

Town Election Set for Tuesday, May 6

By GRACE ALLEN

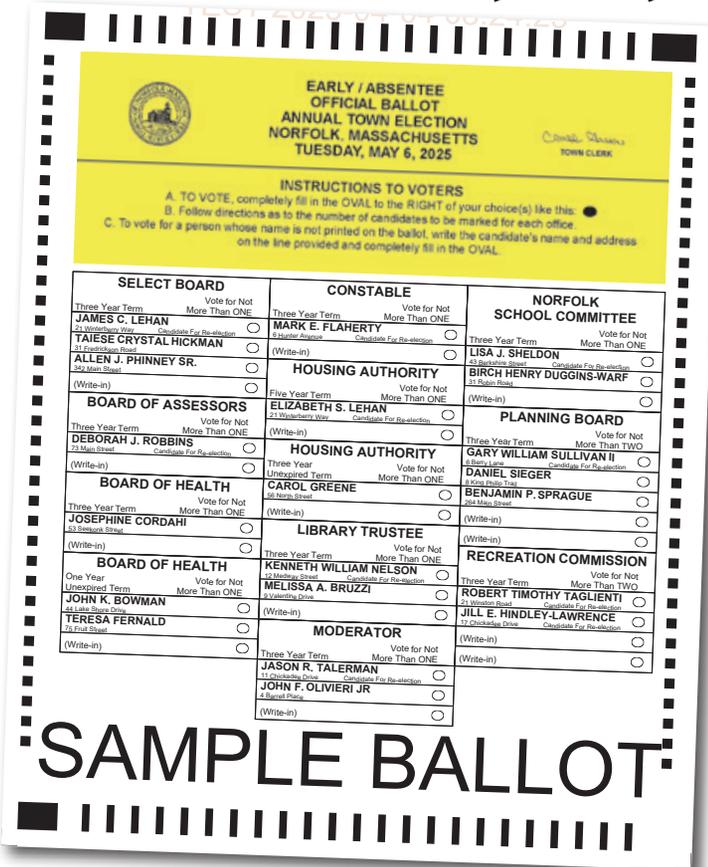
Norfolk residents will head to the polls on Tuesday, May 6, for the Annual Town Election. The election will feature contested races for several key positions, including Select Board, Planning Board, Norfolk School Committee, Library Trustee, Moderator, Board of Health, and Recreation Commission.

All in-person voting for the election will be held at the Freeman Kennedy School, 70 Boardman Street. Polls are open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

According to Town Clerk Carol Greene, there are about 8,100 registered voters in town, and in a typical town election, only 5 to 13% of those voters cast a ballot.

Given the number of races in this year's election, Greene hopes to see a turnout closer to 20%.

To help voters make informed decisions, Local Town Pages posed questions to the candidates in four of the races: Select Board, Planning Board, School Committee, and Town Moderator. See the following pages for their



SAMPLE BALLOT

responses. Due to space considerations, we regret we could not profile each race.

"I'm glad to see so many people interested in running for positions," said Greene. "We always appreciate those willing to volunteer their time

in service to the town."

She added there are openings for positions on several appointed boards. Interested residents can call 508-440-2855 or email jlizardi@norfolk.ma.us for more information.

Wrentham to Decide on Purchase of 2095 West Street at Special Town Meeting

By JOE STEWART

Residents will gather for a Special Town Meeting on May 12 at 7 p.m. at King Philip Regional High School to vote on whether the town should exercise its right of first refusal to purchase 65.5 acres at 2095 West Street, across from Cook's Farm. The property, zoned as 61B recreational land, could be preserved as open space or used for modest recreational improvements, such as walking trails. According to the Wrentham Open Space Committee Request for Community Preservation Funding, the property has been a part of Cook's Farm for over 350 years. Cook's Farm is the oldest continuously operating farm in Wrentham, dating back to 1664; a land grant from the King of England.

Funding the Purchase

The \$2.5 million acquisition would be funded through a combination of the town's Land Acquisition Fund (\$600,000) and a 10-year bond of \$1.9 million, repaid through annual Community Preservation Act (CPA) allocations of approximately \$200,000.

Heather Ledbetter, Wrentham's Land Use Specialist, noted that the Open Space Committee is exploring additional funding options, including grants from the Pawtucket Water Board and the Local Acquisitions for Natural Diversity Grant Program. The land serves as a critical watershed for the Arnold Mills and Diamond Hill reservoirs and feeds into the Charles and Blackstone Rivers.

Select Board Weighs Financial and Community Impact

The Select Board engaged in a detailed discussion about the 2095 West Street purchase during their March 18 meeting, weighing both the financial implications and the long-term benefits for the town. King assured residents that this purchase would not interfere with other major town projects, including the Roderick School and the Department of Public Works projects as the funding sources are separate.

However, Select Board Vice-Chair Chris Gallo raised concerns about the town's financial flexibil-

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Meet the Select Board Candidates

BY GRACE ALLEN

Three candidates are vying for one seat on the Norfolk Select Board in the May 6 Town Election. The Select Board is responsible for the town's governance, including proposing budgets, overseeing various boards and committees, and setting the overall direction and policies for the town. Running for the three-year term are James C. Lehan (up for re-election), Taiese Crystal Hickman, and Allen J. Phinney. Mr. Lehan and Ms. Hickman agreed to answer some questions for readers of Local Town Pages. Mr. Phinney declined to participate.



James C. Lehan

the Norfolk Elementary School Board for 6 years, the Recreation Board for 3 years, the Affordable Housing Trust for 10 years, and the King Philip School Committee for 11 years, on which I am still currently serving. I also have a passion for coaching and have coached the KP varsity boys hockey team and multiple youth teams. I also officiate high school hockey.

James C. Lehan

Occupation: I am retired, after spending my entire 35-year career with Aetna Financial Services in various management positions, the last 10 heading up the Pension Division.

Town boards/committees you've served on: Since retiring, I have devoted my time to serving my community. I have been on the Select Board for 18 years,

of experience will be very helpful in working through these difficult issues.

How would you propose funding local services in the short term, including schools, police, and public works, while keeping property taxes manageable for residents? The Select Board represents all aspects of our community and must ensure that our police, fire, DPW, Town Hall, library and schools remain strong and effective. One cannot be at the expense of the other. Balancing limited resources is difficult, yet necessary. We have limited commercial revenue, and it is imperative that we recognize that the residents bear the burden. There is a perception that the board has great power--not true. Our oversight of the budget is limited to approximately 20%. The remaining costs are fixed, such as Norfolk Retirement, Insurance--both health and liability. The remaining 60% are for schools. The 2026 budget submitted for consideration represents only a 2.5% increase on those costs under the direct control of the Select Board. I am fiscally conservative and believe I can help guide the town through this coming year and not add additional tax burdens on our residents.

What is your view on Norfolk's long-term financial sustainability, especially considering potential infrastructure needs and other growing demands in the future? My wife Betty and

Why are you running for the Select Board? After many years serving the community, there are times when experience and institutional knowledge can make a difference. The next few years will be very challenging for our community. While every year presents challenges, next year will be especially difficult. We face some difficult fiscal considerations, space issues at the elementary schools, a new Town Administrator search, and resolution to the Bay State Shelter issue, just to name a few. I believe my fiscal background and years

I have resided in Norfolk for 40 years. Our 4 children and now 7 grandchildren have all attended our schools. As a member of the Select Board for 18 years, I know it takes years to fully grasp the needs of our community. Experience does make a difference. I truly believe my decisions have served the best interest of the town, even if they differ from my own personal views. Leadership does not come from power; it comes from wisdom. Working together to find common ground, seeking differing views, understanding the downstream impact of decisions--these are critical skills needed to get us through the next few years. I will do my very best if re-elected.



Taiese Crystal Hickman

Taiese Crystal Hickman

Occupation: Academic Administrator and Adjunct Faculty of Biology Education at Brown University, founder of nonprofit New England Equity Collective, and realtor at RE/MAX 360. I have built a career solving complex problems and delivering results in a diverse range of fields, from leading cutting-edge analytics in behavioral health to overseeing multimillion-dollar projects in higher education. I have the right expertise to manage budgets, drive strategic growth, and make data-driven decisions.

Town boards/committees you've served on: Norfolk Special Education Advisory Council (7 years), Norfolk Town Advisory Board (1 year). As a mother of two boys and a granddaughter of a retired public-school teacher, I

understand firsthand the importance of strong schools, inclusive policies, and community advocacy. I have served on the board of Autism Care Partners, the Norfolk SEPAC and the Massachusetts Down Syndrome Congress, and as an advocate for students with disabilities, ensuring every child has access to the resources they need to thrive. Through my nonprofit, New England Equity Collective, I am working to increase homeownership opportunities and affordable housing for working families, veterans and people with disabilities. As a licensed real estate professional, I understand the challenges of affordable housing, sustainable development, and economic mobility, and I will bring that knowledge to town leadership.

Why are you running for the Select Board? I'm running for Select Board because I believe Norfolk deserves fresh leadership that can make our town thrive for everyone. As a Select Board

SELECT BOARD

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member, I will use my experience and vision to ensure that Norfolk spends wisely, grows strategically, and innovates for the future.

As a current member of the Norfolk Town Advisory Board, I understand firsthand the critical importance of getting Norfolk's financial house in order. Growth is happening all around us, and with that growth comes challenges. We need to preserve the character of our town while ensuring we have the infrastructure, services, and economic opportunities to support our residents. We need to continue to invest in our schools, roads, and public safety without overburdening taxpayers. And we need to encourage smart, sustainable development while protecting our environment and small-town feel. Norfolk faces real challenges, but with openness, smart

planning, and an all-hands community approach, we can turn things around. I am ready to get to work and put these ideas into action if given the chance.

How would you propose funding local services in the short term, including schools, police, and public works, while keeping property taxes manageable for residents? Norfolk deserves strong, reliable local services—great schools, public safety, and well-maintained infrastructure—and a tax structure that is transparent and manageable for residents. Before asking for more, we must ensure we're using what we have wisely. I will advocate for a clear, easy-to-understand budget breakdown for residents. The town should have a proactive strategy for applying for state and federal grants, especially for education, infrastructure, and public safety. We should explore partnerships with local businesses and nonprofits to support community services

and youth programs and encourage sponsorships or shared-use agreements that can bring in revenue or reduce expenses without burdening residents. Finally, we should explore using existing stabilization reserves to temporarily shore up critical services like staffing shortages in schools, police, and DPW—with transparency and public input.

For the long term, we need a multi-year financial plan that outlines forecasted expenses and revenue strategies to avoid last-minute decisions or tax overrides. This will help avoid service cuts and protect against over-reliance on property taxes. Lastly, community engagement should be a critical component of the budgeting process. I will host regular forums to involve residents in financial decisions. We must decide together what services we value most and how to fund them responsibly.

What is your view on Norfolk's long-term financial sustainabil-

ity, especially considering potential infrastructure needs and other growing demands in the future? Norfolk's future depends on our ability to balance strategic investment with fiscal responsibility. As outlined in the 2035 Norfolk Master Plan, we face real challenges: an aging population, limited commercial tax base, rising infrastructure needs, and declining in-town employment. But with the right leadership, we can turn these challenges into opportunities. With over 96% of Norfolk's revenue coming from residential property taxes, long-term sustainability means growing our commercial base. Attracting local, "right-sized" businesses means more services and less tax pressure on homeowners—without losing our small-town charm. The plan calls for increased housing diversity to meet the needs of families, seniors, and workers. I support efforts to: Update zoning in ways that align with state requirements

and community character and leverage state funds to reduce local cost burdens for school and infrastructure expansion. We need more than annual fixes—we need a multi-year financial plan that aligns spending with the town's infrastructure and service goals, includes clear benchmarks and reporting to residents, and positions us to secure state and federal grants, which the Master Plan identifies as critical to success. The Master Plan emphasizes that success relies on resident engagement and communication. I'll ensure Norfolk residents are informed, heard, and part of the process—especially when it comes to budgeting and planning major projects. Norfolk's long-term financial health is not just about making tough decisions—it's about making smart ones. With transparency, innovation, and community partnership, I believe we can secure a sustainable and vibrant future for Norfolk.

Meet the Planning Board Candidates

BY GRACE ALLEN

There are two seats up for grabs on the Norfolk Planning Board in the annual Town Election, set for Tuesday, May 6. The Planning Board primarily reviews and approves land development projects while ensuring compliance with local regulations, state laws, and the town's master plan. Three residents are running: Gary William Sullivan II (running for re-election), Daniel Sieger, and Benjamin P. Sprague. They all agreed to answer some questions for readers of Local Town Pages.

Gary William Sullivan II

Please give a brief history of any town experience you have, including serving on any committees. Since moving to Norfolk in 2014, I have been involved in several boards and committees. I served on the Cultural Council (including two years as chair), the Town Government Study Committee, and the B-1 Zoning Committee. I currently serve as a member of the Planning Board and the Community Preservation Committee (as Planning Board rep).

If re-elected, what do you hope to accomplish in your tenure as a Planning Board member? I want to continue the work I've already started, particularly



Gary Sullivan

around updating Norfolk's bylaws so they align with our newly updated 2025 Master Plan, which was developed over nearly two years by a working committee of residents and Planning Board members, with input from hundreds of community members. This includes preserving our semi-rural, agrarian character in residential areas while reducing unnecessary obstacles for existing and prospective businesses. My goal is to shape policies that respect our town's heritage and foster responsible growth.

What do you think are the most important issues the Planning Board is facing? A key challenge is adapting Norfolk's zoning bylaws—especially in the B-1 district—to changing market conditions. We need to make sure

these bylaws promote the development our residents envision for this zone: ample businesses,

walkable spaces, and opportunities that complement our community's character.

How can Norfolk best balance the interests of existing

residential property owners and the need for more housing? We

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can protect Norfolk’s rural feel while still embracing thoughtfully planned growth. This means encouraging developments that fit in with existing neighborhoods, investing in adequate infrastructure and open space, and exploring zoning adjustments for varied housing types. It’s not possible to stop residential growth here in Massachusetts, so by staying true to our town’s Master Plan and getting feedback from existing residents, we can enable development that welcomes new residents without compromising what makes Norfolk so special.

Daniel Sieger

Please give a brief history of any town experience you have, including serving on any committees. Through my 15 years of public and private sector work I have had extensive experience with local government. As Undersecretary for Environment for Massachusetts, I served as a central point of contact for may-



Daniel Sieger

ors and town administrators, helping to advise on local issues that intersected with the state environmental agencies on everything from housing development to water use. In addition, as a consultant, I represented real estate and energy clients before planning boards in Massachusetts. I hope to combine my extensive experience in state and local government with my private sector work, to serve the residents of Norfolk.

If elected, what do you hope to accomplish in your tenure as a Planning Board member? Norfolk is at a crossroads between

being a growing community and maintaining its small-town character. I firmly believe that with responsible planning and development both of those are possible. My priorities are to drive commercial growth, conserve open space, and promote the responsible development of housing that is informed by the input of current residents.

What do you think are the most important issues the Planning Board is facing? As Norfolk moves into the implementation phase following the adoption of the Master Plan and the MBTA Communities Act, I think it is important to find opportunities for local revenue that minimize disruption on the town’s services. Promoting commercial development, supporting neighborhood connectivity and accessibility, and ensuring responsible, community-led housing growth are, in my view, the most important issues facing the Planning Board.

How can Norfolk best balance the interests of existing residential property owners and the need for more housing? The town has engaged extensively with residents in the development of the Master Plan. As we move forward with the implantation of that plan, it will be important to keep residents informed and engaged so that we can continue to grow responsibly as a community, with an eye towards maintaining affordability, and not overly burden the town’s existing resources.



Benjamin Sprague

Benjamin P. Sprague

Please give a brief history of any town experience you have, including serving on any committees. Since moving to Norfolk in December 2020, I’ve been an active member of the Norfolk Lions Club, volunteering at events whenever I can. While I haven’t yet served on a town committee, my professional background includes working for MassDOT as a Relocation and Right of Way Agent, handling infrastructure-related projects, and also working with NHDOT and in private-sector real estate and development. That experience gives me the tools to navigate complex planning and transportation issues—like the one Norfolk is currently facing with the Park Street Bridge.

If elected, what do you hope to accomplish in your tenure as a Planning Board member? My top priority is helping Norfolk advocate for a timely and accountable solution to the Park Street Bridge closure. This bridge is essential to

our local traffic and community connectivity. Norfolk voted in favor of the MBTA Communities Act, and we deserve timely action in return. With my past experience at MassDOT and my knowledge of Massachusetts General Laws, I will press for clear communication and a reasonable timeline from the MBTA and MassDOT. Additionally, I’ll focus on implementing the Norfolk Master Plan, ensuring that growth is planned in a way that benefits both residents and infrastructure.

What do you think are the most important issues the Planning Board is facing? The Park Street Bridge closure is the most immediate and visible challenge. Beyond that, the Board is also navigating how to implement the MBTA Communities Act, managing pressure from developers, and making sure our infrastructure keeps up with residential growth. Every zoning decision made now impacts Norfolk’s future, which is why experience and thoughtful leadership matter.

How can Norfolk best balance the interests of existing residential property owners and the need for more housing? Norfolk can strike a balance by planning for housing that supports community needs—such as senior, workforce, and appropriately scaled multi-family housing—without undermining the small-town character that residents value. That requires strategic zoning, public input, and a commitment to fairness and transparency in the review process.



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Meet the Norfolk School Committee Candidates

BY GRACE ALLEN

Two candidates are running for one three-year term on the Norfolk School Committee in the May 6 Town Election. The School Committee sets policies, approves the budget, and engages the public in school matters. It also oversees school construction projects. Candidates Lisa J. Sheldon (up for re-election) and Birch Henry Duggins-Warf agreed to answer some questions for readers of Local Town Pages.



Lisa J. Sheldon

Lisa J. Sheldon

Why are you running for School Committee? I'm running because every child in Norfolk deserves access to a high-quality education. As a parent with two children in the district, I'm deeply invested in the success of our schools. It's a privilege to advocate for our students and to ensure families are heard and valued in the decisions that impact them. I believe in the power of skilled, well-supported educators and the importance of strong partnerships between schools and families. Norfolk has

much to be proud of, but I want to continue to improve academic achievement, address our space constraints, and invest wisely as enrollment grows.

What experience do you have that makes you a good candidate? I've served on the Norfolk School Committee for the last three years, and am currently the Chair. I've built relationships across local boards and with state representatives, established a liaison program to improve community collaboration, served on the budget sub-committee

through two challenging years, and actively advocated for additional state funding. I also bring experience from serving on the King Philip School Committee this year, which has broadened my knowledge and involvement in our community's education. Professionally, I work in investor relations, where I apply strategic thinking, financial expertise, and clear communication on a daily basis. I'm invested in our schools and committed to fostering open dialogue among all stakeholders. I consider all perspectives and make thoughtful, informed decisions that strengthen both our schools and our community.

What issues do you think are the most pressing facing the School Committee and what do you think should be done to address them? Our most pressing issues are academic achievement, funding and space constraints. Improving academic achievement remains my top priority. Valued and well-supported educators are key to student success, and I'm committed to advocating for a strong focus on reading,

writing, and math. We must ensure our schools are adequately funded—while also being mindful of the financial pressures many in our community face. I've been actively engaging with our state representatives to push for increased funding and a revision of the Chapter 70 formula. We also need to address the space constraints in our buildings in a way that is financially sustainable and acceptable to the community through alternative funding or new solutions along with community engagement. Finally, we must continue building trust through transparency, strong inter-board collaboration, and open communication with families as we navigate these challenges together.

Given the economic and political climate, what is your vision for the school district's budget? How will you balance the need to support students and educators with fiscal realities? My approach to the school district's budget focuses on meeting the needs of students and educators while respecting the financial



Birch Henry Duggins-Warf

limits and responsibilities of our community. State funding shortfalls and local revenue shortfalls are the biggest drivers of the issues we face with our school budget, so we need to focus our time and efforts advocating in both areas. I believe in protecting our teaching core, making strategic investments, and pushing for increased state funding, and I'll continue working collaboratively to explore creative funding solu-

SCHOOL
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SCHOOL

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tions. I also believe in engaging the community—because strong schools rely on strong partnerships, and together, we can make decisions that serve both students and taxpayers.

Birch Henry Duggins-Warf

Why are you running for School Committee? Good schools for our three kids (now 11, 9, and 5) is one of the biggest reasons we moved here. Looking for ways to support that quality education, I began to attend school committee meetings each month and I quickly realized what goes on in school directly impacts my life. It matters when the HVAC system needs repairs. It matters when the administration pilots a successful student engagement program and bullying incidents decrease. It matters when the budget needs to be cut and we lose programming or positions. Most of the town's budget goes to the school, so it matters that we are using those tax dollars wisely to create a school every-

one in town is proud of. It matters that we have people at the table who have engaged with the community, who are willing to think outside of the box and come up with creative solutions. Most Americans don't have their wealth in the stock market or a retirement account—our biggest investment is our homes. A town with enviable schools means property values increase. Thriving schools are a key ingredient to thriving communities and a thriving economy. I want to be a part of protecting our investment in our schools. We have great teachers and staff who come to work every day to teach our kids to think and ask questions. They need to know that we have their backs and we need to set them up for success. Of course, we have issues - budget limitations, space constraints, and academic challenges to address. We need everyone to pitch in to solve those issues. As a school committee member, I want to broaden our engagement with the community. Only by working together can we find better solutions to our problems.

What experience do you have that makes you a good candidate? I have worked in public libraries for nearly a decade, with two of those years in the library director's office of Virginia's largest municipality. In that role, I synthesized data about the city's half million residents and ten library branches to inform decisions about how the library could best serve the community.

Working for a large library system that closely collaborated with the city government, I learned valuable lessons about the operations of local government, strategic planning and setting achievable and measurable goals. I saw first-hand the importance of cultivating relationships, good communication and the unrivaled power of collaboration. After moving to Massachusetts, I switched to working in the private sector as a corporate reference librarian in the financial services industry. Through that work, I built a broad understanding of economic and financial principles and honed my skills in finding reliable data. With my combined private and public sector background, I will

bring a fresh perspective to the committee.

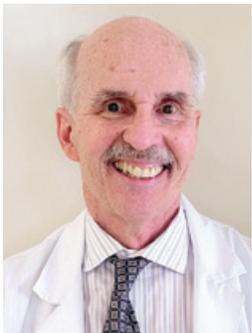
What issues do you think are the most pressing facing the School Committee and what do you think should be done to address them? I have seen a growing mistrust of town leadership, schools, and teachers. Mistrust is a major impediment to the communication and open dialogue that we need to solve our problems. The school committee needs to work diligently to rebuild the trust and partnership between the school and the community. Norfolk residents need to know that the school takes their fiscal responsibility of being the largest expense in the town budget seriously. As a school committee member, I will make it a priority to increase communication, transparency and collaboration between the community and the school. Once we have that trust re-established, we can work together to find better solutions to our budget constraints, to our space needs, and return the students to pre-COVID academic achievements. Our teachers need to know we trust them to appropriately create a welcom-

ing space for the mosaic of traditions, backgrounds, and family structures in our community. While transparency and parent involvement are key to student success, parents shouldn't have to sign a permission slip for kids to talk about their families.

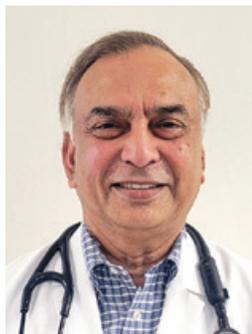
Given the economic and political climate, what is your vision for the school district's budget? How will you balance the need to support students and educators with fiscal realities? We need to approach any changes to the budget - both cuts and additions - from multiple angles. We need to listen to the advice and expertise of our administrators, listen to the concerns of our teachers and staff, look at other districts in the commonwealth for new ideas, engage with the community for feedback, and examine research from the experts in the field. In Norfolk we are all committed to ensuring our children receive the best education that we can afford. As a school committee member, I will look for ways to get the most return on our investment. I will look for ways to spend smarter - consolidating, streamlining, and re-imagining what is possible. We have faced cuts to services year after year at the schools as the cost of living in our town continues to rise. There are no perfect solutions, but my goal as a school committee member is to find the best ones. Importantly, I want to communicate clearly to the community the choices we made, specifically outlining the costs and benefits of the changes. Good schools affect all of us. Strong schools make a strong community. Our citizens have demonstrated their commitment to good schools with the allotment of tax dollars to the education of our children - the largest portion of our town's budget. This tangible vote of confidence from the community requires the utmost degree of diligence with our spending choices. As a professional experienced in finding and synthesizing information, I believe that I am well positioned to approach the issues with thoroughness and rigor.

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Meet the Town Moderator Candidates

BY GRACE ALLEN

One of the key positions on the ballot in the May 6 Town Election is Town Moderator, with two candidates competing for the three-year term. Norfolk's Town Moderator oversees Town Meeting, ensuring rules are followed, and also appoints residents to the advisory board. Jay Talerman, the current Town Moderator, faces a challenge from John Olivieri. Both candidates agreed to answer some questions for readers of Local Town Pages.



Jason R. Talerman

Jason R. Talerman

Why are you running for re-election? I am running because I feel the same as when I was first elected more than a decade ago - that it is important to give back to your community. I am running because I feel that participation in the democratic process is vital to ensuring the success of our community. I am running again because I can lend the experience I have gained in more than 30 years as a municipal lawyer to the running of Town Meeting in a clear and efficient manner.

How do you balance the need for efficient meetings with ensuring all voices are heard? Balancing Town Meeting is a difficult task and demands that you not only understand the complex web of laws and procedures that govern the Town Meeting but that you also can empathize with the voters, who may care deeply about a particular article on the warrant. During Town Meeting, I make every effort to demystify the process so that people can participate without concern over the application of some arcane rule. At the same time, Town Meeting is the Town's legislative assembly, and it is important to apply rules to maintain focus on the matter at hand and to know when the debate has come full circle and people are prepared to vote. I am sensitive to the length of time that it takes to get through Town Meeting, so I aim to ensure that we complete the Town's business in a single night, a goal I have achieved with every single meeting in my tenure.

Residents tend to pack the auditorium to vote on some key issues, after which they leave. What are some ideas to have them stick around for other warrant articles? A Moderator has

limited authority over what goes into the warrant or the order of the articles on the warrant. That is the job of the Select Board. However, I engage with the Select Board and the Town Administrator well in advance of Town Meeting and if I feel a different ordering of the articles is necessary to achieve optimum participation, I let that be known. Additionally, I spend time before Town Meeting and at Town Meeting engaging with voters so that they feel they have an important stake in the outcome. After more than a decade of running Norfolk's Town Meeting, I am gratified that people still feel comfortable speaking with me on the process so that I can become a better Moderator and Town Meeting can become a more welcoming and vibrant event.

John F. Olivieri, Jr.

Why are you running? Over the past several years, our town

has endured many changes and a lot of growth. Our residents have been asked year after year to fund large capital projects to accompany our growing town and to modernize infrastructure. Although many of these projects and expenditures were necessary and important, one pervasive theme I hear when I speak with my fellow community members is that discussion around these topics at our Town Meetings was stifled. Many view our Town Meeting as an unwelcoming place that is not open to opposing viewpoints and is quick to shut down commentary that is contradictory to what our town leaders recommend. It is incredibly important that everyone in town feels their voices are welcome and respected, especially during these pivotal years of change in Norfolk. For these reasons, I have chosen to run for Town Moderator.

How do you balance the need for efficient meetings with ensuring all voices are heard? I have been doing a lot of community outreach and what I have heard is that the ideal length of time for Town Meeting is one and a half hours. That goal may be difficult to achieve, as some topics need significant time for questions and discussion before voting. Community members should not be rushed into voting on a \$50 million+ budget. We need new ideas to balance a lengthy Town Meeting with the necessity to make sure all voices are heard. One



John Olivieri

idea would be to provide a town-wide monthly newsletter that provides short updates (e.g. meeting minutes) from each committee and board meeting. This would make staying informed more accessible than sorting through multiple two-hour long meetings each month. Another idea could be to use an online forum (e.g. Google Group or email list) where the community could submit questions and comments to a particular board or committee before Town Meeting. Simple preparation and making infor-

mation more accessible to busy residents could go a long way in making Town Meeting more efficient while encouraging more participation and attendance.

Residents tend to pack the auditorium to vote on some key issues, after which they leave. What are some ideas to have them stick around for other warrant articles? This is a difficult one, because many residents have limited time and family responsibilities. It doesn't help that Town Meeting typically falls during spring and fall sports seasons, when many families have packed schedules in the evenings during the week. There is support for Saturday meetings, so that might be an idea worth looking into. Offering some form of child care may encourage people to stay longer at Town Meeting also. I think being open to community suggestions and not being stuck in the old "this is how it's always been done" mentality could revitalize how the Town of Norfolk views Town Meeting and would encourage a more active and informed citizenry.





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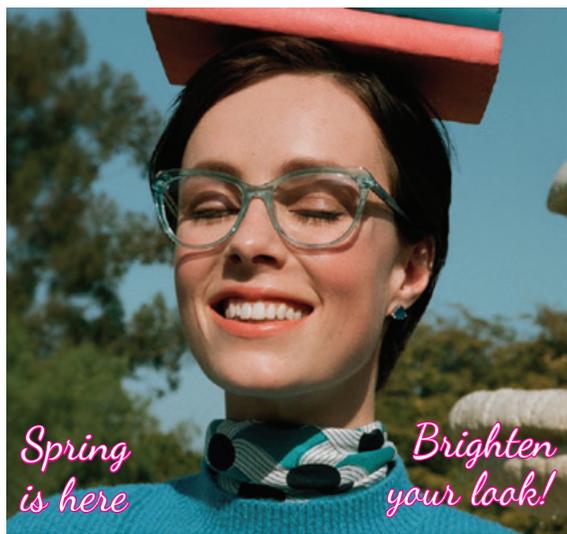




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Jay Schadler started his business in 2005. Back then, it was just him and a beat-up pickup truck taking small jobs and working nights and weekends when he could. As the years rolled on, his business grew, but his commitment to customer service never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

Business spotlight

ving eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

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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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Your Money, Your Independence

Battle of The Ages: Wealth Effect vs. Experience Spending



Glenn Brown, CFP

Saving money to invest is smart.

Planning for the future is essential.

But there's a fine line between being financially responsible and letting portfolio values drive your decisions.

One of the most subtle yet impactful traps in financial planning is the negative wealth effect.

This occurs when a sudden drop in your perceived net worth (like a dip in your 401k or home value) causes you to feel poorer, even if your actual income and financial stability haven't changed. This psychological shift often leads people to cut back on spending—not just on luxuries, but on the very experiences that bring meaning, connection, and joy to their lives.

And that's when internal and external conflicts begin.

The First To Go, But Should It?

When people react to a market downturn or economic uncertainty, one of the first things they scale back on is experience spending—travel, events, concerts, dining out, hobbies, and other non-essential but fulfilling activities.

For many, these aren't reckless purchases; they're often the things that create memories, deepen relationships, and improve well-being. Yet the negative wealth effect convinces people that now isn't the time.

"We'll go next year."

"Let's wait and host a big celebration on your ___th birthday".

"I'll take that art class when things feel more stable."

Here's the rub: markets are never stable but do come back, while specific opportunities don't.

Timing of Experiences Are Critical

Consider the family vacation to Disney, it is a different shared experience for all going when kids are 6 and 8 versus their late teens.

Or the family trip with your HS senior you're planning to do. What's their availability (and de-

sire) once in college to go on a family trip with mom and dad? That window's closing.

You might delay a trip only to find your health, schedule, or relationships have changed.

A Psychological Toll

There's a hidden cost to delaying experience spending, and it's not just about missing out on fun. It can lead to a sense of stagnation, disconnection, and even regret. As humans, we are wired for novelty, connection, and purpose. When we constantly suppress those desires due to financial fear, even when we can afford it, we shrink our lives unnecessarily.

Over time, this pattern will increase stress and negativity which creeps into your work and relationships. What's worse, these delays rarely improve your financial picture meaningfully. Even after skipping a few celebrations or delaying a vacation, it's not going to make your 401k come back.

Don't Let Perception Steal Reality

The key is recognizing that the negative wealth effect is largely psychological. Your net worth on paper will fluctuate, but if your income, emergency savings, and long-term plans are still intact, then cutting off all experience-based spending will

do more harm than good.

Ask yourself: "Is my fear based on the actual numbers—or how I feel about them?"

If it's the numbers, then review your historical net worth data and if it's close to 12-24 months ago, know this happens and will happen again. Move on.

Now if it's how you feel, then consider the sources driving your fear. If you're doom-scrolling politics, maybe it's time to put the phone down, go for a walk, listen to some music and think how to move forward with your planned experience spending.

Now if your budget doesn't have planned experience spending, that's another topic for another day.

Life Moves Pretty Fast...

To paraphrase Ferris Bueler, "Life moves pretty fast, if you stop until everything feels financially perfect, you could miss it." Spending mindfully on experiences that matter isn't

wasteful—it's often the best investment you can make. Oh Yeeeah!

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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Living Healthy

Introducing the PanOptix® Pro IOL: A Breakthrough in Cataract Surgery – and a First for Massachusetts

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

Cataract surgery has evolved dramatically over the past few decades, moving from a simple removal of the clouded natural lens to a transformative procedure that can restore full-spectrum vision. The introduction of advanced intraocular lenses (IOLs) has redefined the standard of care, allowing many patients to regain sharp vision at multiple distances without the ongoing need for glasses.

Now, a new generation of lens technology is poised to elevate outcomes even further: the Clareon® PanOptix® Pro Trifocal IOL. Alcon recently announced the official U.S. launch of this lens, with commercial availability starting in May 2025. I'm honored to share that I will

be performing the first PanOptix Pro implantation in Massachusetts, bringing this groundbreaking innovation to our community.

What Is the Clareon® PanOptix® Pro IOL?

The Clareon PanOptix Pro is Alcon's latest trifocal intraocular lens designed for use during cataract surgery. It builds on the success of the original PanOptix® IOL, which was the first trifocal lens approved by the FDA in the United States. This new version offers enhanced optics, improved light management, and a more seamless range of vision.

This lens features ENLIGHTEN® NXT optical technology, a refinement that allows for 94% light utilization — the highest reported light transmission of any trifocal IOL on the

market today. Compared to its predecessor, PanOptix Pro also boasts a 16% increase in contrast between intermediate and distance vision, delivering a sharper, more comfortable visual experience across the entire range.

Additionally, targeted diffractive refinements help redirect 50% of light previously lost to scatter toward useful focal points, greatly enhancing image clarity and reducing glare.

Why It's Better Than the Original PanOptix

The original PanOptix lens already offered excellent outcomes, allowing patients to see clearly at near (reading), intermediate (computer), and distance (driving) ranges. However, some patients experienced visual disturbances like halos or glare, es-



pecially in low-light settings. The Clareon PanOptix Pro addresses these concerns with:

- Improved contrast sensitivity
- Reduced light scatter
- More uninterrupted light distribution
- Enhanced optical image sharpness

These refinements translate to better night vision, clearer contrast, and greater patient satisfaction, especially in visually demanding environments.

Another major improvement is the Clareon AutonoMe® pre-loaded delivery system, which allows for more precise, consistent lens placement during surgery — a benefit for both surgeons and patients.

Key Benefits for Patients

- Seamless vision across distances — from reading a phone to driving at night
- Reduced dependence on glasses
- Brighter, sharper vision
- Low-light confidence, such as in restaurants or while driving at night
- Built-in UV and blue light filtering for retinal protection

Risks and Considerations

While the PanOptix Pro IOL offers impressive advantages, it's important to remember that no intraocular lens is perfect for every patient. Some individuals may still experience mild visual disturbances such as glare or halos, particularly in the first weeks after surgery. The brain

also requires time to adapt to trifocal optics, and some patients may need a short adjustment period.

The lens is not recommended for those with significant macular disease, irregular astigmatism, or certain other ocular conditions. A comprehensive preoperative consultation is critical to determine candidacy.

Alternatives to the PanOptix Pro

For patients not suited to trifocal lenses, several other IOL options exist:

- Monofocal IOLs: Provide clear vision at one distance, typically requiring glasses for near or intermediate tasks
- Multifocal IOLs: Offer multiple focal points, though with a more limited range than trifocals
- Extended Depth of Focus (EDOF) IOLs: Improve intermediate and distance vision with reduced halos, though near vision may still need support

Choosing the right IOL is highly individualized and should be guided by lifestyle, eye health, and visual expectations.

A First for Massachusetts

Bringing the Clareon PanOptix Pro to Massachusetts is a milestone I'm proud to be part of. Our practice has always embraced cutting-edge technology to enhance patient outcomes, and this next-generation lens is no exception. Performing the

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There are, however, resources to combat those allergies other than medication. Eighty percent of your immune health is located in your gut, so supporting your digestive health is essential to sustaining a healthy immune system. When your immune system is compromised, symptoms such as allergies emerge.

Tom G suffered for 10 years with seasonal allergies, complaining of congestion, runny nose, sneezing and cough until his colleague at work suggested he visit The Holistic Center at Bristol Square. We identified his specific allergies and started

Tom on a program which was geared toward rebuilding his immune system. Removing stressors to the immune system such as processed foods, preservatives, and cleaning products, as well as creating a healthy eating plan, boosted his nervous system function and added supportive supplements. Within several weeks Tom noticed a significant difference. He was less congested, his nose stopped running and the cough was greatly reduced. Tom is not worried the SPRING HAS SPRUNG as he is feeling so much better and is planning on enjoying all the outdoor activities he had to miss out on for so many years.

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EYES

continued from page 10

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The top five teaching hospitals in the nation offer bladeless laser cataract surgery — and so do we. All surgeries are performed at our state-of-the-art surgery center in Milford using advanced laser technology and premium lenses that correct for distance, near, and everything in between. Many cases of astigmatism are now fully correctable with these modern lens implants.

Our complication rates are among the lowest in the nation.

One hundred percent of surgeries are performed under topical anesthesia — meaning no needles, no shots around or behind the eye, no stitches, and no scalpels. It's truly no knife, no shots, no stitch surgery.

We have anesthesiologists present for all cases and we never perform surgery in an office space, unlike some other practices. We also do not charge additional fees for use of the operating room — another key difference. There is no longer any need to travel hours for your cataract surgery. The most advanced care is already here, close to home.

It's Time to Be Pro Panoptimistic!

The Clareon PanOptix Pro IOL is more than just an upgrade — it's a significant leap forward in cataract surgery outcomes. With its groundbreaking light utilization, refined optics, and proven range of vision, it stands to become the new gold standard for patients seeking independence from glasses and sharp, vibrant vision at all distances. Experience cataract surgery results second to none — here, closer to home, at the Milford Franklin Eye Center.

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PURCHASE

continued from page 1

ity, asking whether committing to this bond would limit future open space acquisitions. Town Manager King clarified that while the Land Acquisition Fund would be temporarily depleted, the town

could still pursue other purchases using alternative funding, such as debt exclusions. Select Board Member Bill Harrington added that the Recreation Commission opposed the purchase, arguing that the land's terrain makes it unsuitable for active recreation fields. Despite this, Open Space Committee Chair Alan Selling

emphasized the property's high conservation value, particularly due to its roadway frontage and role in protecting drinking water resources.

Select Board Member Michelle Rouse asked if there would be money for other purchases and how highly ranked the property is. Harrington confirmed that there is money in other accounts and King elaborated that there is also a reserve account for open space and recreation. In response to the property ranking question, Open Space Committee Chair Alan Selling noted that there are some properties like the Big Apple that are ranked higher, but that is due largely to its size - the Big Apple is 186 acres. Wrentham's Conserva-

tion Agent, Daryl Luce, elaborated that the scoring emphasizes drinking water resources and preserving this property would protect those resources.

In a subsequent interview, Selling noted that this a very attractive property to preserve due to its connection to existing protected open spaces, creating a potential corridor of conserved land in West Wrentham. The property is adjacent to multiple preserved areas, including Franklin State Forest (Miscoe Meadow Brooks), the US Army Corps of Engineers - Miscoe Brook Flood Storage Area, the Cherokee Hill Estates ("Blackberry Hill" Conservation Restriction), and Wrentham's Preserve at Oak Hill and Whipple Estates.

mission, emphasized Wrentham's history of acquiring open space—such as Crocker Pond, Joe's Rock, Birchwood Farm, and Wollomonopoag—and urged residents to act now. "The [Conservation] Commission agreed that it is better to purchase good open space when it is available rather than holding back in hopes that something better might come in the future," he wrote in a letter to the Select Board.

The debate highlighted a key question for voters: Should Wrentham act now to preserve this land, or allow development in hopes of a better conservation opportunity later? It's a pivotal decision for Wrentham's future. The May 12 vote will determine whether Wrentham preserves this land as open space or allows residential development. With strong arguments on both sides, residents are encouraged to attend, ask questions, and make their voices heard.

Voter Registration Details

Residents must be registered to vote to participate in the Special Town Meeting. Voter registration is ongoing at the Town Clerk's office, with a special session at the Fiske Public Library on Friday, May 2, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., according to Town Clerk Ann Fisk.

Developer Plans vs. Conservation Priorities

The discussion also touched on what would happen if the town did not purchase the land. Wrentham resident Lisa Bailey (daughter-in-law of Howard Bailey, the developer, who is also a Wrentham resident), said that the developer plans to build 12-15 luxury homes, with lot sizes exceeding two acres each. She noted that these plans would maintain the area's rural character while generating higher tax revenue from upscale properties.

However, Leo Immonen, Chair of the Conservation Com-



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A Year of New Friendships and Fur-tastic Adventures at Dogtopia

By JENNIFER RUSSO

Whether you added a new pup to your home over the holidays, are planning on doing some travel without your furry friend or have been looking for just the right place where you can leave your favorite canine companion for the day, Dogtopia understands that dogs are more than just pets, they are a part of your family.

Dogs are unique in that they are full of unconditional love, they give all of themselves to the people who care for them, expecting nothing in return except some food and attention. They bring a joy to their owners that can't really be described, so finding a caregiver for them is an important choice for any pup-parent.

Dogtopia is committed to giving these extended family members a happy, loving, and safe environment to play and learn in. With their state-of-the-art facility, impeccable safety standards, and certified animal-loving team members who are expertly trained to meet the needs of every pup, dog moms and dads can rest assured that their animals are very well taken care of and having a fabulous time.

Dogtopia, located in the Franklin Village shopping area, aims to be a haven for dogs by creating a fun and engaging environment for them while their owners are busy with work, errands, vacations, or other responsibilities.

"We want your pup to look forward to coming here. Nothing makes us happier than when one of our furry clients shows up and their tails are wagging in excitement to start their day with their friends," says Dogtopia Director Amy Hughes.

The Franklin Dogtopia location has three spacious playrooms where the dogs are placed based on their size, temperament and play style. Safety is always the first priority, and there are a number of protocols in place to ensure the pups' wellbeing, such as certified staff, compressed rubber flooring to reduce impact on the dogs' joints, soundproofing, a climate-controlled environment, and

Business spotlight

pet-friendly cleaning supplies.

Dogtopia requires a meet and greet for new clients, so that they can find the best placement for the pup, since all dogs are different. Each dog needs to be fit for an open play environment, and they conduct a thorough temperament test during this visit to better understand how the pup prefers to interact with others.

"We want to safely socialize the pups so they can release their energy, while getting lots of exercise and having fun," shares Hughes. "We have agility exercises, brain games, and more. It's an activity-filled day that will leave pups happy and fulfilled, so when they go home, they can relax and snuggle with their families."

All dogs need to be at least 12 weeks of age and must be up to date on all required vaccinations (Rabies, Canine Influenza, DHPP, and Bordetella). Dogs 7 months old and up must also be spayed/neutered. If you don't have the records on hand, Dogtopia is able to call your vet and obtain them for you.

For those who welcomed a new pet to the family this year, Amy shares some important tips:

- 1) Early socialization is extremely important so that the pup understands how to act within different environments and becomes more desensitized to distractions.
- 2) Be consistent with everything and have a routine in place that the pup can expect. A certain mealtime, play time, bedtime, potty time, etc. can make all the difference.
- 3) Be patient and calm while training. All dogs are different, and no pup is perfect. Praise for good behaviors and calmly correct those that need improvement.

"If the dog is still a puppy, we do offer a puppy pre-school that can help dogs acclimate



early and be more adaptable," she says. "Bringing any pup into Dogtopia is always a win, because they will learn to safely socialize, have fun playing in a structured way, and reinforce good behaviors that make home life even smoother."

Dogtopia promises peace of mind for dog parents, with live webcams in every playroom that can be looked at any time, and periodic report cards to keep them in the loop.

In addition to daycare, boarding and spa services are also available. Homestyle crates are set up comfortably for rest and that feeling of "home away from home" and pups can even be pampered with a bath, nail trim and blueberry facial!

Dogtopia operates with a community mindset, with events that clients can take part in with their pups, such as a craft day where pups create gifts for their human parents, themed dance parties, Mini Mondays which offer specialized play for small dogs, and more. They even recently had a Santa and pup photo op and an ugly sweater party.

In addition to helping the community by caring for local pets, the Dogtopia Foundation also comes together to raise money for important causes, such as service dogs for Veterans. Stay tuned to learn how to help them with these efforts.

Does your pup need a place for socialization, exercise, love, and endless fun? **Take advantage of a special, limited time offer – for just \$99 a week, your pup can enjoy unlimited daycare visits.** This deal won't last long, so grab it while it's available!



Learn more about Dogtopia of Franklin Village and their amazing services by visiting <https://www.dogtopia.com/massachusetts-franklin-village/> or check out their Instagram at @DogtopiaFranklinVillage.

Check out our May Events!

Puppy Pre-School * Every Saturday

Welcome to Puppy Preschool! Is your pup ready to learn, play, and grow? Enroll them in our Puppy Preschool and set them up for success!

- Socialization with fellow puppies
- Fun games and activities to boost confidence
- Puppy playtime and bonding with other furry friends

Friday, May 2 • Birthday/Gotcha Day

Celebrate our May dogs with a gotcha/birthday party!

Sunday, May 4 • Star Wars Day

In a daycare not so far away, the force is strong with our pups as they train their Jedi skills through play!

Sunday, May 11 • Mother's Day

Celebrate the special dog mom in your life with a personalized craft from her BFFF! (We'll be crafting from 5/7-5/11 so get her a \$5 customized photo before her big day)

Wednesday, May 14 • Wellness Wednesday

We focus on wellness to keep our pups happy & healthy!

Friday, May 16 • Foundation Friday

Treat your pup to 2 pieces of turkey bacon at lunchtime with a \$5 donation to the Foundation.

Monday, May 19 • Mini Monday

This is a really BIG deal for our WEE dogs.

Wednesday, May 21 • Cosmic Dog Prom

With stellar décor, music, & a photo shoot, we promise pups a good time! Dress to impress & dance your best!

Thursday, May 29 • Graduation

We're so proud of all our pups for being their awesome selves. Celebrate all they've learned & done in daycare!

Norfolk's Role in the American Revolution

On Saturday, April 19, Massachusetts was bustling with events as the state commemorated the 250th anniversary of the Battles of Lexington and Concord. Area towns, including Norfolk, also played a part in that historic day many years ago.

As tensions between the American colonies and the British crown reached their peak, Norfolk's residents were quick to respond to the call for action, providing soldiers and resources to aid the colonial cause.

In 1775, as war loomed on the horizon, the Massachusetts Provincial Congress convened in Cambridge, and the General Court was held in Concord. These gatherings were critical in organizing the defense of the colonies and storing ammunition, much of which the British soldiers in Boston sought to seize. Local communities, including Norfolk, became crucial in the effort to resist British advances.

One of the more significant moments in Norfolk's Revolutionary history occurred on the morning of April 19, 1775. As British troops began their march

to Lexington, a messenger came through Walpole, a neighboring town, bringing the alarming news that the Redcoats were on the move. A group of 157 men from South Walpole, including many from Norfolk, quickly mobilized and headed toward Concord, though they arrived too late to engage in the famous battles that day. This group represented about one-fifth of the able male population of the town, illustrating the level of commitment to the cause.

In addition to providing men for the militia, Norfolk's residents also contributed by participating in local military regiments. Among the notable Norfolk men who served in the Revolutionary War were Captain Oliver Pond's Regiment, Captain Benjamin Hawes' Company, and Captain Lemuel Kollock's Company. Key figures from Norfolk and its surrounding areas included Hezekiah Ware, James Blake, Daniel Ware, and Aaron Clark Fales, a Walpole native whose family history tied the region together. Other notable soldiers were John Jepson, who, though born in Bos-



A banner commemorating Norfolk's role in the events of April 19, 1775, was hung in the town center by the Norfolk Historical Commission last month.

ton, became a resident of Norfolk after marrying and raising children there, adding his legacy to the town's involvement in the revolution.

These early military efforts and the active participation of Norfolk's residents helped lay the foundation for the resistance that would eventually lead to the formation of the United States. The sacrifices of these local heroes, from marching to distant battlefields to guarding critical supplies, demonstrated Norfolk's deep commitment to the cause of American independence.

As the Revolution progressed, Norfolk, like many towns in the region, continued to send troops and resources, ensuring its place in the history of the American fight for liberty. The men and women of Norfolk played a key role not just in the military, but in the collective resistance that would shape the future of the nation.

Material used in this article is taken from the "History of Norfolk" by Bertha Fales.

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Clergy Corner

New Hope

Another Easter Past... So What?

BY PASTOR KYLE DEGAGNE
EMMANUEL BAPTIST CHURCH,
NORFOLK

When I was a boy, my grandmother lived in an in-law apartment adjacent to our home. I lived in that house in Somerset, MA for most of my childhood. My sister and I enjoyed many holidays with our mom and "Gram." My mother went through a divorce when I was only 4 years old and remarried when I was 9. For about 5 years I lived with three women! Gram was an excellent cook, so you might imagine that the holidays were filled with a lot of great smells and wonderful memories. Gram died when she was only 67. I was 22. She had a rare disease called scleroderma that eventually led to cancer in her esophagus. I grieve that she was not able to meet my wife and 3

children. She would have loved to give them Easter baskets like she did every year for me and my sister.

I can see the basket clearly in my mind. It was some sort of white chicken with a carrot nose and a pink hat. She filled it with candy every year, but as I turned 5 or 6, I appreciated those sweet treasures more and more. White chocolate bunnies (which were not my favorite), jellybeans, Reese's Pieces carrots, and Cadbury Easter Eggs spilled over the side of the basket that seemed just a bit too small. As my Gram became increasingly sick, she could no longer eat and received her nutrition through a PEG tube in her stomach. One night, shortly before she died, we needed to call an ambulance for her in the middle of the night. It was near Halloween. As the paramedics wheeled her out of the front door, her fragile arm reached out and grabbed the jam, stopping the paramedic. She looked back at me and said, "Kyle, the Halloween candy is in the cupboard." I was 22! She bought me candy 'til her dying day.



Another Easter has passed... So what? Easter candy, baskets, and egg hunts are all good fun of course, but Easter is about so much more than that. It's the day that Christians all over the world, for 2000 years, have celebrated the resurrected Christ. If Jesus is alive, then that means we don't have to be afraid of sickness. We don't have to be afraid of cancer. We don't have to be afraid of loneliness. We don't have to be afraid of failure or guilt. We don't have to be afraid of anything! Jesus told a woman named Martha, at the death of her brother,

"...I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me

will live, even though they die; ²⁶ and whoever lives by believing in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11^{25b-26})

I will see Gram again! But heaven isn't heaven because Gram is there. Heaven is heaven because God's only begotten

Son, Jesus, our life and light, is there. Because Jesus is alive, there is hope. Come and get Him!

An occasional column written by local clergy. The views expressed in the column do not necessarily represent the views of the publisher.




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FREE PRESS

Local Songwriter Wins Top Honor for Breakout Single

King Philip Alum's Award-Winning Track Leads the Way on New Album

BY GRACE ALLEN

Tom Abbott is making his mark in the local and regional music scene. The Wrentham native won Best Song in the Rock/Alt category at the New England Songwriters Competition for his track "Time (Where You Going)." The award-winning song is featured on his newly released album "Buried Treasure Lost Forever."

"I've been focused a lot on songwriting specifically for the past few years," said Abbott, a 2016 graduate of King Philip Regional High School. "To get an award for that skill in particular definitely meant a lot."

Abbott, who studied at the New England Conservatory of Music after graduating from King Philip, says music has always been part of his life. "My parents bought me a guitar when I was 10 or 11, and I picked it up really quickly," he recalled. "I'd tried saxophone, drums, piano, but nothing really clicked until I found guitar. That came much more naturally to me."

That early connection evolved into a passion for performance and songwriting. At King Philip, Abbott was a familiar face in the school's music and theater programs, participating in choir, jazz band, and drama club. He studied under teachers Joshua Woll-off and Ashley Nelson-Oneschuk and capped off his high school music journey by earning a spot in the prestigious All-State Choir his senior year.

Though he took music classes at KP, Abbott's serious study took place outside of school, including voice and guitar lessons. "By the time I was 12 or 13, I remember telling my parents I didn't want to go to college—I just wanted to do music," he laughed. "They told me there were music colleges, and I said, 'Oh great, I'll just do that then.'"

Now a full-time musician, Abbott spends his weekends performing at local bars and breweries, often playing a mix of cover songs and originals in solo acoustic sets. "It's mostly just me and my guitar," he said.



King Philip grad Tom Abbott is achieving success as a singer/songwriter.

"But the album includes a full band—friends from college and the Rhode Island music scene came together to help record it."

Abbott describes his sound as part of a genre known as folk punk or anti-folk sonic revival. "It's folk music but with a much harsher edge," he explained. "It's not traditional country or Appalachian folk. It's rougher around the edges. I definitely lean more

toward the rock side of that genre."

Lyrically, Abbott's work is deeply personal. "Music has always been therapeutic for me," he said. "I feel more comfortable talking about my emotional state through performance—it gives me a barrier between how I feel and how I express it."

Abbott's music is already garnering kudos from reviewers.

"The sophistication of his arrangements point to his schooling by New England Conservatory teachers..." — Pitch Perfect

"The singer-songwriter has crafted a record that shines with folk-rock splendor and flashes its highlights of blues, punk, and lo-fi production throughout fourteen riveting tracks. The

New England artist gifts something to each listener..." The Deli Magazine

As for aspiring musicians looking to follow in his footsteps, Abbott offers simple but solid advice: find your people.

"If you really want to pursue music, going to places where music is happening is probably the best thing you can do," he said. "Surrounding yourself with other musicians is going to push you and open so many more doors than trying to do it all yourself."

Looking ahead, Abbott plans to shift gears with his next project, embracing a more stripped-down, acoustic style. "I want to lean a lot more into the folk side of what I do, make it very minimal—just me and the guitar," he said. "But I've got plenty more songs still to write."

Want to catch a performance? Locally, Abbott will be at Union Straw in Foxboro on May 19 at 6:30 p.m. and on June 1 at 11:30 a.m. He'll also be performing at WORMTOWN Brewery at Patriot Place on June 6 at 6 p.m. Visit tomabbottmusic.com for more information.

Abbott's music, including "Time (Where You Going)," is available on major streaming platforms. He can be reached for bookings or inquiries at tomabbottmusic@gmail.com.

Wrentham Cultural Council Seeks New Members

The Wrentham Cultural Council is looking for people interested in promoting the arts and cultural events in the town.

The main function of the Council is to review grant applications for local arts and humanities programs. The group works under the guidance of the Mass Cultural Council. In addition, there are opportunities to volunteer for programs and exhibits at the Old Fiske Museum.

The Cultural Council meets on the second Tuesday of the month from September to June at the Old Fiske Museum or on Zoom.

Interested in joining the Cultural Council to help keep the arts alive in Wrentham? Send an email to Jean.matte6@gmail.com.

Information on volunteering for town committees can be found at <http://wrentham.ma.us/wrentham-ma-town/volunteering>.

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Q & A With Healthy KP: Diversion Programs

What is a diversion program?

A diversion program is an alternative to traditional disciplinary actions like suspension or expulsion for students who receive a chemical offense at school. These programs are designed to address the root causes of chemical or substance use rather than just administering punishment. Instead of facing immediate punishment, students participate in counseling, education and rehabilitation programs. The goal is to help students understand the consequences of their actions and prevent future incidents, leading to personal growth and better decision-making.

Why do schools offer diversion programs instead of just disciplining students?

In 2022, legislation passed in Massachusetts which called upon public schools to use alternatives to suspension as a first-line response to rule violations. The measure specifically requires consequences that “re-engage the students in

the learning process.” A diversion program allows students to address behavioral issues in a more constructive way than traditional suspension. Research shows that students who are suspended are nearly three times more likely to end up in the criminal justice system. By focusing on education and prevention, these programs aim to reduce the likelihood of future offenses and help students understand the harmful effects of substances, building healthier habits and coping mechanisms.

Does King Philip High School offer a diversion program?

Yes, KPRHS offers a diversion program as a possible alternative to traditional disciplinary actions for chemical offenses. Following an offense, students receive the option of enrolling in a structured diversion pro-

gram rather than receiving a school suspension. Occasionally, the diversion program is imple-

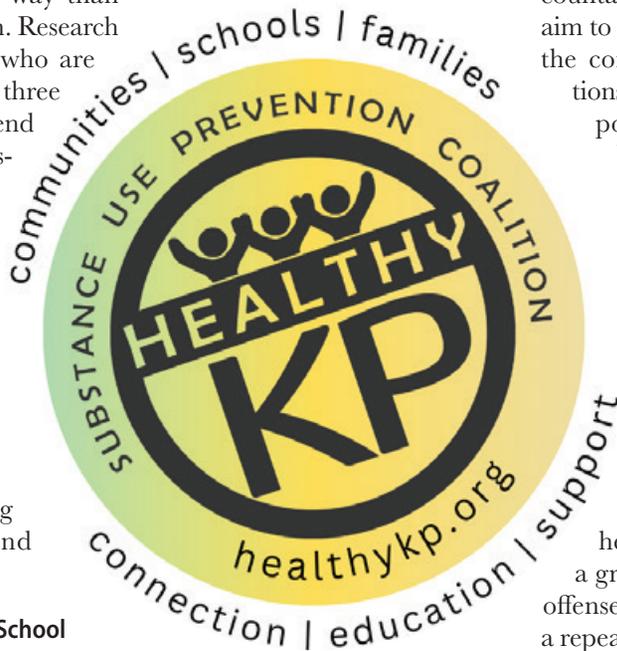
mented alongside a suspension to offer additional support to the student. This program is designed to educate students about the risks associated with substance use while providing them

with the tools and resources they need to make healthier choices. By focusing on prevention, accountability and education, we aim to help students understand the consequences of their actions and guide them toward positive decision-making. With the support of our trained counselor team, students may join our in-school program “iDECIDE” following an offense related to nicotine or alcohol (or if they are actively seeking support.) This four-session program is designed to empower students to engage in healthy decision making in a group setting. Following an offense related to marijuana or a repeated offense, students may be referred to “Up in Smoke,” a three-day group program offered at no cost through the SAFE Coalition of Franklin. This unique program addresses the impact of substance use on the body and brain, helps stu-

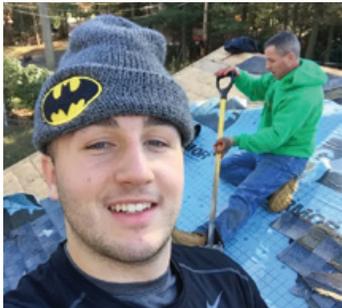
dents understand why they are using, and builds systems of stress management.

For more information about prevention support and resources for parents, visit healthykp.org. Visit safecoalitionma.org to learn more about SAFE’s “Up in Smoke” diversion program.

Please email your questions to info@healthykp.org. Your questions will remain confidential and anonymous. Formed in 2018, Healthy KP is a community-based group of volunteers from the tri-town communities working together to prevent and reduce the use of alcohol, drugs and tobacco products among our youth. In December of 2020, Healthy KP was awarded a Drug-Free Communities (DFC) grant allowing the coalition to strengthen community collaboration and engagement to prevent and reduce substance use among youth. By implementing evidence-based prevention programs, strengthening partnerships and building connections through community events, Healthy KP has made progress in reducing rates of youth use.



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Federal Funding Cuts and Policy Shifts: Local Impacts on Libraries, Schools, and Police

By JOE STEWART

Recent federal policy changes, including the elimination of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and shifts in education and immigration enforcement, have raised concerns about trickle-down effects on local institutions. Interviews with library directors, school administrators, and law enforcement reveal varying degrees of impact—from immediate cuts to library services to a “wait-and-see” approach in education and policing.

Libraries: Statewide Services Hit Hardest

Federal funding for libraries, channeled through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC), is at risk following the dissolution of the IMLS. The MBLC had received \$3.6 million in federal grants supporting statewide services, including digital resources, in-

terlibrary loans, and accessibility programs.

“Federal funds support statewide services that save money. They fund the virtual catalog that gives everyone the ability to borrow materials from libraries throughout the Commonwealth,” said MBLC Director Maureen Amyot. “They support research databases. Over 60% of database usage comes from schools. Close to two million eBooks were borrowed through a platform that is federally funded.”

Wrentham’s Fiske Public Library and Norfolk Public Library rely minimally on federal funds for operations, but both directors—Kim Shipala and Sarah Ward—warned that rural libraries are likely to suffer more from these cuts.

“Suburban libraries like ours will feel it most in services like Libby and interlibrary loans,” Shipala said. Ward added, “Rural libraries often depend on

federal aid as part of their operating budgets—they’ll struggle more.”

The MBLC has already slashed programs, including grants for accessibility training, continuing education, and services for the Department of Corrections, including a manga collection (manga is an artistic style often used in Japanese comics) serving correctional facilities.

King Philip Schools: Steady for Now

Federal funding makes up about 10% of the King Philip Regional School District’s budget, primarily supporting low-income and special education students. Superintendent Dr. Rich Drolet said recent federal policy shifts—such as the end of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) initiatives and heightened immigration enforcement—have not yet altered local practices.

“We learned from COVID not to react immediately,” Drolet said. “We wait for state guidance.”

Last summer, advocacy secured additional state funding for newcomer students, with Norfolk receiving about \$250,000 for facilities and KP gaining about \$90,000 for an additional teacher. Drolet expects minimal disruption, as core federal education funding is Congressionally mandated.

“If impacts emerge, we’ll alert the community,” he said. “So far, nothing has changed.”

Wrentham Police: Grants for Gear, Not Operations

The Wrentham Police Department uses federal grants for equipment, not day-to-day operations. Chief Bill McGrath cited ballistic vests and traffic enforcement as past grant successes, though no applications have been submitted this year.

Competitive federal programs, like the COPS Hiring Program, offer temporary salary support—but towns must cover costs after funding expires. McGrath has avoided hiring grants because sustaining those positions long-term is tough.

On immigration enforcement, procedures remain unchanged. Names are automatically checked against ICE databases during stops, but McGrath emphasized that local criminal processes take precedence. Only after release could ICE intervene—if agents are present.

Reflecting on policing trends for his 25+ year career, McGrath praised de-escalation training and mental health integration. “Policy swings like a pendulum, but good reforms stick,” he said. “For now, we follow the law—and the law hasn’t changed.”

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Tame the Mane—We’ve Got The Secret to Smooth Summer Hair

BY GINA WOELFEL

Has your frizzy hair gone rogue with a mind of its own? Don't sweat it! When the humidity hits, **The Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment** will have you smooth sailing all summer long.

Frizz and lack of definition are common struggles, especially in the summer heat for people with curly, wavy and textured hair. But now, you can say “Buh-bye” to frizz and hello to the most smooth, defined curls with the Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment, **available at b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio in Medway, MA.** “My curls have never looked this good—soft, defined, and totally frizz-free,” says one happy b.LUXE client, Linda Picard. “It’s a total game-changer for summer.

Beach days and warm summer nights are calling—and we’re here to help you look your best—effortlessly. Managing frizzy hair can feel like a full-time job, but what if we told you that you could say goodbye to frizz without losing your hair’s natural texture or integrity? Imagine a summer where your hair stays smooth and hydrated—even in the muggy heat. We’re talking about a **quick, easy, and effective solution** for everyone—from those with tough curls to fine, damaged hair.

Ready to learn more? Let’s dive into why the Saphira Treatment is the must-have summer service for you!

Frizz-Free Hair Without the Fuss

The magic behind this treatment is in the ingredients! Its mineral-based DeFrizz technology is composed of **26 Dead Sea Minerals, Lily Flower and Essential Oils.** These ingredients work together to soothe and refresh your scalp, promoting a healthy foundation for your hair. The treatment also includes **hyaluronic acid**, which is a humectant that helps seal in moisture to keep your hair hydrated, preventing dryness and minimizing frizz. It’s like a spa day for your hair!

And did we mention the dia-

mond powder? We’re talking the fancy stuff here, folks—because diamonds are a girl’s best friend, right? The Saphira Mineral Treatment infuses your hair with **diamond powder** for an extra dose of luxe, leaving it smoother, more radiant, and shining with a healthy, head-turning glow.

The Difference is in the Texture

Love your waves, curls and coils? Keep them! Not to be confused with traditional smoothing or keratin treatments that relax and straighten the hair. The Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment retains your natural texture while eliminating frizz, healing the hair and adding strength. A thermodynamic process occurs when the treatment is applied. One of the key ingredients, **Hyaluronic Acid** is a humectant which hydrates the hair and seals in moisture, eliminating protein bonds that create frizz. This new technology is unlike anything else on the market.

Quick, No-Hassle Treatment

One of the best things about the Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment is how easy and fast it is—no hours spent in the salon or sitting under a hooded dryer. In fact, this treatment can be done in under **60 minutes**, with **no processing time required.** So, you can get an effortless, frizz-free look during your lunch break

and be ready to take on the rest of your day! Plus, it’s **formulated without harsh chemicals**, so no strong smells or waiting for the treatment to “process.” Another bonus! Air drying and blowouts are so much easier! By reducing frizz, your curls and waves dry smoother and sleeker.

Lasting Results That Will Keep You Frizz-Free for Months

Now, let’s talk about longevity. After just one treatment, the Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment will leave your hair **smooth, hydrated, and frizz-free for up to five months.** That means you can enjoy beautiful hair all summer long!

The Best Part? It Works on All Hair Types.

Tough curls, damaged strands, fine hair—you name it, this treatment’s got it covered. It’s the go-to solution for anyone looking to keep their hair healthy, shiny, and frizz-free.

Book Your Saphira Mineral DeFrizz Treatment Today!

Go on—you deserve it! Skip the daily frizz battle and spend more time enjoying your summer. The weather’s heating up, and it’s the perfect time to level up your hair game. With the Saphira Treatment, you can finally say goodbye to frizz and hello to smooth, shiny hair—



SAPHIRA MINERAL DEFRIZZ SMOOTHING TREATMENT

- All natural
- No processing time
- No fumes
- No final rinse
- Heals and repairs
- Seals and improves color
- Fresh clean smell
- Uses low heat
- Lasts up to five months



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Norfolk's 16th Annual Clean and Green Town-wide Cleanup – Thank You!

To the Editor:

The Norfolk Grange would like to thank all who helped make Norfolk's recent 16th Annual Clean and Green event happen this year. Despite the challenging weather (cold, raw, rainy and windy), we had a good turnout in the celebration of Earth Day and the town-wide cleanup which took place on Saturday, April 12. Participants collected wet litter from the streets and public places in Norfolk and brought their collections of trash and recycling to the parking lot of the historical Grange Hall. Located there was a large dumpster provided by the Town for trash disposal as well as a dumpster provided by E. L. Harvey of Westborough for single-stream recycling. Grange members sorted the trash for recycling as well as redeemables which were donated to the King

Phillip Music Association's bottle and can redemption trailer at the Norfolk Transfer Station. Also, participants received volunteer recognition certificates for their community service.

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

*Sincerely,
The Norfolk Grange*

Guest Column

Liberty's Lantern

By G. GREGORY TOOKER

Who will forget American history's recording of Paul Revere's pivotal ride westward on the eve of April 19, 1775? The British Redcoats were preparing to march toward Lexington and then Concord, to capture arms reportedly in the hands of the colonists. Revere was on a mission to warn of their arrival. As renowned poet, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, would later write, "One if by land, two if by sea," referring to signal lanterns to be hung in the steeple of the Old North Church. As the lanterns became visible, Revere, after crossing the Charles, mounted his steed and galloped west. With the help of fellow riders, the message was delivered in

time for the colonists to prepare their defense. What happened thereafter is common knowledge to us all; the birth of American independence was at hand.

Recently, your writer had the privilege of attending a ceremony in front of the nationally acclaimed Concord Museum, dedicating a beautifully crafted large-scale recreation of the famous Old North Church lantern. Standing over ten feet tall, the structure is perfect in detail, scaled to the original which is on display in the museum. It was created by artist Bill Crosby of Crosby Design with the strong support of the Concord townspeople and Richard Fahlander of Art for All, who helped spearhead the project and served as

master of ceremonies at its dedication and lighting.

At a time when many of us feel that American democracy is tattered and teetering, the surge of pride that pulsed through the arteries of the onlookers was palpable. The crowd roared with joy and approval as 17 bicyclists following the colonial riders' route arrived from Boston, carrying a symbolic torch with which to ignite the giant replica. The ceremony was indeed inspiring, providing clear evidence that democracy and the liberty, equality and freedom it still inspires in most of us is alive and well.

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

Save the Date for Norfolk Town Meeting

Norfolk will hold its annual Town Meeting on Wednesday, May 14 at King Philip Middle School, 18 King St. The meeting will start at 7 p.m.

More information, as well as the warrant, is available on the town's website at <https://tinyurl.com/39jpyu2a>

First Universalist Society in Franklin Renewed as Welcoming Congregation

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is pleased to announce it has received its annual renewal from the Unitarian Universalist Association as a Welcoming Congregation.

In 1993, FUSF voted to become a Welcoming Congregation and has maintained its status ever since. This means FUSF works hard to make sure lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, etc. people are accepted as full members of the faith community. Being welcoming also means striving for racial inclusion and creating spaces that honor all identities, backgrounds and experiences.

To receive designation as a Welcoming Congregation, FUSF must complete the "5 Practices of Welcome Renewal" each year. This past year, FUSF completed these requirements by conducting two LGBTIA+ services, hosting a workshop, participating in Franklin's Celebrate with Pride Day, and recognizing days of observance, among



FUSF Welcoming Congregation team members.

other activities.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin. Reverend Beverly Waring

is the Interim Minister. For more information about FUSF, visit fusf.org, send an email to info@fusf.org, or call 508-528-5348.

John Gorka to Perform at Circle of Friends Coffeehouse

John Gorka returns to the Circle of Friends Coffeehouse on Saturday, May 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Gorka is perhaps the quintessential iconic singer-songwriter of the 80's folk scene. Hailing from New Jersey, but forged in the Greenwich Village Fast Folk scene, he honed his craft and persona into an unmistakable image.

Many well-known artists have recorded and/or performed John Gorka songs, including Mary Chapin Carpenter, Nanci Griffith, Mary Black and Maura O'Connell. John has graced the stage of Austin City Limits, Mountain Stage, etown and has appeared on CNN.

The Circle of Friends Coffeehouse is a non-profit organi-



zation affiliated with Franklin's First Universalist Society. Concerts are presented in a smoke free and alcohol-free environment at the Society's handicapped accessible Meetinghouse, 262 Chestnut St. in Franklin, and begin at 7:30 p.m.; doors open at 7 p.m. Beverages and gourmet desserts will be available. Please visit <http://www.circlefolk.org/> to purchase tickets or for more information.

Q&A with a Former Harvard Academic Advisor: Insights for College-Bound Students

In April 2022, *College 101* began contributing monthly articles to the *Local Town Pages*. Shortly after my first piece appeared, I received a message from Bob Doyle, a local resident and longtime Harvard University employee, who told me he enjoyed reading my work—I was so honored! We’ve been pen pals ever since. Bob held many roles at Harvard, but the one I find most fascinating is that of Academic Advisor. We finally met in person, and I had the opportunity to interview him about a topic close to both our hearts: the importance of first-year college students connecting with their academic advisor.

What is the Role of an Academic Advisor?

- An advisor helps students navigate both academic choices and personal development. The greater role is not answering the students’ questions, but guiding students to discover answers on their own—skills that last beyond college.
- Students should seek the guidance of more than just their official advisor - finding an “unofficial” advisor will provide different and valuable perspectives, and maybe even a better fit.
- Most first-year classmates are experiencing college for the first time, so build a network that also includes upperclassmen and grad students.
- A good advisor should be approachable, open, and provide opportunities for students to discuss their thoughts, courses, and plans.
- “Understand the relationship between your area of expertise and the rest of the world” - your expertise could fit into so many different areas. An advisor can help the student think freely.

What Challenges Do First-Year Students Face, And How Can an Advisor Help?

- The initial challenge is adjusting to unfamiliarity—new people, roommates,

spaces, expectations. Students will need to learn to self-advocate for themselves and be responsible for their schedule, tasks, and life. Join activities to meet people and feel grounded.

- Advisors should recognize the signs of struggle, even when a student won’t admit it. It’s their job to listen and gently offer suggestions—not directives.
- Bob would often tell his first year students they will learn the alphabet, “You already know the letters A and B. You may learn C and D in your first semester.” Students can dwell on disappointment—or figure out what to do next. Talk to their professor or TA.

How Should Students Approach Course Selection?

- Explore. Most colleges allow students to drop/add courses within a certain time period - it is intentional to help students determine course fit. Think of the first few days of a new semester as a shopping period where students attend courses that they are curious about and then make changes.
- Students should not commit to a major until they have explored their interests and have taken a course(s) in their potential major. Most schools offer a “minor” which allows a student to balance two areas of interests.
- Approximately 50% of students change their field of study.
- A good rule of thumb in the 1st year is to take 1 general-ed course, a couple of courses in the prospective major, and 1 course of interest per semester.

How Can Students Build Relationships With Professors and Advisors?

- Go to office hours. Ask questions. Follow up after class. This will help a student expand their knowledge of the fields they are interested in.

- At large schools, students may meet with grad students. That’s still valuable.
- Aim to build at least one strong professor relationship per year. Eventually letters of recommendation will be needed, and they can only write well about students they truly know.

What Misconceptions Exist About a Liberal Arts Education?

- Many students treat college like a job pipeline. But the original goal of college was to develop critical thinking and understand diverse disciplines.
- Don’t limit yourself to one field. Take courses that connect your major to the broader world.
- For example, a chemistry student took “The Science of Cooking,” expecting to cook. He didn’t—but he learned the science behind heat and he performed re-



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

search for his dissertation on how to reverse microwave heating.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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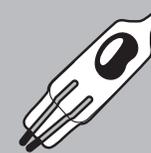
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Sports

KP's Kilroy: 3-sport Captain a Classy Competitor

BY KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Tommy Kilroy is a dynamic ambassador for his school and his community.

A senior at King Philip Regional, Kilroy is a three-sport captain, a two-sport Hockomock League all-star, a two-time National Honor Society student (4.01 GPA), an active contributor in the TOPS Youth Soccer Program (Norfolk, Wrentham and Plainville) where he assisted special needs kids, and he's still active in KP's peer-mentoring and tutoring programs.

The 18-year-old Norfolk native is also a state champion. He was a safety and a receiver in football, helping the Warriors win a state championship in 2023 when KP dominated Marshfield, 42-14, in the Division 2 Super Bowl.

Now competing in lacrosse, the 6-foot-3, 200-pound Kilroy is wrapping up his 10th varsity season (3 in football, 4 in basketball and 3 in lacrosse) and soon will be enrolling at Wesleyan where he plans to major in economics and compete in football.

Playing midfield in lacrosse, Kilroy isn't shy about expressing his team goals — a state crown and a Kelly-Rex Division title are the priorities.

"We want to qualify for the playoffs, go on a deep run and battle for a state championship," he said. "We finished third in the Kelly-Rex Division last year but we've got the talent to win both the league and state titles. Our team has experience, we're skilled, have a high lacrosse IQ, we're instinctive and athletic."

KP's lacrosse team hasn't advanced deep in tourney action during Kilroy's two previous seasons. As a sophomore, he and the Warriors lost in the opening round to Milton and last year KP lost in the second round to Billerica. Kilroy had 6 goals and 22 assists as a sophomore and last year he scored 12 goals and had 11 assists.

Kilroy's personal goal is to be a Hockomock League all-star in lacrosse, which would make him a three-sport all-star.

Coach Hal Bean has high praise for Kilroy, calling him

"the complete package."

"Tommy is durable, fast and smart," Bean emphasized. "His lacrosse IQ is very high, he's got amazing ability and has great instincts. A fast learner, he understands offensive and defensive schemes, is excellent in transition, and he's agile and strong. He's a captain who leads by example, who communicates well and is supportive of his teammates."

KP lost only five seniors from last year's 12-6 squad and has 11 experienced returnees. Kilroy knows his teammates will commit to a strong work ethic and he's sure the Warriors' other four captains will be major contributors. They include senior Pat Weiblen (attack) and juniors Mason Thompson (attack), Brodie McDonald (defense) and Finn Cunningham (goalie).

"All four captains lead by example, they're vocal and communicate well, and they're supportive," Kilroy offered. "The group is talented, well-skilled and they're great to be with on and off the field."

Kilroy also is effusive in assessing his coach's approach. "Coach Bean is passionate about lacrosse and has a great sense of the game," Kilroy noted. He adjusts quickly, is a very good motivator and he pushes us to do our best."

Relying on a style that's aggressive, Kilroy can also lower the temperature and compete with finesse. "I like to use my size as an advantage and play with a great sense of awareness," he said. "My favorite situation in the midfield is forcing a turnover. It's all about hustle and grinding it out."

Kilroy certainly has been a major factor in the early part of KP's schedule. At Local Town Pages deadline, he had 2 goals and 13 assists, and the Warriors had a 4-1 record. "Tommy has been fantastic," Bean said. "He's so valuable and he knows every facet of being a midfielder."

Kilroy chose Wesleyan over



Tommy Kilroy's High lacrosse IQ makes him a top-notch midfielder.



Tommy Kilroy played safety in football and had nine career interceptions.

Middlebury, Assumption and Colby. Calling Wesleyan's football staff "very personable," he said that head coach Don DiCenzo "believes I could get playing time at safety." Kilroy may consider playing lacrosse, too, if he can maintain high standards on the academic front.

Kilroy knows the jump from high school football to the college game is difficult but is confident the transition will be smooth. "It's a big jump and it's going to take dedication and commitment to be successful," he said, "but I think I'll be okay."

Kilroy got some good vibes about Wesleyan when he got a call from an unexpected source — former Franklin High star Jack Nally who played football and baseball at Wesleyan and now is the head coach of baseball at Millis High.

"He talked about how a Hockomock League guy can thrive in the NESCAC (New England Small College Athletic Conference)," Kilroy recalled. "He gave me hope about my transition and told me about the expectations. He also reinforced my decision to go to Wesleyan."

Kilroy's competitive philosophy is all about winning, reaching one's potential and having fun. "Winning is fun and having fun comes from winning," he said. "Reaching your potential also helps an athlete to win. You need all three to have success."

Valuable life lessons can be learned from athletics and Kilroy has respect for what's

transpired in his three-sport experience. "I've learned how to overcome adversity, how to be resilient, how to lead and be a quality teammate, and how to accept responsibility and be accountable," he said. "Being a captain in three sports has been enjoyable. I like having responsibilities and being the guy that teammates respect."

Kilroy's ability has generated plenty of respect in all three sports. In football, he had nine career interceptions, two of which were picks for TDs. His senior year included 20 receptions for 300 yards. His best game was a 41-7 triumph over Milford last year when he had a pick-6, seven tackles (4 for losses) and three receptions for 45 yards.

In basketball, where he was a two-time captain, he averaged 14.1 points and 8.2 rebounds his senior year. His best game was an 80-54 win over Everett this year when he scored 23 points and had 15 rebounds.

His best games in lacrosse were wins over Stoughton and Hopkinton. He scored four goals and had two assists against Stoughton, and against Hopkinton he had a goal and an assist. "What was refreshing against Hopkinton was defending and shutting down their star attackman, Logan DelPonte, who was a Division 1 college commit," Kilroy noted. "I shut him down after his first goal."

Kilroy's top KP sports moment was winning the Super Bowl his junior year. "That was my most thrilling event," he

said. "I had a good day at safety against Marshfield. It was a great team effort and will always be the main topic when teammates talk about the past."

Calling his parents (Tish and Rob) role models, he's thankful for all their sacrifices. "They've attended so many of my games, they're unselfish and also inspiring and encouraging," said Kilroy who has two younger sisters.

Kilroy, like his parents, has also been unselfish, encouraging and inspiring in three athletic venues, in the academic arena and in his community.

Much has been accomplished and Kilroy appreciates all the opportunities he's had during the last four years.

"Playing for the Warriors has provided memories I will forever cherish and friendships that will last a lifetime," he said. "KP is a special place where everyone supports one another. The community has been remarkable with passionate crowds at every game. As my career begins to wrap up, I want to thank those who helped me achieve so much — my family, friends, classmates, coaches, teachers, and this community. Their guidance has turned me into the man I am today. When a new chapter begins at Wesleyan, I'll never forget how honored I was to represent the Green and Gold. There's no other school I would rather be associated with."

Tommy Kilroy gets high marks as a role model and for being a top-notch ambassador for KP's school district.

Keep Wrentham Beautiful Hosts Successful Spring Cleanup



From left, the KWB team: Tim Schey, Krista Andberg, Lisa Masciarelli, Laura Beltis, Steve King, and Julie Garland. Not pictured: Caron Ketchum.

By JOE STEWART

Despite chilly and wet conditions, more than 60 dedicated volunteers came out last month to participate in Keep Wrentham Beautiful's (KWB) annual spring cleanup, collecting over 70 bags of roadside litter from across town.

The event, traditionally held around Earth Day (April 22), took place this year on Saturday and Sunday, April 12-13. Volunteers braved the rain to pick up trash along Wrentham's streets, with single-use plastics—particularly miniature alcohol bottles and drink containers—making up the majority of the waste.

"We're so grateful to everyone who came out to help," said Stephan King, KWB co-chair. "Even in tough weather, our community showed up to make a difference."

King and fellow co-chair Laura Beltis took over leadership of KWB in 2024 after founder Donna Nye, who had organized

cleanups for years, moved away from Wrentham. The group focuses on litter control and fostering community involvement, emphasizing strength in numbers, and that collective effort leads to real impact.

This year's cleanup was supported by sponsors BW Research Partnership, Wrentham Cooperative Bank, and Wrentham Village Premium Outlets, which funded trash bags and grabbers for volunteers. KWB also coordinated with the Wrentham Department of Public Works, which will handle disposal of the collected garbage.

More Initiatives Ahead

KWB is already planning its next projects, including a tree-planting effort in partnership with the Wrentham Conservation Commission, the Town Common Landscape-Memorial Committee, and Tree Warden Ray Rose. River birch, red maple, and possibly red oak trees, supplied by Keep Mas-

sachusetts Beautiful with funding from North Attleboro Subaru, were expected to arrive on April 16. Volunteers are needed to help plant and "adopt a tree" to care for it through the summer.

Additionally, KWB is preparing to launch an "Adopt a Street" program, encouraging local groups

to take responsibility for ongoing litter control on designated roads.

Mark Your Calendars

Residents can look forward to KWB's fall cleanup, scheduled around Wrentham Day—likely two weeks after the event. The organization will also host a booth at

Wrentham Day, featuring a large canvas where children can contribute their artistic touch.

For more information on upcoming events or to get involved, contact the co-chairs at keepwrenthambeautiful@gmail.com or visit <https://bit.ly/KWBchapter>.

KEEP WRENTHAM BEAUTIFUL TOP PICKUP LOCATIONS

FACEBOOK TOP 10

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- 2 CREEK ST ✓
- 3 MADISON ST ✓
- 4 TAUNTON ST
- 5 NORTH ST ✓
- 6 SHELDON RD ✓
- 7 RANDALL RD ✓
- 8 DEDHAM ST ✓
- 9 FRANKLIN ST ✓
- 10 WEST ST ✓

OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST

- 1 GREEN ST
- 2 WRENTHAM DEV CTR ✓
- 3 SHEARS ST ✓
- 4 EMERALD ST ✓
- 5 BEACH ST ✓
- 6 NICKERSON LN ✓
- 7 BENNETT ST ✓
- 8 SWEATT PARK ✓
- 9
- 10

✓ Cleanup Presence 2025 Spring Cleanup

KWB clean-up locations across Wrentham.

Wrentham Democrats to Elect Delegates to Democratic State Convention on May 12

On May 12 at 5 p.m., Democrats will convene at the Wrentham Council on Aging at 400 Taunton Street to elect six delegates and four alternates to represent Wrentham at the 2025 State Democratic Convention.

Individuals aged 16 and above who have registered or pre-registered as Democrats in Wrentham by March 29 may vote and be elected as delegates or alternates during the caucus. Youth (age 16 to 35), people with disabilities, people of color, veterans, members of the LGBTQ+ com-

munity not elected as delegates or alternates are encouraged to apply to be add-on delegates at the caucus or by visiting massdems.org/massdems-convention.

The 2025 Convention will be in person at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA on Saturday, September 13.

Those interested in getting involved with the Wrentham Democratic Committee should contact the Wrentham Democratic Town Committee at info@wrenthamdems.org.

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Register: www.norfolkrec.com

Fee: \$35 (includes t-shirt)



Proudly Presented by King Philip Youth Field Hockey

Garden Club of Norfolk to Hold Annual Plant & Bake Sale

The Garden Club of Norfolk will hold their annual Plant & Bake Sale on Saturday, May 17 from 9 a.m. to noon at the Town Hill and gazebo, adjacent to the Norfolk Public Library. The library is located at 2 Liberty Lane at the corner of Main Street and Route 115. Parking is available at the library. The sale will be held rain or shine.

Find the perfect perennials for your sun or shade gardens. In addition to a large variety of perennial plants, herbs, and

shrubs from our members' gardens, check out our "Garden Treasures" area and the bake sale with its selection of delicious home-baked goods. Enthusiastic garden club members will be on hand to offer advice for plant selection and care. Come early for the best selections.

Proceeds from the sale support the Garden Club's educational programs, which are open and free to the public, and the beautification of Norfolk at numerous civic gardens, public buildings,

and roundabouts.

Zeigler's Market Garden, Birdhouses by May Hosta, Norfolk Sharpening, Return to Wild, and others will be joining us on the Town Hill. Do not miss this opportunity to plan your garden for the upcoming season!

Cash, checks, and credit cards are accepted.

Visit our website at www.gardenclubofnorfolkma.com or contact gardenclubofnorfolkma@gmail.com for more information.



Special Events this Month at the Original Congregational Church

The Original Congregational Church will host an Acoustic Music Coffeehouse on Saturday May 3 at 7 p.m., featuring the band High Planes Duo and musician J. Michael Graham. Tickets are \$15 in advance, available by calling the church office, or \$20 at the door.

The annual Spring Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, May 17, from 8 a.m. to noon. Lots of exciting items for sale!

The Original Congregational Church is located at 1 East Street in Wrentham. Visit <https://www.occhurch.net> for more information or call the church office at 508-384-3110.

Casner & Edwards Adds Brian W. Haynes to its Litigation Practice

Norfolk resident Brian W. Haynes has joined Casner & Edwards as counsel in the firm's Litigation group. Haynes focuses his practice on commercial litigation, insurance coverage litigation, product liability, premises liability, liquor liability, and other complex civil matters.

Haynes has extensive experience representing individuals and businesses, including prominent domestic and international companies, in state and federal court and in international arbitration. In the area of insurance coverage litigation, he has experience with bad faith, defense and indemnification, subrogation, and a variety of first- and third-party coverages. Haynes represents clients at all stages of litigation, including jury trials

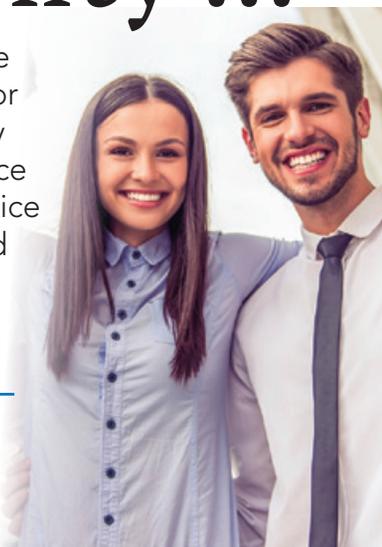
and appeals. He has appeared and argued before the Rhode Island Supreme Court and has contributed to briefs submitted to the Massachusetts Appeals Court, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, and the United States Court of Appeals for the First Circuit.

Haynes is admitted to practice in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. He is a member of the Defense Council of Rhode Island, the Massachusetts Defense Lawyers Association, and the Rhode Island and Massachusetts Bar Associations. He has been recognized by The Best Lawyers in America® for insurance law since 2024. Prior to joining Casner & Edwards, Haynes was a partner at a Providence law firm.

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Barry Zimmerman of Sunstone Wealth Strategies Named Five Star Wealth Manager

Recognized for Twelve Consecutive Years as Featured in Boston Magazine's March Issue

The Bulfinch Group has announced that Barry Zimmerman has earned the designation of **Five Star Wealth Manager**. The Five Star Wealth Manager award is annually given to an elite group of financial managers who are identified through research conducted with peers and firms; the program analyzes internal and external research data, including a survey to more than 3,000 registered financial services professionals and all local financial service companies registered with FINRA or the SEC, to select each year's winners.

Nominated wealth managers who satisfied a total of ten objective eligibility and evaluation cri-



teria are awarded this prestigious title. Barry attended the University of New Hampshire undergrad, earned his MBA from Boston University and is a resident of Norfolk, Massachusetts.

Wrentham Annual Town Election Results

By JOE STEWART

The Town of Wrentham held its Annual Town Election on Monday, April 7, with voters turning out to cast their ballots for key local positions. Despite rainy weather, the election saw a 19% voter turnout—the highest in recent memory for a local election—with 1,927 residents participating.

This year's election was marked by an unusual surge in write-in campaigns and, according to Wrentham Town Clerk Cynthia Thompson, a record 115 spoiled ballots, attributed to voter confusion over properly filling out write-in candidates' names and addresses.

The confusion was compounded by a last-minute partisan-style mailing—rare in Wrentham's non-partisan elections—sent by the Wrentham Republican Town Committee (RTC) and a group called Wrentham Voters Against MBTA Zoning. While the RTC is reg-

istered and files with the state's Office of Campaign and Political Finance, the other group is not registered. The mailer endorsed a slate of candidates under a "Stop MBTA Zoning" message, propelling several newcomers to victory.

Key Results & Impact of the Mailer

Select Board (2 seats): William D. Harrington (1,346 votes) and Roy C. Lamothe (1,156 votes) won. Lamothe, a newcomer, was among those backed by the RTC and the anti-MBTA zoning group.

Planning Board (2 seats): Both winners were write-in candidates—Justin Fairbank Schlesinger (708 votes) and Joe Woodall (643 votes)—were promoted in the mailer.

School Committee (3-year term): Meaghan Drennen (914 votes), another endorsed candidate, defeated Dawn Doyle (884 votes).

Other Races

Board of Health: Margaret D. Settle (916 votes) defeated Michael J. White (610 votes).

Fiske Public Library Trustee: Kristen Smith (1,366 votes) and Suzanne S. Bove (1,343 votes) won.

Moderator: Edward J. Goddard (1,349 votes) was re-elected.

Town Clerk: Ann V. Fisk (1,369 votes) secured the position.

Wrentham Housing Authority: Write-in candidate Richard Mayhew (178 votes) won.

The election's outcome signals a shift in local politics, with groups influencing races traditionally decided by grassroots campaigning. Thompson thanked election workers and acknowledged the challenges posed by the high number of spoiled ballots.



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Real Estate Corner



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KPHS Teacher Amy Remy Named Massachusetts National Honor Society Advisor of the Year

King Philip Regional High School (KPRHS) teacher and National Honor Society (NHS) Co-Advisor Amy Remy has been selected as the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association (MSAA) 2025 Massachusetts NHS Advisor of the Year.

Remy and fellow KPRHS teacher Kim Bertram serve as the KPRHS NHS Co-Advisors. Under their guidance, students

have held food and clothing drives this year and collected gently used sports equipment to pass on to younger teams. They have visited hospitals and nursing homes, made cards for veterans, cleaned up local neighborhood streets, read books to elementary school students, tutored their peers, and held homework clubs for Wood School students in Plainville.

“They are busy, but very productive students who are not waiting until they are grown up to use their talents and skills to make positive impacts on their community,” Remy said.

Remy was scheduled to be the keynote speaker at the Massachusetts NHS Spring Conference this April before the event was canceled. She also serves as an NHS Advisor Educator, lead-



King Philip Regional High School Principal Nicole Bottomley, left, with National Honor Society Co-Advisor Amy Remy, who was selected as the Massachusetts School Administrators' Association 2025 Massachusetts National Honor Society Advisor of the Year. (Photo Courtesy King Philip Regional School District)

ing training for all NHS advisors on the East Coast.

“We are very proud of Ms. Remy and Ms. Bertram, our NHS students, and our KPRHS NHS chapter!” Superintendent Dr. Rich Drolet said. “Hearing stories and witnessing their kind deeds, benevolent acts, and uplifting spirit embodies what we aim to teach our students. I couldn't be more happy for Mr. Remy to be recognized by MSAA for her

important work.”

KPRHS' NHS recently held a prom fashion show event in memory of Davonte Johnson, with all proceeds going to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. KPRHS' NHS also recently hosted a successful Blood Drive to help save 54 lives.

TEACHER
continued on page 27

YOUTH FIELD HOCKEY

16 Years Strong supporting Wrentham, Plainville, and Norfolk girls!

ALL TOWNS WELCOME GRADES K-8



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Real Estate Corner

TEACHER

continued from page 26

In addition to Remy and Bertram, several KPRHS NHS students were recognized at the April 7 School Committee meeting:

- Isabella Lolos for coordinating the Blood Drive and partnering with Red Cross, with assistance from Maddie Hill.
- Logan Riley for modeling in the KPRHS Fashion Show that raised \$3,500 for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. He was also recently elected KPRHS NHS Vice President for the 2025-26 school year.
- Jett Tucker for creating a King Philip News broadcast to recognize various clubs and students.

- Ethan Martin for modeling in the KPRHS Fashion Show and volunteering to clean up after the event.
- Aarush Patlola for volunteering at the hospital and serving as President of the Math Club. He was recently elected the KPRHS NHS President for the 2025-2026 school year.
- Julia Cohn for leading the Wood School Homework Club in Plainville, serving as emcee for the KPRHS Fashion Show, and serving as the NHS historian.

“While our NHS students excel academically, it is the commitment to their community that I am most proud of,” said Principal Nicole Bottomley.



King Philip Regional High School National Honor Society students were recognized by the King Philip Regional School District School Committee on April 7. (Photo Courtesy King Philip Regional School District)

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