



Select Board Chairman Kathryn Coughlin's car was vandalized last Thanksgiving with anti-immigrant sentiments.

Town Updated Official Illegal Immigrant Policy

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

Natick outlined its official policy regarding illegal immigrants last month.

Crafting, implementing and

enforcing immigration policy has vexed nations and governments the world over, acutely so during the last few decades. It comes as little surprise then, to find small

towns and cities struggling with the topic.

IMMIGRATION

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Override Possible

BY SEAN SULLIVAN

The Natick Select Board is debating whether to put a budget override on the ballot for voters next month.

If passed, the measure would allow the town to increase property taxes on residents and other stakeholders. Massachusetts law limits the amount a municipality may increase such taxes annually.

That state ceiling is set at a 2.5% bump per year in addition to new growth, and the override would allow Natick to surpass that limit.

The stated need for an override stems from budget shortfalls in recent years. Those financially lean times have been driven by a so-called structural deficit, wherein town expenditures have exceeded its income. Pandemic-induced inflation has played a role in rising costs and budgetary gaps for Bay State cities and towns.

Natick is far from alone in its override odyssey.

Many Massachusetts municipalities have been united in coping with deficits and offering their residents an opportunity to pass an override to overcome them. Towns and cities have

been somewhat divided in how they vote on those measures. Around two-thirds have opted to pass them in recent years.

The state saw 60 override attempts in 2023, the most per year since 2008. That's been part of a flurry of such votes since the pandemic, with over 100 put before voters during the last few years.

Overriding concerns about passing an override in Natick include its impact on homeowners, who themselves are coping with household inflation. Older residents on fixed incomes too might be acutely vulnerable to the tax increase. The boost in property taxes could also put Natick homes out of reach for potential buyers who are younger and for those with lower incomes.

By charter, the town will have had to submit its proposed budget by Feb. 1st. Officials planned to release two versions of that budget, one including the effects of a successful override and a second edition without it. The latter budget would allow residents to see what services would be cut (and by how much) in order to

OVERRIDE

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IMMIGRATION

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Any reasonable and rational “solution” to the immigration issue seems guaranteed to leave a large portion of constituents dissatisfied. So sequestered seems each camp in its corner; that compromise and empathy feel out of reach.

It’s a sort of trench warfare, each side separated by a legislative no-man’s-land in the center. There’s little common language to unite the two factions. The process is punctuated by political pot shots, and progress can be measured in inches gained and then lost.

Few dare to venture into that middle ground—to propose a solution that includes the practical and good-faith points that could be found on each side. And so most are forced into choosing a side.

So it is with Natick’s new policy on the matter.

A few years ago, the town’s Select Board was petitioned by advocates to designate Natick a “sanctuary town.” That would have added the municipality to a handful of other Massachusetts towns and cities that have ad-

opted the label.

It’s a distinction that’s meant to signal a community’s support for local immigrant populations, but one that carries little definition or clarity. What is clear is that immigration advocates relish the label, and those advocating for stricter immigration laws recoil from it.

“That was off the table from the beginning,” said Kathryn Coughlin of the sanctuary designation. She serves as Chair of Natick’s Select Board. A main reason for that rejection, she said, was that it would have frozen lines of communication between the town and Immigrations and Customs Enforcement.

“That’s not ideal from a public-safety standpoint,” said Coughlin. “Our police chief didn’t want that.”

A memo released a few weeks ago by the Select Board outlined what Natick could (and could not) do in matters relating to immigration. The memo outlined the results of the Select Board’s Dec. 18th vote on the issue last year.

If distilled down to an overriding guiding principle, the board’s decision is an effort to keep the town in compliance with state and federal laws. And keeping the

town in that legal lane is in large part an aim to shield Natick from potential liability.

Massachusetts courts have held that state and local government officers have a limited role (if any) to play in enforcing federal immigration policy.

Seeking to underscore that guidance, the Massachusetts Chiefs of Police Association released a memo of its own. In that statement, the group makes clear that immigration issues and enforcement are outside the authority of state and local governments.

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

Following that advice is what the Natick Select Board seeks to do with its new policy on immigration documentation.

Directive number two on the board’s recent memo: “No employee of the Town shall inquire about or collect any information regarding the citizenship or immigration status of any individual unless Federal Laws or the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts require municipal employees to do so.”

That is the line that sanctuary town advocates might cite to say that Natick isn’t doing enough to support local immigrant populations. For those favoring stricter immigration controls, it’s also the line they might cite to say the town isn’t being tough enough.

But with its new policy, said 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.

“The overriding concerns that I heard and read from hundreds of letters was that ‘we’re concerned about our pocketbooks and concerned about public safety.’”

In the few years since the sanctuary town status was proposed, Coughlin said the board has been in constant contact with Natick’s legal counsel to figure a way forward. The body also researched neighboring towns to see what policies they’d adopted, what lessons could be learned from those examples.

Absent the board’s new guidance, Coughlin offered a few hypotheticals of how the town might run legally afoul of state law.

If a health inspector was visiting a restaurant, or a building inspector attending to a structure in Natick, asking about the residency or immigration status of workers on site would be beyond the roles of those town employees.

“I don’t see this ever happening with them,” said Coughlin of Natick officials. “They’re fantastic.”

Still, the Select Board seeks with its new policy to clarify and ensure the protocol for all Natick staff in this domain.

“Town employees should be working for the town of Natick,” said Coughlin, “not enforcing federal immigration law.”

If workers in the examples above were asked about their legal status or for documentation, the town might be on the hook for violation of state law.

“Whether that person is documented or undocumented,” said Coughlin in such scenarios, “they sue the town and then we’re writing a check for liability. So I want to avoid that at all costs.”

Deliberating and legislating on this debate hasn’t been cost-free

IMMIGRATION

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IMMIGRATION

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personally for Coughlin.

On a weekend morning after Thanksgiving of last year, she awoke to find her car had been vandalized. Its exterior was keyed and an anti-immigrant message spray-painted there. All told, Coughlin said the damage is estimated at \$6,700.

Serving on the Select Board is a volunteer position, one requiring hours in excess of a full-time job. Coughlin said “Tempers were really hot” in the weeks since the policy began to be debated at town meetings. The receipt of some “really ugly” letters has also been a part of the process.

At a meeting last month, the board’s Chair announced that residents wishing to speak at meetings on the topic would no longer be asked for their names or addresses. Several had approached her, said Coughlin, to say they didn’t feel comfortable divulging such information in our current political climate.

Asked about her personal thoughts on immigration, the sun seemed to alight for a moment upon that middle ground that’s

been so elusive in this debate.

“I would really like to see our federal government solve this problem,” said Coughlin. “I think we need a strong border. I think we need a strong asylum system. Most people who come here want to work.”

And as to the person(s) who trespassed upon her own property and caused damage, Coughlin said she thinks the culprits don’t reside in Natick.

“I don’t see Natick residents doing that. I choose to believe I’m in a town where people wouldn’t do that.”

But to state that any town or municipality has an immigration policy is a bit of a misnomer. Local governments must stay within the lanes of their state’s laws, just as states must defer to federal statutes.

Natick’s new policy rather, is one that directs town employees and officers to adhere to state and federal laws regarding matters of immigration.

Those town meetings overflowed with attendees, residents who held strong opinions on the matter of immigration enforcement.

OVERRIDE

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meet the projected 2026 fiscal shortfall.

“So, by then we will have had the budgets, we will have had multiple public forums,” said Kathryn Coughlin. She serves as chair of Natick’s Select Board, a body she said is committed to letting Natick residents weigh in on the override before the board’s vote.

Natick schools will be included on the potential chopping block if the override fails, added Coughlin. They comprise the largest line-item in terms of town expenses.

At a Select Board meeting on Jan. 15th, members sought to inform the public about the implications of the override, whether voters give it the thumbs-up or down.

Ultimately, the board clarified, it will be up to residents to approve the measure. But should it pass or fail, the final budget for the next fiscal year is then in the hands of Town Meeting members. Even if the override passes, that body could craft a final budget that makes use of some (or

none) of the extra funds gleaned by the increased tax levy.

In a Metrowest Daily News article from March of 2008, dollar amounts seem quaint by today’s standards. The override that year for \$3.9 million passed by 10 percentage points, and raised property taxes by \$240 on a home valued at \$400,000.

This current override estimates that the property tax on a median single family home (\$780,400) will rise by \$515 annually. The proposed Natick override for fiscal year 2026 is \$8,000,000.

The Select Board will vote by Feb. 18th on whether to include the override on the ballot. If the board decides in the affirmative, voters will have their say on it during Natick’s Mar. 25th elections.

Coughlin said the town has already combed over its expenditures in recent years, seeking to cut costs to close Natick’s structural funding gap. While striving to spare student-facing services, she said, Natick schools have cut over \$2,000,000 over the past two years.

At the mid-January meeting, Town Administrator Jamie Err-

ickson said that Natick has been operating under the constraints of structural deficits for at least the last decade. Those budget shortfalls, he added, were exacerbated by economic conditions during the pandemic.

“You’re looking at additional cuts to schools and town services,” without the proposed override, he said.

One big driver and casualty of inflation, consumers will know, has been a rise in energy costs. The town, Coughlin pointed out, has been tightening its belt and getting fit for that challenge for years.

“We’ve been doing really good at containing energy usage in buildings because of sustainability principles and practices,” she said.

Board members assured attendees and viewers of the meeting that the town has been diligent in finding ways to cut costs and raise revenues in every corner they can be found.

“This didn’t suddenly creep up on us,” said Coughlin. “It’s not business as usual.”



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Natick Center Cultural District Announces Next Executive Director

Heather Rockwood to begin in January

The Natick Center Associates Board of Directors is thrilled to announce the appointment of Heather Rockwood as the new Executive Director of the Natick Center Cultural District (NCCD). A dynamic and experienced leader in nonprofit and community development, Heather brings over 14 years of expertise in nonprofit management, grant writing, and event

programming, most recently serving as communications director for the Massachusetts Historical Society. Heather has served the community of Attleboro on various boards and committees, including its Cultural Council, Cultural District, and Transformative Development Initiative (TDI) Partnership, among others, and she is the Founder, Director, and Presi-

dent of the popular Jewelry City Steampunk Festival.

As the NCCD Executive Director, Heather will focus on fostering collaboration among local businesses, cultural institutions, and the Town of Natick, while spearheading initiatives that enhance Natick Center's strong reputation as a regional hub for arts and economic activity.

Heather expressed her enthusiasm for the role, saying, "I am excited to join this vibrant community and build on

the compelling reputation of Natick Center as a cultural and economic destination. I look forward to becoming an ally to the many local businesses, artists, and residents, continuing the great work done before me and creating new opportunities for residents and visitors to the District!"

Outgoing Interim Executive Director Paul Joseph shared his confidence in the transition, stating, "Heather's energy and fresh perspective will undoubt-

edly benefit the community of Natick and help us build on its already strong foundation. As a Natick Center business owner and local volunteer, I look forward to working with her."

Artie Fair, Board Chair of Natick Center Associates, noted, "Heather's experience of community engagement and innovative programming makes her the perfect fit to lead the Cultural District into its next chapter of growth and success."

West Natick Fire Station #4 wins Architectural Award

Albany, NY – The American Institute of Architects New York State (AIANYS) has announced the recipients of the 2024 AIANYS Design Awards. AIANYS is the state component of the American Institute of Archi-

itects (AIA) and is composed of 13 statewide chapters representing over 9,500 architecture professionals. Since 1968, these prestigious awards have honored exceptional architectural projects – from local landmarks to international collaborations – designed by licensed and registered architects practicing in New York State.

Twenty-nine projects received recognition across 14 categories, including Adaptive Reuse/Historic Preservation, Commercial/Industrial, Institutional, Interiors, International, Pro Bono Projects, Residential, Small Firms, Unbuilt, and Urban Planning and Design. Citations, Merit Awards, and Honor Awards were bestowed upon the most outstanding submissions.

The West Natick Fire Station #4 in Natick, MA won an award in the "Institutional" category. Tecton Architects, P.C. in Hartford, CT was the Architect

of Record while H2M architects + engineers, who have offices in Troy and Long Island, provided

the firematic design. The 2024 Design Awards jury comprised Jury Chair Terry Welker, FAIA, Architect and Sculptor at Welker Studio, and Visiting Assistant Profes-

sor, Architecture, and Interior Design at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio; Jamie Ober, AIA, a profound understanding and commitment to sustainability, environmental stewardship, and



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Principal at Lenhardt Rodgers Architecture + Interiors and 2025 AIA Pennsylvania President-Elect; and David Viana, Assistant Vice President, Community Relations & Subsidiary Administration at Empire State Development. Peter Arsenault, FAIA, was the facilitator.

From among the 29 award-winning projects, the jury selected the "Best of the Best," which will be revealed at a virtual awards ceremony on February 6.

"I am deeply impressed by the exceptional quality and ingenuity demonstrated in this year's submissions," stated Terry Welker, FAIA, Jury Chair. "They are clear evidence of how caring and dedicated New York architects are to the cause of design excellence and place making. These projects reflect

the unique cultural contexts in which they are situated. They are a testament to the power of design to positively impact our communities and shape a more vibrant future."

AIANYS 2024 President Willy Zambrano, FAIA, added, "The AIA New York State Design Awards are a testament to the extraordinary talent and dedication of our state's architects. These awards celebrate their innovative spirit and their ability to create spaces that enrich lives and inspire communities. I extend my sincerest congratulations to all the esteemed recipients."

The recipients will be honored and the award levels will be revealed at a virtual award ceremony on Thursday, February 6.

Around Natick

Feb 1st. 9am-1pm

Farmers market at Natick common

Feb 3rd. 3pm-4pm

Natick senior center
Tech workshop with natick high robotics club.

Have a computer but don't really know how to use it? Is technology a pain to learn to maneuver? Is the answer is yes then you might be interested in coming to our technology workshop. Please bring your own device. Limited space pre registration is available.

Feb 4th. 1pm

Natick senior center
Chopstick lunch and learn
Using chopsticks help you lose weight, improve coordination and become a more mindful eater. Come have a snack and some great conversations while you learn the art of using chopsticks. We will have a boxed lunch that's perfect for mastering the art of chopsticks.

Feb 4th 5pm-6:30pm

Bacon Free Library
58 Eliot St., Natick
Felted koala craft for adults

Feb 6th 1pm

Natick senior center
Ladies social hour
Connecting women. Know the story behind your name? Come and share your story as we look up the meaning and history of your name.

Feb 10th 1:30pm

Natick senior center
Valentines music performance
Hearts are a flutter with the Sandi Bendrosian quartet who sings love songs

Feb 19th 6:30pm-8:30pm

Trustees room Morse institute library 14 e central st Natick ma
Teen movie night pg-13
In recognition of black his-

tory month teens are invited to come watch the film adaption of the critically acclaimed book the Hate U Give by Angie Thomas. Light snacks will be available.

Feb 20th 11:30am

Natick senior center
Empowering diabetic living
Explore practical strategies for managing diabetes through delicious low-carb recipes essential kitchen tips and empowering tools and technologies including meal planning apps online resources and supportive communities.

Feb 22nd 3pm-4pm

Lebowitz meeting hall Morse institute library
Ron Williams and Olga Rogach will perform American Spirituals and works by African American composers. You will be informed entertained and touched by Ron's personal life stories

Feb 27th 6:30pm-8pm

Select board Natick 101 sessions
Town hall 2nd floor 13 east central street
School committee will discuss topics like
-introduction to SB members
-roles and responsibilities
-examples of recent SB decisions
-how the public can engage

Feb 27th 1pm

Natick Senior center
Mardi Gras Performance
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!

-By Samantha Belpedio

OBITUARY

Priscilla Anne Shea

June 26, 1935- January 7, 2025

Priscilla Anne Shea (Pat) of Natick passed away peacefully on January 7th, 2025, surrounded by her loving family. She was born on June 26, 1935 in Burlington, Maine to Charles and Dora Hatch, and is survived by her brother Randy Hatch and sister Anita McKee She was a beloved mother to Karen Hendrickson, Judy and David Heid, Dorathy and Brent Harman, and Daniel Ostreicher, in addition to her stepchildren Debra Fede, Jacquie and Joe Murphy, Darlene and Wayne MacKeil, Kevin and Heidi Shea, and Keith Shea. Pat was adored by her 17 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husbands Robert Ostreicher,(m.20 yrs),and George

Shea,(m.46 yrs).

Pat worked at a variety of jobs while living in Natick since 1958. Her most recent were in the Natick Senior Center as a kitchen supervisor and as a blood donor recruiter for the Metro West Medical Center for many years. She was known for her themed blood donor parties and was the "Pied Piper" for recruiting community blood donors. Pat also started a company called "Morning Glory Studios" where she created unique garden flower wedding arrangements. Neighbors always stopped by her home to admire her many gorgeous gardens.

Pat loved to travel with her children, vacationing in Ireland, Mexico, the Caribbean, the Grand Canyon and whitewater rafting down



the Salmon River of Idaho, among many other places. Her life will be celebrated in a private memorial service with the family in Westport. In lieu of flowers donations in her memory can be sent to Metro West Hospice Amedisys Foundation 3854 American Way, Suite A, Baton Rouge, LA 70816.

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Start the New Year with Affordable Junk Removal

There are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Perhaps, after the cheerful festivities of the holiday season, navigating your basement or venturing into the attic has become a bit more challenging. Maybe you are planning to move, and you need to declutter before your open house?

Figuring out who to call can be challenging. If you contact one of the big haulers, they route you to a phone center where they've never even heard of your town, plus their pricing seems vague and full of extra fees. No wonder you've let the stuff pile up—it's too much of a hassle to get rid of it!

Or you can call Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business with deep community roots take care of everything.

Jay Schadler started his business in 2005. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never wavered. Now he's got a staff of ten, along with eight trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

Affordable Junk Removal specializes in house and estate cleanouts. If your garage, attic, or office is overflowing with stuff, take back your space and let the pros do the heavy lifting.

Business spotlight

Jay and his team have handled it all. They've dismantled above-ground pools, hauled away ancient hot tubs, taken down old fencing, and stripped away worn carpeting. They'll come for a single item, or they'll clean out an entire house. And they can take almost anything. They can't accept hazardous materials, brush, dirt, or concrete, but everything else is fair game for them to take away.

Not everything ends up in a landfill—not if Jay can help it. He first tries to either recycle or donate items. Only after he tries to repurpose items do they end up at the transfer station.

Working with Affordable Junk Removal is simple. First, you can load stuff yourself if you want by renting a 15-cubic-yard dumpster for a week and chucking up to a ton of your unwanted stuff. If you need to get rid of more weight, then Jay prorates that tonnage—you never pay for what you don't use.

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway special where they'll take away a truckload of your unwanted things if you pile it up. Or if you don't want to lift a finger,



then you can point at the items, and the team will fill up their truck and haul away your unwanted things. However you do it, you're left with more space and more peace of mind.

Jay and his team beat the big waste haulers on both price and customer service. When you call Affordable Junk Removal, you aren't connected to an anonymous call center. Your phone call goes right to Jay.

And speaking of pricing, Jay is upfront about it. His website shows the truck sizes and prices, so you can save time knowing your costs before you call for an appointment. There

aren't any hidden costs or surprise fees with Affordable Junk Removal.

Affordable Junk Removal is fully licensed and fully insured, and they'll treat your property with care and respect.

They also have a thriving commercial business, working with contractors and roofers to clear away debris and keep the job site clean. They can even handle commercial and residential emergencies with same-day service.

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in

Holliston. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

Contact Affordable Junk Removal and let a local small business take care of everything for you. Call Jay Schadler at (774) 287-1133 or visit us online at www.affordablejunkremoval.com.

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Recognizing and Responding to Hypothermia

As the temperature drops, the risk of experiencing hypothermia rises.

Our bodies have a fairly narrow range of ideal temperatures, and it is important to recognize signs of hypothermia at an early stage so action can be taken to treat the condition.

With hypothermia, the body loses heat faster than it can produce it, causing a dangerously low body temperature.

Common causes of hypothermia include exposure to cold weather or immersion in cold water. Any time you combine wet clothing and cold temperatures, you increase the risk for hypothermia, particularly when wind is involved.

Symptoms of hypothermia include:

- Shivering-body attempting to retain heat
- Slurred speech or mumbling
- Slow, shallow breathing
- Weak pulse
- Clumsiness or lack of coordination
- Drowsiness or very low energy
- Confusion or memory loss
- Loss of consciousness

In infants, bright red, cold skin. People with hypothermia usually aren't aware of their condition. This is because the symptoms often begin gradually, and the confused thinking associated with hypothermia prevents self-awareness.

Risk factors for hypothermia include:

- Exhaustion. Fatigue reduces a person's ability to tolerate cold.
- Older age. The body's ability

to regulate temperature and to sense cold may lessen with age.

Very young age. Children lose heat faster than adults do. Children also may ignore the cold because they're having too much fun to think about it.

Cognitive impairment. People with dementia or other conditions that interfere with judgment may not dress properly for the weather or understand the risk of cold weather. People with dementia may wander from home or get lost easily, making them more likely to be stranded outside in cold or wet weather.

Alcohol and drug use. Alcohol may make the body feel warm inside, but it causes blood vessels to expand. As a result, the surface of the skin loses heat more rapidly, and the effects of alcohol decrease situational awareness.

Prevention

To stay warm in cold weather, remember the acronym **COLD** — cover, overexertion, layers, dry:

Cover. Wear a hat or other protective covering to prevent body heat from escaping from your head, face and neck. Cover your hands with mittens instead of gloves.

Overexertion. Avoid activities that cause a lot of sweating. The combination of wet clothing and cold weather can cause the body to lose heat more quickly. Remember that shoveling snow counts as exercise!

Layers. Wear loose-fitting, layered, lightweight clothing. Outer clothing made of tightly woven, water-repellent material is best for wind protection. Wool,

silk or polypropylene inner layers hold body heat better than cotton does.

Dry. Get out of wet clothing as soon as you are able. Be especially careful to keep your hands and feet dry, as it's easy for snow to get into mittens and boots.

If you suspect that someone is experiencing hypothermia, call 911. While waiting for emergency help to arrive, gently move the person inside if possible. Jarring, abrupt movements can trigger dangerous irregular heartbeats, so it is imperative to handle the person gently. Carefully remove any wet clothing and replace it with warm, dry coats or blankets.

For localized areas of frostbite, the American Red Cross suggest the following:

- Move the person to a warm place.
- Handle the area gently; never rub the affected area.
- Warm gently by soaking the affected area in warm water (100–105 degrees F) until it appears red and feels warm.

Loosely bandage the area with dry, sterile dressings.

If the person's fingers or toes are frostbitten, place dry, sterile gauze between them to keep them separated.

Avoid breaking any blisters.

Do not allow the affected area to refreeze.

If you exercise outdoors in more remote areas, ensure that you have a fully charged phone with you. If you have to travel

by car in severe weather, keep additional warm clothing and blankets in your vehicle. During severe weather emergencies, remember that you can call 211 to find the location of local warming shelters. The link below leads to Ashland-specific information: www.ashlandmass.com/714/Extreme-Cold

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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

WONDRIUM- 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.

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.

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

BRAVE AND GAL-LANT 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

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Your Money, Your Independence

Marriage & Finances: What's Love Got To Do With It?



Glenn Brown, CFP

Valentine's Day is a time to celebrate love, but also an opportunity to reflect on how love influences every part of your relationship—even finances.

Financial planning for married couples is not just about managing money; it's about working together toward shared goals with trust, understanding, and united purpose.

Yet, it's surprising the rising number of married couples entering financial planning engagements with separate finances and desire to keep it that way. Blame pre-existing debt (i.e. student loans), divorce rates and desired autonomy to continue not having

to answer for personal spending habits.

By combining finances and collaborating on financial goals, couples can set themselves up for long-term wealth. Here's how to work together as one effectively.

1. Financial Values and Habits

Before combining finances, it's essential to understand each other's financial habits, values, and experiences. Are you a spender or a saver? Do you prioritize security or investment?

Sharing how you were raised to think about money, past financial experiences, and your attitudes toward spending and investing can avoid future misunderstandings.

2. Combining Finances

Couples must decide whether to share everything, keep things separate, or take a hybrid approach. While some CFPs say there is no right answer, I don't encounter \$5M+ married households where finances are separate. Sure, a small discretionary account may exist, but so does transparency of it and across the household.

When couples feel they're underachieving, I'll see evi-

dence of divided assets, funky income-based ratios to cover expenses and opportunities missed due to each spouse having several unknowns of the other. In summary, a lack of trust prohibits taking calculated risks to generate wealth.

The way you manage assets, liabilities and spending should reflect values and shared vision of where your household is in 3, 5 and 10+ year increments.

- If one enters marriage with 6-figure student loan debt, you both work to pay it down.
- If one comes from family money, accept offers of assistance that align with your household's vision.
- If one makes more than the other, spending and payments are balanced.
- If making a large purchase requiring a loan and/or investments, details are discussed and are to fit into the household's vision.

3. Setting Shared Financial Goals

Once finances are combined, it's time to set shared financial goals. These range from short-

term goals (saving for a vacation or building an emergency fund) to long-term goals (buying a house or saving for retirement). Start by discussing your personal aspirations and then find ways to align them into a unified plan. Prioritize these goals based on timelines and importance and be prepared to compromise.

It's essential both partners feel involved and heard when setting goals. This shared vision will make the process of working together more fulfilling and successful.

4. Budget & Prioritize Spending Together

A budget helps couples allocate income, control spending, and save for shared goals. Start by listing all monthly expenses, debt repayments and automatic savings (i.e. 401k). Separately list one-time expenses expected in coming 1-3 years, such as home improvements, travel, auto, etc.

If cash flow is positive, then monitor your budget and adjust as necessary. For some it's monthly, others it's revisited when expected results don't occur.

5. Transparency and Communication

Just as love requires ongoing

communication and transparency, so does financial planning. Working together as a team with check-ins and honest conversations ensures you stay on track, discuss progress toward your goals, and adjust when necessary.

Make sure to celebrate milestones together. Besides keeping each other motivated, it recognizes your power of working together and strengthens your emotional bond.

So, "What's love got to do with it?"—the answer is simple: everything.

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 Plan-Dynamic, 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

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ion 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 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.

\$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 ANI-

MALS IN WINTER- LIVE ANIMALS WITH THE JOYS OF NATURE- HYBRID

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

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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!

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 Curbside pickup is available during all open hours
 Check our website for the

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

Children's Programs

Story Time -- Mondays and Tuesdays @ 10am -- We'll fea-

ture 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, Feb 7th & 28th @ 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, Feb 1st @ 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.

Drop-in Valentine Making -- Friday, Feb 14th, 10am - 12pm -- Stop by anytime between 10:00 and 12:00 to make some Valentine's Day cards for your friends and family! We'll provide an assortment of craft materials. All ages are welcome.

Puppet Story Time -- Friday, Feb 21st @ 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:
 January 23rd - March 5th: Bruno Wernli Art -- Bruno Wernli, born in Zürich, Switzerland, is an abstract expressionist artist currently based in Natick, MA. Specializing in acrylics on canvas, Wernli is renowned for his large-scale abstractions characterized by luminous, intense colors, crafted through a multi-layer technique. He is best known for his adept manipulation of color and form, which results in captivating works that engage viewers with their visual depth and textural complexity.

LIBRARY
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LIBRARY

continued from page 10

Adult Programs

Craft: Felted Koala for Adults -- Tues, February 4th @ 5pm -- Learn how to needle felt a koala holding a heart using wool roving and a barbed needle. Pop up Art School will show you the basics of needle felting. You'll leave the class with the knowledge and basic supplies you need to continue felting on your own! Ages 13+ only please. Registration required.

Francais a la bibliotheque -- Saturday, February 8th @ 10am -- Vous parlez français? un peu, beaucoup, pas de problèmes. Venez nous rejoindre pour parler ou pour écouter.

Gardens of the Pacific Northwest (virtual program) -- Thursday, February 13th @ 6pm on Zoom -- Landscape photographer Joanne Pearson will be our guide on this virtual, armchair tour of gardens in the Pacific Northwest. Register to receive the Zoom link.

Indoor Seed Starting (virtual program) - Tuesday, February 25th @ 6pm on Zoom -- Learn about indoor seed starting. There are so many more varieties of vegetables than what the garden centers offer. Eric Bromberg from Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens will show you everything you need to know. 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

February 6th: Yellowface by R.F. Kuang

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

February 13th: Up Home: one girl's journey by Ruth Simmons

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

February 18th: TBA

Nonfiction Book Club

-- fourth Saturday of the month @10am at the library

February 22nd: Social Justice for the Sensitive Soul: how to change the world in quiet ways by Dorcas Cheng-Tozun

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

February 25th: How to read a book: a novel by Monica Wood

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

Museum Passes

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

Give Cleo A Good Home

Name: Cleo

Age: 7

Bio: Cleo's got the heart of a puppy and the manners of a pro! At 7 years young, she offers the best of both worlds-house-trained, affectionate, and vibrant personality. She'll greet you with a bright smile, a wiggly tail, and an endless love for snuggles and belly rubs.

Always up for an adventure, Cleo is ready for anything you have

in mind! Whether it's a shopping spree, a hike on the trails, or a cozy couch cuddle, she's thrilled just to be by your side. She's toy-obsessed, with a soft spot for tennis balls and squeaky toys, showing off her playful hops and spins whenever it's play-time.

Cleo's also a social superstar with people of all ages. She's a natural with kids, greeting them gently and rolling over for belly rubs from kids and adults alike. On a recent field trip, she charmed everyone she met, navigating busy stores, shopping carts, and even big inflatable displays with ease and confidence.



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Sports

Natick High's Girls Quintet Is Making A 'Big Splash'

BY KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

When Oryx Cohen became the head coach of the Natick High girls basketball team last year, he said there would be some time needed to rebuild a squad that didn't qualify for the playoffs after it finished 5-14.

When his second season got underway in December, Cohen said that his team "was ready to make a splash."

The splash he predicted has been far-reaching because many of the Redhawks' opponents are drying themselves off. At Local Town Pages deadline, Natick was 8-2 and beating teams by an average of 30 points. The Redhawks were also No. 4 in the Division 1 power rankings.

"The objectives we listed in the pre-season were to qualify for the tourney and go as deep as possible, win the Carey Division championship, and for all players to pay attention to detail and work hard in every practice and game to keep improving," Cohen emphasized.

As far as the splash goes, it's mission accomplished.

But, if the present trend is to continue, Natick's 12 players must rely on a plethora of strengths that Cohen admires.

"We've got experience and depth," he said. "We lost only three seniors and we've got eight returnees. As for depth, we can go 10 deep. Our players have a high basketball IQ, are strong defensively, they're athletic,



Natick High coach Oryx Cohen with his seniors who play key roles for the Redhawks' girls basketball team. They are, from left, Christina Lopas, Addie Robie, Sammy Collins, Olivia Penn, and Kira Henderson.

coachable, have size and are well-skilled. Our team chemistry also is strong."

The 51-year-old Cohen also likes his squad's senior leadership and he'll get that commodity from all four of his senior captains. They include Olivia Penn (point guard), Sammy Collins (center), Kira Henderson (guard)

and Addie Robie (guard).

"Olivia is a four-year veteran and a three-year starter," Cohen noted. "At 5-9 she's got good size. She can rebound, drive to the hoop and get assists. An effective facilitator, her court sense is excellent and she's developed a good scoring touch. A leader by example, she's also can be vocal.

She'll be playing soccer at Northeastern University in the fall. At the halfway mark, she's averaging 6 points, 6 rebounds, 6 assists and 7 steals a game."

Collins is a 6-foot-1 center whose style combines leading by example and being vocal. "Sammy can rebound and block shots," Cohen said. "A very good passer, she's always hustling. She can score and is effective driving and cutting and will be playing college lacrosse at Bates."

Henderson is a vocal leader while Robie leads by example.

"Kira is one of our top defensive players," Cohen offered. "She gets offensive rebounds and is quick getting to a loose ball. She was the recipient of our Hustle Player of the Year Award last season. The leader last year in steals with five a game, she's got speed and quickness. Physically strong, Kira can finish her drives and can shoot threes. She'll be playing college soccer at Montclair State in the fall.

"Addie is a solid all-around player. Often at the right place at the right time, she can drive, finish and knock down shots. Always hustling, she's very strong on defense."

Another senior guard, Christina Lopas, gets high praise for her versatility. "Christina is out best three-point shooter," he said. "She can finish well and is a sneaky defensive player who can disrupt an opposing team's offense."

Katie McMahon, a 5-foot-11 forward/center, is the team's only junior. "Katie is very athletic, can drive and finish in the paint," Cohen said. "A solid rebounder, she also blocks shots and is strong defensively. She's averaging 7 points and 7 rebounds a game."

Two very competitive sophomores are 5-10 forward Bridget Pole and point guard Lily Downing.

"Bridget is athletic and strong in transition," Cohen said. "She can drive and score on mid-range or three-point shots, putting pressure on defenses. She also was chosen to compete in the Eastern Mass. Showcase game that features future college prospects. She's averaging 12 points a game. Lily probably is our best ball-handler. She's got a quick first step, making it tough to guard her. She also can pass, shoot threes and get steals by playing strong defense."

Sophomore guard Denai Williams and freshman Kayla Dunlap, a 5-foot-11 forward, provide quality depth.

"Denai has a high hoop IQ, plays year-round and is one of the fastest players on the team," Cohen said. "She can score by driving or shooting mid-range and threes. She's also aggressive on defense. Kayla is athletic, a three-level scorer who can take it to the hoop and a tremendous defensive player who'll block shots, crash the boards and get put-backs. She's averaging 13 points a game."

Rounding out the roster are two top-notch future prospects — sophomore Meghan Pole, a 5-foot-9 forward, and point guard

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Nonprofit Beyond Walls Names Chief Of Staff

Natick Resident Tiffany A. Daniel brings high level experience to role

Tiffany A. Daniel has been named Chief of Staff at Beyond Walls, the award-winning Lynn, Massachusetts-based nonprofit that introduces world-class art and artists to gateway cities.

Daniel brings extensive experience in project management, strategic planning, operations, budgeting, compliance, employee recruitment and retention, and stakeholder relations to her new role. She comes to Beyond Walls from Via Separations, a cleantech start-up where she served as the company's business operations manager.

As Chief of Staff, Daniel will oversee a team of program and project managers, at the organization's headquarters and in the field, to ensure that all initiatives are aligned with Beyond Walls' vision and priorities.

According to CEO & Founder Al Wilson, Daniel will be involved in every aspect of Beyond Walls.

"In addition to joining with community partners to install large-scale murals in diverse urban neighborhoods, Beyond Walls also designs, develops and distributes curriculum for K-12 students and consults with

corporate clients through our Commissioned Services division, an initiative that supports our public art installations and educational programming, said Wilson. "Given her skills and background, I am certain that Tiffany will contribute to Beyond Walls in ways that are meaningful and measurable."

Prior to her arrival at Via Separations, Daniel was Chief of Staff at the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Law. Earlier in her career she served as Project Lead in the Facilities and Design Division at New York Presbyterian Hospital and as the Assistant Project Manager for Operations and Facilities at Long Island's NuHealth Med-

ical Center.

"In collaboration with our senior staff, community partners, and corporate clients, I will focus on delivering programs, special projects, and events that are impactful, well-executed, and reflective of the creativity and energy that define Beyond Walls," said Daniel. "Equally important, I will work to advance our strategic plan to drive meaningful change in the communities we serve and engage with the foundations, donors, and partners who share our commitment to art, education, and access."

A resident of Natick, Daniel earned a Master of Public Administration degree from Long Island University and a Bachelor



of Business Administration degree in Leadership & Entrepreneurship from Florida Atlantic University.

SPORTS

continued from page 12

CC Curan.

"Meghan is an all-around player who gives us length, is a good shooter, and provides us with height going forward," Cohen offered. "CC also is an all-around competitor who's got

a high hoop IQ. She's one of our guards of the future."

Cohen's staff of assistants includes Brian Twomey (freshmen), Kyle Flannery (javyees) and Chet Smith and Sunni Beville (varsity assistants). "We've got a dedicated group of experienced coaches who work well with the players," Cohen said.

Cohen's goals for his second

year at Natick's helm are realistic and attainable. A playoff date is inevitable and winning the Carey Division is very realistic since Natick has a two-game lead over Framingham. "Wellesley is the defending champs, Framingham has some key returnees and tradition and Newton North is talented and well-coached," Cohen notes.

Rebuilding has been achieved and making a splash is a reality. Why the turn-around has occurred so quickly can be attributed to what occurred last summer.

"The girls participated in strength and conditioning drills and competed in the Franklin Summer League," Cohen emphasized. "The summer league

featured some of the state's top squads (Bishop Feehan, Medfield, Foxboro and Franklin) but our team won the title. Plus, eight of our 12 players competed at the club level."

The ingredients for success are all prevalent and the NHS girls basketball team is getting positive results because of its dedication, devotion and desire.

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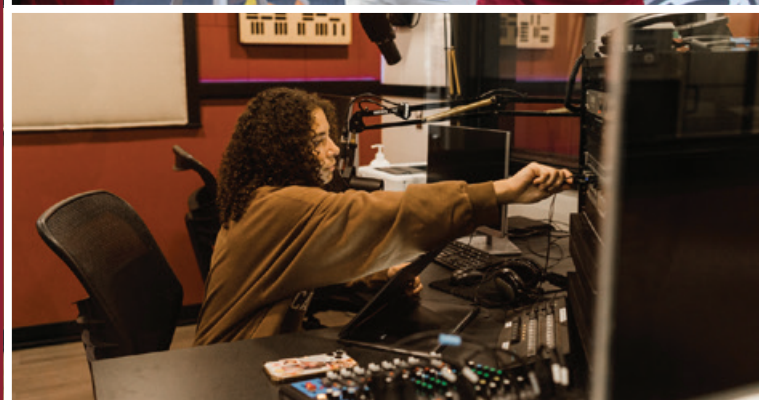
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Real Estate Corner

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The 5-bed, 3-bath 2,786-square-foot house at 224 Bacon Street in Natick recently sold for \$1,050,000. Image credit: www.zillow.com

Date	Natick	Amount
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01/15/2025	5 Glenwood Street	\$793,000
01/15/2025	40 N Main Street #4	\$745,000
01/08/2025	22 Oak Street	\$665,000
01/07/2025	14 Chestnut Street #14	\$1,170,000
01/07/2025	2 Franconia Ave. #1	\$575,000
01/03/2025	224 Bacon Street	\$1,050,000
12/30/2024	5 Porter Road	\$1,560,000
12/30/2024	9 Aqueduct Road	\$1,200,000
12/30/2024	2 Rockwood Road	\$781,000
12/27/2024	54 Pilgrim Road	\$575,000
12/27/2024	11 Porter Road	\$650,000
12/27/2024	1 Everett Terrace	\$1,610,000
12/24/2024	5 Hillside Road	\$1,170,000
12/20/2024	30 Sherman Street #B	\$1,150,000
12/19/2024	184 E. Central Street	\$825,000
12/19/2024	5 Wyndemere Lane	\$2,310,000
12/18/2024	3 Robinhood Road	\$935,000
12/18/2024	37 Morse Street #A	\$1,250,000
12/16/2024	146 N Main Street	\$840,000
12/16/2024	6 Walnut Avenue	\$910,000

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2024 IN REVIEW:

Volume: \$36,478,322

Transactions: 40



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