

## Celebrating After The Prom Safely

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

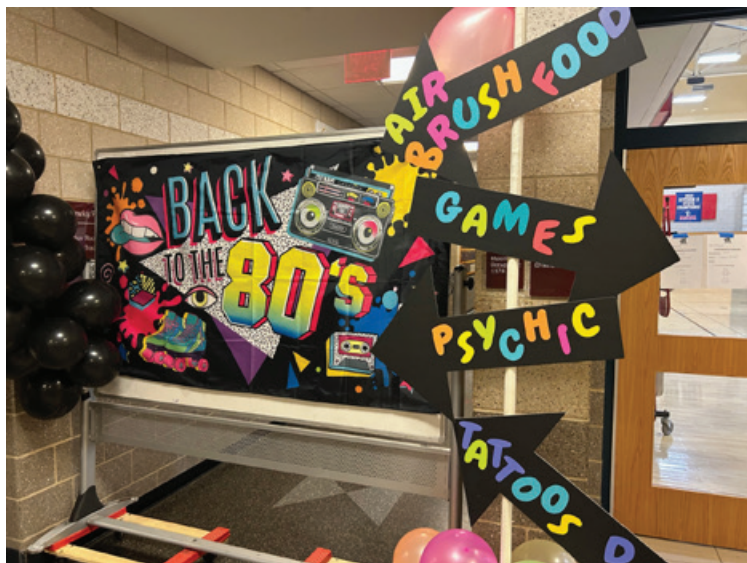
With regard to refining one's vocation, actor and comedian Steve Martin had some simple and succinct advice: "Be so good they can't ignore you."

Martin honed his performative chops over decades, oftentimes in nearly deserted (or even empty) theaters, to create an act that became second nature. He sought whatever gig would put him in front of people, no matter how small the crowd or paycheck, until it became true. They could no longer ignore him.

Hosts of this year's After-Prom Party (APP) are confident that theory will hold true for their annual celebration. The decades-old tradition was designed as a safe space for prom-goers, and has evolved into somewhat of an extravaganza.

Some students might scoff at such an event – chaperoned, substance and alcohol-free as it is. The prom is a rite of passage of sorts, after all, a gateway into college, adulthood and beyond.

But organizers have scripted and sold the party as an event not to be missed. They plan to put on a show, in other words, that stu-



dents can't ignore.

The APP will be held at Natick High School itself, a venue that will be familiar territory to students and some chaperones, and a space that offers acres of indoor square footage for activities. The price is right too (free), as renting out a comparable venue would put a significant dent in the APP's budget.

Distributed throughout hallways, the café and gym, students will get to choose from a menu of activities at the APP. The event will feature laser tag battles in the school's auditorium. A roll-

ing raffle will be held throughout the morning, and the drawing of winners' names will begin at 1 a.m.

"We try to make it big and beautiful so people want to come," said Maureen Austin. "It's a good show." She is chairperson of Natick's After Prom Party committee, and has worked with Natick's Parent Student Teacher Organization to curate the event.

APP volunteers solicit donations from locals to fund the



## Market Days Are Here Again

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

The return of Natick's farmer's market to the great outdoors brings a more generous spread.

"We become larger," said Deb Sayre. "There's more food people."

Like the patrons who frequent it, the event retreats indoors during colder months, within shelter of climate-controlled environs.

Sayre hosted the inaugural market decades earlier, an event that has since grown by leaps and bounds in size and popularity.

That first market a quarter century ago was a sidewalk show of local talent and goods.

It was held just outside the doors of Debsan, long a neighborhood staple and source for paint and other home decorating supplies. Sayre is the "Deb" in Debsan, whose father named the company after her and a sibling.

To Sayre's knowledge, no known photographs exist of that first farmer's market. She was

**FARMER'S MARKET**

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**APP**

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**Claudia Shepherd & Nina Sable**



**APP**

*continued from page 1*

event, which includes an array of rentals and prizes for the raffle. There are thousands of dollars of gift cards and other prizes to raffle off, the renting of skee-ball units, a bounce house and temporary tattoo station, a hypnotist and DJ to hire.

The price tag for the APP is upwards of \$25,000, all of which comes from donations. Bernardi's auto dealer of Natick gifted \$5,000 toward the cause, and Roche Bros. \$1,000. Wegman's, though the supermarket chain recently closed up shop in Natick, gave to the event as well.

"We try to go for bigger donors," said Austin, but all are welcome and appreciated. "We will take anything, goods and services."

Parents have donated televisions, microwave ovens and the like – necessities that might help furnish a dorm room some students are destined for. The event last year featured about \$6,000 in prizes, and about 400 seniors attended.

"We want kids to say, 'yeah,



I want to go to that," said Austin. This will be her second year running the event. "I'm already thinking of next year."

The After-Prom Party's name divulges when the event takes place, but leaves space for who may attend. Seniors needn't have gone to the prom to make an appearance at the party.

"We don't want anybody to



feel left out," said Austin.

In addition to being too good to be ignored, hosts of the APP also designed it to go so late that prom-goers can't stay awake. Held Saturday morning from midnight until 5 a.m., the event is meant to tire out even the most die-hard partygoers.

Just when the APP is winding down, the sun will be threatening to come up; students will be exhausted from the prior day's prom prep, festivities and a morning of partying. Attendees can leave before 5



a.m., but only with parental permission.

"It's a long night," said Austin, one that organizers are still seeking volunteers for.

The APP is free for students to attend, and was created to offer them somewhere safe to celebrate after the prom.

"We feel very strongly that this is something our community needs," said Austin, who has a senior in college and a junior in high school. "It's become a family event. To pay it forward, or pay it back. We feel very passionately that this could save a life."

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**FARMER'S MARKET**

*continued from page 1*

scrambling just to make the event a success, and promotional pictures weren't on her radar during those busy days. And who could have predicted how the event

like SOWA, one of Boston's biggest. There, sellers often drive up to drop off and unload their wares, but then might have to go on the hunt for parking on some far-flung street or lot.

Nevertheless, SOWA is a must-see event for frequenters of farmer's markets and seekers of

common," said Sayre.

For patrons of the market, free overflow parking is available close by at the Town Hall and Pond Street lots.

The town's event has evolved from that initial sidewalk market into an attraction that will feature 68 food vendors at last count.

that advocates for local commerce and creativity. Sayre has been working with Athena Pandolf, director of the Natick Center Cultural District, to plan and promote the town's farmer's market.

Many longtime vendors of the event, said Sayre, initially came

grow us and retire."

The price, also, is right. At \$20 or \$25 per visit per vendor, the cost of admission to sell at Natick's farmer's market makes the event an attractive one for sellers trying to profit from their work.

"We have not raised our rates since we started," said Sayre.

The town's market is locally famous for its diversity of offerings. Local heirloom tomatoes neighbor the products of a potter's imagination and hands. Freshly-picked mushrooms are sold alongside the work of local photographers.

The grinding wheel of a knife sharpener can be heard one Saturday, against the background music of a local band. A pop-up bicycle stand might appear one weekend for tune-ups, a stained-glass artist the next.

Tangerini's Farm, Freight Farms and Little Beehive Farm will be returning as vendors to the village green. Representatives from town agencies are also slated to make an appearance, to talk up the resources and services their organizations provide.

"That's a nice variety to have at a market," said Sayre. "It's going to be quite the opening."



would grow to such a degree over ensuing decades?

That initial market featured a few artists and crafters. Now, the Saturday outdoor market hosts a variety of revolving and favorite food vendors, all permitted by the town's Board of Health.

Suburban markets like Natick's can be a layup for vendors. Parking is a challenge for city markets

vintage goods. And held on Sundays, it makes for a great weekend sequel and complement to Natick's Saturday event.

Natick's outdoor farmer's market is bordered on its south and east sides by parking, allowing vendors to unload just a few steps from where commerce happens on the common.

"Natick's really lucky to have a

That's in addition to the many artisans, musicians and other sellers who will make up the market's outdoor roster, until the event returns indoors in November.

Since those early sidewalk days, the market has become a favorite of locals near and far.

"Then we've just grown from there," said Sayre.

It helps to have a community

for the exposure but stayed for the experience. While the sellers may have grown, the market has remained a valuable venue to get their name and products before customers.

"The atmosphere is so community friendly," said Sayre. "We're an incubator for new companies. They tend to come and stay with us, unless they out-

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# Natick Garden Club Plant Sale 2024

The Natick Garden Club invites all interested parties to our annual PLANT SALE. Doors open at 10 am, SUNDAY June 2, 2024. Rain or shine, as the event is held indoors at the Natick Community-Senior Center, 117 East Central St., Natick, MA. Kick off national "garden club week" with us!

The sale is our major fundraiser for the year. We offer a variety of plants that have been proven to grow successfully in our sometimes challenging weather conditions. Most of the plants are perennials from local gardens, and are labeled for bloom time and season, height, spacing needed, and sun and moisture requirements. We promote native plants as well, meaning they are native to this area, and tolerant of drought conditions and excellent at providing habitat for good insects and birds. As always raffle tickets for a variety of items will be available and you need NOT be

present to win.

All proceeds from the sale fund the Natick Garden Club, a group devoted to civic beautifi-



cation and service in the Natick community. Cash, check and credit card accepted. For more information please visit us at <http://www.natickgardenclub.org/> or find us on Facebook or Instagram.

**Info on our club:**  
Our mission is to promote a positive educational environ-

ment for sharing gardening, horticultural, and conservation information and to encourage civic planting, beautification, and service in the Natick community.

Organized in 1998 by three women, the Natick Garden Club currently has nearly 100 members. Members represent a range of ages, genders, and gardening acumen. All have a passion to learn, share, and volunteer in service to their garden club. The NGC has evening meetings September through May at Morse Library featuring a keynote speaker, with time for socialization and NGC business at the start. September and March are non-membership meetings and for the public at large. We have deep roots in Natick although draw members from several communities, and can be found around town in a variety of capacities throughout the year. The plant sale is our main fundraiser.

# Tools for Resilience & Well-Being: A FREE Elementary Parent Workshop Series

**Mondays, May 6th, 13th, and 20th from 6:30-8:30pm, Cole Center, Natick**

Laura McCarthy, MA, will share practical ideas and strategies to help you increase connection, manage emotions, behavior and stress, and build possibility mindset and hope. Participants will strengthen these tools through empowering and validating conversation with other parents and caregivers.

This is an IN-PERSON event and you are registering for all 3 workshops in the series. Registration is limited to 25 spots. Free childcare available for children ages 4+ - registration required. Light dinner will be offered.

**Sunday, May 19th from 1pm-2pm**

Visual Storytelling Through Comics & Graphic Novels with Author/Illustrator Jannie Ho

This interactive program is designed for elementary-aged students to nurture and develop their appreciation of comics and graphic novels. Author/Illustrator Jannie Ho (The Lost Mitten, Happy Chinese New Year, Fry Guys) will discuss how graphic novels are created. She will also engage children in a lively collaborative drawing game to make their very own comic.

All supplies for the program will be provided. Note: this is NOT a drop off program.

We are committed to providing an accessible event for all community members. Please reach out to [info@sparkkindness.org](mailto:info@sparkkindness.org) with any requests.

Space is limited! Reserve your spot today!

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# Pinci Lasagneria offers delicious Tuscan dining in your own home

BY LINDA CHUSS

When you hear Valerio Pinci describe the homemade, authentic, gourmet lasagna he makes using mainly organic ingredients, or read customer reviews of his lasagneria dishes, you can barely think of anything else except tasting it. You mull over which type to choose: the regular handmade pasta, or the spinach pasta, which actually imparts its flavor, not just the green color. Will it be the grass-fed beef or vegetarian, grilled eggplant between the layers of imported cheeses? The white lasagna with truffled portobella mushrooms, or the latest variation, pesto lasagna?

One decision you are spared regards béchamel, the white sauce used in all types, providing a rich and creamy flavor. Made with butter, milk, and flour, béchamel establishes the lasagna's lineage as Tuscan, and the rich culinary universe that is Northern Italy.

Pinci Foods lasagna is also convenient to get and serve at home or bring to a celebration. The taste far exceeds what you would find at a typical Italian restaurant, yet the price is comparable. As one customer shared, "Be prepared to be transported to rustic Italy for an authentic meal." Another concluded, "It makes for an unforgettable dinner."

"Lasagna was always my favorite food growing up in northern Italy," said Pinci, who hasn't fully lost his Milanese accent. "It's traditionally served at family gatherings like for Christmas

or New Year's. Because it's a baked pasta dish, it can be prepared well in advance of the meal."

"My grandmother taught me how to make it. After moving here from Italy in my early 20s, I couldn't find lasagna like it, or go home every time I wanted it. So, I started making it for myself. Then for my friends." Pinci likely has very many friends.

In 2023, after he moved on from his position as a high-tech executive, other events lined up that propelled him to start the high-end lasagna business. "WSK opened a commercial kitchen in Holliston last fall, providing the right space so close to home. I was able to open earlier this year, and it's been phenomenal."

Pinci makes the lasagna at WSK and flash freezes it. Most customers order from the PinciFoods.com website. Within about three to five days, or at a later date the customer specifies, the lasagna is delivered to the customer, at no extra charge for Holliston and nearby towns including Natick. Membership options for recurring delivery are available, with benefits like preferred access to new varieties and price discounts. Having an exquisite meal at home couldn't be easier.

"What's truly great about lasagna is how well it freezes," Pinci said. "You can have it months later and it will be just as good as when it's fresh. When you're ready to serve it, just thaw, then reheat it for 45 minutes."



## Business Spotlight

If you just cannot wait for the delivery, you can find Pinci Lasagna at the Holliston Suprette. An enticing way to sample the varieties is at a tasting, like the one at WSK held in March that drew over 100 people.

"When you join our email list, you'll be notified of tastings, new offerings, and special discounts," Pinci explained. Right now, when you place your first order on the website, the code FIRSTORDER15 gives you 15% off." Price is based on the type – meat, vegetarian, or gluten free – as well as the size, which is measured in pounds.

A tray of gourmet lasagna makes a perfect gift, especially for people who don't have time to prepare the dish but would enjoy it at home. Pinci can even ship the lasagna, suitably packaged.

Find more information and order at PinciFoods.com. For questions, email info@PinciFoods.com.

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Valerio Pinci makes spinach pasta by hand for his authentic, gourmet lasagna. Courtesy photo.

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# Natick Resident Brian Casaceli Elected To Partnership

Mirick O'Connell is pleased to announce that Attorney Brian M. Casaceli has been elected to partner status.

"Mirick O'Connell's partnership sets the standard for excellence. I am honored and privileged to be elected to such an esteemed group," said Casaceli.

Casaceli, a Natick resident, is a partner in the Labor, Employment and Employee Benefits Group where he focuses his practice on representing employers in federal and state courts in Massachusetts, as well as before the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination and the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission in defense of claims of discrimination, sexual harassment, wrongful termination, breach of contract, and wage payment violations. He also represents employers in wage and hour investigations by the U.S. Department of Labor and the Massachusetts Attorney General, and in unfair labor practice proceedings before the National Labor Relations Board. Casaceli further counsels employers on day-to-day employment and human resource-related advice issues and has significant experience drafting various employment-related documents including handbooks, policies, employment agreements, and

restrictive covenants.

According to Corey Higgins, chair of Mirick O'Connell's Labor, Employment and Employee Benefits Group, "Brian has been a valued member of the Employment Team and will continue to contribute to the Firm's success as a member of the partnership team."

Casaceli has served in leadership roles outside of the Firm as well. He is the former Board chair, and current Vice Chair of Public Policy, of the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce and former co-chair of the Labor and Employment Section of the Worcester County Bar Association.

In 2020, Casaceli was selected by the Worcester Business Journal as one of "40 under Forty" professionals honored for his professional excellence and community service.

He received his JD, summa cum laude, from Suffolk University Law School in 2014 and his BA, magna cum laude, from Stonehill College in 2011.

Casaceli was included in the 2024 edition of the Best Lawyers: Ones to Watch in America™ and was named a Massachusetts "Rising Star" by Boston magazine and Law & Politics.

# Webinar: Coexisting with coyotes in suburban communities

Eastern coyotes are found in nearly every town and city in Massachusetts, and they can thrive close to humans in a variety of habitats.

On May 9, from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., the Ashland Public Library will host a webinar entitled "Coexisting with Coyotes in Suburban Communities" at which attendees will learn about eastern coyote biology, how coyotes use suburban areas, and how communities can take effective steps to coexist with coyotes.

This talk will be presented by MassWildlife's Black Bear and Furbearer Biologist, Dave Wattles, PhD. Dave has been studying and working with large mammals in Mass. since 2006 when he began collaring and studying moose for his graduate work at UMass Amherst. He has 15 years of experience conducting black bear research and has been the Black Bear and Furbearer Biologist with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (MassWildlife) since 2016.

## Coexisting with Coyotes in Suburban Communities



This virtual event is hosted by the Memorial Hall Library in Andover, and a collaboration between several Massachusetts libraries.

Please register for this event to receive the Zoom link in the confirmation and reminder emails

- make sure to check your spam folder for them. The email will be coming from Zoom.

This program is sponsored by the Friends of the Ashland Public Library.

Source: [www.ashlandmass.com/calendar.aspx?eid=13189](http://www.ashlandmass.com/calendar.aspx?eid=13189)

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## Library Hours

Monday through Friday, 9:30-5:30 with extended hours on Tuesday until 7:00pm

Saturdays 9:30-1:30

Curbside pickup is available during all open hours

Check our website for the most up-to-date information and to register for programs: <https://baconfreelibrary.org>

## Children's Programs

Story Time -- Mondays and Tuesdays @ 10 am -- We'll feature a combination of stories for listening and songs for singing & dancing. When the temperature is above 55 and dry, we'll be outside!

Baby Time -- Wednesdays @ 10am -- Join us for a cozy story time filled with lap bounces, rhymes, songs, and simple stories. Geared toward infants and young toddlers with their grownups. Always held indoors.

Dog Tales Story Time -- Monday, May 6th @ 10am -- Join us for dog-approved stories and a chance to pet a calm, sweet, and soft therapy dog. When the temperature is above 55 and dry, we'll be outside!

Jammin with You -- Fridays, May 3rd & 17th @ 10:30am -- Be prepared to laugh, dance, sing, and jam your way through 30 minutes of non-stop family fun! When the temperature is above 55 and dry, we'll be outside!

Read to a Dog -- Saturday, May 25th, 10-11:15am -- Kids can build confidence and practice their reading skills by reading out loud to a registered therapy dog! Children ages 5 and up can sign up for a 15-minute reading session with Sophie, a gentle golden retriever who loves belly rubs, stories, and cuddles. Registration is required.

## All Ages Programs

Featured art display: Rebecca McGee Tuck is a sculptor and an ocean activist. Her current display, called "Along the Wrack Line," deals with the overwhelming amount of debris and plastic trash that contaminate our local New England beaches. Rebec-

cas unique, thought-provoking work will be on display at the BFL from March 28th to May 15th.

Slow Stitching -- Tuesday, May 21st, 5-6:30pm -- Fabric artist, Helen Bellomo is back by popular demand for another Slow Stitching class. Slow stitching is a mindful needlework process that focuses on intention and the joy of being in the present moment. A kit (base fabric, patchwork fabric pieces, lace, trims, buttons, needle, and thread) will be provided.

This program is open to all ages; children under 10 must be accompanied by a caregiver. Registration is required.

## Adult Programs

Zentangle -- Tuesday, May 7th @ 5pm -- The Zentangle® Method is an easy-to-learn, relaxing, and fun way to create beautiful images by drawing structured patterns (called tangles). In this workshop, learn the history of Zentangle, the basic steps of the method, and tools used. Through step-by-step instructions, you will be immersed in creating an original Zentangle tile. No artistic talent or experience is required. All supplies will be provided. Registration is required.

Why Cats Do What They Do -- Weds, May 22nd @ 6pm on Zoom -- Feline Training and Behavior Specialist Stephen Quandt, will explain cat behavior from the perspective of the evolutionary and adaptive forces that help shape their lives. This virtual program will include Q&A time when Stephen will address participants' cat queries.

This program will be held over Zoom. Please register to receive the program link.

Adult Book & Film Clubs - registration required for all clubs <https://baconfreelibrary.org/clubs-programs/>

Mystery Book Club -- first Thursday of the month @ 1pm on Zoom

May 2nd: Mastering the Art of French Murder by Colleen Cambridge

History Book Club -- second Thursday of the month @

11am on Zoom

May 9th: The Girl with Seven Names: escape from North Korea by Hyeonseo Lee

Nonfiction Book Club -- fourth Saturday of the month @ 10am at the library

May 18th: Maid: hard work, low pay, and a mother's will to survive by Stephanie Land

Environmental Book Club -- third Tuesday of the

month @ 7:00 pm on Zoom

May 21st: Not Too Late: changing the climate story from despair to possibility by Rebecca Solnit (editor) and Thelma Young Lutunatabua (editor)

Tuesday Night Book Club -- meets the fourth Tuesday of the month @ 6:30 pm at the library

May 28th: H is for hawk by Helen Macdonald

Cinephile Mondays -- last

Monday of the month @ 4pm on Zoom; watch and discuss films. Check the BFL website for the film of the month and to register.

## Museum Passes

The Bacon Free Library and Morse Institute Library offer passes for free or reduced-admission to 30 local museums. Check one out and plan your next day trip!

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# Natick's Zero Empty Spaces has been chosen to be featured in this year's Boston Design Week

Zero Empty Spaces is celebrating its 2-year anniversary during Boston Design Week. This event will feature talented local artists and offer an opportunity to engage with these talented individuals. There will be unique artwork, prints, and more. Zero Empty Spaces is bringing people together by celebrating creativity, community, and the future of design. This event is located at the Natick Mall. RSVP using this link: <https://zes-BDW-2-year-anniversary.eventbrite.com>



The 11th Boston Design Week takes place April 23-May 5, 2024, featuring 70+ in-person, indoor, and outdoor events city-wide, including the annual Design Week Awards, Friday, May 3rd. This 12-day design festival offers renowned guest speakers, panel discussions, exhibitions, and more hosted by design-oriented businesses, universities, museums, non-profit organizations, and professional societies. All events are open to the public, and most are free with registration.

This year's festival theme is "Designing for the Future – Preserving for the Future". Designers must anticipate the future: the festival organizers seek events in all categories and in all fields of design that look to the future whether in new design or in pre-

serving and protecting historic design. The Special Focus designation events that reflect this theme are noted on the website.

Boston Design Week will feature events that respond to the economic, social and environmental imperatives of our city,

country and world. The festival will also have a number of Special Focus Tracks including architecture, fashion, and more.

World Design Weeks

The full calendar of events is now online and open for registration. To ensure priority access,

please register for our eNews on our website at Boston Design Week is produced by Fusco & Four/Ventures, LLC and seeks to increase public awareness and appreciation of all aspects of design, foster recognition of the vital role design plays in our lives, and bring new audiences to a wide array of design industries and organizations. Our vision is to encourage the public to explore all aspects of design.

Boston Design Week is a proud member of an international coalition to share knowledge, resources, and best practices, and foster the exchange of products and ideas, sustainable development and the growth of our coalition of design events worldwide. Boston joins more than 40 sister Design Weeks in Barcelona, Beijing, Bogota, Eindhoven, Helsinki, Mexico, Seoul, Tokyo, Dubai and others, as well as numerous design weeks and design festivals in the U.S. For more information, visit [www.WorldDesignWeeks.org](http://www.WorldDesignWeeks.org)

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Your Money, Your Independence

# Empower New Graduates with Gifts of Independence



Glenn Brown, CFP

accounts. Even at \$25-\$50 a month, it's a consistent reminder that demonstrates the value of saving, compounding, and choosing to invest over time.

Furthermore, encourage graduates to explore different investment options and asset classes in these taxable investment accounts. And if they make investment mistakes, good. It is better to do it at a young age with less money and responsibilities than in their mid-40's, with a family and inside their retirement accounts.

### Parental IRA Contributions.

Parents can contribute to their child's Individual Retirement Account (IRA) up to the child's earned income. Consider Roth IRA and its unique advantages including being funded with after-tax dollars, meaning withdrawals in retirement are tax-free. This can be incredibly beneficial for young graduates, as their income and tax rates are likely lower now than they will be in the future. By starting a Roth IRA early, graduates can maximize their tax-free growth potential over the long term.

### Financial Literacy Books.

Equip graduates with essential financial knowledge by gifting them books on personal finance and investing. Consider "The Total Money Makeover" by Dave Ramsey, "Poor Charlie's Almanack" by Charles Munger

and Peter Kaufman or "The Millionaire Next Door" by Thomas Stanley and William Danko.

I wish I'd read 'Millionaire' in my 20's, instead of early 30's, as it provides insights into the habits and behaviors of wealthy individuals, offering valuable lessons on living below one's means, budgeting, and accumulating wealth.

### Financial Planning and Investing Tools.

Don't let Tik Tok or free "you-are-the-product" apps be their source of financial knowledge. Consider gifting a subscription to a financial planning app that can help track spending, set savings goals, and create budgets. These tools provide valuable insights into their financial habits and empower them to make informed decisions about their money and avoid unnecessary debt.

And for those who want to invest beyond their low-cost index ETFs, consider Investor's Business Daily or gift a year access to Seeking Alpha Premium.

### Financial Advisory Services.

Last year a client set up two Zoom meetings for their son, a college graduate moving to North Carolina. For the first meeting, the four of us met on an agenda mom and dad wanted covered. For the next meeting, the parents bowed out, leaving the agenda and conversation up to their son. This worked well, as he was much more engaged and

has stayed connected by sending questions as they arise and sharing updates.

### Entrepreneurial Resources.

If the graduate has ambitions of starting their own business, even a side hustle, consider gifting business books, online courses, or membership to entrepreneurial communities. As a parent, consider the legal benefits ensuring a Limited Liability Corporation (LLC) is established by paying for the initial state registration.

### Building an Emergency Fund.

Encourage graduates to establish an emergency fund by contributing to it yourself. Life is unpredictable, and having savings set aside for unexpected expenses can provide peace of mind and prevent them from going into debt during emergencies.

Graduates who receive these gifts will not only appreciate the gesture but also benefit from the financial stability they provide as they navigate the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

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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# A Journey of Love and Adaptation in Alzheimer's Caregiving

**Free Speaker Event for Case Managers, Aging Life Care Managers, Social Workers, and Anyone Caring for Someone Living with Dementia**

Mary Ann Morse at Heritage assisted living community is pleased to announce a special, complimentary speaker event featuring KC Mehta, author and

caregiver. This session is an ideal presentation for case managers, aging life care managers, social workers, and for anyone caring for a loved one living with demen-

tia. The event will take place on Thursday, May 23, 2024, 8:00 – 9:30AM.

KC Mehta's life took an unexpected turn in 2013 when his wife of 39 years, Sumi, was diagnosed with younger-onset Alzheimer's disease at the age of 59. A former engineering executive at Chrysler, KC had little experience in caregiving, but his commitment to Sumi led him on a profound journey of love and adaptation.

Initially grappling with denial and hope for a misdiagnosis, KC immersed himself in research and soul-searching to navigate the challenges ahead. Recognizing the need for personal growth, he shifted his focus from changing Sumi to understanding and meeting her evolving needs.

In 2015, KC began formally documenting their journey, sharing insights and emotions through his WhatsApp journal, "My Journey with Sumi." This raw and unfiltered outlet serves as both a therapeutic tool for processing emotions and a means of offering glimpses into their lives for close family and friends.

Drawing from his experiences, KC actively participates in Alzheimer's support groups and engages with organizations to raise awareness about the disease. With a distinguished 40-year career in the automotive industry, including roles at Chrysler, Ford, Tata Technologies, and the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, KC brings a wealth of expertise and insight to his advocacy efforts.

Educated at the University of California, Berkeley, and Walchand College in India, KC holds degrees in Mechanical Design and

Mechanical Engineering. Since 2015, he has dedicated himself full-time to caring for Sumi as her Alzheimer's progresses, embodying a commitment to love and support in the face of adversity.

KC Mehta's journey is an inspiring testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the transformative power of love in the face of adversity. Through his advocacy, he continues to shed light on Alzheimer's disease and inspire others to embrace compassion and understanding in caregiving.

For professionals serving aging adults and their families, this is an invaluable opportunity to deepen understanding and enhance support in Alzheimer's caregiving. KC Mehta's firsthand account provides a unique perspective and practical strategies to navigate the complexities of Alzheimer's disease.

Individuals can register for this free one and half hour presentation by visiting: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/850988267817/preview/?aff=oddtcreator>. A light buffet breakfast will be served prior to the presentation. Mary Ann Morse at Heritage, 747 Water Street, Framingham, MA 01701.

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# Spring Has Sprung



Chris Hopkins

**Raking:** Give your lawn a thorough raking to remove matted-down leaves, thatch, and other organic matter. Raking helps loosen the soil surface and allows for better penetration of water, air, and nutrients to the grassroots.

**Overseeding:** If your lawn has bare patches or thin areas, consider overseeding with grass seed. Wait until rain is forecasted to help the seeds germinate, and then spread the seed evenly over the prepared soil. Water the area regularly to ensure proper establishment of new grass.

**Fertilization:** Apply a balanced fertilizer to your lawn to provide essential nutrients for healthy growth. Choose a fertilizer specifically formulated for the needs of your grass type and follow the application instructions carefully.

**Weed Control:** Keep an eye out for weeds in your lawn and take proactive measures to control them. Hand-pull weeds or use herbicides as needed, targeting specific types of weeds like dandelions and crabgrass.

**Irrigation:** Turn on your irrigation system and make the necessary adjustments for the spring season. Program your system to provide even and continuous watering to your plants and lawn.

By focusing on these key aspects of lawn care, you can ensure that your lawn remains lush, green, and resilient throughout the spring and beyond.

**Mulching** is a beneficial practice for maintaining the health and appearance of your garden and landscape. Here are some key points about mulching:

**Benefits:** Mulch serves several important purposes in the garden. It helps conserve soil moisture by reducing evaporation, suppresses weed growth by blocking sunlight to weed seeds, moderates soil temperature fluctuations, and adds organic matter to the soil as it breaks down, improving soil structure and fertility.

**Application:** When applying mulch, spread it evenly over the soil surface to a depth of 2 to 4 inches. Avoid piling mulch up against plant stems or tree trunks, as this can cause moisture

retention and encourage rot or pest damage. Leave a small gap around the base of plants to allow for air circulation.

**Mulching Trees and Shrubs:** Mulching around trees and shrubs helps conserve moisture, protect roots from temperature extremes, and reduce competition from weeds. Apply mulch in a donut shape, leaving the area immediately around the trunk or stems clear to prevent moisture buildup and potential rot.

**Mulching Flower Beds:** In flower beds, mulch helps retain

soil moisture, suppress weeds, and provide a neat, finished appearance. Apply mulch around the base of plants, taking care not to smother them, and replenish the mulch layer as needed to maintain the desired depth.

By mulching your garden beds and landscape properly, you can enhance the health and beauty of your outdoor space while reducing maintenance requirements and conserving water.

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## LANDSCAPE INSIGHTS

**Focusing on your lawn** is essential for maintaining a healthy and vibrant outdoor space. Here are some key tasks to prioritize:

**Remove Debris:** Start by clearing any debris, such as fallen tree limbs, leaves, pine needles, and sticks, from your lawn. This not only improves the appearance of your lawn but also promotes better air circulation and prevents potential damage to the grass.

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# The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

## Get To Know The b.LUXE Experience

BY GINA WOELFEL

Hello Natick! We're The b.LUXE Beauty Beat, a monthly column dedicated to keeping you in the loop about the latest beauty, style, and self-care trends. We take pride in creating engaging and informative content for our readers, and we love connecting with you to discuss the hottest topics in our industry.

But what many of you may not know is that we often find ourselves inspired by our client conversations at our salon. When you're in our chair, we love chatting about your beauty routines, challenges, and goals and use those insights for our monthly topics.

That's why, this month, we'd love for you to get to know the studio behind The Beauty Beat!

We're your one-stop beauty destination and take pride in being Massachusetts' most highly-rated beauty salon. Check us out on Google.

### Our Specialties:

- Precision Haircutting
- Curly Haircuts
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- Hair Smoothing Treatments
- Hair Extensions
- Superior Skincare
- Special-Occasion Makeup
- Lash Extensions & Tinting
- Organic Spray Tanning
- On-Site & In-Studio Wedding Beauty

Our studio has a bright, vibrant feel, with passionate stylists who genuinely enjoy their clients. Your appointment should be more than just a task to check off your to-do list. We want every visit to our studio to be a luxury experience.

The "b.LUXE Experience" is our unique approach to beauty and wellness and guarantees your visit will be exceptional. We understand your time is valuable and we respect that. The b.LUXE Experience helps you reset, revive, and leave our studio feeling better than when you walked through our door.

Upon arrival, our friendly front desk staff will check you in and invite you to relax in our comfy waiting area. You can also grab a refreshment from our deluxe coffee bar, where we have a wide variety of refreshments including coffee, teas, seltzers, and snacks.

Your stylist or esthetician will then accompany you to their station or private skin care room for a thorough consultation where you can discuss your beauty goals and budget. They'll evaluate the whole picture to create an individual plan that delivers your desired look and feel.

We offer complimentary "LUXE For Everyone" add-ons to surprise and delight our guests because who doesn't love surprise luxury? We work these mini pop-up services right into your appointment for an extra touch of relaxation.

b.LUXE  
hair & makeup



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- Our signature BEFORE Oil Treatment is rich in essential nutrients that promote healthier hair and scalp. It's a client favorite and offered to all haircut and blowout clients. We apply this right at the sink with a zen-like massage.
- For our color and smoothing clients, we offer our NUTRIR OIL Hand Treatment during your processing time. This therapeutic hand scrub and massage leave your hands feeling soft and supple.
- Our clients who receive luxury facials enjoy a Hot Stone Foot Treatment to alleviate stress and tension.

b.LUXE is a team-based salon. We don't use the words "my client" or "your client," only "our clients." We want you to feel relaxed and at ease with every appointment, and we'll never make you feel uncomfortable if, for any reason, you need to book with another stylist. Because of this shared client base, we can typically accommodate you with a different hairdresser if your preferred stylist is unavailable or if your beauty budget changes.

We carry many popular hair care products, including Oribe, Kerasilk, DualSenses, and Ouidad. Additionally, our award-winning skincare line from G.M. Collin is an undisputed industry favorite. Our knowledgeable team members are always here to provide product education and helpful recommendations.



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Thanks for taking the time to get to know us a little better!

We invite you to visit our studio located in the historic Medway Mills. It's not just a space; it's a vibrant community of artists where you can connect with like-minded individuals, exchange ideas, unwind, and learn from our seasoned experts. We'll help you achieve your beauty aspirations because that's who we are. Beauty is our business!

This upcoming Mother's Day is the perfect opportunity to give Mom (or yourself!) a gift of self-care and pampering!

Our "Me-Time Facial" follows the same luxury steps as our signature b.LUXE facial, with the addition of an under-eye collagen treatment and your choice of either an invigorating scalp massage or a hot stone foot treatment.

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# Events For Natick Community Senior Center

Please register for all events by calling 508-647-6540 or come by the center, 117 East Central St.

## Weekly Walks- Tuesdays

Every Tuesday meet us at 9:30 am at Elm Bank/Mass Hort to walk the loop road. We meet at first parking lot on the left as you enter abutting soccer fields. We will walk as a group for an hour led by Sharon or other volunteer, wear comfortable shoes/sneakers, dress appropriately for the weather, goes rain or shine. Free, registration requested.

## Mindfulness Meditation- Hybrid

Join Sharon every Monday and Thursday, 2-2:40pm, free for some quiet meditation and some guided meditation. No meditation May 27 - Memorial Day.

## Mondays At A Museum

Join Sharon as we visit museums from around the world. Mondays 3:00-4:00pm, free

May 6- Across America photography

May 13- American Passage Homer

May 20, Harvard Art Museum, MOMA, The Barnes

May 27- Memorial Day- Center is closed

## Culturally Curious- Art Of Scandal: Thefts, Vandals And Forgeries

Wednesday, May 1, 1:30-2:30pm, free

This program explores some for the most brazen criminal acts in the art world and features works by artists including da Vinci, Michelangelo and Rembrandt. Learn more about works that were targeted and how they were recovered and restored for our enjoyment today. Thank you to Whitney Place for sponsoring this program!

## The Gilded Age- A Talk With Rick Tulipano- In Person

Thursday, May 9, 1:30-2:30pm, free

What was the Gilded Age? As we answer that question we'll check out the skeleton in Grover Cleveland's closet, James Garfield's untimely (and needless) death and the reason why Benjamin Jarrison would never win a personality contest. We'll also reveal the identity of the America's first coast-to-coast celebrity sensation.

## Share Your Read- In Person Book Group

Friday, May 10, 12:30-1:30 pm, free

Join other avid readers and bring whatever you are currently reading (no more than three books) to share with the group. They may be fiction, nonfiction, romance, mystery, history, or any genre you like! Each person can talk a bit about the book--why you like it, how you found out about it, would you recommend it, and so on. Group leader, Karen Mallozzi, will start us off with her current reads including: Switchboard Soldiers (nonfiction) by Jennifer Chiaverini; The Wager (nonfiction) by David Grann and A Blizzard of Polar Bears (Mystery) by Alice Henderson.

## The Joys Of Nature- Nature Talk On Sharks And Rays- Hybrid

Tuesday, May 14, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Join Joy Marzolf as we look at sharks and rays, ancient and amazing animals. How large were the teeth of the pre-historic megalodon shark? How does a shark find its food? Do sharks always need to keep swimming? What important roles do they play in our oceans? These animals are often portrayed negatively in the media, but what is it really like to be under water diving with them? Learn what makes sharks and rays such amazing animals through images from around the world, including great white, great hammerhead, tiger, lemon, whale sharks and manta rays.

## Live Music With Rob Natoli's Swing String Jazz Trio

Monday, May 20, 1-2pm, free

Join the Swing String Jazz Trio with guitar, vocals, violin and bass guitar for swing music from the "big band" era of the 20's, 30's, and 40's. You'll recognize the songs and are encouraged to sing along and even dance! Sponsored by Mary Ann Morse Healthcare Corp.

## Meet Up At Garden In The Woods

Wednesday, May 29, 10:45am, \$5.00pp due at registration

Garden in the Woods is a 45 acres' woodland botanical garden located at 180 Hemenway Road, in Framingham, Massachusetts, United States. It is the headquar-

ters of Native Plant Trust. Meet in the parking lot and we will enter together.

## Day Trips Coming Up:

**Newport Flower Show At Marble House:** Fri., June 21, \$126.10, per person (non-refundable purchase) Bus departs from Fisk Methodist Church, 106 Walnut St, Natick at 9:00 am returning approximately 6:30 pm. Registration Deadline: Thurs., May 30.

Join us for the annual Newport Flower Show at Rosecliff Mansion. First stop is lunch at Johnny's/Wyndham Resort overlooking the Atlantic Ocean and Newport's Easton Pond. Please choose your entrée at registration: Baked Stuffed Scrod, Chicken Piccata or Pasta Primavera. After lunch we go to the Rosecliff with gorgeous floral displays and gardens. We have some free time downtown Newport before returning home.

**Lobster Roll Cruise- Dennis on the Cape:** Tues., July 23, \$116.10, non-refundable, payable at registration. Luxury bus departs from Fisk Methodist Church, 106 Walnut St, Natick at 10 am, returns approximately 6:15 pm. Registration Deadline: Mon., July 1.

Join us as we head to Dennis on Cape Cod launching on our dinner cruise boat. Enjoy views of Sesuit Harbor on the calm waters of Cape Cod Bay while you enjoy a choice of Lobster Roll, Roast Beef Roll Up or Vegetarian Roll Up (choose lunch option

at registration). Back on land, we have some free time in downtown Hyannis to shop.

**Essex Steam Train And Riverboat:** Thursday, August 8, \$140.00, non-refundable, payable at registration. Luxury bus departs from Fisk Methodist Church, 106 Walnut St, Natick at 8:45am, returns approximately 5:30pm. Registration Deadline: Tues., July 16.

Join us as we head down to Essex, CT boarding Essex Steam Train. We will enjoy lunch in the dining car while we take in the beautiful countryside of meadows and farms. Please choose: Beef Tips with gravy, Baked chicken or Vegetarian Plate at time of registration. We will get off the train at Deep River Station to board the Riverboat for a relaxing ride along the Connecticut River.

**Tanglewood - Concert and Lunch:** Sat., August 17, \$157.50, non-refundable, payable at registration. Luxury bus departs from Fisk Methodist Church, 106 Walnut St, Natick at 7:45am, returns approximately 5:30pm. Registration Deadline: Wed., July 24.

We have an early departure to arrive for our 10:30am open rehearsal performance at the Shed. Earl Lee conducts Simon, Schumann and Beethoven featuring Yo-Yo Ma, cello. Once the performance is done we head over to the Red Lion Inn for lunch where you will have a choice of Roasted Haddock, Pot Roast or Chicken Pot Pie- choose entrée at registration. Meal also

comes with a salad chef's choice of starch and seasonal vegetables and desert. Must reserve this one early, seats limited!

**Block Island:** Tues., August 20, \$140.00, non-refundable, payable at registration. Luxury bus departs from Fisk Methodist Church, 106 Walnut St, Natick at 6:45am, returns approximately 6:15 pm. Registration Deadline: Tues., July 16.

Step back in time to relaxing Block Island starting with ferry ride from Point Judith, RI to the Island. We'll start with an Island Tour approximately 1hr 15' with a stop at the historical Southeast Light. Afterwards we lunch at the National Hotel on the waterfront. Please choose: Pan Seared Chicken Breast, Pasta Pomodori or Flame Grilled Salmon for lunch at your registration. After lunch we'll have time to walk and shop in the Old Harbor downtown or just relax on the hotel porch.

**Newport Playhouse- Run For Your Wife:** Wed., September 25, \$134.10, non-refundable, payable at registration. Luxury bus departs from Fisk Methodist Church, 106 Walnut St, Natick at 9:00am, returns approximately 5:45 pm. Registration Deadline: Tues., September 3.

A FUN filled afternoon at this dinner theatre with buffet lunch, wonderful play and cabaret. The feature play, 1982 British comedy by Cooney, Run For Your Wife, shows John Smith who has two wives, two lives and a very precise schedule for juggling them both.



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# Understanding Mosquito-Borne Illnesses in Massachusetts: Risks and Precautions

Mosquitoes are not just pesky insects buzzing around; they can also pose significant health risks. Mosquito-borne illnesses pose a significant public health concern in Massachusetts, particularly during the warmer months when mosquito activity is high. In Massachusetts, several mosquito-borne illnesses are of concern, especially West Nile virus (WNV) and Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE). Understanding the risks associated with these diseases and taking appropriate precautions is essential for safeguarding public health and protecting yourself and your communities from these potentially serious illnesses.

### West Nile Virus (WNV)

West Nile Virus has become a prevalent mosquito-borne illness in the United States, including Massachusetts. Mosquitoes become infected with WNV by feeding on infected birds and then transmit the virus to humans through their bites. WNV is spread to humans through the bite of an infected female mos-

quito.

In Massachusetts, WNV cases typically occur from late summer through early fall when mosquito activity is at its peak. Most people infected with WNV have only mild, flu-like symptoms that last a few days. Symptoms usually appear within 3 to 14 days of infection and can include fever, headache, body aches, rashes and/or swollen lymph nodes. While most people infected with WNV experience mild symptoms or none at all, but some can develop severe neurological complications. Older adults and individuals with weakened immune systems are at higher risk of developing severe illness.

### Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE)

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is a rare but serious viral illness transmitted to humans through the bite of infected mosquitoes. Although EEE is less common than WNV, it can have more severe health effects.

Cases of EEE in Massachu-

setts are sporadic and tend to occur in late summer and early fall. Symptoms of EEE can range from mild flu-like symptoms such as fever, chills, body aches, and joint pain to neurological impairments such as meningitis, encephalitis or even death. Most people infected with EEE virus do not develop symptoms. For those who develop symptoms, the time from infected mosquito bite to onset of illness (incubation period) ranges from 4 to 10 days.

### Prevention and Precautions:

There are no medications or vaccines to prevent or treat WNV or EEE infections. Preventing mosquito bites is the most effective way to reduce the risk of mosquito-borne illnesses. That is why it is imperative that you understand the importance of prevention against WNV and EEE, especially as the spring and summer months are approach-

**MOSQUITOS**  
*continued on page 17*

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By entering this contest, you are providing consent for Southwick's Zoo and Our Town Publishing (the publishers of The Yankee Xpress/Blackstone Valley Xpress, Free Press and the newspapers of Local Town Pages) to use your photo(s) for print, digital and social media purposes, and allowing Southwick's Zoo and Our Town Publishing to contact you via email for this promotion or upcoming promotions. Only one winner per household. Cannot be an employee or family member of Southwick's Zoo or Our Town Publishing to win.







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# Sports

## Schultz Sets Lofty Goals For NHS Softball Team

### All-star Catcher And Two-Time Captain

BY KEN HAMWEY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Olivia Schultz is a Natick High student-athlete whose achievements are not only impressive, but also stunning.

A four-year varsity starter in softball, the 18-year-old senior played third base her first two

seasons, then settled in as the Redhawks' catcher for her final two campaigns. The 18-year-old Natick native is a two-time Bay State Conference all-star and a two-time captain.

When she played third base as a sophomore, her batting average was .556. Last year, she hit .492, her on-base percentage was

.584, she had 14 RBIs and scored 31 runs. She also compiled top-notch numbers in the field — 104 putouts and a .981 fielding percentage.

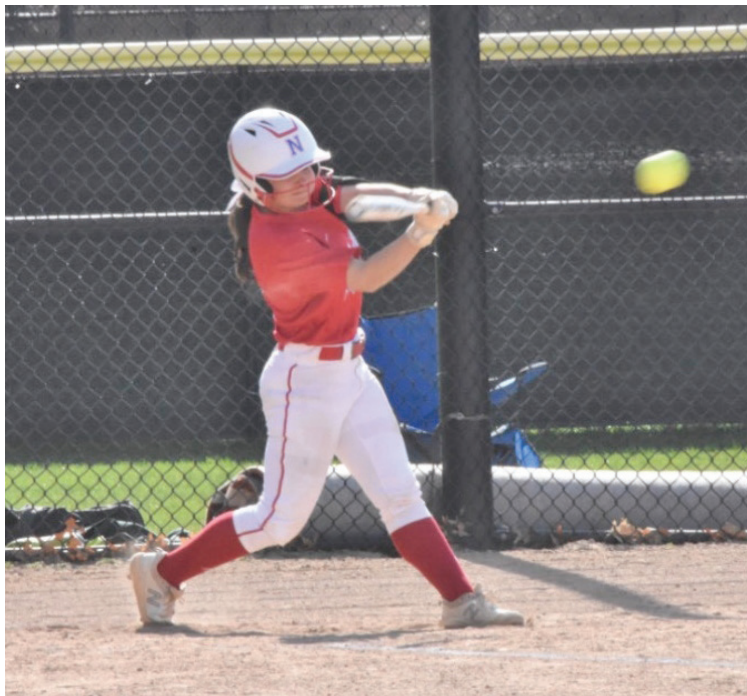
So far this season, Natick has a 3-1 record and Schultz has compiled some amazing statistics. She's got a phenomenal

to compete for the Carey Division title in the BSC and to create an atmosphere where our players bond and enjoy their softball experience," she emphasized.

Schultz believes her objectives are realistic. "We're a close-knit team, we're supportive of one another, and we've got talented



**Olivia Schultz has a 4.32 GPA and she'll attend Middlebury College where she plans on majoring in bio-medical science and research.**



.846 batting average, has clouted 2 home runs, driven in 12 runs and scored 9.

As dynamic as she is at the plate and behind it, she's exceptional in the classroom. A National Honor Society student, she has a 4.32 GPA and she'll attend Middlebury College in the fall. Recruited for softball, she'll be aiming for playing time as the Panthers' catcher but she'll also need time to excel in a challenging major — bio-medical science and research.

Schultz is the total package but there's still a missing ingredient in her vast array of accomplishments. She's played in the state tourney three times but the Redhawks haven't advanced past the second round.

"It would be special and meaningful for our team if we qualify, go on a deep run and win a state championship," she said. "It would be great but it's hard to do. I'll do my best to lead and motivate our team along with the other captains."

Playoff success is one of Schultz's three goals. "The others are

players who can hit, field and pitch," she said.

Brenna Keefe, who's in her second year as head coach, labels Schultz as "a dynamic leader, a superb catcher who can hit and field, and a role model."

The 5-foot-2 Schultz has lots of other strengths and Keefe is quick to recite them.

"Olivia leads by example and by being supportive and communicative," Keefe offered. "She's got speed and quickness, is athletic and instinctive, has great arm strength and knows how to settle down a nervous pitcher. Her softball IQ is high and that's why we trust her calling the pitches."

A catcher who's analytical and relies on patience, Schultz relishes the responsibilities that go with the position.

"I try to stay calm, I keep mental notes on our opponents and when there's runners on base, I like to do the unexpected — like execute a pickoff," Schultz said. "I love playing the position because a catcher is always involved, whether it's cheering for a teammate, helping a pitcher who

might be struggling, or calling the kind of pitches we'll use. My role is like being a coach on the field — supplying energy and keeping our fielders alert to potential situations."

A humble competitor, Schultz says her two seasons as a captain and a league all-star are special. "I'm honored to be selected," she said. "As a captain, I try to lead by example and to be supportive. Hard work and dedication are the keys to both honors. Others deserve credit for my all-star selections. My parents are so helpful, my teammates are supportive and my coaches provide opportunities and are motivating."

Schultz's best game occurred as a freshman in a clash against Newton North, which had beaten Natick in their first meeting. "I got a single and stole second in the seventh inning," she recalled. "I later scored the winning run that gave us the Carey Division title."

A top thrill might seem like a difficult choice but Schultz listed Natick's 2-1 loss to Bridgewater-Raynham last year in the playoffs as her favorite. "We were the 26th seed and they were a six-seed," she noted. "The atmosphere was tense, exciting and nerve-wracking. We lost but we kept it close by staying focused and relying on teamwork."

Schultz, who started playing softball at the youth league level at age six, has played AAU softball for four summers with the Concord Raiders. She's competed at different levels and has seen just about every situation imaginable in softball. Her favorite moment



**Above, Natick High catcher Olivia Schultz leads by example, is athletic and instinctive, and has great arm strength; right, Schultz is adept at the plate, batting .556 as a sophomore and .492 last year.**

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**SCHULTZ**  
continued on page 17



**SCHULTZ**

*continued from page 16*

is batting with a runner on second base. "I just strive to advance the runner," she said, "whether it's a sacrifice fly, a bunt or with a base hit. I enjoy getting an RBI."

Schultz also enjoys working with the Redhawks' other captains — senior Caroline Riley and junior Jayme Kiley.

"Both are excellent leaders," Schultz said. "Caroline plays first base or the outfield, she's a good hitter and fielder and provides lots of energy. Jayme is a third baseman/outfielder who also hits and fields well and is passionate about the game."

Keefe and assistant coach Tom Lamb also get high praise from Schultz. "Coach Keefe never gets upset, finds ways to correct mistakes, is a fine motivator and is energetic," she noted. "Coach Lamb is a big plus in his role. He loves softball and is an all-around, great person."

Calling her parents (David and Theresa) role models for their work ethic and supportive nature, Schultz's athletic philosophy is a combination of reaching her potential, having fun and

winning. "Having fun gets me in the right frame of mind to reach my potential and that leads to winning," she said.

The personable Schultz knows that valuable life lessons can be learned in sports. "I've learned how to accept failure and overcome it," she offered. "I've also learned how to overcome adversity and be resilient, how to lead and how to be a quality teammate."

The Redhawks will likely be a playoff participant once again and a deep tourney run would make Schultz's final season at Natick High memorable. A state title would be special. Whatever happens, she's acutely aware that her interscholastic career is nearing an end.

"It'll be bittersweet when it's over," she said. "I'm excited about my future at Middlebury but I'll miss all the terrific teammates I've known for a long time."

Olivia Schultz is a high-character student-athlete who undoubtedly will achieve success — on the athletic field and in the academic arena.

Count on it.

**MOSQUITOS**

*continued from page 14*

ing. Here are some key precautions you can take:

1. Use Insect Repellent: Apply EPA-approved insect repellents containing DEET, picaridin, or oil of lemon eucalyptus when outdoors, especially during peak mosquito activity times.
2. Wear Protective Clothing: Wear long sleeves, pants, and socks when spending time outdoors, particularly during dawn and dusk when mosquitoes are most active.
3. Eliminate Standing Water: Mosquitoes breed in still water, so empty or regularly change water in birdbaths, flowerpots, and other containers to prevent mosquitoes from reproducing.
4. Use Screens: Keep windows and doors screened to prevent mosquitoes from entering your home.
5. Stay Informed: Stay updated on local mosquito activity and disease risk by monitoring alerts and advisories issued by public health authorities.

Remember to stay vigilant, stay informed, and take these steps to prevent mosquito bites and enjoy a safer outdoor experience this spring and summer!

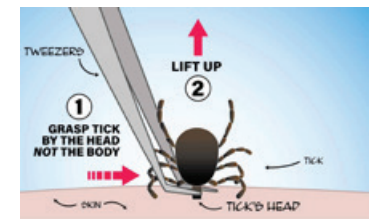
**Tick Safety**

Spring is tick season, here is what you need to know to stay safe: There are two main tick seasons during the year: The first peak starts in spring (March to early April) and continues through the summer, with most activity between June and August. These are often the top months for ticks in Massachusetts as these insects thrive in warm, humid weather.

**When it comes to protection, the most important aspect is keeping ticks from getting on to your body. When you go outside be sure to:**

Spray yourself with a bug repellent containing DEET, and wear long-sleeved pants and shirts, tucking pants into socks or shoes. When you come in from outside, remove clothing and put in the dryer on high heat. Take a shower and perform a full body check. What to do if you find a tick on you: Once found, the tick should be removed as soon as possible. Here's how: Using fine-tipped tweezers grasp the tick as close to your skin as possible, pull

Please feel free to reach out to Ashland Board of Health at 508-532-7922 if you have any questions or concerns.



**Removing a tick with a pair of tweezers**

upwards with steady pressure, not twisting. After the tick is removed, clean the skin with rubbing alcohol or soap and water.

**Common symptoms of tick-related illness to watch for:**

- Fever
- Aches and Pains
- Headache
- Fatigue - Muscle Aches



With Lyme Disease, you may also experience joint pain and a rash; some people may develop a Bullseye rash, but not all.

Please contact the Ashland Board of Health Office for further information or if you have any questions. (508)881-0100 x 1975.

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# Real Estate Corner

## Natick Real Estate: Steps to Success



John McHugh

### REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

The Natick real estate market is buzzing with excitement, even as the inventory of available homes remains scarce. If you've been contemplating selling your property, there has never been

a better time to take the plunge. Let's explore why and how you can maximize your selling potential.

#### The Spring Surge: A Seller's Paradise

Despite the ongoing shortage of homes for sale, Natick's spring market has defied expectations. One recent success story stands out: a home I listed early in the season drew an astounding 200 visitors during the first open house weekend. By the end of that whirlwind weekend, an accepted offer was in place. The demand is unprecedented, and buyers are eager to find homes.

#### Diverse Buyer Profiles

Natick's buyer pool is as varied as the spring blossoms. Consider these categories:

**Upsizers and Downsizers:** Families seeking more space and empty nesters looking to simplify

their lives. **Renovation Enthusiasts:** Some buyers relish the opportunity to transform a property into their vision of perfection. **Lot-Focused Builders:** Developers eyeing the potential of the land itself, beyond the existing structure.

#### Overcoming Hesitations

Many homeowners hesitate. They think they will never finish "all of the work" to prepare the home for sale. Perhaps your house needs some TLC, or you haven't updated the kitchen, baths, or systems. Fear not! In a market where buyers far outnumber sellers, these concerns need not hold you back.

#### The As-Is Advantage

Selling your home "as-is" can be a winning strategy. Buyers are willing to pay top dollar for properties with potential. While some homes benefit from minor fix-ups or a fresh coat of paint, others

shine just as they are. You don't need to embark on major renovations to attract eager buyers.

#### Coldwell Banker's RealVitalize Program

To ease the process, Coldwell Banker offers the RealVitalize program. Here's how it works: **No Upfront Cost:** Repairs, improvements, and even professional staging are covered without any initial expense. **Dedicated Angi Project Consultant:** We'll match you with an expert who will plan and schedule the necessary work. Every situation is unique. Whether it's a new roof, window repairs, or system upgrades, we've got you covered.

How much longer will Natick homes continue to sell for record high numbers? In May and June buyers with children will be focused on getting into a home and settled prior to school starting in September. Taking advantage of

the summer market can be beneficial for sellers as the new school year quickly approaches. The market is ablaze with opportunity NOW: Don't let anything hold you back. When you are ready, reach out for a complimentary Pricing and Market Analysis. It's always good to know the fair market value of your home!

**Your Home, Your Choice** Regardless of your home's condition, discussing your options is crucial. Let's explore how to maximize your selling price while minimizing stress. Remember, you're not alone—we're here to guide you through the process.

John McHugh has been a Senior Agent with Coldwell Banker for 24 years. [JohnSellsNow@gmail.com](mailto:JohnSellsNow@gmail.com) 978.902.5646 [JohnMcHughRealEstate.com](http://JohnMcHughRealEstate.com)

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# Real Estate Corner

## Recent Home Sales

Date	Natick	Amount
04/17/2024	5 Lakewood Rd.	\$2.38 mil
04/16/2024	32 Macarthur Rd.	\$963,000
04/16/2024	93 E Central St. #14	\$700,000
04/16/2024	23 School St. #16	\$520,000
04/12/2024	10 Nouvelle Wy. #S909	\$780,000
04/12/2024	10 Nouvelle Wy. #T922	\$775,000
04/11/2024	27 Erlandson Rd.	\$861,300
04/09/2024	22 Hartford St.	\$752,500
04/08/2024	278 N. Main St.	\$601,000
04/08/2024	59 Village Brook Ln. #7	\$383,000
04/08/2024	154 Hartford St.	\$705,000
04/05/2024	6 Nonesuch Dr.	\$1.85 mil
04/04/2024	36 Silver Hill Ln. #16	\$329,900
04/04/2024	44 N Main St. #1	\$839,000
04/02/2024	6 Woods Ct.	\$725,000
04/01/2024	9 Algonquian Dr.	\$1.30 mil
04/01/2024	76 Eliot St.	\$715,000
03/29/2024	148 Mill St.	\$1.54 mil
03/29/2024	3 Village Rock Ln. #4	\$325,000
03/29/2024	12 Purington Ave.	\$1.80 mil
03/28/2024	19 Stratford Rd.	\$675,000
03/25/2024	17 Harvest Moon Dr.	\$1.50 mil
03/22/2024	8 Greenleaf Rd.	\$650,000
03/22/2024	62 E. Central St. #102	\$301,000
03/22/2024	10 Algonquian Dr.	\$1.60 mil
03/22/2024	11 Morgan Dr. #209	\$715,000
03/21/2024	7 Ferndale Rd.	\$740,000
03/21/2024	9 Marshall Rd.	\$1.0 mil
03/21/2024	25 Hemlock Dr.	\$990,000
03/20/2024	3 Buena Vista Rd.	\$1.26 mil
03/19/2024	22 Brookdale Rd.	\$1.60 mil
03/18/2024	8 Frances Ave.	\$1.0 mil

Source: www.zillow.com / Compiled by Local Town Pages



The 3-bed, 3-bath 2,200 square foot house at 44 N Main Street, Unit 1, in Natick recently sold for \$839,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com

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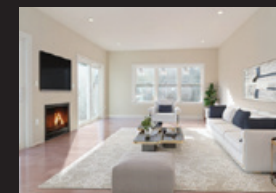
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