

What To Do About Eagle Dam?

CONTRIBUTED BY JOE STEWART

This is the first in a three-part series about Wrentham's dams.

Many people might not be aware there's a push to remove dams across the state, and even across the country. Unless, of course, they live on or near a body of water formed by a dam. One such dam in the state's crosshairs is Wrentham's aging Eagle Dam, which forms the oasis known as Eagle Pond.

Eagle Pond connects to the northeast corner of Lake Pearl, and to Eagle Brook, which winds through Norfolk and the Charles River watershed. Eagle Dam, which was last rebuilt in 1968, dates back to at least the 1800s.

Environmental activists, and in particular the Charles River Watershed Association (CRWA), contend that most dams have outlived their original purpose and should be removed to restore a river's natural flow and increase biodiversity by reconnecting river habitats. Other research, however, asserts that dams help protect the environment by capturing sediment that could



Eagle Dam in early spring. To the rear is Route 140.

contain harmful substances. And then, of course, there's the quality-of-life issue for abutters and other residents who enjoy the lakes and ponds formed by dams.

But in the eyes of the state, Eagle Dam is a failing dam. For years, both Wrentham and the Massachusetts Department of Dams have been aware of its deteriorating condition and the risks that a failure pose. In particular, the high traffic corridor between Wrentham and Franklin, Franklin Street (state Route 140), is immediately down-

stream from the dam. The culvert through which Eagle Brook flows also supports water and gas mains--more than 40% of Wrentham's water flows through the water main.

Brian Anatoli, Wrentham's director of public works, noted that if a substantial breach of the dam were to take place, a potential outcome could be the immediate closure of Route 140 until the water receded and the roadway was repaired. Addi-

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'Old Tyme Day' Set for June 10

Fireworks Planned for the Evening

BY GRACE ALLEN

The unofficial kick-off to summer in Norfolk is returning this month and will be renamed this year in memory of its founder, Scott Dittrich.

The 31st annual Community Day will be held on Saturday, June 10 at the Holmes bus complex on Myrtle Street in Norfolk, starting at 11 a.m. And while most of the details surrounding the event remain the same as in previous years, with a couple of exceptions, this year the event will be called Old Tyme Day in honor of Dittrich, who passed away on March 21 at the age of 77.

Scott Dittrich was a Norfolk Lion for more than thirty years, and many of his creative ideas live on in events that continue to this day. He was, according to a Lions press release, "a man of Big Ideas, actions to back them up, and an uncanny ability to engage others and bring out their best towards serving the community and helping those who were less fortunate."

In memory of Dittrich, Old Tyme Day will culminate with



Community Day has been renamed Old Tyme Day this year in memory of Norfolk Lions' Scott Dittrich.

fireworks at the Freeman Kennedy School on Boardman Street in Norfolk. Sponsored by Norfolk Recreation, the fireworks will start at 8:45 p.m. The rain date for the fireworks will be Sunday, June 11.

Old Tyme Day Events

Admission to Old Tyme Day is free, but there's a suggested donation of \$5 for parking.

OLD TYME DAY

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tionally, homes in Wrentham and Norfolk downstream from Eagle Dam along Eagle Brook might experience flooding, depending upon property elevations.

Both outcomes would impose significant costs on many: emergency repairs to the highway and culvert, emergency repairs to the water and gas mains, emergency repairs to homes and property, much of which is unlikely to be covered by homeowners' insurance.

The town of Wrentham is responsible for Eagle Dam. Along with the DPW, the town must periodically inspect the dam and perform ongoing maintenance. The Commonwealth provides guidance and oversight and, in some cases, partial funding to offset the significant capital costs relating to public infrastructure. State funding, however, prioritizes the largest dams at the greatest risk. Eagle Dam, despite its problems, has been deemed a "low hazard" dam by the state.

What do the experts say?

Over the years, Wrentham



Wrentham's Eagle Pond. Eagle Dam is in the upper right-hand corner.



Eagle Pond is in the foreground, with Lake Pearl in the background.



A view of Red Dam, which creates Lake Pearl. Eagle Dam is downstream of Red Dam.

has tapped multiple experts to provide advice on how to address Eagle Dam. They include Pare Corporation, an engineering and planning services firm with expertise in wetlands, streams, and dams; Weston and Sampson, an engineering consulting firm with deep expertise in public water supply (e.g., wells, water mains, storage, and distribution systems); the Charles River Watershed Association, which has developed modeling and simulation applications; and ESS Group, a water resource management consultancy now owned by TRC Companies.

Likewise, residents living near Eagle Dam have hired Creative Land and Water Engineering (CLAWE), an engineering consultancy providing expertise in hydrology and hydraulics, and in hydrogeology particularly in wetlands, rivers, and wildlife habitats.

In 2012, Pare Corporation performed a dam inspection and rated Eagle Dam as a low hazard dam in poor condition. In its report, Pare recommended that Wrentham either breach or repair the dam and noted that breaching the dam would provide an opportunity to restore more natural stream conditions.

More recently, the town hired ESS Group to conduct a technical feasibility study focused on removing the dam and they delivered their report in April 2021. ESS concluded that there were no major technical barriers to dam breaching or removal and recommended that planning begin immediately, highlighting that the dam's deteriorating condition might lead to enforcement

actions and specifically noting that continuing to do nothing was not a responsible option.

Similarly, the Charles River Watershed Association was hired to provide consulting around Eagle Dam options in part due to their extensive computer modeling of the Charles River watershed. And Weston and Sampson was hired to provide expert advice and project oversight across projects including town water supply (repair and replacement of Town Well #3 and exploration of potential well sites in West Wrentham) and evaluation of Eagle Dam options.

What are the options and the associated costs?

According to Anatoli, Wrentham's DPW head, there are really only two options in regard to Eagle Dam, despite its "low-hazard" designation: repair or breach. Although the town could continue to defer action, Anatoli notes that the risk of failure will only increase as will Wrentham's liability.

Repairing the dam is the most intensive option, said Anatoli, requiring removal of the trees and all other vegetation on and in the dam wall and spillway, as well as rebuilding the spillway and the dam wall itself. Breaching is less intensive, requiring controlled water release, breaching of the dam wall, and then restoration of the habitat.

Cost estimates provided to the town have ranged from \$680K to breach the dam, to as high as \$2 million to repair it.

Repairing the dam would likely change the landscape in

the area, asserts Robert Kearns of the CRWA. Most of the trees and vegetation in and on the dam will be removed, along with the trees that currently obscure Eagle Dam from Route 140. Kearns said the area around the dam would look much like Red Dam, the dam forming Lake Pearl: a sparse earthen mound.

What's the impact on the town wells?

Town Wells 2 and 3 (and the new Well 3 which will replace the existing Well 3) are sited near Eagle Dam and today provide 40% of Wrentham's water. In an analysis performed by CLAWE, the group hired by abutters to the pond, they noted that the pond formed by Eagle Dam provides 8 feet of surface water that supports production from Well 3 (both the existing and new wells) and enhances the drought tolerance of Well 2. Those 8 feet of surface water effectively form a 19-million-gallon storage tank that helps recharge the ground water from which Wells 2 and 3 draw.

Weston and Sampson noted that there is not a 1:1 ratio between surface water level and aquifer capacity owing to permeability of the soils among other factors, but there is agreement that the pond serves as a buffer; it's more a matter of the degree to which the Eagle Pond protects well capacity and at what cost for that protection.

What are the environmental impacts of repairing or removing the dam?

The Commonwealth has designated Eagle Pond and surrounding areas as a priority habitat site to protect threatened species, including a small freshwater minnow, the bridle shiner. CLAWE noted that this priority habitat includes half a dozen identified vernal pools, at least one of which would likely drain if the dam were to be breached or removed, although new vernal pools could form in the remaining water depressions. Vernal pools serve as essential breeding

habitats for amphibians such as salamanders, a federally designated threatened species. In Massachusetts, vernal pools are technically protected under the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, if they meet the definition of "wetlands" under the law.

As noted, potential flooding of the area if Eagle Dam breaches is just one of the reasons some experts point to removal. However, recent analysis disputes that claim. CRWA and Weston & Sampson conducted computer modeling using CRWA's Charles River Flood Model, which models 190 river-miles including 108 dams and 450 bridges/culverts. Andrew Walker, the Weston & Sampson hydrologist who worked on the analysis, said after updating the model with measurements from Eagle Dam and Eagle Brook, they performed a total of 20 simulations of 24-hour storms using two climate models and two conditions: Eagle Dam repaired and Eagle Dam removed.

The analysis focused on flooding impacts for 4 miles, from Lake Pearl to Main Street in Norfolk. And the outcome of the analysis? Less than 1/3 of an inch difference between keeping the dam and removing it, including no increases in flooding risks for any residences near Eagle Brook. Walker did note that consultation is underway with MassDOT to review their findings as they relate to the bridge at Franklin Street.

What about the abutters and other residents who use Eagle Pond?

Residents on or near Eagle Pond, and visitors to the pond to fish, highlight the pond's tranquility and stunning wildlife. A recent visit to the pond resulted in several bald eagle and heron sightings. Bob Pellet, an abutter, noted that for more than 30 years the pond has provided a safe and secure habitat for a variety of fish, birds, and wildlife.

A nearby resident, Joel D'Errico, has become a vocal

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critic of the state's drive to remove dams, especially Eagle Dam, noting quality of life for residents and visitors should be taken into account before any decision is made. Eagle Pond, he says, will be reduced to a slow-moving, small stream if the dam is removed. He takes issue with the CRWA's assertion that dams harm the health of the Charles River and the animals and plants that rely on it. Dams, according to the CRWA, impact water quality, impede fish passage and encourage the growth of invasive species.

"Why do some fish have priority over other fish, or over herons and bald eagles?" asked D'Errico. "There's trout and pickerel in Eagle Pond, supper for the herons and bald eagles. Isn't this all part of the ecosystem too? The dam has been here for hundreds of years."

Both D'Errico and Pellet expressed frustration with town officials, noting that grant money is available to repair Eagle Dam through the Dam and Seawall

Repair Grant Program. However, William Hinkley from the Commonwealth's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs pointed out that the grant program prioritizes "high hazard" or "significant hazard" dams in poor or unsafe conditions.

How can residents learn more about the Eagle Dam issue?

The DPW's Anatoli noted that the town needs to come to a decision soon on what to do in regard to Eagle Dam: repair, breach, or defer a decision. Costs are escalating and the dam will continue to deteriorate. Residents should make their voices heard now.

To educate residents and to learn their thoughts, the town has sponsored a series of walks at Eagle Dam. The town has also conducted several Zoom conferences (May 1 conference available at <https://youtu.be/ePuGz216XY8>) and has surveyed residents through an online survey (survey available at bit.ly/eagledam).

For more information about the town's efforts, visit Wrentham.gov and search for Eagle Dam.

Nicole Bottomley Tapped as KP High School's Next Principal

Nicole Bottomley has been named as the next King Philip Regional High School principal.

She will assume her new role on July 1 following the departure of Principal Dr. Lisa Mobley. Mobley, who has served the district for the past 15 years, has accepted the role of Executive Director of the Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School in Marlborough.

"We are extremely pleased to welcome Nicole to the King Philip Regional High School as we bid Principal Mobley a bittersweet farewell," Superintendent Paul Zinni said in a statement. "Over the years, Dr. Mobley has worked to develop programs that support our students who experience academic and social-emotional obstacles, and I am confident that with her experience Nicole will continue to build upon the work that Dr. Mobley began."

Bottomley currently serves as the principal of Holliston



Nicole Bottomley has been chosen as the next King Philip Regional High School principal.
(Photo Courtesy King Philip Regional School District)

High School. In this role, she led efforts to reimagine the high school experience for students, focusing on 21st-century skills, student agency and authentic learning experiences for all. Bottomley is also credited with

creating the district's Vision of a Graduate and Global Citizen Endorsement.

During the 2022-23 school year, she has spearheaded Cognitive Behavioral Training with the Beck Institute for all school counselors and collaborated on literacy through the implementation of bi-weekly classroom observations, data analysis and data talks with building leaders.

Prior to serving as the principal for the past 10 years, Bottomley also worked as an assistant principal, high school history teacher, mental health counselor and has held several positions relating to the emergency medical care field.

She holds a master's degree in mental health counseling from the University of Massachusetts Boston and a bachelor's degree in psychology from Brandeis

KP PRINCIPAL

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The College Affordability Talk

I wholeheartedly believe that a college education can change lives - but it is also an expensive proposition. Families should begin the process by having the "College Affordability Talk". Parents and their children should sit down early in the process and have a family budget conversation with the goal of understanding the true affordability of college. The, when the acceptance and financial aid packages arrive in the spring, there will be no question which colleges are the right financial fit for the family. Most students like to be a part of the affordability process so that they can ultimately manage their own expectations.

4 College Affordability Talk Discussion Topics:

1. How much does college really cost?

This is a "must have" discussion. Most families do not understand the expense of college. Using Massachusetts colleges as an example, the annual full-time tuition AND housing/dining costs for a 2-year state community college is \$12K, a 4-year state university ranges from 23k- \$33K, and a 4-year private institution can cost as much as 85K. However, keep in mind, most students do not pay the full sticker price- merit schol-

arships and need based financial aid will decrease the bottom line. A private college could easily end up being less expensive than a 4-year state university due to the merit/financial aid package a student receives. So, don't rule out private schools.

The following 2 tools are useful when predicting costs: The college's NPC (net price calculator) located on the college's website. The NPC provides a cost estimate based on the specific student's academic stats and family finances. Additionally, the Federal Student Aid Estimator located on the studentaid.gov website provides an early estimate of the Expected Family Contribution (EFC) and eligibility for federal student aid.

2. How important is it to graduate on time?

It is VERY important. According to a study done at the University of Texas-Austin, students who took out loans and graduated in 4 years owed on average 40% less than students who graduated in 6 years. College is the perfect time for students to explore their interests, but it is wise to consider possible

majors before leaving for college. Taking the time to assess academic interests, aptitudes, and career aspirations can provide the student with a road map of where to begin their journey and eliminate the number of times a student changes their major.

3. How much should a family borrow for college?

The family's number one goal should be to keep debt to a manageable level. Many financial experts suggest student loans should not exceed the students first year's salary, postgraduate, using \$50,000 as the average salary. A helpful exercise is to develop a budget based on a \$50K salary and see what the student can afford living on their own while having some fun too. Managing parent debt is vital too. According to financial experts the same rule applies- parents should not borrow more than their annual adjusted gross income for all their children in total (and less if the parents are close to re-



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

tirement age). Useful tool: The loan simulator on studentaid.gov.

4. How about attending Community College first?

This is a perfect option to reduce the 4-year cost of college. Using Massachusetts as an example, the state universities have articulation agreements with 15 approved community colleges (CC). If a student meets the requirements, they can transfer from an approved CC to one of the state universities, as a junior, and still graduate in 4 years. The state also has agreements with a dozen or so private colleges. Stu-

dents can live vibrant lives as a CC student and transfer along with many of their classmates to a 4-year state institution.

Remember that finding the right fit college is where the students' academic, social, AND financial fit provide an environment where the student will flourish!

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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camera, self-taping and rehearsal techniques.

The Dean Summer Arts Institute will run from July 30 to August 6, 2023. For more information, visit www.dean.edu/summerarts.

The Sports Broadcasting and Forensics Pre-College Summer Programs offer a great introduction to college life. Students will earn college credit for completing the program while they learn from experts in the field and get advice on the college admissions process from a Dean College admissions counselor during a free one-on-one consultation. Students will also participate in unique real-world experiences and field trips embedded into each program, with behind-the-scenes access to program-specific venues such as Gillette Stadium

and the New England Patriots training camp. Additional experiences may include trips to a science lab and police station for the Forensics program and a baseball stadium for the Sports Broadcasting program, as well as the opportunity to call live play-by-play and host talk show programs.

Two one-week sessions of each pre-college summer program will be offered. The first session will run from July 23-28, 2023, and the second session will run from July 30-August 4, 2023. Free virtual information sessions will be held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 from 5:30 to 6:30 p.m. and Wednesday, May 3, 2023, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m.

For more information, visit www.dean.edu/summer.



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Dean College Holds 157th Commencement Exercises on May 6

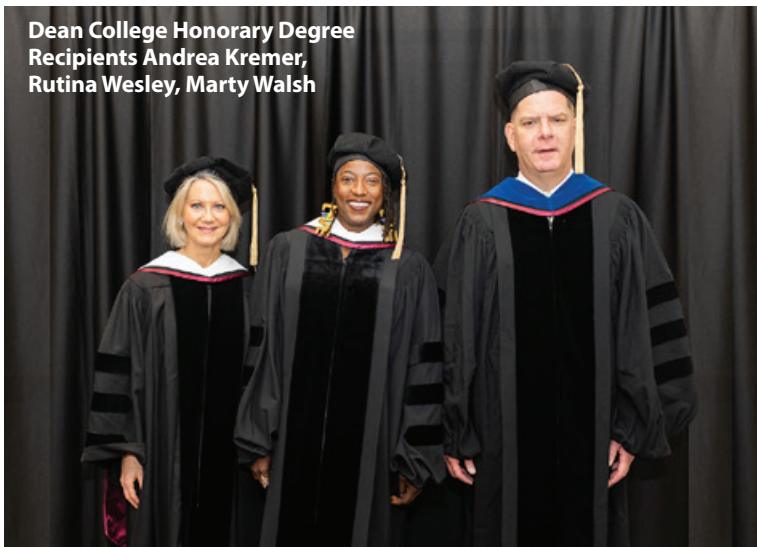


Dean College held its 157th Commencement Exercises honoring the Class of 2023 on Saturday, May 6, 2023 at the Dean College campus in Franklin, MA.

Approximately 270 graduates representing 26 states and four countries received their degrees, with many family members and friends in attendance. The ceremony was held outside on the front lawn of Dean Hall, along Awpie Way, with livestream options for those unable to attend.

The commencement address was provided by Andrea Kremer, the multi-Emmy Award winning sports journalist known for her roles as analyst on Amazon Prime's Thursday Night Football, chief correspondent for the NFL Network, correspondent for HBO Real Sports, and co-host on CBS Sports Network. Kremer asked graduates to reflect on the people that were most meaningful on their path to commencement, explaining that it takes a village to get where they are today.

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OLD TYME DAY

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In addition to the evening fireworks, events and displays at Old Tyme Day will include a children's art contest, touch-a-truck, Tom Antonellis' bird houses, and the golf ball drop 50/50 raffle. Returning and new amusements

include a sports obstacle course and a mega slide.

The black top entertainment will include several local groups, including Inspiration Performing Troupe and Exhale Dance.

New this year, Old Tyme Day will kick off with the first annual Norfolk Lions Carriage, Bike and Wagon Parade for children of all ages. Children and their families

can decorate carriages, wagons, bikes, or trikes, and every entry will receive an award.

This year's schedule of events on the main stage: carriage, bike, and wagon parade (11 to 11:30 a.m.); Inspiration Performing Troupe (11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.); Exhale A School of Dance (12:30 to 1:30 p.m.); musical chairs & balloon toss for kids (1:30 to 2:30 p.m.); and pie eating contest and golf ball drop (2:30 p.m.).

Other activities will take place throughout the complex, including Jeri's Balloons (11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.); an animal petting zoo (noon to 3 p.m.); Good Tymes Banjo Band (12:30 to 1:30 p.m.); King Philip Steel Drum Band (1 to 2 p.m.); Megalodon Tooth Hunt (all day); Meet the GOFI Dogs (all day); airbrush tattoos (all day); antique fire engine, hay wagon and train rides (all day); caricaturist (all day); and foam play courtesy Norfolk Fire Department (3:15 p.m.).

Local organizations will also be on hand to raise funds and awareness of their work.

The Norfolk Lions will hold a food drive during Old Tyme Day, acknowledging the fact that

food pantry supplies are often at their lowest during the summer months. Some items currently needed are cereal, soup, coffee, snacks (especially those for children), juice, pasta sauce, canned tuna, and baked beans.

Many town organizations and volunteers help the Lions with Old Tyme Day, including the Norfolk Fire, Police and Highway Departments and Norfolk Recreation. Also contributing support (and muscle) are the Emmanuel Baptist Church, various King Philip High School organizations such as KP Leos, KP Cares, DECA, as well as many other volunteer groups.

The Lions would also like to thank and acknowledge the sponsors for Old Tyme Day: Holmes Bus Company, Consigli Family, C&K Custom Apparel, Carpentry by Tom Antonellis, Darby By Design, Exhale A School of Dance, Franklin Plumbing, Heating, and Gas Inc, Marino Family, Molly Maid, Next Homes Soundings Realty, Norfolk Auto Inc, Norfolk DPW, Norfolk Recreation, Panepinto Realty Group, Phoenix Biopharma Group, Robert Roofing and Gutters, Steller Salon, Tharrett Fam-

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The Lions Club International is a non-profit organization known for working to end preventable blindness. Norfolk Lions participate in a vast variety of projects important to the community, and proceeds from Old Tyme Day are donated back to local charities or to help with community needs.

For more information about Old Tyme Day or the Norfolk Lions, visit www.norfolkmalions.org or email norfolkcommunityday@gmail.com.

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Let's take a step back, make we sure understand the tool.

What's a HELOC? - A second mortgage that allows you to borrow money using the equity in your home as collateral - a secured line of credit. There is an underwriting approval process with a hard credit pull and home appraisal, which determine terms including duration (usually 10-15 years), variable rate benchmark (-/+ Prime Rate) and credit limit.

Most banks/credit unions allow 70% or 80% Loan-To-Value (LTV) minus mortgage balance. For example, your house now appraises for \$800K. At 70% LTV is \$560K less mortgage balance of \$400K means potential \$160K HELOC. At 80% LTV, \$640K - \$400K = \$240K HELOC.

Upon closing, you're provided a checking account to move money into and out of the

HELOC as you please. If you do borrow, you will only owe interest for a monthly payment. However, keep the balance at \$0, then no interest or fees.

And that's the strategy - keep the balance at \$0 for the "what ifs" in life.

Take a dual-income household with slightly positive cash flow each month. When bonuses or RSUs vest, they build savings, pay cash for big expenditures, take vacations, etc. They could be approved for ~\$150K HELOC but choose not to plan and apply.

Then the following happens:

Job-Loss - Instead of coming from a position of strength, you're now at the mercy of a lender - good luck on those terms, even if approved.

Bank Balance Sheets Gone Mad - Fall 2008 saw banks stop issuing new HELOCs almost 2 years. Some tried to reduce, even close HELOCs, but regulators stepped as it is secured line of credit. As long as the collateral (house) and borrower uphold

terms of agreement, the banks couldn't change terms - even if you lost your job. Same is not true for credit cards.

World Gone Mad - Remember when we'd shut down for 2 weeks to end a pandemic but instead laid off 38 million by end of April 2020? Banks stopped issuing new HELOCs and slowed new mortgages until October. And those with high limit HELOCs at \$0 balance became cash buyers of vacation homes from cash-seeking sellers. More opportunistic planning occurred using cash-out refi in 2021 on new property to lock in a low, fixed rate.

Economic Downturn - Banks reduce lending in anticipation of economic slowdowns. Regardless of your opinion on recession, we can all agree banks need deposits in order to underwrite new loans/lines. What's been a recent problem banks are having to maintain? Deposits. Declining deposits equals declining new lending applications.

There are more strategies to consider for HELOCs. Like using as an emergency savings proxy to reduce opportunity costs or delay/spread out taxation from selling investments over calendar years to meet unexpected cash needs.

Talk to your Certified Financial Planner to learn more.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of PlanDynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

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FPAC to Conclude 2022-23 Season with Violet

The Franklin Performing Arts Company (FPAC) will close out their star-studded 2022-23 season with the musical *Violet*, June 8-10 at THE BLACK BOX starring Broadway's Emily Koch and Tyrick Wiltez Jones.

Emily Koch, currently on Broadway in *Kimberly Akimbo*, will lead the cast as Violet. Koch also appeared on Broadway as Elphaba in *WICKED* and *Waitress* as Jenna. Tyrick Wiltez Jones will appear as Flick. Jones has been seen on Broadway in *Hairspray* and *Finian's Rainbow* as well as the off-Broadway cast of *Bat Out of Hell*. NYC's Robbie Rescigno will round out the principal cast as Monty.

Set to Jeanine Tesori's stunning score, *Violet* tells a gripping story. As a girl, Violet was struck by a wayward axe blade when her father was chopping wood, leaving her with a visible scar across her face. With enough money



finally saved, she travels across the Deep South in 1964 towards a miracle - the healing touch of a TV evangelist who will make her beautiful. Although she may not succeed in having the scar on her face healed, Violet is able to repair those scars that are lying deeper than her skin. On the way, she meets a young soldier whose love for her reaches far past her physical "imperfections." The production's opening night sponsor is Physician One Urgent Care and FPAC's Broadway sponsor is

Dean College.

The Franklin Performing Arts Company at THE BLACK BOX is a professional Equity theater producing musicals, plays, and more, featuring Broadway stars, professional and regional performers, and emerging artists. The 2022-23 season featured performances by Sara Jean Ford (*The Phantom of the Opera*, *CATS*, and more), Tyrick Wiltez Jones (*Hairspray*, *Finian's Rainbow*), Michael Barra (*A Bronx Tale*), and Christopher Rice-Thomson (*Hamilton*, *Book of Mormon*, *Pretty Woman*), new choreography by Broadway dance legend Tyler Hanes, and direction by FPAC resident artists and New York guests.

For *Violet* tickets and more information, visit THEBLACKBOXonline.com or call the box office at 508-528-3370. THE BLACK BOX is located at 15 W. Central St. in downtown Franklin, MA.

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June Program Highlights at the Norfolk Senior Center

The Norfolk Senior Center building is closed until further notice, but programs are being held at alternate locations as listed below. The staff is working at Norfolk Town Hall and is available by phone Monday-Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 508-528-4430.

Pre-registration is required for these events. RSVP to 508-528-4430.

Tuesday, June 6 at 1 p.m. at the Norfolk Grange, 28

Rockwood Rd. **Making Fleece Pouches for Baby Animals** Learn how to make fleece pouches for Return2Wild, Norfolk's Wildlife Rehabilitator. Soft fleece pouches make the warmest and coziest beds for the tiny babies at Return2Wild Wildlife Rehab in Norfolk. They're used for baby squirrels, bunnies, and opossums. If you would like to donate your time, talent, and materials for these simple, yet

very needed items, please join us to learn the specifications for this project. And if you have a wildlife question, bring that too!

Wednesday, June 7 at 3 p.m. at the Norfolk Grange **A Panoramic Tour of Rome** This virtual walking tour will show the highlights of the city, from the Piazza del Campo to the Duomo and beyond. We will talk history, curiosities, celebrities, gastronomy and so much more!

Thursday, June 8 at 1 p.m. at Norfolk Library Community Room, 2 Liberty Lane **Book Reading by Andrew Noone**, author of "Bathsheba Spooner, A Revolutionary Murder Conspiracy." The book details the most sensational crime of the Revolution. The title character, when five months pregnant, was hanged (despite protests to Boston) alongside her three British and American accomplices. Spooner, John Adams' second cousin, was the first woman executed in the new U.S., the instigator behind the nation's premier capital case. Followed by Q&A with the author.

Friday, June 9 from 1 to 2 p.m. at the Norfolk Grange **Knock on Wood, Acoustic Folk-Rock Duo** Knock on Wood is a high-energy acoustic folk-rock duo, featuring singer-songwriter Howie Newman on guitar, lead vocals and harmonica. *This program is supported in part by a grant from the Norfolk Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.*

Tuesday, June 13 at 1 p.m. at the Norfolk Grange **The National Game, A Brief History of Baseball, 1840-1920** Pre-

sented by "Artifactual Scholar" Paolo DiGregorio. Many of us are familiar with great players, records, and games of the sport. Yet, the early history of baseball is often ignored or shrouded in myth. This talk will explore the origins of baseball and how the game became our national pastime.

Wednesday, June 14 at 1 p.m. at the Norfolk Grange **Vintage Car Slideshow Social** Take a ride down memory lane with John from Orphan Car Garage. John will highlight some of the most notorious vehicles of the past.

Thursday, June 15 at 10:30 a.m. at Norfolk Town Hall **Drums Alive with Kelly** This high energy class combines movement and music with the power of drumming. Classes can be done seated or standing and can use a variety of different equipment based on the needs of the class or individual. Norfolk residents get priority until 6/5.

Thursday, June 22 at 1 p.m. at the Norfolk Grange **Classic Movie: Stagecoach** The 1939 American Western film is directed by John Ford and stars John Wayne in his breakthrough role.

Learn about Medicare Options at the Fiske Library

On Thursday, June 15, the Fiske Library will hold a program on Medicare options. The program will run from 6:30 to 8 p.m.


Wondering what your insurance options may be when you leave employment or if you are going on or already on Medicare? If so, this is the program for you!

Topics discussed will include health insurance outside of employer-sponsored coverage such as:

- Explanation of Medicare
- Medigap and Medicare Advantage Plans
- Programs available to early retirees, such as COBRA

The program will be presented by Sue Flanagan of Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts.

Sign up at the front desk or by calling the library at 508-384-5440 x2 after May 2.



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Local Swim Instructor Pens Children's Book

BY GRACE ALLEN

Norfolk resident Michelle Consoles has taught swimming lessons for close to thirty years. She is currently teaching private swimming lessons using the Red Cross Learn-to-Swim program, which is designed to help students progress at their own pace. It was her experiences teaching area children how to swim that compelled her to write her first book, "Sink or Swim." It's about a boy named Nate who is afraid of the water.

Consoles, a tax professional, also teaches American Heart Association Heartsaver CPR and First Aid, another life-saving skill she hopes to instill in students of all ages.

She agreed to answer some questions about "Sink or Swim" for readers of Local Town Pages.

What inspired you to write a children's book?

As a swim instructor, I have worked with special needs children, children with fears of putting their faces into the water, and children with general swim

anxiety. I've also dealt with correcting problems from other swim programs and have worked hard to tame "daredevil" swimmers.

Teaching children with fear and anxiety is heartbreaking, because while the goal is to be safe first and foremost, I want children to also love and have fun with their peers in the water. Swimming is a life skill.

But it was while I was working with a child who was particularly scared that I thought, wouldn't it be great for him to have a book to read about a child with the same fears about swimming? Because then he might realize that he wasn't alone.

Can you tell us a bit about the book and its target audience? About Nate?

Because it is a children's picture book, the book is geared towards children 1-8, but it's really suitable for any child that is timid about swimming. The character Nate is a mixture of all of my scaredy cats and timid kids from the last 28 years.



Long-time swim instructor Michelle Consoles has written her first book for children.

How do you hope your book will impact young swimmers?

My hope and dream is that my story impacts and helps children with fears about swimming. I want them to realize that it is okay to be scared, but that in a warm and loving environment you can overcome your fears and even thrive.

I also think it is very important to acknowledge the fears but not feed into them. So many kids feed off their parents' emo-

"Sink or Swim" is geared to children afraid of the water, or of learning to swim.



tions. I believe in encouragement with kindness. Going at their own speed but going forward, progressing. I have found that by being patient, giving lots of encouragement, and providing them with tricks and tools goes a long way to help eliminate anxiety.

How long did it take you to write the book? Who did you work with?

This truly was a passion project and it took two years because the children's genre is very specific about word count and story-

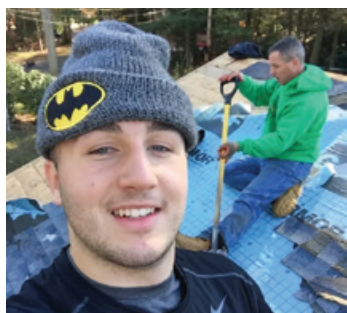
telling. The formatting piece was very challenging.

I enlisted the help of Jordan Peterson to illustrate the book and she captured my vision completely. She is a King Philip and UMass graduate.

Where can people buy your book?

"Sink or Swim" is available on lulu.com, which published the book. I also have some available for local pickup. People can contact me through Facebook for more information.

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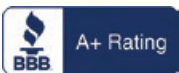
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What to Do If You Haven't Filed an Income Tax Return

Filing a past due return may not be as difficult as you think, and contrary to what some might have expected, this tax season was not extended due to COVID-19. Unlike the filing season for 2020 & 2021 that were extended automatically to July and May respectively, this tax season ended with the regular filing deadline in April.

Taxpayers should file all tax returns that are due, regardless of whether full payment can be made with the return. Depending on an individual's circumstances, a taxpayer filing late may qualify for a payment plan. It is important, however, to know that

full payment of taxes upfront saves you money.

Here's What to Do When Your Return Is Late

Gather Past Due Return Information

Gather return information and come see us. You should bring any and all information related to income and deductions for the tax years for which a return is required to be filed.

Payment Options - Ways to Make a Payment

There are several different ways to make a payment on your taxes. Payments can be made

by credit card, electronic funds transfer, check, money order, cashier's check, or cash.

Payment Options - For Those Who Can't Pay in Full

Taxpayers unable to pay all taxes due on the bill are encouraged to pay as much as possible. By paying as much as possible now, the amount of interest and penalties owed will be lessened. Based on the circumstances, a taxpayer could qualify for an extension of time to pay, an installment agreement, a temporary delay, or an offer in compromise.

Taxpayers who need more time to pay can set up either a short-term payment extension or a monthly payment plan.

- A short-term extension gives a taxpayer up to 120 days to pay. No fee is charged, but the late-payment penalty plus interest will apply.
- A monthly payment plan or installment agreement gives a taxpayer more time to pay. However, penalties and interest will continue to be charged on the unpaid portion of the debt throughout the duration of the installment agreement/payment plan. In terms of how to pay your tax bill, it is important to review all your

options; the interest rate on a loan or credit card may be lower than the combination of penalties and interest imposed by the Internal Revenue Code. You should pay as much as possible before entering into an installment agreement.

- A user fee will also be charged if the installment agreement is approved. The fees to set up the payment plan range from \$31 to \$225, based on the type of plan you set up. Setting up your plan online with automatic direct debit is the least expensive fee, while applying by phone, mail or in person and making your own payments, rather than having them taken out automatically, carries the most expensive fee.

What Will Happen If You Don't File Your Past Due Return or Contact the IRS

It's important to understand the ramifications of not filing a past due return and the steps that the IRS will take. Taxpayers who continue to not file a required return and fail to respond to IRS requests for a return may be considered for a variety of enforcement actions.



If you haven't filed a tax return yet, please contact us. We're here to help!

Jeffrey Schweitzer can be found at Northeast Financial Strategies Inc (NFS) at Wampum Corner in Wrentham. NFS works with individuals and small businesses providing financial and estate planning, insurance, investments and also offers full service accounting, bookkeeping, payroll, income tax preparation, and notary public services. For more information, stop by the office, call Jeffrey at 800-560-4NFS or visit online - www.nfsnet.com

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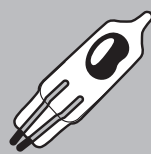
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Notable People and Places of Wrentham

As part of Wrentham's 350th anniversary celebration, the committee planning this year's events has asked residents to submit memories of significant people and places in the town's history. Following is a submission the anniversary committee shared with Local Town Pages.

George Hagopian, Sr., and the Red Bird Farm

Born in New England, George Hagopian Sr. lost his sight when he was a mere child. He dimly recalls the appearance of the sun, the green of trees and grass — and that is all. Early in life, he entered Perkins Institution, which is devoted to the education of the sightless. Some years later, his immediate family found it necessary to move to a distant part of the country, but George Sr. remained in Boston alone.

During certain summer vacations, he boarded on the farm which was then owned by a Mr. Fisher. George Sr. developed a love for the country, which eventually drew him back to the open fields.

At the school, Hagopian secured a good general education, the benefit of which was apparent when he spoke on any subject. He also studied music, learned piano tuning, and how to cane chairs, graduating in 1910. Mr. Fisher had passed away and George Sr. took up his residence at the farm, caning chairs as a source of income.

In 1912, a 50-foot poultry house was erected along with an incubator, lamp-heated brooders, and 90 S. C. Rhode Island Reds and the business grew very profitable and more buildings were erected to house the chickens.

During their marriage, George Sr. and Beatrice had 3 children, George Jr., (my father), Robert and Sylvia.

In 1949, a large fire of undetermined cause broke out. Over 80,000 chicks were lost and the 250-foot building was a total loss with over \$100,000 worth of damage.

George Sr. passed away in 1952 and his wife Beatrice took over the day-to-day operations with both sons working on the farm until 1978 when the farm went out of business.

Beatrice passed away in 1997 and the land remains in a trust.



Red Bird Farm's grain silos on Taunton Street. Dated 1962.



Picture taken today of where the grain silos once stood.

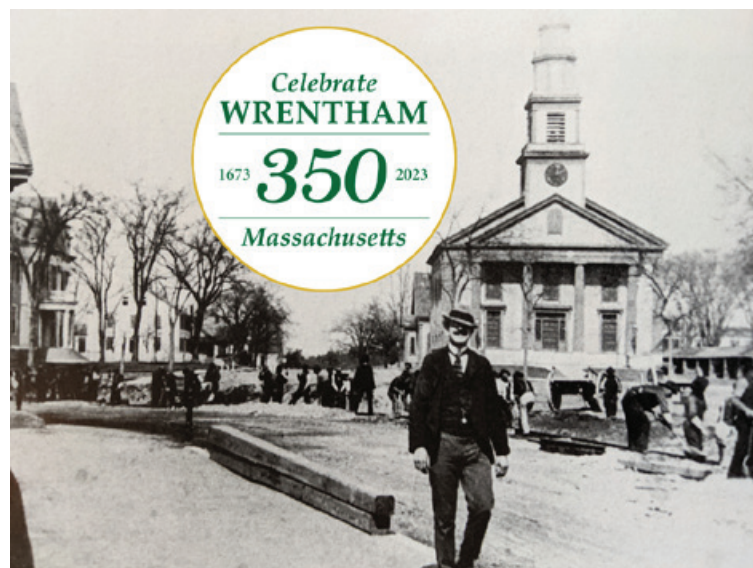


Second Red Bird Farm building at intersection of May Street and Shears Street.

As a child growing up on Red Bird Farm, each Saturday, my brother George and I would sit in the back of the egg room where they processed and packed all the different sized eggs. We would get a basket of the ones that didn't come clean through the machines, and sit there for the day with steel wool, scrubbing off the "chicken stool." Red Bird farm purchased their chickens from Maine and

when they were delivered to Wrentham, we would receive a quarter for each one that got away. As we got older, we graduated to more important jobs.

It was a family run business, and George Hagopian Jr., worked six ten-hour days a week on the farm. He was an accomplished classical pianist, black belt in jujitsu, and an amazing weightlifter who worked out three times a day.



Red Bird Farm fire on Taunton Street, October 28, 1949.

George Hagopian Sr.'s first wife couldn't bear children, so George married Beatrice Bullikan who took over the farm after George passed. Beatrice was fortunate to have an amazing and loyal secretary until the end, named Louise Roby.

WRITTEN BY MARK HAGOPIAN, GEORGE HAGOPIAN SR.'S GRANDSON.

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FSPA Summer 2023 and Fall 2023-24 Enrollment Open

Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA) is now enrolling for Summer 2023 and Fall 2023-24. The school encourages new families to explore their options for both Summer and Fall.

Proudly serving more than 500 students annually from 45 communities in Massachusetts' Metro West region, the Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA) is committed to quality education in the arts with exceptional curriculum, outstanding professional faculty, and unwavering dedication to each and every student enrolled. Founded in 1985 by Director Raye Lynn Mercer, FSPA is a unique place where students of all ages and levels of ability participate in an array of music, dance, and drama programs with professional instruction and extraordinary performing opportunities. With broad-based and varied curricula, FSPA guides students in the development of technique, creativity, and artistic expression to last a lifetime. FSPA's faculty boasts outstanding professional artists, performers, and teachers. Their impressive credentials are indicative of the excellent instruction available in all programs. FSPA instructors strive to meet the individual

needs of each student, working to develop each student's abilities to his or her own potential.

In addition to the Summer Session weekly classes, FSPA will hold one week camps including Creative Kids, Acting, Broadway, Little Music School Experience, Rock Out!, and Voice. FSPA will also offer 5 weeks of Summer Theater. Students can sign up for one or more of the offerings. The more students participate, the more they save. July 19-21 for grades 5-12 is Broadway Boot Camp. Broadway Boot Camp brings Broadway's brightest talents to FSPA for song and dance master classes and coaching on individual performance skills. July 24-26 is the Cabaret Show for grades 5-12. Students will hone their skills and tap into their potential with a focus on performance skills, including repertoire choices, song interpretation, and presentation. The week concludes with a cabaret-style revue at THE BLACK BOX, showcasing solo and small ensemble pieces that have been workshopped during the week. Week 3, July 31-August 4 is a one week intensive for grades 4-8 and 8-12 that will focus on the rehearsal and preparation of a play that will be performed at THE BLACK BOX. The



plays will be selected for each age group based on enrollment. Weeks 4 and 5, August 7-18, culminate with the production of Musical Theater Scenes staged at THE BLACK BOX. Grades 4-8 and 8-12.

The FSPA Ballet Conserva-

tory will offer two intensives. The pre-professional summer intensive offers a four-week program for the dedicated and serious ballet student wanting to further ballet training and performance skills. A rigorous schedule of classical ballet tech-

nique, pointe, modern, dance history, and character is provided. Students will be divided by their current ballet level for technique, pointe, select variations and choreography to ensure and maintain a challenging curriculum for every dancer. Additional disciplines may vary depending on enrollment and teacher availability. This intensive is for FSPA Conservatory Levels III/IV/V/VI, or by audition for ages 12+. It runs June 26-July 20 (4 weeks) Monday-Friday 9:30-3:00. The three-week "Young Intensive" program is designed to challenge and motivate the young dancer. Instruction in classical ballet technique, pre-pointe, character, modern and dance history is offered. Additional disciplines may vary depending upon enrollment and teacher availability. The Young Dancers Program caters to FSPA Conservatory Levels I (2nd year)/II/III, or by audition ages 8-11. It runs July 5-20 (3 weeks) Monday-Thursday 9:30-3:00.

FSPA is located at 38 Main Street, Franklin MA. To register or learn more, visit www.FSPAonline.com or call 508-528-8668.

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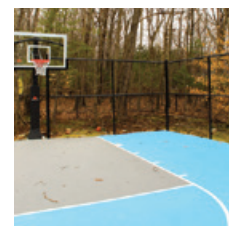
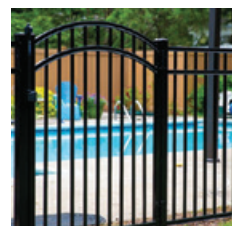
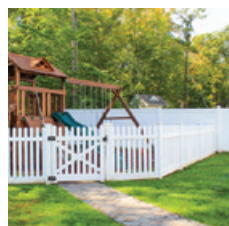
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Norfolk Senior Center Renovations Ongoing

Re-Opening Targeted for this Summer

The Norfolk Senior Center has been closed to the public since the beginning of February following a pipe burst that resulted in extensive damage to the building.

Despite taking several precautions ahead of the unusually cold weather that occurred over the

weekend that the pipe burst, including increasing the heat and keeping doors open to allow for the proper circulation of heat, the temperatures were too low. This caused the pipe to burst above the ceiling space on the side of the building near the front desk and the office to the left of

the front desk. The burst resulted in the ceiling in those areas to collapse and pools of water to collect on the ground, which caused damage to the top floor and all of the downstairs floor.

Since the center was closed, the Facilities Department, headed by Director of Facilities Matt Haffner, has worked with the town's insurance carrier to expedite the initial water mitigation and to come up with approved values to complete the repairs to the building.

The facility has since been fully dried out and multiple large dumpsters have hauled away damaged building materials, along with programming items, electronics, and supplies.

A major hurdle the Senior Center had to overcome during its renovation efforts was the building's elevator. The unit had two feet of oily water in the pit of the machine as a result of the pipe burst. To get rid of this water, a hazmat crew was hired to remove and properly dispose of the liquid. The elevator also had to be repaired before undergoing a safety inspection by the state.

The facility has received much-improved insulation for the damaged spaces, and dry-wall and plastering are nearing completion. Damaged lighting fixtures and fire alarm modules have also been replaced, and the HVAC systems have been inspected.

The Council on Aging team has worked collaboratively with the Facilities team to select paint colors, flooring materials, cabinets and furniture, which have been ordered but are delayed.

"There is much work to still be completed before the center reopens to the public. As a joint



The walls at the Senior Center have since been fixed and are ready to be painted.

(Photos courtesy Town of Norfolk)



The Norfolk Facilities Department has managed contract restoration services. Some repairs include tearing down and re-doing the insulation and walls of the Senior Center following a pipe burst that caused significant damage to the building in February.

Guest Column

Withering on the Vine?

By G. GREGORY TOOKER

Reluctantly, spring is creeping over the horizon. As we plant our gardens, anxious to grow and harvest their bounty, your writer earnestly hopes we all are thinking about a harvest of different but equal importance, that of a bumper crop of votes cast in next year's critical elections.

Just as newly-sprouted seedlings need water and nourishment, so does our garden of democracy. But we have been derelict in recent decades, leaving that watering can sitting by the tool shed as we involve ourselves in activities considered more important. Voter turnout, especially in local elections, has been abysmally low. This is a public embarrassment and one that will surely undercut healthy long term community growth objectives. If most of those voters having more private interests in mind are drawn to the polls, we will not be electing government representatives serving the broad objectives of the electorate as a whole.

Wrentham, among other communities, has constructed a very valuable pre-election resource, the Wrentham Voter Guide, enabling the local electorate to make informed voting decisions. The Guide encourages candidates to publicly state why they are running for office and to provide a brief biography for the benefit of potential supporters. Such information should be readily available in every local, state and federal election.

It is rare these days to witness a voter turnout of more than 50%. Our local elections produce numbers far lower. Yet we continue to hear people complain perennially about the performance of office holders. If we are ever able to persuade a healthy majority of registered voters to cast their informed ballot, your writer feels confident that these protestations will gradually disappear from our daily conversation. In a true democracy, the real majority rules.

team, we are truly excited for the facility to open its doors with many new finishes throughout the interior and to show off the building's wonderful new exterior," Council on Aging Director Karen Edwards said.

It is expected that the Senior Center will reopen to the public sometime in the summer, either July or August, once all renovations are completed.

Since the closure of the Senior Center, the Norfolk Council on Aging has worked diligently to ensure continuity of services and programming. The library has hosted events and programming out of a temporary office in Norfolk Town Hall, and larger programs such as Bingo and fitness classes have been held at the Norfolk Grange.

Metacomet Public Health Alliance Public Health Nurse Jeanine Murphy has been available to senior residents by appointment between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. every Wednesday at the Town Hall.

Senior residents needing assistance can visit the Council on Aging between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. Monday through Thursday in person at the Town Hall, or can conduct business via phone at 508-528-4430. The physical office is closed on Fri-

days, however, business can be conducted via telephone.

The office/conference room is located close to the back entrance off of the parking lot. It's the second door on the left that is painted light green.

The Council on Aging is planning to host a soft opening followed by a grand reopening at a later date. Until further notice, community members are asked to avoid the Senior Center and the area surrounding it as it is a construction site.

"The Council on Aging and our Senior Center have received tremendous support throughout this whole ordeal, however, we would like to note that even before the pipe burst we had a dedicated team who ensured that our facility was well-kept and operating smoothly," Director Edwards said. "Unfortunately, the pipe burst was out of our control and since then we have been working hard to ensure that we offer the same level of services as we did when the building was open. We are greatly looking forward to re-opening our center to the public and having the opportunity to once again serve as a hub of activities for our senior residents."

The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Balayage or Highlights? Here's a Little Secret...

BY GINA WOELFEL

Client: "I'd like to lighten my hair today."

Stylist: "Great! What do you have in mind? Or better yet, did you bring an inspiration picture?"

Client: "No, I don't have any pictures, I just want a blonde balayage."

Stylist: "Ok, we can highlight your hair a number of ways. What kind of look are you going for?"

Client: "Oh no, I don't want highlights, I just want a blonde balayage."

Balayage or Highlights? Confused about what to ask your hairstylist for? You're not alone. If you're fretting on which service is best for you, stop worrying! Here's something I bet you didn't know:

Balayage is simply a highlighting technique to get you to the desired look you want. In recent years, though, the word Balayage has become synonymous with dark-rooted, blonde hair, and most clients that request it are actually just looking for that specific style. In reality, multiple techniques are used to attain that look. Balayage, Foilage, Baby lights, Teasylights and Foil Highlights are all just different names for coloring techniques used to lighten (and sometimes darken) your hair.

These techniques aren't just for blonding anymore. The brunette Balayage is huge this summer and the perfect way for all you darker haired beauties to boost your brown tresses.

With that, let's chat about our two most popular coloring services - Balayage and Foil Highlights.

Balayage, pronounced BAH-LEE-AHGE, means "to sweep" in French, and is, by far, the most requested color service at The b.LUXE Studio. Highlights are hand-painted directly on the hair to create a natural gradient from dark to light. The lightened pieces appear more naturally placed and lived-in, which mimics what the sun does to our hair naturally. This free-form color application can be

heavy or subtle, depending on how the stylist sections your hair. But, (and this is a big but) Balayage is not for everyone and can only lift (lighten) hair about 3-4 shades. So, if you're a dark brunette looking for light, honey-blond highlights, this technique is not for you.

But, fear not, blonde-seekers! The Balayage "look" you so desire is still well within your reach.

If your hair does need a considerable amount of lift, your stylist will need to use foil highlights.

Now, I'm sure for some of you, the word "foils" is conjuring up painful memories of the overly-streaky highlights of the early aughts. But, take a deep breath. Today's highlighting techniques and products are far superior to their predecessors and allow for precision placement and tone.

Here's a breakdown of both services:

BALAYAGE:

- Free-hand, non-foil highlighting technique that can lift hair 3-4 shades
- Creates a soft, natural gradation of lightness, usually deeper closer to the root and lighter towards the ends, giving that beachy-blond, lived-in look.
- Takes between 2 to 5 hours, depending on the length and thickness of your hair.
- Maintenance: Every 12-18 weeks with a gloss/toner refresh around the 6-8 week mark to revive your blonde tone. With the darker root and no obvious demarcation line of regrowth, Balayage is considered a more low-maintenance highlighting technique with more time between appointments.

FOIL HIGHLIGHTS:

- Foiling is the preferred method for that all-over, big, blonde look.
- Color is usually placed evenly along the whole section of hair, from root to tip.

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- Sheets of foil are used as a platform for color and lighter. They encapsulate and separate highlights to boost lift while processing.
- Your stylist may choose to use one color or multiple colors for a more multi-dimensional result.
- Foil highlights take between 2 to 3 hours and are very precise and can be placed close to the root or mid-shaft to achieve a Balayage effect when hair needs to be lifted more than 3-4 shades. (See, we told you not to worry!)
- Maintenance: Every 6-10 weeks.

A few important things to remember...

You DON'T need to be well-versed in cosmetology to book a color appointment, but you do need to plan ahead. First, bring a few pictures to show your hairdresser the exact style and color you want. Why? Well, for example, your idea of what honey-



blonde looks like may be wildly different than what your stylist thinks. An "inspiration photo" lets your hairdresser know exactly what you want and how they'll go about getting it.

Be flexible. Describe the "look" you want and let your stylist use their expertise to suggest what method would work best for you.

Lastly, (and we can't stress this enough), before any new color service, book a consultation. At b.LUXE, we offer them virtually or in-person, and they're al-

ways complementary. These 10 minute appointments are game-changers and give your stylist the chance to analyze your hair, gauge the timing of your appointment, and determine what it will take to achieve and maintain the hairstyle you desire.

We look forward to seeing you (and your inspiration pictures) at the studio this summer!

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Living Healthy

Macular Degeneration

Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment Options

BY ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.
MILFORD FRANKLIN EYE CENTER

Macular degeneration, also known as age-related macular degeneration (AMD), is a progressive eye condition that affects millions of people worldwide. It is a leading cause of vision loss, particularly among older adults. Macular degeneration primarily affects the macula, a small area located near the center of the retina responsible for sharp, central vision. This article aims to provide an overview of macular degeneration, including its causes, symptoms, and available treatment options.

Causes of Macular Degeneration

While the exact causes of macular degeneration remain unknown, several risk factors have been identified. Age is a significant factor, as the condition

predominantly affects individuals over the age of 50. Genetic factors, family history, smoking, obesity, high blood pressure, and prolonged exposure to ultraviolet light are also associated with an increased risk of developing macular degeneration.

Types of Macular Degeneration

There are two main types of macular degeneration: dry (atrophic) AMD and wet (neovascular) AMD.

Dry AMD

Dry AMD is the most common form, accounting for approximately 85-90% of cases. It is characterized by the gradual breakdown of the macula due to the accumulation of drusen, yellow deposits beneath the retina. As the condition progresses, central vision becomes blurred, making it difficult to perform tasks

such as reading or recognizing faces.

Wet AMD

Wet AMD is less common but more aggressive than dry AMD. It occurs when abnormal blood vessels develop beneath the macula and leak blood or fluid, leading to rapid and severe vision loss. Individuals with wet AMD may experience distorted or wavy central vision, a dark spot in the center of their visual field, or rapid visual decline.

Symptoms and Diagnosis

The early stages of macular degeneration often present no noticeable symptoms, making regular eye exams crucial for early detection. As the condition progresses, symptoms may include:

- Blurred or distorted central vision
- Difficulty reading or performing activities that require fine detail



Normal Vision



View with AMD

- Dark or empty areas in the central visual field
- Decreased brightness or intensity of colors
- Difficulty recognizing faces

A comprehensive eye examination, including a dilated pupil examination, visual acuity test, and imaging tests such as optical coherence tomography (OCT) or fluorescein angiography, can help diagnose macular degeneration and determine its type and severity.

Treatment options

Macular degeneration is a progressive eye condition that affects the central portion of the retina, called the macula. Although there is no known cure for macular degeneration, there are several treatment options available that can help slow down its progression and manage the symptoms. Here are some of the common treatment options:

Anti-VEGF Therapy

Anti-vascular endothelial growth factor (anti-VEGF) drugs are injected into the eye to reduce the growth of abnormal blood vessels in the retina. These drugs include medications like ranibizumab (Lucentis), bevacizumab (Avastin), and aflibercept (Eylea). Anti-VEGF therapy has shown significant success in stabilizing or improving vision in many cases of macular degeneration.

Photodynamic Therapy (PDT)

This treatment involves the use of a light-activated medication called verteporfin (Visudyne). The medication is injected into a vein, and then a laser is applied to the abnormal blood vessels in the retina to activate the drug, causing the vessels to close and reduce their leakage.

Laser Therapy

In some cases, laser therapy may be used to target and de-

stroy abnormal blood vessels in the macula. This treatment is known as focal laser photocoagulation.

Implantable Miniature Telescope

For individuals with end-stage macular degeneration in both eyes and severe vision loss, an implantable miniature telescope (IMT) may be an option. The IMT is surgically placed in one eye to improve central vision by magnifying the images that reach the healthy portion of the retina.

Low Vision Aids

These include devices such as magnifying glasses, telescopic lenses, and electronic visual aids that can help individuals with macular degeneration make the most of their remaining vision.

Lifestyle Changes

Certain lifestyle modifications can help manage macular degeneration. These include quitting smoking, eating a healthy diet rich in antioxidants and nutrients (e.g., leafy green vegetables, fish, and fruits), exercising regularly, maintaining normal blood pressure and cholesterol levels, and protecting the eyes from harmful ultraviolet (UV) light.

Supplements

The AREDS study conducted by the National Eye Institute and concluded in 2001. It showed that the AREDS formula can reduce patients' risk of the advanced form of AMD by about 25 percent. The formula helps protect people's central vision, which is needed for reading, driving, recognizing faces and other daily activities.

The AREDS 2 study, which concluded in 2011, tested several antioxidant nutrients that earlier research had suggested



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Living Healthy

A Drug Free Approach to Treating ADD/ADHD

An estimated 11% (6.4million) of US school aged children have been diagnosed with ADHD in their lifetime. Additionally, 4.4% of adults have ADHD in the US. ADHD is a neurobehavioral disorder that is characterized by a persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity or impulsivity that interferes with function and development. Some of the symptoms include lack of focus, inability to complete tasks, and impulsive behavior. Many people choose to treat this disorder with medication and behavior modification, while others choose a more holistic approach which targets the cause and not just the symptoms.

Marla P. was frustrated dealing with her 8 yearold son. He had difficulty finishing school-work and difficulty completing his daily tasks at home. She would ask him repeatedly to get dressed, brush his teeth and put his toys away. He would start but not finish these tasks because he became distracted easily. At first, she thought he was just lazy, but very quickly realized there was something wrong. The behavioral patterns of inability to focus, complete tasks or sit still for any length of time “set off bells” in her head. She realized that something was not right and that he might have ADHD. She didn’t want to put him on meds



Dr. Rochelle Bien & Dr. Michael Goldstein

and decided to take a holistic approach. A dear friend suggested she call The Holistic Center At Bristol Square in Walpole.

Within 2 weeks of beginning treatment, Marla noticed that

her son could sit to do his homework and complete the assignment without screaming, yelling and tears. Within 4 weeks, he was completing his daily tasks at home easily and happy to do

so. Within 2-3 months her son was happy and more confident, because he was finishing his assignments in school as well as at home in a reasonable time frame.

If you or someone you love is suffering from ADD or ADHD don’t hesitate to contact

Dr Rochelle Bien or Dr Michael Goldstein at The Holistic Center at Bristol Square, 1426 Main Street in Walpole.

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EYES

continued from page 16

might protect the eyes: lutein, zeaxanthin, and omega-3 fatty acids. Omega-3 fatty acids are produced by plants and are present in oily fish such as salmon. Lutein and zeaxanthin are carotenoids, a class of plant-derived vitamins that also includes beta-carotene, and are present in leafy green vegetables. The body uses these nutrients to maintain the health of the retina, the part of the eye that can be damaged by AMD. The AREDS 2 research team did find that the risk of developing advanced AMD was reduced by about 18 percent in study participants who took the variant that included lutein and zeaxanthin but no beta-carotene, compared with participants who took the variant that had beta-carotene but no lutein or zeaxanthin. And those participants whose diets were low in lutein and zeaxanthin at the start of the study, but who took a variant with lutein and zeaxanthin during the study, were about 25 percent less likely to develop advanced AMD, compared with similar participants who did not take lutein and zeaxanthin.

The researchers say that removing beta-carotene from the AREDS formula and adding lutein and zeaxanthin will result in a single formula that is safe and effective for all AMD patients.

Another recent AREDS report showed that the benefits of taking the AREDS formula appear to be long-lasting. Participants in the first AREDS study who took the original formula daily for five years continue to enjoy a 25 percent lower risk of developing advanced AMD.

It’s important to note that the choice of treatment depends on the type and severity of macular degeneration, as well as individual factors. If you or someone you know has macular degeneration, it’s crucial to consult with an ophthalmologist or retina specialist who can provide personalized recommendations and guidance based on the specific situation.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we use state-of-the-art technology to treat a variety of eye problems, including macular degeneration. We are proud to have a Boston Harvard dedicated retina specialist in our practice, specializing in the treatment of retinal eye disease and AMD. With the presence of this service and equipment that rivals the best found in major teaching eye hospitals, our practice continues to provide world class eye care closer to home.

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KP PRINCIPAL

continued from page 3

University. She also holds a Diversity and Inclusion Certificate from Cornell University.

“Nicole is articulate and student-centered, bringing with her over a decade of instructional leadership experience. She has a mental health background and values social-emotional learning,” KP Superintendent-Elect Dr. Rich Drolet said. “Numerous people who have worked with Nicole describe her as a smart high school principal who is respectful, balanced, hard-working, encouraging, collaborative and focused on elevating students’ voices. With all of that said, we are confident that she will be a great addition to our high school and district.”

There were 22 applicants for the position. A search committee, led by Superintendent Zinni, was comprised of parents, community members, teachers and administrators. The search committee screened applications, interviewed six candidates and then forwarded two finalists to Superintendent-Elect Drolet. Superintendent-Elect Drolet then conducted finalist interviews, checked references, and selected Nicole Bottomley as the next King Philip Regional High School principal.

“I would like to thank the high school principal search committee for their thoughtful work and care in selecting such excellent candidates to inter-

view, and then forwarding exemplary finalists to me,” stated Dr. Drolet. “We are pleased to appoint Nicole to this position.”

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KPHS English Teacher Erin Nerlino Named Teacher of the Year Semifinalist

King Philip Regional High School English teacher Erin Nerlino has been selected as a 2024 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year semifinalist.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Massachusetts Teacher of the Year Program honors a Massachusetts teacher who exemplifies fine teaching in the Commonwealth. Nerlino was nominated for the program by KP High School Principal Dr. Lisa Mobley.

"Throughout her time at the high school, Erin has gone above and beyond for her students and colleagues," Dr. Mobley said in a statement. "She has an innate ability to form strong, lasting relationships with those that she teaches which allows her to tailor her lessons to each student's unique needs and be a champion for them throughout their time at KP. She is extremely deserving of this recognition."

Nerlino has served as an English teacher at King Philip Regional High School since 2013. During this time, she has taught a variety of secondary English classes including sophomore and junior standard levels, junior and senior honors, and Advanced Placement Language and Composition.

She has revised curricula to include more works representative of different voices throughout the classes she teaches and



King Philip Regional High School English teacher Erin Nerlino has been selected as a 2024 Massachusetts Teacher of the Year semifinalist. (Photo Courtesy King Philip Regional School District)

proposed, developed, and taught a new English elective, Exploring Social Issues, that aims to provide a space for students to explore, analyze, discuss, and reflect upon their own identities in conjunction with issues of oppression and social injustice in society.

Nerlino has also adapted anti-harassment bystander intervention training to a high school setting and presented the training with students at conferences and the MIAA/MSAA DEI Symposium.

Outside of the classroom, Nerlino serves as a mentor to new teachers within the district and as the founding advisor of the People of Prosperity, a club dedicated to supporting the needs and leadership aspirations of students of color.

Nerlino is also an accomplished researcher and presenter in her free time. She has been published several times including in the Educational Action Research, The Educational Forum and has presented at the American Education Research Association conference several times.

"I would like to extend kudos and congratulations to Erin on receiving this wonderful honor," KP Superintendent Paul Zinni said. "Anyone that knows Erin knows that this recognition is not a big surprise as she is extremely dedicated to her job and her students. Regardless of the official outcome, Erin is truly 'Teacher of the Year' in my book and I would like to thank her for all that she has done and continues to do for our students."

The Teacher of the Year will serve as a liaison to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and as an ambassador to other teachers in the state. The finalist will be announced in Fall 2023.

"I am honored to be considered for this program among the many impressive educators throughout the state," Nerlino said. "It has been a privilege to work and learn within the KP community for the past ten years, and I am especially grateful for the students, Dr. Mobley, and Mr. Zinni, who have been such formative parts in my development as an educator."

New Principal of H. Olive Day School Announced

Tami Rebello has been selected as the next principal of the H. Olive Day School in Norfolk.

Rebello will begin her new role on July 1 and will have several opportunities to meet with current H. Olive Day School Principal Linda Balfour, who will support Rebello's transition.

"We are excited to welcome Ms. Rebello to the Norfolk Public Schools community," Superintendent Dr. Ingrid Allardi said in a statement. "Ms. Rebello demonstrated values that align with the H. Olive Day School in terms of creating a warm, collaborative and welcoming environment that fosters strong partnerships within the school community and with families. Her values, coupled with her leadership practices centered around community and social-emotional learning, make her a perfect fit for our school and we are excited to see the school continue to grow under her leadership."

For the past 20 years, Rebello has served as an educator in the Taunton Public Schools. Since 2016 she has served as the K-4 assistant principal for the Elizabeth Pole Elementary School in Taunton. Prior to that role, Rebello also worked as a kindergarten and special education teacher.

She holds a master's degree in instructional technology from Bridgewater State University and a bachelor's degree in elementary education and special education from Salve Regina University.

Rebello was selected as the next principal following a rigorous search process. Upon receiving Principal Balfour's retirement notification, the Norfolk Public Schools worked with UMass Boston's Edward J. Collins Jr. Center for Public Management



Tami Rebello has been selected as the next principal of the H. Olive Day School. (Photo courtesy Norfolk Public Schools)

to conduct the search and interview process for Balfour's replacement.

A screening committee comprised of three teachers, two mental health staff members, one paraprofessional, one executive assistant, two parents, the H.O.D. assistant principal, the district administrator, and the director of human resources was formed.

Simultaneously, the Edward J. Collins Jr. Center held focus groups that included input from stakeholders, parents, educators, support staff and administrators. A survey was also sent to gain additional input. Feedback gathered from focus groups and the survey was used to create a Candidate Profile Report. The report was used by the screening committee during the selection process.

The screening committee concluded interviews with candidates on April 27. The committee had a diverse pool of candidates with varied experiences and, out of the 15 applicants, interviewed seven highly qualified candidates. Two candidates were then moved to the next stage of the selection process, which included site visits, reference checks and interviews with Dr. Allardi.



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Sports

KP Girls Lacrosse Team Relies on Experience, Athleticism

By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The Division 1 girls lacrosse tournament is about to begin and coach Kourtnie Wilder and her King Philip squad hope to build on the success they achieved last year when the Warriors finished 13-5, then split a pair of play-off matches, defeating Needham and losing to Lincoln-Sudbury.

The goals Wilder outlined for her forces during pre-season practice were down-to-earth and realistic.

“First, I stressed daily improvement in practice and in matches,” Wilder said. “I also emphasized that teamwork was essential and to take each match one at a time. I also said that we’d aim for the Kelley-Rex Division title and concluded with earning a berth in the state tourney and advancing further than last season.”

At Local Town Pages deadline, the Warriors had a respectable 8-5 record and were in line to get a favorable seed for the playoffs. The Kelley-Rex Division crown, however, appears to be on its way to Franklin. As for Wilder’s objectives that focus on teamwork and daily improvement, those boxes get an indelible checkmark.

“We’ve got some key strengths,” Wilder offered. “We’ve got experienced starters, we’re technically sound, definitely athletic, and have a high lacrosse IQ. The players are very coachable and they’ve been able to adjust and adapt quickly.”

The Warriors have three seniors, six juniors, seven sophomores and two freshmen. All of the seniors and juniors are experienced and four of the seven sophomores are starters.

KP’s captains — seniors Ilah Weiblen (defense) and Emily Campbell (goalie) and junior Lily McNulty (defense) have different leadership styles but their lacrosse strengths are admirable.

“Ilah leads by example,” Wilder noted. “A tenacious defender, she’s aggressive going to the ball, very good on ground balls and she creates turnovers. Emily is a vocal leader who’s instinctive. An experienced net-minder, she sees the field well and can make a difficult save. Lily has good technique, excel-



The 2023 King Philip girls lacrosse team is aiming for a berth in the state tournament.

lent speed and forces turnovers. A vocal leader, she meshes well with all our defenders.”

Junior Mara Boldy and sophomore Sierra King are dependable defenders who are athletic, instinctive and skilled. “Mara is competitive, technically sound and well-skilled,” Wilder said. “She’s aggressive and controls ground balls effectively. Sierra is agile and quick. She can read the attackers’ moves and adjust quickly.”

Four junior attackers have a variety of pluses that no opponent can take lightly. They are Sarah Brown, Kelly Holmes, Alyssa Legere, and Nicole McDonald. At Local Town Pages deadline, Brown had 7 goals and 13 assists for 20 points; Holmes had 7 goals and 12 assists for 19 points; Legere had 20 goals and 9 assists for 29 points; and McDonald had 37 goals and 2 assists for 39 points.

“Sarah is skilled, passes effectively, and has a quick shot with good placement,” Wilder noted. “Kelly is athletic, instinctive and quick. She’s improved her scoring and her reaction time is excellent. Alyssa has settled in as a starter. A steady contributor, she’s got speed and a hard shot. Nicole is competitive, fast and instinctive. She reads defenses effectively and creates scoring opportunities.”

Three sophomores who’ve been solid patrolling the midfield include Makenzie McDevitt, Abby MacDonald, and Sammy Cloutier. McDevitt was a Hockomock League all-star last year. At Local Town Pages deadline,

McDevitt led the squad in scoring with 40 goals and 20 assists for 60 points. Abby MacDonald had 19 goals and 7 assists for 26 points, and Cloutier had 12 goals and 10 assists for 22 points.

“A year-round player, Makenzie is well-skilled, has good endurance and is strong in transition,” Wilder said. “Last year she had 40 goals and 9 assists. This season she’s our leading scorer. Abby is a true midfielder with great endurance. She could play an entire match. She’s solid on both the offensive and defensive end. Sammy was a defender last year. She’s solid in transition and her stickwork and endurance are very good.”

Wilder said that KP’s other goaltenders (senior Haley Bright and sophomore Kaitlyn Parish) can both make tough saves. “Haley is active and intercepts passes well,” Wilder offered. “She’s quick and her footwork is sound. Kaitlyn is vocal, athletic and also active.”

Rounding out the roster are two freshmen and two sophomores. The freshmen include Ashleigh Whitbread (defender) and Lauren Obara (defense/attack), and sophomores Maggie Sweeney (midfielder) and Emily Heslin (attack). “They’re athletic, try hard and are coachable,” Wilder said. “We’ll look to them in the future.”

The 30-year-old Wilder, who’s in her sixth year as KP’s head coach, has guided the Warriors to five playoff appearances. Her philosophy of coaching is a three-prong approach.

“I focus on being competitive,” she said. “That leads to winning. What I also stress is reaching one’s potential and enjoying the athletic experience. I also like our players learning some good life lessons from sports. Some are overcoming adversity, being resilient, setting goals, becoming leaders and knowing how to manage your time.”

A native of Framingham, Wilder played field hockey, ice hockey and lacrosse at Framingham High where she was a captain in ice hockey and a Bay State Conference all-star in field hockey and ice hockey. She played lacrosse at Assumption College where she majored in biology and secondary education, and earned



Kourtnie Wilder, middle, who’s in her sixth year as KP’s girls lacrosse coach, has guided the Warriors to five playoff appearances. Her sisters Kaitlyn, front, and Kristin, rear, are her assistants.

a masters degree from Endicott College in secondary education. She teaches biology at KP.

Wilder’s assistant coaches are no strangers. Her sister Kaitlyn, who’s KP’s varsity field hockey coach, is her varsity assistant, and her sister Kristin is the jayvee lacrosse coach.

The trio will all be involved in plotting the Warriors’ strategy going forward. They’ll rely on a style that emphasizes aggressive defense and a cohesive offense that strives to create scoring opportunities.

That blend no doubt will lead KP to a tourney berth. It’s an invitation the coaches hope will be long-lasting.

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Real Estate Corner

Public Meeting Held to Review Feasibility Study for Metacomet Greenway

By MARJORIE TURNER HOLLMAN

Advocates for the proposed Metacomet Greenway passed another milestone, moving the project further along. Residents and others who are interested in the project met in person and by Zoom on Wednesday, April 19, to hear and ask questions about the feasibility study completed by the engineering firm VHB.

The Metacomet Rail Trail is proposed to go from N. Attleboro, through Plainville, Wrentham, Norfolk, terminating in Walpole. The project is still in its beginning phase. During the meeting in Wrentham, it was pointed out that Wrentham and Norfolk are both at the feasibility study stage. Norfolk has a smaller segment of the proposed trail than Wrentham.

The spokesman for VHB, William DeSantis, went through the important points in the study, available on Wrentham.gov, and during the presentation responded to a number of questions residents had about the project.

While DeSantis offered a broad overview of the entire project, he focused primarily on Wrentham's part of the whole. He described several alternate

plans for building the trail from the Plainville line through Wrentham and into Norfolk.

After explaining the options available to connect the trail with the William A. Rice Recreational Complex, DeSantis focused primarily on Segment 1, which stretches from the Plainville line up to Wrentham center. This is an intact right of way, site of the original rail bed this project is based upon. However, this section is privately owned by National Grid. Those in attendance learned that National Grid is amenable to negotiating an easement of some sort with the town of Wrentham. This willingness to negotiate with the town goes a long way toward making the building of the trail possible for this specific segment.

Many rail trail projects take more than fifteen years to complete. Wrentham's portion of the Metacomet Greenway has the advantage of having the support of the Wrentham Recreation Commission. In addition, Wrentham has Community Preservation Act (CPA) funding in place that may be one source of monies needed to make the trail a reality.

Design and permitting are estimated to take at least two years before any construction



can begin. The mile-long section from the Plainville line to Wrentham center is estimated to take three to four years to complete if funding is available.

When asked about funding sources, several options, including grants, were discussed. State monies may be available. State Recreational Trails Program (RTP grants) have been provided to many rail trail projects across the state. Chuck Adelsberger (Wrentham Recreation Commission member) noted, "If you can show the project has regional scope you stand a better chance of getting grants." Planning level construction costs for Segment 1 are estimated to be between \$1 million and \$4 million.

Many of the questions that were brought up at this meeting were met with the answer "It's up to you." Would the path be paved or crushed stone dust? Three options exist to connect the rail trail to another portion that is in Nor-



folk. Which one will be chosen? For these and many other questions, the answer was the same—It's up to the town, and most likely decided by a vote at town meeting. A non-negotiable point is that the trail must meet federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

A priority in the planning of the rail trail route is to connect the trail to the William A. Rice Recreation Complex (the site of the former Wrentham State School). Two of the proposed options would accomplish this, but traffic, housing developments, and other barriers all may affect the ultimate decision for how the trail would get through Wrentham to Norfolk. A third, possibly most feasible option, would not be able to connect the trail with the recreation complex.

Near the end of the meeting, attendees were urged to "Get done what you can, when you can, as soon as you can." Those at the meeting were also advised, "These projects usually do not get everything done at once."

The feasibility study offers detailed information that residents can read for themselves to help better understand the possibilities and potential this project has to increase recreational opportunities in town and improve trans-



portation options.

The Metacomet Greenway committee has been organizing grass-roots efforts to bring this project to the attention of local officials, and has been successful in gaining the support of important boards in the towns the trail would be built in. Zack McKeever, the committee's president, noted that parts of the proposed right of way are already being used by residents. These locations have no designated parking, are dirt paths (often used by dirt bikes), and may be overgrown in places.

The individual sections are not connected, but interest is growing, which gives many of us hope that we will one day have a local, accessible rail trail available for both residents and visitors who enjoy getting outdoors and being more active. Stay tuned for more developments.

To lend support for this project, email metacometgreenway@gmail.com or message the Metacomet Greenway's Facebook page.

Visit https://townofwrentham.hosted.civiclive.com/residents/metacomet_greenway to read the feasibility study and other Metacomet Greenway information.

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Real Estate Corner



On April 16, Gilly's House co-founder Barbara Gillmeister of Wrentham spoke at Temple Beth David in Westwood, during a Brotherhood Breakfast. Gillmeister spoke about the drug epidemic in Massachusetts and how Gilly's House, a home for men in recovery, prepares its residents to re-enter society as productive members. Also speaking at the event were Steven Spiewakowski, a retired probation officer of Wrentham District Court, and Maureen Cappuccino, Gilly's House administrator. From left, Steve Spiewakowski, Maureen Cappuccino, Barbara Gillmeister, and Avi Glaser of Temple Beth David.

OCC Church Yard Sale Set for June 17

The Original Congregational Church of Wrentham will hold a spring yard sale on Saturday, June 17 from 8 a.m. to noon. The church is located at 1 East St.

There is something for everyone in the church's vestry, which will be filled with household

goods, toys, sporting equipment, and much more.

Parking is available in the church lot. Please enter at the office side entrance. For more information, visit www.occhurch.net or call 508-384-3110.

Rep. Vaughn Addresses Wampum Corner Intersection in Wrentham

SUBMITTED BY THE OFFICE OF REP. MARCUS VAUGHN

Over the past few years, it has become clear to many that the Wampum Corner Intersection (Rte. 121 and Rte. 1A) in Wrentham is accident-prone and in need of some change. Representative Vaughn has been contacted by many constituents in the area, most prominently Wampum Corner Wine and Liquors, which has had several accidents take place on the property.

After hearing his constituents' concerns, Representative Vaughn acted immediately to reach out to the Department of Transportation (DOT) to see what can be

done to improve public safety at the intersection. As a result of his advocacy, Representative Vaughn was able to work with the DOT to formulate a design plan which should help to lessen the danger this intersection poses to drivers and the businesses nearby.

This plan includes the addition of a speed limit reduction sign on the southbound approach to the intersection, lane designation signs for the intersection, chevrons on the curve, and dashed pavement markings to denote the curved lanes through the intersection. The DOT should be installing these signs and painting the lines on the road in the coming weeks.

"We are glad that we were able to get the help and cooperation of DOT on this matter of public and road safety," Representative Vaughn said. "Their expertise and resources have been invaluable in identifying and implementing solutions that will make our community safer for everyone who uses our roads and the businesses surrounding the intersection."

Contact the office of Representative Vaughn with any questions or concerns at (617) 722-2263 or Marcus.Vaugh@mahouse.gov.

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Local Law Student Recognized for Efforts Organizing for Environmental Justice


Wrentham resident Jennifer Aisha Loveland-Rose received Clean Water's 2023 Youth Action Award to recognize her work supporting Clean Air Taunton and their fight against a proposed sludge incinerator in Taunton, MA, an environmental justice community.

Loveland-Rose is a student at Northeastern University's School of Law.

She was honored on May 23 at Clean Water Action's 2023 Annual Celebration, held at the Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation in Waltham. María Belén Power,

the Undersecretary of Environmental Justice and Equity for the Healey-Driscoll Administration, gave the keynote address at the event.

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Real Estate Corner

Wrentham Democrats to Elect Delegates to Democratic State Convention

On Monday, June 12 at 7 p.m. (registration opens at 6:30 p.m.), Democrats will convene in person and at the Council on Aging to elect two delegates and two alternates to represent Wrentham at the 2023 State Democratic Convention.

Registered and pre-registered Democrats in Wrentham 16 years old by June 12, 2023, may

vote and be elected as delegates or alternates during the caucus. Youth (age 16 to 35), people with disabilities, people of color, and members of the LGBTQ+ community not elected as delegates or alternates are encouraged to apply to be add-on delegates at the caucus or by visiting massdems.org/massdems-convention. The 2023

Convention will be in person at the Tsongas Arena in Lowell, MA on September 23.

Those interested in getting involved with the Wrentham Democratic Committee should email Joe Stewart at info@wrenthamdemocrats.org or call (508) 507-9660.

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A "Clean and Green" Thank You

To the Editor:

The Norfolk Grange would like to thank all who helped make Norfolk's recent 14th Annual Clean and Green event happen this year. The weather was great and we had a good turnout in the celebration of Earth Day and the town-wide cleanup which took place on Saturday, April 15.

Participants collected litter from the streets and public places in Norfolk and brought their collections of trash and recycling to the parking lot of the historic Grange Hall. Located there was a large dumpster provided by the

town for trash disposal, as well as a dumpster provided by E. L. Harvey of Westborough for single-stream recycling. Grange members sorted the trash for recycling as well as redeemables which were donated to the King Phillip Music Association's bottle and can redemption trailer at the Norfolk Transfer Station. Also, participants received volunteer recognition certificates for their community service.

Thank you to all participants who volunteered to clean the streets and public places in

Norfolk this year, including the Scouts! We also would like to thank the Norfolk Select Board, the Norfolk Department of Public Works, Freeman Kennedy School, and E. L. Harvey Waste and Recycling Services for their support of our event. Again, thank you to everyone for helping beautify Norfolk and for making a positive difference for our environment!

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Real Estate Corner

2023 First Quarter Real Estate Activity Report

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reported that Norfolk County recordings for the first quarter of 2023 (January-March 2023) indicate a continued decrease in overall real estate activity, with significant drops in mortgage activity and property sales as compared to the first quarter of 2022.

"During the recently completed 2023 first quarter, real estate activity fluctuated in line with seasonal trends, but showed an overall decrease compared to the first quarter of 2022," said Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds recorded 22,704 documents in the first quarter of 2023. This was 34% less than the first quarter of 2022.

"Property sales have decreased compared to the previous year, however, they are trending closer to the numbers that were seen prior to the pandemic, with property sales in the first quarter of 2023 being 4% lower than the first quarter of 2019," said Register O'Donnell.

The number of deeds for the first quarter of 2023, which reflect real estate sales and transfers, both commercial and residential,

was 3,252, a decrease of 18% from the first quarter of 2022.

Register O'Donnell noted, "The lack of available real estate inventory is one likely reason why property prices are still higher than they were before the pandemic." O'Donnell added, "Another reason for current property prices is the desire for individuals to live in Norfolk County communities."

Sale prices for the first quarter have decreased compared to the first quarter of 2022. The average sale price in the first quarter was \$892,783, a 29% decrease from the first quarter of 2022. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is down, decreasing 47% from the same period a year ago.

"The steady drop in the number of mortgages recorded at the registry may indicate that homeowners who took advantage of lower interest rates in 2020 and 2021 are hesitant to make moves with average mortgage interest rates significantly higher." O'Donnell added, "Although average sales prices are declining, current homeowners and first-time buyers may be holding out hope for lower interest rates. Also, the higher interest rates drive up

the cost of purchasing a home, which affects not just first-time buyers but all buyers of real estate."

Overall lending activity showed a continued downward trend for the first quarter. A total

of 3,190 mortgages were recorded this quarter, 52% less than the first quarter of 2022.

"According to the data, we are recording significantly fewer mortgages than in the past, which can be attributed to a number of

factors that the country is experiencing right now, such as the rising cost of living and a spike in mortgage interest rates," explained O'Donnell. "These aspects of the economy can affect the local real estate market."



Rabbi Tom Alpert and Rev. Doreen Oughton traded places the weekend of May 5-7. Rev Oughton gave the sermon at Temple Etz Chaim of Franklin during the Shabbat Friday evening service. Rabbi Alpert did the same at Franklin Federated Church Worship Service on Sunday morning. This long-time tradition between the two faith communities was extra special this year, as Rev. Oughton is new to the FFC. Temple Etz Chaim is a Reform Jewish congregation incorporated in 1992 and serving thirteen area towns, including Norfolk and Wrentham.

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