

Wrentham's Grand Parade Set for Sept. 16

"Event of the Year" to Mark Town's 350th Anniversary

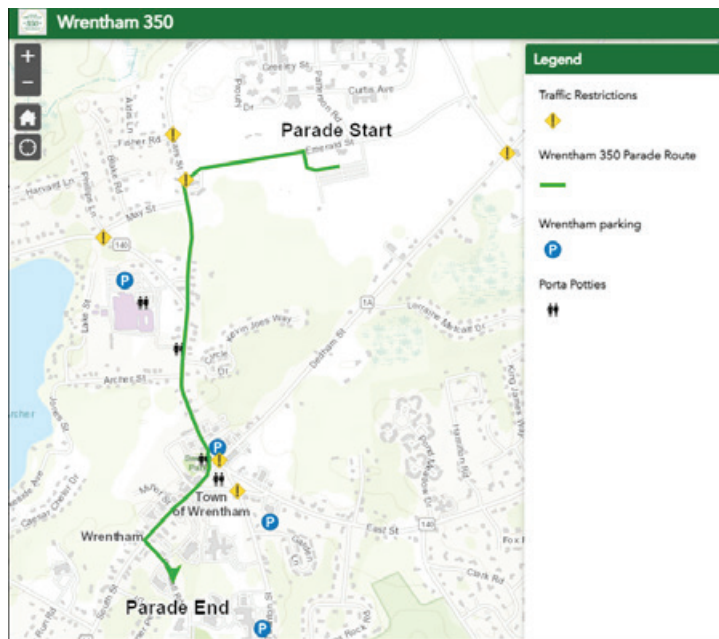
BY GRACE ALLEN

In a year full of celebrations, the town of Wrentham will hold the biggest parade in its history this month. While many events have been planned to mark the town's 350th anniversary, the parade, scheduled for Saturday, September 16, will be one of the most memorable, say organizers.

"This is definitely not going to be your typical small-town parade," said Kristen Andreatto, a member of the 350th Anniversary Committee.

The parade will kick off at noon from the Rice Complex on Emerald Street, travel down Shears Street, continue onto Franklin Street and take a right on South Street (Rt. 1A). The parade will finish at Randall Road (King Philip Plaza).

Residents should consider walking into town if possible, as parking will be at a premium and many roads will be closed. Some spectator parking



Preliminary map of the parade route and parking locations.

will be available in a few locations: Rice Field Complex, King Philip High School, the Delaney School, the courthouse, in the new center lot, Rice Field Complex, and at the American Legion. Shuttle buses will run from

the Legion.

The rolling parade will last close to two-and-a-half hours,

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Norfolk Woman Gearing Up for Charity Boxing Match

Belles of the Brawl Set for October 12

BY GRACE ALLEN

Shortly after moving to Boston a few years ago, Kara Lightowler was invited by a new friend to attend an event called Belles of the Brawl. Lightowler was initially reluctant, unsure of what exactly the event was about. But she went anyway and was deeply moved by what she experienced that night.

"I was just blown away, and thought 'this is the coolest thing ever,'" said Lightowler. "It was emotional but also so empowering. It was like a sporting event, but everyone was on the same team. And I knew I had to do this."

Belles of the Brawl is part of Haymakers for Hope, an organization that raises money and awareness to help "knock out cancer." The all-female, amateur participants in Belles of the Brawl take on an opponent for three two-minute rounds during the charity boxing event, which will take place this year on October 12 at the MGM Music Hall at Fenway.

After applying to the charity fight for several years in a row,



Kara Lightowler hopes to knock out cancer on Oct. 12.

Lightowler was finally chosen.

"I opened my email on June 8, the day after my birthday, and I saw that I got in," said Lightowler, who recently moved to Norfolk. "It was just the best birthday gift ever."

Lightowler, 33, will be one of thirty-two women participating in sixteen boxing matches on October 12. The event adheres to USA Boxing rules and regulations, so boxers are paired with someone compatible in age and weight.

Participants are assigned to a local boxing gym and train for

BOXING

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PARADE

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so people are advised to bring lawn chairs and coolers and settle in for a while. The parade will be held rain or shine, and portable toilets will be available along the route.

Local and national bands, military color guards, fife and drum corps, Scouts, local and state police, and fire departments will march. Town and regional organizations will be well represented in the floats, as well as area dance schools. Performers, such as jugglers, puppeteers, and stilt walkers, will also entertain the crowds.

Even the Philadelphia Mummers will be there.

The 350th Anniversary Committee has been planning the parade for close to two years. When Wrentham turned 300, there was also a big parade and hundreds of people came out to watch, although it was pouring rain that day. The town was much smaller fifty years ago, of course, so organizers expect a lot more people to attend this time and they want them to know it will be worth the effort.



The Philadelphia Mummers is just one nationally recognized group participating in the parade.

Committee Chair Ed Goddard stated, "This will be the largest and most expensive parade in Wrentham's 350-year history, with more than sixty national, regional, and local groups participating."

Organizers say the parade is made possible through generous donations from area businesses, residents, and corporate sponsors. Donations are still being accepted and sponsorships are still available to help with parade costs and some of the other upcoming anniversary events this

year. Donations of a certain level will be recognized and those donors will also receive tickets to the gala planned for December 2 at Lake Pearl Luciano's. It is expected that tickets to that event will sell out quickly.

Andreozzi says the town's residents have enthusiastically participated in all of the year's celebrations so far, so the anniversary committee expects crowds of people for the parade, too.

"This will absolutely be memorable, and we do feel it will be the event of the year because it's for everyone of all ages," she said. "We think it's going to be an incredible afternoon. It's really going to be amazing."

Cable 8 will livestream the parade for anyone who can't attend. Check wrentham350.com or the group's Facebook page for more information about the parade, including any updates, closer to the date.

WRENTHAM 350th GRAND PARADE

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Save the Date!

Re-Opening Celebration for Senior Center on Sept. 23

The Norfolk Senior Center will hold a re-opening celebration on Saturday, Sept 23 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. All are welcome.

The senior center was closed for several months due to a burst pipe last winter, and has undergone some remodeling and refreshing, along with repair work.

A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held at 11 a.m., and the celebration will include live music, refreshments, games, and a scavenger hunt. Information on the Senior Center's services will also be available.

On hand to greet guests will be Council on Aging Director Karen Edwards, as well as Town Administrator Justin Casanova-Davis.

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BOXING

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four months leading up to the event. Lightowler, who has run eighteen marathons, including the Boston Marathon this past April, had never boxed before.

“I thought I was in shape, but boxing is just a totally different breed,” she said. “There’s so much more technique to it than people realize. It’s foot skills, eye coordination, defense skills, the movement of your entire body.”

She trains at Elite Boxing & Fitness in North Attleborough. Paul Locke is her trainer, along with Norfolk resident Dawne Galetta, who herself participated in the 2021 Belles of the Brawl.

“They’re just amazing trainers and between the two of them I have learned so much already,” said Lightowler.

Belles of the Brawl participants raise money for a charity of their choice, and Lightowler has committed to raising \$10,000 for Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, which treated her best friend’s mother, Maria, who passed away from pancreatic cancer, and another friend’s sister, Abbie, who had breast cancer as a young mom.

Signing up to fight for loved ones who didn’t sign up for cancer is one way Lightowler feels she can show sup-

port and honor their battles with the dreaded disease. Getting punched is nothing compared to what others have gone through, she says.

“I’m not afraid of getting hit,” said the federal probation officer. “I just want to give the other girl a good fight and not have regrets that I didn’t train enough. Similar to running a marathon, you have to fully commit to the training as well as embrace getting punched in the face in hope of landing some punches yourself.”

Newly married, Lightowler says her husband as well as other family members were initially apprehensive but are now supportive and excited for her. She’s also very close to her six young nieces and nephews, and notes they’ve always shown up and cheered her on when she runs marathons.

“I know they can’t come to the fight, and they might not even fully comprehend what it’s about,” she said. “But I’d like to think that I’m showing them that girls, especially, can do anything.”

For more information, or to donate to Lightowler, visit <https://haymakersforhope.org>. Tickets for the event were still available at press time.

The MGM Music Hall at Fenway is located at 2 Lansdowne St., Boston. Fight Night begins at 7:30 p.m.

New Members Welcome to Charles River Chorale Open Rehearsals in September

The Charles River Chorale will soon begin rehearsals for its Fall 2023 season and is actively recruiting new members who are seeking a new community and musical opportunity.

The non-audition chorale group will begin open rehearsals on Tuesday, September 19 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ, 142 Exchange St., Millis. Two additional open rehearsals will take place on September 26 and October 3 to allow interested new members an opportunity to explore the chorale opportunity.

Under the leadership of director Ashley Nelson-Oneschuk, the Charles River Chorale is entering its 40th year as a non-profit 501(c)3 chorale. Nelson-Oneschuk, a music professional in her 8th year with the Charles River Chorale, is also the choral director for Medway High School. Her goal for the chorale is “focused on cultivating a joyful community first, with excellent musical experiences

as the vessel to achieve this.”

Charles River Chorale members hail from many area communities and range in age from teenagers to octogenarians. The group holds winter and spring concerts, with the Winter 2023 concert planned for Sunday, December 10 at 2 p.m. at Medway High School. The theme of the Winter 2023 concert is “Joy to the World, Celebrations from around the Globe.” This program will feature music celebrating cultures and seasonal events across the globe, including Chinese New Year, Kwanzaa, Christmas, Hanukkah, Diwali and more!

The Charles River Chorale rehearses on Tuesday evenings from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Church of Christ in Millis. Membership dues for the non-profit organization support operating costs. There are no dues for high school students, and scholarships based on need are available. There is also a separate children’s choir for children

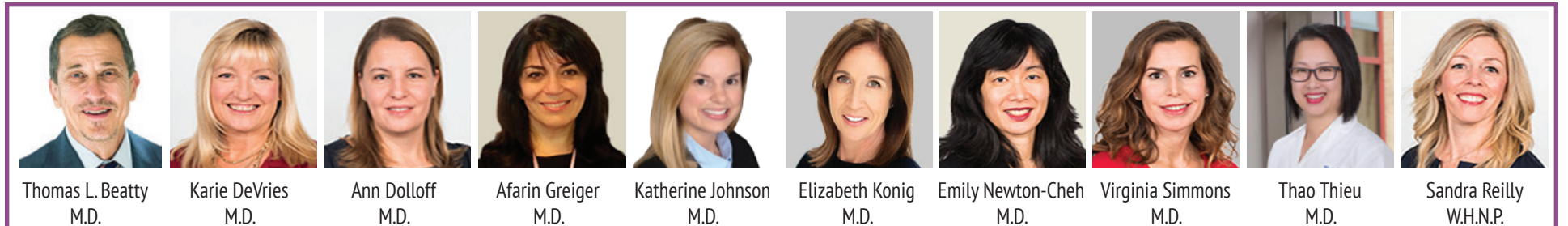
in Grades 2 through 6.

For more information about the organization and the upcoming open rehearsals, visit <https://www.charlesriverchorale.com>. Those who are interested in joining the chorale for the start of the season on September 19 are asked to complete a short sign-up document via either the QR code or by using the following link: <https://forms.gle/9GY3nfGJgtV9tsFk7>.

Sponsorships and advertising opportunities are also available.



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“Memory Café” Comes to Wrentham Senior Center

By ANGELA WEICHERDING-FITTON

Every year in the United States, more than 500,000 new cases of Alzheimer’s disease/dementia arise. New diagnoses are made every 67 seconds. This illness affects not only the lives of those with the disease, but also those who care for and love them.

On August 22, the Wrentham Senior Center introduced its new “Memory Café,” a gathering place within the center for people with Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia and memory problems. The Memory Café was established by Robin Tobin, the center’s Outreach Worker. Tobin previously worked in Canton, where they had a Memory Café, and she wanted to bring this welcoming setting to the town of Wrentham.

Memory Cafes were started in the Netherlands in 1997. They are located all over the world. Since the US has been working towards becoming a more dementia-friendly society, it’s only natural that they have been popping up in many different states in recent years.

The primary goal of a Memory Café is to make guests feel comfortable and not so isolated. Attendees can talk with others who understand the trials and tribulations associated with Alzheimer’s, focus on strengths to build self-confidence in both the patient and the caregiver, and explore new things within the company of like-minded people. A Memory Café is not a respite, meaning the patient with memory problems cannot be left unattended; it is meant to be a supportive environment for both patient and caregiver.

Memory Cafes offer activities as a break from regular routines, such as guest artists, educational

personnel, live entertainment, and modified exercise classes. Other times, a Memory Café can be just for relaxing. According to Tobin, “The Memory Café is a unique way for caregivers to connect within the community, and a lot of times they’ll receive suggestions on how to make day to day life easier.

“This is a project near and dear to my heart,” Tobin continued. “Janet, the director of the Wrentham Senior Center, and I felt that Wrentham needed a Memory Café. We are fighting the stigma against forgetfulness and dementia.” It should be noted that participants of the Wrentham Memory Café are welcome at other Memory Café locations as well.

Lauren Hewitt, a public health nurse in Wrentham who collaborates with the senior center, expressed great excitement about the Memory Café. “It’s a place where people can relate to one another. There’s a cohesiveness that comes into group bonding and helping each other out.” Research suggests that in settings like a Memory Café, people are calmer because they’re around others with whom they can relate. It’s also been shown that settings such as these lower a person’s blood pressure and cause them to generate better, more helpful hormones, as opposed to cortisol and anxiety hormones.

Hewitt credited Tobin with being a key player in adding the Memory Café to the Wrentham Senior Center. “Robin has been so instrumental,” she stated. She also emphasized that the Memory Café is a great place for caregivers to find out about services of which most people are unaware.

The Memory Café, which is open the fourth Tuesday of every month, is an extension of the Caregiver Support Group, which is held the second Wednesday of the month. September’s Memory Café will be held on the 26th.

While visiting the senior center for either or both of these groups, Nurse Hewitt expressed that she and Jeannine Murphy, another registered nurse with the Public Health Alliance (PHA), want to educate people about what they’re eligible for as Wrentham residents:

- For patients who are prescribed medication, the PHA will provide medication boxes with reminder alarms.
- The nurses will provide residents in need with Depends, which are received through donations. The PHA also receives donated medical equipment, most still in its original packaging, which they can provide to patients in need.
- Every resident of Wrentham is eligible for a free case of Ensure Protein Drinks every month. These are pivotal for Alzheimer’s patients as they generally have a low appetite yet move around a lot and have difficulty maintaining or gaining weight.
- The nurses at the PHA conduct home visits to check vitals and do assessments to make it a safer environment. They can provide information about shopping for patients, rides to doctor’s appointments, or overnight help if necessary. The PHA has a partnership with BNNG, a group of local business owners who donate services.

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A memory café is a welcoming gathering place for people with forgetfulness or other changes in their thinking and for their family, friends, and caretakers. Memory cafés are happening all over Massachusetts. Each memory café is unique; for example, some cafés invite guest artists, some offer education about memory changes, and some are just for relaxing and chatting. The goal of the Memory Café’s is to help guests feel comfortable and to know that they are not alone. Cafés are a place to talk with others who understand what you are going through, to forget about limitations and instead focus on strengths, to enjoy other’s company, and to explore something new.

To register for this free event please call the Wrentham Senior Center, 508-384-5425

Wrentham Memory Café will be held the 4th Tuesday of each month at 2:00pm!

Guests that require personal care are required to have their caregiver present

In sponsorship with the Wrentham Senior Center and the Wrentham Metacommet Health Alliance

“There is no such thing as a stupid question. We want the people of Wrentham to know what resources are available to them.” Hewitt said. The PHA nurses take every question and request very seriously and if they cannot perform a task personally, they know who will.

“It’s nice to be able to help people who are unaware of resources,” Hewitt stated. “This job makes me feel like I make a difference.” The primary goal of the PHA is to allow patients to stay in their own homes for as

long as possible. And they will go to great lengths to make this a reality.

For more information on the Memory Café and the Caregiver Support Group, contact the Wrentham Senior Center, located at 400 Taunton Street, at (508) 384-5425, or you can email Robin Tobin at rtobin@Wrentham.gov.

If you have any questions for the nurses at PHA, call (508) 384-5485 or email atphnurse@metacometpha.org

Grit, Determination, and a New-Found Love of Running

BY GRACE ALLEN

“Age is no barrier. It’s a limitation you put on your mind.” – Jackie Joyner-Kersey, 3-time Olympic gold medalist in track and field

How old is too old to start running marathons? According to Tim McDonagh, you’re never too old, and middle age is a great time to start.

The 45-year-old Norfolk resident and Norwood police officer had just finished the Boston Marathon this past April when he started eyeing the Chicago Marathon as his next goal. He’d been bitten by the marathon bug.

“I wish I had started running in my twenties,” admitted McDonagh, a detective sergeant. “It would’ve helped with reducing stress, kept me in better shape, and maybe I’d have raised more money for charity. But now I know, and it’s better late than never.”

The police officer will run the Chicago Marathon on October 8 in support of the children’s charity Open Heart Magic, which trains volunteers to become hospital magicians. Working alongside child life specialists, the magicians engage and empower children undergoing serious medical treatment.

McDonagh credits his colleagues at the Norwood Police Department for their encouragement and comradery in support of a healthy, fit lifestyle. For the runners among them, McDonagh helped establish the Norwood Police Running Club, an official U.S. Track and Field club. The group’s members run as a team in local races, and the club designation lends a certain cachet and legitimacy to their efforts.

Last fall, the club ran the BAA Half Marathon and raised close to \$6,000 for Dana Farber and the Jimmy Fund. The group has also participated in Run for a Vet, Boston’s Run to Remember, turkey trots in Norfolk and Norwood, and other local races.

McDonagh also encourages the younger officers in the department to try running while they have more stamina and are less prone to injuries, telling them he regrets waiting so long to take up the sport.

“I tell them we have to be in shape for our job,” said McDonagh. “And I hope that our running club helps motivate ev-



McDonagh with his family after finishing the 2023 Boston Marathon.

everyone to run and stay healthy. Maybe I can inspire some younger officers by showing them it can be done at any age.”

Mostly self-taught, McDonagh has immersed himself in the running world, focusing on nutrition and proper form—things he never really considered as he ran his first Boston Marathon in October of 2022. But he bested the time from that race in his April 2023 marathon, which was the focus of an article in the April Norfolk/Wrentham and Norwood editions of Local Town Pages (see www.norfolk-wrenthamnews.com/archives). He finished his second Boston Marathon in 4:30, shaving 19 minutes off his 2022 attempt. McDonagh had started to pay attention to the mechanics of successful distance runners and now draws inspiration himself from the older athletes—known as masters—he meets.

And while he is currently focused on the Chicago Marathon, McDonagh has a bigger goal in mind. He’s set his sights on the Abbott World Marathon Majors, a race series of six prestigious marathons across the globe. The Marathon Majors include the Boston, Chicago, Berlin, London, New York, and Tokyo marathons. Finishers of all six marathons receive a special medal and entrance into a global community comprised of Olympic and elite athletes, as well as amateur runners ticking off a bucket list goal.

McDonagh says after Chicago, he plans to run Boston again in 2024, followed by the New York City Marathon in November of that same year. In 2025, he hopes to run the London Marathon. Berlin and Tokyo will follow.



The Norwood Police Running Club at the BAA Half Marathon last year.

But for now, training for the Chicago Marathon and raising money for Open Heart Magic is his mission. The father of two says children’s charities will always strike a chord with him. McDonagh himself was born with a collapsed lung and a heart murmur, and struggled with bad asthma throughout his childhood. If he can give hope or inspiration to others struggling—no matter how old they are—he feels all his efforts are worth it. McDonagh notes his children have started entering kid’s races, and he’d like to think he’s setting a good example by leading a healthy, active lifestyle. More

importantly, he hopes he’s exemplifying that it’s never too late to start.

And in this era of community policing, McDonagh would like to think he is modeling a way to be involved with the greater community by supporting and acknowledging the needs of others. Police officers running for a charity is one way to do that, he says.

“It’s the community that’s going to be there when we need them,” said McDonagh. “Forming strong relationships, getting involved, and giving back in ways like this, well, I hope it shows people we care.”



McDonagh after finishing the Run to Remember.

As McDonagh and his colleagues continue to run races for charities, he hopes they will not only show the community the value of a connected police force, but also model that no matter your age, you can still strive to make healthy life choices and, perhaps, even run a marathon.

For more information about Open Heart Magic, visit <https://openheartmagic.org>. To contribute to McDonagh’s fundraising efforts for the organization, visit <https://haku.ly/e0a9d5f293>.



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Dean College Awards \$38,000 Scholarships to Local High School Students

Dean College is pleased to announce that two local high school students have been awarded \$38,000 scholarships to attend Dean: Ethan Pflomm received the Franklin High School Scholarship, and Caleigh Brown received the Hockomock YMCA Scholarship. These scholarships are awarded annually by the College to a deserving high school senior and are renewable each year the student attends Dean, provided they maintain a 2.7 GPA or higher.

To apply, a student must submit an essay about what prompted them to apply to Dean and how they hope to contribute to the Dean community. They must also include a letter of recommendation from a school administrator, counselor or teacher. After all materials are reviewed, applicants meet with the scholarship selection committee for an interview.

Franklin High School Scholarship recipient Ethan Pflomm

chose Dean for the sense of community he found here on campus.

"I chose Dean College because of the people and the atmosphere," Ethan said. "Everyone that I met and talked to was kind and welcoming. When I spoke to current and past students, they all told me that they loved their experience. I could see myself fitting in very easily with the community and that's how I knew that Dean was the right choice for me. In the fall, I am looking forward to getting involved with the Theatre program!"

Meanwhile, Hockomock YMCA Scholarship recipient Caleigh Brown is looking forward to taking advantage of all the opportunities Dean offers to help her launch a career in occupational therapy.

"Dean College's close-knit community and vibrant atmosphere drew my attention from the moment I stepped on cam-

pus," Caleigh said. "I'm grateful to have been chosen for this scholarship which will give me the freedom to shape my future and reach my dreams. The Exercise Science program aligns perfectly with my future goal of becoming an Occupational Therapist and the emphasis on internships will provide real-world experience and invaluable networking opportunities. This fall, I'm looking forward to getting involved in the honors program as well as Dean's numerous community service initiatives. I'm so excited to be a Bulldog!"

Congratulations to these future Dean College Bulldogs! If you are a current high school senior eligible and interested in one of these local scholarships, contact your high school guidance office for more information.

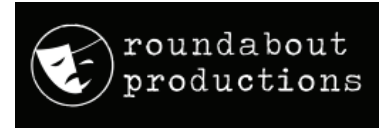
To learn more about Dean College, visit www.dean.edu.

"Much Ado About Nothing" Comes to Norfolk and Attleboro

Roundabout Productions will present a version of William Shakespeare's "Much Ado About Nothing" later this month.

Laughter, witty wordplay, and 1960s nostalgia come together in one of Shakespeare's most delightful romantic comedies. Don John's malicious gossip and Leonato's pride threaten to ruin the fairy-tale wedding of Claudio and Hero, as love quickly turns to scandal. With honor and friendship on the line, sharp-tongued adversaries Beatrice and Benedick put their battle of wits (and hearts) on hold to restore order, that might just lead to true love.

Performances will be held at the Norfolk Grange, 28 Rockwood Rd. in Norfolk on Thursday, September 14 at 7:30 p.m.; Friday, September 15 at 7:30 p.m.; and Saturday, September 16 at 7:30 p.m.



Performances will also be held at the Coelho Middle School, 99 Brown St., Attleboro on Friday, September 22 at 7:30 p.m.; Saturday, September 23 at 7:30 p.m.; and Sunday, September 24 at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$20 or \$15 for seniors, students, and veterans, and may be purchased at the door or online at roundaboutproductions.org/events.

For more information, visit our website or Facebook page.

This production is made possible by a grant from the Mass Cultural Council and Norfolk Cultural Council.

Correction

Last month, Pan-Mass Challenge organizers submitted an incomplete list of Norfolk and Wrentham riders to Local Town Pages. Following is the full list of residents who signed up to ride:

Norfolk: Bryan Adams, John Bailer, Susan Bloom Brooks, Jessica Boulter, John Cali, Andrew Cleverdon, Brian Donegan, Rob Duffy, David Dwyer, Shawn Folan, Team Jack, Wayne Johnson, David Lawson, Paul Lugten, Paul Macrina, John Maheu, Vincent Manning, John McCarron, Michael Quinn, Ed Rapa, Frank Reilly, Nancy Rose, Andy Weitzman, and Andrew Wolff.

Wrentham: John Anderson, Joseph Collins, Michael Earls, Shawn Hanrahan, Christine Harney Hanifin, Brian Harvey, David Hennessey, Bob Marini, Christopher Pacella, Danielle Page, Josh Person, Thomas Pruell, Jeremiah Sullivan, and Isabelle Taylor.

Pan-Mass Challenge regrets the error.

FAFC Backpack Drive

The Wrentham-based Friends of Adoption and Foster Care (FAFC) are collecting items to fill backpacks for foster children.

School supplies, new stuffed animals, and personal care items are needed. Also needed are new pajamas, girls sizes 10/12 and 14/16, and boys sizes 5, 7/8, 10/12 and 14/16.

MA Department of Children & Families (DCF) social

workers keep these backpacks on hand so when a child is placed into foster care, the child will get a new backpack. Backpacks are a great comfort to children who have left home with nothing.

Donated items can be dropped off at St. Martha's Church in Plainville or St. Mary's Church in Wrentham. Donation bins are located in the parking lot behind each church.

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Exhale, let the dance journey begin

Local studio offers instruction to students ages 18 months to adults

Exhale A School of Dance started in Norfolk in 2015 and now has two locations in Norfolk: 18 Union St., Suite 103, next to Town Hall and across from the library; and 65 Holbrook St. Suite 170, in the Rivers Edge Plaza next to Anne's Market and Elvate Salon.

Exhale offers instruction to students of all ages, from 18 months to adults.

"We like them to start with us and stay so they understand our culture and become part of our dance family, but we also specialize in adult programming including Ballet, Tap/Jazz and Dance Cardio which is a fun way for adults to exercise in a judgment-free zone," says Exhale's founder and CEO Jen Cote.

Cote says another popular class is Boys Dance 2. "It's a fun upbeat class with hip-hop, tap and jazz just for boys."

When do you know if your child is ready for dance? "If they can walk, love to move and can follow simple directions they can begin in our Dance with Me class at 18 months," says Cote, recognizing that all children are different.

"I would suggest giving it a try and not having any expectations. Dance with Me classes can be difficult the first few lessons when both the students (and parents) are learning new skills. Don't give up, and by the end of the session your child will likely be following directions, dancing and having fun! If the first few lessons are too stressful, wait until they are big enough to do an independent class."

"Most of our teen students are in our Exhale Dance Youth Intensive Program, most have

"Exhale is one huge family, and we love the bond that it has created with the Norfolk community!"

Amerie P

been with us for seven years and loved dance so much they wanted to make it a bigger part of their lives," says Cote, adding teen classes include Tap, Hip-Hop and Lyrical (THL).

"Our Youth Intensive students perform in several Exhale-produced shows, just started competing (for the educational experience) last season, and also perform in community and fundraising events."

To adults she says, "Once you attend you will love it. Don't expect to get everything right on the day and just enjoy the movement. We create a judgment-free, fun zone. You will come in for the dance and stay because of the friendships and laughs. Some students in our Tap/Jazz adult class choose to perform while others do not. Either way, simply learning the dance is fun!" Adult classes typically have between 10 to 15 dancers at the most.

Trial sessions are available for those hesitant to enroll.

Cote, also known as "Mrs. Jen" to her students, graduated from Dean College with a Bachelor of Arts in Dance, and taught for many years in the Greater Boston Area. Cote lives in Norfolk and grew up in Norwood.

"For over a decade I managed the youth performance program of the Dance Inn, also known

Business spotlight

as the 'Legacy Dance Company' in Lexington. My mentor and boss, Thelma Goldberg, has owned the Dance Inn for 42 years and she taught me everything she knows about business and dance and I absolutely loved working there," says Cote. But after her first child was born, her family moved to Norfolk and the commute to Lexington became too challenging with a little one at home.

"I wanted to enjoy her childhood and not spend so much time simply commuting back and forth. I noticed that none of the studios in the Norfolk area were similar to the ones I had taught at previously, and I wanted to create a pre-professional program with a family feel, place where young dancers could receive a stellar dance education in a non-competitive environment while learning to be 'their best' not necessarily 'the best.'"

"One day I sat in Rte 95 traffic for over two hours, and the next day I found the courage to make a phone call that changed my life: I called the Norfolk Grange Hall to inquire about renting space, and the rest is history - Exhale was born in the spring of 2015."

The Exhale instructors have extensive teaching experience and all have degrees in education, dance or theater or are in the process of receiving one.



"We are so grateful we found Exhale. My daughter beams with joy when she has classes and the studio uses a nurturing approach that builds confidence and a love for dancing."

Greta H



Each year, in addition to a spring recital in mid-May, Exhale offers special performances including:

- "Clara's Sleepover" which will take place in Dec., and will feature Ella Paralta and Lyla Graham who have been cast as Clara. The story is a spin on The Nutcracker with a similar

storyline and includes jazz, tap, ballet, modern and hip-hop performances. In this story, Clara has invited all her friends to a birthday sleepover at her house on Christmas Eve, and magic ensues.

- "The Extravaganza" which will take place on Feb. 10 at the Orpheum Theater in Foxboro, and will feature guest teacher Christina Belinski who has performed on Broadway, with ballet companies and has been on faculty/judging panels of several well-known dance competitions and conventions.

For detailed information about all Exhale programs, including registration information (note, classes are filling up fast), visit www.exhaledance.com

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Attention College-Bound Students: Important FAFSA Changes

FAFSA is the “Free Application for Federal Student Aid” form that determines the family/college student’s eligibility for federal or state need-based financial aid which includes grants, work-study, and/or student loans. The FAFSA Simplification Act passed in 2021 which simplified the FAFSA form. These changes will become the standard with the 2024-2025 FAFSA- which applies to students attending college in 2024-2025. There are several important FAFSA changes that could significantly impact a student’s financial aid package, and a few are highlighted below.

FAFSA Opening Date: The FAFSA typically is available on October 1st of each year for students who are expecting to enroll into college the following academic year. However, due to the complexities of instituting the FAFSA changes, the 2024-2025 FAFSA will not be available until December 2023. This

may impact the colleges’ ability to send out their financial aid packages in a timely manner.

Fewer Questions: The number of questions on the FAFSA form will decrease from 108 to 46. Additionally, the form will better align with the questions asked on the federal tax returns. The hope is that the FAFSA will now be easier to submit.

Expected Family Contribution (EFC) is being replaced with the term - **Student Aid Index (SAI)**. The EFC and the SAI is a calculation of the amount of need-based federal financial aid that a student might be eligible to receive. The term EFC led families to believe that the calculated amount is what they would be responsible to pay annually for their child’s education; however, the cost is often much higher. The new FAFSA terminology will be less misleading, but a family will still not know the final costs until they receive the financial aid package from the college.

Multiple Children in College:

This is one of the most important changes. In the past, FAFSA focused on a family’s cash flow, and it was assumed that if a family had 2 children in college the family would not have double the money to pay for college. The new FAFSA will ask for the number of children in the family’s household but will no longer provide any discount for multiple children in college.

Separated or Divorced Parents:

In the prior FAFSA, financial aid was solely determined by the custodial parent’s income- which is the parent who the child lives with 50% or more of the time. With the new FAFSA, the parent responsible for filling out the FAFSA will be the parent that provides the most financial support to the child - and not where the child resides.

Grandparent 529: Certain untaxed income, such as grandparent-owned 529 plans and/or cash gifts from relatives will no longer be reported on the FAFSA - so the gifts will not impact the student’s financial-aid eligibility.

Income Protection Allowance: Income protection allowance, which is basically the amount of income that is not counted when determining the



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

student’s financial aid eligibility, will increase for parents by 20% and by 35% for the student.

The Pell Grant: Federal Pell Grants are provided to the neediest of students. In the 2024-2025 year the Student Aid Index (SAI) calculation will be adjusted so that more students qualify for Pell Grants. In addition, incarcerated students will be eligible again.

Financial Aid Appeals:

There are quite a few changes in this section, but one of the most significant is that a college can no longer implement a policy that denies all financial aid appeals. All appeals must be processed on a case-by-case basis.

Third Party Assistance: The new FAFSA guidelines do not allow any third party to charge a fee to help complete the FAFSA.

This is an especially important topic and we only touched upon 10 of the changes. There are many resources available to learn a better understanding of ALL the changes, such as in the Federal Student Aid website: <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/dear-colleague-letters/2023-08-04/fafsa-simplification-act-changes-implementation-2024-25>

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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Dean College to Hold 26th Annual President’s Cup Golf Tournament on September 18

The 26th Annual Dean College President’s Cup Golf Tournament will take place on Monday, September 18 at the Franklin Country Club, 672 East Central Street, Franklin, MA.

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To learn more about the tournament, sponsorship opportunities and to register, visit www.dean.edu/golftournament.

RECYCLE THIS NEWSPAPER

Your Money, Your Independence

Financial Aid Changes to Impact This Fall's College Applications

We've come to expect Congress naming new legislation that exaggerates impact but does little to be true to its name.

Inflation Reduction Act. Secure Act. American Rescue Plan Act.

Now add "FAFSA Simplification Act," which makes the upcoming 2024-2025 college admissions process a complicated mess.

To be balanced, here are the benefits per advocates:

- Easier FAFSA application process with a reduced number of questions.
- The Federal Pell Grant expands to more students and will link eligibility to family size and the federal poverty level.
- The Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) has been replaced by the Student Aid Index (SAI).

This last one is interesting because SAI is based on a comprehensive database of education costs that includes tuition



Glenn Brown, CFP

and fees, room and board, and other living expenses. The index also includes data on financial aid awarded to students, such as grants, scholarships, and loans.

By calculating the average cost of college for a given school and comparing it to the average amount of financial aid awarded, the index can provide a more accurate estimate of the student's EFC and help make more informed decisions about which school to attend.

Ok, enough of the accolades, let's get to the complications and impact.

Two Different Views. Both students and parents must create a Student Aid Account to get an FSA ID before completing the form. Previously a shared sign-on allowed for a singular view, now each completes their respective sections and continuity becomes more challenging.

No longer does the most capable parent complete. For divorced or separated parents, the one providing greater financial support over past calendar year must now complete the FAFSA. Yes, not the parent most engaged to ensure accuracy and meet deadlines, but the one who provides the most money. So much for a fiduciary process.

Paying for two or more kids in college at same time? Who cares. The number of students a family has enrolled in college will no longer factor into the FAFSA calculation.

You aren't selling the farm or small business you've built, but if you had to...? The net worth of family farms and small businesses with under 100 employees will now be required as part of

the application. Maybe having to sell is a strong ask, but borrowing against isn't - otherwise, why ask now?

All applicants, especially Early Action / Early Decision (EA/ED), your school's deadlines will be before FAFSA opens. Historically, FAFSA opens October 1 and EA/ED deadlines followed in mid-October through November. Per the federal government, this year FAFSA has "an anticipated December 2023 launch date." The colleges aren't waiting around, they're keeping October and November EA/ED application deadlines, including CSS Profile schools.

For example, state university UMass-Amherst has a Early Action deadline of November 5 and Regular Decision of January 15, but the FAFSA priority deadline is March 1 and state deadline for Massachusetts is May 1.

CSS Profile school Williams College states, "The FAFSA is not an initial requirement for the 2024-2025 academic year, given the uncertainty of the FAFSA Simplification Act application

timeline. Enrolled students will be required to complete the FAFSA by May 15th."

So don't prioritize completing the FAFSA before submitting your college applications this year.

Instead work on the admissions application now, continue your student's building of a relationship with the university's local academic recruiter and stay focused on Return On Investment (ROI) during the selection process.

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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Why Now Is The Best Time To Buy Life Insurance

Local Insurance Expert Recommends Putting a Financial Safety Net in Place

The current economy continues to put financial strain on many of us. So it just makes sense to examine our budgets and look for ways to trim the fat from our monthly expenses and put more into savings, if possible.

“That’s a great way to help stabilize your finances, but it’s also important that you have a financial safety net in place in case something were to happen to you,” says Jeffrey N. Schweitzer, EPA, CEP, ATP, RTRP, a Tax, Insurance & Financial Services Professional with Northeast Financial Strategies Inc in Wrentham, MA. “Life insurance is one of the few guarantees your family could rely on to maintain their quality of life if you were no longer there to provide for them.”

There are 95 million adult Americans without life insurance, according to LIMRA, an insurance industry research group. “The fact is, the vast majority of Americans need life insurance and, sadly, most people either have none or not enough,” says Schweitzer. “If someone depends on you financially, you need life insurance. It’s that simple.”

September is Life Insurance Awareness Month, making it the perfect time to take stock of your life insurance needs. Schweitzer offers three additional reasons why now is the best time to look into getting life insurance.

You’ll never be younger than you are now. While that may sound obvious, youth is on your side when it comes to life insurance.



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It makes good financial sense to get coverage when you’re young and healthy, as premiums are based on your age and health. For most policies, your premiums will be locked in at that rate over the life of the policy, and can’t be raised due to a change in your health status.

It’s affordable, with rates near historic lows. People overestimate the cost of life insurance by nearly three times, according to a recent study conducted by LIMRA and the LIFE Foundation, a nonprofit insurance education organization. In fact, life insurance rates remain near historic lows; the cost of basic term life insurance has fallen by nearly 50 percent over the past decade. For example, a healthy 30-year-old can buy a 20-year, \$250,000 level-term policy for about \$13 per month.

Life happens. One day life is going along smoothly, and the next, you’re thrown a curve ball. No one knows what the future holds. None of us expect to die prematurely, but the truth is roughly 600,000 people die each year in the prime of their lives. That’s why today is always the best day to take care of your life

insurance needs.

“Life Insurance Awareness Month is the ideal time for a life insurance review,” says Schweitzer. “I urge everyone to take a few minutes out of their busy schedules this month to make sure they have adequate life insurance protection.”

According to Schweitzer, consumers can get a general sense of their life insurance needs by going to www.lifehappens.org/lifecalculator and using the online calculator offered by the LIFE Foundation. The next step, suggests Schweitzer, should be to contact a local insurance professional, who can conduct a more comprehensive needs analysis and help you find the right products to fit your specific needs and budget.

About Life Insurance Awareness Month

Held each September, Life Insurance Awareness Month is an industry-wide effort that is coordinated by the nonprofit LIFE Foundation. The campaign was created in response to growing concern about the large number of Americans who lack adequate life insurance protection. Roughly 95 million adult Ameri-



Jeffrey Schweitzer

cans have no life insurance, and most with coverage have less than most insurance experts recommend. For more information on life insurance, visit LIFE’s website at www.lifehappens.org

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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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.

Split Ticket

Wrentham is a small town, but two opposing parties in the same building?

This photo was taken during the 1960 Presidential campaign which featured John Kennedy versus Richard Nixon. Apparently matters of this sort were handled on a gentlemanly basis by the two political parties at that time.

The story behind this photo is that one party had rented space in the building while the other was having trouble locating a vacant office in the center of town.

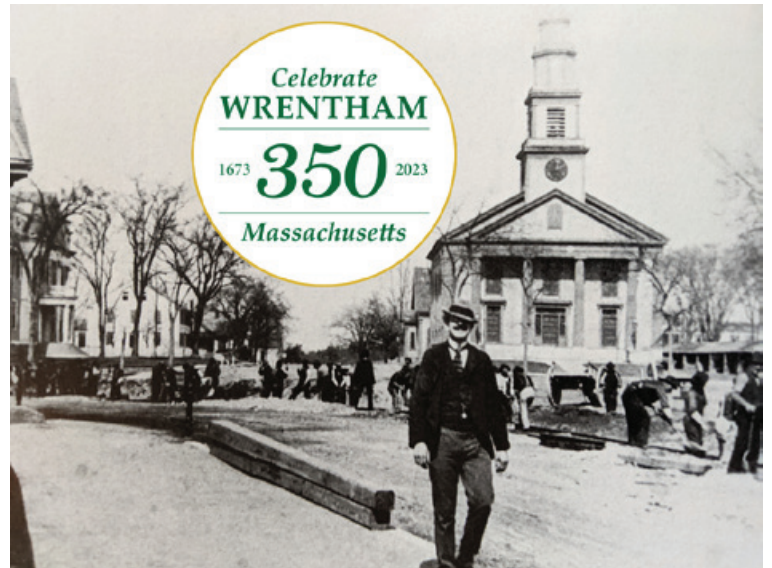


The other party, knowing the space was available next to them, provided they approved, decided that offering the office next to them was the proper thing to do.

It can be reported that even though their offices were only

one door away, neither party adopted a "Wrenthamgate" strategy to further their cause.

Though the photo is one of hundreds owned by the Historical Commission, it was brought to our attention by two former



Wrentham residents, David and Betty Fuller. Writing from his home in Hawaii, Mr. Fuller enclosed a copy of a short article cut out of a February 1982 copy of "Popular Photography" magazine and asked if the picture was of the building he thought it was. Though the photo is deceptive with the banners and signs hanging over the facade of the

building, if you look carefully, you will note that it is the building which now houses the Wrentham Cooperative Bank.

Write-up source: 1982-1983 Wrentham Telephone Directory which was sponsored by the Wrentham Historical Society. (Digitized in 2023 by Grey Almeida, Wrentham 350 Anniversary Committee.)

Upcoming Program Highlights at the Fiske Library

Book Club

The new Fiske Library Book Club will hold its first meeting Tuesday, September 26 at 7 p.m. in the Sweatt Meeting Room. The book for discussion is "Lessons in Chemistry," by Bonnie Garmus. The Book Club will meet on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m., and it is

open to adults 18 and over. No registration is required. For more information, please contact Library Director Kim Shipala at 508-384-5443 x 3.

The History of French Neutrals in Wrentham

French captives forced to live in Wrentham? Please join us at the Fiske Library on Thursday,

September 7 at 7 p.m. as Steve and Bronya Joanis present new research uncovering the forgotten story of a family of "French Neutrals" who were removed from their homes in Nova Scotia during a war with France and forced

to live right here in Wrentham. This fascinating story centers on the life of Joseph Robeshaw and his brother Pierre who spent their childhood living in 18th century Wrentham as captives. Their lives encompassed the Revolu-

tionary War when Pierre served with the Continental Army, and the early Federal Period when Joseph was shipwrecked in Boston Harbor in 1786. This event is free and open to the public. No registration is required.

Wrentham Lions Announce Scholarship Winners

The Wrentham Lions Club is pleased to announce the recipients of its 2023 scholarship awards. The awards were presented to the students at King Philip High School Senior Award Night, held on June 1.

- Mariano Bernardini Memorial STEM Profession Scholarship: **Audrey Kelley**
- Eugene "Skippy" Brooks Memorial Leadership Scholarship: **Brooke Noonan**
- Phil & Mickey Scott Memorial Health Profession Scholarship: **Allison Boie**
- Educational Opportunity Scholarship: **Katrina Groom**

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Family-run Affordable Junk Removal takes the stress out of cleanups

By CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Whether it's one old fridge in the garage or an entire home of unwanted goods, the team at Affordable Junk Removal offers a cost-efficient, stress-free approach to waste management. "You don't lift a finger," says owner Jason Schadler, who started the company along with his wife Christine in 2005.

The business offers same-day service for both residential and commercial clients across eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island. In addition to junk removal, the company rents 15-yard dumpsters.

As a family-owned and operated company, Schadler says Affordable Junk Removal has lower overhead costs and is more accessible than national competitors. "I answer my phone 24 hours a day," he says. "I was on vacation in Italy and Portugal, and I was still answering my phone on the beach. When you call us, you get me — not an automated machine!"

Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible, properly disposes of non-recyclables and resells many items at the Schadlers' secondhand store, Resellables. "We opened that store in Bellingham because we hated to see things thrown away," Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time



endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

Business spotlight

As for Norfolk and Wrentham in particular, Schadler says they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the area. Christine spent her childhood holidays in Norfolk, where her aunt and uncle live, and she learned to blow glass at Luke Adams Glass Blowing in nearby Norwood. The Schadler family also frequents Supercharged in Wrentham, one of her son's favorite spots.

One of the best parts of his job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships with returning customers. "We are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the MetroWest area," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call 774-287-1133 or visit affordablejunkremoval.com.

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Christine and Jason Schadler, shown here with their children and dog, started Affordable Junk Removal in 2005.

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FSPA to host Fall Open House

The Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA) will hold an Open House for prospective students and families at 38 Main Street. The community is invited to tour the facilities, observe classes, speak with faculty and staff, and learn more about FSPA programs in music, dance, and drama, whether for recreational enjoyment or serious study.

The open house will be held on September 9 from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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 extraordi-



nary 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.

Performance is an integral part of an FSPA education and the school offers unrivaled performing opportunities for students throughout the year. On the calendar annually are student recitals, concerts by faculty and guest artists, master classes, student showcases, holiday shows, the school's signature Spring Concert, and summer camps and intensives. In addition, for students whose level of interest is more focused, there are special performing ensemble opportunities available by audition. THE BLACK BOX, home of the Franklin Performing Arts Company (FPAC), a 200-seat flexible theater located behind FSPA, provides a professional venue for FSPA student productions, while FPAC offers opportunities by audition for students to perform as apprentices.

For more information about FSPA and its programs, visit www.FSPAonline.com, call 508-528-8668, or stop by 38 Main St. in Franklin. You can follow FSPA on Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube.

Guest Column

Achilles Heel

By G. GREGORY TOOKER

As the elections primaries peep over the horizon, we watch with curiosity as candidate after candidate creeps onto the stage. But none so far appears to have a snowball's chance of knocking the leading "Republican" off his pedestal. It is becoming clear that no matter how many indictments or convictions are directed at this individual, his supporters will continue to believe an allegedly corrupt department of justice has skewed the system to its political advantage. This hard core has been classically conditioned to follow their candidate to hell and back. They will show up at the polls in a hurricane, snowstorm or driving rain.

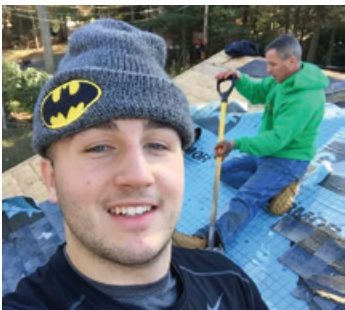
The rest of the electorate generally lacks such loyalty and devotion, no matter their candidate of choice. And herein lies the Achilles heel of American democracy. When on occasion more than half of the registered voters in the United States are not sufficiently motivated to cast their ballots in a presidential election, the probability of victory by an otherwise noncompetitive candidate looms

large. Add to that an aggressive gerrymandering strategy to redraw voting district boundaries and newly constructed poll access hurdles, you've got a recipe for an unexpected and unwanted takeover of national leadership.

Your writer is confident, given the seriousness and potential disastrous consequences of an election run amok, the electorate is going to be far better focused on the key issues than it has been in the past. The challenge is to achieve ready access to factual information that will support well-considered voting decisions. This means a conscious effort to steer clear of social media outlets as a source of candidate and election news and sticking to well-established, reliable sources. A healthy turnout at the polls during the upcoming primaries and the 2024 national election could spell the difference between the survival of American democracy as we know it or the emergence of an autocracy that will mark the beginning of its demise.

Opinions expressed in the Guest Column do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher.

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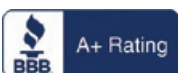
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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

More Beauty For Your Buck

By GINA WOELFEL

Nowadays, it's essential for beauty products to be worth the money we spend on them and to last as long as possible. That's why b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio is so excited to introduce you to the three treatment products we've formulated to target today's most common beauty concerns. We make our **BEFORE BRAND** and **NUTRIR** products from only natural, vegetarian ingredients, and to help you get the most from these beauties, we've put together three alternative ways to use them effectively. How's that for multitasking?

Allow me to introduce you to our three unique products.

- **b.LUXE BEFORE OIL** - Preventative, pre-shampoo treatment oil designed to be your first line of defense against hair damage. Applying BEFORE OIL just 10 minutes before shampooing allows you to wash and clean your hair without drying it out. It penetrates the hair shaft, depositing just the right amount of hydration to keep hair smooth, healthy, and well-protected. It can also help with hair color retention and is safe for all hair types. This formula includes organic sunflower oil, prickly pear seed oil, and our powerhouse ingredient - broccoli seed oil.
- **NUTRIR HIGH-IMPACT FACIAL SERUM** - Antioxidant-rich serum formulated with an ideal blend of 2% Bakuchiol extract, hyaluronic acid, tetrapeptides, Coenzyme Q10, and niacinamide to target fine lines, discoloration, and enlarged pores. Bakuchiol is an all-natural, non-irritating alternative to retinol (which can often have unpleasant side effects.) When used regularly, our high-impact serum leaves skin visibly smoother and firmer with a more radiant-looking appearance.
- **NUTRIR HYDRATING MIST & BODY OIL DUO** - Moisture-rich body hydration set packed with some of nature's most potent ingre-

dients. Its unique blend of therapeutic emollients instantly plumps, soothes, and revives dry, fatigued skin. Start with the all-over body mist for a blast of aloe vera, silk amino acids, and hyaluronic acid. Next, seal in those hard-working ingredients with our NUTRIR Body Oil, blended with nourishing coconut, sunflower, avocado, argan, rice bran, and broccoli seed oils.

If those products weren't already good enough, let's make them work double time! Finding ways to cut time and spending is always good, right? So, here are three easy and effective beauty hacks to get more beauty for your buck!

b.LUXE Beauty Hack #1 - DIY Scalp Spa Treatment.

Fun fact about this product: every element of our BEFORE OIL is just as healthy for your hair as it is for your skin (and remember, your scalp is still your skin!) In a small dish, combine two tbsp of natural sugar, two droppers of BEFORE OIL, one tsp of apple cider vinegar, and one tsp of quality honey. Whisk with a fork until scrub forms. Cover shoulders with a towel, and part dry hair down the middle. Gently buff a small amount of scrub into the exposed scalp area. Continue working in sections over your scalp until you've exfoliated every part. Now, take two more droppers of BEFORE OIL and work it through the ends of your hair. This is a great time to indulge in a relaxing scalp massage and remember, BEFORE OIL is beneficial for your skin and scalp, so feel free to move about the cabin and massage your temples, neck, and shoulders. Now, wrap your hair for one hour. Proceed with your regular shampoo and styling routine, and relish the nourishing effects of this easy DIY. Scan the QR code for a video tutorial.

b.LUXE Beauty Hack #2 - DIY Facial Lymphatic Drainage Massage.

If you've yet to hear about the benefits of Facial Lymphatic Drainage Massage, you don't know what you're missing! Your lymphatic system collects and

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eliminates your body's excess fluid, toxins, and waste. Facial lymphatic drainage (or FLD) is becoming incredibly popular because of its multiple benefits to your skin, appearance, and general wellness. When done daily, this gentle massage technique drains the buildup of lymphatic fluid trapped within your face, enhancing and improving blood flow, circulation, muscle tone, and cell renewal. This DIY superhero is an all-natural face-lift you didn't know you had in your back pocket. When applying your NUTRIR High Impact Serum, incorporate this gentle massage into your nightly skincare routine or anytime you'd like to de-puff and sculpt your face.

Scan the QR code for an FLD video demonstration.

b.LUXE Beauty Hack #3 - DIY NUTRIR Bath Fizz

Is there anything like a hot bath at the end of the day? It's the ultimate way to relax and ease your body of stress and fatigue. Our bath fizz recipe combines the nourishing power of our NUTRIR Duo with soothing effervescence. It's also a great way to revive dry, tired skin. This treatment is b.LUXE owner Heather Cohen's favorite DIY beauty boost! Just sprinkle over a warm water tub for a fun and fizzy experience.

Scan the QR code for the recipe and video tutorial.

We hope you found our beauty hacks and video tutorials helpful. Your beauty routine should be fun and flexible. Many of the beauty products that live



on your shelves are just waiting to be repurposed. Be creative, save money, and see how many uses you can get from one product!

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Living Healthy

Computer Vision Syndrome

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

As our scholars go back to schools and colleges, more and more time is spent every day using computer screens and our eyes are paying the price. Research shows that 25 to 93 percent of computer users experience a problem so common there's a name for it: Computer Vision Syndrome. Symptoms include decreased or blurred vision, burning or stinging eyes, sensitivity to light, headaches and back and neck pain.

Computer Vision Syndrome is more common if we exceed 2 hours of continuous computer screen time a day. The most common causes of this syndrome include improper viewing angle or distance from the screen, glare on the computer screen, extended computer use, staring without blinking and uncorrected vision problems.

The good news is that these problems are easy to fix, and identifying and treating the underlying cause usually eliminates this syndrome. Here what you can do:

1. Adjust your viewing angle

Studies have found the angle of gaze plays a key role in this syndrome. The angle used for computer work is different from that used for reading or writing. As a result, the requirements for focusing and moving the eyes place additional demands on the visual system when using a computer. To achieve the best angle, the center of the monitor should be placed 20 to 28 inches from your eyes and 4 to 5 inches below eye level. Reference materials should be positioned so they can be seen without moving your head to look from the document to the screen.

2. Reduce glare

Letters on a computer screen are not as clear as letters on a printed page. Your eyes will work harder if there is too little contrast between letters and background or glare on the screen. This can result in sensitivity to light that can worsen under high-wattage fluorescent or flickering lights. Position your screen to avoid glare from overhead lights or windows. Close the blinds on your windows or switch to lower-watt bulbs in your desk lamp. If you cannot change the lighting to minimize glare, buy a glare filter for your monitor.

3. Rest your eyes

When using a computer for an extended period of time, rest your eyes periodically to prevent eye-strain. Every 20 minutes,



look away from your computer to a distant object for 20 seconds. This will give your eyes a chance to refocus. After two hours of continual computer use, rest your eyes for 15 minutes.

4. Blink often

Our eyes need lubrication to see well. This is accomplished by a blinking reflex and leads to production of moisture (tears) on the surface of the eyes. People normally blink about 18 times a minute, but computer users tend to blink only one-fourth as often. This increases the chance of developing dry eye. To lessen this risk, blink more often, and refresh your eyes periodically with lubricating eye drops.

5. Get your eyes checked

Uncorrected vision problems—farsightedness or astigmatism, problems focusing or coordinating the eyes and eye changes associated with aging—can contribute to eye strain and musculoskeletal pain. Even if you don't need glasses for daily activities, you may need them for computer use. If you wear glasses or contacts and need to tilt your head or lean toward the screen to see it clearly, your lens prescription may not be right for computer use. Having the correct prescription

can help prevent pain in the neck, shoulders or back resulting from contorting the body to see the screen.

If the above measures don't work, don't put off seeing an ophthalmologist. If the underlying cause of Computer Vision Syndrome is not addressed, symptoms will continue and may worsen in the future. Your ophthalmologist can do a visual acuity measurement to determine how your vision is affected, test your eyes to find a prescription that will compensate for any refractive errors, and check how well your eyes focus, move and work together.

Computer Vision Syndrome is very common... As more screen work is needed, more eye strain can be expected. Our center and ophthalmologists have state of the art equipment to diagnose and treat many eye problems, including this syndrome. 7 dedicated eye care providers here to help you in 3 state-of-the-art facilities in Franklin, Milford and Millis. We are available and have Saturday and after-hours appointments. From the basic eye exam to the high-tech surgeries performed locally in Milford, our center is now able to better recognize and manage this problem and continue to provide world class eye care for the entire family.

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Living Healthy

Just Because You Can't See Them Doesn't Mean They Aren't There

Parasites live on or in other organisms and thrive to the detriment of their host. Many different parasites can affect humans, and they can pass on diseases such as Giardia, Lyme and Trichomoniasis. Ensuring that food is fully cooked, using insect repellent and following good hygiene practices can reduce the risk of getting parasites. More and more people have been getting infected from fruit, meat, fish and unwashed lettuce. Travel abroad can also contribute to acquiring other parasites including amoeba from drinking the water. Common symptoms of intestinal parasites include abdominal pain, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting, gas, bloating and bloody stools.

Stacey H entered our office complaining of the symptoms above. Her symptoms were so bad she was afraid to leave her home for fear that she would have an accident if a bathroom was not nearby. Prior to coming to The Holistic Center at Bristol Square she had an endoscopy and colonoscopy and was diagnosed with IBS. She was prescribed prednisone as well as other meds for IBS which did not improve her symptoms.

Examination revealed that Stacey was suffering from parasites, bacteria and Candida in her intestinal tract. She was prescribed a treatment plan including a restricted diet, NIS (Neurological Integration Sys-

tems) sessions and supplements to detoxify and heal her gut. Today Stacy can confidently leave her home without fear of having an accident and is enjoying her life pain free.

If you are experiencing similar symptoms and want to make a change in your health, call THE HOLISTIC CENTER AT BRISTOL SQUARE (508-660-2722) and schedule an appointment today. We are located at 1426 Main Street, Walpole.

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Dr. Rochelle Bien & Dr. Michael Goldstein

FTD Support Group at Milford Regional Medical Center

Milford Regional Medical Center is hosting a free, monthly support group for family members of loved ones afflicted with Frontotemporal Degeneration (FTD) or others impacted by the condition. The Association for

Frontotemporal Degeneration (AFTD) will lead the monthly meetings.

Space is limited and pre-registration is required. Meetings are held the last Saturday of each month from 10 to 11:30

a.m. FTD is the most commonly diagnosed dementia in individuals under the age of 65. The condition initially impacts behavior or language, and, like all dementias, it is neurodegenera-

tive. To learn more about FTD, visit theaftd.org.

To register for the support group, email your name, email address, phone number and

mailing address to msanford@milreg.org. Additional information will be provided once registration is complete. Call (508) 422-2827 with any questions.

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King Philip High School Announces New Assistant Principal

Karen Archambault has been selected as the next assistant principal of King Philip Regional High School.

Archambault began her new role as the newest member of the King Philip leadership team at the end of August in time for the start of the 2023-24 school year. In this role, she will oversee ninth-grade and eleventh-grade students throughout the upcoming school year.

"Ms. Archambault has a vast array of educational experiences and focuses everything she does through a lens of equity and empathy. She is a strong educational leader, a fierce advocate for students and, most importantly, treats everyone with respect and kindness. We are very fortunate to have her join our leadership team," said Principal Nicole Bottomley.

Archambault has spent the past five years gaining experience as an assistant principal working most recently at Holliston High School and Westport Junior/Senior High School.



Karen Archambault will serve as the assistant principal of ninth and eleventh grades at King Philip Regional High School for the 2023-24 school year. (Photo courtesy King Philip Regional School District)

Prior to working in Westport, she worked in Wellesley at both the high school and district level as an instructional coach and data coordinator. Throughout her work, she has received exten-

sive experience with instructional practices and alternative learning assessments. Additionally, she's worked with schools to develop a Vision of a Graduate, which articulates the essential skills a student should be equipped with upon their graduation.

Archambault holds a Bachelor of Arts in International Affairs from George Washington University and a Master of Education from Boston College. She is also a Certified Data Wise Coach and Teaching Fellow from Harvard University.

"I'm thrilled to be joining the King Philip community and am excited to develop relationships with faculty, students and the overall community," Archambault said. "I'm proud of the work I have done in collaboration with educators and students as I thrive off of helping others discover and pursue their passions. I look forward to having the opportunity to apply these skills at King Philip Regional High School."

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King Philip Middle School announces its 2022-2023 Trimester 3 Honor Roll:

8TH GRADE

Highest Honors

Alexandropoulos, Rihanna; Amidon, Marina; Arriaga, Andy; Beatty, Anna; Bonaceto, Brianna; Bostrom, Benjamin; Boucher, James; Boucher, Jack; Bouffard, Garrett; Bourdeau, Olivia; Brideau, Julia; Burke, Adrian; Chisholm, Harrison; Cleasby, Olivia; Cleverdon, Ashley; Costa, Mia; Da Silva, Laura Valentina; Davis, Benjamin; Dawe, Amelia; Diamond, Jake; Ford, Robert; Forrester, Aidan; Gebhard, Alexandria; Greaney, Ashlyn; Greenberg, Quinlan; Hatami, Nathanael; Hickey, Alexandra; Hoyt, Elijah; Hughey, Luke; James, Liam; Jusczyk, Malia; Kane, Addison; Karavasileiadis, Angelina; Keswick, Caitlin; Kuzmeskas, Carly; LaPlante, Molly; Lewis, Courtney; Loomer, Owen; Mahoney, Faelyn; Maksakova, Arina; Marrone, Ryan; Marshall, Luca; Mason, Oscar; McDuff, Tayla; Michenzie, Emily; Miles, Eric; Morgan, Ella;

Moriarty, Bella; Morneau, Andrew; Morris, Emily; Moses, Sebato; Mucciarone, Gia; Mui, Brendan; Newcom, Lauren; O'Brien, Rylie; Pasquantonio, Nova Rose; Pauline, Marissa; Podzka, Kathryn; Polce, Kyle; Quinn, Abby; Roach, Henry; Shrivastava, Aarit; Soares, Grady; Soifer, Cole; Sperling, Kellan; Sreenath, Swathi; Steck, Erin; Talat, Daania; Townsend, Adeline; Ward, Brayden; Wistran, Ashley; Yanni, Mia; Ye, Anran; Young, Angela.

High Honors

Antonellis, Ryan; Babbitt, Pearl; Balunos, Donnelle; Barry, Emmette; Becker, Jack; Bollu, Shreyas; Bowen, Alexander; Brady, Caleigh; Brown, Marleigh; Brunelli, Giovanni; Callahan, Jordyn; Cardona-Ortez, Brianna; Cecere, Tyler; Cederbaum, Bailey; Chavers, Olivia; Collins, Kayla; Collins, Natalie; Collins, Owen; Connolly, Kerin; Cordahi, Jad; Coutchie, Tessa; Crosbie, Gavin; Crowley, Nathan; Davis, Michael; DeCarteret,

Ty; Donahue, Kelly; Donegan, Ellie; Dow, James; Duffy, Jake; Edmunds, Max; Fitzgerald, Elin; Flaherty, Michael; Fox, Lilliana; Freeman, Lilian; Giampa, Ava; Grace, Erin; Harlow, Katelyn; Hasson, Alida; Henderson, Maddock; Hollowell, Isla; Houlding, Hayden; Hull, Leah; Hunt, Hollis; Hurwitz, Owen; Ibrahim, Rita; Jacobsen, Emily; Johnston, Jacqueline; Joseph, Michael; Kavanah, Rowan; Kelley, Katelyn; Khalil, Anthony; Kolluri, Tanmayee; Kwiatek, Noah; Labell, Alex; Labriola, Matthew; Lagasse, Jamie; Laight, Olivia; Lawler, Brendan; Lawrence, Kiera; LeBlanc, Molly; Leskow, Olivia; Lutfy, Thomas; MacDonald, Andrew; Marchand, John; McCrave, Mallory; McDonald, Ella; McHugh, Grace; McNamee, Ryan; Medeiros, James; Michienzi, Rebecca; Mish, Daniela; Modena, Alice; Montfort, Taj; Mullaney, Victoria; Murk, Cameron; Murphy, Molly; Murphy, Lucy; Muse, Molly; Nelson, Erik; Noonan, Ava; O'Neil,

Amie; O'Sullivan, Teagan; Parenteau, Berkley; Pollender, Darcy; Pompei, Abigail; Quinn, Caelan; Raymond, Lucas; Rettman, Zachary; Reza Bejarano, Mateo; Richard, Drew; Richard, Cooper; Rohrs, Donovan; Rosario, Julian; Saenz, Alex; Salguero, Menfhis; Schweitzer, Neila; Senthil Kumar, Sangeetha; Simmer, Brayden; Sisti, Olivia; Smith, Benjamin; Stierer, Kathryn; Sullivan, Ryan; Sullivan, Addison; Tammineni, Tanvi; Troutman, Chase; Uriarte, Sophia; Van Hoesen, Max; Vasconcelos De Souza, Maria Clara; Waldner, Ryleigh; Wells, Sage; Wells, Hunter; Westbrook, Taliah; Wetmore, Julia; Whalen, Brody; Wolff, Ethan; Wolloff, Paige.

Honors

Chard, Colin; Cordahi, Elias; D'Aiello, Alexander; Foley, Zachary; Levesque, Samantha; MacDonald, Brayden; Morando, Francesca; Murphy, Benjamin; O'Sullivan, Jacoby; Parker, Brodie.

7th GRADE

Highest Honors

Anderson, Benjamin; Astorino, Claire; Barton, Amelia; Bernier, Michael; Bishop, Sabrina; Burke, Shannon; Canty, Catherline; Caravaggio, Anthony; Cardoso, Ryan; Cemerski, Andrey; Cervantes, Aeson; Coffin, Brendan; Costantino, Olivia; Dang, Jordon; Dangelo, Tess; DeBaggis, Maxwell; Derfler Murphy, Liam; DuBois, Rachel; Faille, James; Fisher, Ashton; Fitzgerald, Cadence; Hamilton, Norah; Hanf, Courtney; Hartford, Jacob; Herlin, Delaney; Hostetler, Jacob; Howitt, Madison; Keighley, Sadie; Kelly, Edward; Kosar, Charlotte; Kouame, Amari; Kozik, Rylan; Kunicki, Addison; Lee, Payton; Lefebvre, Ella; Liptak, Reilly; Lopes, Lilliana; Mandel, Mia; Mansour, Moreen; Marks, Charlotte; McLaughlin, Dennielle;

HONOR ROLL

continued on page 24

Sports

KP Boys Soccer Team Has Experience and Athleticism

Warriors Aiming for Tourney Return

BY KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

The King Philip boys soccer team will be focusing on three goals this season — to improve as players and people; to contend for the Kelley-Rex Division title in the Hockomock League; and to qualify for the playoffs and go as deep as possible.

Mike O'Neil, who's beginning his fifth year as the Warriors' coach, believes those objectives can be achieved, primarily because of his team's strengths.

"We've got a good mix of high soccer IQs and technical skills," O'Neil emphasized. "We've also got a group that's coachable and cohesive. They're receptive to learning and they promote good team chemistry."

Another top-notch attribute is experience. Although KP, which finished 7-11 last year and fell short of a tournament berth, lost 10 veteran players to graduation, O'Neil has a contingent of nine seniors and three juniors who've got experience and athleticism.

The Warriors senior captains — Tommy Lomuscio (striker/wing), Dermott Amorim (midfielder), Will Bowen (wing), and Neelam McGrath (defender)

— have all the necessary athletic components for success and they've got a good mix of leadership styles.

"They lead by example, by being vocal and communicative and by being supportive," O'Neil noted. "They're responsible and accountable."

Lomuscio, who led the team in scoring with five goals and four assists last year as a defender will be in position this season to take advantage of more scoring opportunities. "Tommy is a two-time captain who's a fierce competitor and leader," O'Neil said. "He's also a very intelligent player."

A native of Long Island, N.Y., O'Neil also has high praise for Amorim, Bowen, and McGrath. "Dermott is a true soccer player," he said. "An intense competitor, he's versatile. He can play any field position. Will is a creative attacking player who's committed to improving. We'll rely on him a lot. And, Neelam is one of our best athletes. He's a lockdown defender with lots of speed and quickness."

Senior Ryan Keller can compete as a midfielder or forward and O'Neil is expecting "a break-



Mike O'Neil, who's beginning his fifth year as KP's boys soccer coach, calls his Warriors "a group that's coachable and cohesive."

out year" from him. "Ryan has a nose for the goal, he's creative and has very good field vision," he said.

Two other seniors who'll be contributing are midfielder Evan Barker and striker Jack Morgan. "Evan is solid in transition, has excellent close control of the ball and plays with a lot of composure," O'Neil offered. "Jack is physical, relies on instincts and plays with plenty of desire."

Two senior goalies — Jake Van Hoesen and Alex Nathan — provide depth at that position. "Jake split time last year with Connor O'Reilly who grad-

uated," O'Neil said. "Jake is an excellent shot-stopper who can shut down an offense. Alex was in school last year in England. His technique is accomplished and he's very good with his feet."

Three juniors, who got their share of playing time last year as sophomores, include Sayan Panda (midfielder), P.J. Sullivan (center back), and Braden Lynn (wing).

"Sayan started last year," O'Neil said. "I like his ability to read the game. Very coachable, he's an excellent defender and a creative passer. P.J. also was a starter. Relying on quickness and an instinctive nature, he has total commitment to winning the ball. Braden is smart, smooth and very creative as a passer."

Two sophomores with effective skills will be candidates to play at the varsity level. They are forwards Marco Amorim and Joseph Craff.

KP's style of play this season will feature an up-tempo brand. "We call it 'possession with purpose,'" O'Neil said. "It's all about controlling the ball with an intent to move it effectively."

The 53-year-old O'Neil rates Franklin as the deepest team in the Kelley-Rex Division. "They captured the division title last year, and they're not only im-

proved, but also well-coached and have plenty of tradition," he said. "Milford is always prepared and competitive, and North Attleboro is a well-coached squad."

O'Neil's coaching philosophy focuses on making sure his players reach their potential and enjoy their athletic journey. "And, if they're competitive, then winning will be the by-product," he emphasized. "There's also life lessons that can be learned in athletics and it's always a plus when our kids learn how to overcome adversity, develop character to pursue challenging goals, become leaders, acquire mental toughness and volunteer in their communities."

KP will open its season at home against Stoughton on Sept. 7, then visit Bishop Feehan on Sept. 9. The Warriors will stay on the road for their third match — a Sept. 12 encounter with rival Franklin that O'Neil has circled on his calendar.

Not only has O'Neil and his family lived in Franklin for 12 years, but his son Andrew is also a three-year veteran and a senior captain for the Panthers.

"If Franklin beats us, Andrew will be sleeping out in the shed," O'Neil said jokingly.

Norfolk Wins Jim Finn Award

This summer, the Norfolk Baseball Association entered three teams into the 8U Friendship summer baseball league. All three teams had great seasons with winning records and advanced as far as the divisional finals in the playoffs.

The Friendship League awards the Jim Finn Award to the town program with the best overall record. This year Norfolk took the honor and was awarded the Jim Finn Trophy, after their divisional final playoff games on Sunday, July 30 in Foxboro.

The award was accepted by head coaches Andy Fuller, Lee Margolis, and Zack McKeever, with all 30 of the town's 8U players.

The Friendship League is a long-established Eastern Massachusetts summer travel base-

ball league specially designed for eight-year-old baseball players to help them develop their baseball skills and to introduce young players, their managers, coaches

and families to summer travel baseball in a competitive, but friendly, environment. Over 60 teams participated in the League across more than 40 towns.



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FPAC Announces 2023-24 Season

The Franklin Performing Arts Company (FPAC) is excited to announce its 2023-24 season of musicals and plays in their home venue THE BLACK BOX. The exciting lineup will include Disney's *The Little Mermaid*, *Buyer & Cellar*, *Bright Star*, *Tarzan*, and *August: Osage County*. Additionally, FPAC Holiday Productions will present holiday favorites *The Nutcracker* and *Humbug! A Christmas Carol Musical with a twist* at the Franklin High School Auditorium.

FPAC will open its season with Disney's *The Little Mermaid* directed and choreographed by Broadway's Christopher Rice-Thomson (*Hamilton*, *Book of Mormon*, *Pretty Woman*) October 13-22. Based on one of Hans Christian Andersen's most beloved stories and the classic animated film, Disney's *The Little Mermaid* is a hauntingly beautiful love story for the ages. With music by eight-time Academy Award winner, Alan Menken, lyrics by Howard Ashman and Glenn Slater, and a compelling book by Doug Wright, this fishy fable will capture your heart with its irresistible songs, including "Under the Sea," "Kiss the Girl," and "Part of Your World." With music direction by Hallie Wetzell.

The season continues with the hilarious comedy *Buyer & Cellar* starring Paul Rescigno November 17-19 at THE BLACK

BOX. Alex Moore has a story to tell. A struggling actor in L.A., he takes a job working in the Malibu basement of a beloved megastar. One day, the Lady Herself comes downstairs to play. It feels like real bonding in the basement, but will their relationship ever make it upstairs? *Buyer & Cellar* is an outrageous comedy about the price of fame, the cost of things, and the oddest of odd jobs. Winner of the 2014-2015 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Solo Show. Directed by Nick Paone.

FPAC Holiday Productions will mount their annual production of *The Nutcracker* December 2 and 3 featuring live orchestra, special guest artists, and more than 100 area dancers. The holiday magic will continue on December 16 and 17 with *Humbug! A Christmas Carol Musical with a twist*. With musical hits of every genre and live accompaniment by a 10-piece band of professional musicians, *Humbug!* transports audiences from Dickensian England to contemporary America as the novel's iconic characters and storyline are cleverly reimagined with modern setting and dialogue. FPAC Holiday Productions are presented at the Franklin High School Auditorium.

After the holidays, FPAC will present the musical *Bright Star* January 5-7 at THE BLACK BOX. Featuring the Tony-nominated score by Steve Martin and

Edie Brickell, Broadway's *Bright Star* tells a sweeping tale of love and redemption set against the rich backdrop of the American South in the 1920s and '40s. When literary editor Alice Murphy meets a young soldier just home from World War II, he awakens her longing for the child she once lost. Haunted by their unique connection, Alice sets out on a journey to understand her past—and what she finds has the power to transform both of their lives. With beautiful melodies and powerfully moving characters, the story unfolds as a rich tapestry of deep emotion. An uplifting theatrical journey that holds you tightly in its grasp, *Bright Star* is as refreshingly genuine as it is daringly hopeful. Directed by Raye Lynn Mercer. Music Direction by Hallie Wetzell.

The 2023-24 season will continue with a reimagined immersive production of *Tarzan* the Broadway musical starring Broadway's original Tarzan Josh Strickland March 8-17. THE BLACK BOX will be transformed into a multi-stage rock concert centering the iconic Phil Collins music, while telling the classic story by blending Broadway and concert experience. Conceptualized and directed by Raye Lynn Mercer and Ali Funkhouser with choreography by Broadway's Clay Rice-Thomson (*Moulin Rouge!*, *KING KONG*,

FRANKLIN PERFORMING ARTS COMPANY

<p>Disney THE LITTLE MERMAID Directed and Choreographed by Broadway's Christopher Rice-Thomson OCTOBER 13-22, 2023</p>	<p>JOIN US FOR OUR EXCITING 2023-2024 SEASON!</p> <p>SEASON TICKET PACKAGES AVAILABLE</p>	<p>BUYER & Cellar Starring Paul Rescigno NOVEMBER 17-19, 2023</p>
<p>BRIGHT STAR Directed by Raye Lynn Mercer JANUARY 5-7, 2024</p>	<p>Broadway's Original Tarzan JOSH STRICKLAND in TARZAN Choreographed by Broadway's Clay Rice-Thomson MARCH 8-17, 2024</p>	<p>August: Osage County Starring Paul Rescigno JUNE 7-9, 2024</p>

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

Newsies, *Matilda*). Music Direction by Hallie Wetzell. Based on Disney's epic animated musical adventure and Edgar Rice Burrough's *Tarzan of the Apes*, *Tarzan* features heart-pumping music by rock legend, Phil Collins, and a book by Tony Award-winning playwright, David Henry Hwang. High-flying excitement and hits, like the Academy Award winning "You'll Be in My Heart," as well as "Son of Man," and "Two Worlds," make *Tarzan* an unforgettable theatrical experience.

FPAC's season will conclude with Tracy Letts's Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning play *August: Osage County* June 7-9 at THE BLACK BOX. A vanished father. A pill-popping mother. Three sisters harboring shady little secrets. When the large Weston family unexpectedly reunites after Dad disappears, their Oklahoman family home-

stead explodes in a maelstrom of repressed truths and unsettling secrets. Mix in Violet, the drugged-up, scathingly acidic matriarch, and you've got a major play that unflinchingly—and uproariously—exposes the dark side of the Midwestern American family.

FPAC is an Actors' Equity Small Professional Theater company based at THE BLACK BOX in downtown Franklin. Each season, FPAC produces musicals, plays, ballets, and more featuring Broadway stars, professional actors, local artists, and students of the arts. Tickets for the 2023-24 season will be on sale soon. Follow Franklin Performing Arts Company and THE BLACK BOX on Facebook and Instagram for updates on programming.

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September Program Highlights at Norfolk Senior Center

RSVP to 508-528-4430 or register at the Norfolk Senior Center, 28 Medway Branch Road, Norfolk.

Tuesday, September 5 at 10 a.m. **Back to Basics on iPhone and iPad** Learn about iPhone hardware (buttons, ports, cameras, and speakers), navigation (how to use touchscreens and find important information), and communication (messaging and calling) with Kevin from Kev-Tech Services. RSVP required.

Thursday, September 7 at 1 p.m. **Mary Kay Fall Skincare Refresher** Come join us for a 1-hour skincare experience that will renew your skin after all the summer stressors, like dust, pollen, sunscreen, salt water, sweat, and UV rays. Just bring yourself and be ready for a refreshing time with friends. RSVP appreciated.

Tuesday, September 12 at 10:30 a.m. **Powerful Tools for Caregivers Information Session Via Zoom** Please join an information session to learn more about a 6-week virtual class series (starting October 3) on reducing caregiver stress, improving self-confidence in caregiving, managing time and problem solving, and more caregiver tools. RSVP or email Karen at kedwards@norfolk.ma.us.

Wednesday, September 13 at 1 p.m. **Stroke Awareness Program** Recognize the signs and symptoms, know the facts, and act against stroke risk factors. Join Lindsay Ricard, Occupational Therapist at Encompass Health, and Vita Cepkauskas,

Clinical Liaison at Encompass Braintree Rehab Hospital for this stroke awareness program. RSVP appreciated.

Thursday, September 14 at 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Sky Buffet Lunch** Join us for lunch at Sky Buffet in Milford. Enjoy unlimited portions of Asian and American food favorites. There is something for everyone! The COA van will leave the Senior Center at 11:30 a.m. or you can drive yourself. Please RSVP so we can reserve tables.

Monday, September 18 at 10 a.m. **Diamond Art Holiday Demonstration** It is hard to believe the holidays are approaching. Come learn about diamond art and see holiday ideas and gifts you can make.

Tuesday, September 19 at 1 p.m. **Climate Change: Simple Serious Solvable** Harvey Leonard, WCVB-TV Channel 5's chief meteorologist emeritus, will be discussing the important difference between weather and climate. He will explain how climate change is simple, but real, and why it is serious. He will also discuss how to mitigate or solve some of the problems caused by climate change. RSVP required.

Tuesday, September 19 at 2 p.m. **"All Booked Up" Book Club** The Norfolk Senior Center and Norfolk Public Library host a monthly book group facilitated by Library Director Sarah Ward. We will be discussing "The Bookshop on the Corner" by Jenny Colgan this month at the Senior Center. RSVP appreciated.

Tuesday, September 26 at 10 a.m. **Be Red Cross Ready!** The American Red Cross will provide a 45-minute presentation with lifesaving preparedness tips for home fires and other natural disasters. A Disaster Program Specialist will give tips and tools for you and your household to Be Red Cross Ready in the event of an emergency. RSVP appreciated.

Wednesday, September 27 at 10 a.m. **DPW Meet and Greet** Meet Norfolk Department of Public Works Director Blair Crane. DPW provides many services, including snow and ice removal, stormwater drainage, water supply and distribution, wastewater collection and pumping, vehicle fleet maintenance, tree removal and planting, road maintenance and improvement, public property maintenance, and operation of the transfer station for refuse and recycling. Come ask your questions. Donuts and coffee will be served. RSVP appreciated.

Thursday, September 28 at 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. **Briggs Nursery** Come walk around Briggs Nursery Garden Center and store. See the beautiful plants and shrubbery. Enjoy lunch at the café. Please RSVP to reserve a space on the COA van.

Friday, September 29 at 10 a.m. to noon. **Coffee Tasting** To celebrate National Coffee Day, we will be tasting coffee with different add-ins and flavored creamers. RSVP appreciated.

Norfolk Public Schools Thanks Principal Linda Balfour for Over 50 Years of Dedicated Service

On behalf of the Norfolk Public Schools community, Superintendent Dr. Ingrid Allardi would like to thank H. Olive Day Elementary School Principal Linda Balfour for her many years of dedicated service to the district upon her retirement.

Following an over 50-year career with Norfolk Public Schools, Principal Balfour retired from the district at the end of July.

"Linda's deeply held core values have made the H. Olive Day School the outstanding educational institution that it is. Families regularly comment on how welcoming the school environment is and how well school staff know their children. Principal Balfour's leadership, compassion and dedication will be missed by students, staff, parents and the community at large," Superintendent Allardi said.

Throughout her tenure at Norfolk Public Schools, Principal Balfour served in a variety of different roles since joining the district in August 1972 as a second-grade teacher. She went on to become a special education resource teacher before becoming a part-time special education coordinator.

In 1990, Principal Balfour left the classroom and became a full-time administrator, serving as the part-time assistant principal for the Freeman-Centennial School and part-time special education coordinator.

She was appointed to the principalship of the H. Olive Day School in June 1993 and was there to open the doors of the new school building on Jan. 10, 1994. While serving at the H. Olive Day School for the past 30



H. Olive Day Elementary School Principal Linda Balfour retires from the district at the end of July. (Photo courtesy Norfolk Public Schools)

years, Principal Balfour led the efforts to implement social-emotional learning into curriculum, specifically the Open Circle curriculum that has been a staple in the school for the past 25 years.

In 2019, Balfour was honored with the Thomas C. Passios Massachusetts Elementary School Principal of the Year award which was presented to her at the National Distinguished Principals Convention in Washington, D.C.

Added Superintendent Allardi, "We are grateful for all that Principal Balfour has done for the Norfolk Public Schools over her lengthy and impactful career. It is hard to think about H. Olive Day School without thinking of the face of early childhood education in Norfolk -- Mrs. Linda Balfour. We wish Linda the very best in her retirement."

Tami Rebello succeeds Principal Balfour, beginning her new position on July 1, with Balfour working with Rebello to support her transition.

Norfolk Discovery Day Set for Sept. 9

NSBA Issues Call for Vendors

Norfolk Small Business Association (NSBA) will hold its 2023 Discovery Day on Saturday, September 9 from 3:30 to 7 p.m. on Town Hill. All are welcome to attend and learn about the town's small businesses.

There will be live entertainment, food, drinks, and activities for kids. Organizers expect over 500 people to attend.

Vendors are welcome to purchase a booth. The event will cap

vendors at 50 and spots are filling up quickly. If you wish to purchase a booth, or for more information, email NSBA members

Jen Cote (director@exhaledance.com) or Aaron Buczek (Aaron.Buczek@edwardjones.com).



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October Election Set for New Tri-County Regional High School

CONTRIBUTED BY JOE STEWART

On October 24, voters in Norfolk and Wrentham (as well as Franklin, Medfield, Medway, Millis, North Attleborough, Plainville, Seekonk, Sherborn, and Walpole) will decide whether to support a building project for a new Tri-County Regional Vocational High School. Tri-County, located in Franklin, offers students comprehensive vocational and technical education programs as well as traditional academic courses.

Since this is the first time that Tri-County has requested funding outside of the normal annual assessments, this will be an historic election – the first ever district-wide election.

In the 1970s, to address shortages in trained vocational workers, Massachusetts launched a vocational school building program and, with both state and federal funding, built Tri-County with no increase in local taxes.

When the school opened in 1977, Brian Mushnick, the Norfolk representative to the Tri-County School Committee and chairman of its School Building

Committee, entered its first class and subsequently graduated from Tri-County in 1981.

Mr. Mushnick says that Tri-County is now nearly 50-years-old, and its age is showing throughout: water damage, inadequate heating and cooling, and no fire suppression system. Despite ongoing maintenance and repairs, the facilities are “tired,” noted Mushnick.

In 2019, Tri-County applied for funding to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), the state agency that provides construction funding for public schools in the Commonwealth. Since then, the school has been working through the various MSBA approval phases.

According to Tri-County’s June 27 Schematic Design Submission (robust design for project evaluation – just under 1,000 pages), the total project budget is estimated at \$286 million, which includes hazardous materials abatement, demolition, construction, technology, and more.

Dr. Karen Maguire, Tri-County Superintendent, shared that the School Committee en-



Rendering of proposed new Tri-County building. (Photo courtesy of Tri-County School District.)

tered the MSBA program planning a renovation, but following two years of detailed assessments of four alternatives, the determination was made to build a new structure as opposed to renovating the existing building. Among other factors, the estimated total project costs across the viable alternatives differed by less than 1%, from \$279 million to \$282 million.

Dr. Maguire also noted that seven of the Commonwealth’s twenty-eight vocational schools are also in the MSBA pipeline, including Old Colony which serves her own community, so she has both a taxpayer and a superintendent perspective. Dr. Maguire offered the old car analogy: there comes a time when fixing an old car doesn’t make sense. In the case of Tri-County,

a renovation costs a bit more and we’d still be left with a 50-year-old building.

For a local government perspective, we spoke with Kevin Kalkut, Chair of the Norfolk Select Board, who explained that the financial impact to member towns only recently became available. Because costs are spread across 11 district towns based upon enrollment, Tri-County estimates that the Norfolk allotment would be \$520K and Wrentham, \$927K, for the next 30 years in addition to the usual annual cost. While Norfolk might not need an override, towns like Medway and Plainville, each with more than \$1 million estimated assessment, will likely need a debt exclusion to fund their share of the Tri-County debt.

About 40 students from Norfolk and close to 70 from Wrentham attend Tri-County.

Polls will be open from noon to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, October 24. Unlike the King Philip Regional School District where two of the three member towns must approve debt, the Tri-County district requires a majority vote regardless of town. No early or mail-in voting is planned.

Tri-County plans public meetings about the project and will also have a booth with more information at the Cracker Barrel Fair, scheduled for Friday, September 15 through Sunday, September 17.

For more information visit the Tri-County Building website: <https://www.tri-countybuilding.com/>.

MAPC Invites Proposals for the FY2024 Accelerating Climate Resilience Municipal Grants

The 101 municipalities in the Metropolitan Area Planning Council’s region are invited to apply for funding for one-year projects that will help advance their communities’ climate resilience.

The Accelerating Climate Resilience (ACR) Municipal Grants

program is now accepting applications for one-year municipal

projects that advance strategies to protect people, places, and communities from the impacts of climate change. The application deadline is September 15, 2023, with awarded FY24 projects expected to be announced in November 2023 and commence in January 2024. Municipalities can receive up to \$50,000 for technical assistance and design, capital projects, or capacity building.

Community-based organizations, nonprofits, schools and institutions, and other individuals can contact their local municipal officials to express ideas for projects that advance climate resilience and encourage application to the ACR program.

Now in its third year, this grant program is generously funded by the Barr Foundation. To date, grant projects have ranged from one- to two-year duration, up to \$140,000, and funded municipal-

led innovations and interventions that facilitate long-term transformation and strengthen climate change resilience in the region. Previously funded projects spanned a number of categories, including nature-based green infrastructure; capacity building for municipal staff; strengthening community resilience; innovative public outreach strategies; and even supporting local food systems. Overall, projects that promote environmental justice or demonstrate innovative climate resilience strategies that are transferable at the local or regional level are encouraged to apply.

ACR grantees also get to participate in the program’s Resilience Community of Practice (RCOP), a peer-to-peer networking and learning group dedicated to knowledge exchange, as well as technical, value-based,

and instructional guidance to aid municipalities in deploying, scaling, and amplifying their climate resilience practices across municipal functions. In tandem with the ACR grant program, MAPC hosts a speaker series about innovations in climate resilience.

Learn more about past years’ grantees and find the invitation for proposals and application form for the FY24 grant round at www.mapc.org/resource-library/accelerating-resiliency/.

For more information and questions about the Accelerating Climate Resilience program, contact MAPC Senior Environmental Planner Van Du at vdu@mapc.org.

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Wrentham Police Officers Swear-In and Promotion Ceremony Held

On Thursday, July 13, colleagues, family, and friends gathered at a formal swearing-in ceremony at the Wrentham Police Department for the department's new officers and for the promotion of two veteran officers to the rank of sergeant.

"I would like to congratulate all four Wrentham Police Department members who were recognized," Chief Bill McGrath said. "Their colleagues, friends and family are rightfully proud of their accomplishments and, in the end, the residents of Wrentham and those who visit here will benefit from their service."

During the ceremony, Officer Kristine Crosman and Officer Brandon Perella, both of whom transferred to the Wrentham Police Department within the last year, were officially recognized and pinned by family members.

Officer Crosman joined Wrentham Police from the North Attleboro Police Department and Officer Perella joined from the Bellingham Police Department. Both bring with them a wealth of training, experience and -- equally as important -- great personalities that fit well into the Wrentham community.

Officer Derick Cassidy and Officer Steve Eaton were also promoted to the rank of sergeant during the ceremony. Officers Cassidy and Eaton participated in a competitive promotional assessment center last year and did a fantastic job positioning themselves among the top candidates.

Sgt. Derick Cassidy

Sgt. Cassidy has been a member of the Wrentham Police Department for approximately 12 years. Previously, he served as a Permanent Intermittent (part-time) officer with the Plainville Police Department.

Sgt. Cassidy has been an outstanding patrol officer during his time with Wrentham Police and went on to serve as the department's D.A.R.E. Officer after Sgt. Jeff Smith retired. In this role, he quickly earned the trust and friendship of students and staff alike. Unofficially and self-assigned, Sgt. Cassidy also served as a liaison to the autism community. With a deep personal connection to this role, he's handled



From left: Selectwoman Michelle Rouse, Selectman Joseph Botaish, Officer Crossman, Officer Perella, Selectman Jim Anderson and Selectman Bill Harrington. (Photo courtesy Town of Wrentham)

many situations involving people with autism with a level of compassion and care that simply cannot be taught in a classroom.

In his new role, Sgt. Cassidy will serve in an administrative role as he takes on the duties and responsibilities of his new rank.

Sgt. Steve Eaton

Sgt. Eaton began his career with the Walpole Police Department and transferred to Wrentham approximately eight years ago. Prior to becoming a police officer, he honorably served in the United States Army where he received several decorations for his participation in the Gulf War.

As a long-time Wrentham resident, Sgt. Eaton is heavily involved in the community, having raised his family in Wrentham and coached his kids in sports. This deep connection to the community allowed for Sgt. Eaton to seamlessly transition to the department, and since then he has been an integral member of the Wrentham Police Department.

Up until now, Sgt. Eaton has worked the midnight to 8 p.m. graveyard shift, however, in his new role he will be working the 4 p.m. to midnight shift, which will allow him the ability to interact with the public more.

"It's a privilege to officially have the opportunity to welcome our newest officers, Officers Crosman and Perella, to the de-

partment, and to recognize the well-deserved promotions of Sgt. Cassidy and Sgt. Eaton," Town Administrator Kevin Sweet said. "On behalf of the Town of Wrentham, I would like to commend these officers for their dedication to our police department and the Wrentham community."



From left: Selectwoman Michelle Rouse, Selectman Joseph Botaish, Sgt. Eaton, Sgt. Cassidy, Selectman Jim Anderson and Selectman Bill Harrington at Thursday night's ceremony. (Photo courtesy Wrentham Police)



Sgt. Eaton, left, and Sgt. Cassidy swearing into their new position as sergeants. (Town of Wrentham)

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HONOR ROLL

continued from page 18

McManus, Caitlyn; McNulty, Michelle; Montfort, Noa; Morales, Alani; O'Brien, Nora; Pandit, Suneel; Pettit, Anna; Pruell, Emerson; Reilly, Adelyn; Richard, Lily; Ritchie, Lauren; Roach, Matigan; Simone, Ewan; St. Laurent, Madalyn; Steidel, Lyra; Sweeney, Molly; Taylor, Finn; Tezber, Sophia; Tully, Olivia; Turner, Ava; Weiblen, Emma; Wilayah, Diana; Zaffalon Godoi, Gabriel.

High Honors

AlSara, Muhja; Anderson, Riley; Andrews, Annabelle; Astin, Adrian; Babbitt, Phoebe; Bass, Taylor; Burns, Emma; Byda, Gavin; Cannella, Noelle; Cardona Medrano, Natasha; Carone, Gavin; Carty, Tristan; Castaneda, Kevin; Cataldo, Benjamin; Cereno, Shaine; Charland, Tyler; Covell, Lorelai; Curran, Annabelle; Dalton, Hailey; D'Andrea, Benjamin; Desrosiers, Matthew; Dolan Bourke, Owen; Dumay, Zion; Evans, Meghan; Finnegan, Gavin; Fisk, James; Foley, Elliott; Francisco, Evan; Frazier, Vivian; Garland, Nathan; Ghostlaw, Lucy; Gill, Ryan; Gilmore, Joseph; Giovanella, Jaden; Godfrey, Alayna; Guasch, Elianna; Guinan, Aisling; Hall, John; Haviland,

Matthew; Hay, Brayden; Heinselman, Brayden; Hogan, Benjamin; Holmes, Carter; Howitt, Reese; Huot, Hallie; Jasset, Gianna; Jelloe, Louis; Johnson, Madison; Kania, Daniel; Kavanah, Addison; Keays, Mia; Kennedy, Jacoby; Kozik, Landon; Lopes, Julia; Lussier, Kellan; MacRae, Jacob; Marella, Brian; Marella, Chad; McGourthy, Anna; McHugh, Patrick; Melise, Brayden; Miller, Evan; Morrissey, Jake; Murray, Cheyenne; Musial, Mary; Napier, Caroline; Nealon, Ella; Neelon, Patricia; Nesterovich, Olga; Noonan, Maria; O'Brien, Turlough; O'Donnell, Molly; Owens, Brayden; Palson, Maxwell; Patel, Heer; Payne, Tyson; Pedro, Jordan; Petrillo, Gabriella; Pontes, Anna; Robinson, Isla; Rogers, Luke; Routh, Matthew; Sanford, Kaylee; Sharpe, Isabella; Simmer, Cameron; Valkov, Preslav; Wainwright, Olivia; Whiting, Savannah; Wilson, Madison; Wynn, Jillian.

Honors

Armour, Jacob; Bacon, Chloe; Bah, Binta; Cemerski, Luka; Connor, William; Ferreira, Zachary; Franciosa, Marco; Kracher, Kayla; Manning, Patrick; Nichols, Eleanor; Niedzwecki, Emma; O'Connell, Declan; Rizzo, Sebastian; Ruggiero, Rocco; Silva, Eriana; Willette, Nicholas; Wosny, Ryan.

Parking Permit Application for Liberty Lane, Norfolk

The Select Board's office is now accepting applications for commuter parking at Liberty Lane for the 2023-2024 cycle which runs from October 1, 2023 to September 30, 2024.

There are 32 permits available for Liberty Lane parking. If more applications are received than spots are available, a lottery will be held and a waiting list created for applicants who were not selected.

Only Norfolk residents may apply. Applications must be submitted to the Select Board's office no later than Wednesday, September 13, 2023, at 6 p.m. The lottery will be held on or before Monday, September 18, 2023.

All applicants awarded a parking permit will be notified by email and receive instructions with details on obtaining their parking permit decals.

Evidence of a valid license and vehicle registration will be required upon pick up of the permit.

The application can be found on the Town of Norfolk Select Board's webpage.

Please print the application, complete, sign, and email to parkingpermits@norfolk.ma.us.

Local Resident Named to University of Maine Spring 2023 Dean's List

Aaron Wilkinson of Norfolk has been named to the University of Maine Spring 2023 Dean's List.

To be eligible for the Full-time Dean's List, a student must have completed 12 or more calculable credits in the semester and have earned a 3.50 or higher semester GPA. Students who have

part-time status during both the fall and spring semesters of a given academic year are eligible for Part-time Dean's List. They must have completed 12 or more calculable credits over both terms and have earned a combined GPA in those terms of 3.50 or higher.

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Agents of the Month in our Medfield office!



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Real Estate Corner

Save the Dates for these Upcoming Wrentham Lions Events

The Wrentham Lions plan a busy fall season for residents. Mark these dates on your calendar and help the Lions give back to the community.

Halloween Spooktacular Costume Party

Join the Wrentham Lions for a Halloween party on Saturday, October 21 from 7 to 11 p.m. at the Franklin Elks, 1077 Pond St., Franklin.

There will be a costume contest, food, cash bar, DJ, and raffles. Cost is \$50 per person. Venmo Cheryl Hobbs at Cheryl-Hobbs-11 or email cas324@msn.com for other payment options.

Holiday Vendor Fair

Vendors and crafters are welcome to purchase space for the Wrentham Lions Holiday Fair planned for Saturday, November 18 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Wrentham American Legion.

The rental fee for a 10 x 10-foot space is \$65, \$10 extra to rent a table. Set up for the fair is 7 to 8:30 a.m. and breakdown is at 2:15 p.m.

Email Cheryl Hobbs at cas324@msn.com for an application and to reserve a space. Venmo Cheryl-Hobbs-11 or make checks payable to Wrentham Lions.

The deadline to apply for a space is November 3.

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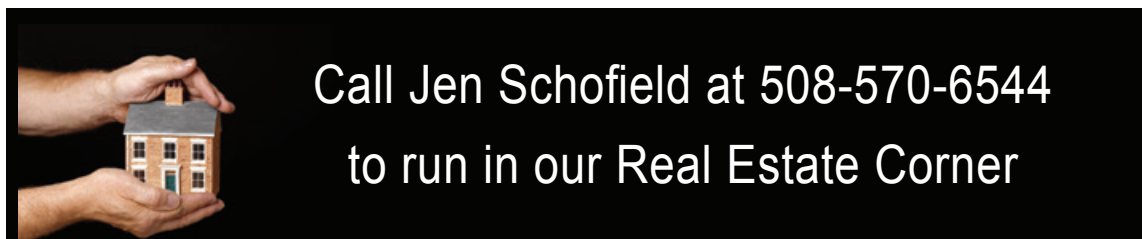
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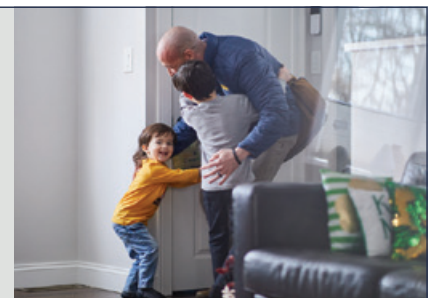
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Increasing Strain on Limited Housing Inventory Pushes July Prices to Surge

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reported that Norfolk County recordings for July show a significant increase in average property sale prices compared to both the previous year and the previous

month. This surge can likely be attributed to having limited housing inventory in a competitive market.

"Average property prices are up significantly this month, and while this may be good news for

sellers and investors, it makes it increasingly difficult for first-time homebuyers and homeowners looking to move, especially with high interest rates relative to what they were in 2020 and 2021," stated Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell.

The average sale price of commercial and residential properties for July 2023 was \$1,452,378, a 19% increase compared to July 2022 and an increase of 40% from June 2023. However, the total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is down, decreasing 7% from last year but up 7% from last month.

"Based on prior years and trusted economic theory, we know that even when demand remains the same but the supply of an item decreases, the price will increase," said Register O'Donnell. "Unfortunately, when prices rise without a corresponding rise in inventory, it may result in increased competition among buyers. This makes it harder for homebuyers in general but especially for first-time homebuyers who must now deal with the added cost of higher in-

terest rates to afford homes and properties."

Notwithstanding the increase in average property sales prices the total number of deeds for July 2023, which reflects both commercial and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 1,272, down 18% from July 2022 and decreased 26% from June.

According to Register O'Donnell, higher interest rates have a particular impact on first-time homebuyers, especially given that the average price for commercial and residential property is 43% higher than the value in 2021 and 74% higher than the value in 2020. Higher interest rates also affect seasoned homebuyers' eagerness to refinance and willingness to sell, which results in fewer mortgages being recorded.

For the month of July, lending activity overall continued to decline. A total of 1,258 mortgages were recorded, which is 47% less than last year and 14% less than last month.

Overall real estate activity is on a downward trend, driven by two likely factors: limited in-

ventory and high interest rates, which reduce the number of deeds and the number of mortgages, which make up a large portion of the total document volume at the registry, said Register O'Donnell.

The Registry of Deeds recorded 8,620 documents in July 2023. This was 21% less than in July 2022 and 18% less than in June 2023.

"On a positive note, for the first time this year, we are seeing a reduction in both the number of foreclosure deeds and the number of notices to foreclose compared to last year," said Register O'Donnell.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds continues to closely monitor the foreclosure market. In July 2023, there were 5 foreclosure deeds recorded as a result of mortgage foreclosures taking place in Norfolk County, whereas in July 2022, there were 9 recorded. Additionally, this month, there were 18 notices to foreclose, the first step in the foreclosure process, less than the 21 recorded in July 2022.

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Real Estate Corner

Homeownership Bar Too High, Too Few Homes Brings Decreased Sales in Second Quarter

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reported that Norfolk County recordings for the second quarter of 2023 indicate a continued decrease in overall real estate activity impacted by interest rates along with a lack of inventory. The increased costs of carrying the purchase of a home, along with limited inventory and high real estate costs, are setting the homeownership bar too high for some individuals.

"It is not a secret, and I believe most people can feel it, that the economy is experiencing a downward trend, driven by two factors: limited inventory and high interest rates, relative to what they were in 2020, which

makes finding a home difficult for homebuyers in general but especially for first-time homebuyers who must now deal with the added cost of higher interest rates," stated Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell.

In the second quarter of 2023 (April, May, and June), the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds recorded 27,374 documents. This was 23% less than the second quarter of 2022.

"Looking at the statistics, we can see that fewer properties are being sold. The likely factors that are contributing to this are that while new home construction has increased, it is not enough to keep up with the demand, and we need to increase the supply

of new homes," said Register O'Donnell. "The other factor is that existing homes remain off the market, possibly because individuals that want to sell may be struggling to find a suitable home to move into within their budget, and for those individuals who took advantage of lower interest rates in the past, they may be hesitant to exchange that for a higher rate."

The total number of deeds for the second quarter of 2023, which reflects both commercial and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 4,193, down 16% from the second quarter of 2022.

"Higher interest rates affect seasoned homebuyers in terms

of eagerness to refinance and willingness to sell, but first-time homebuyers are particularly impacted, especially considering average prices for commercial and residential property are 16% above 2021 values and 32% above 2020 values," said Register O'Donnell. "This means that homebuyers in 2023 are paying higher property prices and a higher interest rate, resulting in a monthly mortgage payment that may not be economically feasible, particularly for first-time homebuyers who may not have the financial resources to overcome this obstacle."

The average sale price for the second quarter of this year was \$996,394, a 23% decrease com-

pared to the second quarter of 2022. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is down, decreasing 42% over the same period in 2022.

For the months of April, May, and June, lending activity overall continued to decline. During these months, a total of 4,084 mortgages were recorded, which is 40% less than the same period last year.

Those who took advantage of the lower interest rates in 2020 and 2021 are also less likely to refinance at current rates, and with property sales going down, this results in a more pronounced decline in the number of mortgages recorded, noted Register O'Donnell.

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