

## Best Buddies Sweetheart Pageant theme will be 'Mythology'

**Girls will perform, boys will dress up**

By Theresa Knapp

This year's Best Buddies Sweetheart Pageant will take place on Friday, April 28, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the Milford High School auditorium. The event is free and the public is invited.

The annual beauty and talent pageant is a time for MHS students with intellectual disabilities to showcase their talents. It started in 2014 after a female student with an intellectual disability at the time wanted to be in a pageant but there was not an opportunity for her to do so. A group of students in the Best Buddies program decided to create such an opportunity.

The current Best Buddies club has 125 students.

Club Co-President Vedi Raval says, "It gets to show off their talents and who they



The Milford Best Buddies club is preparing for the Best Buddies Pageant to be held on April 28. Pictured here are club officers Tessa Scrimgeour, Vedi Raval, Dean Draycott, and Eddie Hough. Photo by Theresa Knapp

are. A lot of the time kids with intellectual disabilities feel excluded from the rest of the school in a way. The pageant is a way for them to show off how special they are."

Each year the boys and

girls rotate between showcasing a talent in the pageant or dressing up in a way that reflects that year's theme. The

### BEST BUDDIES

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## What's next? Post-graduation plans for the Milford High Class of 2023



With decades of experience, guidance counselors at Milford High School advise students about options following high school: Debora Monteiro, Jennifer Mitchell-Hartford, Claudia Tamsky, Jason Gelmini, Amy DeVeuve, Amanda Masotta, and Kate Molinari. Courtesy photo

By Linda Chuss

As high school winds down, seniors are known to kick back and celebrate. Yet it's also naturally a time of worry and anticipation as they face major decisions.

"Students will be on their own for the first time. That independence comes with freedom, but also change and added responsibility," said Jason Gelmini, a guid-

ance counselor at Milford High School.

The COVID pandemic has had an effect, too. "Students had less time to prepare, and some are less ready emotionally," explained fellow guidance counselor Kate

### WHAT'S NEXT?

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# Selectmen Chair touts Milford/Amazon relationship

## Discusses how Milford became model Amazon town

By Scott Calzolaio

When the Amazon warehouse in Milford opened in 2019, at a cost of \$34 million, the Board of Selectmen were hit with a slew of complaints about the company’s sudden encompassing presence in town; but now Milford’s relationship with the retail giant is attracting attention from others facing similar issues.

The early relationship with Amazon was rocky. Tensions flew high as residents felt imposed upon by the company, said Tom O’Loughlin, Chairperson of the Board of Selectmen.

Between truck traffic, tractor-trailers going down streets that cannot support the weight, and various complaints of property damage, it was clear to O’Loughlin that a more working relationship with the company would benefit both parties.

“There were people that had fences knocked down, and other damage,” he said. “I’ve built a relationship with them because of the number of complaints.”

O’Loughlin said he began establishing this relationship with local delivery contractors, and Amazon representatives alike. What were once long updates and lists of complaints from the Board of Selectmen, have faded to near quarterly updates in the last three years, he said.

By working with these Amazon liaisons during his three-year tenure with the Board of Selectmen, O’Loughlin said the relationship with the company has become less of an issue and more of an opportunity.

“Some of what we’ve accomplished here, they pretty much use as a model,” he said. “I have received calls, not only from across the state, but from across the country saying ‘Tell us how you did this’,” he laughed.

Establishing this working relationship, he said, was far easier than he thought it might be, as they were very receptive to change, and willing to take the pressure off by helping in any way.

“The way I’ve approached



The Amazon warehouse on Commercial Way. Source: Google Maps

it - you can live in an arm-wrestling contest forever, or you can sit down and have discussions about how we can resolve these issues for our residents,” said O’Loughlin.

Now, Amazon has paid for certain street signs deterring their drivers from heading down structurally questionable roads. The company also aids with seasonal cleanups around their two town warehouse loca-

tions and surrounding areas. Porta-potty facilities have been installed along with dumpsters near the entrances and exits of the warehouse locations as well, to ensure drivers do not resort to littering.

These, said O’Loughlin, are just a few examples of how the company has shifted to a “friendly neighbor” attitude towards the town and its representatives.

Complaints, he said, have dwindled over the last year or so, and Amazon remains highly receptive to the criticism.

“When we get a complaint, we send it to Amazon right away. We don’t wait for a meeting, and they’re very responsive,” he said. “I’ve had people with knocked down fences come back to me and they could not believe how quickly Amazon responded.”

## The Friends of Milford Town Library semiannual Book Sale April 28

The Friends of the Milford Town Library will begin their semiannual book sale for members of the Friends only on Friday, April 28, from 4 - 7 p.m. Memberships are \$15 per year and may be paid at the door. The book sale will continue on Saturday, April 29 from 10 a.m.

- 3 p.m.

Thousands of books are available: bestsellers, mysteries, classics, cookbooks, books on history, investing, hobbies, crafts, and children’s books. Audio books, CDs, DVDs, and puzzles are also available. In the adult section, all items are \$1. All

children’s books are 25¢. This is a great chance to gather books for vacation reading, entertaining visiting grandchildren, or to lower the cost of required school assignments. You’ll find recreational and reference materials for both adults and children, textbooks for home schooling,

possibly a favorite out-of-print title you’ve been searching for or a copy of the classic storybook that was lost in a move; all while helping the Friends fund programs, museum passes and materials for the Milford Town Library.

If you have books to donate,

please bring them to the Milford Town Library before the sale. We don’t accept textbooks more than 5 years old or Readers Digest condensed books.

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# American Legion Post receives free car from Imperial

## Vehicle will help transport vets to medical appointments



In February, Imperial Cars donated a vehicle to American Legion Post 85 to help transport veterans to medical appointments. Pictured here are (L) Rich Allain, Commander's Liaison for American Legion Post 85; Mike Penner, Executive General Manager at Imperial Cars; and Rob Lefort, Commander of Post 85. Courtesy photos

By Theresa Knapp

When American Legion Post 85 was in need of a vehicle to transport veterans to medical appointments, Commander's Liaison Rich Allain took to the airwaves of WOON 1240, specifically the radio show of Dave Richard and Gary Smith who often allow him to promote Legion services.

"We have been having trouble getting vets in northern Rhode Island, and the southern [Massachusetts] towns that border Rhode Island, to their medical appointments so I was talking about it on the radio," says Allain. Then, later that day, "All of a sudden, the telephone call comes in from [owner] Kevin Meehan from Imperial

Cars who says 'Hey, we want to donate a vehicle to you guys.'"

In February, Imperial Cars held a ceremony and donated a 2008 Chevy Impala with low mileage to the Legion. They also donated two years of free maintenance.

"The car is like mint, it's clean, and it's beautiful," says Allain. "This is going to help everybody. It's going to help them in Providence too, we can take care of our vets in this area."

Typically, veterans call the Veterans' Administration Medical Center in Providence to arrange a ride to a medical appointment but the demand is incredibly high, says Allain. In addition, after an appoint-

”

"Someone in our office heard the radio program," says Mike Penner, Executive General Manager of Imperial Cars.

"We donated the vehicle because we care about veterans and first responders, and we felt it was the right thing to do."

ment at the VA, vets are often referred to an outside specialist on another day which means they need another ride which creates an additional burden on the transportation system.

"This is the area that the guys have been having a real hard time getting to their appointments, and we're trying to alleviate some of that burden and by getting someone to donate a car,



that's just going to do the trick," says Allain, noting the Legion currently has nine volunteer drivers.

Allain says the Legion is very grateful for the car.

"A big thank you to Kevin Meehan and the crew at Imperial Cars and [service] maintenance, we so appreciate what they did for us in donating the vehicle; and I really want to

thank Rob Lefort who allowed me to take this project and really work with it."

If veterans need a ride to a medical appointment, they should call the American Legion at 401-766-7585 and give their information to the person who answers, then a Legion member will get back to them to arrange the ride.

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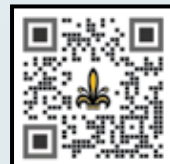


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#### Publisher

Chuck Tashjian

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#### Send Editorial to:

editor@milfordfreepress.com

#### Advertising Sales Manager

Jen Schofield

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#### Creative Design & Layout

Michelle McSherry

Kim Vasseur

Wendy Watkins

**Ad Deadline** is the Wednesday  
8 days prior to publication date.

#### Reader Submission Deadline

is the 25th day of the month  
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date. For example, items should be  
submitted by Feb. 25 to  
be included in the March issue.

Please submit to  
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# Ready, set, grow! Tips from the Greenleaf Garden Club



Greenleaf Garden Club members Nancy Wojick, Patsy Timmons, and Judy Thomas planting the new memorial garden at Draper Park in June 2022. Courtesy photo

By Linda Chuss

As warm weather plays hide-and-seek early in the New England spring season, green thumbs in the region become itchy to work their gardens.

"Having moved here from Oklahoma, I was surprised that spring arrives so late and much of the planting needs to wait until May," said Patsy Timmons, President of the Greenleaf Garden Club in Milford.

The club has been around for 55 years, with one original member still participating. Their 50 members share advise and plants, hold educational programs, and give back to the town.

"Right now, clean your beds, removing the leaves, pruning back the spent perennials, and adding new mulch. Don't do that in the fall because the beneficial insects and other critters

like to use the stalks over winter," Patsy advises.

As for planting, according to Judy Thomas, a board member who also spearheads town beautification, "Place plants where they need to be in terms of shade and sunlight – sun plants need at least six hours of light. I like to plan for continual color throughout the seasons – bulbs from fall plantings, then irises, and day lilies."

Don't till the soil because it brings dormant seeds, including from weeds, to the surface. Instead, Thomas recommends trying a "lasagna garden," which the club did when planting the Purchase Street island. Start with a layer of cardboard on the ground at the site for the planting, layer compost, manure, and wood chips, then cut through the layers and cardboard and



Uplifting blooms along Main Street in the summer of 2022, provided by the Greenleaf Garden Club. Courtesy photo

put your plant into the opening.

Emily Hooper Alston joined the club after moving here from California, impressed by the plantings around town and looking to learn how to garden in this climate.

"To deal with potential droughts, avoid species that need frequent watering. Mulch to preserve moisture. During watering bans, you can use rain barrels and water from dehumidifier buckets." For her vegetables, she conserves water with a drip irrigation hose.

Vegetable gardening, especially in raised beds, has become popular in recent years. Another

trend is using native plants and those that will attract pollinators.

"They like bee balm and native asters," Timmons said. "Hummingbirds love a trumpet flower bush with its long-throated orange blooms," Alston added.

The Greenleaf Garden Club welcomes members of any experience level. New members are paired with a mentor their first year. The club has program meetings from September to April and holds summer field trips. For more information, visit [greenleafgardenclub.org](http://greenleafgardenclub.org) or email [greenleafgardenclub@gmail.com](mailto:greenleafgardenclub@gmail.com).

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# New law may offer financial opportunities



Mark Freeman

## FINANCIAL FOCUS

Your own decisions and actions typically determine your financial strategies. But outside events can affect your choices, too. And that may be the case with the recent passage of the SECURE 2.0 Act.

This piece of legislation covers many areas. But here are some changes that may be of interest to you, depending on your situation:

### If you're a retiree ...

- *Higher age for RMDs* – The

age at which you must take withdrawals — known as required minimum distributions, or RMDs — from your traditional IRA and 401(k) has increased from 72 to 73, effective this year. (If you turned 72 in 2022, but still haven't taken your first RMD, you will need to do so this year.) And in 2033, the RMD age will increase again, to 75. You don't have to wait until these ages before taking withdrawals, but the new age limits may affect your withdrawal decisions.

- *Lower penalties for missed RMDs* – If you don't take at least the RMD for a given year, you could face tax penalties. Previously, this penalty was 50% of the amount you were supposed to have taken but now it's reduced to 25%.

- *New options for qualified charitable distributions* – If you're 70½ or older, you can make a one-time qualified charitable distribution (QCD) of up to \$50,000 to entities that previ-

ously couldn't receive these QCDs, including charitable remainder annuity trusts, charitable remainder unitrusts and charitable gift annuities that meet certain criteria. Because QCDs are typically excluded from your taxable income and could satisfy some or all of your required RMDs, which are otherwise taxable, these expanded opportunities may prove beneficial from a tax standpoint. Consult with your tax advisor to determine if and how QCDs make sense for your situation.

### If you're still working ...

- *Roth contributions to retirement plans* – Starting this year, if you participate in a 401(k) or similar plan, you can take your employer's matching and other contributions on a Roth basis. While these contributions will count as taxable income, they can ultimately be withdrawn, along with any earnings they generate, tax free, provided you meet certain conditions.

### If you're a business owner ...

- *Increased tax credit for starting a retirement plan* – If you have 50 or fewer employees, you can now claim a startup credit covering 100% — up from 50% — of the administrative costs of opening a 401(k) plan, up to \$5,000 for each of the first three years of the plan.

- *Employer contribution credit* – You may now be able to get a tax credit based on employee matching or profit-sharing contributions. This credit is capped at \$1,000 per employee and phases out gradually over five years.

- *Military spouse tax incentive* – If you have 100 or fewer employees who earn at least \$5,000 annually, you can earn a tax credit of up to \$500 for three years if you make military spouses eligible for a retirement plan, such as a 401(k) or SEP IRA. You can receive the credit for the year in which the military spouse is hired, plus the next two taxable years.

These aren't the only provi-

sions in the SECURE 2.0 Act that may be relevant to you, and some parts of the new law go into effect in the future. You may want to contact your financial and tax advisors to see just how you might ultimately be affected by this legislation, and how you could take advantage of it.

Edward Jones, its employees and financial advisors cannot provide tax or legal advice. You should consult your attorney or qualified tax advisor regarding your situation.

If you would like to discuss your personal situation with a financial advisor contact:

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# Eighth Annual Milford Beautification Day, April 22

All Milford residents and groups invited to volunteer to help clean our community

Citizens for Milford is organizing the Eighth Annual Milford Beautification Day, Milford’s annual clean-up event, which enables area residents, organizations, and businesses to work together to beautify our community by picking up trash around town. Milford Beautification Day will be held Saturday, April 22 (rain or shine) from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. All interested citizens are invited to meet with organizers anytime between those hours in the municipal parking lot across from Sacred Heart Church (5 East Main Street) to get supplies, instructions, and assignments.

Families, community groups, churches, local businesses, and teenagers who need to perform service hours are all invited to participate. Younger children are encour-

aged to attend as long as they are accompanied by a supervising adult.

Beautification Day Chairperson Nancy Wojick says, “I hope that many people, young and old, join us to clean up the streets of Milford on April 22. It is a great way to meet others from the community who take pride in their town.” We will once again be joined by the Friends of the Milford Upper Charles Trail and volunteers from the Milford Federal Bank.

Trash bags, gloves, safety vests and water will be provided to all clean-up volunteers.

And we are delighted to announce that once again The Lions Club is going to be cooking hot dogs and hamburgers for all participants! So, we encourage you to return after you are finished to return vests

and gloves and have some delicious lunch.

Questions regarding any of the Beautification Day efforts may be submitted by email to [CitizensforMilford@gmail.com](mailto:CitizensforMilford@gmail.com).

Citizens for Milford are sincerely grateful to our partners Milford Federal Bank, The Friends of the Milford Upper Charles Bike Trail, The Lions Club and The Milford Highway Department and the all of the citizens who take pride in their town and make this such a successful event.

Citizens for Milford is a volunteer, nonpartisan, grassroots organization, which includes a diverse group of citizens who care about our community. Participation in our projects and events is open to everyone in Milford. More information is available on the group’s website [CitizensforMilford.com](http://CitizensforMilford.com).

## BEST BUDDIES

continued from page 1

2023 theme is Mythology.

This year the girls will perform and the boys will dress up in costumes such as Hercules, Zeus, and Percy Jackson; and the school will be decorated with the mythology theme.

Past performances have included guitar riffs, singing, dancing, tricks, basketball dribbles, and Lego® building.

“It’s a pretty exciting day,” says club Co-President Tessa Scrimgeour. “There are some really creative talents.”

Last year, club Vice President Eddie Hough helped out backstage. “It’s kind of fun to be with them before they go on stage, they’re so excited. It’s fun to watch everyone do their thing and show off for a crowd, they don’t get that opportunity anyplace else...and the performances were really awesome!”

The event is the club’s biggest fundraiser of the year. Admission is free but there will be raffle baskets and other opportunities to make donations at the event. Pageant proceeds will help cover costs for activities like pumpkin decorating and gingerbread house kits; and will help defray costs associated with trips to the Providence Bruins, Woo Sox, a movie theater, and more.

Club Buddy Advisor Dean Draycott said he joined the club last year because “I like hanging out with friends and making connections with people.”

Hough also joined last year. “It’s really cool that I’m making an impact and am part of the



reason these kids look forward to events and feel like they have a friend.”

Raval said she enjoys being in the club because “It makes me feel like I’m part of something bigger than myself...I have known a lot of these students for a long time.”

Scrimgeour has been in the club for four years. “My favorite part is being able to have a safe and non-judgmental space for everyone. I love going to the dances every month. They are truly the best people you will ever meet, and you get to express yourself and be surrounded by people with positivity and love.”

Special education teacher Nathan Gaucher, one of the club’s three advisors says, “This club prepares all students for how we want to view the real world, with love, acceptance and kindness; and we hope that it spreads to everyone who comes in contact with our club.”

Organizers are also seeking community sponsors and donations of any kind, including raffle basket items, gift cards, and time and service to help make the pageant a success.

For more information, contact Alexis Forgit at [aforgit@milfordma.com](mailto:aforgit@milfordma.com)

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### BEST BUDDIES SWEETHEART PAGEANT

WHERE: Milford High School Auditorium

WHEN: Friday, April 28

TIME: 5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

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### CONCURSO “BEST BUDDIES SWEETHEART”

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CUANDO: Viernes, 28 de Abril

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# Milford-Franklin Eye Center World-Class Eye Care closer to home

By: Roger M. Kaldawy, M.D.  
Milford Franklin Eye Center

Milford-Franklin Eye Center has been providing eye care to the community for almost 5 decades. Our mission is to deliver state-of-the-art eyecare by physicians, surgeons and optometrists who are predominantly from the community, live in the community and dedicate their careers to serving the community. During the past decades we have performed hundreds of thousands of procedures, many of those are complex and are only available in Boston. We serve everyone in the community, regardless of insurance coverage, race, or disability. Our practice physicians are local and are available daily for emergencies and difficult cases. Other practices do not do the same and often times the provider you see in those practices is not even a physician. If they have physicians, they are only there

sporadically. When it comes to eyecare, ask your friends and neighbors who is the best? Your eyes deserve the best.

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performed hundreds of thousands of surgeries, have lectured nationally and internationally and trained junior physicians and other ophthalmologists from prestigious academic institutions. Choose wisely- Your eyes deserve the best.

With offices located in Milford, Franklin and Millis (Millis Eye Center), and soon a new satellite office in Hopkinton, our own award-winning surgery center in Milford and a support staff of 60, we are proud to be the leading medical and surgical eye care center in the area and one of the major eye care centers in the State. We are also one of the rare ophthalmology practices to own and operate our own surgical center, the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford. No longer need to travel miles and hours to have cataract surgery! Three experienced eye physicians/ surgeons and 5 optometrists are here to deliver comprehensive



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and excellent eye care for the entire family. If your eyecare provider is still asking you to travel far away for eyecare or surgery, call us for a second opinion.

Have you wondered where do other physicians and even ophthalmologists go for their eyecare and surgery? You guessed it! We have been privileged to care for other physicians and we have operated on other ophthalmologists. Those who know best about

EYES  
continued on page 9



## MILFORD - FRANKLIN EYE CENTER



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John F. Hatch, M.D.



Bryan Hong, M.D.



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# Milford Town Library Calendar of Events

80 Spruce Street, Milford • 508-473-2145 • MilfordTownLibrary.org • HOURS: Mon. – Thurs. 9-9 • Fri. 9-6 • Sat. 9-5 • Sun. CLOSED

By Reference Department

## Library Closed on Patriots' Day

The library will be closed on Monday, April 17 in observance of Patriots' Day.

## Tax Forms Available

The federal and state tax forms are available on the Grab & Go Table located at the library entrance, between the double doors. Schedules can be found at [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

The AARP Tax Assistance Program has concluded for the season and more than 170 seniors and low-moderate income individuals were helped. The library is happy to partner with the AARP to make this important service available.

## ESL Drop in Classes

During April, Drop-In ESL Classes will meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the ESL classroom on the lower level. No registration is necessary.

A newly created English Learning Lab, featuring iPads loaded with language tools such as Mango Languages and Transparent Languages is available Monday - Thursday 9:30

a.m. - 8:30 p.m., Friday, 9:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. and Saturday, 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Students can borrow iPads and wireless headphones for self-paced, in-library use of these tools to learn English. Go to the Reference Desk to sign up for 30, 60 or 90-minute sessions. We thank the Milford Rotary for their sponsorship.

## Acrylic Floral Workshop with Libia Goncalves

Painters of all skill levels are invited to attend a step by step acrylic floral painting workshop on Tuesday, April 11 from 7 - 8:30 p.m. Participants will leave with their own finished canvas. This workshop is appropriate for ages 13 and older and a fun time for groups of friends.

A gifted artist, Libia has been featured on MilfordTV and has exhibited her own work at the library and also curated an exhibit of work by her young students. She currently studies art at Worcester State University and is the owner of D'Colorex art studio. Libia recently won a juror's prize for her painting The Great Heron in the 19th Annual College Art Show sponsored by ArtsWorcester.

Materials are \$5 for Friends

members or \$15 for non-members which includes an annual membership. Spots are limited, so please email [reference@milfordtownlibrary.org](mailto:reference@milfordtownlibrary.org) or call 508-473-2145, ext. 219 to sign up.

## Dave Morin Photographs

Local photographer Dave Morin returns with a new exhibit of recent photographs which will be on display near the Information Desk throughout April. A patron favorite, Dave's work features a combination of portraits, and nature photography. Beside his beautiful images, Dave also shares details how he captured his shots.

## Center Book Group

The Center Book Group will meet on Tuesday, April 18 at 10 a.m. at the Milford Senior Center to discuss a book of poems *Call Us What We Carry* by Amanda Gorman.

National Poetry Month is a perfect time to read and savor the work of this young, black poet who read her poem *The Hill We Climb* at President Biden's inauguration. Her work has a musical quality that begs to be read aloud.

To reserve a copy or to learn more about the Center Book Group, please call the Information Desk at 508-473-2145, ext. 219 or email Anne at [aberard@milfordtownlibrary.org](mailto:aberard@milfordtownlibrary.org).

## The Contemporary Book

The Contemporary Book Group will discuss *Ten Thousand Doors of January* by Alix E. Harrow on Wednesday, April 26 at 7 p.m. in the Children's Program Room.

The titular January is January Scaller, a young woman living in 1900s as a ward of a wealthy family. She finds a book in the mansion where she's landed and it opens up new worlds for her. This lyrical novel straddles several literary genres—coming of age, adventure, and fantasy.

To reserve a copy of *The Ten Thousand Doors of January* or for more info, call Shelley at 508-473-2145, ext. 223 or email [ms-gammato@milfordtownlibrary.org](mailto:ms-gammato@milfordtownlibrary.org).

## Cookbook Club

The Cookbook Group will meet not meet in April. If interested in becoming a member or for more information, email the Reference Department at [reference@milfordtownlibrary.org](mailto:reference@milfordtownlibrary.org).

## Let's Get Growing Cannabis

Plant Guy Eric will present a cannabis growing workshop on Saturday, April 22 at 1 p.m. Eric is a cannabis cultivation consultant in central Massachusetts who teaches people how to grow their own medical or recreational marijuana - successfully, affordably, and legally. From

choosing seeds, to daily care, right through the process of harvesting and curing, you will learn all you need to know to begin. This event is 21+. Sponsored by the Milford Cultural Council, a local agency, which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

## Friends of the Library Spring Booksale

The Friends of the Library will hold their spring booksale on Friday, April 28 4 - 7 p.m. (members) and Saturday, April 29 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. for the public. Great deals on books, movies, music, puzzles and more for the whole family can be had. Join other book lovers at this can't miss event.

Friends memberships (\$15 annually) can be purchased or renewed at the door. Those who renew their memberships by June 10 will be entered in a raffle for a raised herb garden. <https://www.milfordtownlibrary.org/friends-library/pages/become-member>

## Coming Soon:

Matt York will perform songs by and tell stories about Johnny Cash, Waylon Jennings, Kris Kristofferson and Willie Nelson on Saturday, May 6 at 1 p.m.

May artist: Nancy Russo  
Look for us at Celebrate Milford on Saturday, May 20.

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# Electronics Recycling Day April 29

The First Congregational Church of Milford is sponsoring an Electronics Recycling Day on Saturday, April 29 from 8 a.m. - noon. The church will ensure that 99% of dropped off items will be reused and recycled.

All computer monitors, computers, parts and accessories, faxes, copiers, printers, scanners and TV's can be recycled. Recycling fees range from \$5 to \$35 per item. Cell phones can be recycled at no charge and will be donated to charities that recycle and reuse them. The recycling vendor will erase and shred all hard drives at no additional cost.

This event is an easy and fun way to dispose of the old electronics in your garage, basement, attic and offices. So start setting them aside now and bring them to the church parking lot on Saturday, April 29. A drive through process will allow those donating to quickly drop off their items where help will be available.

The First Congregational Church Electronics Recycling event is held twice a year during April and September. We very much appreciate the support of those who have previously chosen to responsibly recycle with us and look forward to continuing to offer this recycling opportunity.

Drop off in the church parking lot at 4 Congress Street, Milford. (Opposite Draper Park, next to the Post Office). Please enter the lot from the Church street entrance.

Cash payments only, please. For more information contact Martha at 508-904-4471.



EYES

*continued from page 7*

surgery. This laser procedure is offered locally at the Cataract and Laser Surgery Center of Milford. We have the only fellowship trained pediatric ophthalmologist in the area. We have the only dedicated optical shop offering a boutique style frames and glasses for our precious and unique little eyes. Our vitreoretinal specialists are world- renowned and have written the books on retina eye care. They have also trained other students and fellows in this field.

We are particularly proud of our surgery center, the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford. This facility is in your backyard

and is proud to offer world class cataract surgery closer to home: Here in Milford. Our surgery center passed certification and accreditation by the most rigorous State and National accreditation agencies.

Cataract surgery is all about better precision, more safety, and excellent outcomes. At Milford Franklin Eye Center, Dr. Kaldawy is proud to have been the first surgeon in the area and among the first in Massachusetts to offer bladeless laser assisted cataract surgery and the first surgeon in the greater Boston area to implant the PanOptix and Vivity lens implants. We have trained local and out-of-state surgeons on how to perform cataract surgery. We implant high

quality premium lenses, with correction for distance, near and everything in between. Many cases of astigmatism are no longer a problem. Our percentage of posterior capsule complications and infections is one of the lowest in the Nation. 100% of the surgeries are performed under topical anesthesia, so only drops, no need for shots and no need for stitches.

We are also proud of our 5 optometrists who deliver comprehensive and routine eyecare to our community and for the entire family. They are all accepting new patients and they have a zero-wait time appointments. They are here to help daily, with availability of late and Saturday appointments. All our

optometrists work under the direct supervision and immediate access to our ophthalmologists/specialists.

We are equally proud of our optical shop which is the only local shop to have its own dedicated lab and can cut and finish your glasses while you wait. Our shop is run by an optician with 4 decades of experience.

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For more details, see our ad on page 7.

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Pet Spotlight




Jasada and Gumbo available at The Milford Humane Society. Courtesy photo.


This month the Milford Humane Society is featuring Jasada and Gumbo, who are two young male cats that were surrendered separately but decided to move in together; and they have been roommates ever since.


Jasada is an active Tabby Tux who enjoys interacting with other cats. Gumbo is a black medium haired cat with stunning green eyes who prefers to hang back and nap while his friend wanders.


For more information on Jasada and Gumbo, or the other cats at The Milford Humane Society, please visit <https://www.milfordhumane.org/>



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WHAT'S NEXT?

continued from page 1

Molinari.

Amanda Masotta, also a guidance counselor, knowing some students withdraw from college, said, "With tuition costs so high, more students are forgoing college to prevent wasting money. Or they choose colleges with online classes to more easily work while attending."

Overall, plans for the 310 graduates in 2023 will likely resemble 2022 figures. About 51% pursued a four-year degree, 8% a two-year program, 7% enrolled in career education, 1% signed on with the military, 1% took a gap year, and 31% entered the workforce.

"More students are attending community college, some

to complete general education requirements before transferring to a four-year school," Masotta noted. "Community college is viewed in a positive light and is a smart economic choice."

It can be hard deciding where to attend and what to study. Senior Brianna Gerreiro shared about the importance of a school visit. "When you have an expectation of a college, the reality of visiting in person can be very different," Gelmini noted, "More students are selecting computer science, nursing, and biotech, in part because a well-paying job after graduation is likely."

Students directly entering the workforce after graduation include those who participated in the work-based learning program Milford High introduced two years ago. Counselor Deborah Monteiro finds internships

in the community where upperclassman work in the afternoons. Mornings are for classes, including money management and workforce soft skills. Upon graduation, some stay in the field, while others pursue degrees. Molinari explained, "The aging trade union population needs young people to replace them." Most in demand are electrical, HVAC, construction, and manufacturing positions.

Understanding the challenges of making a decision, Molinari advises: "Stay curious. You have to try something new to know if you'll like it." Masotta adds, "Don't be afraid to change your mind. No one knows what they want in 10 years." Gelmini recommends reaching out to advisors for help and making connections. "And stay positive," he emphasizes.

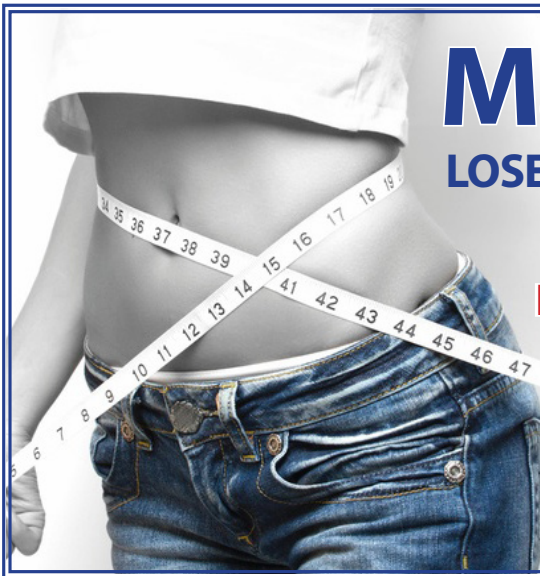
Recent Home Sales

Date	Milford	Amount
03/27/2023	39 1/2 Claflin Street	\$320,000
03/24/2023	95 Prospect Street	\$390,000
03/24/2023	7 Country Club Lane #C	\$416,000
03/22/2023	62 E Main Street	\$374,000
03/17/2023	5 W Pine Street	\$525,000
03/16/2023	86A East Street Ex	\$550,000
03/15/2023	23 Chestnut Street	\$600,000
03/09/2023	15 Temple Street	\$495,000
03/06/2023	56 Bowdoin Drive	\$371,000
03/06/2023	18 Country Club Lane	\$360,000
03/03/2023	20 Sherwood Drive	\$486,000
03/03/2023	8 Clarridge Circle	\$650,000
03/03/2023	5 Whitewood Road	\$750,000
02/28/2023	8 Trinity Drive	\$492,500
02/28/2023	186 Medway Road	\$520,000
02/27/2023	15 Vassar Drive	\$485,000
02/27/2023	94 S Main Street	\$295,500

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Milford Free Press



5 West Pine Street in Milford recently sold for \$525,000. Photo credit www.zillow.com



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Celebrate Milford to be held on May 20

"Celebrate Milford" will take place on Saturday, May 20, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. at Milford Town Park.

The event is a time to celebrate everything that makes Milford our home. Sponsorship, vendor and volunteer registration forms can be found at



www.CelebrateMilford.com.



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FREE PRESS





# Experienced employees welcome aboard new owner of Colonial ChemDry

## Business spotlight

When Michael Halliday decided his next career step would be to run a business, he had two requirements: he wanted it to be in a Massachusetts town, and it had to serve the community. Originally from the western part of the state, Halliday spent most of his adult life in the south, first as a submariner in the Navy, and then as an engineer for the government, working on Navy projects. Returning north would put him near his family. Operating a business that served the community would be a natural extension of what he saw as his role in the military, serving people.

Halliday settled on Colonial ChemDry, in part because of its long presence in Upton; it's located at 152 Milford Street. "A business like this one that's been around for forty years is rooted in the community, and I wanted to build on that," he said. ChemDry is a franchise-based company known for using unique,

specialized cleaning tools and patented agents to clean carpets in the home or business with little water and leaving behind minimal residue. That means rugs dry faster and stay clean longer.

"There's been a lot to learn, but I'm enjoying it. The tinkering engineer in me likes maintaining the equipment, too." Halliday did a lot of research and as part of that, found it reassuring to learn the ingredients in the cleaners are safe for people, the rugs, and the environment. He explains this is possible with ChemDry because the equipment agitates the rug as part of the process, and therefore doesn't need strong chemicals the way other processes might.

Halliday adds, "I'm especially grateful such experienced technicians were already here. From them, I've picked up a lot." Colonial ChemDry employees average over 20 years at the company, having received extensive training from the parent firm, and more importantly,

invaluable experience working for clients. "Over the years, they've seen all kinds of problem spots and know what to do, plus they go the extra mile when needed. They're proud of the results they achieve, and I am too." The employees have warmly welcomed him

on board his new "ship." Says Office Manager Stacy Boulanger, "Everyone here is very happy to be working under Mike.

He offers full support to the staff. Mike makes sure to show his appreciation and makes the workday enjoyable. He's made many positive changes so far."

Customers also appreciate Colonial ChemDry's high degree of expertise. "Most people who bring us in have used us before. They can't believe the kinds of stains we can get out, especially pet odors. And people with allergies, such as dust mites, really like the results, too." He is adding some newer equipment for cleaning area rugs at a humidity-controlled room in his facility that will



Colonial ChemDry's new owner Michael Halliday with the powerhead star tool that sprays a cleaning agent and agitates it to extract dirt from carpets.

allow the company to complete the work in about a week rather than the few weeks as is needed now. The business focuses mostly on residential carpets and area rugs, but will also clean granite and wood and more, at homes as well as businesses.

Halliday also wants to give back to the community. Last fall he brought the company van to the Upton Trunk or Treat event and handed out candy.

"When I was in the service, we'd help with the Special Olympics and build homes for people," he said. "I want to do more like that as part of our contribution to the community."

Colonial ChemDry is located on Route 140 in Upton near the Milford town line. To find out more about our services visit [carpetcleaningcd.com](http://carpetcleaningcd.com) or call 508-529-4115.

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## Annual Town Election

The unofficial results of the Milford Annual Town Election can be found on our Facebook page @FreePressPapers



or at [www.milfordma.gov](http://www.milfordma.gov)



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## Blair House dedicates Veterans Wall of Honor



From left to right: Ron Arpino, Jo-Ann Morgan, Steve Petak, Joe Luffy, and Frank Andreotti. Courtesy photos



On March 25, an exciting and fitting ceremony was held at the Blair House assisted living facility in Milford.

A Veterans Wall of Honor was dedicated as a living memorial for all Veterans but especially for those Veterans who called Blair House their home, current residents and those that have passed on. The Wall will be updated and maintained to include all new veteran residents as well.

The Wall of Honor is a special place to honor and me-

morialize Veterans who served our country both in war time and peace time. The Wall was made possible by the efforts of the Milford Veterans Advisory council and Sgt John W. Powers Post 59 Legion Auxiliary Unit. The Auxiliary was responsible for the funding of the wall which was designed and built by the Advisory Council.

Following the ceremony refreshments were served and attendees were able to socialize and visit with residing veterans.

## Johnson to participate in Tough Ruck



Police Officer Mike Johnson (center left) is presented a check from Mike Shain (center right) of Thanks To Yanks, based in Milford. Also pictured are Thanks To Yanks volunteers Connor, Ellie, Logan, Jacob and Maggie McIsaac. Credit: Gavin McIsaac. Courtesy photo

Mike Johnson, a local police officer and a 9-plus year veteran of the US Army, will be participating in this year's 26.2 mile Massachusetts Tough Ruck.

While deployed to Afghanistan, Officer Johnson's unit suffered multiple losses of life during combat operations and several in his unit were wounded. When his unit returned to Fort Lewis following their deployments, Officer Johnson and his brothers would lose nearly a dozen more members of his battalion to suicide.

Mike realized that his cop-

ing mechanism over the loss of his brothers is pushing himself and his physical limits, using the lives and sacrifices of his brothers as internal motivation to accomplish these feats. In this photo, Milford-based Thanks To Yanks president and founder Mike Shain, is making a donation, from money raised during the Make Change for Veteran's Coin Drive at the Milford elementary schools this past fall, to support Officer Johnson's noble cause of completing the 2023 Tough Ruck.

Thanks To Yanks is a local nonprofit that supports all who

serve and sacrifice for our freedoms. Funds raised by Tough Ruck are used to honor and support the families of fallen service members and first responders.

According to toughruck.org, Tough Ruck Nation is group of military, first responders and civilians whose sole purpose is to Ruck in honor and in memory of our Fallen Service Members, Police, Firefighters and EMTs, while raising funds to support warriors and families of the Fallen. They will march with and carry the names of their Fallen comrades with them.

## Fortune Cookie Club prompts seniors to answer questions silly to profound

*Club one of many at Milford Senior Center*

By Theresa Knapp

On the third Tuesday of every month, local senior citizens gather at the Milford Senior Center to reflect on words of wisdom garnered from fortune cookies.

The current group consists of about 12 to 20 people, both men and women.

"The premise of the group is to engage individuals and, in the process, promote connection and friendship," says Client Service Coordinator

Kim Considine, who leads the group. Considine reads quotes and the group discusses what the quote means to them and how it relates to their lives. Previous quotes have included:

- They say I have changed a lot and I said a lot has changed me.
- If you have to walk on eggshells, practice stillness and don't take the walk.
- Sometimes the most powerful thing you can say is nothing at all.

• Change is inevitable. Growth is optional.

• There will always be someone who can not see your worth. Don't let it be you.

Considine says the group encourages many perspectives and life experiences, and there is no such thing as a wrong answer. If someone does not want to share, they simply say "I pass" and the group moves

**FORTUNE** continued on page 13

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# Milford Girl Scouts celebrate World Thinking Day



Cadette Troop 64720 (pictured left to right), Claire Viera, Mia Santomenna, Kaia Demers, Mila Cales, and Ella Knapp representing France. Courtesy photo.



Brownie Troop 65222 (pictured left to right), Sophie Hulbig, Angelina Martinez, Madison Mirenda, Charlotte Roy, Peyton Arthurs, and Hazel Parente representing Tanzania. Courtesy photo

After a 3-year hiatus due to the pandemic, Milford Girl Scouts hosted the World Thinking Day Festival on February 25, 2023, at the CCC/First Unitarian Universalist Church. This festival is an international friendship day set aside for Girl Scouts to develop awareness about their sisters around the world, explore cultural similarities and differences, and learn about issues that girls and women face. The 2023 World

Thinking Day theme explored what we can learn from the environment and how we can work with nature to create a more peaceful and secure future for girls everywhere. More than 65 Milford Girl Scouts across 13 troops participated in the festival with their leaders and families. Seniors and Ambassadors (9th through 12th grade) hosted activities to demonstrate peace, while Daisies, Brownies, Juniors,

and Cadettes (Kindergarten through 8th grade) represented countries from the five World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts regions, including Africa, Arab, Asia Pacific, Europe, and Western Hemisphere. Troops researched what life is like for girls in their selected country, then created a display, swaps, and food samples for other Girl Scouts to experience. Some troops even learned greetings or wore traditional clothing from

their represented country. In addition, there was a performance by Cadette Troop 64720 for a mime-inspired ballet to represent France. Troop Leader Sandy Knapp said “World Thinking Day will always be my favorite tradition. What better way to explore different cultures than with your sister Girl Scouts!” For more highlights, check out Milford (MA) Girl Scouts on Facebook at [bit.ly/MilfordGS](https://bit.ly/MilfordGS)

## FORTUNE

continued from page 12

on to the next person. Marjorie Kruger of Milford says she attends the group as often as she can. “I would describe the meeting as fun and thought provoking,” says Kruger. “Kim reads a ‘fortune cookie’ like statement and asks us to comment on it. Sometimes the conversation is profound, other times downright funny. We do laugh a lot!” Kruger says she likes every-

thing about the group. “It is an opportunity to feel a part of a community of people my own age. Isolation can be a big problem for seniors and the Senior Center activities really boost morale,” she says, noting the meetings usually begin with socializing. “We have all grown quite fond of each other.” The Fortune Cookie Club meets on the third Tuesday of every month from 11 a.m. to noon. There are also many other unique programs offered by the Senior Center including a

Writer’s Group where group leaders assign homework to write a short blurb or poem about a particular word and how the word relates to their life; a Women’s Group where the leader asks questions, such as “What room in your house best

describes your personality and why?”; and a Men’s Group that has speakers from town positions who talk with the group and answer questions. They also have a Craft Group, Brain Games, Trivia, Book Group, Red Hat Club, Watercolor Painting

Classes, Zentangle, Singing Group, many fitness classes, and much more. Considine says, “There is something for everyone, as the Milford Senior Center is often described as a cruise ship without the water.”

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# Gold Award project focuses on peace and prayer

Peace Garden offers area to relax and de-stress

By Theresa Knapp

Theresa Thomas, 17, is a senior at Milford High School. She is also a member of Milford Girl Scout Troop 11275 and has been a Girl Scout for more than 10 years.

For her Girl Scout Gold Award Project she chose to construct a Prayer Garden for St. Mary of the Assumption Church where she is a parishioner.

“I had decided on this project to help create a healthier way to cope with mental stress from everyday life,” says Thomas. “The main reason I had chosen to pursue my Gold Award was mainly due to the influence of my two brothers and sister who had all received their Eagle and Gold Awards.”

For her project, she coordinated the building of a stone pathway leading to the Peace Garden and a granite bench situated at the feet of the statue of Mother Mary.

“I have been, and still am, very involved in my parish community. I am an altar server and am also part of the Youth Ministry. This church and the relationships I have made in it have been a very important part of my life. Because of this, I wanted to give back to my parish community,” says Thomas.

She also created a pamphlet for the project which includes specific prayers - Prayer to Mother Mary, Prayer for Mental Strength, and Prayer for Healing - and instructions on how to pray: Set aside time to pray,



Girl Scout Theresa Thomas stands near the Prayer Garden she created at St. Mary of the Assumption. As part of her Gold Award Project, Thomas created a peaceful area for prayer and meditation. The project included the addition of a stone pathway and a granite bench.

Courtesy photos

clear your mind, know the purpose of your prayer, find a prayer that relates to you, and recite the prayer.

Thomas said, “I wanted to create a place for people to relax

and de-stress through prayer and meditation. I chose this because throughout my life, prayer has helped me when I have struggled and I believe in prayer.”





The Girl Scout Gold Award is the most prestigious award that Girl Scout Seniors can receive. To earn the award, Girl Scouts must spend a suggested 80 hours to complete the required steps: identifying an issue, investigating it thoroughly, getting help and building a team, creating a plan, presenting a plan, gathering feedback, taking action, and educating and inspiring others.

Source: [www.girlscouts.org](http://www.girlscouts.org)



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# Boston Marathon bombing survivor running 2023 Boston Marathon to support Milford Regional Medical Center

*Michele Blackburn of Uxbridge was standing near bombs in 2013*



**Boston Marathon Bombing Survivor Michele Blackburn is training to run this year's Boston Marathon to fundraise for the lymphedema therapy she received at Milford Regional Rehabilitation & Sports Medicine.** *Courtesy photo*

Michele Blackburn is running this year's Boston Marathon to raise awareness and funding for the lymphedema therapy she received at Milford Regional Rehabilitation & Sports Medicine. The Uxbridge resident's lymphedema diagnosis results from injuries sustained nearly ten years ago and fuels her motivation to run the 2023 marathon on April 17.

On April 15, 2013, Michele Mahoney (now Blackburn) was

standing on Boylston Street waiting to see her best friend cross the Boston Marathon finish line. At 2:49 p.m., a bomb detonated two feet from where Blackburn was standing, causing severe damage to both of her legs. She was told her left foot would likely need to be amputated; however, due to her skilled surgeon and extensive skin grafting, she was able to keep both of her legs.

After two years of grueling physical therapy, Blackburn began living her life again. She got married and had two children and her injuries had little impact on her day-to-day life.

Following the 2013 bombing, the Boston Athletic Association each year offers an invitational entry to survivors who would like to run the marathon themselves or gift to someone to run in their honor. "Over the years, so many people told me I should run the marathon myself, but honestly it was never really on my radar," said Blackburn, who last year gifted her entry to well-known Peloton instructor Jess Sims.

Watching Sims finish the 2022 race was the first time Blackburn returned to the marathon route since the 2013 bombings. "When I saw her cross the finish line, it really inspired me and that's when I first thought, 'I might actually be able to run this myself.'"

It was about that time (Spring 2022), when Blackburn began noticing painful swelling in her legs, particularly in

her left leg. Her primary care physician recommended she see a specialist for lymphedema (the buildup of lymph fluid in the fatty tissues under skin that causes swelling and pain).

Initially, Blackburn had a difficult time locating such a lymphedema specialist until she found physical therapist Eileen Valis-Kerr of Milford Regional Rehabilitation & Sports Medicine in Milford.

Blackburn admitted she was hesitant to begin another regimen of physical therapy and even more hesitant to discuss her goal of running the Boston Marathon with Valis-Kerr. "I was so worried she was going to tell me I wouldn't be able to do it, but instead, she couldn't have been more supportive."

Valis-Kerr worked with Blackburn to develop a six-week plan of physical therapy consisting of exercises and compression and lymphatic massage that over time significantly reduced Blackburn's lymphedema symptoms. Valis-Kerr's prescribed plan allowed Blackburn to move forward with her marathon aspirations.

"The goal of my physical therapy was always to be able to do it on my own, and now it's a life skill for me. It's a tool I have in my tool box that empowers me to live my life. That's what Eileen gave to me," noted Blackburn.

Blackburn selected Milford Regional Medical Center as her charity because of the positive and supportive experience she



**Milford Regional physical therapist Eileen Valis-Kerr (right) speaks to Michele Blackburn about her lymphedema therapy regimen.** *Courtesy photo*

had with Valis-Kerr. "I'm just so grateful and it's my way of saying thank you," she explained.

To make a donation in support of Blackburn, visit [foundation.milfordregional.org](http://foundation.milfordregional.org).

## Youth Poetry Contest

The Youth Services Department at the Milford Town Library is pleased to announce the 2nd Annual National Poetry Month Poetry Contest! The contest opens at 9 a.m. Friday, April 1 and closes 5 p.m. on Sunday, April 30. This contest is open to all Milford School District youth in Grades K-12.

Poems will be judged on

their originality, appeal, writing style, and use of age appropriate spelling and grammar. Each contestant should submit their entry to the Milford Town Library Children's Room desk or email it to [milfordyouth@cwmar.org](mailto:milfordyouth@cwmar.org) with "Poetry" in the subject line. All entries whether delivered in person, or by email must be received by 5 p.m. on

Sunday April 30.

The judging categories will be K-2nd, 3rd-5th, 6th-8th, and 9th-12th, depending on the number of entries received categories may be increased or decreased as needed. One winner from each category will win a \$10 gift card to Target.

Winners will be notified no later than 5 p.m. Saturday, May 13.

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## SCHOOLS

# Milford School Building Highlights

Compiled by Scott Calzolaio

## Districtwide news

DMH Behavioral Health Hotline. The Department of Mental Health has launched a new Behavioral Health Help Line that people can call or text at 833-773-2445. The helpline can help individuals and families navigate the behavioral health system and access treatment, including mobile crisis services. It is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in more than 200 languages. For more information, please see the FAQ. Anyone with questions or concerns about the helpline can email the helpline director at Mio.Tamanaha@mass.gov.

## Milford High School

Congratulations to Haley Jansons and Liam Delaney for being selected for recognition by the Worcester County Superintendents Organization. Liam and Haley have distinguished themselves for their academic achievements, extracurricular achievements, record of service and leadership, and character. Students joined Principal Otlin and Superintendent McIntyre on March 7 for the Worcester County Superintendents Organization annual recognition luncheon.

Another congratulations to Haley Jansons, this time for

being selected as Milford High School's representative for the Jewish American War Veterans program. The "Classmates Today-Neighbors Tomorrow" project, created by the Jewish War Veterans, is a program for Massachusetts high school students that aims to promote diversity, inclusivity, and tolerance.

Prom season is right around the corner. Students in need of a dress or accessories and who would like to visit Jackie's Boutique should contact Mrs. Gray via email at sgray@milfordma.com.

School administrators extend their thanks to Jersey Mike's and the Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation. Representatives from MHS staff and prevocational and vocational programs were invited to Jersey Mike's on March 28 as part of the Month of Giving.

The Flutie Foundation is the charity partner for New England for the Month of Giving. Jersey Mike's provided participants with catered lunch boxes.

*Save the dates:*

4/29/23: Junior Prom

4/28/23: Best Buddies Sweetheart Pageant, 5 - 8 p.m..

5/26/23: Senior Prom

6/4/23: Graduation

## Stacy Middle School

Stacy Middle Schools Minds-Matter Club visited with Megan Burke, owner of Cuernos Cloth-



During February, 30 Stacy Middle School French students traveled to Quebec City, Canada for Winter Carnival. Source: Milford Public Schools

ing Company, on March 23. Cuernos Clothing Company is about helping individuals who struggle with social, emotional, and mental health. The MindsMatter Club is hoping to work to bring Megan's idea of embroidering and make some "stitched patches" as resources for students in the school. The MindsMatter team has also made over 300 calming stones as another resource for May which is mental health awareness month, giving students concrete SEL self-care strategies to add to their toolboxes. Megan Burke was featured on WBZ Change Makers with Lisa Hughes.

*Save the dates:*

PTO Meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month unless otherwise posted. 4/26: MindMatters Read-A-Thon, 4 - 9 p.m.

## Woodland Elementary School (WES)

Mr. Germán Chiriboga, from the UMass Chan Medical School, spoke to select Milford High School Video Production classes on February 14. Chiriboga taught about the storytelling model, including how to conduct storytelling interviews with elementary students. The high school students will then work with Mr. Chiriboga and district social workers Anita Amante and Talita Rodovalho

on a Woodland Elementary School Storytelling Grant received through the Metrowest Health Foundation. The grant will allow newcomer students to share their immigration journeys through video, and grant the high school students the experience in interviewing and filming.

*Save the dates:*

PTO Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. 4/12: Woodland PTO Meeting, 7 p.m.

## Memorial Elementary School (MES)

Memorial students participated in a "March Mathness" Challenge. Students worked to increase their progress on ST Math by 10% during March. Classrooms tracked their progress every Monday. Special thanks to the Milford High School students in Mr. Knapp's classes for making 3D Golden Jijis for use during this event.

Rock Your Socks! MES rocked their socks on March 21, World Down Syndrome Day. Colorful patterns of socks could be seen in and out of classrooms as a fun way of spreading awareness for the worthy cause.

*Save the dates:*

PTO Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. unless otherwise posted.

## Brookside Elementary School (BES)

Brookside is in full March Mathness mode! Students have set goals in ST Math to earn "basketballs" for additional recess time. Special thanks again to the Milford High School students in Mr. Knapp's classes for making 3D Golden Jijis for use during this event.

Classes are earning "Brookside Badges" to encourage positive behavior and class teamwork. Classes receive special events to celebrate when they receive ten badges.

Brookside is getting six module classrooms for the start of the 2023-2024 school year. Preparation work has already begun.

During March, the BVT dental program conducted a class with BES first graders to promote healthy dental hygiene. BES students talk with their older peers about dental hygiene, proper tooth brushing techniques, and general questions about how to care for their oral health.

*Save the dates:*

PTO Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. unless otherwise posted.

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**MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

continued on page 17



SCHOOLS

Milford Schools invited to State House to accept AP Award

Inclusion efforts pay off, and Milford and 25 others receive state-wide recognition

By Scott Calzolaio

Milford High School is one of the 26 schools that are part of this year's Advanced Placement® Day celebration at the Massachusetts State House on April 5. Milford is being awarded an AP Access Award due to its commitment to expanding access to Advanced Placement courses. Equal access to education based on a student's skill level, rather than their financial situation at home has been at the center of these efforts. The ceremony will take place at 9:45 a.m. at the State House.

"We appreciate being recognized by both the state legislature and the College Board for our work around ensuring all students have access to the most rigorous courses Milford Public Schools offers," said Superintendent of Milford School District Kevin McIntyre. "Please know that we still have work to do in this area, but it is a credit to our teachers and administrators to be recognized among a very small number of high schools across the state. Milford High School is also committed to Early College programming,

One Goal college planning support, career readiness programming, and offering a high-quality curriculum that supports all students to meet their future goals."

Massachusetts celebrated its first AP Day in 2019 in an effort to advocate for equal access to Advanced Placement courses.

Students enrolled in AP courses study and complete coursework on a college level. In addition, students can receive college-level credits for the completion of an AP course and passing the subsequent test. Though the courses are free to take in high school, the end-of-year test costs about \$96. This expense has caused AP courses to become more of a privilege for those who could afford it. Through the efforts of communities like Milford, AP courses have been accessible to more and more demographics. By raising and setting aside funds to assist those who need it in order to complete the AP courses, amongst other efforts, Milford and other communities are being recognized for their efforts in the form of the AP Access Award.

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Local Residents named to Simmons University Dean's List

The following local students were named to the 2022 fall semester dean's list at Simmons University in Boston:

- Riley Campbell, Milford
  - Cressida Michaloski, Milford
  - Angie O'Connor, Milford
- To qualify for dean's list

status, undergraduate students must obtain a grade point average of 3.5 or higher, based on 12 or more credit hours of work in classes using the letter grade system. For more about Simmons University, visit [www.simmons.edu/](http://www.simmons.edu/)

MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

continued from page 16

Shining Star Early Childhood Center (SSECC)

In honor of Shining Star's "Imagine it, Make it" theme in February and March, students have been hard at work planning, and collaborating with peers to make creations out of cardboard boxes and other materials. The result of their work will be showcased at the "Invention Convention."

Shining Star Early Childhood Center registration for the 2023-2024 school year is underway. Interested families who reside in Milford should email Dr. Masterson directly at [cmasterson@milfordma.com](mailto:cmasterson@milfordma.com) or contact the main office 408-478-1135 for more infor-

mation and for information on how to secure a registration packet.

Save the dates:  
PTO Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month unless otherwise posted. 4/12: Shining Star PTO, 7 p.m.

Milford Family and Community Network (MFCN)

In addition to registered weekly playgroups, MFCN welcomed children ages 3-7 years old for a Sensory STEAM program. Participants created slime, built and sorted objects, and more.

The MFCN kicked off a new 7-week Wednesday afternoon playgroup from 3:30 to 5 p.m. that will run from March to the end of May. MFCN (Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Network) is excited to introduce a weekly

Lap Babies program for their littlest friends on Mondays in April and May.

Staying local for Spring Break? The MFCN will be holding a Drop-In Playgroup on Tuesday, April 18 from 9 - 11 a.m.

The MFCN CFCE holds weekly, registered playgroups for children ages birth to 5 years old and their parent/caregiver. These facilitator-led playgroups are two hours in length. Session II playgroups will run through May 27. If you are not in a registered playgroup, feel free to call the office to be added to the waitlist.

For more information on MFCN programming, visit: <https://www.milfordpublicschools.com/milfordfcn>, email [familynetwork@milfordma.com](mailto:familynetwork@milfordma.com) or call 508-277-4981. Source: Milford Public Schools



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SPORTS

# MHS Baseball eyes return to postseason



Milford baseball taking part in the first outdoor scrimmage of the year at Town Park. Courtesy photo

By Chris Villani  
Sports Writer

After seeing the win total tick up last season and returning four players with three years of starting experience at the varsity level, the Milford High baseball team is coming into the 2023 season with high expectations.

“We have a lot back this year,” head coach Alex Dion said. “We felt the effects of the COVID year and started a bunch of freshmen the year after that. This is, ideally, the year that all pays off for us.”

Evan Cornelius, Damien Carter, Keith Lee, and Sean

McGee are all back for the Scarlet Hawks as three-year starters and Cornelius is the lone senior among the group.

“They are going to bring some maturity, some competitiveness, and the experience they have gained from the shortened season their first year through last year,” Dion said. “We have seen it already in tryouts, this looks like a group that has been together for three years.”

Pitching figures to be a strength for MHS. Cornelius, who is heading to Rollins College to play baseball next year, is the undisputed ace of the staff. Tyler Caldon started five games for Milford last season on the mound and the St. Michael’s-bound right-hander is going to be back on the hill this spring.

Anthony LaPierre is another experienced arm, having started against powerhouses Franklin and Taunton a season ago. Milford also returns Carter, who has

thrown out of the bullpen his first two years, and Ian Carter, who Dion said has a “plus-fast-ball” for someone his age.

Senior Mason Baldic and Nick Koch, a left-hander who pitched for the Milford Legion last summer, are also expected to see time on the mound.

Milford finished 7-13 a season ago, a step up from where the team was two years ago but well short of the high bar set by the traditionally baseball-crazed town. Dion said Franklin and Taunton are once again strong, but he wants to see Milford back at the top of the Hockomock League this year and poised to make a deep run in the state tournament.

“We have talked a lot about the tradition in Milford, it’s why I love coaching here and why [assistant coach] Mike Reed loves coaching here,” Dion said. “We know the type of player it’s produced in the past, and I see a lot of that in this group.”

Dion described his players as “some old-school Milford kids” who love baseball and love to compete. He is hoping that pays off with a return to the tournament.

“I know what our goals are,” he said. “Hopefully, it’s what they’ve always been here in Milford.”

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SPORTS

# Veteran group leads Milford High softball

*Scarlet Hawks have no Seniors, but plenty of experience*



From left: MHS softball players Jianna Fernandes, Grace Bonina, Olivia Baglione, Maeve Driscoll before a spring practice. Courtesy photo

By Chris Villani  
Sports Writer

It’s unusual for a team without a single senior to be considered “experienced,” but such is the case for the Milford High softball team this spring. The Scarlet Hawks return seven juniors and many of the players on head coach Steve DiVitto’s team have either two or three varsity seasons under their belt. “While we are still young, that song and dance is getting old, we need to show up now,” DiVitto said. “What we can’t do is rest on the fact that we are younger and use that as an excuse, because we have that experience at the varsity level.”

DiVitto said this year’s squad

is particularly athletic and has strong depth across the lineup. Junior Maeve Driscoll returns as the team’s top pitcher and Milford is eyeing left-handed freshman Angelina Bonina as a player who can log some innings as well and give Driscoll a breather. Sophomore Cae Pellegrini is back at the corner infield spots and will hit in the middle of the lineup after earning Hockomock League all star recognition during her freshman year. DiVitto said Pellegrini is looking strong after a preseason arm injury. “We need her in the middle of the lineup to continue the pop that she brought to the

team last year,” he said. Milford will also look to Camille Bonina, a junior, for another big bat. Bonina burst onto the scene as a freshman and DiVitto is hoping for that same level of production this spring. “We want her to take that leap now,” he said. “She is an upperclassman and she is going to be the cleanup hitter in the lineup. With her and Cae in the middle, they need to be our boppers and drive in runs.” Junior Sarah Wengal returns in the outfield and DiVitto said the left-hander is working hard. Another junior, Maddie Burns, will handle the catching duties and sophomore Olivia Baglione

is set to play shortstop. One key to success this spring will be staying healthy. Milford started 3-1 last year before injuries unraveled the season. “We dealt with everything from torn ACLs to arm issues, back issues, you name it and we had it last year,” DiVitto said. “We finally feel like we are healthy and the girls are going to be able to play at a higher level.” DiVitto hopes the combination of good health and experience will help the team compete for a playoff spot in the challenging Hockomock League. “It’s time for us to put our foot on the gas and go,” he said.


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#H23191A • AWD, SPORT TRIM, CPO  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$36,750~~ **\$25,977**

**2019 FORD  
FUSION SE**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$60/WK**

#P15751 • 23/34 CITY/HIGHWAY MPG  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$28,690~~ **\$19,977**

**2020 CHEVY  
TRAVERSE**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$101/WK**

#44762R • AWD, LS TRIM, ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$39,995~~ **\$31,477**

**2022 HYUNDAI  
KONA SUV**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$78/WK**

#H03615 • SEL TRIM, ALLOYS, CPO  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$29,650~~ **\$24,977**

**2021 FORD  
EDGE SEL AWD**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$106/WK**

#P15447RGG • 3K MILES, ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$40,395~~ **\$32,977**

**2021 MERCEDES  
GLC 300**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$159/WK**

#H03231 • 19" ALLOYS, 4MATIC AWD  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$64,670~~ **\$47,977**

**2018 TESLA  
MODEL 3 AWD**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$113/WK**

#H03762PP • SUNROOF, NAV, ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$58,990~~ **\$34,977**

**2022 FORD  
BRONCO 4x4**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$170/WK**

#P15540GG • BIG BEND TRIM, NAV  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$62,995~~ **\$50,977**

**2019 SUBARU  
FORESTER**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$90/WK**

#H03769 • AWD, ALLOYS, SUNROOF  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$32,695~~ **\$28,377**

**2020 HONDA  
ACCORD SPORT**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$81/WK**

#H03725A • LEATHER, TURBO, ALLOYS  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$34,600~~ **\$25,977**

**2022 JEEP  
GLADIATOR**  
AS LOW  
AS  
**\$134/WK**

#D13075 • SPORT TRIM, ALLOYS, V6  
NEW RETAIL PRICE: ~~\$49,450~~ **\$40,977**

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Mike Penner  
General Manager

**SEVEN DAY VEHICLE  
EXCHANGE PROGRAM**

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