

WELCOME TO THE
CHOOSE FRAMINGHAM NEWSLETTER



*Choose Framingham Newsletter
March 31, 2018 - In This Issue:*

**Downtown Framingham, Inc.
Expands Its Reach**

.....

**River's Edge Garden Center Opens
for the 2018 Season**

.....

**Framingham Named Among the
Nation's Best Places to Live**

.....

**Saxonville Mills To Hold Open
Studios in April**

.....

Café Culture in Framingham

.....



**Saxonville Mills To Hold
Open Studios in April**

[Saxonville Mills](#) will hold their first annual Saxonville Mills Open Studios,

**Downtown Framingham, Inc.
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*After One Year on the Job, Executive Director
Courtney Thraen Sees Organization Grow*

public to get a peek at all the amazing things happening there. On April 7th and 8th, more than 15 artisans, artists, and businesses will open their studios to the public from noon to 5:00 pm. The community will tour the Mill complex, talk with artists - including photographers, potters, woodworkers and more - buy original works, and enjoy refreshments. Visitors can look forward to live figure painting, metal and light sculptures, and 3D printing - not to mention specials, discounts, and giveaways.

Companies and nonprofit organizations participating in the Open Studios event include: Past Presence/Sensationwear, Framingham MakerSpace, Damianos Photography and Publishing, Saxonville Studios, The Mill Contemporary Art Studios and Gallery Ever Designworks, Better Standing Company Inc., Acord Editions!, Red 13 Creative, Fireseed Arts, The Potting Shed, Framed In Time, and Friends of Saxonville.

Parking will be available at the central courtyard at 1602 Concord Street and in the Watson Place lot. More information on the event is available at their [Facebook](#) page and at the [Framingham Patch](#) site.

Café Culture in Framingham

Framingham enjoys a thriving café culture - and we know how much residents, visitors, and workers alike enjoy their coffee. This month, [Choose Framingham](#) is highlighting the many ways and places that Framingham residents can enjoy a cup of joe in the city.

[Padaria Brazil](#)

165 Concord Street
Framingham, MA 01702
(508) 872-8698

[Miranda Bread](#)

470 Waverly Street
Framingham, MA 01702
(508) 405-1444

[Sofa Cafe](#)

181 Concord Street
Framingham, MA 01702
(857) 250-2381



Over the past year, [Downtown Framingham, Inc.](#) has expanded its reach by holding 19 community events that have helped to solidify its relationship with downtown businesses. Additionally, the organization created the new Downtown Framingham Business Coalition to help to build relationships between the small businesses that make up the backbone of the neighborhood.

"It's hard for small businesses to get together and we wanted to provide a way for them to do so," said Courtney Thraen, who has served as the organization's executive director for about a year. "We have also begun to provide individual business consultations to help those individuals and to continue to build our relationship with them."

Since last spring, the nonprofit that promotes Downtown Framingham has held six community walking events, including two cultural tours and four community crawls. "Walking around events are really important, as a way for people to see what is interesting and unique about downtown," said Thraen. The tours looked at Framingham's culture and its history, while the crawls focused on social engagement and neighborhood connections. Furthermore, Downtown Framingham, Inc. held the successful Taste of Downtown Framingham event last year, and is gearing up for the 2018 [Taste of Downtown Framingham](#) in April.

So what's next? In addition to the Taste of Downtown Framingham, the organization will be holding its annual [Six Mile Moment](#) on Marathon Monday (April 16th) and is launching a [Public Market](#) series, which will run from April to October. Thraen says they are also planning an engagement strategy called the Lokerville Lookouts, which includes a block party for the Butterworth Park area on September 8th. You can learn more about each of these events at the organization's [Facebook](#) page and its [website](#).

"We've had to be resourceful, but we've learned the power of creativity in expanding our reach with both residents and businesses," said Thraen. "It's great to see so many people engaged with the neighborhood."

River's Edge Garden Center Opens for the 2018 Season

March came in like a lion - and has remained roaring like one for several weeks. But the good news is that Spring has begun, April showers will soon begin, and a Framingham tradition - the opening of [River's Edge Garden Center](#) - continues. River's Edge officially opened for the 2018 spring and summer season on Tuesday, March 27th.

"Even though Framingham is a city, it's really a community," said Jennifer Porter, who owns and operates the garden center. "People come in here, they all know each other. It's a nice place."

B Sister's Cafe

680 Worcester Road
Framingham, MA 01702
(508) 424-0014

The Cyber Café

93 State Street
Framingham, MA 01702
(508) 626-4802

Allegro Coffee Company

575 Worcester Road
Framingham, MA 01701
(508) 628-9525

Hogan Brothers Coffee Roasters

82 Herbert Street
Unit 2
Framingham, MA 01702
(508) 875-4421

Panache Coffee

680 Worcester Road
Ski Market Complex
Route 9 Eastbound
Framingham, MA 01702
(508) 424-0014

Honey Dew Donuts

861 Edgell Road
Framingham, MA 01701
(508) 877-5495

Dunkin Donuts

Seven locations in [Framingham](#)

Starbucks

Three locations in [Framingham](#)

Porter's parents began the business as a passion project. Initially, it was just their home, a house they bought in the 1950s in part because it had a little greenhouse. But both of her parents loved flora and fauna, and soon they began selling plants out of their driveway when Jennifer was a child. Eventually, they put up larger greenhouses and began selling more and more flowers and other plants. Jennifer took over the business several years ago.



"I can remember when the tomatoes were mixed in with the roses! But it's a lot more organized now and we've grown a lot," Porter said. Most of their customers are local residents looking to do their own spring planting but they are open to seeing new faces.

When asked about her favorite plants, Porter mentions the mandavilla vine and the flowering vinca because they are really drought tolerant and plant owners can leave them for a few days without fear that they will die. "But truly, I love them all!" said Porter. "There is nothing I don't like, and there isn't one thing here I haven't planted at some point."

River's Edge is open through July. In April, the center's hours are 9:00 am to 5:30 pm every day; in May and June, they are open from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm on weekdays and 8:00 am to 6:00 pm on weekends; and in July, their hours are again 9:00 am to 5:30 pm daily. Porter reports that they often receive visitors who will eat lunch in their backyard, near the Sudbury River.

You can visit River's Edge Garden Center and learn more about them at their [website](#) or their [Facebook](#) page.

Framingham Named Among the Nation's Best Places to Live

Framingham residents and business owners have another reason to celebrate choosing Framingham. According to [Livability](#), Framingham ranks among the best places to live in America. Livability reports that, "Framingham has all the charm you'd expect from a historic and tight-knit community, with affordable housing options mixed in with more expensive homes."

Why does Framingham often hold a position Livability's Best Places to Live list? No doubt the beautiful conservation land, highly-regarded art institutions, quality education, wide array of businesses and retail offerings, all of which contribute to making Framingham a top-notch city in Massachusetts. In particular, Framingham is considered special for its public parks, conservation land, botanical gardens, and museums. Framingham's Conservation Commission owns and maintains 400 acres of protected land with trails that are perfect for hiking, cross-country skiing, and bird watching.

Livability also highlights Framingham's highly rated public school system. The online platform, [Niche](#), lists Framingham as one "Best School Districts in Massachusetts," one of the "Most Diverse School Districts in Massachusetts," and lastly, one of the "Districts with the Best Teachers in Massachusetts." Additionally, Framingham State University offers students 60 undergraduate and graduate programs in a wide range of different subjects; not to mention, FSU's campus is a picturesque and traditional New England campus with a planetarium, art galleries, and state-of-the-art science laboratories and dorms. Finally, the Livability site also mentions the city's access to high quality health care, especially the MetroWest Medical Center.

As a newly designated city, Framingham will surely find itself on more Best Places to Live lists in the future.

Framingham EDIC

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The Framingham Economic Development and Industrial Corporation (EDIC) was established in 1995 to stimulate economic development and expand employment opportunities in the Town of Framingham in accordance with the town's approved economic development plans.