn't have a Newcomers Club, are welcome to join us.

We are so thankful for the generosity and kindness that April Rock, Owner, Escape Into Fiction, has bestowed on us this year. She's more than humble, so it might not be known to you

how generous she is to our community. Teachers, especially, should know that she keeps a Teacher Wishlist at the register. All Teachers are welcome to sign up. If you are a teacher, April is an amazing resource for you and your classroom. Look for us on our Meetup and Facebook pages for more information. <https://www.meetup.com/Franklin-Newcomers-Friends> <https://facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersFriendsClub>.



## The First Public Library – in Gingerbread!

Residents at Magnolia Heights, along with the activities department, created a gingerbread creation of the Franklin Public Library for the annual gingerbread contest.



## Dean College Offers Summer Programs in Sports Broadcasting and Forensics

Is your high schooler interested in learning more about careers in sports or forensics while getting a taste of college life? This summer, Dean College will offer two pre-college programs in Sports Broadcasting and Forensics.

The Sports Broadcasting and Forensics Pre-College Summer Programs offer a great introduction to college life. Students will earn college credit for completing the program while they learn from experts in the field and get advice on the college admissions

process from a Dean College admissions counselor during a free one-on-one consultation. Students will also participate in unique real-world experiences and field trips embedded into each program, with behind-the-scenes access to program-specific venues such as Gillette Stadium and the New England Patriots training camp. Additional experiences may include trips to a science lab and police station for the Forensics program and a baseball stadium for the Sports Broadcasting program, as well as the op-

portunity to call live play-by-play and host talk show programs.

Two one-week sessions of each pre-college summer program will be offered. The first session will run from July 23-28, 2023, and the second session will run from July 30-August 4, 2023.

Free virtual information sessions will be held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and Wednesday, May 3, 2023, from 6 to 7 p.m.

For more information, visit [www.dean.edu/summer](http://www.dean.edu/summer).



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Saturday: 9 a.m. - 2 p.m. CLOSED Sunday

# February 2023 at Franklin Public Library

The library will be closed on Monday, February 20th for Presidents Day.

## Book Sale

### Franklin Library Book Sale

Friday, February 17, 1-5 p.m.  
Saturday, February 18, 9 a.m. to 12 Noon.

All books \$1! Bag Sale - \$5 A Bag—Saturday, February 18, from 1-4 p.m.

## Special Events for Kids & Families

### Kids Take & Makes: Little Heart Keychains!

Kits include supplies and instructions for making your own keychain! SUPPLIES ARE LIMITED! First come first serve!

### Kid's Paint Party! Saturday, February 4th @ 1 p.m.

FOR KIDS AGES 5-11!

**REGISTRATION REQUIRED!** Join local instructor Denise Palmieri for this step-by-step paint party specifically for kids! All materials provided. Register through the events calendar on library website.

### Doggie Tales! Monday, February 6th @ 4 p.m. (1st grade +)

Improve your reading skills by reading aloud to a trained therapy dog! **REGISTRATION REQUIRED. SPOTS ARE LIMITED.** Register on library website.

### Baby Sensory! Saturday February 11th @9:30 a.m.

Join us for a 45-minute baby sensory program! Watch your baby under 2 interact and engage with a variety of sensory items! (Got older siblings? They can bring along a stuffed toy or baby and play along!)

### Girl Scouts World Thinking Day! Saturday February 11th @1 p.m.

### Ed Popielarczyk Magic Show! Tuesday February 21 @10:30AM

### Jewelry Making with PT color Market! Tuesday February 21 @1 p.m.

**FOR KIDS IN GRADES 3-5!** Join local artist Paulina Teng for a special workshop celebrating what makes us unique! We will be journaling some personal affirmations, creating a positive affirmation board, & make a leather bracelet together! Register on our website to reserve your spot.

### Mr. Vinny's Shadow Puppets! Wednesday February 22 @1 p.m.

### Snowflake Sing-Along! Thursday February 23 @10:30 a.m.

### Winter Beach Party! Saturday February 25 @10:30 a.m.

## Special Events for Teens

### Teen Take & Makes: Wooden Heart Plaques!

Kits include supplies and instructions for making your very own heart! SUPPLIES ARE LIMITED! First come, first serve!

### Navigating College Admissions in 2023! Wednesday February 15 @7 p.m.

A virtual seminar for all high school students and their parents with Ron Feuchs and Jackie Tepper, from Stand Out For College, LLC. For the zoom link, email Bree at bcomeau@minlib.net.

### Teen Interactive Movie Screening! Wednesday February 22 @5:30 p.m.

## Events for Adults

### Adult Take & Makes: Hearts of Love!

Kits include supplies and instructions for making your very own heart! SUPPLIES ARE LIMITED! First come first serve!

### Knitting Group, Fridays, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

### Community-wide Read! Winter 2023

Beginning January 1, 2023, copies of *Kindred: A graphic novel adaptation* by Octavia E. Butler, adapted to a graphic novel by Damian Duffy and John Jennings will be available. Find out more on the library's website. *Kindred: A graphic novel adaptation* is also available on Hoopla!

### Mid-Week Reset Wednesday February 1st 7 p.m.

*No registration required* Join us for a mid-week breather at our guided meditation. This event is open to all levels and no prior experience is required.

### Adult Crafts, February 5th, 2 p.m. Enjoy a Still life project! Registration Required

Register Here: [http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/ekform.cfm?curOrg=FRANKLIN&curName=2023/02/05\\_Adult\\_Crafts](http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/ekform.cfm?curOrg=FRANKLIN&curName=2023/02/05_Adult_Crafts)

### The Challenges of Being a Debut Author – Virtual- February 6th @7 p.m.

Register Here: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/6416717231133/WN\\_SdPpBfhTRdyfqv64EV5quA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/6416717231133/WN_SdPpBfhTRdyfqv64EV5quA)

*In collaboration with Ashland Public Library!*

Speak with debut author, first book, *Of Crown and Legends* and other debut authors Laura Gao, Brian D. Kennedy, Jean Louise, and XiXi Tian about the challenges and joys of getting your first book out.

### YA Book Club, Tuesday, February 7th @ 7 p.m.

*February Book: (Don't) Call Me Crazy: 33 Voices Start the Conversation about Mental Health*

*March Book: Improbable Magic for Cynical Witches by Kate Scelsa*

### Friends of the Franklin Library Book Club, Tuesday, February 7th 6:30 p.m.

### Ladies Night: Empowerment Workshop –Virtual- February @8th 7 p.m.

Register Here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUld-qppj4pHNER-v5o8zZxNOMio9Zk5Rpjh>

Have you ever wanted more from your romantic relationships? Join us for a chat with Laura Amador, a certified Laura Doyle relationship coach.

### Q&A with author Kate Clayborn! –Virtual- February 9th 7 p.m.

Register Here: [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3016688713105/WN\\_OVz8h3bQR1SZKJdXvWZjBA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/3016688713105/WN_OVz8h3bQR1SZKJdXvWZjBA)

*In collaboration with Ashland Public Library!*

We love Kate Clayborn, author of *Love Lettering* and her newest book, *Georgie*. Bring your questions!

### Adult Paint Party! February 11th @ 2 p.m.

Register Here: [http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/ekform.cfm?curOrg=FRANKLIN&curName=2023/02/11\\_Adult\\_Paint\\_Party](http://www.eventkeeper.com/code/ekform.cfm?curOrg=FRANKLIN&curName=2023/02/11_Adult_Paint_Party)

### Women Lead Slave Revolts with Dr. R Hall –Virtual- February 11th 2:30 p.m.

Register Here: [https://wattertown-ma.zoom.us/webinar/register/9816709617607/WN\\_XICdeNkBRP2OjY8eCbaYuw](https://wattertown-ma.zoom.us/webinar/register/9816709617607/WN_XICdeNkBRP2OjY8eCbaYuw)

*In collaboration with Watertown Public Library*

This year's Black History Month honors Black Resistance throughout history and today. Archivist, scholar, and graphic novelist Rebecca Hall joins us on Zoom to discuss her groundbreaking book, *Wake!*

### Author Janis Robinson Daly, Thursday, January 5th, 7 p.m.

Author Janis Robinson Daly share the genealogical journey that led her to write *The Unlocked Path*. Free to everyone, no registration needed.

**Zoom link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83013837127?pwd=UHBwaU12NEx3NIN2cCtkR3JjNVdGdz09>

### Chess Group, Sundays, 2-4:30 p.m.

All ages and ability levels are welcomed. Sets will be available. No registration is required, free.

### Table Top, Tuesday, February 14th & 28th 6 p.m.

Registration Requested! Table Top is a Monthly game of Table Top Role Playing Games for Adults!

Email [mgousie@minlib.net](mailto:mgousie@minlib.net) to sign up or get more info!

### Edward M. Brooke February 15th 6:30 p.m.

Join Alan Earls through the exploits of Senator Edward M. Brooke of Massachusetts. The first African American elected to the Senate!

### Navigating College Admissions in 2023! Wednesday February 15 @7 p.m.

A virtual seminar for all high school students and their parents. Join Ron Feuchs and Jackie Tepper, from Stand Out For College, LLC. as they help you understand how the lingering effects from the pandemic have changed the college admissions landscape. For the zoom link, email Bree at [bcomeau@minlib.net](mailto:bcomeau@minlib.net).



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# Sports

## Franklin's Bramson: A Wrestler Who Knows Adversity

### 145-Pounder Aiming for Sectional Success

By KEN HAMWEY,  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Devon Bramson is looking forward to the Division 1 South Sectional wrestling tournament that gets underway on Feb. 11. For good reason. Make that two good reasons.

Two years ago, when Bramson was a sophomore, the Franklin High wrestler wasn't sure if he'd ever compete again, and he justifiably was worried about what his daily life might be like. After compiling a .500 record as a freshman and finishing fourth in the sectional, he began his second year, but was forced to stop two bouts into the season. Not feeling well physically, he was diagnosed with an underlying heart issue.

"I had to increase both my fluid and salt intake," the Franklin native said. "And, I was instructed to exercise lightly and to modify my workout regimen if I wanted to continue to wrestle."

Able to compete as a junior last year, Bramson finished the season with a 27-8 record in the 145-pound class. A second trip to the sectionals, however, wasn't in the cards.

"I had moved up from the 126-pound class, but didn't get the nod for the post-season," he said. "I wasn't upset, because a good friend was selected, and

he deserved it. I was pleased for him."

Now as a senior co-captain, the classy Bramson opened the season at 3-2 before spraining his knee. The injury sent him to the sideline for two weeks but at *Local Town Pages'* deadline (Jan. 15) he was preparing to return after missing six matches.

Now, he's more motivated than ever to get to the sectional and excel.

"Absolutely," he said about his desire to excel in the sectional. "I'm super motivated. I was disappointed to miss two weeks, but I'm glad there wasn't any major damage. I sprained a ligament in my right knee, and it was painful to walk. The injury, however, has taught me to be resilient."

"My individual goals at the start of the season were to go the sectional, finish first, then advance to the state tourney," he emphasized. "I also want to win at the sectional for another reason — my name would go on the plaque outside the wrestling room. All of the school's post-season winners have their names on the plaque. My team goal is for us to be successful. We began the year as a young team, but we can finish strong in the tourneys."



**Devon Bramson will focus on maritime operations and navigation in college.**

Franklin's team record at *Local Town Pages* deadline was 7-6.

The 17-year-old Bramson firmly believes all his goals can be achieved. "Our team can do well because we've got talent, ability, depth and experience," he said. "And we've got superb coaching."

Panthers' head coach Carmen Colace was impressed with his co-captain in his five bouts.

"Devon is strong, mentally and physically tough, and he's got a high wrestling IQ," Colace offered. "His work ethic is outstanding, and he's a good student and a fine role model who leads by example. It's difficult to see him deal with another tough break."

"When the season began, I wanted to make sure I got to know all of our wrestlers and their strengths, and I was willing to offer any help if needed," Bramson said.

Three teammates he admires for their contributions are senior co-captain Alex Foley, junior Riley Carlucci and senior Matthew Fitzgerald.

"Alex is a quality leader who's confident, mentally and physically tough and successful," Bramson said. "Riley is aggressive and technically sound, and Matthew is motivated and resilient."

Bramson also admires his coach, who's been a mentor for countless Franklin matmen. "Coach Colace is a dynamic motivator who's a brilliant strategist," he noted. "He also teaches the sport effectively."

Bramson's style combines being defensive and technically sound. "I wait for an opponent to make his move," Bramson said. "If there's a mistake or a mistep, I'll capitalize on it. My favorite move is a leg rider, which controls the position of an opponent. It involves wrapping my legs around an opponent's body and aiming for back points or a pin."

The 5-foot-11, 145-pound Bramson calls his first victory in the sectional during his freshman season his best match.

"I was unseeded and was facing the No. 2 seed," he recalled. "He was stronger, and the match was grueling, but I was able to pin him in the second period. It felt great, and it gave me confidence, because I won my next two matches against the No. 3 and the No. 4 seeds. The three victories enabled me to finish fourth and to advance to the state tourney where I had a 1-2 record before I was eliminated."

Bramson says he was honored to be selected a captain, but his top thrill in wrestling was "getting back to what I love."

"Wrestling is my passion, and to return as a junior was a thrill," he noted. "Unable to compete as a sophomore was sad, but I was glad to be part of the team again. I had some shaky moments physically in my rehab time. I didn't know how intensely I could compete or if I was going to be able to wrestle again. Going 27-8 felt great. I had lots of pins and not too many close matches. It was pleasing to overcome physical adversity."

Relying on a competitive philosophy that focuses on reaching one's potential and "enjoying the journey," Bramson says that if those situations occur, then winning will follow. He's also learned some valuable life lessons from wrestling. "I've learned to be persevering and resilient when facing adversity, to accept losing but learn from it, and to be a quality leader," he offered.

Bramson, who started wrestling at age 10, also competes at the club level, where he's sharpened his skills and traveled to tourneys in Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New York. A capable student, he'll likely enroll at a maritime college and focus on navigation and maritime operations.

"A deep run in the post-season and maybe a berth in the all-state tourney would be the best way to end my wrestling career," he said.

That kind of success would be welcomed, not only because Bramson has overcome two physical challenges, but also because he'd like to be a good example for his younger brother.

"My brother Jacob is already a state champ at the middle school level," Bramson said. "He's a seventh grader who wrestles at 104 pounds. I'm eager to see him compete hard and be a success."

Devon Bramson has always been about encouraging others. He's a natural leader who excels on and off the mat. And, even though a health concern threatened to derail his future two years ago, he stepped up and became a terrific role model. No matter how his wrestling career ends, Devon Bramson will be a champion.



**Franklin's Devon Bramson, right, relies on strength, technique and a high wrestling IQ when he's competing.**

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# DCR to Commence Blackstone Section of Southern New England Trunkline Trail in Spring 2023

The Baker-Polito administration announced in early January that the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) will break ground on the Blackstone section of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail (SNETT) in Spring 2023, which is estimated to take approximately three years to complete. The \$11.3 million project runs from the Saint Paul Street Bridge in the Town of Blackstone to the Massachusetts-Rhode Island state border and is the final half-mile of an approximately 4.2-mile section of DCR's Blackstone River Greenway. Additionally, this section of the greenway is critical for the connection to Rhode Island's Blackstone River Bikeway and also provides a regional connection to Douglas, Mass., and the State of Connecticut through the SNETT.

"Since taking office, the Baker-Polito Administration has worked diligently to greatly expand the Commonwealth's vast network of trails, which offer incredible economic, health, and transportation benefits, and access to the natural world that surrounds us," said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Beth Card. "This Blackstone section is a vital part of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail that

will not only connect communities, but two states together, enabling stronger bonds and better opportunities to explore nature."

The SNETT is a recreational trail, owned and managed by DCR, along a former railroad corridor that runs approximately 22 miles from the Franklin State Forest in the Town of Franklin to the Douglas State Forest in the Town of Douglas. The SNETT passes through the towns of Bellingham, Blackstone, Douglas, Franklin, Millville, and Uxbridge and is one of the longest rail-trails in southern Massachusetts. Currently, most of the trail is gravel surface and is used for various recreational and transportation purposes. Additionally, a portion of the SNETT, including the section to be built in the Town of Blackstone, is part of the Blackstone River Greenway, an envisioned 50-mile greenway with a paved shared-use path connecting Providence, Rhode Island, and Worcester, Massachusetts.

"The Department of Conservation and Recreation is excited to commence work on the Blackstone section of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail this spring," said DCR Commissioner Doug Rice. "The commitment by the Baker-Polito Adminis-

tration to complete this section provides many benefits for residents, businesses, and visitors for years to come."

The Blackstone project includes a single-span railroad viaduct and a seven-span railroad viaduct on which the trail will be constructed. Both of these viaducts that will be rehabilitated as part of the project are important historic structures and cultural resources. Additionally, funding for the project is through the DCR Major Trails Capital Program.

"I am grateful for the Baker-Polito administration and DCR's investment in the Blackstone Valley," said State Senator Ryan Fattman (R-Sutton). "This trail is a focal point for tourism in our area for those that love the outdoors, and this improvement will build upon that experience. By finalizing the connection between Blackstone and the MA-RI border, we will be opening the door for many outdoor enthusiasts to enjoy these trails in the Blackstone Valley."

"I am excited to see work commence on the Blackstone section of the Southern New England Trunkline Trail," said State Representative Michael J. Soter (R-Worcester). "I applaud DCR and the Baker Polito Administration for their work and commitment to bring

towns of Southern New England."

In 2018, DCR completed the 3.7-mile section from 146A in the Town of Uxbridge through the Town of Millville to the Saint Paul Street Bridge in Blackstone, MA, and in 2019, DCR completed the Canal Street Bridge. Rhode

Island has also completed the bridge across the Blackstone River that connects to the Massachusetts border. Significantly, this project will complete the final link to the Massachusetts/Rhode Island border within a 23-mile intrastate greenway.

## LIBRARY

*continued from page 20*

### Community Conversations! Thursday February 23 @ 6 p.m.

All are welcome to join us each month as we unpack, discuss, and engage with topics relevant both within our community and beyond. This month's topic: Black History is American History

### Highwaymen Concert with Matt, Saturday, February 25th 2:00 PM

Longtime New England musician/author Matt York will perform the songs of Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson and Waylon Jennings and tell stories of their careers. York was recently nominated for the Boston Music Award for Best Country Artist and his album *Gently Used* was just named one of Worcester Magazine's best albums of 2022.

Program supported in part by a grant from the Marshfield Local Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency

### Board Game Group, Tuesday, February 21th 6:30 p.m. All ages welcome!

### Harriet Tubman: She Came to Slay! -Virtual- February 22nd 7 p.m.

Registration Link on the Library Calendar of Events!

*In collaboration with Belmont Public Library!*

### Genealogy Club, Thursday, January 19th, 6:30 p.m.

Basic Genetic Genealogy with Dr. Adina Newman. First of a 5-part "Genetic Genealogy" series. Free and open to anyone interested, no registration required.

**Zoom Link:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89722066111?pwd=QzFFRFJmJmIsanoyZzY0MS8vUESzZz09>

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# Calendar

## February 1

Franklin Art Association presents **Dennis Sardella**, Artist, and Author of *Visible Image of the Invisible God, An introduction to Russian and Byzantine Icons*, published by Paraclete Press, will present an illustrated lecture entitled "Russian Icons: Art as Revelation." The public is invited.

The Franklin Art Association is supported in part by the Franklin Cultural District and the Franklin Cultural Council. For more information select FAA to visit their Facebook page or their website: [www.franklinart.org](http://www.franklinart.org)

## February 2

Franklin Downtown Partnership General Meeting, 8:30 a.m., Dean College Dr. Paula Rooney Student Center on the second floor in the Golder Room. [www.franklindowntownpartnership.org](http://www.franklindowntownpartnership.org)

## February 4

THE BLACK BOX presents **James Montgomery with the Daybreakers**, 7:30 p.m., 15 West Central St., Franklin, [www.theblackboxonline.com](http://www.theblackboxonline.com) or (508) 528-3370

## February 7

Franklin Rotary Club Meeting, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., The Rome Restaurant, 4 East Central Street (Rte. 140), Franklin, MA. To attend, email Diane at [padularotary@gmail.com](mailto:padularotary@gmail.com), and she will make arrangements for you to be a guest at one of Rotary's upcoming meetings. To learn more, <http://portal.clubrunner.ca/3689>.

## February 8

Greater Franklin Virtual Career Fair, 3:30-6:30 p.m. for veterans, 4:30-6:30 p.m. for general public, sponsored by Franklin Veterans Services Office and MassHire Career Center, <https://app.premiervirtual.com/events/6559fc74-7755-4e57-8ad5-444371e042fe/greater-franklin-virtual-job-fair/attendee>

Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club February Meeting, 7 p.m., Escape Into Fiction Book Store, 12 Main Street, Franklin, featured speaker, Club member Gloria Lee, a licensed acupuncturist. Light refreshments will be served.

Virtual 50+ Job Seekers Networking Group, Create a Marketing Plan and Marketing Brief, 6-8 p.m., To register for each workshop, go to Bellingham library calendar, select the workshop date, and click on the link to register directly via Zoom.

Circle of Friends presents **Tracy Grammer, with Hana Zara**, 8 p.m., First Universalist Society of Franklin meetinghouse, 262 Chestnut St., Franklin, <http://www.circlefolk.org/>

## February 10

Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA) presents **The Addams Family** featuring an all-student teen cast, THE BLACK BOX, 7:30 p.m., 15 West Central St., Franklin, [www.FSPAonline.com](http://www.FSPAonline.com) or call (508)-528-8668

## February 11

Franklin Rotary Club 4th Annual Senior Valentine's Brunch, 10:30 a.m. to 12 Noon, at Central Park Terrace Hall, 1000 Central Park Terrace, Franklin, open to all seniors in Franklin, find sign-up sheet at Franklin Senior Center, 10 Daniel McCahill St., or Central Park Terrace, 1000 Central Park Terrace, Franklin  
FSPA Youth Musical Family Reunion, 2 p.m. & 4 p.m., THE BLACK BOX, 15 West Central St., Franklin, [www.FSPAonline.com](http://www.FSPAonline.com) or call (508)-528-8668

Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA) presents **The Addams Family** featuring an all-student teen cast, THE BLACK BOX, 7:30 p.m., 15 West Central St., Franklin, [www.FSPAonline.com](http://www.FSPAonline.com) or call (508)-528-8668

Women Lead Slave Revolts with Dr. R Hall -Virtual, 2:30 p.m.

Register Here: [https://waternetown-ma.zoom.us/join/register/9816709617607/WN\\_XlCdeNkBRP2OjY8eCbaYuw](https://waternetown-ma.zoom.us/join/register/9816709617607/WN_XlCdeNkBRP2OjY8eCbaYuw)

In collaboration with Watertown Public Library

This year's Black History Month honors Black Resistance. Archivist, scholar, and graphic novelist Rebecca Hall joins us on Zoom to discuss her groundbreaking book, *Wake!*

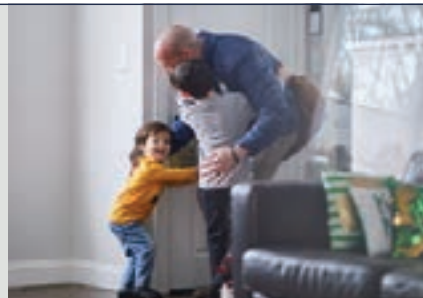
## February 12

Franklin Historical Society Second Sunday Speaker Series, 1:15 p.m. (doors open 1 p.m.), Dean College Professor Rob Lawson, editor at New England Jour-

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nal of History and co-editor of video series History in Your Own Backyard, Franklin Historical Museum, 80 West Central St., Franklin

## February 15

Navigating College Admissions in 2023! 7 p.m., Franklin Public Library virtual program, For the zoom link, email Bree at [bcomeau@minlib.net](mailto:bcomeau@minlib.net).

"Edward M. Brooke," 6:30 p.m., Franklin Public Library,

Alan Earls will present on Senator Edward M. Brooke of Massachusetts, the first African American elected to the Senate!

Virtual 50+ Job Seekers Networking Group, Applications, Cover Letters & Negotiation, 9-11:30 a.m., To register for each workshop, go to Bellingham library calendar, select the workshop date, and click on the link to register directly via Zoom.

## February 17

Franklin Library Book Sale, 1-5 p.m., Franklin Public Library, all books \$1

## February 18

Silent Saturdays, Film at Franklin Historical Museum, *Safety Last!* (73 minutes), 1923 silent romantic comedy starring Harold Lloyd, 11 a.m., free, 80 West Central St., Franklin

Franklin Library Book Sale, 9 a.m. -12 p.m., Franklin Public Library, all books \$1

## February 21

Ed Popielarczyk Magic Show! 10:30 a.m., Franklin Public Library, for kids and families

Franklin Rotary Club Meeting, 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m., The Rome Restaurant, 4 East Central Street (Rte. 140), Franklin, MA. To attend, email Diane at [padularotary@gmail.com](mailto:padularotary@gmail.com), and she will make arrangements for you to be a guest at one of Rotary's upcoming meetings. To learn more, <http://portal.clubrunner.ca/3689>.

tary@gmail.com, and she will make arrangements for you to be a guest at one of Rotary's upcoming meetings. To learn more, <http://portal.clubrunner.ca/3689>.

## February 22

Mr. Vinny's Shadow Puppets! 1 p.m., Franklin Public Library

## February 23

Community Conversations! 6 p.m., Franklin Public Library, Folks of all ages are welcome, this month's topic: Black History is American History

Dean College Theater presents **Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play**, 7:30 p.m., Dean College Main Stage Theater, 109 West Central St., Franklin, [www.dean.edu/box-office](http://www.dean.edu/box-office)

## February 24

Dean College Theater presents **Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play**, 7:30 p.m., Dean College Main Stage Theater, 109 West Central St., Franklin, [www.dean.edu/box-office](http://www.dean.edu/box-office)

Rick Berlin with Jodi Heights, Niagara Coffeehaus, sponsored by Millis Cultural Council and Friends of Niagara, 8 p.m., 8 Exchange St., Millis, <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/boston-music-legend-rick-berlin-with-jodi-heights-at-niagara-coffee-haus-tickets-510239810007>

## February 25

Silent Saturdays, Film at Franklin Historical Museum, *The Freshman* (76 minutes), 1925 silent romantic comedy starring Harold Lloyd Jobyna Ralston, Brooks Benedict, and James Anderson, 11 a.m., free, 80 West Central St., Franklin

Highwaymen Concert with Matt York, 2 p.m., Franklin Public Library

Tracy Grammer with special guest Hana Zara, 8 p.m., Circle of Friends Coffeehouse, Franklin's First Universalist Society. Concerts are held in the Society's Meetinghouse located at 262 Chestnut St. <http://www.circlefolk.org/> for tickets and select their FaceBook page for more information.

Dean College Theater presents **Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play**, 2 & 7:30 p.m., Dean College Main Stage Theater, 109 West Central St., Franklin, [www.dean.edu/box-office](http://www.dean.edu/box-office)

## February 26

Dean College Theater presents **Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play**, 7:30 p.m., Dean College Main Stage Theater, 109 West Central St., Franklin, [www.dean.edu/box-office](http://www.dean.edu/box-office)



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## Dean Bank Welcomes Austin Reed, of Franklin, to their Commercial Lending Dept.

Dean Bank recently announced the hiring of Austin Reed as its new Commercial Construction Portfolio Manager. Reed's duties will include managing the existing commercial and residential construction portfolio, serve as the main point of contact for new borrowers and builders through the construction phase of their projects as well as continuing the relationship once construction has been completed. Additionally, Reed will work closely with local inspectors and serve as a liaison between the bank, the builders and the customers through all phases of each project.

Austin gained experience working in numerous local financial institutions such as Rockland Trust; most recently serving as a Commercial Credit Analyst at Walpole Cooperative Bank. A



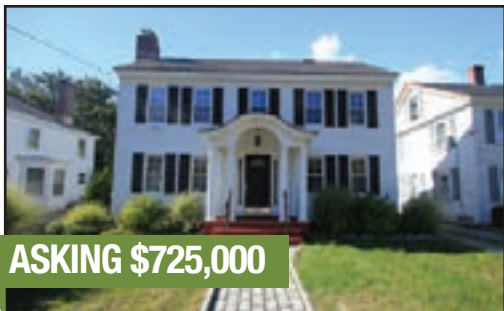
lifelong Franklin resident, he's a graduate of both Mount St. Charles Academy and the University of Rhode Island, Austin brings a wealth of local community banking knowledge to his new role.

Dean Bank President and CEO Kevin Goffe stated, "We

**REED**

*continued on page 26*

## Commercial Properties



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# Real Estate Corner

## December 2022 Real Estate Activity in Norfolk County

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reported that Norfolk County recordings for the month of December 2022 indicate a continued decrease in overall real estate activity, with significant drops in mortgage activity and the average property sale price as compared to the December 2021 numbers.

In December, there were 9,429 documents recorded at the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, a 37% decrease from December 2021 and a slight increase of 5% from November 2022.

"The real estate market is feeling the effects of inflation and steadily rising interest rates, which is limiting how much money customers can save," said O'Donnell. "The total number of documents is much lower in December 2022 than it was in December 2021, but the change from last month is less pronounced. The number of recorded deeds, which is one measure of document volume, shows a drop in real estate sales from the previous year."

The number of deeds for December 2022, which reflect real

estate sales and transfers, both commercial and residential was 1,273, a decrease of 31% from December 2021 and an increase of 5% from the previous month of November 2022.

Sale prices for December appear to have dropped significantly compared to December 2021. The average sale price in December was 936,804, a 38% decrease from December 2021 and a 4% decrease from November 2022. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is down, decreasing 59% from one year ago and decreasing 2% from last month.

"With interest rates approaching and exceeding 7%, consumers appear to be less inclined to borrow, and the decline in average sales prices suggests sellers are lowering pricing to compensate," noted O'Donnell. "According to the data we have at the Registry, we are recording significantly fewer mortgages than in December 2021."

Overall lending activity showed a continued downward trend for

the month of December. A total of 1,383 mortgages were recorded this month, 53% less than a year ago at the same time, but up 2% from last month.

"The increasing cost of living and rising interest rates that the country is currently experiencing have an effect on the local real estate market," noted O'Donnell. "The number of pending foreclosures in Norfolk County is a continuing source of concern."

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has been closely monitoring the foreclosure market. In December 2022, there were 4 foreclosure deeds recorded as a result of mortgage foreclosures taking place in Norfolk County, whereas in December of 2021 there were 7 recorded. However, in December of 2022, there were 40 notices to foreclose, the first step in the foreclosure process, significantly more than the 19 recorded in December of 2021.

"The substantial increase in the number of these notices is troubling. It suggests that more of our neighbors may have finan-

cial difficulties in the future," said O'Donnell. "We will continue to monitor these figures."

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.

To learn more about these and other Registry of Deeds events and initiatives, "like" us on Facebook at facebook.com/norfolkdeeds. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram at @norfolkdeeds.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, located at 649 High St., Dedham, is the principal office for real property in Norfolk County. Residents in need of assistance can contact the Registry of Deeds Customer Service Center at (781) 461-6101 or email us at registerodonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.

### REED

*continued from page 24*

are fortunate and excited to be able to add a commercial lending professional of Austin's caliber to our Commercial Lending Team here at Dean Bank. His local knowledge, combined with his prior community banking experience offer the perfect blend of experience and expertise.

We're certain our customers will benefit greatly as a result."

Dean Bank, founded in 1889, is a Massachusetts state-chartered, mutually owned institution with assets approaching \$450 million. The bank has offices located in Franklin, Blackstone, Bellingham, and Mendon. As a member of both the FDIC and DIF; the bank's deposits are insured in full.

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Susan Morrison  
*Buyer Agent*

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Eileen Mason

708 Emmons Street  
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Eileen Mason

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Susan Morrison  
*Buyer Agent*



**Susan Morrison**  
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