

## Norfolk Prepares to Host State's Newest Shelter

More Questions than Answers at May 15 Meeting

By GRACE ALLEN

By all accounts, Norfolk town officials and residents were stunned to learn on May 10 that the town would be host to the state's newest homeless shelter come mid-June. The Bay State Correctional Center has been unveiled by the Healey Administration as an overflow site for asylum-seekers, homeless families, and migrants, many of whom have been sleeping at Logan Airport.



The former Bay State Correctional Center in Norfolk will be repurposed to serve as the state's newest shelter.

About 450 people, including 140 families, will be housed at the former prison, which closed in 2015. The exact demographics of the population were not clear, however.

A packed meeting was held on May 15 for residents to ask questions of town officials, who admitted they didn't have all the answers and were just as

surprised as everyone else at the news.

"This is fearful for all of us," said Select Board Chair Jim Lehan. "I've lived here for 40 years. This is a first. This is the hand we were dealt, and we have to figure out how to work through this."

Officials said the goal was to try and minimize the impact on the community, despite the many unknowns. They pointed out that the site will be staffed

around the clock with security. On-site service providers will coordinate access to food and handle cleaning and maintenance. There will be a curfew.

Many of the concerns brought up by residents revolved around the schools, which are already overcrowded. While the exact number of

**SHELTER**

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## The Very Best Of THE SHADOWS FOUR



Bill Trainor, far right, with his band the Shadows Four, in 1964.

## Age is Just a Number When it Comes to Music

Wrentham Guitarist Reflects on Career and Looks Ahead

By GRACE ALLEN

They say musicians don't retire; they stop when there's no more music in them. Bill Trainor

would agree with that. The 77-year-old Wrentham resident

**MUSIC**

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**SHELTER***continued from page 1*

school age children to be housed at the new shelter is not clear, officials said it's likely there will be a fair number of children that the town will have to accommodate and educate. The state will provide emergency aid, at a rate of \$104 per student per day, to help cover costs. Other monies may potentially be available.

Anita Mecklenburg, Vice Chair of the Select Board, said the district's schools are committed to ensuring they are a safe and welcoming space for any new students.

Another concern is the impact on public safety. Fire Chief Erron Kinney said colleagues in other towns with shelters have



seen an increase in aid calls, noting that shelter populations may not have had preventative health care and be at more risk of illness. He pointed out that even a 5 to 10% increase in calls will affect response times and potentially endanger the Norfolk community, which numbers about 11,000 people.

Residents at the meeting questioned the state's assertion that background checks were performed on shelter residents, and that vaccinations were up to date.

The decommissioned prison, located about two miles from the town center on a road with no sidewalks, will need extensive

renovations before it can house families in the dormitory-like setting. The facility contains a cafeteria, gymnasium, common rooms, and offices that will be used for administrative activities. There are showers and bathrooms on each floor. The barbed wire surrounding the site will be removed, and the gates will remain open so families can come and go.

The emergency shelter is expected to operate for six to 12 months, according to state officials.

Massachusetts is a "right-to-shelter" state, which means the state must provide living spaces for pregnant women and families with children. The influx of migrants coming into the state, plus a growing body of homeless Massachusetts residents, has strained the shelter

system. Temporary shelter sites have been opening in cities and towns across the region.

Justin Casanova-Davis, Norfolk's town administrator, said the state will hold community forums in early June, to further address residents' concerns. He said the town's website, [norfolk.ma.us](http://norfolk.ma.us), will be updated with any new information.

Lehan said the police and fire chiefs, school department heads, and other town officials will meet regularly to discuss the impacts and logistical challenges of the state's plan.

"We'll get nowhere if we approach this in an adversarial way [with the state]," said Lehan. "We didn't ask for this challenge, but how we respond to this challenge is entirely in our control."

## Norfolk Community Day Set for June 15

The Norfolk Lions, in conjunction with local organizations, are in the final planning stages for the town's annual Community Day, to be held on Saturday, June 15 at the Holmes Bus complex

at 22 Myrtle Street in Norfolk. Community Day events start at 11 a.m. There is a \$5 donation for parking.

Events at this year's Community Day celebration include a children's art contest, touch-a-truck, Tom Antonellis' bird houses, golf ball drop 50/50 raffle, as well as many new and old favorite amusements, including a sports obstacle course, Batter Up, Mega Slide, Wipe Out and Frozen Combo.

The blacktop entertainment will include several local groups who have participated for the last 25 years, including Band Together--More Than a Music School, and Exhale Dance Performance.

This year's schedule of events: On the Main Stage: Band

Together--More Than a Music School (11 a.m.); Lions Talent Show Winners (noon); Exhale A School of Dance (12:15 p.m.); kids' games & contests--musical chairs & balloon toss (1 p.m.); pie eating contest & golf ball drop (2 p.m.); and High Flying Dogs (2:30 p.m.).

In addition, there will be an animal petting zoo; musical entertainment, including the Good Tymes Banjo Band and Loud Steel Band; Megalodon Tooth Hunt; GOFI Dogs Kissing Booth; airbrush tattoos; antique fire engine, hay wagon, and train rides; a caricaturist; and foam fun with the Norfolk Fire Department.

All the food and fun are sponsored by various local groups, many of which are selling good-

ies to raise funds and providing literature about their organizations.

In addition, the Lions will be collecting donations for the food pantry since food pantry supplies are at their lowest during the summer months. Some items that are currently needed are cereal, soup, coffee, snacks (especially those for children), juice, pasta sauce, tuna, and baked beans.

The Norfolk Lions could not undertake this fun event without the widespread assistance of all those who volunteer their funds, materials, and time. The Lions would like to thank the Norfolk Fire, Police, and Highway Departments and the Norfolk Recreation Department for their ongoing support. The event is also made possible with the help of other community organizations such as the Emmanuel Baptist Church, KP Leos, KP Cares, DECA, and various volunteer groups.

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The Lions are a non-profit organization known for working to end preventable blindness. Norfolk Lions participate in a vast variety of projects important to the community and proceeds of Community Day are donated back to local charities or to meet community needs. For more information regarding Community Day, visit [www.norfolkmalions.org](http://www.norfolkmalions.org), or email [norfolkcommunityday@gmail.com](mailto:norfolkcommunityday@gmail.com).

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**MUSIC**

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still plays his guitar every day, and if you want to hire him for any gigs, he's ready to go.

Aging Baby Boomers like Trainor just won't quit. Take Mick Jagger, Rod Stewart, Paul McCartney, Stevie Nicks...the list goes on and on of "senior" musicians still performing. And why not, asks Trainor.

"Just because you're old doesn't mean you're done with music," he said. "Once it's in your blood, you just keep going."

Music has been in Trainor's blood for a very long time. When he was six, his parents bought him a Roy Roger child's guitar. By the time he was eight, he had upgraded to a real guitar his parents purchased from a pawn shop for \$32. And when he was 13, he formed a band called the Rhythm Masters and started playing gigs.

But it was during senior year of high school that it really came together for Trainor. He started another band, the Shadows Four, which became one of the biggest Boston-based garage bands of its time. In the mid-1960s, the Shadows Four was the first band to play at the Music Hall (now the Boch Center) in Boston's theatre district. The performance was so successful that the venue began holding rock concerts as a new way to draw in crowds.

The Shadows Four toured during the summer of 1965, playing theatres all over New England. They played at drive-ins, too, setting up their equipment on the roof of concession stands, performing until the movies started at dusk. They also went on tour with the beach party film, "How to Stuff a Wild Bikini."

They were even hired to play the breaks between sets for Bo Diddley, when the performer played at Harvard University.

"He was terrible and they asked us if he could play our breaks instead," recounted Trainor. "I said no, you hired him, he's the star."

Trainor entered the Marine Corps later that year, during the Vietnam War, and went on to learn electronics through the military. When he was discharged, his training enabled him to embark on a long career. He worked for several companies through the years, until he retired

in 1998 from Meditech, a medical software company.

But, like time, the beat went on, sometimes in the background, sometimes front and center.

Trainor met his wife, Peggy, on a blind date, and it turned out she was musical too. The two formed yet another band, Breeze, a function band that played at weddings, with Peggy as the lead singer. Breeze went through several drummers, says Trainor, including Paul Caruso, who went on to play for the Boston-based band the Atlantics, and Ronny



The marquee at the Music Hall, now the Boch Center, announcing the Shadows Four.



Trainor met up with Rex Trailer in late 2012, before Trailer passed away three months later.

Stewart, who performed with Joe Perry of Aerosmith. A high school friend, Dave Henneberry, also played the drums for Breeze. In 2013, Henneberry was the Watertown homeowner who discovered Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the Boston Marathon bomber, hiding in his boat.

Trainor, who has lived in Wrentham with his family since 1986, had remained friends with his Shadows Four high school band. In the late 1970s, two of the friends were performing on "Boomtown," the Western-themed children's television show hosted by Rex Trailer and filmed in the Boston area at the WBZ-TV studios. Before the start of the show's last season, the guitar player in the "Boomtown" band left and Trainor was asked to fill in.

"Rex Trailer was a great guy," reflected Trainor. "He'd sit with us before all the shows and tell us stories. He was a real cowboy, having grown up on a ranch in Oklahoma. He loved doing the show and he loved the kids. Just a fabulous, fabulous guy."

Up until the pandemic,

Trainor had always been in a band, at one point playing in five different bands at the same time. The last band he played with was called Back in Time, which he'd been a part of for over 25 years. The group played every year for 13 years at the July 4 fireworks celebration in Waltham, to crowds of 10-15,000 people.

Trainor even taught guitar lessons after he retired, teaching up to 20 students a week.

Now, however, he mostly plays for himself, his kids, or his grandkids. Every night, while he watches TV, he picks away on an electric guitar that sits by his chair. But is he finished performing? No way, he says.

"My equipment, my PA system, my stand and stuff, are still in the trunk of my car. If somebody called today, I could drive right up to their house, set up, and play. I'm ready at the drop of a hat to perform."

Trainor, who still has every guitar he's used in his life—about 25—said he'll never retire from music until he's forced to.

He reflected, "I tell people, don't ever stop."



Bill Trainor, far right, with Rex Trailer and the Boomtown Band in 1978.



Trainor and his wife Peggy's band, Breeze.

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“We opened in Wrentham in the middle of June in 2004 and have been proudly serving the people of Wrentham and the surrounding communities over the past 20 years,” said Attorney Daniel J. Wood who, along

with his law partner David M. Gresham, run the practice.

“We are a local law firm, conveniently located in Wrentham Center, where clients can actually come to our office, meet with us, and speak to us,” says Wood. “We have raised our families in Wrentham and have given back to the community by sponsoring and serving on the boards of

many of the youth sports organizations in the area including King Philip Pop Warner, Wrentham Youth Baseball & Softball Association, Wrentham Youth Soccer Association, and all King Philip Sports & Boosters.”

Wood & Gresham cares about its clients and the outcomes they obtain. At this firm, clients are not just a number - which can happen at larger law firms where a case can be worked on by a first-year associate - they are a priority and are assigned to, and worked on by, a partner with over 25 years of experience.

Attorneys Wood and Gresham both broke off from a large Boston-area law firm that primarily worked for insurance companies and defended automobile accident claims.

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Wood said, “When we opened our own firm in 2004, we began representing individuals who were injured in motor vehicle accidents, slip and falls, and work-related accidents. We found this work particularly rewarding because we were helping injured people ‘get back on their feet’ and recover fair compensation for their injuries and economic losses...When it comes to personal injury cases, we have the distinct advantage over other law firms of having practiced law on the other side (the defense side), so we know how insurance companies think. We know what elements of a personal injury claim insurance companies look for when evaluating a claim’s value, so this helps us maximize the financial recovery for our clients.”

“We know how insurance companies think. We know what elements of a personal injury claim insurance companies look for when evaluating a claim’s value, so this helps

## Wood & Gresham examples of success

### Case 1 - The Bicyclist

One of the firm’s most recent successes was a jury verdict obtained in Norfolk Superior Court last year where Wood represented a bicyclist who was injured in an automobile accident. He was knocked unconscious and sustained a cerebral concussion which lasted approximately 6-8 weeks, a significant laceration to the back of his head requiring 13 staples, and suffered from vestibular vertigo.

The insurance company vehemently disputed who was at fault for the accident and the nature, extent, and causation of the Plaintiff’s vertigo. The Defendants’ insurer’s highest offer prior to trial was \$100,000. After a week-long jury trial, the jury returned a verdict which amounted to over \$413,000 including interest and statutory costs.

### Case 2 - The Dream House

After many months of frustrating legal hurdles, the firm recently helped a young couple purchase their dream home. The firm obtained a settlement for a client who was involved in a minor motor vehicle accident that some people may have considered a small settlement, but to this particular client, the settlement was enough to put a down payment on a house for him and his family.

us maximize the financial recovery for our clients.”

In addition to personal injury cases, the firm offers services in estate planning and real estate. When the firm opened in 2004, the partners noticed there was a “real need in the community to help people with estate planning (wills and trusts), probate, and real estate purchases and sales” - a need they have filled for two decades.

“We began concentrating in those areas and have found this to be very rewarding because we are helping people in the community deal with important aspects or events in their lives. Everyone needs an attorney to help them create a customized estate plan. Everyone needs help probating a family member’s Will at some point; and most people eventually need help buying or selling a home. For these reasons, we want people in the commu-

nity to know that we offer these services, as well as personal injury representation.”

And if they don’t offer a particular service, they can refer people to an attorney who does.

“We always tell people that, if they have any legal problem at all, just give us a call, because even if we don’t handle those kinds of issues, we usually can refer them to another attorney who specializes in that area,” says Wood.

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# NOW HIRING - A Flexible Job Opportunity with Maria C. Levin P.C.

By: JENNIFER RUSSO

Though the current unemployment rate in the United States remains below 5%, Bureau of Labor Statistics studies are showing that the job market today is still rather unpredictable and growing at a very slow pace. Many people are looking for solid career opportunities that also offer a good work/life balance. If you are currently looking for a role that is engaging, with a great team of people, but also offers a flexible schedule to maintain a high quality of life, look no further.

Maria Levin has been a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) for over 30 years, specializing in tax and financial advisory services, from her office in Norwood. With an influx of new business and new clients knocking on her door, she is currently looking for an experienced tax accountant or two to help, ideally for 35 hours per week, and the salary will be dependent on the level of experience.

“We do have a lot of fun here. I believe you really need to love the environment that you are in, and when you like the work and people you are working with, it makes all the difference. Some people have been with me more than 20 years – this is a wonderful place to be,” says Maria.

Maria is looking for a team player with a positive attitude, and a willingness to learn. The team runs the gamut for income taxes, working with businesses and individuals on tax resolution, filing, debt, foreign tax, small business set up, QuickBooks®, and more. Tax season can be demanding, but Maria really believes in the team mentality.

“It’s not me or you – it’s us. We work together to get things done. Laws and rules regarding finances and taxes in Massachusetts do change from time to time, but we stay on top of everything and can train the right candidate(s) in anything they don’t already know. If you are a tax accountant who took some time off to raise a family or do other things, this might be the right fit for you too,” Maria shares.

Though many people do their own tax returns through online software options, there are things that often get missed,



especially if a client is someone who has a business or other assets, has a child in college, or other factors. Having a CPA in your corner ensures that you are not spending more than you need to and that someone can walk you through the intricacies of state deductions, investments, and more so that taxes do not need to be amended and errors are not made.

“I really enjoy what I do. We have invested back into the business with innovative technology to support administrative functions and create the highest level of security for our customers. I love helping people get the most out of the work that they put in to create a happy and fulfilled life for themselves. This is true in helping people financially, but also for those who work with me,” explains Maria.

“We value family and relationships – we all need to work, but it’s more about that quality

## Employment spotlight

and balance. Family is first, always. This can be a full-time role or a part-time one. We can hire someone to work in the office or in a hybrid capacity. We are even pet friendly. What is most important to me when filling this role is finding someone who is highly collaborative, with an optimistic outlook, and is willing to put the effort in to be the best they can for our clients.”

If you are a tax accountant and think this might be the role for you, please reach out to Maria via e-mail to [info@levincpas.com](mailto:info@levincpas.com) or call (781) 769-2487 to discuss. Learn more about Maria and her practice on her website at [www.levincpas.com](http://www.levincpas.com).

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## MBTA Zoning Law Passes at Town Meeting

By GRACE ALLEN

The controversial MBTA Communities Zoning act was approved by a majority of voters at Norfolk's Town Meeting, held on May 15.

The law's goal is to increase zoning for multi-family housing in towns served by or adjacent to MBTA stops. Nearly half of the state's 177 applicable cities and towns have complied with the law, but others are refusing to rezone or have delayed a decision.

Communities that do not comply with the law by the end of 2024 may face the loss of certain state funding or grant money.

Proponents of the act say increased housing density near public transportation will help alleviate the state's housing crisis by removing discretionary processes such as special permits, zoning variances, or age restrictions. The law calls for zoning

with a minimum density of 15 units per acre, 10% of which must be affordable.

It's important to note that the law does not mandate new housing, just new zoning.

The Norfolk Planning Board chose to use overlay districts, where the new districts are laid on top of existing districts which already have their own zoning regulations. The existing districts already allow multi-family housing, and overlaying the new districts on top allows Norfolk to meet the requirements of the new law. While the new districts will permit high-density housing to be built, additional hurdles, such as preserving wetlands and the lack of public sewer in both districts, will likely either dampen developers' interest in taking on the projects or cause whatever projects are proposed to be smaller in scale.

## Stakeholders Discuss MBTA Communities in Public Meetings

By JOE STEWART

Wrentham elected officials have been holding public meetings to explain the implications of the MBTA Communities program on Wrentham and to secure public comment from residents. The Planning Board, which is developing zoning districts to comply with the law, has discussed the MBTA Communities program at nearly every meeting since February, as has the Select Board.

Of particular interest were two Select Board meetings, each with invited speakers. The first was held on March 19 and included Chris Kluchman, Director of Livable Communities, a division of the state's Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC). The Livable Communities division is responsible for implementing the MBTA Communities program. Recording of this meeting is available on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/3UF3cCw>

The second meeting was held on May 9 and included the chairman of the Cape Ann Political Action Committee and an attorney, Michael Walsh, who represents Cape Ann in its suit opposing the MBTA Communities program. Recording of this meeting is also available on YouTube: <https://bit.ly/4bx2xul>

### Livable Communities

In the first meeting, members of the Select Board shared concerns about the possible impacts of future development on Wrentham, highlighting inadequate infrastructure such as sewer and water, and the costs of traffic, schools, police, and fire. In responding, Kluchman noted that she too lives in a small town and therefore understands the concerns. Nonetheless, the law was passed by the legislature, signed by Governor Baker, and it's her job to oversee the implementation of that law. Kluchman also oversees the state's housing-re-

lated grant programs, including a new program to address needs such as water lines and intersections.

Kluchman clarified that the law requires the zoning but as Wrentham has experienced with its existing housing and commercial zones, it takes a lot of work among many stakeholders (key among them land owners, developers, and banks) to deliver new development.

Regarding water and sewer infrastructure, Kluchman offered an example appropriate to Wrentham, which does not have town sewer and currently has quite limited water supply: assume two acres zoned for 15 units per acre, yielding 30 units. In Wrentham, that developer might need to use an acre for the sewer leach field and for the well, thus cutting the density in half, down to 15 units. Kluchman also noted the devel-

### STAKEHOLDERS

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# Thanks, Dad - For Showing How to Lead, Then Trusting to Follow



**Glenn Brown, CFP**

Fatherhood isn't just about providing; it's about leading by example, imparting wisdom, and instilling values that echo through generations. As Father's Day approaches, it's time to pause and express gratitude for these silent architects of our lives.

This will be my first without my dad, who passed last month at 94. He had a great run as he lived an active lifestyle with emphasis on volunteerism, a farmer's work ethic and humility.

Growing up on a dairy farm in Hampton Falls, NH, he attended nearby UNH to study agriculture and worked on the farm through his late 20's. As with many farms in the 1950's, financials and scale would impact their ability to operate, so he took a job as a rural mail carrier.

He'd retire 34 years later in this same capacity, never seeking to climb the corporate ladder nor amass great sums of money. He, along with my mom who left teaching high school to stay at home, found more value in being present for my childhood and creating an environment to provide better opportunities than they had.

I experienced his leadership through my involvement in team sports, Cub Scouts, and school activities. But what awe-struck this kid was his being in the Volunteer Fire Department (including Fire Warden) for 20-plus years. The visits to the firehouse with guys greeting "Forrest!", his gear ready to go in our hallway, fire scanner in the bedroom and of course, seeing him come home. Sometimes it would be in the middle of the night or in the early morning where he'd shower, eat breakfast, and go to work as the only mailman in town because "someone's gotta deliver the mail."

As my dad led by example in work ethic and volunteerism, he also learned to trust in my expertise and insights as an adult. This reciprocal exchange of trust signifies the evolving nature of the parent-child relationship. Fathers trust their children to carry forward their legacy and ensure their well-being in old age. This

trust with my dad was nurtured through open dialogue, shared decision-making, and a mutual commitment to the family's collective goals.

Let me be clear, it wasn't always easy. It can be a humbling realization – to see the roles reversed, to witness the wisdom and innovation of the next generation, and to have the courage to follow their lead. There were times he'd feel anxiety towards change, whether all proper precautions were being taken and he'd reference others who were doing something different.

From a financial planning perspective, some examples of actions taken (with his initial reaction) included: establishing a revocable trust ("Why, we're not loaded"), maintaining long-term care insurance ("It's getting so expensive, I might never use it"), and converting his modest IRA to Roth in January 2009 plus switch to growth investments ("I'm too old for that").

And of course, the greatest combination of financial and well-being in old age planning - knowing when it's time to get support for elder care ("Your mother and I are going to sell our home, move to Mass and live with you, your wife, and young kids - are you crazy?!").

As I look back on the last 5 1/2 years since that decision, his abil-

ity to trust and follow plans made for some of the most relaxed experiences together as a father and son. We could both focus on developing fond memories and instilled values with our girls, his granddaughters. For this, and many other reasons, I say thanks Dad and Happy Father's Day.

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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## STAKEHOLDERS

*continued from page 8*

opers of the Wrentham outlets and the Ledgeview complex were responsible for similar infrastructure.

Kluchman then discussed school-aged children, noting that a clear demographic trend is that families are having fewer children and school districts are experiencing declines in enrollment. It's possible that if the new housing is built in Wrentham, any children moving into those units could offset enrollment declines and, in any case, those enrollments will take place over time. Kluchman shared as well that studies show new housing developments are revenue-positive for towns.

Among other topics, Kluchman addressed the "one size fits all" and "every community is unique" concerns, noting that adding multi-family zoning that applies to a small area of land should not alter the character of Wrentham.

### Cape Ann PAC

In the second meeting, John Kolackovsky, a Rockport resident who filed a lawsuit in 2022 because of the MBTA Communities program, and an attorney representing the group in its suit, Michael Walsh, presented and took questions. Similar to the Livable Communities meeting, members of the Select Board offered remarks about concerns and then quickly brought the speakers forward.

Kolackovsky started with a summary of the towns at which they presented, including Rockport, Gloucester, Manchester, Boxford, Winthrop, Raleigh, Wakefield, Shrewsbury, and Hamilton. Kolackovsky shared that the legal process is quite slow, having filed suit in 2022. It's hoped the next hearing, scheduled for May 14, will actually take place because they have enough parties to designate the suit as a class action.

Kolackovsky introduced the MBTA Communities program as a mandate taking legal rights away from citizens and allocating those rights to a state bureaucracy to arbitrarily change zoning. Kolackovsky further noted that in return for giving up those rights, communities may still continue to compete for four specific state grants.

Kolackovsky then posed a series of questions for Wrentham, including: Has the town assessed the legality of the law? Has the town reviewed the value of the state grants? Has the town figured out the cost of complying, including school costs to educate more children, and the costs of increased fire and police services?

Then Kolackovsky questioned if Wrentham has a housing shortage or just a shortage of affordable housing. Kolackovsky also noted that people are moving out of Massachusetts and that the state is looking at a billion-dollar budget shortfall and thus questioned the viability of future grants. Following a few more remarks, Kolackovsky asked Michael Walsh to continue the presentation.

Attorney Walsh summarized the history of the law that produced the MBTA Communities program, its purpose to spur housing development, and its high-level requirements, notably a by-right zone authorizing high density housing.

Walsh then highlighted that while the law was sold to the legislature as an affordable housing law, it does not include an express requirement for affordable housing. Walsh explained that a developer could build 750 market rate units and do nothing to increase available affordable housing in Wrentham.

Walsh switched to summarizing the Rockport suit, starting with the principal argument that the statute is unconstitutional under the state constitution, namely "Home Rule" which was adopted by voters in November 1966. Walsh explained that Home Rule delegates to towns and cities the right to manage their affairs as voters like, and most importantly, the authority to define zoning regulations. Because the MBTA Communities program requires a change to zoning regulations, their suit contends that is an unconstitutional usurpation of town and city power by the state.

Walsh believes that this is the first time since Home Rule was adopted that the state has directed towns and cities to do something that otherwise was within the power of towns and cities to manage.

Walsh went on to discuss the suit's other arguments, alleging that the value of the grants are modest in comparison to town

budgets; that the guidelines are not enforceable because the guidelines were not developed using the state's regulation process; and that the rules governing adoption by town meeting (the simple majority exception to adopt high density zoning) is an illegal exception.

### MBTA Communities Behind the Scenes

We reached out to Michael Kennealy, Governor Baker's Secretary of Housing and Economic Development, for his take on the MBTA Communities act. According to Kennealy, then-Governor Baker formed a broad coalition in 2015 to begin to address the state's housing shortfalls that were impacting and continue to impact economic growth. The coalition included advocates such as the Citizens' Housing & Planning Association, Massachusetts Municipal Association, and many other stakeholders including Chambers of Commerce, Massachusetts Realtors, and the AARP. Importantly, the coalition was composed of both non-partisan and partisan organizations and was negotiated in the State House in a bipartisan manner.

Kennealy specifically noted that Baker could have vetoed the MBTA Communities program but retained it along with his signature program, Housing Choice. Housing Choice enables municipalities to adopt high density zoning with a simple majority of votes. According to Kennealy, the state's 350 municipalities have prevented nearly all high-density housing development, largely through zoning - nearly all towns and cities do not have zoning authorizing high density housing. Instead, landowners hoping to build such housing must embark on a long, risky special zoning process.

Following Baker's signing the bill into law, it fell to Kennealy to begin implementing the law. To that end, he collaborated with the same coalition to build the guidelines. He noted that more than 400 comments were submitted and analyzed.

In our conversation, Kennealy directly addressed a common misconception; that the MBTA Communities is a "mandate to build tomorrow." In Kennealy's view, it's a "mandate to zone."

Kennealy noted that between 2010 and 2020, approximately 80,000 housing units (multi-family units) were produced in Massachusetts. Of that 80,000, 30,000 were produced in Boston and another 20,000 by the next 10 cities and towns combined, leaving the remaining 330+ towns and cities having produced 30,000 - the same as Boston. In other words, most towns did nothing.

Kennealy shared this analogy: many of us would object if a developer of a quality product for which there was a clear need was prevented from producing the product by government regulation. Local government is stifling the production of housing, he said.

Kennealy's final comment was that if we can't solve this housing problem, we won't be able to grow. That's why every chamber of commerce supported this effort to enable the building of new housing.

### CHAPA's CEO

Rachel Heller, CEO of Citizens' Housing & Planning Association (CHAPA), shared some of the history leading to adoption of MBTA Communities. Heller highlighted that in 2014 CHAPA sponsored workshops with affordable housing developers and related interested parties such as housing advocates and municipalities to identify key challenges to producing housing in Massachusetts. Of the many challenges the workshops detailed, the single most important was summed up with: "If it's not zoned, you can't build it."

Also in 2014, the Massachusetts Housing Partnership submitted its report, "Unlocking the Commonwealth," to the legislature documenting obstacles to housing production across the state. The report highlighted that, "It is not any one policy that has failed, but rather many factors that have made Massachusetts one of the most difficult places in the country to build new housing." And its number one recommendation? "Require that every zoning ordinance and bylaw in the Commonwealth provide reasonable opportunity to construct multi-family housing."

From 2014, Heller listed a number of subsequent efforts. The Smart Growth Alliance, originally formed in

2003, began collaborating with stakeholders. As Heller recalled, likely in 2015, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council released its housing needs report which concluded the state would need nearly 500,000 units by 2040.

As the cost of housing rose and the availability of units declined, other organizations joined the effort. All those voices enabled the Baker Administration to begin negotiating with the legislature on the specific policies to implement.

For the Baker Administration, Housing Choice, which enables towns to enact high density zoning with a simple majority vote, and an abutters appeal bond, which enables judges to impose a bond to assure abutters' appeals are not frivolous, were key policies they wanted enacted.

Similarly, there were advocates for an expansion in the low-income housing tax credit and for a requirement that cities and towns authorize a reasonably-sized zone for high density housing.

As Heller recalled, those efforts spanned multiple legislative sessions before the House Housing Committee voted to advance the Economic Development bill with these policies. Notably, negotiators compromised on the zoning, limiting it to cities and towns served by the MBTA, which represent more than 50% of the state's population.

Heller highlighted the Baker Administration's efforts to craft, pass, and ultimately put into law those policies. Similarly, Heller listed the efforts of the Healey Administration to accelerate housing production through the Affordable Home Act, currently making its way through the legislature. That bill includes more than 25 policies such as authorizing accessory dwelling units for all single-family homes by right (much like the MBTA Communities authorized a by-right high density housing zone), a real estate transfer fee (a new source of funding for cities and towns), and a doubling of the grant funding available for affordable and public housing to more than \$4B.

# MBTA Communities - Where Are We? How Did We Get Here?

By JOE STEWART

Have you wondered how it is that Norfolk and Wrentham have been tasked with creating zoning districts to enable multi-family housing? To understand how we got here, it's helpful to dust off our high school civics classes.

## The Process

Here's a summary of the process, adapted from the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation MassLegalServices website (<https://bit.ly/3WN6Cpk>).

In Massachusetts, the process of creating public policy involves these key steps:

1. Issue Identification: Stakeholders such as advocates (e.g. homeless, housing, transportation, veterans, etc.) and lobbyists (e.g. those representing business and developer interests) collaborate to secure support from a state legislator, the sponsor.
2. Legislative Proposal: The legislator drafts a bill and introduces it in either the House or the Senate.
3. Committee Review: Once introduced, the bill is referred to the appropriate committee to hold public hearings where stakeholders, experts, and members of the public provide testimony on the bill.
4. Floor Debate and Vote: If the committee votes to approve the bill, it moves to the floor of the respective chamber for debate and voting. Both the House and the Senate must approve the bill.
5. Conference Committee: If the House and Senate versions of the bill differ, a conference committee reconciles the differences and produces a compromise version of the bill. That version of the bill must then be approved.
6. Governor's Approval: Once both chambers have passed the bill, it is sent to the Governor for approval. The Governor can either sign the bill into law, veto it, or let it become law without signature.
7. Regulation Development: After the bill becomes law, relevant state agencies are tasked with developing regulations to implement the new policies outlined in the law. This involves a period of public comment and review before the regulations are finalized.
8. Publication: Once the regulations are finalized, they are published and have an effective date.
9. Enforcement and Implementation: Finally, the regulations are enforced by the appropriate state agencies, and the policies outlined in the law are implemented throughout the state.

In the case of the MBTA Communities program, the legislation emerged as a last-minute compromise between the House and Senate during the final days of the 2019-2020 legislative session and was signed into law by Governor Charlie Baker in January 2021.

According to the Massachusetts Housing Partnership (<https://bit.ly/44JpQ15>), many collaborated to create the program, notably advocates for the environment, housing, and transportation as well as lobbyists representing business and development interests. The advocates support reduced housing costs, reduced environmental impact through denser housing and increased use of public transportation while business and development interests supported reduced government oversight, reduced development costs, and reduced risk.

According to the State's Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities, draft regulations were published in December 2021 and the agency took public comment through March 2022. In all, more than 400 comments were reviewed.

Importantly, in March 2022, Wrentham engaged in the Regulation Development phase, submitting seven recommendations to the Executive Office of Housing and Economic Development. The letter was signed by both the Planning and Select Boards. The elected officials who signed the letter and continue to represent Wrentham are Michael McK-

night, Charles Woodhams, Jr., and James Lawrence from the Planning Board, as well as Joseph Botaish, James Anderson, Christopher Gallo, and Charles Kennedy from the Select Board.

In August 2022, the compliance guidelines were published. Since then, the guidelines were revised in October 2022 and August 2023.

## Wrentham Responds

In January 2023, Wrentham submitted its action plan and in March 2023 received interim compliance. That brings us to phase 9, Enforcement and Implementation. In Wrentham's case, development of draft zoning regulations that comply with state law and the published guidelines.

Throughout 2023, the Wrentham Planning Board and Wrentham's Director of Planning and Economic Development worked with Bohler, a Boston-based civil engineering firm hired through a grant from the Commonwealth, to evaluate sites and develop zoning regulations in compliance with MBTA Communities.

According to Bohler, analysis started with four large areas:

- The Conservation, Recreation, School and Park district off of North Street
- The Residential 43 district off of Taunton Street
- The Commercial Industrial 2 district adjacent to the Wrentham Outlets
- The Village Zone B district off of Franklin Street

From there, potential districts were added, assessed, and eliminated over the course of the past year culminating in two zones:

- The downtown Village mixed use district with a density of 8 units/acre
- Wampum Corner MBTA Communities multi-family overlay district with a density of 16 units/acre.

The May 5, 2024, presentation to the Wrentham Planning Board summarizes the work that the Planning Board has performed including details on the assessment criteria for potential sites and on the proposed zones (<https://bit.ly/3yfU281>).

What's next? In addition to the public hearings that the Planning and Select Boards have already held, both Boards plan future hearings seeking additional public comment.

For example, Thomas DiPlacido, a local builder and current member of the Board of Assessors, submitted written comment offering two ideas:

- First, rezone the Wrentham Premium Outlets to allow for a "Legacy Place" or "University Station"-like development which would appeal to national developers.
- Second, borrowing an idea from the 2000s, rezone the quarry on Green Street coupled with multiplied 5-7 acre parcels throughout Wrentham to form villages which might appeal to smaller developers.

## First Annual Men's BBQ Set for June 9

Gilly's House will host its first annual Men's BBQ on Sunday, June 9 at 1 p.m. at Gilly's House, 1022 West St, Wrentham. This FREE event is for any man who has lost a loved one to substance use disorder or suicide.

The meal will be catered by Commonwealth BBQ. There will also be a cornhole tournament.

Featured guest speakers are David Gillmeister, founder of Gilly's House; David Swindell, founder of CWS Foundation

and the director of the Sun Will Rise Foundation; and Franklin James Cook, director at SADOD (Support After a Death by Overdose).

Register at [gillyshouse.com](http://gillyshouse.com). Once spots are full there will be a waiting list. Please state your t-shirt size in the comment section when signing up.

Contact Maureen Cappuccino ([maureen@gillyshouse.com](mailto:maureen@gillyshouse.com)) or David Swindell ([dks27@comcast.net](mailto:dks27@comcast.net)) with any questions.

## Crafters Wanted!

The Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club is accepting applications for booth space at their 49th annual craft fair, scheduled for Saturday, November 9 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Tri-County Regional Vocational Technical High School in Franklin.

This is a juried craft fair for artisan crafters to sell their handmade items; we do not accept MLM companies or other resellers.

The deadline for applications is July 15.

Visit our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersCraftFair/> for more information and to access the application.

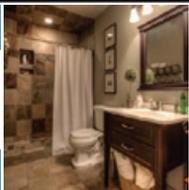


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# Led by Trauma Expert, Sibling Support Group Marks 5 Years

By GRACE ALLEN

A local support group for siblings affected by substance use disorder has been meeting for five years now, a significant milestone in the area. "Supper with Siblings" meets at Gilly's House in Wrentham once a month and offers a safe place for family members to connect with others grappling with similar issues.

While there are all kinds of support groups out there, there is little support for people dealing with a sibling's addiction or death from substance use disorder. That is slowly changing, however. It's now recognized that addiction is a family disease, says Judi Earnest, a Milford and Wrentham-based clinician who facilitates Supper with Siblings.

"It used to be thought that the person struggling with addiction or in recovery suffered alone, but what we're finding is that the whole family suffers," said Earnest. "And if the family isn't in recovery to deal with the issues too, it doesn't work well."

Earnest, who lost a brother herself to substance use disorder, is well-versed in the emotions

unique to siblings of the addicted. Siblings, she says, suffer in ways that are distinct from parents, especially if the family member dies from an overdose. They may blame themselves, because often they were aware of the addiction before the parents. Or they may be resentful of all the attention, albeit negative, an addicted sibling receives. Parents are often overwhelmed when a child has substance use disorder and siblings may think they should step up to help but are ill-equipped to do so.

"The sibling that is not using can get lost in the chaos," Earnest said. "It's a very complex issue, especially if you know what's going on but no one is asking you. Or when parents make the decision to start setting some boundaries, the focus is suddenly on you."

The peer-led Supper with Siblings is structured around a shared meal, usually donated by a community member. No one is ever turned away from the gathering, and it's open to ages 16 through adulthood.

The meal is then followed by a free-flowing group forum. A candle is lit and participants can

welcome loved ones into the room who are struggling or have passed.

"It's a spiritual or emotional 'bringing into the room,'" said Earnest. "If there's anyone on your mind because of an anniversary, an important date, or that you're worried about, they are 'welcomed' by us."

Earnest's role is to help set boundaries and offer coping skills and grounding techniques, if necessary.

A recent addition to Supper with Siblings is Gilbert, a service dog who has undergone two years of training by NEADS in Princeton, MA.

"We are an ADA-certified team, but his service is to the people I work with," explained Earnest. "He's a wonderful asset to have in the group because he is very in tune with emotions. He'll say hello to everybody but if someone needs more attention, he offers it to that person."

When Supper with Siblings first started, it was the only resource of its kind in the area. Now, however, there are three other similar groups, two of which are also facilitated by Earnest. Change, she

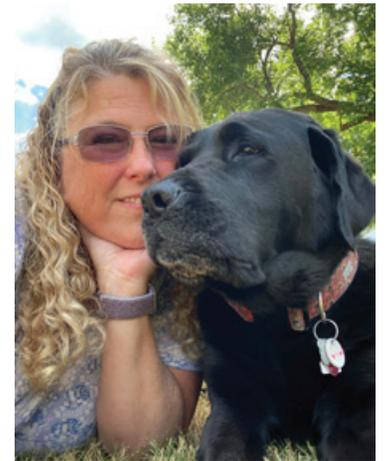
said, is happening, but slowly.

"It's generational, I think," she offered. "There are so many diseases out there and I don't think a lot of people understand this is a disease too. My brother didn't wake up and say, 'I want to be an addict.' Families need to understand this is not a dirty little secret. My goal is to take the shame out of it. Maybe then we can start to change the culture around addiction."

Earnest says not everyone is ready to take that first step and attend a group session. That's okay too, she said.

"People should take the information and when they're ready, then go to the meeting, or even just text or call me. Know we're there, and that's the biggest piece, even if it takes time to emotionally come to that place. Because it can be scary."

Supper with Siblings takes place on the third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. There is no charge to attend, but registration is requested for planning purposes. Participants can bring a spouse or a friend. Visit [www.gillyshouse.com](http://www.gillyshouse.com) to register.



Judi Earnest helps facilitate Supper with Siblings, along with Gilbert, a world-class service dog.

Contact Earnest at [judi612@aol.com](mailto:judi612@aol.com) or 508-944-5308 to connect or just to ask questions about the program.

Gilly's House, located at 1022 West St., Wrentham, offers a comprehensive life-skills transitional program for young men who have successfully completed a residential treatment program. The nonprofit was established in memory of Steven "Gilly" Gillmeister, who lost his battle with addiction in 2016 at the age of 25.

## SOUTHWICK'S ZOO PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS!

Thanks to all those who entered! These 12 entries will receive a family four-pack of GA passes to Southwick's Zoo for the 2024 season!

### PUBLISHER'S PICK



"MACAW!"

Submitted by Nate H.

### STAFF CHOICE



"Oh what fun ..."

Submitted by Bobbie G.

### FAMILY



"Family time at the zoo"

Submitted by Nancy M.

### SOUTHWICK'S SIGN



"Southwick's is our favorite zoo!"

Submitted by Rachel R.

### KIDS



"A couple of cuties at the zoo"

Submitted by Christine H.

### HALLOWEEN



"No matter the season ..."

Submitted by Emily T.

### NOSTALGIC



"My daughter meeting Jeff Corwin, 1999"

Submitted by Lora D.

### RUNNER UP



"We are so goated"

Submitted by Agatha D.

### RUNNER UP



"Fun for all ages"

Submitted by Misty W.

### RUNNER UP



"Having a roaring good time!"

Submitted by Jillian R.

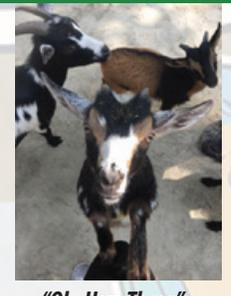
### RUNNER UP



"Yikes! What are these?"

Submitted by Brooke M.

### ANIMAL



"Oh, Hay There"

Submitted by Emily S.



# 'Arts on the Common' to be Held on June 1

Wrentham's Arts on the Common, an annual celebration of the arts, returns to the town common on Saturday, June 1. Sponsored by the Wrentham Cultural Council, the arts festival will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine.

The outdoor festival boasts hand-crafted goods from dozens of artisans, and is designed to appeal to all age groups, with demonstrations, performances, and interactive activities. The free, family-friendly festival will also include performances by local dance troupes, live music, and a "yarn bomb" installation.

Part-time and full-time artists are encouraged to use Arts on the Common as a venue for displaying and selling their work. Some artists also take the opportunity to demonstrate their creative processes.

The Wrentham Cultural Council is a local branch of the Massachusetts Cultural Council, responsible for reviewing and awarding grants for cultural programs in the town. The Council is committed to enhancing the

vitality of the Wrentham community through engagement in the arts, humanities, and interpretive sciences. The Arts on the Common event is just one way the Wrentham Cultural Council achieves this. Arts on the Common is a celebration that unites buyers, admirers, and artists in a more personal manner on Wrentham's beautiful town common.

The Cultural Council tries to select a wide variety of artists to participate, with considerations like price point and originality factoring into the council's selections.

"We are fortunate to welcome talented artists and performers that come from all over New England. There will be paintings, fine arts and other handmade crafts. All pieces have to show some artistry and be handmade," said Evelyn Zeptf, chair of the cultural council.

The following performances will take place at the festival:

- 10 to 10:30 a.m.: Sri Kuchipudi Natyala- traditional Indian Dancers



- 10:30 to 11 a.m.: Showcase Dancers
- Noon to 1 p.m.: Ryan Loud steel band
- 1 to 2 p.m.: TBD
- 2 to 3 p.m.: Nina Ott Band-world class jazz band
- 3 to 4 p.m.: Mike and Louie

In addition to the festivities on June 1, an exhibit entitled "Living in a Material World: The Fabric of Wrentham Lives" will open at Wrentham's historic Fiske

Museum, 55 East St., from 1 to 4 p.m. Curated by Wrentham's Cultural Council and Historical Commission, this exhibit investigates how people living in Wrentham obtained materials and created fabrics and clothing. It highlights fashion trends and what people in Wrentham wore, and how and where they wore it. From uniforms to wedding gowns to accessories, this collection tells the story of daily life in Wrentham.

In addition to annual events like Arts on the Common and quarterly poetry readings, the Cultural Council also awards grants addressing cultural needs specific to the community, following state guidelines. The state provides an annual appropriation to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, which then allocates funds to each community. For more information about the Wrentham Cultural Council, email [contactwcc@wrentham.gov](mailto:contactwcc@wrentham.gov).

## So You Want to be a Beekeeper?

The Wrentham Open Space Committee will host a presentation about beekeeping on Sunday, June 23 at 1 p.m. at the Wrentham Senior Center, 400 Taunton St.

Ed Szymanski, past president of the Norfolk County Beekeeper's Association, will share his knowledge about honeybees and beekeeping.

The presentation is free.

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# June Program Highlights at the Fiske Public Library

The Fiske Public Library will be closed Wednesday, June 19 for Juneteenth. The library's regular hours are Mondays, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Wednesdays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., Fridays, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The library will be closed on Saturdays in July and August.

For a full list of programs, visit [fiske.lib.org](http://fiske.lib.org). Contact Library Director Kim Shipala at [kshipala@sailsinc.org](mailto:kshipala@sailsinc.org) or 508-384-5440 with any questions.

**Reading Challenge 2024** Fiske Library is participating in the Massachusetts Center for the Book 2024 Reading Challenge for kids, teens and adults! Visit [www.massbook.org/readingchallenge](http://www.massbook.org/readingchallenge) to see how to participate. The challenge for June is a book that inspired a film or television series.

**Baby Signing with Sheryl White of Baby Kneads** Thursdays in June, 11 to noon. Register at [fiskelib.org](http://fiskelib.org) for this free four-week series on an introduction to sign language for caregivers and babies. Participants will learn the benefits of signing with babies, learn and practice several signs, watch the instructor sign with your baby, and learn how to teach American Sign Language to your baby. This class is appropriate for babies and young children aged 2 months or older and pre-verbal.

**Flying High Dogs** Saturday, June 8, from 1 to 2 p.m. Join us on the lawn to see Mike and his team of high-flying dogs. Mike is a world record holder & multiple time world finalist in K9 frisbee. Mike and his four flying high frisbee dogs will perform a variety of frisbee and other tricks to entertain all ages. *While we love all*

*dogs, please leave your own furry friends at home, as they can be a distraction to the performers.*

**Chalk the Walk Summer Reading Club Kick-Off** Monday, June 17, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Registration for our 2024 Summer Reading Club begins today. Summer Reading Club is open to all kids from birth to age 18. Visit the library to sign up and decorate the front walkway with sidewalk chalk!

**Choose Your Own Adventure Book Club** Tuesday, June 18, from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Have you ever wished you could decide the ending of a story? Kids in grades K-3 are invited to join us for an interactive book club. We will read the book aloud and work together to choose a path and decide the fates of the characters. Register at [fiskelib.org](http://fiskelib.org) beginning June 4.

**Mike the Bubble Man** Friday, June 21 at 11 a.m. Mike the Bubble Man brings magic and science to the stage with this interactive 45-minute indoor show about BUBBLES! Through music, choreography, and comedy, bubbles—in all different shapes and sizes—come alive, sparking imagination and wonder. Exploring science through bubbles creates an entertaining learning environment that introduces shapes, color, and chemistry. A love for bubbles is never outgrown—especially when there's a chance to see the world from inside of one! Register at [fiskelib.org](http://fiskelib.org) beginning June 7.

**Page Turners Book Club** Tuesday, 6/25, noon to 1 p.m. Kids in grades 4-6 are invited to bring lunch and join us for the June meeting of the Page Turners Book Club. This month we will be reading "The First Rule of Climate Club" by Carrie Fires-

tone. Copies of the book can be picked up at the circulation desk. Register at [fiskelib.org](http://fiskelib.org) beginning June 11.

**Teddy Bear Storytime and "Sleepover"** Thursday, 6/27 from 6 to 7 p.m. Put on your pajamas and bring your teddy bear (or other stuffed friend) for this fun evening event. After story time, kids will tuck their teddy bears in, and say goodnight as the teddies have a sleepover at the library! Ms. Sara will send parents pictures of the teddy bear party throughout the evening. Kids can come back in the morning to pick up their stuffed friends. Register at [fiskelib.org](http://fiskelib.org) beginning 6/13.

**Free Drop-in IT Help Office Hours**, Tuesdays, 5 to 7:45 p.m. The Fiske Public Library is hosting Free IT help office hours with IT expert Ben Elliot who will be available to help with personal technology-related issues in an informal setting. Ben is available at the Fiske Public Library on a first come, first served basis.

**Gardening and Water Preservation with Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens** Thursday, June 9, at 6:30 p.m. Learn several techniques to hydrate your garden in preparation for droughts and dry summer conditions. This program is free and open to the public. No registration is required.

**Fiske Public Library Book Club for Adults** Tuesday, June 25, at 7 p.m. We'll discuss "Paper Palace" by Miranda Cowley Heller. A story of summer, secrets, love and lies: in the course of a singular day on Cape Cod, one woman must make a life-changing decision that has been brewing for decades.

# A "Clean and Green" Thank You

## To the Editor:

The Norfolk Grange would like to thank all who helped make Norfolk's 15th annual "Clean and Green" event successful this year. Despite the dreary weather, we had a good turnout in celebration of Earth Day and the town-wide cleanup on Saturday, April 6. Participants collected litter from the streets and public places in Norfolk and brought their collections of trash and recycling to the parking lot of the historic Grange Hall. Located there was a large dumpster provided by the town for trash disposal, as well as a dumpster provided by E. L. Harvey of Westborough for single-stream recycling. Grange members sorted the trash for recycling as well as redeemables, which were donated to the King Phillip Music Association's bottle and can redemption trailer at the

Norfolk Transfer Station. Also, participants received volunteer recognition certificates for their community service.

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

Sincerely,

The Norfolk Grange

## Guest Column

# "Don't Give Up the Ship!"

By G. GREGORY TOOKER

This inspiring cry, which left the lips of Capt. James Lawrence on June 1, 1813, as he lay mortally wounded on the deck of the USS Chesapeake, has inspired Americans through the generations.

The Chesapeake was engaged in a battle outside Boston harbor with the British warship, the HMS Shannon, during the War of 1812. Later, in another battle during the same war for control of Lake Erie, U.S. Admiral Oliver Hazard Perry memorialized Capt. Lawrence's words by raising a banner upon which they were inscribed. In recent times, those who would erase the very democracy for which our forefathers so valiantly fought, have tried to purloin the immortal words to further their misguided cause.

During one evening last month, your writer listened to an interesting but very disturbing NPR radio program during which the merits of becoming

an expatriate were being discussed. The program guest was of the opinion that democracy in America is in such a sorry state that we with the means to do so might be well advised to consider gathering our assets, abandoning ship for greener pastures; let the Good Ship Lollipop, Shirley Temple and all, seen flooded to the gunnels, merely sink beneath the waves.

Fellow Americans, there is no safe harbor at this point; if we give up on the very country most responsible for nurturing the noble concept of democratic government, we have raised the flag of surrender. One may safely live out his or her life in another country before that fruitless house of cards collapses, but ultimately, absent the lighthouse of American democracy, the rest of the planet will suffocate under the iron grip of authoritarianism.

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

# Wrentham Town Meeting Set for Monday, June 3

Wrentham's annual spring Town Meeting will be held on Monday, June 3 at King Philip High School, 201 Franklin St., Wrentham. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. in the auditorium.

The warrant is posted on the town's website ([www.wrentham.ma.us](http://www.wrentham.ma.us)).

# King Philip Students Attend DECA International Career Development Conference

A total of 66 King Philip DECA members attended DECA International Career Development Conference (ICDC) in Anaheim, California on Saturday, April 27. Students attended this competition after qualifying at the state conference in March.

KP DECA had the most students qualifying for this conference throughout the state and had the most students receiving international honors on stage in Anaheim in MASS-DECA. KP DECA also had the honor of being the only chapter in the state to win a first-place trophy at this level of competition.

Students who received recognition at the international level are as follows:

- Ryan Brown and Chris DelVecchio won first place in Hospitality and Tourism Operation Research
- Jacob Schmier and Dylan Spak won second place in Business Services Operations Research
- Keith Joseph won third place in Franchise Business Plan
- Luke Reagan, Jake Van Hosen and Brady Ricci won fourth place (ICDC Champions) in Integrated Marketing Campaign Service
- Jett Tucker and Jack Haltom won fourth place (ICDC Champions) in Startup Business Plan
- Caitlin O'Brien and Gavin Hickey were named International DECA Finalists in Financial Literacy Project
- Zunairah Syeda and Anayna Boominthan were named International DECA Finalists in Independent Business Plan
- Ian Knott, Anthony Fraone and Braedon Reilly were named International DECA Finalists in Independent Business Plan

During the school year, approximately 100,000 of DECA's 224,000 high school student members take part in the organization's competitive events program, allowing them to compete for local, regional and association



**Ryan Brown (right) and Chris DelVecchio received first place (GLASS TROPHY) in Hospitality and Tourism Operation Research.**

titles. The competitions are designed to simulate real-life business scenarios and test students'

This year's DECA ICDC featured over 22,000 members and advisors in attendance. In addition to



**Jacob Schmier (right) and Dylan Spak received second place (GLASS TROPHY) in Business Services Operations Research.**

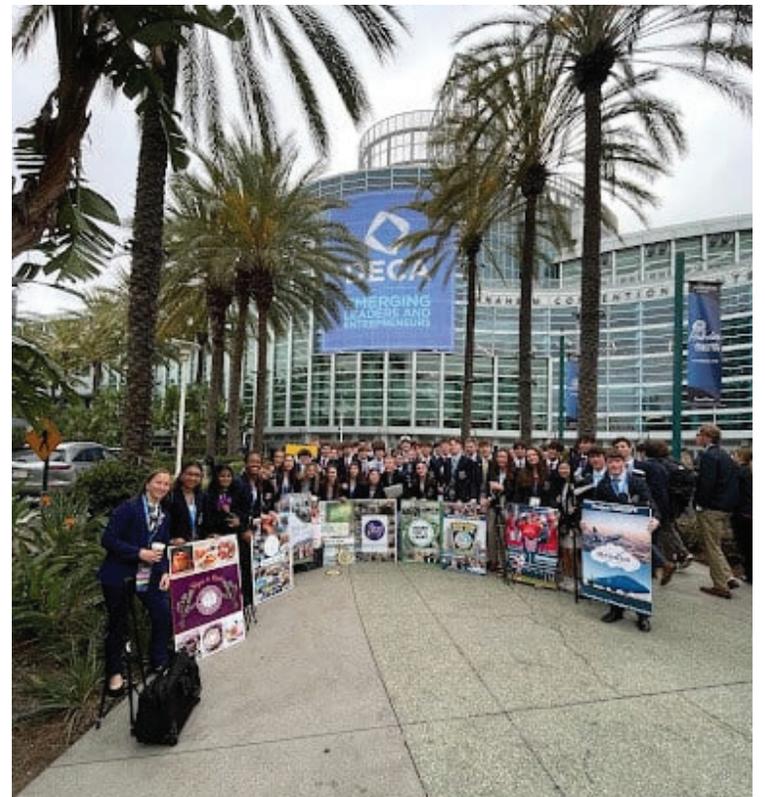
academic understanding and skills development.

The top association winners then put their talents to the test during the program's final round of competition in Anaheim. The DECA International Career Development Conference was the pinnacle of competition where over 22,000 students vied for international honors. Over \$200,000 in scholarships and awards were presented to students and teachers for their achievements.

tion to career-based competitions, DECA members engaged in leadership academies and networking opportunities with over 80 internationally recognized businesses and universities.

## About DECA Inc.

DECA is a career and technical student organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs who are interested in careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management. DECA enhances the preparation



**A total of 66 King Philip DECA members attended DECA ICDC in Anaheim, CA on Saturday, April 27.**

*Photos courtesy King Philip Regional Public Schools.*

for college and careers by providing co-curricular programs that integrate into classroom instruction, apply learning, connect to business, and promote competition. DECA student members leverage their experience to become academically prepared, community-orient-

tated, professionally responsible, and experienced leaders. DECA is a 501 © (3) nonprofit with over 240,000 members in 3,600 high school and college chapters in nearly all 50 United States, Canada, Puerto Rico, Guam, and Germany.

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**Norfolk Housing Authority**  
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(508)528-4800

## Part-time Office Position

The Norfolk Housing Authority is seeking an office person for 16 hours weekly (9AM to 1PM, M-TH). Candidates for this position must have strong math skills, be responsible and trustworthy and possess polite telephone skills. Duties involve various office tasks, including but not limited to accounts receivable/payable, answering phone, rent calculations and collection, computer entry, maintenance work order entry and communication. Job training is provided. A background check will be performed. Starting pay for this position is \$20.00 per hour. NHA is an Equal Opportunity Employer and a Drug-free and smoke-free workplace. Resumes will be accepted until the position is filled. No phone calls, please.

*Please email or mail resume to:*  
NorfolkHA.ED@gmail.com  
Lisa M. Audette, Managing Agent  
**Norfolk Housing Authority**

33 Rockwood Road - #11 Hillcrest Village, Norfolk, MA 02056

# KP Middle School Honors Memory of Student Malia Jusczyk

## A Legacy of Kindness Lives On

On Thursday, April 25, King Philip Regional Middle School celebrated a “Day of Kindness” in tribute to Malia Jusczyk (MJ). Malia died in June 2023 at the age of 14 after a heroic battle against relapsed neuroblastoma. The goal of the MJ Day of Kindness was to honor Malia’s “absolute rule for a day,” which was for everyone to be kind for an entire day.

On MJ’s Day of Kindness, the KPMS community took part in lessons and activities that encouraged and spread kindness. During each class period, teachers facilitated various lessons, which included having students watch a welcome video remembering Malia and introducing the day, creating cards that recognized someone they appreciated, participating in a compassion meditation exercise, and thinking about how they could continue to be kind through the rest of the school year.

Students brainstormed an Act of Kindness that they could complete and wrote it on a paper heart. The hearts were later collected and added to a bulletin board in the school. Students



**A permanent outside ping pong table was recently installed behind King Philip Regional Middle School in memory of Malia Jusczyk.**

also reflected on a time when someone was kind to them and wrote it on a paper chain link. The chain links from each class were put together and hung in and outside classrooms. A coloring page was also available for students to complete, which featured various cheerful shapes and figures, and the words “I’ve Got This!” in recognition of Malia’s extraordinary attitude.

The lessons and activities were facilitated by KPMS staff members wearing MJ Day of Kindness t-shirts donated by Malia’s parents.

“It was great to see Malia’s wish come to life through the Day of Kindness, and we are proud to honor her memory in this way,” KPMS Principal Michelle Kreuzer said in a statement. “We are beyond grateful to all of our staff



**King Philip Regional Middle School staff members wore MJ Day of Kindness t-shirts donated by Malia Jusczyk’s parents on April 25. Photos courtesy of King Philip Regional School District.**



**A mural, which will feature an MJ heart surrounded by flowers and the phrase “I’ve Got This!,” is being painted by KPMS staff to pay homage to Malia Jusczyk’s extraordinary attitude.**

## MERCURY RECOVERY PROGRAM

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members and student ambassadors who helped to plan lessons and activities, gather materials, communicate with families and facilitate everything on the day.”

In addition to MJ’s Day of Kindness, Facilities Director Joe Zahner worked with Malia’s father, Glen, to assemble and install a permanent concrete ping pong table behind the school. Malia enjoyed ping pong and the table was installed in her memory for use by the school and community.

Two local companies, LDS Design Associates, of Bellingham, and Mix-Rite Metered Concrete, of Norfolk, volunteered time, equipment, and materials to dig out the base for the ping pong table, and prep and level the footing for assembly.

A mural is also being painted by art teacher Ari Barrett and

KPMS staff. The mural will feature an MJ heart surrounded by flowers and the phrase “I’ve Got This!” The mural will be located in a seventh-grade hallway near the classrooms of Malia’s former teachers. It is expected to be completed by the end of the school year.

“MJ’s Day of Kindness was such a thoughtful tribute and we hope to make it an annual event at KPMS as part of the legacy Malia left behind in our district,” KP Superintendent Rich Drolet said. “I would like to acknowledge Malia’s guidance counselor, Leah Barry, for coordinating the day, as well as Principal Kreuzer, Facilities Director Zahner, and all of our KPMS staff and students. I would also like to thank Malia’s parents, Glen and Meg, for their support of this initiative.”

## Norfolk Summer Concerts on Town Hill

The 2024 summer concert series will be held on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m.

June 13	<b>The Reminisants</b>
June 20	<b>Ken DoRosario</b>
June 27	<b>SE New England Community Band</b>
July 11	<b>BC &amp; Company</b>
July 18	<b>Jumpin' Juba</b>
July 25	<b>Pub Kings</b>
July 14	<b>Southeastern Community Band</b>
Aug. 1	<b>FSPA's Electric Youth</b>
Aug. 8	<b>Heartland Radio</b>

## Wrentham Concerts on the Common

The 2024 Concerts on the Common series will be held on Sundays at 6 p.m.

June 2	<b>King Philip Band (held at KPHS Bus Loop)</b>
June 9	<b>Bare Bones</b>
June 16	<b>Dixie Diehards</b>
June 23	<b>Reminisants</b>
June 30	<b>Scott Brown &amp; The Diplomats</b>
July 7	<b>Mike &amp; Joe's Big Band</b>
July 14	<b>Southeastern Community Band</b>
July 21	<b>Mike Tarra Music</b>
July 28	<b>Pieces of Eight</b>
Aug. 4	<b>Elastic Five</b>
Aug. 11	<b>Daybreakers</b>
Aug. 18	<b>Tom Abbott Music</b>

## Living in a Material World: The Fabric of Wrentham Lives

How are Lady Gaga, the Rice Complex and mesh purses connected? What secret message was a woman communicating when she held a hand fan to her chin? Which three houses in Wrentham were built from straw?

A new exhibit at the Old Fiske Museum in Wrentham answers these questions and showcases the fabric of Wrentham lives over the last three centuries. The free exhibit is open from 1 to 4 p.m. on the following dates this summer:

- Saturday, June 1 (Arts on the Common)
- Sunday, June 2
- Sunday, June 16
- Sunday, June 30
- Sunday, July 7
- Sunday, August 4

The Old Fiske Museum is located at 55 East St. Additional exhibition dates will be announced in the fall.

### About the Exhibit

The Wrentham Historical Commission holds an archive of Wrentham artifacts, including clothing and other textiles featured in the exhibit. More than



twenty clothed mannequins and a loom form the centerpieces of the show. Curated by Wrentham's Cultural Council and Historical Commission, this exhibit investigates how people living in Wrentham obtained materials and created fabrics and clothing. It highlights fashion trends and what people in Wrentham wore, and how and where they wore it. From uniforms to swimsuits to wedding gowns to accessories, this collection tells the story of daily life in Wrentham.

The Old Fiske Museum is jointly assigned to the Wrentham Cultural Council (WCC) and the Wrentham Historical Commission (WHC). Each group has their own mission. The Historical Commission is primarily focused

on collecting and preserving town history. The Cultural Council's primary focus is administering state grants for arts and humanities-related programs.

This year, our groups have decided to form a Museum Council sub-group that will focus on the functional operation of the museum. The Museum Council will consist of representatives from both the WCC and WHC and members at large who are interested in curating exhibits and events, and have time, energy, and talent to contribute. If you have an interest and would like to contribute, or for further exhibit information, contact us at [contactwcc@wrentham.gov](mailto:contactwcc@wrentham.gov)

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# The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

## An Interview With a Very Special b.LUXE Client

By GINA WOELFEL

Beauty and cancer are two words that, for most people, don't naturally go together. Going through something as traumatizing as a cancer diagnosis can disconnect you from your relationship with yourself and shatter your beauty ideals. In short, cancer is ugly.

At b.LUXE, we see clients daily for all their hair, makeup and skincare needs. We help them feel stylish, trendy, and confident. Most days, giving beauty advice comes easily, but some days, it tugs at our heartstrings and redefines what it means to feel beautiful.

Kathy Curran first met Heather, the owner of b.LUXE Hair and Makeup, over 15 years ago when Heather was working at The Sherborn Day Spa. Kathy booked with Heather when her stylist changed her hours, and they "instantly clicked." When Heather opened b.LUXE in 2011, Kathy followed and has been a loyal client and friend ever since. "While I was sitting at Heather's new salon having my hair done and absorbing the whole atmosphere, I thought, this feels like family, and this is where I want to be. Heather cracks me up," says Kathy. "We laugh and laugh every time I see her, but she has also helped me through some rough times."

"In August of 2021, I found a lump in my breast. I had an echocardiogram a few weeks earlier, and I remember thinking that the technician was rough

and the area hurt like I'd been bruised. I took a short trip with my husband, and I was still hurting when I returned," explained Kathy. "I called my doctor, and she saw me right away. She scheduled a mammogram and ultrasound that afternoon. They confirmed the mass and immediately sent me for a biopsy."

"While waiting for my results, I didn't let myself get too nervous or down. I was diagnosed during COVID-19, and processing times for pathology were delayed," Kathy shared. "I read everything I could about breast cancer and genuinely believed that the mass would be benign. On Friday evening, while having supper with my family, my primary care physician called to tell me I had cancer."

When Kathy met with her treatment team in Boston, they explained to her that she had a very aggressive kind of cancer that could not be treated with conventional drugs. She was handed a mountainous stack of paperwork and release forms that detailed her grueling treatment process and its problematic side effects. After reading through everything once, she set it aside. She knew she would have to endure severe nausea, stomach upset, total body hair loss, and extreme exhaustion, but this was her only chance. "I remember thinking this is what soldiers must feel like going into battle. You don't know what will happen or if you'll come out on the other side, but you do it anyway



because it's the price you pay to be alive."

"Heather was one of the first people I called to help me prepare for my hair loss," Kathy remembered. "It was an emotional phone call. I remember saying I needed to see her and told her why. It was like telling a sister, if you know what I mean. We both cried. She was so sweet and apologized for the tears. She told me she'd get me in, and we'd figure out what to do. I remember sitting in her chair telling her to chop it really, really short. I didn't want big clumps of hair falling out all at once. She looked at me with all sincerity and said something so inappropriate and yet so funny, we both burst out laughing." Kathy remembers that laugh felt like "a breath of fresh air" in the darkness of a cancer diagnosis. "Honestly, she's done that more than once over the course of our relationship, but that particular time was very poignant. Heather has this crazy, quirky sense of humor.



That's her gift. She makes people laugh and feel better. She cut my hair really short and sassy and I looked great for the couple of weeks I still had my hair."

Kathy started her treatment in September 2021. She underwent two surgeries in April and June of 2022: a partial mastectomy with a bilateral reduction and another surgery to address an infection. Kathy began radiation treatment in June 2022 and continued to receive infusions until December. She still gets a bone-strengthening infusion every six months until next summer. Kathy has been in remission since April 2022.

I asked her if her beauty ideals had changed at all after going through such an ordeal.

"I bought a book on makeup and how to look your best during chemo. I'm not makeup crazy, but I was very scared about my appearance," she explained. "When my hair started to come back it was coming back curly and I thought, oh my. Heather loved it and thought it was great! I thought I looked like my mother and my siblings were kind of freaked out!"

When Kathy's hair grew back curly, there were still patches that grew straight. She joked with me, "I didn't know what to do! I didn't want to look like Albert Einstein!" Heather told her she could do a smoothing treatment, but Kathy opted to embrace her curls. "I had gotten so comfortable with being lazy about my appearance. I don't mean lazy in the sense of letting it go, I mean taking the easy route. I just do a little bit of mascara, a little bit of blush and I stick my head under

the sink in the morning and wet my hair and it's done."

When I asked Kathy if perhaps she was focusing more on different things, she told me, "Well, that's just it. It became less of a priority. There were so many other things that were more important. I cared about my appearance, but I didn't want to spend a lot of time on it now. I just kind of changed my beauty routine and Heather has really helped me do that because she's like a cheerleader. When I see her, she always says, 'OK, how's your hair? I want you to love it!' And I say, Heather, I'm not sure I'm ever gonna love it, but, you know, I'm in a place now where I can look at it, and it's my victory crown."

While preparing for the Beauty Beat last month, I asked Heather for five client names to contact for our June column titled "Getting to Know You." We planned to interview customers from nearby towns and write about their experiences at b.LUXE. However, Kathy was my first call, and after our initial talk, I realized there was a much bigger story to tell.

**Hers...**

Thank you for sharing your story with us, Kathy. Beauty and cancer are two words that don't naturally belong together, but you showed us that you can find beauty despite cancer, and that strength, bravery, and grace all come from within.

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**BIOHEAT**

# Scottish Highland Games Coming to Milford on June 15

4th Annual "Home Games" Welcomes 120 Athletes Sporting Muscles, Kilts

By THERESA KNAPP

The public is invited to the Scottish Highland Games on Fino Field in Milford on June 15 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., rain or shine.

More than 100 athletes from all over New England, the United States, and Canada will compete in two separate competitions: Highland Games Heavy Athletics with all nine traditional events, and Team Highlander.

The Heavy Athletics events include, in traditional order: Braemar, Open Stone (like Shotput), Heavy Weight for Distance, Light Weight for Distance, Heavy Scottish Hammer, Light Scottish Hammer, Caber Toss, Weight Over Bar, and Sheaf Toss.

The Team Highlander competition will include teams from the best barbell clubs and gyms in New England, who will compete in a more strongman style competition, and will start with a Truck Pull.

The event is run by No Fame Games in Milford and is essentially "track and field meets strong-man in kilts with centuries of deeply rooted history and culture," says founder Joshua Mackintosh. "This is not something you see every day, and right in our own backyard."

Athletically, it is said that the Scottish Highland Games is one of the forerunners to modern track and field. The beauty of the Games is in the deep history that dates as far back as the 11th century, noted Mackintosh. The Games were originally held as a way for Scottish clans/tribes to showcase their warriors' strength and athletic prowess. Moreover, it was a way to celebrate togetherness and foster community connections.

"This will be the largest Highland Athletic Event in New England," Mackintosh said. "It's special, fun, family-friendly, and healthy. Also, youth athletes and adults alike get a chance to see world-class caliber and world record holding professional athletes

compete, in person, right in front of them. They can meet and talk to them. It's not like the NFL, or NBA, or NHL, although these athletes are just as magnificent, athletic, and talented. It's engaging and alive."

The day will begin with an opening ceremony with traditional bagpipes; representatives from Scottish clans who will share their Celtic history and lineage; and more.

Other aspects of this family-friendly event include youth "try it" stations, such as Kids Sheaf, Caber, Stone 'Put' (like shotput), and Weight Over Bar; playground area for kids that parents can self-supervise while keeping them entertained; truck pull; local food and coffee trucks; and much more.

This is the fourth year of the event which started as a grassroots backyard movement during



the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We were all missing throwing given how long the pandemic was at the time," said Mackintosh, who himself started throwing in the Highland Games in 2018. "A few of us got together to practice and it naturally spawned into, 'Hey, what if we had a backyarder games?'"

"Backyarder" is a very casual, simplified Highland Games that just focuses on the "Heavy Events" or athletics, explained Mackintosh.



"We started a larger group chat and when coming up with a name, we all liked 'No Fame Games,'" continued Mackintosh. "The first Home Games in Milford was in the summer of 2021, and we've been growing very rapidly ever since. We were one of the largest Highland athletic events in the nation last year with over 120 athletes coming from all over the country."

He said they have had a world record broken on Fino Field every year so far, including World Champions who can throw stones and weights distances that only a handful of people have ever done in his-

tory.

These games continue, Mackintosh said, due to numerous volunteers, including his wife Jennifer Yarro, and the No Fame Games team.

"We do this for our heritage, health, the community, and also because there is a power to giving back. We do this because it is the right thing to do, because things die out when people do not step up to keep them alive. This is something we wanted to teach our son by showing him

directly. When people come and see Home Games, they will feel what I'm trying to explain. It's ancient, yet as relevant as ever today."

For more information, visit [www.nofamegames.com](http://www.nofamegames.com). Entry fee is \$10 per person, \$20 per family. Lawn chairs encouraged.

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# Living Healthy

## Over 40 and Tired of Wearing Reading Glasses?

### Refractive Lens Exchange May Be for You

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

Refractive Lens Exchange (RLE) stands as a transformative solution for those grappling with vision impairments and hate wearing glasses. This intricate surgical procedure replaces the natural lens of the eye with an artificial one, offering a path to clearer sight and reduced dependence on corrective lenses. In this article, we delve into the depths of RLE, exploring its intricacies, indications, benefits, potential risks, and alternative options.

#### Understanding Refractive Lens Exchange

RLE, often referred to as lens replacement surgery, is primarily utilized to rectify refractive errors such as severe nearsightedness, farsightedness, and astigmatism. Moreover, it effectively addresses age-related vision issues like presbyopia, which typically af-

fects individuals over 40. Unlike LASIK or PRK, which reshape the cornea, RLE involves substituting the eye's natural lens with an artificial one, often termed an intraocular lens (IOL).

#### Indications for Refractive Lens Exchange

The ideal candidates for RLE are individuals experiencing progressive vision deterioration due to refractive errors or age-related changes in the lens. Candidates typically exhibit:

Significant refractive errors, including severe nearsightedness, farsightedness, or astigmatism.

Age-related vision issues, particularly presbyopia, resulting in difficulty focusing on close objects.

Ineligibility for LASIK or PRK due to factors like thin corneas, high refractive errors, or unstable vision.

Desire for decreased depen-

dence on glasses or contact lenses for clear vision.

#### Best Candidates for RLE

The most suitable candidates for RLE often meet the following criteria:

**Age:** Candidates are typically over 40 years old, experiencing age-related changes in vision.

**Stable Prescription:** Their refractive error should have stabilized, ensuring accurate preoperative measurements.

**Good Eye Health:** Candidates should have healthy eyes without conditions such as glaucoma, macular degeneration, or severe dry eye syndrome.

**Realistic Expectations:** They should possess a clear understanding of the procedure's goals, benefits, and potential risks.

#### Benefits of Refractive Lens Exchange

RLE offers a plethora of benefits, making it an attractive option for those seeking vision



correction:

**Permanent Vision Improvement:** RLE provides long-lasting vision correction, potentially eliminating the need for glasses or contact lenses.

**Enhanced Visual Quality:** The use of premium IOLs can enhance contrast sensitivity and reduce glare, improving overall visual quality.

**Addressing Age-related Vision Issues:** RLE effectively treats presbyopia, allowing individuals to regain near and distance vision without relying on bifocals or reading glasses.

**Predictable Outcomes:** With advanced preoperative testing and surgical techniques, RLE offers predictable and precise results.

**Lifestyle Enhancement:** Improved vision can enhance daily activities such as driving, reading, and participating in sports or hobbies.

**No future cataract:** Since RLE involves removing and replacing the natural lens, there will never be a cataract in your future because the lens that can cause a cataract and require cataract surgery will be removed.

#### Risks Associated with Refractive Lens Exchange

While RLE is generally safe and effective, there are potential risks and complications to consider:

**Infection:** As with any surgical procedure, there is a risk of infection, although it is rare with RLE.

**Glaucoma:** Some individuals may develop increased intraocular pressure following surgery, potentially leading to glaucoma.

**Retinal Detachment:** In rare cases, RLE may increase the risk of retinal detachment, particularly in individuals predisposed to the condition.

**Posterior Capsule Opacification:** This common complication involves clouding of the capsule behind the IOL, which can be treated with a simple laser procedure.

**Refractive Error:** While precise measurements are taken preoperatively, there is a possibility of residual refractive error necessitating additional procedures or corrective lenses.

#### Alternatives to Refractive Lens Exchange

While RLE offers significant advantages, alternative options may be considered based on individual preferences and circumstances:

**LASIK (Laser-Assisted In Situ Keratomileusis):** LASIK reshapes the cornea using a laser to correct refractive errors, making it suitable for individuals with relatively stable vision and healthy corneas. LASIK does not correct reading vision after 40.

**PRK (Photorefractive Keratectomy):** PRK involves removing the corneal epithelium and reshaping the cornea to correct refractive errors, making it an

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There are, however, resources to combat those allergies other than medication. Eighty percent of your health is located in your gut, so supporting your digestive health is essential to sustaining a

healthy immune system. When your immune system is compromised, symptoms such as allergies emerge.

Tom G suffered for 10 years with seasonal allergies, complaining of congestion, runny nose, sneezing and cough until his colleague at work suggested he visit The Holistic Center at Bristol Square. We identified his specific allergies and started Tom on a program which was geared toward rebuilding his immune system. Removing stressors to the immune system such as processed foods, preservatives, and cleaning products, as well as creating a healthy eating plan, boosted his nervous system function through NIS (neurological integrative systems work) and added supportive supplements. Within several weeks Tom noticed a sig-

nificant difference. He was less congested, his nose stopped running and the cough was greatly reduced. Tom is not worried that SPRING HAS SPRUNG as he is feeling so much better and is planning on enjoying all the outdoor activities he had to miss out on for so many years.

If you are suffering with allergies call THE HOLISTIC CENTER AT BRISTOL SQUARE located at 1426 Main Street, Walpole. CALL (508) 660-2722 to schedule your appointment today.

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Dr. Rochelle Bien & Dr. Michael Goldstein

### EYES

*continued from page 20*

option for individuals with thin corneas or irregular corneal surfaces. PRK does not correct reading vision after 40.

Implantable Contact Lenses (ICLs): ICLs are surgically implanted lenses that work with the eye's natural lens to correct refractive errors, offering a reversible alternative to RLE for younger individuals. ICLs will not correct reading vision after 40.

Monovision: This approach corrects one eye for distance vision and the other for near vision, providing an alternative for individuals with presbyopia who prefer to maintain some degree of natural vision. Monovision can cause a loss of depth perception. Your brain may or may not get used to monovision.

### Conclusion

Refractive Lens Exchange emerges as a revolutionary solution for individuals seeking lasting vision correction. By replacing the eye's natural lens with an artificial one, RLE offers a path to clearer vision and reduced dependence on corrective lenses. It is amazing to be able to reduce dependency on glasses,

both for distance and near. While it presents numerous benefits, candidates should carefully consider the potential risks and alternatives before undergoing surgery. With advancements in surgical techniques and intraocular lens technology, RLE continues to redefine the landscape of vision correction, providing hope and clarity to countless individuals worldwide.

RLE is all about better precision, freedom from glasses for far and near and excellent outcomes. At Milford Franklin Eye Center, our surgeons have performed tens of thousands of intraocular surgeries and are happy to offer the RLE procedure to our communities. We implant high quality premium lenses, with correction for distance, near and everything in between. Our percentage of

posterior capsule complications and infections is one of the lowest in the US and is measured by independent sources. 100% of the surgeries are performed under topical anesthesia, so only drops, no need for shots and their risks and no need for stitches. Our surgery center is state-of-the-art and staffed by anesthesia full time. We treat our patients like family and ethically: we do not charge you fees for using our OR as another practice in Milford is doing. Our surgeries are performed in a certified and accredited surgery center, not in an office. World class outcomes closer to home.

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# Transitioning to College

Preparing for the college journey is an exciting time - meeting new friends, experiencing fun adventures, and enjoying a busy schedule that the students have created on their own. Although adapting to college life might seem daunting at first, students begin to learn how to best juggle their new-found independence while focusing on their studies. The summer before freshman year is an ideal opportunity to organize, prepare, and ensure a smooth transition to college life.

Here are a few helpful steps for parents and students to review this summer.

1. Consider the legal documents needed, such as, FERPA, Health Care Proxy, HIPAA, Durable Power of Attorney, and if needed, the Psychiatric Advance Directive.
2. If the student has an Independent Educational Plan (IEP) in place during high school, it does not automatically transfer to college. The college may require additional testing and/or documentation.
3. The student should continue to check the college portal and their email frequently throughout the summer for any important updates. The student should inform the college of their personal email contact information before their HS graduation.
4. Be aware of the deadlines for tuition bills and any additional requirements. If the student did not apply for need based financial aid through the CSS and FAFSA, the Bursar's office may need the student to sign a waiver before they release the student's scholarship award.
5. Notify the Guidance Counselor of the student's final college decision and request a final transcript to be sent to college. The student should also request a copy of their transcript for future records.
6. Sign up for the summer student orientation & register for classes at the first opportunity. Tip - when registering for classes, if the student is not an early bird, do not sign up for an 8 am class!
7. Some colleges will require placement exams for math, science, English, and foreign language - check the college website and deadlines.
8. Complete the housing & roommate surveys. It is essential that students are clear about their preferences- it will help the college identify well-matched roommates.
9. Make summer appointments for medical physicals and dental check-ups.
10. Register for pre-orientation activities. These programs allow new students to move-in early and connect with a small cohort of peers- great 1st bonding experience.
11. Coordinate the shopping list for the dorm room with roommates. Ship any items that can be mailed prior to arrival on campus or purchase locally. Check the college website as schools often offer their own services to purchase common items such as sheets, blankets, fans, etc..
12. Establish a bank account on campus or a nearby town; and establish a fund transfer account such as Zelle/Venmo/PayPal.
13. Reach out to your academic advisor and schedule your first appointment.



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

14. Students should visit their professor's "Office Hours" early - don't wait until the day before a test!
15. Visit campus club events to find favorite activities - a great way to stay involved and meet your "people".
16. Parents should plan for the fall Parents Weekend. Pre-arrange a nearby hotel and dinner reservations - maybe even with your child's new friends.

Message to students: The first few months of college requires flexibility, resilience, and time management. Part of the process is learning to advocate for yourself and figuring out where to get the help you need. Get your sleep, exercise, and eat well! Take care of your physical and mental

health as you expand your network of friends and resources. Give it time and try new experiences. Before long, your campus will be your new home. And nothing in life is permanent! If it is truly the wrong fit campus for you, transferring is always an option. But first give yourself time for the adjustments! Just bring your best self and enjoy!

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

College 101 Admissions Consultants LLC.

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# State's Nonprofit Retirement Plan Celebrates Enrollment Milestone

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On Monday, May 20th, the Office of the State Treasurer and Receiver General celebrated a key milestone for its CORE program - the program now has 200 enrolled organizations.

Launched in 2017, the CORE Plan was the first state-facilitated plan of its kind in the United States. The CORE Plan helps Massachusetts nonprofit employees save and invest for a financially secure retirement. The plan is a state-of-the-art multiple employer 401k retirement plan designed specifically for the nonprofit sector in Massachusetts.

"I am very excited about this key milestone in the CORE Plan's success," said State Treasurer Deborah B. Goldberg. "Nonprofit workers contribute so much to their communities, and we are thrilled to provide them

with great retirement savings options so they can have the secure financial futures they deserve."

The structure of the plan allows each adopting organization to join under one plan and trust, while the Office of the State Treasurer and its partner Empower assume most administrative responsibilities. Nearly 85% of employers adopting the CORE Plan are start-ups, meaning they did not offer any retirement benefits outside of Social Security prior to adopting the CORE Plan.

For many of Massachusetts' nonprofit organizations, the cost and resources required to administer an in-house retirement plan can create prohibitive challenges. This is especially true for smaller nonprofits with fewer employees, making the CORE Plan an es-

ential offering from the state.

"I knew firsthand the value of having good retirement benefits, and wanted to find a plan that we could offer to our staff. As a very small nonprofit, there were not many affordable options, and I started to think that it would not be possible to secure a good plan," said Carol Knox, former Board President for BalletRox. "Imagine my surprise when I received an announcement about the new CORE plan! It seemed tailored made for our situation, offering simplicity, a good benefit structure, and the backing of the Commonwealth. Within days we were signing up as the first nonprofit to join the new CORE plan!"

**RETIREMENT**

*continued on page 24*

# FSPA Summer 2024 and Fall 2024-25 Enrollment Open

Franklin School for the Performing Arts (FSPA) is now enrolling for Summer 2024 and Fall 2024-25. The school encourages new families to explore their options for both Summer and Fall.

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

In addition to the Summer Session weekly classes, FSPA will hold one week camps including



**Current FSPA Senior Finley Doherty in an FSPA vocal performance**

Creative Kids, Acting, Broadway, Little Music School Experience, Rock Out!, and Voice. FSPA will also offer 5 weeks of Summer Theater. Students can sign up for one or more of the offerings. The more students participate, the more they save. July 29-August 2 is a one week intensive for grades 4-8 and 8-12 that will focus on the rehearsal and preparation of a play that will be performed at THE BLACK BOX. The plays will be selected for each age group based on enrollment. August 5-9 for grades 4-8 and 8-12 culminates with the production of Musical Theater Scenes staged at THE BLACK

BOX. August 12-13 is Broadway Boot Camp. Broadway Boot Camp brings Broadway's brightest talents to FSPA for song and dance master classes and coaching on individual performance skills. August 14-16 is the Cabaret Show for grades 5-12. Students will hone their skills and tap into their potential with a focus on performance skills, including repertoire choices, song interpretation, and presentation. The week concludes with a cab-

aret-style revue at THE BLACK BOX, showcasing solo and small ensemble pieces that have been workshopped during the week.

Ballet Franklin, the ballet conservatory at FSPA, will offer their Young Intensive July 8-25. This three-week program is designed to challenge and motivate the young dancer. Instruction in classical ballet technique, pre-pointe, modern, and dance history is offered. Additional disciplines may vary depending upon enrollment

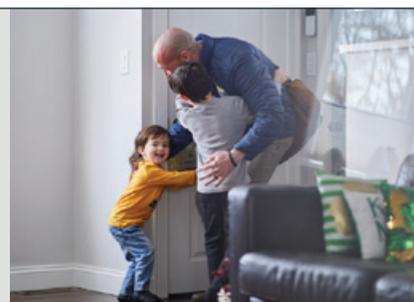
and teacher availability. Students will have the opportunity to learn choreography in all the disciplines, take Master Classes with FSPA Faculty and Guest Artists, receive individualized instruction, experience camaraderie in a friendly environment, and participate in a professional dance photo shoot.

FSPA is located at 38 Main Street, Franklin MA. To register or learn more, visit [www.FSPAonline.com](http://www.FSPAonline.com) or call (508) 528-8668.

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# After Six Months, New Tracking Tool Identifies 50 Lithium-Ion Battery Fires

*Standard Nationwide Method Recorded About 20 Per Year*

The Massachusetts Department of Fire Services' new tool for tracking lithium-ion battery fires has helped to identify 50 such incidents in the past six months, more than double the annual average detected by a national fire data reporting system, said State Fire Marshal Jon M. Davine.

The Department of Fire Services launched its Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Investigative Checklist on Oct. 13, 2023. It immediately went into use by the State Police Fire & Explosion Investigation Unit assigned to the State Fire Marshal's office, and local fire departments were urged to adopt it as well. Developed by the DFS Fire Safety Division, the checklist can be used by fire investigators to gather basic information about fires in which lithium-ion batteries played a

part. That information is then entered into a database to identify patterns and trends.

"We knew anecdotally that lithium-ion batteries were involved in more fires than the existing data suggested," said State Fire Marshal Davine. "In just the past six months, investigators using this simple checklist have revealed many more incidents than we've seen in prior years."

Prior to the checklist, the state's fire service relied on battery fire data reported to the Massachusetts Fire Incident Reporting System (MFIRS), a state-level tool that mirrors and feeds into the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS). NFIRS tracks battery fires but does not specifically gather data on the types of batteries involved. Some fields do not require the detailed information that Mas-

sachusetts officials were seeking, and some fires may be coded according to the type of device involved rather than the type of battery. Moreover, MFIRS reports sometimes take weeks or months to be completed and uploaded.

"Investigators using the Lithium-Ion Battery Fire Checklist are getting us better data faster," said State Fire Marshal Davine. "The tool is helpful, but the people using it are the key to its success."

From 2019 to 2023, an average of 19.4 lithium-ion battery fires per year were reported to MFIRS – less than half the number identified by investigators using the checklist over the past six months. The increase since last fall could be due to the growing number of consumer devices powered by these batteries, increased attention by local fire investigators, or other factors, State Fire Marshal Davine said. For example, fires that

started with another item but impinged upon a battery-powered device, causing it to go into thermal runaway, might not be categorized as a battery fire in MFIRS or NFIRS.

Lithium-ion battery fires were reported in 38 cities and towns. Nine of the fires involved micromobility devices such as battery-powered scooters, e-bikes, and hoverboards, making them the most commonly involved in fires, according to the data. Eight fires involved laptops and another eight involved cell phones, tablets, or similar devices. Power tools were involved in six fires. The device's charging status could be determined in 41 of the 50 fires: surprisingly, 56% of these devices were not charging at the time of the incident.

## BATTERY FIRES

*continued on page 27*

## RETIREMENT

*continued from page 22*

1,900 employees at over 200 small nonprofits are now participating in the CORE Plan, and more than 80% of participating nonprofits are offering employer contributions to bolster their employees' savings.

Currently, the CORE Plan is only available to nonprofit organizations with 20 or fewer employees. In the years since its creation, Treasurer Goldberg has promoted the expansion of the CORE Plan to ensure all workers in the nonprofit sector, not only those at small nonprofits, have the opportunity to save for retirement through their employer. H.3031 and S.2025, sponsored by Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante and Senator Joan Lovely, respectively, would allow this expansion. Both bills were co-filed with Treasurer Goldberg and currently sit with the Joint Committee on Ways and Means.

For more information about the CORE Plan, visit <https://www.mass.gov/core-plan-for-nonprofits>.



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# Sports

## KP's McDonald: Major Plus for Girls Lacrosse Team

*3-Sport Athlete, 3-Sport Captain,  
4-Time All-Star*

BY KEN HAMWEY  
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Nikki McDonald is the total package — three-sport athlete, three-sport captain, four-time Hockomock League all-star, and a National Honor Society student who will attend the University of South Carolina in the fall. Her GPA is 4.08.

The King Philip senior is wrapping up her final season of interscholastic sports, excelling on offense at attack for the Warriors' girls lacrosse team that had a 10-5 record at Local Town Pages deadline. McDonald, who had 59 goals last year, is enjoying another superb season. She's scored 30 goals and assisted on 8 after 15 matches.

The 5-foot-2 McDonald was a league all-star in field hockey, ice hockey and lacrosse last year, and this season she's been a captain in all three sports.

Her lacrosse coach, Kourtne Webster, is acutely aware of McDonald's value not only as a prolific scorer, but also as a gifted leader.

"Nikki leads by example and she's also supportive," Webster said. "She does a good job communicating with our underclassmen. A four-year starter at attack, she's got lots of strengths. She has a high lacrosse IQ, has speed and quickness, is agile and instinctive, passes effectively and the placement on her shots is excellent. She's a finesse lacrosse player."

The 18-year-old McDonald set three goals before KP's season got underway and one of them is lofty but certainly not unrealistic.

"I want our team to be close-knit and I want us to enjoy competing," she said. "I also want the team to advance in the state tourney all the way to the final. Last year we finished 12-6 but lost in the first round of the play-offs to North Andover. For the seniors, this is our last chance to play for a state title."

The Plainville native is executing at an intense pace and doing her part to fuel her cham-



**KP's Nikki McDonald is a talented three-sport athlete who's been a three-sport captain and a four-time Hockomock League all-star. She's also a National Honor Society student who will attend the University of South Carolina.**

pionship desire. Her scoring definitely takes pressure off the Warriors' defense.

"My teammates set screens and picks enabling me to capitalize," McDonald said. "That helps me to sneak past a defender and drive to the net off the elbow. I go from zero speed to super-fast and aim for good placement on my shots. Our attackers strive to play a controlled offense at a relaxed pace."

McDonald is totally relaxed in her role as one of KP's four captains.

"I'm grateful I've had the opportunity to lead three teams as a captain," McDonald said. "It tells me my coaches and teammates trust me. It's super fun but also comes with responsibilities. The key is to be friendly to everyone instead of intimidating. If any player has an issue, I want them to be comfortable talking with me about it."

McDonald sure was comfortable in a game against powerful Medfield last year. She scored six goals and had an assist in a 17-15 loss.

"That game was the best of



**Nikki McDonald, who scored 59 goals as a junior last year, is a force on offense. The Warriors' senior attacker had 30 goals and 8 assists at Local Town Pages deadline.**

my career and it also was very thrilling," she offered. "We lost by big margins to Medfield when I was a freshman and sophomore. This time, however, we all played well. It was an exciting, back-and-forth battle with the outcome settled in the final minutes."

McDonald points to KP's other captains as "outstanding contributors and excellent leaders." They include seniors Alyssa Legere (attack), Sarah Brown (attack) and Lily McNulty (defense). She also has high praise for junior midfielder Makenzie McDevitt who has committed to play at Boston University after she graduates. "She's an all-around player, a strong defender with a high lacrosse IQ, and a nose for the net."

A fan of her coach, McDonald likes Webster's approach to the sport.

"Our coach motivates us well," she emphasized. "She knows the game and she's able to take advantage of our opponents' strengths and weaknesses. She works to shore up our weaknesses and knows how to use our

strengths to wear down our opponents."

McDonald plans on majoring in business in college (sports management likely) and probably will play club lacrosse at South Carolina, which doesn't have a women's varsity program.

Calling her parents (Edward and Jennifer) role models for their support and encouragement, McDonald relies on a competitive philosophy that combines winning, reaching her potential and having fun. "If my teammates and my potential is reached, winning likely will occur and winning equals fun," she noted.

McDonald knows that athletics are truly an extension of the classroom and that sports can teach valuable life lessons. "I've learned to be a good teammate and a quality leader, how to overcome adversity and be resilient, and how to manage my time," she said. "I suffered a concussion in ice hockey last winter and had to sit out four games. That taught me how to deal with adversity and to be resilient."

Starting her lacrosse career at nine in the Wrentham youth league, McDonald says her favorite situation is a one-on-one battle with a defender. "The key to succeed in that situation is to rely on speed, quickness and agility," she said. "It's exciting when a one-on-one confrontation ends with a goal."

McDonald's final season at KP is coming to a close. She's thought about it and says it'll be bittersweet.

"I'll definitely miss my teammates and coaches," she said. "I'll also miss being part of a team. But, there's a new chapter ahead. I'll be away at a distant university, there'll be new experiences and new relationships. But now, I'm focused on that one final chance to play for a state championship."

That achievement would be dynamic — a fitting way for one of KP's premier student-athletes to conclude a fabulous four-year interscholastic career.

If Nikki McDonald becomes a state champion, she no doubt would handle that honor with class, grace and dignity.

# June Program Highlights at the Norfolk Senior Center

RSVP to (508) 528-4430 or register for programs in person at the Norfolk Senior Center, 28 Medway Branch Road. For a full list of activities, visit the Senior Center page on the town's website: norfolk.ma.us.

Thursday, June 6 at 1 p.m.  
**Scams with Norfolk Police Detectives** Scams cost us billions of dollars. Learn about telephone, internet, and solicitor scams from Norfolk Police Detectives so you can spot common scams and keep your money secure. RSVP required.

Friday, June 7 at 1:30 p.m.  
**iPad Art for Beginners** With Kevin of KevTech, we cover the basics of creating art in the Procreate app, the most popular app for making art on the iPad. Learn various features in Procreate like colors, brushes, layers, and more. The class includes an activity in which a piece of unique artwork is created. Apple Pencil recommended. Limited to 15 people.

12 iPads available at the Center. RSVP required.

Tuesday, June 11 at 1 p.m.  
**Farm Girl on The Front Line: Deborah Sampson's Secret!** Discover the secrets and strategies of the young woman who hoodwinked the Continental Army with her principled deception. Learn the story of this patriot, living a life of deprivation yet prevailing as the only woman to serve as a soldier in the Continental Army without detection. Deborah describes her deception strategies, victories, & failures, plus colonial constraints imposed on females and her "firsts" for women. Performed by Janet Parnes of "Historical Portrayals by Lady J. Millis" (who performed Frances Perkins in April) and made possible by the Norfolk Cultural Grant. RSVP required.

Monday, June 10 at 2 p.m.  
**Discovering Music in Spotify** With Kevin of KevTech, we will learn about the Spotify app

and use it to explore music from artists we love, build playlists of songs and albums, and listen to audio books and podcasts. Limited to 15 people. You can borrow an iPad from the Center. RSVP required.

Tuesday, June 11 at 5 p.m.  
**Father's Day Dinner** In celebration of Father's Day and the first Tuesday when we're open late, we will be having a Father's Day dinner. Pulled pork, chicken salad, pasta salad, potato salad, tossed salad, rolls, watermelon, and beverages will be served. Space limited to 40 people. RSVP required by June 4th.

Thursday, June 13 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. **Fly-Casting with LL Bean** This 3-hour comprehensive course teaches all the basics of fly-casting. The LL Bean instructor will teach three basic casts, how to strip and shoot line, as well as how to tie basic fishing knots. Limited to 6 people. Cost: \$20. RSVP required. Full

payment due at reservation. No refunds.

Thursday, June 13 at 2 p.m.  
**Flag Day Celebration** Veteran Robert Yeager will discuss the history of the flag, decorum of presenting the flag, and misconceptions. RSVP required.

Thursday, June 13 at 2 p.m.  
**Veteran's Group Meeting** After the Flag Day celebration, there will be a Veteran's Meeting led by veteran Jim Schweitzer. RSVP required.

Monday, June 17 at 10 a.m.  
**Instacart, Uber & Venmo** With Kevin of KevTech, we'll explore 3 apps: Instacart, Uber, and Venmo. These apps are used for ordering groceries to be delivered, getting rides from one place to another, and making transfers from your bank or card to friends and family. Limited to 15 people. You can borrow an iPad from the Center. RSVP required.

Thursday, June 20 from 2 to 4 p.m. **Collectibles Appraisal**

Community collectibles appraisal event by Rick Keller of Perfect Pastime 617. Gather your Pokémon/sports cards/memorabilia, coins, video games/consoles, comics, broken & fine jewelry, sterling silver, etc. to see if you have treasure or trash! Register at the Center. Limited to 12 people. Also, please email pictures of the item(s) you plan to bring for appraisal to Rick ahead of time: perfectpastime617@gmail.com. (The Senior Center can help you send this email.)

Friday, June 28 at 11 a.m.  
**Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary Trip** This will be a leisurely group walk of the boardwalks and paths at Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, 108 North St, Norfolk. We will look at the vegetation and wildlife. Bring your camera or art pad if you like. The COA van will leave the Senior Center at 10:45 a.m. or you can drive yourself. RSVP required.

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# Call for Walkers: Register for the 36th Annual Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk

Registration is now open for the 2024 Boston Marathon® Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai. Scheduled for Sunday, October 6, funds raised from the Jimmy Fund Walk support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and cancer research at the nation's premier cancer center, Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. Due to ongoing construction in Copley Square, the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line location has been moved to the Boston Common for 2024.

## One Walk, Four Distances, For All Cancers

The Jimmy Fund Walk is the only organized walk permitted

on the famed Boston Marathon® course, and participants have the flexibility to choose from four distance options:

- 5K Walk (from Dana-Farber Cancer Institute's Longwood Medical Campus)
- 10K Walk (from Newton)
- Half Marathon Walk (from Wellesley)
- Marathon Walk (from Hopkinton)

Whatever route walkers choose, participants will be treated to refueling stations with refreshments throughout the course. Poster-sized photographs of patients – Jimmy Fund Walk

Heroes – are displayed along the course as inspiration. Walkers can participate virtually, as well.

All routes will conclude at the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line Powered by Schneider Electric at Boston Common, by the corner of Charles and Beacon Street. The finish line will include a celebration with food, entertainment, and more. Public transportation is encouraged.

The Jimmy Fund Walk has raised more than \$176 million for Dana-Farber in its 35-year history, raising a record-breaking \$9.4 million in 2023. Funds raised from the Jimmy Fund Walk support all forms of adult and pediatric patient care and

cancer research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. The Boston Athletic Association has supported the Jimmy Fund Walk since 1989, and Hyundai has been the presenting sponsor for more than 20 years.

Register as an individual walker, team member, or start a team! Take advantage of this unique opportunity and lead a group of your family, friends, or colleagues to the finish line. The Jimmy Fund can help you start a team, grow your fundraising, and defy cancer, together.

Volunteers are needed to cheer on participants, serve snacks, distribute T-shirts, and more, at the four start locations

along the course, and at the 2024 Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line Powered by Schneider Electric, located in the Boston Common. The Jimmy Fund Walk would not be possible without the hundreds of dedicated volunteers who donate their time, talent, and energy.

To register for the Walk (#JimmyFundWalk) or to support a walker, visit [www.JimmyFundWalk.org](http://www.JimmyFundWalk.org) or call (866) 531-9255. Registrants can enter the promo code NEWS for \$5 off the registration fee. All registered walkers will receive a bib, medal, and a Jimmy Fund Walk T-shirt.

## BATTERY FIRES

*continued from page 24*

Lithium-ion batteries power everything from small devices like e-cigarettes and smartphones to scooters, e-bikes, and electric vehicles. If they are overcharged, overheated, or abused, they can fail rapidly and without warning. A lithium-ion battery that goes into thermal runaway will erupt in an explosion of toxic gases and flames that will ignite nearby furnishings. Water and traditional fire extinguishers are significantly less effective against lithium-ion battery fires.

State Fire Marshal Davine offered the following safety tips for preventing lithium-ion battery fires:

- Be sure you have working smoke alarms installed on every level of your home.
- Use only the original equipment manufacturer's batteries and charging equipment. Aftermarket or generic batteries and chargers may be cheaper but are more likely to pose a burn, fire, or explosion hazard.
- Store scooters and e-bikes outdoors if possible. If you must store them indoors, keep them and their batteries clear of doors, windows, and stairways.
- Charge the battery directly from a wall outlet, not an ex-

tension cord or power strip. Place it on a hard and stable surface, not a bed, couch, or pillow.

- Charge only one battery or device at a time and unplug it when it's fully charged. Don't allow a charged battery to continue charging.
- If you notice changes to the battery or the device, including damage, an unusual odor, a change in color, too much heat, change in shape, leaking, smoking, or not keeping a charge, stop using it right away.

- If and when it's time to dispose of the battery, don't put it in the trash. Lithium-ion batteries should be recycled, and you can find a location to take them at <https://www.call2recycle.org/locator/>.

Residents can learn more about lithium-ion battery safety at the Department of Fire Services' Lithium-Ion Battery Safety web page: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/lithium-ion-battery-safety>.



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**Michael Joseph Gage, Jr.** of Norfolk, MA, passed away on Tuesday, May 14, 2024. He was born on October 14, 1970 to Donna (Beck) Gage-Hambleton and the late Michael Joseph Gage Sr. Michael was a life-long lover of music, most especially the Grateful Dead. He adored the game of baseball but unlike his father, he chose to love the Red Sox, not the Yankees. He had big dreams, a bellowing laugh and a hug that could solve all your worries. He was profoundly proud of his four sons and spent days and nights imagining the men they'd one day become. Michael is survived by his wife Gillian Farrell and their son Declan of Norfolk, his sons Jackson, Samuel, Cooper and their mother Nancy Gage of Medfield, his mother Donna (Beck) Gage-Hambleton and Steve Hambleton of Bourne, his brother Tim Gage and Deanna Gage of Manassas VA, his many uncles, aunts, cousins, nieces, and his friends that are family. Michael is predeceased by his father Michael Gage Sr. of Penfield, NY. Visiting Hours were at the Gillooly Funeral Home, 126 Walpole Street (Rt. 1A) NORWOOD on Saturday, May 25 from 3 – 6 PM, and again on Sunday May 26 from 10 AM – 1 PM, with a Funeral Service at 11AM. In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Michael's name to the MSAA - Multiple Sclerosis Association of America <https://mymsaa.org/>



## FPAC to present *August: Osage County*

The Franklin Performing Arts Company (FPAC) will conclude its 2023-24 season with *August: Osage County*. June 7-9 at THE BLACK BOX.

Directed by FPAC's Nick Paone, Tracy Letts's Tony Award and Pulitzer Prize-winning play *August: Osage County* is a family drama. 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 homestead 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.

The cast of New York and New England talent is led by Melissa Baratta as Violet, Hallie Wetzell as Barbara, Kellie Stamp as Ivy, and Casey Harkness Andrade as Karen. They are joined by Mike Baratta as Bill, Nick Paone as Steve, Robbie Rescigno as Little Charles, April Lisette as Johnna, Tatiana McAlpine as Jean, Charley Eastman as Charlie, and Mireille Eastman as Mattie Fay.

"I'd bet the farm that no family has ever been as unhappy in as many ways—and to such sensationally entertaining effect—as the Westons of AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY, a fraught, densely plotted saga of an Oklahoma clan in a state of near-apocalyptic meltdown. Fiercely funny and biting sad...[a] turbo-charged tragicomedy..." —The New York Times.

*August: Osage County* contains strong language and adult themes.

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 *August: Osage County* are available at FPAConline.com or by calling the box office at 508-528-3370. Follow Franklin Performing Arts Company and THE BLACK BOX on Facebook and Instagram for updates on programming.



top L to R: Melissa Baratta, Hallie Wetzell, Kellie Stamp, Casey Harkness Andrade, Bottom L to R: Michael Baratta, Nick Paone, Robbie Rescigno, April Lisette

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# Real Estate Corner

## First Quarter Real Estate Activity Report

Norfolk County recordings for the first quarter of 2024 (January-March 2024) indicate a slight decrease in overall real estate activity due to a drop in mortgage activity as compared to the first quarter of 2023.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds recorded 21,980 documents in the first quarter of 2024. This was 3% less than the first quarter of 2023.

“During the recently completed 2024 first quarter, the number of deeds recorded fluctuated in line with seasonal trends,” noted Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O’Donnell. “However, lending activity, which makes up a significant percentage of overall recordings, was down, likely due to higher interest rates relative to what they were in 2020 and 2021.”

The number of deeds for the first quarter of 2024, which reflect both commercial and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 3,262, an increase of half a percent from the first quarter of 2023.

Real estate sales and transfers have remained steady this quarter when compared to the first quarter in 2023, but despite an increase in property listings in the first quarter of 2024, the number of available properties on the market is still not able to keep up with demand, leading to a rise in average property sales prices, noted Register O’Donnell.

Overall lending activity was down overall for the first quarter. A total of 2,960 mortgages were recorded this quarter, 7% less than the first quarter of 2023.

“Homeowners who took advantage of lower interest rates in 2020 and 2021 are less likely to refinance and are more hesitant to buy at current mortgage interest rates. Higher interest rates also make it harder for first-time home buyers to secure affordable repayment options,” said O’Donnell.

The first quarter’s sale prices have increased compared to the first quarter of 2023. The average sale price in the first quarter was \$1,019,512, a 14% increase from the first quarter of 2023. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is up \$153,241,526, increasing 11% from the same period a year ago.

According to O’Donnell, the increase in sale prices reflects the competitive real estate market in Norfolk County and Massachusetts as a whole, with the number of available properties not being able to meet demand.

“The first quarter of 2024 revealed a real estate market that is feeling the effects of a limited inventory of available properties,” said O’Donnell. “The demand to both live and work in Norfolk County remains high, which is one factor contributing to the competitive market, and until more inventory becomes available, this trend is likely to persist. An increase in new home construction could alleviate some of the strain, leading to a more balanced market for buyers and sellers alike.”

Follow the Registry of Deeds on Facebook (facebook.com/norfolkdeeds), Twitter (@norfolkdeeds), or Instagram (@norfolkdeeds).



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## Home Buying Season Springs to Life in April

Norfolk County recordings for the month of April 2024 indicate an increase in overall real estate activity, with significant increases in property sales and mortgage activity as compared to April 2023.

The Registry of Deeds recorded 8,312 documents in April 2024. This was 9% more than in April 2023 and an 8% increase compared to March 2024.

“Spring is the first half of the traditional home-buying season

and typically marks the beginning of a busy period for the real estate market,” said Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O’Donnell. “The rise in property sales and mortgage activity compared to last year reflects a strong demand for housing in Norfolk County.”

The total number of deeds recorded for April 2024, which reflects both commercial and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 1,250, up 12%

from April 2023 and up 6% from March 2024. Looking at just commercial and residential real estate sales, the number was up 15% from last year.

“Despite some difficult market conditions, the total number of commercial and residential property sales in April 2024 showed a significant increase compared to the previous year,” stated Register O’Donnell. “This may be an indication that March’s increase in property listings, while still not

enough to counteract the overall lack of available property inventory, is beginning to attract more buyers, leading to more property sales.”

The average sale price of commercial and residential properties for April 2024 rose to \$1,036,735, a 12% increase compared to April 2023 but a decrease of 1% from March 2024. The total dollar volume of commercial and residential sales is up, increasing 28% from last year and up 13% from last month.

O’Donnell noted, “With a limited supply of available properties on the market, any increase in demand is likely to cause an increase in the average property sales price. Unfortunately, when prices rise without an equivalent 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.”

For the month of April, lending activity showed an increase compared to the same month a year ago. A total of 1,243 mortgages were recorded in April 2024, up 12% from April 2023 and 14% more than last month.

The increase in lending activity this month is likely a product of the increase in the number of property transactions compared to 2023, noted O’Donnell. This may suggest that while some homeowners are still hesitant to make moves with average mortgage interest rates above 7%, others are not dissuaded by current interest rates.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has been closely monitoring the foreclosure market. In April 2024, there were 6 foreclosure deeds recorded as a result of mortgage foreclosures

taking place in Norfolk County, whereas in April 2023, there were 10 recorded. However, in April 2024, there were 43 notices to foreclose, the first step in the foreclosure process, more than the 30 recorded in April 2023.

“The substantial increase in the number of these notices is troubling. It suggests that more of our neighbors may have financial difficulties in the future,” said O’Donnell. “If you are having difficulty paying your monthly mortgage, please consider contacting one of these non-profit agencies for help and guidance,” said Register O’Donnell.

For the past several years, the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds has partnered with Quincy Community Action Programs (617-479-8181 x376) and NeighborWorks Housing Solutions (508-587-0950) to help anyone facing challenges paying their mortgage. Another option for homeowners is to contact the Massachusetts Attorney General’s Consumer Advocacy and Response Division (CARD) at 617-727-8400.

The Norfolk County Registry of Deeds, located at 649 High St., Dedham, is the principal office for real property in Norfolk County. The Registry is a resource for homeowners, title examiners, mortgage lenders, municipalities, and others with a need for secure, accurate, and accessible land record information. All land record research information can be found on the Registry’s website, www.norfolkdeeds.org. Residents in need of assistance can contact the Registry of Deeds Customer Service Center at (781) 461-6101 or email at registerodonnell@norfolkdeeds.org.

## Summer slowdown? The climate for selling is hot!



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# Real Estate Corner

## Norfolk County's Most Expensive Real Estate Sales 1st Quarter of 2024

During the first quarter of 2024, ten properties, a mix of commercial and residential, sold for more than \$6,000,000, with an average price of \$11,846,612. The properties were sold during the period of January 1, 2024, through March 31, 2024.

The ten properties were:

10. The U-Haul rental and storage facility on Washington Street in Stoughton. The property on 3.14 acres of land was sold in February for \$6,409,127.
9. 738 Washington Street, Norwood, a 40,700-square-foot three-story retail unit and multi-family apartment building, sold in February for \$6,450,000.
8. 3 Buckingham Terrace, Wellesley, a 9,922-square-foot, six-bedroom mansion sold in March for \$6,450,000.
7. 99 Yarmouth Road, the 5-bedroom Brookline Chestnut Hill Estate, which sits on 1.38 acres of land, sold in January for \$6,815,000.
6. 11 Randolph Road, Randolph, an over three-acre industrial center and warehouse site, sold in March for \$7,300,000.
5. 280 Dudley Street, Brookline, a 10,194-square-foot, six-bath, seven-bedroom mansion sold in January for \$8,000,000.
4. 419 Orchard Street, Millis, a five-bedroom, 4,086 square-foot home and 23.12 acres of land sold in March for \$10,000,000.
3. 140 Constitution Boulevard, Franklin, a 101,882 square-foot medical equipment manufacturing building, sold in January for \$17,000,000.
2. 6 Billings Street, Randolph, the Conference & Function facility and Bos-

ton-area landmark known as Lombardo's, sold in February for \$24,592,000.

1. 23-25 Bridge Street, Quincy, the 6-story, 60-unit apartment complex known as Hillside Residences, sold in March for \$25,450,000.

The top sales appear to have been a combination of apartment complexes, retail, industrial and warehouse space, and residential property.

"The variety in these real estate transactions bodes well for the Norfolk County economy, with high value properties selling in both commercial and residential sectors," stated Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell. "This also indicates that Norfolk County is not only a desirable place to both live and work but is also a magnet for business, industry, and trade."

Excise taxes from these 10 sales totaled more than \$540,000 for the state and county.

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Interested in reserving a month? Contact Library Director Sarah Ward at sward@sailsinc.org or call (508) 528-3380.

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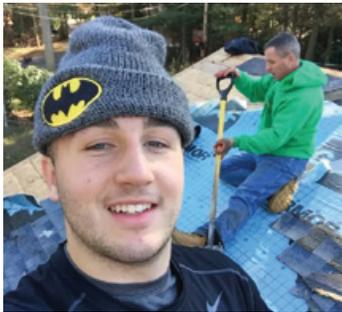
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