

Advocating for Choice: The Fight to Preserve Institutional Housing Options

Wrentham Developmental Center One of Two Remaining in MA

By GRACE ALLEN

Is Wrentham Developmental Center slated for closure? Some would say it certainly seems that way. A local coalition of families, caregivers, and advocates is speaking out on behalf of individuals with severe mental disabilities, demanding broader housing options amid shifting care policies.

Those policies increasingly emphasize community-based settings such as group homes. But advocates maintain that institutional care in places like Wrentham Developmental Center remains not only appropriate but essential for those individuals whose complex medical and behavioral needs exceed the capacity of smaller-scale environments.

On May 9, a group known as the Saving Wrentham and Hogan Alliance visited the Massachusetts State House to



argue that the move towards a one-size-fits-all model of deinstitutionalization risks stripping away a vital option for those who require the structure, security, and specialized support that only institutional settings can provide.

The group is questioning why Wrentham Developmental Center, and the Hogan Regional Center in Danvers, are

no longer taking new admissions. The Wrentham facility has 1,000 beds, and yet the number of residents is currently at 148. With no new residents, and current residents mostly elderly, the group believes the facility is on track to close.

HOUSING

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Norfolk Community Day Set for June 14

The town of Norfolk is gearing up for one of its most popular events of the year, the 33rd annual Norfolk Community Day. Set to take place on Saturday, June 14 at the Holmes Complex (22 Myrtle Street), the celebration kicks off at 11 a.m. and promises a fun-filled day for families and community members of all ages.

Organized by the Norfolk Lions in collaboration with numerous local organizations, this year's Community Day is packed with entertainment, interactive activities, and community spirit. Signature attractions include the always popular Touch-a-Truck, Tom Antonellis' custom bird-houses, and the golf ball drop 50/50 raffle. Children can enjoy fan favorites like the Sports Obstacle Course, Mega Slide, Frozen Combo, and for the daring, Wipe Out. Each young attendee will also receive a souvenir—a 15-million-year-old megalodon shark tooth.

New to this year's lineup is a team wood-cutting competition, adding a fresh and competitive edge to the festivities.

Entertainment Lineup

Community Day will feature live performances and demonstrations on the main stage and throughout the grounds:

On the Main Stage:

- 11 a.m. to noon: Band Together – More Than a Music School
- Noon to 12:15 p.m.: Lions Talent Show Winners
- 12:15 to 1 p.m.: Exhale: A School of Dance
- 1 to 2 p.m.: Kids games & contests (musical chairs, balloon toss)
- 2 to 2:15 p.m.: Pie eating contest & golf ball drop

Additional Attractions (all day unless noted):

- Jeri's Balloons (11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.)
- Petting Zoo (noon to 3 p.m.)
- Good Tymes Banjo Band (12:30 to 1:30 p.m.)
- Loud Steel Band (1 to 2 p.m.)

COMMUNITY DAY

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HOUSING

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Kim Meehan and Elaine Delorey-Strug were among the group of advocates who met with legislative aides to State Senators Paul Feeney and Rebecca Rausch on May 9. The two Norfolk women have family members with intellectual disabilities and point out that offering a choice between institutional or community-based care is federal law. They, and the other advocates, are urging Governor Healey, the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS), and the Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS) to open admissions to the Wrentham Developmental Center and the Hogan Regional Center.

Both centers are intermediate care facilities (ICF), which provide comprehensive, long-term nursing and supportive care to residents. At one time, there were seven such facilities in the state.

Meehan contends that although ICFs provide full-time medical staff, structured programs, and constant supervi-

sion, DDS increasingly labels them as outdated and favors group homes instead—a characterization she disputes.

“I’ve visited group homes where all they do is sit in the house, watching TV all day,” Meehan said. “That’s not community. That’s isolation. And for severely developmentally disabled people, it’s not much of a life.”

The key difference between the state institutions and other settings lies in oversight. ICFs are federally regulated with strict standards for care, hygiene, and staffing—requiring doctors, nurses, and occupational and physical therapists, among other specialists. In contrast, many group homes, while privately operated under state contracts, are not subject to the same federal standards.

Meehan’s sister Kristen is currently living in the Hogan Regional Center, after being cared for by their mother for 50 years. When her mother passed away last year, Meehan and her sister Karen, co-guardians of Kristen, struggled to get her admitted to Wrentham. After a long battle with the state, and a story by Boston 25 News, Kristen was placed at Hogan, where Meehan says she is thriving. Still, the family would prefer Kristen be placed at Wrentham, just minutes from their homes.

“If her primary care doctor of many years, who oversees her day-to-day care, says she needs ICF placement, why does the state get to override that recommendation?” Meehan asked. “How can a one-time nurse as-



On May 9, a group of advocates and family members visited the Massachusetts State House to urge legislators to keep Wrentham Developmental Center and the Hogan Regional Center open. From left, Mitchell Sikora (COFAR board member), Marsha Hunt, Shiri Ronen-Attia, Laurie Noland, Ilene Tanzman, Ana Paula Meehan, Allan Tanzman, Mary Dias, Elaine Delorey-Strug, Jim Durkin (AFSCME Council 93), and Kim Meehan. (Photo by David Kassel).

session by the state make that kind of decision?”

Colleen Lutkevich is also a member of the Saving Wrentham and Hogan Alliance, and the president of the Family Association at Wrentham. Her sister Jean, now 72, has lived at the Wrentham Developmental Center for 60 years. Lutkevich says the 1980 federal case Ricci v. Okin, while greatly improving standards of care, oversight, and regulation for ICFs, contributed to a deinstitutionalization movement, pushing the state to reduce reliance on large state-run facilities and instead invest in community-based alternatives.

“We saw vast improvements at Wrentham after Ricci v. Okin,” she said. “My sister went from living in a ward with 60 other people and hardly any staff to a beautifully renovated house on the grounds with her

own bedroom and lots of staff. She has recreational therapy, a therapeutic swimming pool, and what they call ‘active day treatment.’ Tufts Dental operates a clinic on site. There’s a medical stabilization unit. All these services are helping to provide a meaningful life. It’s a wonderful place to live.”

What frustrates families most is the lack of transparency from the state, says Meehan. She maintains DDS continues to deny access to ICFs under the guise of promoting “community integration” while ignoring the preferences and needs of the individuals and families impacted.

“They haven’t given a real answer as to why people can’t choose,” said Meehan. “They just say ‘institutions are bad.’ But if you walk inside Wrentham, you’ll see it is beautiful—clean, safe, and full of love.”

Rep. Marcus Vaughn agrees that the refusal to admit new residents into the Wrentham and Hogan facilities raises serious questions, and notes he is pushing for answers from DDS. He has also begun working with his colleagues in the legislature to address the state’s admissions policies and long-term future of the developmental centers.

“While there has been no formal closure announcement, this quiet policy shift is functionally a closure by attrition,” said Rep. Vaughn in an email. “It undermines confidence in the state’s commitment to these critical care facilities. Families deserve to know the truth—not be left navigating mixed messages while trying to plan for the care of loved ones with complex needs. For individuals with severe and profound disabilities, settings like Wrentham and Hogan often provide the specialized medical care, safety, and structure that smaller communities simply cannot. The state’s current approach disregards this reality—and in doing so, it strips families of choice and limits options for those most vulnerable.”

Delorey-Strug, who has a young adult son with developmental disabilities, wonders why the state isn’t being more creative. She notes there are hundreds of acres of state-owned land on the campuses of Wrentham and Hogan that could be better used—not just for individuals with disabilities, but as inclusive communities.

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HOUSING

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“Governor Healey is calling for more housing,” said Delorey-Strug. “Well, here’s 400 acres at Wrentham already owned by the state. Why not integrate the community by building some condos for family members and let us live near our loved ones?”

Lutkevich agrees. “The state should be looking at Wrentham Developmental Center as a wonderful resource and trying new and innovative ways to keep it alive. Why not build elderly housing? Add a coffeeshop or community pool? Why not replicate or move Pappas Rehab to the site, for example? Why does the state not look at this in a meaningful way?”

The Saving Wrentham and Hogan Alliance has the support of the Massachusetts Nursing Association, the National Council on Severe Autism, Voice of Reason, and COFAR, the state-wide nonprofit organization that advocates on behalf of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

For now, however, families are left jumping through hoops and a system they say wears them down with red tape.

“We just want real choice,” said Meehan. “We want the dignity of deciding where our loved ones can live and thrive.”

For more information, or how you can help, contact the Saving Wrentham and Hogan Alliance at savingwrenthamhogan@yahoo.com.

COMMUNITY DAY

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- Megalodon Tooth Hunt
- GOFI Dogs’ Dog Kissing Booth
- Airbrush Tattoos
- Antique Fire Engine, Hay Wagon, and Train Rides
- 4-H Stick Pony Games
- Foam Fun sprayed by the Norfolk Fire Department (3:30 p.m.)
- Caricature Artist (Time TBD)

Food and drink will be available throughout the day, with various local organizations offering treats to raise funds and share information about their causes. A special thank-you goes to the Norfolk Fire Department for hosting the community BBQ.

Giving Back to the Community

In addition to the fun, the Norfolk Lions are encouraging attendees to bring donations for their Community Day food drive, aimed at addressing food pantry shortages during the summer. High-need items include cereal, soup, coffee, snacks, pasta sauce, tuna, and juice. Donations can be dropped off at the collection box near the parking lot.

Parking and Event Info

Parking is available for a \$15 donation on the day of the event. However, attendees can save by pre-paying online for just \$12 at www.norfolkmalions.org.



The Norfolk Lions express their deep appreciation for the many volunteers, town departments, and partner organizations who make this event possible. These include the Norfolk Fire, Police, and Highway Departments, as well as the Norfolk Recreation Department, Emmanuel Baptist Church, KP Leos, KP Cares, DECA, and more.

Community Sponsors

This year’s event is supported by a wide range of generous sponsors: Holmes Bus Company, C&C Ice Cream, C&K Custom Apparel, Carpentry by Tom Antonellis, Exhale A School of Dance, Norfolk Auto Inc, Norfolk DPW, Norfolk Public Library, Norfolk Recreation, Franklin Plumbing, Heating & Gas, Inc, Law Office of Justin P.

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More Information

The Norfolk Lions are a non-profit organization dedicated to preventing blindness and supporting community needs. All proceeds from Community Day are donated to local charities and services. For more details, visit www.norfolkmalions.org or email norfolkcommunityday@gmail.com.



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Garden Club of Norfolk Wins New England Award for Butterfly Gardens

The Garden Club of Norfolk (GCN) has received one of New England's top honors in wildlife gardening for its innovative and educational butterfly gardens. At the March meeting of the New England Garden Clubs, GCN was awarded the Virginia Grandpre Wildlife Gardening Award, marking it as the top project in

Massachusetts and across New England for excellence in native plant education and public benefit. This prestigious award, established in 2009, recognizes outstanding programs that promote the use of native plants and contribute to ecological education. GCN's three butterfly and pol-

linator gardens—located at H. Olive Day Elementary School, Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, and the Norfolk Federated Church—were praised for their beauty, educational value, and ecological impact.

All three gardens are Monarch Waystations, and one also holds certification as a Butterfly Garden. Each provides a vital habitat for butterflies, including host and nectar plants essential to their life cycle. Species like the Monarch butterfly rely on milkweed to survive, while the Black Swallowtail prefers plants like parsley and dill. Without these native host plants, butterflies cannot reproduce or sustain their populations.

All three GCN gardens are free of chemicals. Visitors are welcome.

H. Olive Day Butterfly and Flagpole Gardens (232 Main Street) began in 1994 as a school project to attract pollinators. With the help of local lepidopterist Madeline Champagne and years of nurturing by club members, it has flourished into an official Monarch Waystation by MonarchWatch.org, featuring milkweed, sedum, yarrow, and more.



The Garden Club of Norfolk was awarded the Virginia Grandpre Wildlife Gardening Award.

Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary Butterfly Garden (108 North Street) underwent a major transformation in 2014. Once overgrown and inaccessible, it was restored by GCN volunteers and a grant from the Massachusetts Master Gardeners Association. Additions included native perennials like purple coneflower and butterfly weed. A birdhouse, fencing, and signage—thanks to a local Eagle Scout—now welcome visitors to the rejuvenated space. The garden is certified as a Monarch Waystation and Butterfly Garden by the North American Butterfly Association.

Federated Church Butterfly Garden (1 Union Street) sprouted from a 2015 Girl Scout project to support Monarch conservation. With GCN's help, the Scouts created an interactive garden for preschoolers that includes butterfly releases, crafts, and an emphasis on milkweed preservation. The garden is certified as a Monarch Waystation and Pollinator Habitat.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN
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Korn Ferry’s Erika Warren – Helping to Shape the Healthcare Workforce

By JENNIFER RUSSO

Though the unemployment rate in the United States currently hovers around 4.2%, it seems that we steadily continue to see an influx of people who are looking for work after experiencing a layoff or other challenges. It can be frustrating for both those looking for a position and those who are looking to fill them, as hundreds and even thousands of resumes are coming in and need to be reviewed. Prospective workers often don’t get a response to their applications or receive a generic one after an AI tool has filtered their resume out of the proverbial pile. And prospective employers are often so busy with their day-to-day responsibilities that they may not have time to find the right candidates for the job. This is where an organizational consulting firm can save the day.

Korn Ferry is a global firm which uses proven strategies to find top-rate talent and channel it into the perfect employment opportunity. It has a reputation for excellence in executive search, organizational strategy, and talent acquisition, and plays a pivotal role in shaping how businesses grow and how professionals advance.

Erika Warren, Managing Consultant in the Healthcare and Academic Medicine Practice at Korn Ferry, partners with health systems, medical centers, hospitals, and other healthcare provider offices to execute executive and physician searches for senior-level and leadership roles. With almost twenty years of experience in the healthcare talent search, she has developed trusted client and candidate relationships and has delivered measurable results, especially in the New England market.

“For me, it’s about more than filling a position, it’s about contributing to the healthcare landscape by placing the right leaders where they can drive real impact. Every placement is a step toward high-performing leadership, measurable clinical outcomes, and sustainable

healthcare impact - especially in a system as complex and fragmented as healthcare in the United States,” says Erika.

Backed by the Korn Ferry mission of using a human approach to talent solutions, Erika relies on her empathy, personal connection, and people-first strategy to create successful outcomes, especially as it relates to physician searches. Understanding the pressure and uncertainty that can come with a job search or finding the right leader for the position, she knows it goes beyond just filling roles; it’s about helping highly trained individuals and healthcare businesses thrive together.

“Even with constrained budgets, the right consulting partnership unlocks strategic and creative approaches to physician and C-suite search - delivering results in a complex market,” Erika shares.

For organizations navigating challenging hiring needs, tight talent pools, and shifting workplace expectations, partnering with a seasoned talent professional is crucial. As Korn Ferry continues to help companies and jobseekers around the world, experts like Erika remind us that behind every placement is a person that is essential to organizational growth.

Specializing in understanding the nuances of healthcare leadership search requirements, leadership styles, and strategy, Erika brings a holistic perspective to everything she does, partnering closely with her clients and drawing on Korn Ferry’s resources and reach to identify and engage transformative talent. Personally, Erika has lived in Norfolk for 15 years with her family and elderly pup, Bella. Outside of Korn Ferry, you will find her cheering on her boys from the sidelines, reading a good mystery novel, or buying more house plants she doesn’t need.

To learn more about Korn Ferry’s human-focused talent solutions and organizational consulting services, visit www.kornferry.com. Korn Ferry



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The butterfly garden at the H. Olive Day School.

BUTTERFLY GARDEN

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How You Can Help Butterflies

- Plant a butterfly garden in a sunny, open area with some sheltered edges. Include water areas, flat rocks, nectar flowers, and host plants. Avoid pesticides. These gardens need minimal care and water once they are established.
- Plant native plants.
- Stay away from chemically treated plants (like neonicotinoids).

- Look for host plants (plants that caterpillars eat).
- Replace your lawn with wildflowers.

The Garden Club of Norfolk, Inc. is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating its members and the public about horticulture and promoting the beautification of the community. The club includes gardeners of all skill levels and welcomes new members. Area residents interested in gardening or learning more about the club’s activities are encouraged to visit the club’s website at www.gardenclubofnorfolkma.com.

OBITUARY

Hannelore Amelia Pacheco (Kuhlmann), 95, formerly of Holbrook, known affectionately as Hanna to her friends and family, passed away peacefully of natural causes on May 1, 2025, in Raynham, Massachusetts. Born on December 8, 1929, in Mecklenburg, Germany, she was a beacon of adventurous spirit, generosity, and captivating charm throughout her 95 years.

Hanna’s early years in Germany were marked by an appreciation for the great outdoors, a passion that only grew as she did. Her love for ice skating, skiing, and hiking was matched by her talent in each, and became an integral part of her life. Her melodious voice found a home at The Boylston Schul-Verein, Walpole, a German Club, where she joined the singing choir, and she sang with gusto and joy, sharing her culture and zest for life with all those around her.

A master of the garden, Hanna cultivated beauty and life in the soil of her home in Holbrook, creating an oasis that reflected the care and attention she gave to every aspect of her life. Her gardens were a symbol of her nurturing soul, a

trait that extended into her relationships with her loved ones.

She is reunited in eternity with her husband, Manuel Costa Pacheco, her mother Dora Becker, and her sister, Ursula Clark, whom she cherished deeply. Hannelore leaves behind a legacy of love carried on by her children Bruce Pacheco and wife Beth, Mark Pacheco and wife Linda, and Michelle McSherry and husband George, her grandchildren Jonathan, Lauren, Emily, Hannah, Katelyn, Shane and Joshua and her great-grandchildren Evelyn and Kellan. Each family member carries forward a piece of Hanna’s extraordinary legacy through their own lives.

Those who knew Hanna will remember her as a woman who embraced life’s challenges with a remarkable blend of strength and grace. Her generous nature knew no bounds, and she was always the first to offer help to anyone in need. Her life was a tapestry of experiences that made her one of the most interesting and engaging individuals to be around.

Hanna’s passing leaves a void in the hearts of all



who loved her, but her spirit remains a guiding light. Her adventurous tales, her laughter in the chorus, and the beauty of her gardens will continue to inspire and comfort her family and friends. Hannelore Amelia Pacheco’s life was one well-lived, full of passion and kindness, and she will be dearly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

A private memorial service honoring her life was held at Cartwright funeral followed by her burial at Blue Hills cemetery.

The family would like to thank Old Colony Hospice of West Bridgewater for their compassionate care. Memorial contributions may be sent in lieu of flowers to Old Colony Hospice, 321 Manley St. West Bridgewater, MA 02379.

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Wrentham Installs EV Chargers at the Center School Lot

By JOE STEWART

New electric vehicle charging stations have been installed at Wrentham's Center School Lot. Gregory Enos, Wrentham's Assistant Town Manager/Director of Human Resources, in an email exchange shared that Wrentham's Center School Lot will have four spots to charge electric vehicles with Level 3 chargers. There are a few remaining tasks such as configuring the software and electricity activation, both of which are expected to be completed by the end of May. Wrentham hopes to have the chargers go live sometime in June.

According to East Coast Renewable Energy (ECR), which donated the chargers to Wrentham, Level 3 charging stations are also known as DC fast chargers and they provide rapid charging capabilities, allowing electric vehicles to charge up to 80% in just 20-30 minutes. Nicholas Valorie, president of ECR, noted that charging rates depend upon a number of factors, such as battery capacity

and temperature. ECR provides services spanning EV charging, community solar, and solar installation for both residential and commercial clients.

Enos noted that the project was heavily subsidized by National Grid incentives and that all proceeds from the sales of electricity through the chargers go to Wrentham, which approved a revolving fund to pay for the electricity, administration costs, and other fees at the fall Town Meeting.

In an interview, Valorie shared that "Wrentham made the right move" in quickly approving the project - he noted that the level 3 charger incentives were fully consumed in just 11 months leaving many communities unserved. Level 2 charger incentives remain and are best suited for locations where charging can take place over a couple hours such as recreation fields, housing complexes, and schools.

Enos shared that Wrentham is also installing two chargers at Town Hall. That project is in the design phase, and he hopes



New fast EV charging stations at Wrentham's Center School Lot.

to have those chargers up and running by the end of the summer. Valorie clarified that these charges will also be level 3 chargers.

Wrentham has EV charging stations available at the Wrentham Village Premium Outlets, which offers eight chargers, and at the Interstate Travel Plaza on Washington Street, which offers two chargers.

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Understanding the Social Host Law in Massachusetts:
A Guide for Parents

As we approach the season of graduations, summer celebrations, and family gatherings, we want to provide important information to ensure a safe and enjoyable time for everyone. The upcoming months often bring opportunities for teens to come together and celebrate. In light of this, we would like to remind all parents and guardians of the Massachusetts Social Host Law.



Q: What exactly is the Social Host Law in Massachusetts?

A: The Social Host Law in Massachusetts (M.G.L. c. 138, s34) makes it illegal for anyone—regardless of age—to knowingly or unknowingly allow underage individuals (those under 21) to consume alcohol on property they own, lease, or control. This means that if you are a homeowner, renter, or someone who simply has control over a space (ie. hotel room), you could be held legally responsible if underage drinking occurs there, even if you didn't provide the alcohol yourself.

Q: Can I still be held responsible if I wasn't home or didn't know there was drinking happening?

A: Yes, under Massachusetts law, you can still be held responsible for underage drinking that occurs on your property even if you were not physically present or did not know it was happening. Courts can determine that you "should have known" or were negligent in preventing it.

Q: What kinds of penalties could I face if I violate the Social Host Law?

A: Criminal penalties include a fine of up to \$2,000, imprisonment for up to one year, or both. In addition to criminal charges, you may also face civil lawsuits—especially if someone is injured or killed as a result of underage drinking on your property. In such cases, you could be sued for damages, including medical costs, pain and suffering, or wrongful death.

Q: What if another parent gives permission for their child to drink in my home?

A: Even if another parent says it's okay for their child to drink, you are still legally responsible for what happens in your home. The law does not make exceptions for parental permission unless the alcohol is being provided by the minor's own parent or guardian, and even then, only in that parent's own home.

For additional resources on preventing underage drinking and having meaningful conversations with your teens about alcohol, drugs, and party safety, please visit healthykp.org.

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 nicotine/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. For more information, visit www.healthykp.org.

Gilly's House Hosts Free Men's BBQ

Gilly's House invites men who have lost a loved one to substance use or suicide to attend a free, supportive community event, the Shoulder-to-Shoulder Men's BBQ. Taking place on Sunday, June 8 at 1 p.m., the afternoon gathering offers a chance for connection, healing, and camaraderie among those who have faced similar grief. Gilly's House is located at 1022 West Street in Wrentham.

The event will feature guest speakers, food, and a friendly cornhole tournament.

Guest speakers include:

- David Gillmeister, Founder of Gilly's House
- David Swindell, Founder of the CWS Foundation & Director at The Sun Will Rise Foundation

- Glen Ford, CEO of Peer Support Community Partners & Director of SADOD (Support After a Death by Overdose)

Sponsors include:

- Commonwealth BBQ
- The Sun Will Rise Foundation
- Robert Roofing and Gutters
- Polar Beverages

To register, visit www.gillys-house.com.

For more information or questions, contact: David Swindell at davidswindell2015@gmail.com or Maureen Cappuccino at maureen@gillyshouse.com.

Parting

By G. GREGORY TOOKER

One aging father shared with his son,
Wisdom gained through four score years,
The hardest truth when life's near done,
Must be faced with courage, falling tears.

A life lived long has one regret,
For as those picket years stream by,
Along the way dear pickets spent,
Will fall at wayside, one can't deny.

From sad farewells, there's no escape,
No matter strength of ties well bound,
The many years that did create,
Those treasured friendships, strong and sound.

Author's Note: Derived from memories of a conversation with my father on the occasion of his 92nd birthday.

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Your Money, Your Independence

Mid-Year Review: Five Financial Metrics To Evaluate



Glenn Brown, CFP

As the year reaches its midpoint, June is a great time to reflect on your financial progress.

Whether your goals include building savings, paying off debt, and/or preparing for retirement - evaluating key financial metrics this month gives you the opportunity to make strategic changes to complete a strong year. Here are five essential financial indicators to assess this month and how to act on what you find.

1. Net Worth

Your net worth provides a clear snapshot of your overall financial health. It's calculated by subtracting your total liabilities (debts) from your total assets (cash, investments, real estate, etc.).

Why it matters in June: Reviewing net worth mid-year helps you evaluate growth of wealth over time. If it's stagnant or declining, it may signal overspending, increased debt, and/or underperforming investments.

Action step: List all assets and liabilities using a spreadsheet or financial planning software, like eMoney. Compare with your end of December figures to track progress and use this insight to

adjust the following items.

2. Savings Rate

Your savings rate is the percentage of your income that you're saving — including contributions to retirement accounts, HSAs, 529s, emergency funds, brokerage accounts, etc.

Why it matters now: If you're not close to 50% of your annual savings target, consider increasing contributions to accounts where funds are accessible this year without penalty. This usually means taxable accounts and not 401k or 529 plans, because if a shortfall is created, you'll need ease of access to funds to cover.

How to calculate: Divide your total savings to date by your gross income (pre-tax) for the same period. A 15% savings rate is a solid target, but if you wish to be above-average there are only two ways - save more and/or invest beyond median returns of the population.

3. Monthly Cash Flow

Cash flow reflects your day-to-day financial reality by measuring the difference between your monthly income and expenses. Positive cash flow means you're living a sustainable lifestyle and have money left to save and invest.

How to check: Track all income and expenses for the past one or two months. Subtract total expenses from total income. If you're consistently negative, you need to trim spending, increase income, or both.

Action step: Use budgeting apps or spreadsheets to monitor cash flow. Small leaks — like unused subscriptions, frequent takeout, impulse purchases — can erode your financial health over time.

4. Emergency Fund Coverage

An emergency fund should cover 3-6 months of essential living expenses to defend against financial surprises.

Why June matters: If you've had unexpected costs this year, your emergency fund may be lower than it should be. Summer travel and seasonal expenses can also drain savings if you're not careful.

Action step: Calculate the last 3 months of essential expenses, compare to your current cash balance, and plan to replenish if needed.

5. Investment Portfolio Allocation

June is a great time to check investment returns and asset allocation. Market changes or personal milestones (like a job change, large purchase or desired earlier retirement) may require a strategy shift.

Why it matters: If your portfolio has drifted from your target allocation (e.g., too much in stocks, not enough in bonds or real assets), it can affect risk exposure, volatility and long-term results.

Action step: After confirming monthly cash flows and emergency funds are aligned and no additional funds need to be raised, review your portfolio allocation and rebalance accordingly.

Final Thoughts

A mid-year financial check-up gives you clarity, control, and the chance to recalibrate while sitting outside with your laptop sipping morning coffee or lazing on a sunny afternoon in the summertime.

The opinions voiced in this material are for general information only and are not intended to provide specific advice or recommendations for any individual.

Glenn Brown is a Holliston resident and owner of Plan-Dynamic, LLC, www.PlanDynamic.com. Glenn is a fee-only Certified Financial Planner™ helping motivated people take control of their planning and investing, so they can balance kids, aging parents and financial independence.

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Living Healthy

Direct SLT

A Revolutionary Advance in Glaucoma Treatment Debuts in Massachusetts

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

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of irreversible blindness worldwide, affecting over 3 million Americans and millions more globally. This silent disease gradually damages the optic nerve—often without noticeable symptoms until significant vision is lost. Lowering intraocular pressure (IOP) remains the only proven way to slow or stop its progression—and innovative treatments continue to evolve in the fight to preserve vision.

In a major advancement for glaucoma patients in Massachusetts, Dr. Roger Kaldawy, MD, is offering the state’s first Direct SLT (Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty) using Alcon’s newest,

state-of-the-art laser system. This groundbreaking 2-second procedure will take place at Milford Franklin Eye Center’s surgical facility in Milford, MA, marking a new chapter in laser glaucoma care—right here, close to home.

What Is Glaucoma and How Is It Treated?

Glaucoma is a group of eye diseases that damage the optic nerve, usually due to increased intraocular pressure. The most common form, **open-angle glaucoma**, occurs when the drainage system of the eye becomes less effective over time, allowing fluid to accumulate and pressure to build. Without treatment, this pressure can cause permanent vision loss.

Traditional glaucoma treatment options include:

- Medicated eye drops to reduce fluid production or improve drainage
- Oral medications, often a last resort due to systemic side effects
- Laser treatments, such as conventional SLT or argon laser trabeculoplasty (ALT)
- Minimally Invasive Glaucoma Surgery (MIGS) for moderate disease
- Traditional surgeries, including trabeculectomy or tube shunts, for advanced cases

Each approach has its pros and cons, and treatment is tailored to the patient’s specific needs and stage of disease.

What Is SLT?

Selective Laser Trabeculoplasty (SLT) is a well-established, non-invasive laser treatment that targets the eye’s **trabecular mesh-**



work—the tissue responsible for draining fluid from the eye. SLT uses gentle laser pulses to improve outflow and lower IOP, often reducing or eliminating the need for daily eye drops. It’s a quick, painless procedure with minimal downtime, typically performed in an outpatient setting.

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, **Dr. Kaldawy was among the first surgeons in the region to offer SLT**, performing hundreds of successful treatments over the years. Our facility provides SLT in a state-of-the-art surgical center in Milford, offering expert care without the need to travel to distant hospitals or urban centers.

With this advanced center available in your backyard, there’s no reason to travel hours for glaucoma or eye surgery. If your provider is still recommending you drive long distances for treatment, we welcome second opinions and offer world-class laser glaucoma care, right here in Milford.

Introducing Direct SLT: The Next Generation of Laser Therapy

Alcon’s Direct SLT takes traditional SLT to the next level, combining the trusted benefits of SLT with cutting-edge technology and enhanced precision. This new approach allows the laser to be applied more accurately and consistently to the drainage tissues of the eye, resulting in improved outcomes and a better patient experience.

What Sets Direct SLT Apart from Traditional SLT?

Traditional SLT:

- *Requires a gonioscope:* A specialized lens is placed on the eye to allow the physician to visualize and direct the laser beam at the trabecular meshwork
- *More operator-dependent:* The accuracy and effectiveness can vary based on the physician’s experience and technique
- *Longer procedure:* Typically takes a few minutes
- *Can involve some discomfort:* Some patients may experience discomfort from the gonioscope

Direct SLT (DSLST):

- *Non-contact:* Laser energy is delivered through the limbus, eliminating the need for a gonioscope or physical contact with the eye
- *Automated and fast:* The procedure is automated, takes less than 3 seconds, and can be performed by trained personnel
- *Efficient and accessible:* DSLST may treat more patients in less time, making care more accessible
- *Potentially more comfortable:* Non-contact delivery improves patient comfort

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Living Healthy

It's More Than Just a Click or a Pop!!!!!!

TMJ is a condition characterized by pain in the jaw joint and surrounding tissues accompanied by a decrease in the range of motion of the joint itself. There may be clicking or popping and a noticeable swing of the lower joint. Currently more than 12% of Americans suffer from TMJ symptoms.

There are many causes of TMJ. These include dental procedures, autoimmune disease, biting into a large sandwich or bagel, injuries to the jaw area and infection. Once the biomechanics of the joint has been altered, the function becomes affected and the pain ensues.

Traditional treatments include pain medication, muscle relaxers and dental appliances. These are effective resources for some but not for all, especially long term.

Stephanie B. suffered from TMJ pain for over two years since the removal of her braces. Chewing certain foods would aggravate her jaw and intensify her pain. In the beginning, she felt she could handle the problem on her own by giving up chewing gum, eating oversized sandwiches, chewy meats and certain fruits. However, she noticed that over time just yawning and even singing, could cause an

exacerbation. She was becoming disillusioned with the idea that she could fix this on her own and decided to call The Holistic Center at Bristol Square and made an appointment to see the doctors.

Upon exam, the swing was noted in Stephanie's jaw as she both opened and closed her mouth, indicating a dysfunction in the biomechanics of her TMJ. After several weeks of treatment, the clicking and popping were gone and the swing in her jaw was stabilized. She no longer suffers from the TMJ pain and has noticed that the headaches she thought were unrelated had gone away as well.

If you are suffering from TMJ pain, do not hesitate to contact The Holistic Center at



Dr. Rochelle Bien, Dr. Molly Rappaport & Dr. Michael Goldstein

Bristol Square, located at 1426 Main Street, Walpole. Call (508)660-2722 and make your appointment today.

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EYES

continued from page 10

Who Should Consider Direct SLT?

Direct SLT is especially beneficial for:

- Patients with early to moderate open-angle glaucoma
- Individuals looking to reduce or avoid glaucoma medications
- Patients with sensitivity or allergies to eye drops
- Those with difficulty maintaining a drop regimen
- Patients with ocular surface disease worsened by medications

Benefits and Risks of Direct SLT

Benefits:

- No incisions and minimal discomfort
- Quick recovery
- May reduce or eliminate the need for daily drops
- Repeatable treatment
- Customized for individual patient needs

Risks:

- Temporary eye irritation or inflammation
- Mild, short-term increase in IOP immediately after treatment

- In rare cases, insufficient pressure reduction

Why Choose Milford Franklin Eye Center for Your Laser Glaucoma Surgery?

We are proud to be **the first center in Massachusetts to offer Direct SLT**, and even prouder to provide it in a local, accessible setting that prioritizes patient comfort and convenience. Our facility is equipped with the latest ophthalmic technology, and our team—led by Dr. Kaldawy—delivers compassionate, expert care with excellent outcomes.

Here's the great news: You don't need to travel far to receive top-tier glaucoma care. We're offering excellence in SLT—including the newest Direct SLT—right here in Milford.

If you or someone you love is living with glaucoma or elevated eye pressure, **contact us today** to learn whether Direct SLT is right for you. We're honored to bring this breakthrough in glaucoma care to our community—and we're ready to help you protect your vision for years to come.

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Ready, Set, Glow!

The Best Summer Facials at b.LUXE

BY GINA WOELFEL

The flowers are blooming, the sun is shining, and iced coffee is officially back in our rotation—that's right, **summer is just around the corner!**

While we've mostly thawed out from winter, your skin might still be playing catch-up. After months of dry indoor heat, unpredictable New England weather, and layers of holiday makeup, it's time to refresh your complexion before the summer sun takes center stage.

We've designed our hand-picked lineup of **facials and skincare treatments to exfoliate, hydrate, and bring back your skin's natural glow**—just in time for the sunny season ahead. With beach days, weddings, and outdoor adventures on the calendar, we've rounded up a few summertime favorites to help your skin look—and feel—its absolute best.

So, let's go!

The Power of 3 Facial

Think of this as the ultimate skincare triple threat. The Power of 3 Facial blends dermaplaning, a brightening peel, and a deeply hydrating mask to sweep away dull, dry skin and reveal the fresh, dewy glow beneath the surface.

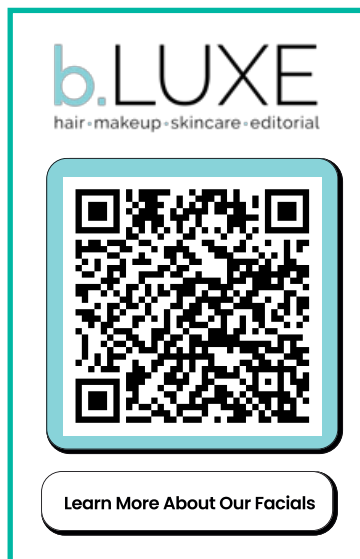
Using a sterilized blade, dermaplaning gently sweeps away built-up surface debris, fine vellus hair (aka peach fuzz), and micro-surface wrinkles without harsh chemicals, downtime, or discomfort.

Results: A smoother, more refined complexion that better absorbs your skincare products and creates the perfect canvas for makeup.

Best for: All skin types except active acne or hypersensitive skin.

Oxygenating Facial

Is your skin feeling tight, dry, and thirsty for hydration? This facial delivers a refreshing gulp



of oxygen to your complexion, clearing out clogged pores and flooding your skin with moisture. But it's more than just a quick fix—it's our ultimate anti-aging facial treatment. Infusing the skin with pure oxygen and potent actives helps boost circulation, stimulate collagen production, and restore your natural glow.

You'll leave with visibly plumper, smoother, and more radiant skin—and the results don't stop when you walk out the door. This treatment works long after your appointment, improving elasticity, reducing fine lines, and giving your complexion a fresh, youthful bounce you'll love.

Best for: Tired, dull, oily, acne-prone, devitalized, or element-stressed skin needing a deep reset and revitalization.

Pro tip: Schedule early in the season for a complete refresh.

Hydrolifting Facial

This anti-aging, hydrating miracle worker profoundly improves the visible toning of the face, neck, and jawline.

Best for: Anyone wanting to feel tighter, brighter, and red-carpet-ready.

Results: Smooth, vibrant skin—like you got eight hours of sleep (even if you didn't).

The Mind Body Facial

The complete reset—from the inside out. The Mind Body Facial combines the skin-loving power of G.M. Collin skincare with the **calming energy of Reiki and personalized aromatherapy**. It's a facial-meets-spa-meets-energy-clearing kind of treatment, and it's every bit as dreamy as it sounds.



You'll start with a full consultation and then settle into a session that includes a deep cleanse, exfoliation, steam, a custom mask, and hot stone foot therapy. Oh, and let's not forget the soothing hand, arm, and shoulder massage with aromatherapy that will have you floating in relaxation.

Best for: Stressed-out skin, tired minds, and anyone needing a serious dose of self-care.

Results: Hydrated, glowing skin and a calmer, lighter you.

Big Results, Minimal Time Stand-Alone or Add-On Chemical Peel 30 min

Ready to shed that dull, dry layer? This professional-grade chemical peel is customized to your skin type and gets right down to business. Your esthetician will choose the best acid—glycolic, salicylic, or lactic—to smooth texture, brighten tone, and give your skin that fresh-faced glow.

Think of it as spring cleaning for your skin.

Best for: A quick, no-nonsense glow-up.

Just a warning: They can be addictive from the very first one!

Stand-Alone Oil Dermaplaning 30 min

Short on time? No worries—you can book an oil dermaplaning on its own for the ultimate lunch break glow-up. This quick treatment smooths skin, removes peach fuzz and helps your products absorb more effectively.

Best for: Makeup lovers, SPF devotees, and anyone craving a smoother, more radiant complexion.

Pro Tip for Summer: Don't Skip the SPF

Sun protection is non-negotiable—especially after a glow-boosting facial. Make daily SPF part of your routine to keep your skin looking radiant and healthy all season long. **Great skincare doesn't end at the spa!**

Bonus: You can purchase your G.M. Collin SPF with your HSA!

b.LUXE proudly carries a curated selection of top-tier SPF formulas from G.M. Collin to help you perfect and protect your glow.

One Last Thing

b.LUXE isn't just your go-to for luxury facials—it's a local, woman-owned business that combines top-tier skincare with a warm, welcoming vibe. Whether you're a first-timer or a regular, you'll feel right at home from the moment you walk in.

Give your skin the love it deserves—your summer glow is just a facial away!

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Guest Column

Don't Tax My Credit Union

By SUSAN J. KENNEY
CEO, NORFOLK COMMUNITY
FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Credit unions are speaking as Congress and the new administration move quickly on tax reform and announced plans to end the industry's tax exemption status. Here's what you should know:

A Tax on Credit Unions Is a Tax on You: Why We Must Act Now

In communities across America, credit unions are doing what they've always done best—putting people first. As not-for-profit financial cooperatives, credit unions are fundamentally different from banks. They exist to serve their members, not to generate profits for shareholders. That's why more than 140 million Americans—43% of the population—have chosen credit unions as their trusted financial partner.

But this model is now under threat.

There's a growing concern that lawmakers may consider eliminating the federal income tax exemption for credit unions. Make no mistake: a tax on credit unions is a tax on you and the millions of other Americans who depend on them.

Credit Unions' tax status was established by congress in 1937, and it is crucial to all credit unions' survival and continued ability to service people left behind by banks. As cooperatives, credit unions succeed when people come together. We are all stronger when we advocate and act with one unified voice. Just like in the movie "It's A Wonderful Life," with Bailey Building and Loan fighting against Mr. Potter's authoritarian way.

Why Credit Unions Matter

Credit unions were born out of necessity. More than a century ago, when banks turned their backs on working families, farmers, and small business owners, credit unions stepped in to serve. They provided accessible financial services to those excluded from the mainstream banking system—and they continue to do so today.

Unlike banks, credit unions are not-for-profit and member-owned. Any earnings they generate are returned to members through better interest rates on loans, higher returns on savings, fewer fees, and personalized services like financial counseling. This community-first model helps individuals and families build stronger financial futures and strengthens local economies. Credit unions are democratically owned and operated, governed under a "one member, one vote" principle, regardless of the amount of deposit. While banks are operated with the purpose of maximizing profits for their shareholders, credit unions' sole purpose is to return those benefits to their member-owners and the communities they serve.

Despite their growth, credit unions remain a relatively small player in the financial sector, holding only 8.8% of assets compared to banks, which control 91.2%. Yet their impact is outsized when it comes to improving financial well-being.

What's at Stake

The federal income tax exemption for credit unions exists because of their unique structure and mission. Congress recognized long ago that credit unions provide essential financial ser-

vices to underserved communities, and that taxing them like for-profit banks would undermine that mission.

It's important to note: credit unions already contribute billions in state and local taxes. The exemption only applies to federal income tax on profits—profits that are reinvested back into the membership, not handed to wealthy shareholders.

If Congress were to eliminate this exemption, it would significantly reduce the ability of credit unions to provide the services their members count on. That means fewer low- and no-fee accounts, less access to affordable loans, and reduced financial support for families and small businesses.

Why You Should Care

Eliminating the tax exemption wouldn't just hurt credit unions—it would hurt you. It would force your credit union to operate more like a bank, focusing on profits instead of people.

And ultimately, those costs would be passed on to you in the form of higher fees and worse rates.

This isn't just a financial issue—it's a fairness issue. Why should consumers who have chosen a cooperative financial model be penalized because of pressure from big banks that fear competition?

Take Action: Protect Your Credit Union

Credit unions are not a loophole. They are a lifeline for millions of Americans.

As federal lawmakers consider tax reform, they need to hear directly from you. Tell your U.S. Representative and Senators: **Don't tax my credit union—it's a tax on me.** Visit donttaxmycreditunion.org for more information and a link to your lawmakers. You can also get the link on our website: www.norfolkcommunityfcu.org.

Your voice matters. Let Congress know that you stand with credit unions—and that any at-

tempt to tax them is an attack on the financial security of more than 140 million Americans.

Here at Norfolk Community Federal Credit union, it has been our mission to help our members fulfill their dreams and meet their financial goals for almost 75 years. We're in business to help people improve their lives through realizing their financial goals and to provide financial services to members at the lowest possible cost. People helping people help themselves. We have a Board of Directors who are local members of your community, volunteering their time to oversee the general direction of the credit union. So, credit union profits don't get distributed to them, like bank shareholders get bank dividends. We reinvest it in you, our members!

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Wrentham Votes to Buy 2095 West St. & Add Lighting to Sweatt Park

May 12 Special Town Meeting Draws a Crowd

By JOE STEWART

Following more than 90 minutes of debate, Special Town Meeting attendees overwhelmingly voted to purchase 2095 West Street through a combination of bonding, funds from the Land Acquisition Fund, possible funds from the Pawtucket Water Supply Board and the state's Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and ongoing Community Preservation Fund payments. Likewise, voters approved electrical and lighting improvements at Sweatt Park also using the Community Preservation Fund. Neither vote will increase property taxes.

Moderator Ed Goddard called the meeting to order shortly after 7 p.m. and held a moment of silence for former Select Board member Joe Botaish, who recently passed away. Goddard also admonished attendees to remain professional in listen-

ing to speakers, acknowledging criticism that speakers were heckled at the December 16 Town Meeting to adopt MBTA Communities-compliant zoning (which did not pass).

Community Preservation Act

Town Manager Michael King provided a brief overview of the Community Preservation Act (CPA) and its various funds and possible uses. In particular, funds placed into the Land Acquisition Fund must be used to purchase land and cannot be used for other purposes such as sidewalks or town operations. King also provided an overview of the funding sources for the purchase of 2095 West Street for \$2.5M, including \$600K from the Land Acquisition Fund, \$650K from the Pawtucket Water Supply Board, and \$500K from the DCR. The balance would come from a 10-year bond, which would be paid for from future CPA funds.

Sweatt Park Lighting

Following King's introduction, debate commenced on the Sweatt Park project, which adds lighting to the sport courts, pathways, and stairs, extending the usability of the park into the evening hours. Sweatt Park is currently undergoing renovation, which has been financed using Federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds, including development of common areas

and walkways, new sport courts, rebuilding the staircase, and improving accessibility.

One of the first questions asked why lights weren't in the current project, to which King explained that the town cut electrical and lighting to stay within the budget funded by ARPA. Following a few more questions, Goddard brought it to a vote and it passed on a majority voice vote.

2095 West Street

Alan Selling, chair of the Open Space Committee, described the 2095 West Street property as 65 contiguous acres 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. Selling also noted that the property has been a part of Cook's Farm for over 350 years. Cook's Farm is the oldest continuously operat-

ing farm in Wrentham, dating back to 1664, a land grant from the King of England.

Selling emphasized the contributions from the Pawtucket Water Supply Board and the state's DCR, effectively enabling Wrentham to preserve the land for "half price."

Wrentham resident and long-time builder Howard Bailey shared his plans for developing the land, likely 12-15 homes. He noted that with another parcel he owns, the total acreage is closer to 100 acres, of which he would plan to use about 20 acres for the homes leaving the remaining 80 acres unchanged. Bailey also shared that he does not plan to add a road so Wrentham would not incur additional sanding and plowing expenses.

Shifting to finances, Bailey noted that the homes will provide property tax revenue long into the future, and at valuations greater than \$1M each, these homes would likely provide about \$250K in tax revenue annually.

Following these presentations, voters began debating. Everett Skinner noted that the property is one of the few in town that has elevations above 400 ft., which makes it suitable for a water supply tank. He asked both Bailey and Selling if they would support the installation of a water tank. Bailey responded that yes, he

would and that he has experience with similar requests. Selling, after conferring with town counsel, responded that the conservation restriction would preclude development.

Several voters discussed the value of the watershed itself, sharing personal stories of damage from pollution and runoff, the need to protect the area for drinking water, and similar concerns.

Two other speakers raised interesting observations: one pointed out that if the property is developed, just 15 families will enjoy a gorgeous area while 13,000 other Wrentham residents will not. Another pointed out that this property is largely untouched and any disruption to that habitat will dramatically reduce its value - if one wants open space it needs to remain open space.

At 9:15 p.m., a vote "moved the question," which cut off debate and brought the article to a vote. The article passed, 347 to 39.

To complete the purchase, voters will need to approve selling to the Pawtucket Water Supply Board a "first right of refusal" which they require for their contribution to the purchase.

That vote will take place at the Annual Town Meeting, 7:30 p.m. on June 2 at the King Philip Regional High School.



LITERACY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Attend an in-person Orientation

Wednesday, June 11, 2025
6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

In-person ESOL tutor training begins in September, call for details or to learn about other orientation dates.

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PorchFest Returns to Franklin on June 7

Music will soon fill the streets of Franklin's Cultural District as PorchFest returns on Saturday June 7, from noon to 6 p.m. The free, family-friendly event transforms porches and patios into stages, showcasing local musical talent in an informal, community-driven setting. In case of rain, the event will take place on Sunday, June 8.

Originating as a grassroots movement, PorchFests have grown in popularity across the country. The events offer neighbors a chance to connect and celebrate the arts while enjoying

the unique charm of their own communities. Franklin's edition is no exception, inviting residents and visitors to explore live performances across genres in a casual, walkable atmosphere.

Attendees can stroll through the Cultural District, where porches and patios will host musicians ranging from solo acoustic acts to full bands. With its relaxed vibe, PorchFest also encourages festivalgoers to explore Franklin's local shops and restaurants as they enjoy the day.

Complete band schedules and porch locations are avail-



able on the official website at <https://franklin.porchfest.info>, and updates can be found on the event's Facebook and Instagram pages.

Whether you're a long-time local or new to the area, PorchFest offers a unique way to experience Franklin's vibrant spirit. Don't miss this celebration of music, community, and creativity.

Transitioning to College

Preparing for the college journey is an exciting time — a period filled with intellectual exploration, new friendships & adventures, and the responsibility of managing one’s own schedule. Although adapting to college life can seem daunting at first, students begin to learn how to best juggle their new-found independence while focusing on their studies. The summer before freshman year is an ideal opportunity to organize, prepare, and ensure a smooth transition to college life.

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

1. Consider the legal documents needed, such as, FERPA, Health Care Proxy, HIPAA, Durable Power of Attorney, and if needed, the Psychiatric Advance Directive.
2. If the student has an Independent Educational Plan (IEP) in place during high school, it does not automatically transfer to college. The college may require additional testing and/or documentation.
3. The student should continue to check the college portal and their email frequently throughout the summer for any important updates. The student should inform the college of their personal email contact information before their HS graduation.
4. Be aware of the deadlines for tuition bills and any additional requirements. If the student did not apply for need-based financial aid through the CSS and FAFSA, the Bursar’s office may need the student to sign a waiver before they release the student’s scholarship award.
5. Notify the Guidance Counselor of the student’s final college decision and request a final transcript to be sent to the college. The student should also request a copy of their transcript for future records.
6. Sign up for the summer student orientation and register for classes at the

- first opportunity. Tip - when registering for classes, if the student is not an early bird, they should not sign up for an 8 a.m. class!
7. Some colleges will require placement exams for math, science, English, and foreign language - check the college website and deadlines.
 8. Complete the housing & roommate surveys. It is essential that students are clear about their preferences— it will help the college identify well-matched roommates.
 9. Make summer appointments for medical physicals and dental check-ups.
 10. Register for pre-orientation activities. These programs allow new students to move-in early and connect with a small cohort of peers- great 1st bonding experience.
 11. Coordinate the shopping list for the dorm room with roommates. Ship any items that can be mailed prior to arrival on campus or purchase locally. Check the college website as schools often offer their own services to purchase common items such as XL dorm room sheets, blankets, fans, etc..
 12. Establish a bank account on campus or in the nearby town; and establish a fund transfer account such as Zelle/Venmo/PayPal.
 13. Reach out to your academic advisor and schedule your first appointment in September.
 14. Students should visit their professor’s “Office Hours” early - don’t wait until the day before a test!
 15. Visit campus club events to find favorite activities - a great way to stay involved and meet your “people.”
 16. Parents should plan for the fall Parents Weekend. Pre-arrange a nearby hotel and dinner reservations - maybe even with your child’s new friends.

Message to students: The first few months of college requires flexibility, resilience, and time management. Part of the process is learning to advocate for yourself and figuring out where to get the help you need. Get your sleep, exercise, and eat well! Take care of your physical and mental health as you expand your network of friends and resources. Give it time and try new experiences. Before long, your campus will be your new home. And nothing in life is permanent! If it is truly the wrong fit campus for you, transferring is always an option. But first give yourself time for the adjustments! Just bring your best self and enjoy!

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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Sports

KP Softball Team Ready For Another Playoff Run

By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

King Philip's softball team has high standards and its seasonal records usually are so good they invite lofty expectations.

Consider the last two years. Coach Kate Fallon-Comeau, who's in her sixth year at the Warriors helm, led KP into the state tourney final last season, and in 2023 KP advanced to the state semifinals. On both occasions, the Warriors lost to Taunton, which now has won four consecutive state championships.

Those setbacks, however, haven't discouraged the 2025 contingent — they're back in the playoff mix again and ready for another deep advance.

"At the start of the season, the girls' goals were all about going back to the states again," Fallon-Comeau said. "My immediate goals were to work hard and develop our strengths. The next

objectives were to qualify for the tourney and go as deep as possible. We're capable of getting to the finals again but we must keep working hard and improving."

Fallon-Comeau no doubt has her team's attention. At Local Town Pages deadline, the Warriors were 14-2.

KP lost five seniors from last year's outstanding squad but five starters on this year's team are experienced returnees. Three freshmen, nevertheless, have earned starting roles and are contributing.

"Our strengths include pitching, hitting, defense, some experienced players, and girls whose softball IQs are good but still developing," Fallon-Comeau offered. "Our players are also athletic and very coachable."

KP's four captains are quality leaders and well-skilled competitors. They include seniors Liv Petrillo (shortstop) and Allie Cecere (pitcher/first base) and



Kate Fallon-Comeau has guided KP's softball team to another successful season.

juniors Ali Gill (second base/outfield) and McCoy Walsh (pitcher).

Through the first half of the season, the quartet had compiled some noteworthy statistics. Petrillo, who will play next year at Providence College, was hitting .423 and had 7 home runs,

21 RBIs and 14 runs scored. Gill was hitting .424 and had 4 home runs, 16 RBIs and 23 runs scored. Walsh was 8-1, had 84 strikeouts and an E.R.A. of 1.09. Cecere was 3-0, had 25 strikeouts and a 0.00 E.R.A.

"Liv bats in the clean-up slot, she hits hard and has lots of power," Fallon-Comeau said. "Her swing is great, too. Liv is solid at shortstop and has a strong arm. Allie moves the ball effectively, relying on a curve ball and riser. Her control is good and she's a very capable fielder."

"Ali (Gill) swings well, she's fast on defense and has good range in the outfield. McCoy is one of the top pitchers in the state, a dominant force. She's confident, mixes her speeds, locates well and relies on lots of spin. She also fields her position very well."

Sophomore Bailey Cederbaum may be young but "she's doing a great job as our catcher," Fallon-Comeau said. "Bailey's

skills and technique are improving every day, she's solid on defense and her throwing arm is strong."

At the halfway mark of the season, sophomore Kiera Lawrence, who has a batting average of .412, 11 RBIs and 10 runs scored, had settled in nicely in right field. "Kiera is fast, her arm is strong, and she gets a good read on the ball," Fallon-Comeau said. "She's improving as a hitter."

KP's freshmen trio includes Cheyenne Murray (third base), Annabelle Curran (center field), and Liv Wainwright (left field). Curran was hitting .486, had 10 RBIs and 18 runs scored.

"Cheyenne is solid at third, making things happen," said Fallon-Comeau. "She's athletic and is smooth covering bunts. She's got lots of confidence at

PLAYOFF

continued on page 17

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PLAYOFF

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the plate. Annabelle is fast, reads the ball well in the outfield, has a strong arm and is a left-handed hitter who swings a solid bat. Liv started well, is solid, improving and still learning.”

Junior Lauren Griffin is utilized as the designated-player. “She’s a very effective contact hitter who keeps the ball in play,” Fallon-Comeau noted.

KP’s assistant coaches deserve praise for the way the program continues to excel. Clara Pereira is the first-base coach and Bill Kelley, who’s been assisting Fallon-Comeau for six years, helps wherever he’s needed. “Clara played for me at Franklin High and she played at Wheaton,” Fallon-Comeau said. “She knows the game. Bill has got great experience, he focuses on basics and is always a step ahead.”

Fallon-Comeau’s coaching philosophy stresses a combination of winning, reaching one’s potential and having fun.

“I drill fundamentals, strive to motivate our players and want them to respect the game,” she said. “And, there are valuable

life lessons I hope the girls learn. Some include overcoming adversity, learning to be resilient, becoming good leaders and quality teammates while also accepting responsibility and being accountable.”

The Warriors are acutely aware that Taunton has set the bar high. The Tigers are still in dynasty-mode (four straight state crowns). They also are the defending Kelly-Rex Division champs. Their program obviously is dominant.

But, as Kate Fallon-Comeau says: “We’re capable of getting to the state finals again.”

A strong work ethic, daily improvement and staying healthy are the keys to a deep tourney run for KP. Another match-up with Taunton isn’t out of the question.

The Warriors’ coach and players, however, know there’ll be some challenging opponents early on and that a deep tourney advance is all about taking care of business.

Regardless of how KP’s season ends, this program continues to provide its fans with hope and high expectations.

Fire Officials Warn Against Laptop Fire Social Media “Challenge”

14 Incidents and Attempts Reported in MA, Many More Likely Undetected

State Fire Marshal Jon Davine and Massachusetts fire chiefs are urging parents and educators to talk to youngsters about the risk of fire and injury posed by a recent social media “challenge.”

The trend, which appears to have started on TikTok, promotes inserting a paper clip, pencil lead, or other conductive object into a laptop computer’s charging port or other port. This can cause a short circuit that increases the device’s temperature or causes smoke, sparks, or a fire – any of which could injure a young user.


“We’ve received more than a dozen reports from Massachusetts fire departments of young people engaging in this behavior in less than a week,” said State Fire Marshal Davine, who circulated a notice about the nationwide trend to local fire chiefs.

“There are probably many more that responsible adults haven’t heard of or officially reported. No matter how smart your kids or students might be, please impress upon them that the only thing you should place in a computer port is the appropriate cord.”

“Today’s electronic devices pack a lot of power into small containers, and tampering with them is dangerous,” said Foxborough Fire Chief Michael Kelleher, president of the Fire Chiefs Association of Massachusetts. “Almost all modern laptops are powered by lithium-ion batteries, which can erupt in sparks and flames when damaged or abused. An event like that will injure anyone close by. The fire can easily spread to clothing, bedding, upholstery, and furniture.”

Most of the reported incidents were interrupted by teachers who spotted the abuse of school-issued laptops. They occurred in Barnstable County, Essex County, Hampden County, Hampshire County, Middlesex County, and Worcester County beginning on or about May 6. So far, only one minor injury has been reported but heavy smoke and device damage have been reported in some cases.

Unfortunately, social media trends involving risky fire-related behavior are not new. In 2020, numerous electrical fires and damage were reported after another challenge promoted dropping a coin onto the prongs of a power plug partially inserted into a wall outlet.







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Sports

New KP Girls Lacrosse Coach Off to Dynamic Start

Warriors' Goal: Get Past 2nd Round of Tourney

By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

A first-time varsity coach has adjusted quickly to that role and it's paying dividends for the King Philip girls lacrosse team.

Matt Custodio's transition from Natick High assistant to head coach of the Warriors has been as smooth as silk. KP's record at Local Town Pages deadline was 15-1, numbers that no doubt reflect the competitive philosophy of the 31-year-old coach.

"I focus on winning, our players reaching their potential and enjoying their athletic journey," Custodio said. "Here's what it all come down to — 'are you being the best version of yourself?'"

That question would easily get a "yes" from KP fans. The Warriors have qualified for the playoffs again and they may even achieve a lofty goal that Custodio put on his to-do list.

"The first goal we set after preseason practice was to do the little things well and play for the girl next to you," Custodio said. "Our second objective (the lofty goal) was to avenge last year's

overtime loss to Franklin and capture the Hockomock League's Kelly-Rex Division title. And our third goal was to top last year's ranking (No. 15) and go deeper than the second round of the tourney."

Check the box on the first goal but beating Franklin and taking first in the division has yet to be determined because the KP-Franklin match was on tap after Local Town Pages deadline. As for surpassing last year's ranking, that has not been determined yet but the Warriors were No. 10 after the last rating. Advancing past the second round of the tourney obviously is in a wait-and-see situation.

Last year, the Warriors, who were coached by Kourtne Wilder, finished 14-6, were seeded at No. 15 and lost in the second round of the playoffs to Wellesley after defeating Brookline.

KP's overall team strengths should be major assets in the post-season. And, Custodio likes what his players bring to the table.



Coach Matt Custodio with his captains — Makenzie McDevitt, left, and Sierra King,

"We've got experience," he said. "Our squad is a junior-senior team that has great team chemistry. Our six seniors all will be playing college lacrosse next year. Other keys are our high lacrosse IQ, our depth, skills and athleticism. The players are also accountable, always trying to improve and learn."

KP's captains — senior midfielders Makenzie McDevitt and Sierra King, personify many of the team's strengths. McDevitt was the Warriors top scorer last year (63 goals, 15 assists for 78 points).

"Makenzie is the fastest player on the team," Custodio said. "Her endurance is great, she's outstanding in transition, passes well and makes her teammates better. She also gets all the ground balls. A captain who leads by example and by being vocal, she'll play for Boston University next year."

"Sierra is an excellent defensive midfielder who's the focal point of our defense. She's the first to volunteer for whatever task she's given. She's willing to compromise and strives to improve. She'll be playing at Stone-

hill next year."

Three senior attackers who'll also play in college are Sammy Cloutier (Southern New Hampshire University), Emily Heslin (Westfield State) and Abigail MacDonald (Endicott).

"They've got strength, speed and an instinctive nature," Custodio emphasized. "They know how to get position and they've got a sixth sense of where their teammates will be. This is a trio that knows how to generate success."

KP's defenders include juniors Katie McGann, Lauren Obara and Ashleigh Whitbread.

"These girls are the vocal leaders of the team," Custodio said. "We'll go as far as this group takes us. They mesh well, they're tenacious when needed and their technical skills are good. They move fast, read the game effectively and rely on defensive communication."

Senior Kaitlyn Parish started in goal last year and had 150 saves, a goals-against average of 6.85 and a save percentage of 52. This season her numbers are a goals-against average of 5.5 and a save percentage of 60.

"Kaitlyn is fearless," Custodio said. "She's got a high lacrosse IQ and is excellent at calling out plays on defense. She's doing a good job of reading the game and she's quick. She's not afraid to battle for ground balls and she's tough, able to box anyone out."

Custodio has assembled a top-notch group of assistant coaches. They include Meaghan Steck (javyee coach), Kate Holmes (javyee assistant), and varsity aides Cam Curley and Caroline Klim. "It's an amazing staff that allows the coaches and players to be ourselves," he said.

Custodio was an assistant coach for two years for Natick High's girls lacrosse team, then moved over to the boys squad last season before taking the reins at KP. A 2011 graduate of Natick High, he played two years of javyee lacrosse for the Redhawks. He later enrolled at Penn State University, majored in broadcast journalism and graduated in 2015.

"I worked for Natick Pegasus, the town's public access cable station, for six years, and finished up as the station's assistant sports producer," he said. "Currently, I'm a computer science teacher in Natick and have been in the system for six years."

Custodio, who's been married to his wife Lindsay for 1½ years, said he's always wanted to coach at the varsity level. "I've always wanted my own program," he noted. "And, I knew KP was looking for a head coach. I had two interviews and got the job in late February."

Adding Custodio to the Warriors' coaching staff appears to be a solid move. When he talks about the life lessons he wants his players to learn from playing lacrosse, his words are very telling.

"I want the girls to learn how to overcome adversity and be resilient," he emphasized. "They can also learn how to become top-notch leaders and quality teammates. And, two other keys are to learn to be goal-oriented and to be accountable."

The way the KP girls have played this season is an indication that they've learned those lessons well.



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KPHS Students Honored at Hockomock League Scholar Athlete Dinner

Two students from King Philip Regional High School were honored for their impressive accomplishments during the annual Hockomock League Scholar Athlete Dinner held at Luciano's Restaurant on Thursday, May 1.

King Philip Regional High School seniors Gavin Hickey and Noah Lerner were among 24 student-athletes honored with the Scholar Athlete Award at the Hockomock League Scholar Athlete Dinner.

Gavin competed with the King Philip Regional High School cross country, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field teams. Gavin now plans on attending Bentley University to study business.

Noah also competed with the high school's cross country, indoor track and field, and outdoor track and field teams during his time at King Philip. Noah plans on attending Central Florida University in the fall.

The Hockomock League Scholar Athlete Dinner celebrates the outstanding accomplishments of student-athletes from the 12 league schools. Students are recognized for their achievements both in the classroom and in sports.

"Both Gavin and Noah have demonstrated outstanding leadership, academic success, sportsmanship, and athletic achievement throughout their four years of high school, and we're so proud of all their accomplishments," said KPHS Athletic Director Gary Brown. "Gavin is a true leader and an asset to the KP community. Noah is also a true leader, serving as a captain for all three sports programs he was involved in. We're so proud to have them both. For these two, participating in athletics is an extension of the classroom. They excelled in all aspects of their high school careers."

Superintendent Dr. Rich Drolet and Principal Nicole Bot-



KPHS senior Gavin Hickey was joined by Athletic Director Gary Brown as he received the Scholar Athlete Award. (Photos courtesy King Philip Regional School District.)



KPHS senior Noah Lerner was joined by Athletic Director Gary Brown as he received the Scholar Athlete Award.



Gavin Hickey and Noah Lerner were among 24 student-athletes honored at the Hockomock League Scholar Athlete Dinner on Thursday, May 1.

tomley both congratulated Gavin and Noah on their outstanding accomplishments in sports and academics.

"We are extremely proud of Gavin and Noah. They are both very deserving of this recognition," said Principal Bottomley.

"Gavin and Noah have shown a tremendous amount of dedication to their academics while excelling in sports. They each have very bright futures ahead of them."

"The King Philip Regional School District is proud to honor seniors Gavin Hickey and Noah

Lerner. Congratulations to both of them!" said Superintendent Dr. Drolet. "We're grateful to see them recognized for their efforts at the Hockomock League Scholar Athlete Dinner, as they each get ready to embark on their futures in college and beyond."

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Sports

KPHS Longtime Girls Tennis Coach Bob Goldberg Notches 800th Career Victory

King Philip Regional High School Girls Tennis Coach Bob Goldberg reached a historic milestone on Thursday, May 1, earning his 800th career victory with a win over Stoughton High School. The achievement adds to a remarkable coaching legacy that spans more than 50 years.

The win marks yet another chapter in a legendary coaching career that has spanned more than five decades.

A native of Maine, Coach Goldberg took the reins of the

King Philip Regional High School Girls Tennis program in 1971 and has remained a steadfast presence every spring since.

In his 54 seasons, he has guided his teams to 46 MIAA State Tournament appearances and secured 19 Hockomock League titles. His longevity and success are unparalleled, but it is his impact on students and the school community that truly defines his legacy.

“Coach Goldberg has been an asset to the entire KP com-



The King Philip Regional High School Girls Tennis team celebrates Coach Bob Goldberg's 800th victory following a match against Stoughton High School on Thursday, May 1. (Photos Courtesy King Philip Regional School District)



King Philip Regional High School Girls Tennis Coach Bob Goldberg won his 800th match on Thursday, May 1.

munity for over 50 years and is a role model for student-athletes, coaches, teachers and administrators,” said King Philip Athletic Director Gary Brown.

Coach Goldberg is also known for a rare feat in high school athletics — coaching two different mother-daughter player combinations over the course of his career, a testament to his enduring presence and influence.

“As teachers, students and coaches have come and gone, Bob has been a consistent presence at KP, and everyone is better off for their interactions with him,” Athletic Director Brown said.

In addition to his coaching accomplishments, Coach Goldberg taught history at King

Philip Middle School for 39 years, educating and mentoring students both in the classroom and on the courts. Even after retiring from teaching, he continues to serve as a life coach to countless young athletes through the game of tennis.

“Coach Bob Goldberg embodies everything we strive for in education and athletics,” said King Philip Superintendent Dr. Rich Drolet. “He’s a kind and compassionate leader who never loses sight of the bigger picture — supporting the whole student and creating a positive, respectful team culture. Bob’s 800 wins are a remarkable accomplishment, but his true legacy will always be the countless lives he’s touched across generations at King Philip.”

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KPHS Awarded Innovation Career Pathway Designation in Business and Finance

King Philip Regional High School has officially received designation from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) for an Innovation Career Pathway (ICP) in Business and Finance.

This recognition follows a competitive multi-phase application process and positions the school to expand meaningful, career-connected learning opportunities for its students.

DESE publicly announced the District's new ICP designation during the 2025 Massachusetts STEM Summit at Gillette Stadium earlier today, Wednesday, May 7.

The effort began in the summer of 2024 when Principal Nicole Bottomley, Math Department Head Shawn Geary, School Counseling Department Head Jessica Nutter, English Department Head Sean Skenyon, and Assistant Superintendent Colleen Terrill applied for the Innovation Career Pathways Planning Grant.

On Oct. 24, 2024, DESE confirmed that KPRHS was awarded \$15,000 to begin planning the Business and Finance Pathway. This initial grant supported foundational work in curriculum development, student outreach, and industry engagement.

Building on this momentum, the team submitted Part A of the ICP grant on Oct. 23, 2024, and later applied for Part B in February 2025.

As of today, May 7, KPRHS has received official designation from DESE, joining the growing network of Massachusetts schools offering Innovation Career Pathways in high-demand sectors.

In addition to the ICP Planning Grant, KPRHS was also awarded a \$35,000 Career Connected Learning Program Development Grant in early April 2025. This grant, managed by the Office of College, Career and Technical Education, provides targeted funding to further develop program infrastructure, expand student access, and deepen community partnerships.

Innovation Career Pathways are designed to help students explore future careers, build industry-relevant skills, and connect with real-world learning experiences before they graduate from high school. The Business and Finance Pathway will offer students access to specialized coursework, industry certifications, internships, and mentorship opportunities in partnership with local employers.

To support this work, the initial planning team expanded to include Library Technology Teacher Cheryl Rowe, Teaching Assistant Cheryl Dittrich, School Counselor Samantha Hilton, School Counselor Mallory Connors, and Business Teacher and DECA Program Leader James Dow. Their involvement has helped broaden access to business-related opportunities and ensure alignment with student interests and community needs.


"Receiving this designation and the supporting grants is a major milestone for our school," said Principal Bottomley. "We're excited to provide students with hands-on experiences that connect what they're learning in the classroom with the skills and knowledge they'll need in the real world."

Looking ahead, KPRHS aims to expand its Innovation Career Pathways into additional high-demand fields.

"Our goal is for current and future King Philip Regional High School students to get to choose from a growing menu of relevant career pathway opportunities," said Superintendent Dr. Rich Drolet. "One of our most important jobs as educators is to prepare our students for life beyond high school. This new designation will enable our District to help prepare more students for meaningful careers in Business and Finance. We look forward to pursuing other Innovation Career Pathways in the coming years."

For more information about Innovation Career Pathways, visit www.maicp.org.

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Norfolk Designated as Tree City USA by the Arbor Day Foundation

The Town of Norfolk was named a Tree City USA by the global nonprofit Arbor Day Foundation.

Norfolk earned the designation as a result of achieving Tree City USA standards for 2024, maintaining a tree board or department, upholding a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban forestry, and participating in an Arbor Day celebration.

The Arbor Day Foundation’s Tree City USA program is operated in partnership with the National Association of State Foresters and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service.

The program has recognized cities and towns across the country that leverage urban forestry to enhance the livability and sustainability in the community for more than 40 years. The Arbor

Day Foundation, along with its network of supporters, have helped plant more than 500 million trees across the U.S. and more than 60 other countries since 1972.

“To be named a Tree City USA is to be part of something bigger,” wrote Dan Lambe, chief executive of the Arbor Day Foundation, in a letter congratulating Norfolk on the designation. “In an era where cities

and towns are facing increasing challenges related to air quality, public health, and climate resilience, nurturing urban forests has never been more important. By prioritizing tree stewardship, you’ve not only helped enhance Norfolk’s beauty and livability, but you’ve also invested in a healthier, more sustainable future for your residents.”

The designation of Norfolk as a Tree City USA comes on the heels of Blair Crane, the town’s Tree Warden and Director of Public Works, being named as the 24th annual Seth H. Swift Tree Warden of the Year by the Massachusetts Tree Wardens’ and Foresters’ Association (MTWFA). Crane was presented the Silver Tree Award by MTWFA President Ed Olsen during the association’s 112th annual meeting and conference on Jan. 7.

Crane and Town Administrator Justin Casanova-Davis both thanked the Arbor Day Foundation for the designation and pledged to continue preserving the natural environment in Norfolk.

“To be recognized as a Tree City USA community is a testament to Norfolk’s dedication



to environmental stewardship,” Crane said. “We’re proud to earn this distinction and to promote the value of our trees, celebrating our efforts to preserve our natural environment. Thank you to the Arbor Day Foundation for this recognition.”

“Trees are a vital part of Norfolk’s landscape, providing beauty, improving air quality, and supporting biodiversity,” said Casanova-Davis. “We appreciate the Arbor Day Foundation’s efforts to bring attention to the cause of planting and maintaining trees in the United States and across the world. This recognition as a Tree City USA highlights the Select Board’s and our community’s ongoing dedication to maintaining and growing a precious natural resource, our trees.”

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Norfolk Public Library Institutes New Policies and Procedures to Ensure Patron Safety

The Norfolk Public Library has updated policies and procedures related to public computer usage and electronic services as part of its continued commitment to fostering a safe, welcoming, and respectful environment for all community members.

The changes were made to enhance patron safety — especially among children and teens — while maintaining the library’s dedication to intellectual freedom and access to information.

Key changes include:

- **Centralization of Computers:** All public access computers have been relocated from the juvenile and young adult areas to a more visible, communal space next to the Reference Desk. This will make computers more visible and make it easier for staff to supervise use.
- **Guest Pass Restrictions for Minors:** Children ages 9-15 will not be issued guest passes. Children in this age group can continue to access the internet using their library cards.
- **Updated Language on Obscene and Offensive Materials:** The policy emphasizes the library’s obligation to balance patrons’ rights to access information with the community’s right to a public space free from disruptive or inappropriate content.

Computer workstations are located in public areas that are shared with library patrons and staff. Individuals are expected to respect the rights of others when accessing content. The deliberate access of obscene materials may constitute a violation of one or more provisions of Massachusetts General Laws.

The library is operating under new protocols when a patron is observed accessing obscene materials. Staff may:

- Order the patron to terminate their session
- Bar them from the library for the remainder of the day
- Issue a formal written warning from the Library Director
- Enact progressive discipline for future violations

As part of the updated procedures, all users must now agree to a condensed version of the Electronic Services Policy each time they log on to a library computer.

The full policy can be viewed on the library’s website: <https://norfolkpl.org/about/policies>.

“These updates reflect our responsibility to provide a safe environment for all patrons while preserving the values of public access and free expression,” said Library Director Sarah Ward. “We are committed to ensuring our policies evolve in a way that supports the needs of our community.”



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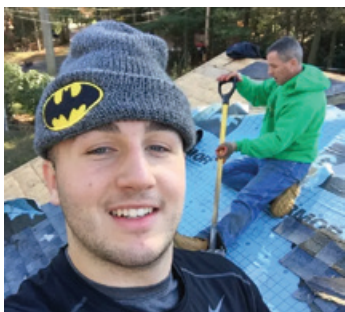
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