

Merry and Bright

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

For the past month, holiday lights have brought cheer and joy to Natick. Homeowners and businesses alike adorned their structures and property with festive displays to honor the various holidays of the season.



MORE PHOTOS

on page 2

Natick Not a 'Sanctuary Town'

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Likely spurred into action by results of the presidential election late last year, town officials are seeking to clarify Natick's role in matters of illegal immigration.

The short answer so far: Massachusetts towns and cities have no such role.

Within days of the publication of this writing, a new federal administration will be certified within halls of our nation's capitol. As a presidential candidate, Donald Trump had promised a mass mobilization of resources to deport millions of undocumented immigrants.

His election in November has since left state and local governments across the country to ponder (and plan for) what that might mean for municipalities.

Could local law enforcement, for example, be "deputized" by federal agencies to detain undocumented immigrants?

The answer to that one, at least for towns and cities in The Bay State, is no.

In a statement of legal guidance released by the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association, the group makes clear that im-



migration issues and enforcement are outside the authority of state and local government.

In fact, the memo makes clear that Massachusetts cities and towns might expose themselves to legal liability by taking part in immigration enforcement efforts.

The memo says that under state law, "there is no statutory or common-law authority permitting state or local law enforcement officers to detain individuals solely based on a federal civil immigration detainer."

An "immigration detainer" is a request from a federal authority to hold an individual for the purposes of federal immigration en-

SANCTUARY

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MERRY AND BRIGHT

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SANCTUARY

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forcement. If someone is arrested for a violation of local law for instance, they would be further detained for up to 48 hours beyond the typical time prescribed for their primary offence.

Those additional two days of detention would be an acquiescence by local government to the federal request. And as the memo also makes clear, it would be just that—a request. No federal statute exists to empower the federal government to compel states, cities and towns to take such action.

At a packed December 11th Select Board Meeting, residents gathered to hear about Natick’s deliberations and decisions relating to the immigration question. An online survey was conducted by the town in anticipation of that meeting, an effort to garner and gauge public sentiment and questions surrounding the issue.

At the meeting, the Select Board sought to address some of those questions posed by residents. A thread through many of those queries was a concern that the board’s new guidance was designed to shelter undocumented immigrants from federal

authorities.

Put another way, some residents seemed concerned that the policy would designate Natick as a “sanctuary city”—a vague and politically charged term that has little or no legal purchase.

“That is not what the policy is about,” said Kathryn Coughlin to a full house at the meeting. She serves as Select Board Chair. “It’s about ensuring the town and its employees are compliant with state and federal laws regarding immigration. And it protects the town from liability.”

“If you look at other towns that have adopted this...,” added Coughlin, “they have not seen, in the seven years that they’ve had these policies, an influx of migrants.”

The reason for that, she said, is the widespread high cost of housing in the municipalities she cited.

With the new policy, added Coughlin, the board is also seeking to bolster public safety. Immigrants fearing questions about their legal status, she said, are less likely to report crimes or work with authorities in solving them.

“This type of mutual trust and cooperation is absolutely crucial,” said Select Board Vice Chair Bruce Evans, “in prevent-

ing and solving crime incidents, as well as maintaining public order, safety, and security in the entire community.”

Evans was quoting here from a proposed police policy regarding its relationship to immigrant communities.

“State law says that police officers, and by extension town employees, cannot ask for documentation,” said Coughlin.

“We shall and must release them,” said Natick Police Chief James Hicks, who spoke at the meeting. “We cannot hold for 48 hours; we can only hold for the time period it takes to process that prisoner.”

Chief Hicks added that the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association does not consider proposed policies like Natick’s to pose a safety risk to residents.

One question that stood out in the online survey was whether the town should use resources to assist national immigration enforcement efforts. Approximately two-thirds of local respondents replied that Natick should not.

“The consensus was,” said Select Board member Richard Sidney, “do not use town funds or staff to assist federal immigration laws.”

Natick Receives Preliminary Approval for Memorial Elementary School Project

The Massachusetts School Board Authority has authorized the Natick Public Schools to partner with the MSBA to enter the feasibility phase of a major renovation or expansion of the Memorial Elementary School

Representative David Linsky (D-Natick) announced that the Massachusetts School Board Authority (MSBA) today approved a partnership with the Town of Natick to study the feasibility of a new or expanded Memorial Elementary School. This approval serves as an important step towards addressing the overcrowding at Memorial by securing MSBA support for the project.

“I am thrilled that we are making progress towards a new or expanded Memorial Elementary School” said Representative Linsky. “Memorial’s current spaces are significantly undersized for the current number of students, and enrollment is projected to continue increasing. This approval

from the MSBA is a crucial step forward to addressing these concerns. Thank you to the Natick officials involved in preparing and submitting this proposal, and to the MSBA for their support and attention to this matter.”

The feasibility study will include documentation on existing conditions, a development and evaluation of alternatives, and recommendations of educationally appropriate and cost-effective solutions to be submitted to the MSBA Board of Directors for consideration. Should the feasibility study be approved by the MSBA, the next stage of this process entails design, budget, and schedule for the proposed project.

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Community Foundation for MetroWest Announces 2024 Fall Grant Partners

The Community Foundation for MetroWest is thrilled to announce its 2024 Fall Grant Partners, awarding a total of \$625,000 to support critical initiatives across the MetroWest region.



MetroWest. “We are committed to supporting our non-profit partners in delivering essential services, cultivating artistic expression, and creating a more equitable and sustainable future for all.”

2024 Grant Highlights:

- Environmental Grant Partners: Organizations like OARS and the Charles River Watershed Association will promote environmental stewardship and conservation efforts.
- Discretionary Grant Partners: The Waltham Boys & Girls Club and Friends of the Waltham Family School will receive crucial support for their youth development and educational programming.
- Human Services Grant Partners: Funding will assist a wide range of organizations, including 2Life Communities, Advocates, and African Cultural Services, in addressing essential human needs such as housing, healthcare, and mental health services.
- Arts & Culture Grant Part-

ners: Grants will be awarded to organizations like Acton Community Center (DBA Theatre III), Bellforge Arts Center, and the Danforth Art Museum and School, fostering artistic expression and cultural engagement.

- Hunger Relief Grant Partners: A Place to Turn, Gaining Ground, and other hunger relief organizations will receive vital resources to combat food insecurity.

“While MetroWest is often seen as a collection of affluent suburbs, it’s important to remember the striking disparities our neighbors are facing,” stated Susan Kavoojian, Chair of the Foundation’s Distribution Committee and Foundation Trustee. We are so grateful to our Distribution Committee for investing their time in reviewing applications and going on site visits to make informed and thoughtful decisions when awarding these grants.”

To see a complete listing of our 2024 Grant Partners, visit here.

Learn how to make a lasting impact in MetroWest by visiting here.

GRANTS

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Natick’s 20th Annual MLK Day Community Celebration

Monday, January 20th from 9:00-11:00am at Natick High School, 15 West Street, Natick

For community members of all ages! In person, with options

leaders and partners, Interfaith Clergy representatives, a moving and interactive keynote from Jamele and Amy Adams, and more!

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Special Thanks to Our MLK Community Celebration Event Partners!



to view the program virtually!

Celebrate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his legacy that inspires and empowers us all. Our program will feature performances from student groups, Middle School MLK Day Creative Contest winners, community

Join us immediately before the program at 9:00am for a Community Connection Event, including special MLK Day activities for all ages, and time to meet student groups, community organizations, neighbors and friends. Free refreshments for all guests will be provided by Starbucks! Our MLK Day program will begin promptly at 10am.

Can't join us in person? You can livestream the program through Natick Pegasus - www.natickpegasus.org/ or watch through Natick Community Television channels: RCN 3, Comcast 99, and Verizon 29 beginning at 10am. Visit <https://tinyurl.com/NatickMLKDay2025> for more information about this special community event.

Help us Fill the Van! Donate a non-perishable pantry item to the Natick Service Council on MLK Day. We encourage community members and event attendees to bring donations to help Fill the Van! Items can be dropped off on Monday, Jan. 20th from 9:00-11:00am at Natick High School.

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Buying Distressed Homes Doesn't Need to Be Complex, Says Nina Sable



**Sable Homes
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**Business
spotlight**

Nina Sable, with William Raveis Real Estate in Natick, can walk seniors through the process of selling their home to move to a senior living facility.

By JENNIFER RUSSO

Home buyers looking for a good bargain often consider distressed real estate properties and fixer-uppers when searching for

a home. An immensely popular investment practice with the rise of HGTV programs on the topic, small builders or house-flippers may buy these homes to resell as is, upgrade and resell, or fix and rent.

A property is considered “distressed” when it has fallen into a noted state of disrepair or is at the brink of foreclosure for one reason or another. Significant repairs may be necessary and there are some important things to consider if you are in the market for a home like this.

“It is important to target buy-

ing or selling a distressed home before it is in foreclosure,” says Nina. “The home still has equity at that point. Buying or selling homes that are foreclosed is also a very lengthy process that could take 6 months to a year to complete.”

Other things to consider are ensuring that a clear title is available, and that some discovery is done on the house to be sure you are not dealing with issues that are more than you bargained for. Though having work to do is an expected part of the process, some repairs are going to cost more than others, such as certain electrical or plumbing issues, roof replacement, mold, code violations, or significant structural issues.

“Sometimes major repairs can be a win/win situation for sellers and small builders though,” Nina shares. “For instance, if there is a failed septic system and the seller can’t afford to replace it, a builder buying

the home can manage the repairs that traditional financing doesn’t cover.

Currently, the Natick area market has a great deal of equity and inventory, but many of the Cape-style homes have floorplans that are difficult with little space flow, one bathroom, and narrow or steep stairways. Homes like these are also great for builders to purchase for remodeling.

Known for her caring and patient approach and deep market knowledge, Nina doesn’t believe in pushing on a timeline or pressuring clients in any way. Working with people and building trusting relationships is the reason she got into the business.

“I want to respect the vision that people have when buying or selling a home. We have lots of partners to help ease the process from start to finish, whether the home is being sold to a small builder or an end-user planning to live in the home,” Nina says.

“When it comes to buying a distressed home, builders tend to look at MLS listings, but homes don’t need to be off market to get a good return. Also, if they are planning on reselling, there are things that may not be worth upgrading because a new buyer may have a different vision entirely,” she shares. “We encourage people to have a conversation with us first before anything is purchased or improved.”

Are you a small builder or interested in purchasing an older or distressed home? Get in touch with Nina and her team for a consultation to discuss the market, best practices, and how they can help navigate it with you. For more information, contact Nina Sable at 508-733-8935, nina.sable@raveis.com or visit their website at

www.sablesellshomes.com.

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GRANTS

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About the Community Foundation for MetroWest

The Community Foundation for MetroWest is the trusted philanthropic partner for individuals, families, and businesses dedicated to enhancing the quality of life

for all in the MetroWest region. Since 1995, the Foundation has awarded more than \$35 million in grants to charitable organizations and stewards over \$30 million in charitable assets to 30+ cities and towns across the region. Visit communityfoundationmw.org or call (508) 647-2260 to learn more.



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Keeping Natick Above the Influence

Natick Above the Influence (NATI) is a high school organization that seeks to combat substance abuse. The group's mission is also to reimagine and reinforce what positive student social life should look like.

"We've done an amazing job growing the program," said NHS senior Maya Fortune. This will be her second year serving as a NATI representative.

Broadening the group's reach and its offerings has been part of that expansion. NATI student reps organize forums where they chat with high school peers and middle school students. Those events are geared toward educating others about the nature and hazards of substance abuse.

The group's current big project is building a program to accommodate the safe disposal of vaping paraphernalia.

Providing resources for vape disposal is an outreach effort that has double the impact. Its stated goal, of course, is addressing an environmental concern.

Most vaping devices (pens in industry parlance) use lithium



power cells to activate the release of nicotine and other substances in vapor form. Such batteries can cause fires and are considered hazardous to the environment.

Nicotine too, according to the Environmental Protection Agency, is toxic and presents a risk to workers and the planet.

But those environmental warnings also serve as a stern harbinger of vaping's hazards relating to human health. It's a cautionary note worth reading—

that the addictive chemical in cigarettes and vaping devices isn't a substance to be taken (or inhaled) lightly.

"There's no real solution to disposing vapes anywhere," said Shresta Chakilam. "It's, like, extremely hazardous." She is in her second year at Natick High School, and as a NATI rep also.

Part of the students' mission too, of course, is to provide peers with direct help. To "Give them the resources they need if they want to quit," said Chakilam. "Our whole goal is to show and provide them with the resources they need."

NATI student reps began working on logistics for their vape disposal program last year. And toward that end, the group is slated to receive some much-welcome funding.

"We ended up getting this grant which is very exciting," said Kiely Chiaruttini, a Natick High sophomore and NATI member. The group will allocate its \$15,000 award toward funding its vape disposal program, and also use some of the grant money to bolster NATI's educa-

of the organization. They serve as ambassadors, representatives that bridge social and generational divides between teachers and parents one side, students on the other.

"Youth are an incredibly important part of that coalition," said Katie Sugarman. She is Prevention & Outreach Program Manager for the Natick Health Department. "Lots of kudos reserved for the students."

Sugarman also serves as Program Director for the Natick 180 Coalition, a substance abuse prevention organization which oversees groups like NATI.

The group plans to start installing its vape disposal sites in the spring, and the details of that process are occupying



tional programming.

Suitable locales must be scouted out and designated for the disposal sites, and the receptacles purchased as well. Then there's the outreach effort aimed at informing peers about proper vape disposal, and how they can take advantage of NATI's offerings.

Charlotte Austin is also a NATI representative and a senior at Natick High School.

"We still have to work out the details," she said. "A lot of this year is going into planning."

Austin runs NATI's Instagram account, a social channel the group uses to get the word out about its mission and keep peers informed about programs.

"It's mainly just keeping up with what we're doing with the club," she said.

Students like Austin and her peers are an indispensable part

much of the group's attention these days. NATI believes their program will pave the way for similar disposal efforts and awareness elsewhere.

"We're still sort of working on those pieces," she said. "I think other communities are going to be watching."

Students seem to be taking notice too, at least with regard to public health warnings about the use of vapes and e-cigarettes. That, and policy and pricing measures, have reduced their use in recent years.

Elizabeth Chalfin cited surveys from this decade that show that decline in vaping among the younger cohort. She is Associate Project Coordinator for the Natick 180 Coalition.

"They are going downward," she said, "in the right direction."

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January Events At Natick Community Senior Center

MINDFULNESS MEDITATION- HYBRID

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Mondays at a Museum

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

January 6- Matisse Liberates Color

January 13- Matisse and Earthly Bliss

January 27- Norman Rockwell – Telling Stories

WONDRUM – TAKE MY COURSE PLEASE!

The philosophy of humor- HYBRID

Tuesdays 11:00am-noon

January 7- The Science of Laughter/Truth and Humor

January 14- Satires, Parodies and Spoofs/ Stop Me If You've Heard This One

January 21- Superiority Theory/Inferiority Theory

January 28- Ridiculousness and the Human Condition

FEATURE FILMS WITH RE-FRESHMENTS- WOLFS

Tuesday, January 7, 1:30-3:30pm, free

Enjoy snacks and this comic/drama/thriller featuring George Clooney and Brad Pitt in Wolfs, 2024, R, 110 minutes. Two rival fixers cross paths when they're both called in to help cover up a prominent New York official's misstep. Over one explosive night, they'll have to set aside their petty grievances and their egos to finish the job.

WARTIME FASHION WITH SPIRITS OF FASHION

Monday, January 6, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Have you ever wondered what changes in fashion occurred during WWI and WWII? Despite wartime shortages and restrictions, men and women managed to dress in style. How did they accomplish this? Join us to discover how determined people still managed to be fashionable with clothing, accessories and resourcefulness. Karen (Ren) Antonowicz received her Mas-

ter's Degree in Textiles, Fashion Merchandising, and Design, with a concentration in Historic Costume & Textiles from the University of RI. She then taught History of Fashion and other courses full time at the college level for 13 years, and taught part time in the CE Program at the RI School of Design.

CULTURALLY CURIOUS

All that Glitters is Gold: Gustav Klimt- HYBRID

Wednesday, January 8, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Austrian painter Gustav Klimt is associated with a number of artist movements including Art Nouveau and Symbolism, but in the end he developed a distinctive style all his own. This program introduces audiences to the idiosyncratic artist and reviews his famous gold paintings as well as his lesser known works. Image: Gustav Klimt, Judith (detail), 1901. Belvedere Gallery, Vienna. Thank you to Whitney Place for sponsoring this program!

JOURNEY THROUGH ITALY - IL BEL PAESE

Part 1- TALK WITH PAOLO DIGREGORIO

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

Il Bel Paese: A Journey Through Italy- There are few places that are as rich in beauty, culture, and history as Italy. For centuries, travelers, poets, and artists have been drawn to the country, and many have been

seduced by life on the peninsula. This series of talks examines the history and culture of Italy by looking at some of the great cities, artists, and events that have captivated and inspired many. Sponsored by- Riverbend of South Natick, Thomas Upham House of Medfield, Timothy Daniels House of Holliston- Three Ex-

SENIOR CENTER

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SENIOR CENTER

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CULTURALLY CURIOUS

Devil with a Brush: Caravaggio's Dramatic Masterpieces-HYBRID

Wednesday, January 15, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Caravaggio's turbulent life story reads like a crime thriller, making him one of art history's most captivating and controversial figures. He was a revolutionary Italian painter of the Baroque era, as famous for his violent temper and criminal behavior as he was for his groundbreaking artistic techniques. Caravaggio's paintings reflect his tumultuous life with dramatic lighting and intense realism. The program provides an overview of the artist's life and body of work.

Monday, January 20- Center closed for MLK Birthday.

JOURNEY THROUGH ITALY - IL BEL PAESE

Part 2- TALK WITH PAOLO DIGREGORIO

Tuesday, January 21, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Il Bel Paese: A Journey Through Italy- There are few places that are as rich in beauty, culture, and history as Italy. For centuries, travelers, poets, and artists have been drawn to the country, and many have been seduced by life on the peninsula. This series of talks examines the history and culture of Italy by looking at some of the great cities, artists, and events that have captivated and inspired many. Sponsored by- Riverbend of South Natick, Thomas Upham House of Medfield, Timothy Daniels House of Holliston- Three Exceptional Short Term Rehab &



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ELDERLY BROTHERS BAND

Wednesday, January 22, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Shake off the cold, dreary blues of January! Join the Elderly Brothers Band to bring back those great memories of youth with fun songs, a great time and many smiles. Keyboards, guitar, bass and drums brings to life the music of the 50s and 60s.

MAGICAL TUCSON-HUMMINGBIRDS AND MORE-

TRAVEL TALK WITH THE JOYS OF NATURE- HYBRID

Monday, January 27, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Join Joy Marzolf in this arm-chair trip to Magical Tucson: Hummingbirds & More. Southern Arizona, only 60 miles from the Mexican border, appears at first glance to be only a mix of rugged mountains and barren desert. However, life teems in this area when you look closer. Tiny hummingbirds can be found calling for mates and nesting in shrubbery, while giant saguaro cactus provide homes and food for a variety of bird life including cactus wrens. Animals including venomous gila monsters, road runners and even mountain lions have adapted to survive in this challenging environment. Just north of Tucson is the unique experimental site Biosphere 2. Here a closed environment allows scientists and students to study biological systems including rainforests, oceans, savannahs, grasslands in an effort to better understand the workings of these ecosystems.

ROB NATOLI'S STRING SWING TRIO

Tuesday, January 28, 1:30-2:30pm, free

String - Swing jazz trio with guitar, vocals, violin and bass guitar will bring us swing music from the "big band" era of the 20's, 30's, and 40's. You'll recognize the songs and are encouraged to sing along and even dance.

THE FIFTIES- HISTORY LECTURE WITH RICK TULIPANO

Thursday, January 30, 1:30-2:30, free

Many people regard the 105-s as a boring decade that bred chrome-plated conformity. But in this talk, we'll look behind the stale image to see how dynamic and creative that ten-year span really was! Sponsored by- Riverbend of South Natick, Thomas Upham House of Medfield, Timothy Daniels House of Hol-

liston- Three Exceptional Short Term Rehab & Skilled Nursing Facilities close to home.

FEBRUARY EVENTS AT NATICK COMMUNITY SENIOR CENTER

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MINDFULNESS MEDITATION- HYBRID

Join Sharon every Monday and Thursday, 2:00-2:40pm, free for some quiet meditation sitting and some guided meditation.

Mondays at a Museum

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

February 3- Uncover the Origins of Impressionism: Cezanne, Monet, Degas

February 10- Painting the American President and Presidential Portraits

February 24- Uncovering a Lost Artist- Sofonisba Anguissola rare woman artist of the Italian Renaissance

WONDRUM- The African Experience - HYBRID

Tuesday, 11:00-noon, free February 4-: Kinship and Community/ Like Nothing Else

February 11-: Soul and Spirit/ Ethiopian Christianity

February 18- West Africa Golden Age/ Swahili Commercial World

February 25- The African Slave Trade- the Scope/the Impact

FEATURE FILMS WITH REFRESHMENTS- CONCLAVE

Thursday, February 6, 1:30-3:30pm, free

Enjoy snacks and this feature film, Conclave, 2024, PG, 120 minutes, Drama, The pope is dead. Behind the locked doors of the Sistine Chapel, 118 Cardinals from all over the globe will cast their votes in the world's most secretive election. They are holy men. But they have ambition. And they have rivals. Over the next 72 hours, one of them will become the most powerful spiritual figure in the world. Starring Ralph Fiennes, Isabella Rossellini and Stanley Tucci.

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Your Money, Your Independence

Hoping “New Year, New You” Makes Financial Goals Come True?



Glenn Brown, CFP

Made New Year’s resolutions to improve your financial wellness in 2025?

Now is when many of us reflect on what we’ve accomplished and where we fell short. This introspection often leads to the creation of New Year’s resolutions, with financial goals ranking high on the list. Whether it’s paying down debt, saving more, or investing smarter, the start of the year feels like an ideal time for a fresh financial start.

Yet, people often struggle to make lasting changes to their financial habits. Understanding the reasons behind these challenges can help create more sustainable financial planning strategies for the year ahead.

Let’s examine 5 common challenges.

1. Unrealistic Expectations

- A common reason why New Year’s resolutions fail. Take someone who wants to save 50% of their income or pay off long-standing debt in a short period. While ambitious, these goals often don’t align with one’s current financial reality, thus frustration and discouragement occur when progress is slower than expected. Setting unattainable goals results in burnout and abandonment.

Resolution: Break goals into small, manageable steps. Instead of resolving to pay off a debt in one year, consider reducing the balance by 25% in 6 months. If you end up with more, great, but an incremental approach brings accomplishment and makes the goal feel more achievable.

2. Lack of a Clear Plan

- Vague goals like “save more money” or “get out of debt” lack actionable steps, making it difficult to execute. Without a structured plan and understanding your “why”, it’s easy to become distracted by day-to-day life, leading to stagnation.

Resolution: Develop an outline of specific considerations, steps and timelines. For example, if building an emergency fund is a goal, then create a budget, set up logistics like automatic transfers and monitor progress/spending to stay on track.

3. Failure to Track Progress

- An easy way to lose sight of financial goals is not having scheduled check-ins. It doesn’t need to be weekly or even monthly, but there needs to be consistency in times to review and identify where adjustments are needed. Without this, bad habits persist or worse, form, and now you’re battled to unwind new problems.

Resolution: Leverage technology and objective people that are unafraid to tell you much-needed truths. For many couples, an outside intermediary saying what needs to be said greatly benefits relationships. Also, make sure you celebrate milestones along the way.

4. Emotional Spending and Instant Gratification

- Many struggle with impulse spending or seek instant gratification, especially after a stressful day. Afraid to look at your Amazon spending history? This behavior derails the best-laid financial plans.

Resolution: Identify triggers and implement strategies to delay or review purchase decisions. Create a spending prioritization strategy by identifying where you want to spend your money, this helps shift focus from immediate desires to long-term financial goals.

5. Lack of Accountability

- Some are great at executing on their own, for others going it alone can make sticking to financial goals even more challenging. Without a support system or accountability partner, it’s easier to lose focus and fall back into old habits.

Resolution: It goes beyond someone telling you “No” when needed, as by sharing progress and/or changes along the way, an accountability partner can help reassure you’re on track and motivate you with confidence to keep pushing forward.

Conclusion

Financial resolutions are a powerful tool for creating long-

term financial security, but they require more than just wishful thinking.

Maybe it’s time to socialize your goals, set monthly action steps to create fresh start moments and leverage an accountability partner (i.e. Certified Financial Planner) to make your 2025 resolutions happen.

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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SENIOR CENTER

continued from page 8

VALENTINE'S MUSIC WITH SANDI BEDROSIAN QUARTET

Monday, February 10, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Hearts are aflutter with vocalist Sandi Bedrosian who sings love songs! Sandi has been performing professionally for the past 30 years as lead vocalist singing Jazz, Swing, Rhythm & Blues, and Classical, as well as Top 40 and Gospel/Liturgical music. She has been the opening act/lead vocalist for Gary Charrone of Van Halen/Extreme, Sheena Easton, Tom Sullivan, Barbara Mandrell, and the Capital Steps. Sandi has also starred in many

musical productions, theater and opera. Sponsored by the Friends of the Natick Senior Center.

BRAVE AND GALLANT SOLDIERS: A BRIEF HISTORY OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN THE U. S. MILITARY

A talk with Paolo DiGregorio Tuesday, February 11, 1:30-2:30pm, free

From the Revolution to the present day, African American soldiers have played a role in our conflicts and wars. Though their legacy is often overlooked, their stories are an important part of our history. In Honor of Black History Month, we will examine the bravery, patriotism, and sacrifice of America's soldiers

of color. Sponsored by- Riverbend of South Natick, Thomas Upham House of Medfield, Timothy Daniels House of Holliston- Three Exceptional Short Term Rehab & Skilled Nursing Facilities close to home.

FASHION AND THE FIRST LADY WITH SPIRITS OF FASHION

Wednesday, February 12, 1:30-2:30pm, free

During the course of history, the First Ladies of America have been watched, admired, copied, sometimes criticized, and followed for their fashion and style. Join us for a look at the clothing and accessories worn by our presidents' wives, as we journey through time from our earliest first lady to our current president's wife, Jill Biden. We will examine the ladies who changed the course of fashion as well as those who had little or no effect whatsoever. Vintage Fashion expert, Ren, brings many items of vintage clothing and accessories to tell the story. Feel free to bring some of your own too! Karen (Ren) Antonowicz received her Master's Degree in Textiles, Fashion Merchandising, and De-

sign, with a concentration in Historic Costume & Textiles from the University of RI. She then taught History of Fashion and other courses full time at the college level for 13 years, and taught part time in the CE Program at the RI School of Design.

\$10,000 Pyramid GAMES WITH KEVIN RICHMAN

Thursday, February 13, 12:30-1:30pm, free

Join others for this fun interactive game. It's a team sport that will have you laughing along with fun host, Kevin Richman. Refreshments and prizes.

CULTURALLY CURIOUS- Rhythm and Hues: The Harlem Renaissance and Its Legacy- HYBRID

Wednesday, February 19, 1:30-2:30pm, free

The Harlem Renaissance, a cultural explosion in the 1920s, saw African American artists challenge stereotypes and celebrate their heritage. From the poetic simplicity of Jacob Lawrence to the cosmopolitan portrait photographs of James Van Der Zee, this era produced works that continue to resonate today.

Discover the visionaries who gave voice to the African American experience and forever changed the landscape of American culture. Thank you to Whitney Place for sponsoring this program!

MARDI GRAS WITH DAVID SPARR PIANO

Tuesday, February 25, 2025, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Celebrate Mardi Gras with pianist David Sparr as he plays classic New Orleans and Dixieland favorites in a rollicking barrel-house piano style! Snacks included!

NEW ENGLAND ANIMALS IN WINTER- LIVE ANIMALS WITH THE JOYS OF NATURE- HYBRID

Wednesday, February 26, 1:30-2:30pm, free

Brrr, winter is cold in New England! How do animals survive here? Learn about what mammals, birds, insects and reptiles do in the winter. Some Live animals will be on hand!

117 East Central St. Please register for programs online thru Community Pass or call 508-647-6540.

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Bacon Free Library in January 2025

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

Children's Programs

Story Time: Mondays and Tuesdays @ 10am -- We'll feature a combination of stories for listening and songs for singing & dancing.

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

Jammin with You: Fridays, Jan 3rd & 17th @ 10:30am -- Be prepared to laugh, dance, sing, and jam your way through 30 minutes of non-stop family fun! **Registration is required

Read to a Dog: Saturday, Jan 4th @ 10-11:15am -- Children ages 5 and up can sign up for a 15-minute reading session with

Sophie, a gentle golden retriever who loves belly rubs, stories, and cuddles. Registration is required for each child attending.

Music & Movement with Walnut Hill: Friday, Jan 10th @ 10:30am -- Join Miss Katie from the Community Theater Academy at Walnut Hill School for the Arts for a fun program that emphasizes the bond between children and their caregivers, while enriching their musical, cognitive, and physical development. Caregivers are led in enjoyable, simple rhythmic patterns, dances, and activities. Instruments like rhythm sticks, bells, shakers, and drums are used, as well as scarves, balls, bubbles, and more. This program is geared toward ages 6 months to 4 years. Registration is required.

Puppet Story Time -- Friday, Jan 24th @ 10:30am -- Through Me To You Puppetry invites you to join Newton and the gang for some story time fun! Newton and his puppet friends take turns reading stories and singing songs with the kids. At the end of the show, the kids are invited to say hi to Newton and even play with some of the puppets during a hands-on free play session.

All ages welcome. Registration is required.

All Ages Programs

Featured art display:

December 12th - January 22nd: Carlos Santiago Art -- Carlos Santiago's still lifes walk a line between representational and abstract art, with his primary source of inspiration being flowers and vases. In flowers, he finds complicated patterns, shapes, and repetition; elements that show up in all of his paintings.

Adult Programs

Virtual Q&A with Author Erica Cirino: Healthy Plastic-free Pregnancy and Parenting: Weds, January 8th @ 7pm -- Erica Cirino, author of Thicker Than Water: The Quest for Solutions to the Plastic Crisis, joins us once again to help new parents (and all concerned!) with reducing plastic in their lives as they also welcome new life into their homes. As a new mom, herself, Erica will not only be sharing the knowledge she has of the plastic crisis in general, but her own personal story of how she found ways to reduce plastic in this new

phase of her life. This program is held in partnership with the Ashland Public Library. Register to receive the Zoom link.

Francais a la bibliotheque: Saturday, January 11th @ 10am - Vous parlez français? un peu, beaucoup, pas de problèmes. Venez nous rejoindre pour parler ou pour écouter.

Winter Sowing: Saturday, January 11th @ 11:30am -- Winter sowing is a simple way to start seeds outdoors during the winter-time. All you need is a milk jug, potting soil, seeds, and a sunny, protected location. At this workshop, you'll learn all about this process while creating your own winter sowing jug. All supplies will be provided in the workshop. Registration is required.

How Birds Created the World and Other Stories from The Complete Language of Birds with author Randi Minetor (virtual program): Monday, January 13th @ 7pm on Zoom -- Author and journalist Randi Minetor and her photographer husband Nic have visited 354 (out of 429) National Parks. All of their travels have inspired one of Randi's

books, The Complete Language Of Birds. In this program, Randi will discuss her book, birds and their evolution, and some of her travels. This program will be held over Zoom, in collaboration with the Ashland Public Library. Register to receive the Zoom link.

In conversation with author and historian Philippa Langley: Finding King Richard III and The Princes in the Tower (virtual program): Weds, January 22nd @ 2pm on Zoom -- We are looking forward to chatting with author and historical sleuth Philippa Langley about her book The Princes in the Tower: Solving History's Greatest Cold Case and her discovery of the grave of King Richard III in 2012. Join us as she discusses her research methods, her team, her findings, and how solving this cold case affects our understanding of the royal monarchy (in the 1500s, of course). This program will be held over Zoom, in collaboration with the Ashland Public

LIBRARY

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Sports

Miller Upbeat About NHS Boys Indoor Track Team

By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Natick High coach Matt Miller wouldn't mind if his boys indoor track team emulates the success that his cross-country team achieved last fall.

The Redhawks' cross-country runners finished second in the Bay State Conference Meet and the Division 1B State Meet. They were fifth at the All-State Meet and managed to finish 10th at the Nike New England Regionals in New York.

The 59-year-old Miller, who's in his 10th year as coach of both the boys indoor and outdoor squads, has set several goals for his indoor contingent. "We're aiming for top individual efforts in the BSC Meet and to get high placements in the post-season events, which include the Division 1B, All-State, and Indoor National Meets," Miller noted. "Another goal is for our athletes to lower their personal-best times."

Last year's indoor team posted a 3-2 conference record and finished third in the BSC Championship Meet. At the BSC Meet, John Bianchi was second in the mile and Steven Tafmizi was sixth in the shot put. Bianchi advanced to the All-State Meet and placed eighth in the mile.

Miller is upbeat about his team's outlook because the Redhawks have some solid overall strengths. "We're athletic, our athletes are coachable and we've got good team chemistry," he said. "Our kids have a high track IQ and we've got experience. We lost nine seniors from last year's team but have 12 returnees with experience."

Natick's sprinters personify many of the strengths Miller mentions. Four of them include seniors Nolan Cloutier (hurdles, 55-meter, 300-meter, and pole vault), Rex Robbins (55-meter), Tommy Showstead (55-meter, 300-meter and relays), and Nick Fernandes (300-meter and 600-meter).

"Nolan has speed, he's versatile and he's committed to learning all the basics and nuances of a difficult event like the pole vault," Miller said. "A leader by example, he holds the school record for both the indoor vault (11 feet, 9 inches) and the outdoor vault (13 feet, 6 inches). Rex has speed, is a very hard-worker, and his 55-meter starts are exceptional. He's diligent in practices, staying low and powerful in the early going. In the spring, he's outstanding in the javelin."

"Tommy is a good leader whose success comes from hard

work. He's coachable and very fast. Nick also is fast and very dedicated. He improved greatly last year and he's a good teammate and a quality leader."

Miller also has some top-notch distance runners. Two of them are seniors — Will Catching (600-meter and 1,000-meter) and Joe Vogel (mile and two-mile).

"Will has good endurance and his speed is a plus," Miller said. "He works hard, leads by example and is mentally tough. He was our No. 5 runner in cross-country. His best time in the 1,000-meter run is 2:40.03. Joe is a leader by example, is mature and a hard-worker. His endurance is consistently strong, undoubtedly because he spent lots of time training last summer."

Two juniors are also high-quality distance runners. They are Freddie van der Velden (mile and two-mile) and Bianchi (1000-meter and mile).

"Freddie is very dedicated, he's talented, gritty and never quits," Miller said. "He sets high goals and he's a great teammate. His best time in the two-mile was as a sophomore, compiling a time of 9:44.51. He was our No. 2 runner in cross-country and also was a BSC all-star last fall."



Key contributors for the Natick High boys track team include, front row from left, Rex Robbins and Tommy Showstead; back row from left, Will Catching, Joey Vogel, John Bianchi, and Nolan Cloutier. Not pictured, Nick Fernandes.

Bianchi, who's a BSC all-star in cross-country and indoor and outdoor track, is a highly decorated competitor. Besides his indoor laurels mentioned earlier, he was seventh in the outdoor mile at the All-State Meet and his personal best in the outdoor mile is 4:16.31. He holds school records in the cross-country 5k and the outdoor mile.

"John is very humble, very competitive and exceptionally tough," Miller emphasized. "He's also got great speed and is a great teammate."

Another top-level distance runner is sophomore Callum Doyle, who competes in the mile and two-mile. "Callum was a conference all-star in cross-country last fall," Miller offered. "He's determined, aggressive and mentally and physically tough. He doesn't hesitate to push the pace."

A native of St. Louis, Miller's philosophy of coaching focuses on reaching one's potential and achieving personal bests. He also wants his athletes to enjoy their sports journey. "If athletes are having fun and

competing at a peak level, then winning will follow," he said.

Miller, who's married and has two children, wants his competitors to learn valuable life lessons from sports and he's got a list that he views as important. "Some key lessons are learning how to be quality leaders and teammates; how to overcome adversity and be resilient; and to set goals and do the work to achieve one's objectives," he noted. "Learning to be self-disciplined is also very important. I've seen talented kids who lack the discipline to reach their potential."

A social-studies teacher at Natick for 25 years, Matt Miller has helped a plethora of cross-country and track-and-field competitors reach their peak and enjoy success in post-season meets.

The 2024-25 boys track team at Natick High, which lost its opening meet against Brookline, should still be well-positioned to garner its share of success as the season moves into high gear.

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LIBRARY

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Library. Register to receive the Zoom link.

Encounters with Killers with true crime author and professor of forensic psychology Katherine Ramsland (virtual program) -- Monday, January 27 @ 7pm on Zoom -- Dr. Katherine Ramsland recounts her most memorable interactions with serial killers over the course of her life, describing how it shaped her career in forensic psychology. A Pied Piper, two Coed Killers, a Candy Man's handyman, and BTK, among others, have left their marks on her research and writing, both fiction and nonfiction. This program will be held over Zoom, in collaboration with

the Ashland Public Library. Register to receive the Zoom link.

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

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

January 2nd: How to Solve Your Own Murder by Kristen Perrin

History Book Club -- second Thursday of the month @ 11am on Zoom

January 9th: The Frozen River by Ariel Lawhon

Environmental Book Club -- third Tuesday of the month @ 7pm on Zoom

January 21st: Fire Weather by John Vaillant

Nonfiction Book Club: fourth Saturday of the

month @10am at the library

January 25th: Ice: from mixed drinks to skating rinks, a cool history of a hot commodity by Amy Brady

Tuesday Book Club -- fourth Tuesday of the month @ 7pm at the library

January 28th: Demon Copperhead: a novel by Barbara Kingsolver

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

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Natick's Housing Market Poised for Continued Growth in 2025



John McHugh

REAL ESTATE INSIGHTS

If you're thinking of buying or selling a home in this great town, you're in the right place. Let's dive into the latest trends and insights to help you navigate the market with confidence.

Natick's housing market is expected to experience sustained growth in 2025, driven by a combination of factors. The

town's desirability, limited inventory, and strong demand will shape the market in the coming year.

The current market trends indicate a continued increase in demand, particularly among first-time buyers and families. Natick's excellent schools, convenient location, and small-town charm make it an attractive option for those seeking a great quality of life.

Limited inventory of homes will persist leading to a competitive market and potentially higher prices. As a result, buyers should expect to act quickly and be prepared to negotiate when finding a suitable property.

The median home price in Natick is likely to increase up to 4% in 2025. This growth will be driven by the ongoing demand for housing and the limited supply of available homes. The

days on market are expected to remain low which indicates a fast-paced market where homes are selling quickly, often with multiple offers.

The sales volume in Natick is anticipated to increase in 2025. This growth will be driven by the continued demand for housing and the limited supply of available homes.

Yale Wolf, Mortgage Lender with Guaranteed Rate says:

"Rates are not expected to rise. There will be a moderate decrease in rates over time, but it will not be a straight line to get there. With easing policy as well as unemployment rising we should see rates start to retreat in 2025."

The luxury market in Natick, comprising homes priced over \$1.5 million, will likely experience moderate price growth.

The first-time buyer market will remain competitive, with scarce inventory driving demand.

The rental market in Natick will continue to attract investors, with rental yields increasing due to high demand and limited supply.

As the Natick housing market continues to evolve, buyers and sellers must be prepared to adapt. Understanding the current market trends and future outlook is key to making informed decisions and achieving real estate goals.

The Natick housing market's sustained growth in 2025 will be driven by a combination of factors, including demand, limited inventory, and price appreciation. As the market continues to thrive, it is essential for buyers and sellers to stay informed and be prepared to act quickly in this fast-paced market.

Ready to take the next step in Natick's vibrant real estate market? When you're ready to sell I'm here to guide you through the process with expertise and personalized care. Reach out to discuss your goals and strategies. Let's work together to achieve success in Natick's thriving real estate landscape! Reach out if you would like a complimentary market analysis and pricing for your own property!

John McHugh has been a Senior Agent with Coldwell Banker for 24 years. 978.902.5646 JohnSellsNow@Gmail.com Visit My Website for home- buying/homeselling tips and to SEARCH ALL PROPERTIES: JohnMcHughRealEstate.com

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12/10/2024	5 Broads Avenue	\$690,000
12/09/2024	10 Nouvelle Way #5613	\$910,000
12/06/2024	8 Millbrook Road	\$724,000
12/05/2024	5 Flynn Street	\$731,000
12/03/2024	301 Eliot Street	\$785,000
12/02/2024	49 Village Brook Lane #11	\$315,000
12/02/2024	125 Manor Avenue	\$2,350,000
11/27/2024	31 Evergreen Road	\$700,000
11/26/2024	35 Curve Street	\$758,000
11/25/2024	32 Walden Drive #19	\$350,000
11/25/2024	1 Harding Road	\$614,000
11/25/2024	83 Kendall Lane	\$770,000
11/25/2024	68 Pond Street	\$1,130,000
11/22/2024	14 Blossom Circle	\$1,320,000
11/22/2024	9 Sherwood Road	\$1,340,000
11/21/2024	75 Cottage Street	\$650,000
11/19/2024	20 Stratford Road	\$1,100,000
11/19/2024	4 Malden Street	\$1,340,000
11/19/2024	15 Florence Street #1	\$650,000



The 3-bed, 2-bath 2,188-square-foot house at 20 Stratford Road in Natick recently sold for \$1.1 million. Image credit: zillow.com

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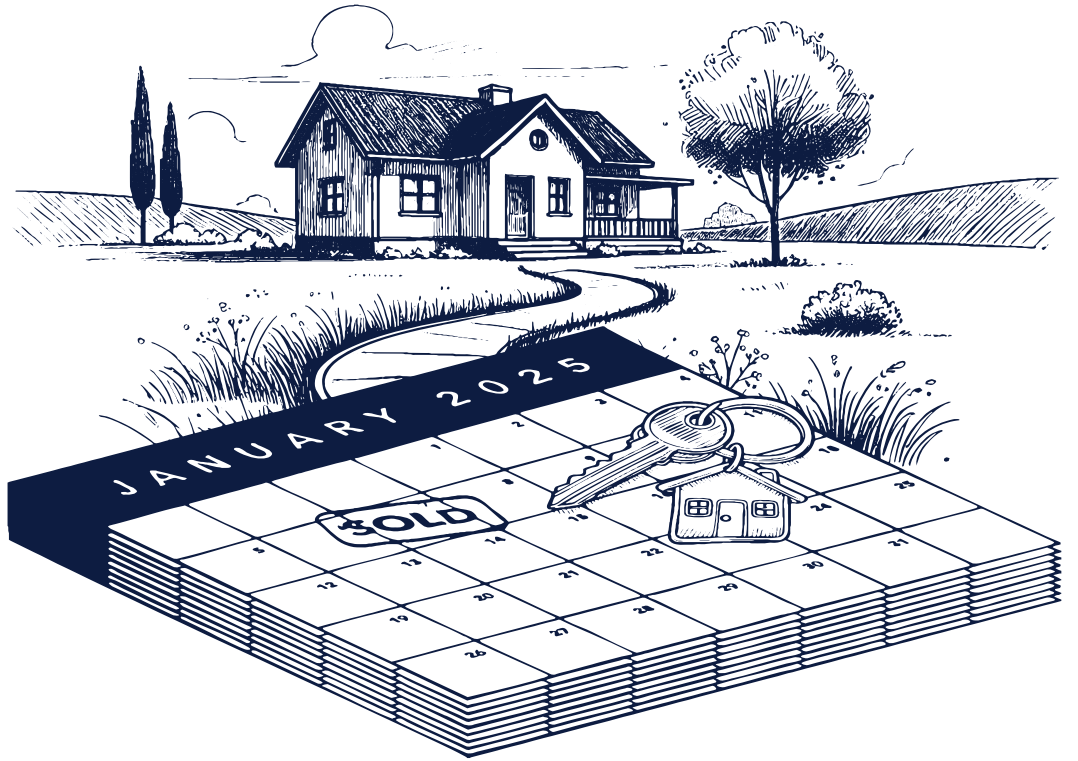
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