

# Florence

## HEIGHTS

178 Florence Road • Florence, MA 01062 • (413) 584-4030 Option #5

**March 2026**

### Your Team

Property Manager:

Jessica Sastre

PmMgr4@NorthamptonHousing.Org

Jessica is On Site Mondays,  
Wednesdays & Fridays

Call the office for all work orders.

### Resident Service Coordinator

Danielle McColgan

413-341-5672

Meets by appointment.

### AFTER HOURS

If you have an after-hours  
maintenance emergency, please call  
413-584-4030 and follow the prompt  
to PRESS 0. This will connect you to  
our on-call service technician.



### World-Changing Women

In honor of Women's History Month  
in March, consider the words of  
abolitionist Harriet Tubman: "Every great  
dream begins with a dreamer. Always  
remember, you have within you the  
strength, the patience and the passion  
to reach for the stars, to change  
the world."



### Simple Pleasures

"Some old-fashioned things like  
fresh air and sunshine are hard to  
beat." —Laura Ingalls Wilder

### Welcoming Spring

The vernal equinox, which marks  
the beginning of spring in the Northern  
Hemisphere, occurs on March 20. On  
this day, the sun is directly over the  
equator, so day and night are of  
equal length.

### Turn Around, Bright Eyes

It's a total eclipse of the moon on  
March 3, starting at about 6 a.m. EST.

### Spring Cleaning Science

Level up the season's cleaning  
with these science-backed tips:

*Work smarter, not harder.*

Princeton University researchers  
studied brain scans of study  
participants and found that visual  
clutter reduced attention and cognitive  
processing performance. Stay focused  
on tidying by setting a timer for as little  
as five minutes per day to make the  
chore a brain-boosting no-brainer.

*Stop and smell the suds.* Florida  
State University researchers studied  
dishwashers who worked mindfully,  
finding that participants who paid  
attention to soap scent, water  
temperature and dish texture  
experienced a 27% decrease in  
nervousness and a 25% increase in  
mental inspiration.



### Longevity Coaching

In this rising wellness trend,  
longevity coaches advise folks of all  
ages how to lead longer, healthier  
lives using a variety of tools, including  
genetic testing, goal setting and  
lifestyle change suggestions. Make  
sure, as always, to check in with your  
doctor to see what's right for you.

### Lion to Lamb

The common March maxim "March  
comes in like a lion and leaves like a  
lamb" has a double meaning. The  
month begins with Leo, the lion  
constellation, rising in the east, and  
ends with Aries, the ram or lamb,  
setting in the west. It also conveniently  
describes the tempestuous shift from  
winter to a usually milder springtime.

## Declutter and Donate

Spring cleaning this season? Experts recommend thoroughly decluttering before cleaning to improve mood and efficiency. Start your donation pile with more obvious items and work your way up to the clutter you've been clinging to with these suggestions.

### *Old bedding and pet supplies.*

Local animal shelters often accept bedsheets, old blankets, towels and wash cloths, as well as pet-specific goods like toys and food.

*Unused or outgrown kid and baby gear.* Day cares and preschools near you may accept donations of toys, clothes, cribs and baby items such as high chairs, strollers and play gyms.

*Digital devices.* Several nonprofits accept donations of old cell phones, chargers, tablets, laptops and gaming equipment to make sure underserved populations have the digital access and resources they need to thrive in today's modern world.

*Worn and torn fabrics.* Planet Aid accepts clean clothing and bedding that other donation centers won't, including sleeping bags and torn and stained items, so long as the items are dry and clean. The organization has more than 10,000 bins located throughout the country for convenient drop-off.

*The "good" stuff.* Now, it's time to re-home the items in good condition that lay unused in your home. Traditional charity thrift stores like Goodwill and Salvation Army generally accept donations of clothing, books, shoes, toys, housewares and furniture. If you're not able to deliver items to the store, many charities offer to pick up your labeled donations from outside your home at a pre-scheduled time, using your old goods to fund their worthy programs and help the community.



## Thrifty Thirties

Consider these 30-themed personal finance pro tips to work toward greater financial peace.

*Shopping.* If impulse buys blow your budget, consider trying the 30/30 rule from the documentary stars and authors known as "The Minimalists." According to their guidance, if it costs more than \$30, try waiting 30 hours before purchasing. For items over \$100, wait 30 days. Author Joshua Fields Millburn describes this approach as being about deliberation, not deprivation: "This extra time helps me assess whether or not this new

thing will add value to my life."

*Spending.* Do you know how much money you're spending where? Many experts recommend spending no more than 30% of your income on flexible "wants" like entertainment and dining out, as opposed to static need-based costs, such as housing, groceries and health care. Spend 30 days tracking how much of your money goes to wants. If, after this time period, want-based expenses exceeded 30% of your total income, plan on cutting back the next month. Use the saved difference to pay down debts by highest interest first (like credit cards) or add to your emergency fund.

*Saving.* Create a separate savings account and set up automated transfers from your checking to savings once a month. You don't need to set aside a huge amount: as little as \$30 per month adds up fast.

## A Rainbow of Natural Wonders

Chase the rainbow to these far-flung destinations, where you'll find colorful natural treasures.

*Rainbow spring.* In Yellowstone National Park, Old Faithful may get a lot of the credit, but Grand Prismatic Spring is a rainbow-colored pool that draws plenty of the park's visitors. About the size of a football field, the thermal pool is deep blue in the center and ringed by bands of green, yellow and orange. Bacteria that crave the spring's hot water, which can climb to over 180 F, give Grand Prismatic Spring its vibrant colors.

*Rainbow trees.* Take a drive down Hana Highway in Maui, and you can find rainbows in the trees. Along the roadside, rainbow eucalyptus, also known as painted gum trees, catch eyes with their otherworldly bark, which looks like it's been painted with shades of neon pink, yellow and

green. The tree is native to Southeast Asia but was transplanted in Hawaii. These colorful eucalyptus trees grow an average of 6 feet per year.

*Rainbow mountain.* Vinicunca, also known as Rainbow Mountain, in Cusco, Peru, bears colorful stripes of red, yellow-green and teal, thanks to 14 different minerals. Prior to 2015 or so, the bright peak looked like any other mountain because its colors were covered by ice and snow. Once the snow melted away to reveal Vinicunca's gorgeous stripes, tourism—which is still heavily regulated—skyrocketed.





### The Happiest Place on Planet Earth

Picture your happy place in honor of the International Day of Happiness on March 20. Now, picture the eight-time winner of happiest country in the world: a nation partly located in the Arctic Circle where neighborhoods go days without sunlight. So, what is Finland doing right?

**Sisu.** Finns value “sisu,” a cultural concept that embodies perseverance and competence in the face of adversity and taking risks even when failure seems imminent. Of course, while the word “sisu” is Finnish, the underlying concept transcends national boundaries, and anyone can benefit from values of grit, willpower and resilience.

**Sauna.** There are 5.6 million people and 3.3 million saunas in Finland. Most Finns use the sauna at least once a week, making sure to shower before entering, and staying inside the sauna for multiple short periods of about 10 minutes, punctuated by cooling breaks with a cold shower or even a roll in the snow!

**Scenery.** Snow or shine, Finns prioritize being outside. During winter months, many people still bike to work, and some parents even trade strollers for sleds to take their kids to school.

**International Day of Happiness is March 20.**

### Cheesy Irish Soda Bread

Irish soda bread gets a boost of savory flavor from cheddar cheese.

#### Ingredients:

- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons caraway seeds
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon ground red pepper
- 1/2 cup shredded Irish cheddar cheese, or any sharp cheddar cheese
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/4 cups buttermilk

#### Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 F. In a large bowl, mix flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, salt and seasonings. Stir in cheese. Set aside.

In a medium bowl, mix eggs and buttermilk. Add to dry ingredients and stir until well blended. Spread batter into a lightly greased 9-inch round cake pan.

Bake 30 to 40 minutes or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove bread from pan and let cool completely on wire rack.

*Find more recipes at McCormick.com.*



### Safe Passage

Resources, support, counseling, and confidential shelter to survivors of domestic violence.

76 Carlon Dr., Northampton, MA

### Northampton Recovery Center

57 Armory St., Northampton, MA  
(413) 584-5911

- Résumé building
- Job hunting
- Filling out applications
- Interview preparation
- MassHealth and SNAP benefits
- Housing information and advocacy
- Detox substance use programs

### Division of Community Care

Monday through Friday  
8:30AM-4:30PM  
(877) DCC-0413

### Poison Prevention for Pets

National Poison Prevention Week is observed during the third full week of March, and it’s a good time of year to review some common pet toxins.

**Foods.** The most common foods that are dangerous for dogs and cats are chocolate (or any caffeinated substance), alcohol, onions and garlic, grapes and raisins, yeast dough, and macadamia nuts. If you’re unsure whether a food is safe for your pets, just don’t give it to them.

**Medications.** Painkillers (especially acetaminophen and NSAIDs), antidepressants, and vitamin supplements are all extremely toxic to pets. Keep all medications secured safely so your pet can’t reach them.

**Plants.** Lilies, tulips, amaryllis and mums are all popular houseplants that are harmful to pets. Check the list of toxic plants at [www.ASPCA.org](http://www.ASPCA.org) before bringing a houseplant into your home.

**Household chemicals.** Cleaning supplies, pesticides and similar substances should always be safely locked away.

# SUDOKU

Sudoku requires no arithmetic skills.

The object of the game is to fill all the blank squares with the correct numbers.

Each row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.

Each column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order.

Each 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9.

Solution

3	4	6	7	2	6	8	1	5
9	5	7	8	1	4	3	6	2
2	1	8	3	5	6	9	7	4
8	7	5	1	6	2	7	4	3
7	8	4	2	7	6	5	1	3
6	2	1	5	8	3	4	9	7
8	5	7	1	9	4	2	3	6
9	7	6	3	4	2	1	8	5
4	3	5	8	6	1	9	7	2
1	8	2	7	5	9	3	6	4

		2	7		9			4
						9		
9			3			1	8	
8	5		1				3	
6		1	5		3			
					6			8
		9			5		2	
	6	3					5	9
					7	6		

