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July 2025

Partial Reopening of Park Street Bridge

BY GRACE ALLEN

Area drivers may feel some relief soon, as the Park Street bridge in Norfolk was scheduled to re-open in one direction by late June. The bridge has been closed to traffic for the past seven months.

At Local Town Pages deadline, MassDOT would not commit to a date, but plans were being finalized to reopen the northbound lane (heading towards Main Street) in a reduced capacity, with restrictions on truck traffic and other heavy vehicles.

"A barrier will be placed accordingly to limit vehicular traffic, and proper signage will be installed at the bridge notifying motorists of the one-lane road," said Mass DOT spokesperson John Goggin in an email exchange. "Detour signs will remain in place to guide motorists wishing to travel southbound on Park Street."

The bridge was closed abruptly on December 9 after an inspection revealed structural issues, including ongoing



A partial reopening of the Park Street bridge is expected to lessen the strain on local commuters.

corrosion of the exposed steel reinforcement. The bridge was downgraded from Fair to Poor in 2020, and was then subjected to more frequent inspections. Located at the northern end of Park Street, the bridge crosses over the MBTA commuter rail tracks at the Main Street end of Park.

Goggin said MassDOT has performed a full load rating of the bridge structure based on the existing, current conditions.

Through analysis, it was determined that the northbound portion of the bridge is able to convey vehicular traffic at a reduced weight posting for two, three, and five-axle vehicles. While trucks and school buses are not excluded from weight-restricted bridges, MassDOT will work with the local bus company and emergency ser-

No Unfunded Mandate - Judge Rules Against Wrentham

BY JOE STEWART

For more than a year, Wrentham has delayed full compliance with the MBTA Communities program, which seeks to increase housing in part through requiring zoning that authorizes multi-family housing "by right." In December, voters at Town Meeting overwhelmingly rejected a proposed overlay zone. Then in March, Wrentham and eight other communities initiated legal action claiming that the MBTA Communities program is an unfunded mandate. On June 6, Plymouth Superior Court Judge Mark Gildea denied Wrentham's motion and agreed with the Commonwealth to dismiss the case.

Not an Unfunded Mandate

In his decision Gildea wrote, "... Municipalities have neither pled specific costs for anticipated infrastructure costs, nor provided any specific timeline for anticipated construction projects. Instead, the only allegations... before the court are generalized comments about large-scale issues they foresee, which are insufficient to sustain the Municipalities' claims." Later, Gildea states, "...

the court concludes that: 1) §3A is not an unfunded mandate; 2) the Municipalities have failed to identify nonspeculative direct costs requiring appropriation for anticipated infrastructure costs."

State Responds

In an email exchange, Ed Augustus, the Commonwealth's Secretary of Housing and Livable Communities, wrote, "We are pleased the courts have again affirmed the intent of the MBTA Communities Law, and we look forward to working with the remaining communities to complete their zoning changes. Massachusetts' housing shortage has led to unaffordable prices and rising rents, but the MBTA Communities Law is working to deliver new housing where it's needed most and to bring down the cost of housing for all residents."

Augustus highlighted that 75% of MBTA communities have now approved multifamily zoning, many for the first time in decades, and the law is already working to produce needed housing with

MANDATE

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BRIDGE

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BRIDGE

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vices to evaluate specific buses and emergency vehicles to determine if certain vehicles may use the bridge.

According to Goggin, average daily traffic over the bridge prior to its closing was estimated to be 10,000 vehicles per day, based on observed traffic volumes and MassDOT inspection procedures. Since December 9, detours have been in place and surrounding neighborhoods and roads in Norfolk, Franklin, and Wrentham have been impacted.

Blair Crane, Norfolk's Director of Public Works, said that town departments, and the bus company, have adjusted their schedules and tried to adapt to the loss of a key intersection in town.

"We've all moved some resources around as well as changed our schedules, and there haven't been that many issues, other than inconvenience," he said.

More pressing, however, is that the partial reopening of the bridge in one direction may cause some confusion for motorists, added Crane.



"It is certainly a concern of mine, which I have put forth to the state, is that in my experience people don't pay a lot of attention to signs," he said. "Sign pollution is a worry. After a while, people don't look at them anymore."

It's unclear if the bridge will have to be fully closed down again, either before or during the repair (or replacement) process. Spokesperson Goggin confirmed the state agency could conceivably close the bridge again, based on future inspections or new safety concerns.

And staging of the construction process will be determined during design, making it impossible to predict for now whether the bridge will have to be closed completely for repairs to begin.

As for a timeline when the bridge project would take place, Goggin would only say options were being evaluated to fund its long-term replacement. MassDOT receives federal bridge funds for state-owned and mu-

nicipally-owned bridges and also contributes state funds to most projects.

"Projects receiving federal aid are typically financed using an 80% federal and 20% state funding split," he explained. "The district has added this structure to its priorities for the next iteration of the State Traffic Improvement Program (STIP). This bridge is considered an On-System, non-National Highway System (NHS) bridge. Securing funding for such bridges has been difficult in recent years, as most bridge funds are being utilized to address bridges that are part of the NHS. MassDOT is evaluating options to fund On-System, non-NHS poor condition bridges, and will continue to look for opportunities to address this structure."

Until funding is secured and design plans are finalized, the future of the Park Street bridge remains uncertain, leaving area drivers with little choice but to stay patient for now.

MANDATE

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over 4,000 units in the development pipeline across the new multifamily districts.

In March, the Healey-Driscoll Administration awarded \$8.7 million to 10 fully compliant MBTA communities through the MBTA Community Catalyst Fund, enabling development of 2,332 new units. The Catalyst Funds will be used for water, sewer, and drainage infrastructure improvements and, in the case of Arlington, Revere, and Somerville, to acquire land for housing development.

According to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), every community that requested support, including Wrentham, received it. The Healey-Driscoll Administration has provided over \$7.8 million worth of technical assistance and grants to 157 MBTA communities to support the implementation of this law.

No Decision by Select Board

At its June 17 meeting, the Select Board did not move forward with scheduling a Special Town Meeting nor make a decision to appeal; instead choosing to go into executive session to discuss litigation strategy. Town Counsel Jay Talerman summarized the court's ruling as concluding that there is no unfunded mandate, that the law only requires the adoption of compliant zoning.

The Select Board discussed possible next steps including scheduling a Special Town Meeting (STM) to enable voters

to adopt MBTA Communities compliant zoning. Talerman cautioned against scheduling a STM without taking the time to educate voters on the implications of not adopting the zoning, noting that, "Any rush is a rush to failure."

Select Board Chair Chris Gallo asked how much litigation has cost so far and Town Manager Mike King responded that the cost has been about \$13K. Talerman elaborated that a future appeal might cost another \$10K - \$20K. Select Board Member Jim Anderson asked about the plans of the other towns and Talerman summarized that Hanson has not made a decision, Holden has decided to not appeal, Middleton has decided to appeal, and Wrentham has adopted MBTA Communities compliant zoning.

Talerman noted that an appeal would likely be decided by the Supreme Judicial Court (SJC) because this is a statewide issue. He further observed that the SJC is likely to support the law and that overturning the decision is difficult.

Following deliberations in executive session, the Select Board issued a statement, "After careful consideration, the Wrentham Select Board has decided not to appeal." The Select Board did not provide guidance on next steps, such as scheduling a STM or requesting that the state provide more time for the Town to educate voters on the advantages and disadvantages of approving MBTA Communities compliant zoning.

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Curbside Composting Coming to Wrentham

Wrentham residents will soon have the option of curbside composting available to them. Black Earth Composting, a Massachusetts based company, will be doing bi-weekly, curbside pickups in Wrentham. Residents can sign up to express interest in the service by going to blackearthcompost.com. The first 100 residents

to sign up for the service will get a FREE starter kit that includes a wheeled barrel as well as compostable liners.

The service is available for a fee of \$16.99 monthly or sign up for six months for \$89.99. While participating in the program, residents will also receive a coupon for a free bag of compost.

Benefits to the environment when composting can be found on the Black Earth Compost web site, and additional information can be found at www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home.

Questions? Email Black Earth through their website or follow Wrentham Recycling's Facebook page and send a message.

Three Wrentham Girl Scouts Earn Gold Award for Community Impact Projects



Sammy Hughey created kits to help young students manage anxiety.

Girl Scouts of Southeastern New England recently honored three young women from Wrentham for earning the prestigious Girl Scout Gold Award, the highest achievement in Girl Scouting. Each teen took on a community-focused project that addressed important needs and left a lasting impact.

Sammy Hughey: Supporting Mental Health in Elementary Schools

Sammy Hughey earned her Gold Award for her project titled *Calming Corner Kits for Elementary School Students*. With a passion for children's mental health, Sammy created specialized kits for every K-3 classroom at Delaney Elementary School in Wrentham. These kits included stress-relief tools such as books, coloring pages, fidget toys, posters with breathing exercises, and positive affirmations—all designed to help young students manage



Lillian James helped implement an after-school Spanish tutoring program.

anxiety and stress in a healthy, effective way.

To make her vision a reality, Sammy collaborated closely with the Delaney School principal and school counselors throughout the academic year. She also organized fundraisers and solicited donations from local stores, friends, and family to gather the materials for the kits. Additionally, she created resource documents for teachers to further support their students' emotional well-being.

Sammy presented her project to the teachers at the start of the school year and received positive feedback from the staff.

Lillian James: Helping Classmates Excel in Spanish

Lillian James was also recognized with the Gold Award for her project *Si Se Puede: Strengthening Spanish Education in Schools*. After noticing that many of her classmates were struggling with



Kate LaPlaca wrote a cookbook to help food pantry clients cook simple, nutritious meals.

Spanish but hesitant to ask for help, Lillian took action to fill the gap. She created an online resource hub filled with study guides and helpful materials for Spanish students and worked with school leadership to revive a Spanish-specific tutoring program.

Lillian partnered with the Spanish National Honor Society to recruit volunteers for after-school tutoring. Because of her efforts, the program has seen steady student participation and measurable improvement in student performance.

Kate LaPlaca: Food Pantry Cookbook Helps Clients Cook Nutritious Meals

Kate LaPlaca earned the prestigious Girl Scout Gold Award for her project, *Food Pantry Recipe Book*. Partnering with the Wren-



Kathleen Bellicchi participated in the 2025 Ride to End ALZ New England at Hampton Beach State Park on Sunday, June 14. Along with her team, Bellicchi's Classic Biscotti Bike Team, the Wrentham resident raised \$4,872 to support Alzheimer's and dementia research. Bellicchi rode in memory of her late husband, Eric, who was diagnosed with early-onset Alzheimer's at 57. Their shared tradition of baking biscotti became a source of connection through his illness and eventually grew into a business, Bellicchi's Classic Biscotti, which now continues under new ownership while supporting the Alzheimer's Association.

Concert Intime

A Musical Tribute with a Historic Connection to Helen Keller

The Wrentham Historic Commission and the Original Congregational Church proudly present *Concert Intime*, an extraordinary musical event exploring the trailblazing Zoellner String Quartet, performed by the acclaimed Musicians of Ma'alwyck. The concert will take place on Friday, July 25 at 8 p.m. at the Original Congregational Church in Wrentham.

This unique performance invites audiences to step back in time and rediscover the adventures, stories, and musical bril-

liance of the early 20th-century Zoellner String Quartet. Their remarkable legacy includes a compelling historical connection to Wrentham, having spent two summers in residence there in 1915 and 1916 with renowned disability rights advocate Helen Keller. Musicians of Ma'alwyck bring this history to life through a thoughtfully curated performance that intertwines music and storytelling.

Tickets are \$20 and available online. For more information, visit musiciansofmaalwyck.org.

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SCOUTS

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Q & A With Healthy KP

What is the Drug-Free Community (DFC) grant program?

Q: What is the Drug-Free Communities (DFC) grant program?

A: The DFC grant is a federal program that helps local communities prevent youth substance use. It provides funding and support to help schools, families and community groups work together to create safe, healthy environments for kids. Research shows that students who feel connected to school and supported by adults are less likely to use drugs or alcohol. The DFC grant helps create these connections—both through education and through fun, meaningful activities that build a sense of belonging.

Q: Is the King Philip Regional School District part of this program?

A: Yes! King Philip Regional School District partners with the

Healthy KP Substance Use Prevention Coalition. The coalition was formed in 2018 and received federal DFC funding in 2020.

Q: How is the Healthy KP Coalition using the grant?

A: It funds education, outreach, and events that help students stay connected and make positive choices. Examples include providing prevention resources and guest speakers for parents, supporting student events that build positive peer relationships, and partnering with schools on the diversion program, which helps students learn, reflect, and grow after substance-related incidents.



Q: Who is involved in the coalition, and how is it structured?

A: Each DFC-funded coalition must include representatives from 12 required community sectors, ensuring a broad and balanced approach to prevention. These sectors are: youth, parents, business community, media, schools, youth-serving organizations, law enforcement, religious or faith-based organizations, civic and volunteer groups, health care professionals, state/local government, and other organizations involved in reducing substance use. In addition to its sector representatives, the Coalition includes a full-time

coordinator, a Steering Committee and engaged community members who help guide and support its work.

Q: What's next for the Healthy King Philip Coalition?

A: The coalition has applied for a continuation of the DFC grant to keep this work going for another five years. If awarded, the funding will allow even more support for prevention programs in the district. The community will find out in September whether the new funding has been approved.

Q: How can I get involved?

A: The coalition welcomes new members! Whether you're a parent, student, business owner, or just someone who cares, your voice matters. Visit healthykp.org for more information or reach out to info@healthykp.org for updates on coalition meetings,

volunteer opportunities, and ways to support local prevention work.

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

Norfolk Lions Announce 2025 Scholarship Recipients

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The Norfolk Lions are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2025 scholarship awards. Four high school seniors were each awarded \$2,500 scholarships. To be eligible, the student must reside in Norfolk but can attend any public or private high school or be home schooled.

The scholarships are awarded to candidates who demonstrate a commitment to an active involvement in community service, as well as academic performance and participation in other extra-curricular activities. This year's recipients are:

- Ashrith Epuri

High School: King Philip High School

Attending: University of Florida
- Keira Evans

High School: King Philip High School

Attending: University of Florida
- Ugonna Ezemma

High School: King Philip High School

Attending: University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Lindsey Moynihan

High School: Ursuline Academy

Attending: Tufts University

SCOUTS

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tham Food Pantry, Kate created a cookbook titled Cheap and Easy Meals, featuring simple, nutritious recipes using ingredients commonly found at the pantry.

She assembled meal kits for her overnight oats recipe in mason jars, accompanied by

one of 35 hand-painted pottery bowls she crafted. These were distributed to families during pantry pickups. Kate also organized a food drive to collect ingredients for the featured recipe and made the cookbook available online to ensure long-term impact.

Find Kate's recipe book here: <https://sites.google.com/view/cheapandeasymeals/home>.

An Apology to Howard Bailey

To the Editor:

At the Wrentham Special Town Meeting of May 12, the Town voted to exercise its right to buy 2095 West Street and deny Howard Bailey, a local builder and developer, his plan to develop that property. Although I was happy with the vote, I was uncomfortable with the characterizations made regarding Howard at that meeting. Atypical of many builders, Howard has been a friend to Conservation and Open Space in Wrentham for more than 50 years. As the Agent for the Conservation Commission, I offer my apology for not rising to speak to that at the meeting but also believed such was tangent to the subject and that Mr. Bailey could weather the mischaracterizations.

I've been the Conservation Agent in Wrentham since 1989 and have worked with Howard over that time on several projects. He can be difficult, but he is a businessman hewing to the regulations and decisions

of the Town's boards. The local builders, like Howard, have reputations to protect and always finish their projects as the boards direct. Some out-of-town builders showered the Town boards with promises and then ran away to the next town after the profit was wrung out. That sticks the Town with paying to finish the work correctly, which can cost tens to hundreds of thousands of dollars. Several local builders, with Howard in the fore-front, have used the Open Space Preservation Development (OSPD) Bylaw to permanently protect natural, open spaces. Although some of that Open Space wasn't the best it could be, some of the blame could be assigned to a badly outdated OSPD Bylaw and not completely the developer.





With the many new residents in Town, I would like to provide some background on Open Space and Mr. Bailey. Howard was a good friend of my late father-in-law, Luke Schensnol – one of the founders of the

Conservation Commission, and together they acted during the 1970s and early '80s to preserve many of the open spaces that we have today. Much of that work has been forgotten. But one example that springs to my mind is a 100-acre area south of Crocker Pond that serves as the upper watershed for our Town Well #4. Howard worked with the owner, Mr. Simeone, to deed that property to the Conservation Commission to maintain it in a natural state.

The primary reason to preserve Open Space is to protect the quality and quantity of our drinking water. This not only gives us and downstream communities cleaner water but keeps our taxes low by lessening the need to treat that water. Secondary benefits are fewer homes and thus cars on the road and a town that retains some of its rural appearance and heritage. Regardless of the math and circumstances, study-after-study have found that residential development costs a town money.

The fact that so many came out to protect this one property was encouraging and hopefully it persists.


Sincerely,
Darryl Luce, Agent
Wrentham Conservation Commission



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Summer Cleanout is Greener with Affordable Junk Removal

There are plenty of reasons to call a junk removal service. Maybe walking through your basement has gotten difficult or there is no more room in the attic? Perhaps you are planning to move, and you need to declutter before your open house?

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

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

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

Business spotlight

got a staff of ten, along with eight trucks, servicing eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island.

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

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

Not everything ends up in a landfill—not if Jay can help it. He first tries to either recycle or



donate items. Only after he tries to repurpose items do they end

up at the transfer station.

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

If you don't want to be bothered with the dumpster, they've also got a driveway special where they'll take away a truckload of your unwanted things if you pile it up. Or if you don't want to lift a finger, then you can point at the items, and the team will fill up their truck and haul away your unwanted things. However you do it, you're left with more space and more peace of mind.

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

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

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

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

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

Jay and his family are deeply involved in the community. He and his wife, Christine, run the Corner Market restaurant in Holliston. It's not uncommon for someone to reach Jay at the restaurant, order a sandwich, and then schedule a junk removal appointment. Yes, the local small business really can handle everything!

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

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KPHS Valedictorian and Salutatorian Named

King Philip High School has announced the valedictorian and salutatorian of the Class of 2025.

The valedictorian of the graduating class is Noah Lerner, and the salutatorian is Sarah Joy.

Noah Lerner

“Noah is a truly exceptional student whose intellectual drive and dedication to learning have set him apart,” said Principal Nicole Bottomley in a press release. “He has pursued the most rigorous academic path available at King Philip, enrolling exclusively in Honors and Advanced Placement courses, and complementing his studies with independent work in data science through IBM’s Coursera program. With a keen interest in mathematics and computer science, Noah approaches problem-solving with sharp analytical thinking and a genuine enthusiasm for discovery.

Noah served as president of the Spanish National Honor Society and participated in the Math National Honor Society. He was also a three-season varsity captain, leading the cross country, indoor track, and

spring track teams.

Outside of school, Noah volunteered at Magnolia Heights Gracious Retirement Living and worked at Bonnet Shores Beach Club.

Noah has committed to the University of Central Florida to study computer science for the next phase of his education.

Sarah Joy

“Sarah has distinguished herself through exceptional academic achievement, artistic talent, and a deep commitment to service,” said Principal Bottomley. “She has consistently demonstrated intellectual curiosity and leadership.”

Sarah completed her Graduation with Distinction year-long project/capstone on the medical science of meditation during her senior year.

In addition to her academic accomplishments, Sarah served as the treasurer of the National Honor Society and as president of the French National Honor Society. She was also a member of the Science National Honor Society and the Healthcare Club. She is an accomplished musician, participating in the



The valedictorian of the Class of 2025 at King Philip Regional High School is Noah Lerner, left, and the salutatorian is Sarah Joy. (Photo Courtesy King Philip Regional School District)

Band Leadership Program and Chamber Music Group, and she has taken private flute lessons throughout high school.

Sarah is also a dedicated dancer, specializing in ballet, contemporary, and jazz. She attended the five-week Washington School of Ballet Summer Intensive Program, as well as a one-week Repertory Experience held there.

Her passion for the arts extends into mentorship — she teaches children’s ballet at the Franklin School of Performing Arts. She also volunteers through the Leo Club, contributing to numerous service projects that benefit both the school and the broader community.

Sarah has committed to Brown University to study neuroscience, pre-med, and ballet as part of the next phase of her education.

Norfolk Summer Concert Series

Norfolk’s summer concert series takes place Thursday evenings on Town Hill from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Check the Recreation Department’s Facebook page for updates or changes due to weather. Rain dates are usually the following Monday. Concerts are presented by Norfolk Recreation, with support from the Norfolk Cultural Council.

- June 26
Reminisants - Great Oldies
- July 3
Southern New England Community Concert Band - Big Band Sound
- July 10
Heartland Radio - Current and Classic Country
- July 17
Ocean Breeze - Beach Music
- July 24
Franklin School of Performing Arts SPA Electric Youth

- July 31
Pub Kings - Favorite Pub Songs
- August 7
BC & Company - Jazz, Show Tunes, & More!
- Tunes for Tots – Concerts for the Littlest Residents
Children’s concerts take place Tuesdays from 5:45 to 6:45 p.m. on Town Hill. If it rains, concerts will be held inside the Norfolk Public Library. Concerts are presented by Norfolk Recreation and the Norfolk Public Library, with support from local sponsors.
- June 24
Jungle Jim sponsored by the Norfolk Lions
- July 1
Toe Jam Puppet Band sponsored by SEPAC

- July 8
Rolie Polie Guacamole sponsored by Norfolk Community League
- July 15
The BaNannies sponsored by Exhale, A School of Dance
- July 22
BenAnna Band sponsored by C&C Ice Cream Truck

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New Memory Café Launches in Norfolk

BY GRACE ALLEN

On June 25, the Norfolk Council on Aging held its first Memory Café in the Community Room of the Norfolk Public Library. Scheduled for the fourth Wednesday of every month from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., the Memory Café will offer individuals with memory loss and their caregivers a place to connect and enjoy activities in a supportive, judgement-free environment.

According to Karen Edwards, the director of Norfolk's Council on Aging, the Memory Café aims to provide a little normalcy, fun,

and companionship in the lives of those affected by dementia or Alzheimer's.

"The goal is to reduce social isolation in a stigma-free social setting," Edwards explained. "It's an opportunity to go someplace together, and caregivers can meet other caregivers, too."

The monthly Memory Café is sponsored by the Friends of the Library and the Council on Aging. A light lunch is provided, along with games, easy crafts, and other interactive activities.

Some form of musical entertainment is usually on tap,

too, since the benefits of music for individuals with dementia is well-known. The Alzheimer's Association notes music can improve mood, reduce agitation, and enhance memory, cognition, and emotional expression.

"Music does resonate with people with memory loss," said Edwards. "We may forget a lot of things, but even non-verbal people seem to recognize music from their youth."

The July 23 Memory Café will feature Donna Newman-Bluestein, a dance therapist. On her website, danceforconnection.com,

Newman-Bluestein notes cognitively-impaired individuals respond well to both music and movement, both of which enhance neuroplasticity, the brain's capacity to rewire itself in response to new experiences.

Many of the area's senior centers host memory cafés. Edwards says they are all held on different days of the month, so people can attend more than one. Anyone from any town is welcome to attend Norfolk's. Quite often, assisted-living communities will take some of their residents to memory cafés, and help sponsor the programming.

More than six million people in the U.S. have been diagnosed with some form of dementia, according to a report by the National Institutes of Health. Researchers estimate that 42% of Americans over the age of 55 will eventually develop dementia.

Edwards has wanted to bring a memory café to Norfolk for a while now. She is a certified trainer in Powerful Tools for Caregivers, which teaches

memory-enhancing techniques and practical strategies to boost memory functioning. She has found that most of the participants in her classes are caregivers for someone with dementia.

"Dementia diagnoses are happening more and more because people are living longer," Edwards said, noting her father had Alzheimer's. "There's a need for support."

Edwards hopes Norfolk's new Memory Café will offer some of that support and says she's open to feedback from participants. The programming will evolve and reflect the community's wants and needs.

"I'd like it to be one more option, or tool in the toolbox, for caregivers," she said. "It's a way to get out and provide themselves and their person with a nice thing to do."

Contact the Council on Aging at 508-528-4430 with any questions about the Memory Café. Participants are asked to register before attending.

Wrentham Lions Announce 2025 Scholarship Recipients

The Wrentham Lions Club awarded four scholarships to the following graduating seniors at King Philip High School's Awards Night on June 5. The scholarship winners were:

- Caitlin O'Brien: Educational Opportunity Scholarship

- Lillian James: Eugene "Skippy" Brooks Memorial Leadership Scholarship
- Dylan Canavan: Mariano Bernardini Memorial STEM Scholarship
- Addisyn Lamothe-Vaughn: Phil & Mickey Scott Memorial Health Profession Scholarship

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Glenn Brown, CFP

Once David Letterman had a frequent guest and favorite musician of his, Warren Zevon, on for an entire show. Zevon, who disclosed his terminal cancer, performed and interviewed throughout. Dave at one point asked, "Anything you know now, that I should know?" to which Zevon wittily deadpanned, "Enjoy every sandwich."

Those raising children and helping aging parents often feel rushed and are distracted thinking about what's next, overlooking the beauty of daily, mundane moments.

July is National Sandwich Generation Month, celebrating a generation of people sandwiched between caring for their young children and aging parents at the same time.

I'm a Sandwicher, as are approximately 15% of Americans between ages 40-60 who face the challenges of planning, communicating and executing for 3 generations at once.

After 60 years in their New Hampshire home, my parents were struggling with their health and finding it increasingly difficult to maintain their independence. The stress weighed heavily on my mother, as she was becoming a caregiver and daily living/house routines began to slide. My wife, our daughters (then 5 & 3) and I lived comfortably in our Ashland home. The adults agreed on a Plan B supported by updated financial planning. Sell both homes, buy a new home for 3 generations and live as one household sharing in daily responsibilities.

The urgency was greater than anticipated and not without challenges since our move to Holliston, here's some antidotes for Sandwichers:

Small talks instead of "The Talk". Families don't like to think about declining health and elder care, let alone discuss it. I used single topics tied to a recent story about a friend, asking what they would do. I'd gain small agreements, then change the subject to continue building a framework for a mutual plan.

Bring in outside mediators. My aunt shared with my mom that time is not your friend. She emphasized the positives and encouraged to act now, rather than later, when fewer options are available. Additionally, we consulted with an elder care attorney on understanding MA Health options, current trusts, POAs and proxies before making the move.

Define their plans for wellness. Far too often, adult children tip-toe around aging conversations with parents for fear it may come across as morbid or worse, inheritance focus. These conversations need to focus on their future ideas of wellness. What is it they foresee for a surviving spouse? When they can no longer remain independent? By having these talks when both parents are in

good health, it defines their expectations and allows planning a foundation with greater flexibility.

Your spouse's support is critical. Very fortunate to have a spouse that pushed me to see the positives and embraces bringing family in as "you'd want your daughters to treat you the same someday".

Through the eyes of a child. It's not all about you, the girls show the love and benefits of learning by being around grandma and grandpa. And vice versa, as health and activity improved due to the energy and motivation brought daily by our girls.

Sometimes timing is everything. I couldn't imagine the anxiety and ill-advised actions my parents would have faced on their own since fall of 2018. Nor would I have wanted to see my mom on her own this past year and moving forward.

Your parents sacrificed many things to make sure you had it better, including concealing issues to not worry you. Be open with communication and embrace change, the best ways to prevent costly unintended consequences and ensure positive lasting memories.

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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Gilly's House to Host Free Summerfest Celebration

Gilly's House invites the public to its annual FREE Summerfest Family Fun Sober Event, taking place on Sunday, August 17 from 12 to 4 p.m. at the Wrentham Developmental Center Fairgrounds, located at 131 Emerald Street, Wrentham.

The annual celebration brings the community together to honor recovery, connection, and healthy fun in a safe, substance-free environment. Admission is completely free, and all food and activities are provided at no cost, thanks to the generosity of sponsors and community partners.

The afternoon will feature:

- Live music and entertainment from MC Michael Petit and DJ Jeff Hall

- A wide variety of family-friendly activities, including a circus workshop, water slide, bouncy house, petting zoo, dunk tank, dragon foam, and arts & crafts
- Hamburgers, hot dogs, chips & drinks (sponsored by the Norfolk Lions Club)
- A restaurant cook-off featuring many local restaurants
- A special guest appearance by Pat the Patriot, mascot of the New England Patriots
- Recovery resources and local vendors on site

Gilly's House, a sober recovery home for men located in Wrentham, was founded by

David and Barbara Gillmeister in memory of their son, Steven, known as "Gilly" by his friends. The nonprofit's mission is to provide a structured sober environment along with life-skills development to help residents reintegrate successfully into the community.

As a nonprofit sober home and community resource, Gilly's House relies on the support of donors and sponsors to make Summerfest a continued success. To help keep the event free for all, visit www.gillyshouse.com for sponsorship opportunities.

For questions or to get involved, please contact Maureen at maureen@gillyshouse.com.

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Living Healthy

Summer Eye Safety

Stay Safe This 4th of July

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

We all use sunscreen to protect our skin, but it's important not to forget your eyes. Summer means more time outdoors, and sunlight can be harmful to your eyes just as it is to your skin. Bright sunlight increases the risk of cataracts, macular degeneration, and even eye cancer. This risk is the same when using indoor tanning beds, so protecting your eyes from artificial UV light matters as much as shielding them from natural sunlight. If you're spending time at the beach or pool, be aware that sunlight reflecting off water and sand can cause photokeratitis, a painful condition sometimes called snow blindness. Everyone, regardless of age or skin color, is vulnerable to UV damage, but children are especially at risk because their eyes

absorb more UV rays. People with light-colored eyes may also be more susceptible to certain eye diseases linked to UV exposure, including eye cancer. Additionally, people with eye conditions like retinal dystrophy might be more sensitive to UV damage. One of the most common eye problems linked to sun exposure is cataracts, which is a clouding of the eye's lens. The lens needs to be clear to focus light properly on the retina for good vision. Years of sun exposure are a major factor in cataract development, which is why cataract surgery is the most frequently performed surgery in the United States. Despite the risks, many people don't realize how important it is to protect their eyes from UV rays. A survey by the American Academy of Ophthalmology found that only about half of



those who wear sunglasses check whether they block UV light. Fortunately, protecting your eyes is simple. Sunglasses should be labeled as providing 100% UV protection or UV400 to block both UV-A and UV-B rays. Choosing wraparound styles helps prevent UV rays from entering around the edges. Even if you wear contact lenses that block UV rays, you still need to wear sunglasses for full protection. Wearing a wide-brimmed hat along with your sunglasses adds extra defense from sunlight. Children need special care too. It's best to keep them out of direct sunlight during midday

when the sun's rays are strongest, and make sure they always wear sunglasses and hats when outside. Many people think clouds block UV rays, but this is not true; the sun's rays can pass through clouds, haze, and fog, causing damage at any time of the year—not just in summer. Be especially cautious when near water, snow, or at high altitudes, where sunlight is more intense because it reflects off these surfaces. With these simple precautions, you and your family can enjoy the summer safely while protecting your vision.

Fireworks: Enjoy the Celebration Safely

With Independence Day approaching, many people look forward to fireworks. While professional displays are generally safe, backyard fireworks can cause serious injuries. Most firework injuries happen between late June and late July. Each year about 16,000 people go to emergency rooms because of fireworks-related injuries, and there are roughly 18 deaths. The number of minor injuries that don't require ER visits is even higher.

Many people believe those lighting fireworks are at the highest risk, but it's the bystanders who are most often hurt. About 65% of firework-related emergency room visits are by people watching from the sidelines. Injuries most commonly affect hands, fingers, legs, head, face, ears, and arms. Small fireworks and sparklers, often considered safer and used near children, still cause many injuries.

Eye injuries from fireworks can be especially devastating. The eyes are very delicate, and sparks, flames, smoke, or flying debris from fireworks can cause permanent damage. Common eye injuries include scratches on the cornea, detached retinas, ruptured eyeballs, and burns. Any injury to the eye should be treated as a medical emergency. If you suffer an eye injury from fireworks, seek immediate care. To avoid risks, leave fireworks to the professionals and enjoy a safe celebration.

Bladeless laser cataract surgery is a major advancement that is FDA-approved and widely used by leading ophthalmologists. This method offers greater precision and safety compared to traditional surgery and often allows correction of astigmatism at the same time, resulting in better vision outcomes.

Why Choose Milford Franklin Eye Center?

At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we provide high-quality sunglasses with full UV protection at our optical service. For those needing cataract surgery, Dr. Roger Kaldawy was the first surgeon in the area, and among the first in Massachusetts, to offer bladeless laser-assisted cataract surgery. Dr. Dan Liu in our practice, offers the same services. We use premium lenses that correct vision at all distances, including near, far, and everything in between. Thanks to bladeless laser technology, even patients with astigmatism can now enjoy excellent results.

Our surgeries take place in a certified, accredited surgery center in Milford, where an anesthesiologist is always present to ensure your safety and comfort. This level of care is not typical for all practices; some perform surgery in-office without an anesthesiologist, which is not endorsed by professional societies or Medicare. If you have been offered office-based cataract surgery, call us for a second opinion.

With more than 24 years of experience and tens of thousands of procedures performed, we are proud to offer state-of-the-art medical and surgical eye care to our community. Your vision comes first with us.

Protect your eyes this summer by wearing proper sunglasses, using hats, avoiding direct sun during peak hours, and celebrating holidays safely. If it's time for cataract surgery, advanced options are available to restore your vision better than ever. At Milford Franklin Eye Center, we're here to help you see clearly for many summers to come.

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John G visited the Holistic Center at Bristol Square office complaining of dizziness and loss of balance. This started after he had Covid and he had been sneezing and coughing. He had been to his primary care physician who told him his issues can happen after a virus like Covid and would resolve on its own. After suffering for over two weeks with these symptoms John decided on a second opinion at the Holistic Center. Upon his exam, it was discovered that John had benign paroxysmal positional vertigo (BPPV), and needed treatment. After being put on a regimen of chiropractic adjustments, supplements and specific exercises, the dizziness and loss of balance started to resolve.

If you or a family member are suffering from BPPV or balance and /or dizziness problems contact The Holistic Center at Bristol Square, located at 1426 Main St. in Walpole. Call (508) 660-2722 to schedule an appointment today.

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

Wrentham Resident Receives Commission into United States Army

On May 7, Carter Joseph Campbell of Wrentham received commission into the United States Army at Clemson University.

Clemson University’s Army and Air Force ROTC units held a joint ceremony to commission 37 Second Lieutenants. Twenty-two students received commissions into the U.S. Army, and 15 students received commissions into the U.S. Air Force.

The ceremony occurred at Clemson’s newly renovated Memorial Auditorium in Tillman Hall.

Following the commissioning ceremony, the newly appointed Lieutenants participated in a Silver Dollar Salute on Clemson University’s Military Heritage Plaza above Bowman field. The ceremony marks the first salute received by the officer from an enlisted member. As a sign of mutual respect, the officer presents the enlisted member with a silver dollar.



Wrentham resident Karson M. Bilezerian graduated from St. Sebastian’s School on June 5. Bilezerian, shown with Head of School Brendan Sullivan, will be attending Fairfield University in the fall.

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Your Best Summer Hair Ever

Easy Ways to Keep Your Hair Healthy All Summer Long

BY GINA WOELFEL

Feel that sunshine? The longer days and poolside vibes mean summer is in full swing—and it's the perfect time to brighten your blonde with a beachy balayage or lighten up your look. But while you're soaking up the season, your hair might be soaking up something else: UV rays, chlorine, and mineral-heavy water.

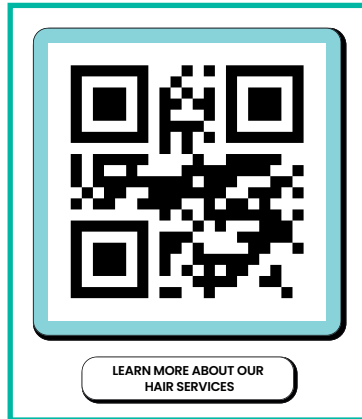
The result? Dryness, dullness, and yes—even that dreaded green tint. Don't worry—we've got you covered with easy ways to keep your hair healthy, vibrant, and summer-ready.

Why Does Hair Turn Green in the Summer?

Most people think chlorine is the main culprit, but that's only part of the story. The real issue? Metals in the water—especially copper.

Copper is often found in pool water, particularly those filled with well water or treated with copper-based algacides. When chlorine oxidizes these metals, they bond to the proteins in your hair. The result? A greenish patina—just like an old penny.

And if you think saltwater pools are a safer bet, think again.



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Saltwater systems still produce chlorine—they just do it differently—so your hair is still exposed to the same oxidizing effects.

The good news? A few proactive steps can go a long way toward protecting your hair from turning green, getting dry, or fading in the sun. Read on for our expert tips.

Pre-Wet and Protect

Dry hair acts like a sponge, quickly soaking up chlorine, salt, and other chemicals. Before you swim, thoroughly saturate your hair with clean, filtered water, then apply a protective hair oil. We recommend favorites like our own *b.LUXE BEFORE* Oil, *Goldwell's STYLESIGN Weightless Shine-Oil*, *KERASILK's Multi-Benefit Hair Oil*, or *Oribe's Gold Lust Nourishing Hair Oil*. This simple step helps block harsh chemicals and seals in moisture to keep your hair soft, shiny, and protected.

Don't Be Afraid of a Swim Cap

Not just for Olympic athletes anymore, swim caps are a smart (and often cute) option if you swim frequently. Choose one made from silicone or lycra for a more comfortable, hair-friendly fit. Bonus: they keep your blow-out intact longer!

Ditch Copper-Based Algacides

If you maintain your own pool, check the ingredients in your algacide. Copper-free op-



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SUMMER
2025

tions are now widely available. You can also test your water's metal content with simple strips from your local pool store and use metal removers or filters as needed.

Start with Healthy Hair

Dry, brittle hair is more prone to damage and discoloration. Invest in regular conditioning treatment like *KERASILK's Recovery Mask* to strengthen and seal the hair cuticle.

Rinse and Clarify

After swimming, wash your hair as soon as possible to rinse away chlorine, salt, and other impurities. If you swim regularly, we recommend using a clarifying shampoo every 1–2 weeks to deeply cleanse and maintain hair health. We love the *Kerasilk* shampoo line—all formulas include a chelating agent, which gently removes mineral build-up without stripping essential moisture, leaving your hair clean, soft, and balanced.

Struggling with Hard Water at Home?

Clean, healthy hair starts with clean water. Hard water can dull your color—especially blondes—and cause unwanted discoloration or fading. That's why b.LUXE now carries the *Kitsch Water Filter*, designed to reduce chlorine and other impurities while being gentle on your hair, skin, and nails. Best of all,

it won't affect your shower pressure, so you can enjoy your wash-time ritual without compromise.

Got Green? Here's How to Fix It

Have you noticed a greenish tint in your hair? Don't worry—it's totally fixable. Book a demineralizing treatment at b.LUXE, like *Malibu C's Crystal Gel Demineralizer*, to remove the build-up of metals and impurities that cause discoloration. Your stylist may also recommend a gloss or glaze to rebalance your tone and bring back that healthy shine.

A Little Prep Goes a Long Way

Summer should be all about fun in the sun—not damage control. With just a few extra steps and the right products, you can enjoy the pool, the beach, and everything in between without sacrificing your hair color or health.

Are you setting your summer hair goals? Book a consultation or conditioning treatment with b.LUXE today—we'll help you stay shiny, strong, and green-free all season long.

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Officials Reflect on Norfolk Shelter Closing

By JOE STEWART

In May, Governor Maura Healey announced that all of the hotel-based emergency shelters across Massachusetts would close this summer. Additionally, the Norfolk Rapid Shelter located at the former Bay State Correctional Center in Norfolk would close as well, likely by July 31.

In an interview, Senator Becca Rausch highlighted the collaborative efforts among stakeholders: members of the Healey administration, Representative Marcus Vaughn and his team, government leaders from Norfolk and Wrentham, school leaders from the King Philip Regional School District and the Norfolk School District, and various community groups including Norfolk Strong. Rausch noted that early on in the crisis the lines of communication were not well established and that it took some time to build trust among the stakeholders.

Despite initial challenges, Rausch credited the Commonwealth with timely financial support to both school districts to mitigate the abrupt increases in enrollment. Rausch emphasized that creating transparent, trusted lines of communication was key

in reducing the impact on Norfolk and surrounding communities.

Justin Casanova-Davis, Norfolk's former Town Administrator, likewise highlighted the open lines of communication, stating that he and members of the School Committee, Select Board, Police and Fire Departments, among others, participated in weekly meetings through December. Casanova-Davis said the greatest impact was felt at the Norfolk Public Schools where additional classrooms were created through renovation, the costs of which were offset by approximately

\$250,000 provided by the Commonwealth. He noted that teachers, administrators, and the School Committee managed the new students effectively and that there were minimal impacts to other departments such as Fire and Police.

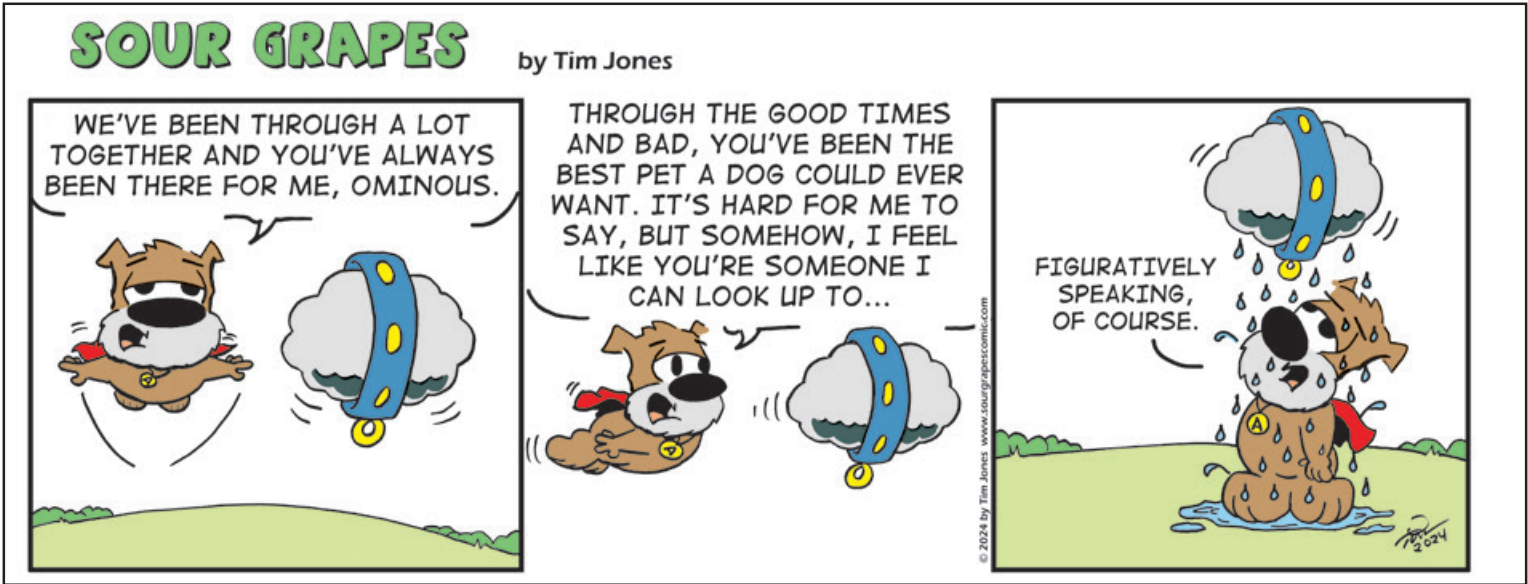
According to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC), a core goal of the emergency shelter system has been to quickly help families find stable housing. Families who stayed in the shelter were required to work with case managers to secure their own leases on the private housing market.

Danielle Ferrier, CEO of Heading Home, the contractor that operated the shelter, shared that 306 families and 973 people have been supported at the shelter since it opened in June, 2024. Heading Home provided employment training, education and housing placement assistance. Families have been moved into alternative housing across the entire Commonwealth, as far out as the Berkshires, where they have been able to secure jobs and affordable housing.

The EOHLC shared that almost 90% of families seeking shelter now are long-time Massachusetts families. Since the start

of 2025, double the number of families have exited shelter (approximately 2,500) than have entered shelter (approximately 1,100).

In an interview with the Franklin Observer, State Rep. Marcus Vaughn said he's called on the state to develop a clear plan for the use of the Bay State property once it's empty. He requested the Executive Office of Administration and Finance initiate a working group to evaluate possible uses, and emphasized Norfolk town officials should be involved in any discussions.



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July Program Highlights at the Norfolk Senior Center

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

Thursday, July 3 at 1 p.m. **Patriotic Flower Arrangements** Rick Tedoldi of Norfolk Garden Club hosts this workshop making flower arrangements using patriotic colored flowers, a red vase and an American flag. Bring a pair of sharp scissors and a small bottle of water. Limited to 22 people. Cost: \$10. RSVP required. Full payment due at reservation. No refunds.

Monday, July 7 at 11 a.m. **Armchair Travel to Greece (Tha-**

sos & Karpathos) Travel virtually to two Greek islands with Jeff Klapes, the Traveling Librarian. Thasos is the northernmost of the Greek islands while Karpathos is at the extreme southeast of the country. Both have distinct Greek charms, and are both off the beaten path, but each has its own unique personality. Thasos is lush and forested with a rich history and fabulous beaches. Karpathos is mountainous and barren but has many traditional mountain villages and some

Thursday, July 10 at 12:30 p.m. **Discover StemWave** Learn about StemWave therapy, a safe, non-invasive, drug-free treatment that is helping many older adults find lasting relief from ar-

thritis, knee, shoulder, back and joint pain. This acoustic wave therapy stimulates natural healing. Alleviation Therapeutics in Franklin will provide guidance on conditions with which StemWave can help. RSVP requested.

Monday, July 14 at 12:45 p.m. **Passing of the Town Cane Ceremony** Join us as we honor Deby Preston, the new oldest resident of Norfolk, former King Phillip employee, and a Norfolk Senior Center bingo enthusiast, as she receives the town cane. She has been a resident for decades. RSVP requested.

Tuesday, July 15 at 1 p.m. **Steve Martin: The Craftsman of Comedy** From his early days

of standup to his stint as a Saturday Night Live host and his decades-long film career in comedy, Steve Martin is a star that has yet to dim. Join film enthusiast Frank Mandosa for a look at Martin's distinguished career. RSVP requested.

Tuesday, July 22 at 1 p.m. **Bananas Foster Cooking Demonstration** All American Assisted Living is providing a demonstration on making bananas foster. Sample some with ice cream. RSVP required.

Wednesday, July 23 from 11 to 12:30 p.m. **Norfolk Memory Café at Norfolk Library** Bring your loved one to the Memory Café and enjoy a light lunch, along with a class led by dance

and movement therapist Donna Newman-Bluestein. For individuals living with memory loss and their care partners. No cost to attend.

Tuesday, July 29 at 11 a.m. **Norfolk Select Board Meet & Greet** Select Board Vice Chair Kevin Roche will discuss various happenings in Norfolk and answer your questions. Bagels and cream cheese will be provided. RSVP required.

Wednesday, July 30 at 12:45 p.m. **Guitar Performance** King Phillip High School Senior Aidan will play instrumental oldies music and more on his guitar. RSVP requested.

KPHS Announces 2025 Graduation Distinction Recipients

Six members of the King Philip Regional High School Class of 2025 have earned Graduation Distinction honors.

To be awarded this distinction, students proposed, researched,

and developed a project based on a community need, then shared their final product with the public. Each student wrote a final process paper and formally presented their project to a fac-

ulty panel. The graduates each received a special designation on their diploma and was honored during the school's senior awards ceremony and commencement exercises.

DISTINCTION IN LIBERAL ARTS

Tristan Cornell — The Impact of French Language and Culture on the Youth

Tristan researched the positive effects of bilingualism and learning to appreciate French culture for American students. He also focused on the connections between the French and English languages and how these connections can inspire elementary and middle school students to continue their French education through high school years. Tristan worked with the Fiske Public Library to create a poster and handouts displaying his research for the Young Adult space.

ated the impact of a mobile app that offers comprehensive information on local farms, seasonal products, and the advantages of shopping locally.

Sophia Evans — Exploring Computer Science Education and Effective Teaching Approaches for Younger Students: A Focus on Learnathons and Coding

Sophia organized a community event that taught elementary students about Scratch and climate science, during which they created a climate science game using Scratch, a coding community for children and a coding language with a simple visual interface that allows young people to create digital stories, games, and animations.

Sarah Hedberg — Disability in the Spotlight: Media Representation and Its Impact on Society

Sarah researched how disabilities are portrayed in film and television, as well as the importance of casting disabled actors in roles that require them to portray characters with disabilities. She focused on different tropes for disabled characters and how these need to be addressed and remedied. Sarah partnered with the Plainville Public Library to create a poster displaying her research to library patrons, and she gathered overwhelmingly positive feedback from them.

Sarah Joy — Here is Everywhere: An Introduction to the American Medical Mindfulness Movement

Sarah curated and displayed a list of expert resources for those wishing to begin mindfulness and meditation practices.

Addison Lewis — Empowering Young Women in STEM

Addison founded STEM Sisters and created the Girls in STEM Summer Camp in collaboration with a local elementary school. She designed multiple activities for students and taught STEM-focused lessons, and she will continue this work during the summer of 2025.

DISTINCTION IN STEM

Keira Evans — My Local Farm

Keira created and then evalu-

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Wrentham Residents Elected to MA Society of CPAs Board Of Directors

Cooper Named Vice-Chair and Audit Committee Chair; Tull Elected Chair-Elect

The Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants (MassCPAs) announced that Marquis Cooper and Ron Tull, CPA, of Wrentham were elected to its Board of Directors for its 2025-2026 fiscal year, which began May 1.

Cooper, elected as vice-chair and audit committee chair, is a manager of global internal audit at Boston Scientific where he oversees a team of analysts and leads audit and advisory projects for the company’s corporate functions, ESG Strategy, as well as the Europe, Middle East and Africa region. He also leads the company’s BRIDGE employee resource group, which is dedicated to enhancing the experience for Black employees and



Marquis Cooper

employees of color and serves on MassCPAs’ Academic and Career Development Committee and Educational Foundation Board.

Tull, elected as chair-elect, is a partner at Schofer Dillberg & Company, Inc., a full-service



Ron Tull

public accounting firm in New England. With over 23 years of tax compliance and consulting experience, Tull specializes in privately owned businesses, professional service organizations, and high-net-worth individuals. He provides support in entity se-

lection, estate and gift planning, multistate tax planning, and assists clients during IRS and state examinations.

MassCPAs Board of Directors is a group of 19 elected members that sets policies, manages programs and oversees activities that benefit the 11,500-member organization and accounting profession in Massachusetts.

“MassCPAs Board of Directors are an exceptional and diverse group of forward-thinking leaders,” said Zach Donah, CAE, president and CEO of MassCPAs. “Their fresh ideas and strategic insight will help shape our initiatives and foster innovation across the accounting profession in Massachusetts.

I am confident that both Marquis and Ron’s involvement will be instrumental in driving long-term growth and value for our members and the industry.”

About the Massachusetts Society of CPAs:

The Massachusetts Society of Certified Public Accountants, Inc. is the state’s professional association of certified public accountants, representing over 11,500 members in public accounting practice, industry and business, government and education. The Society works to develop and maintain high professional standards and offers a wide array of legislative, technical and referral services to its members.

July Summer Services at the First Universalist Society

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) July summer services will explore the Unitarian Universalist (UU) values of Equity, Transformation, Generosity, Interdependence, Justice, Pluralism and Love. All services start at 10 a.m., followed by cookies and conversation.

July 6 -- Yes, And: The Spirit of Improv & UU Values

Join FUSF member, high school teacher, and improv enthusiast Emily Steltzer for a joyful and interactive worship service exploring the surprising connections between the principles of improv and the Unitarian Universalist values of

generosity and equity. Through an introduction to the 5 “rules” of improv and playful exercises, we will build community, boost confidence, and discover how saying “yes, and” can deepen our spiritual practice. Come ready to engage, connect, and leave a little lighter and more inspired!

July 13 -- A Very Tolkien Creation Story

The Fourth Unitarian Universalist Principle says that congregations will affirm and promote the free and responsible search for truth and meaning. As Unitarian Universalists we are challenged to find our own sources of truth and mean-

ing in our lives, whether through sacred texts, encounters with nature, or the exquisite alchemy of our relationships. FUSF lay leader Dave Gerlits will share his own search and how he finally found a Creation Story that he could embrace. It appeared in a most unexpected place: the writings of J.R.R. Tolkien.

July 20 -- The Power of Love

The six UU values revolve around the principle of Love. Rev. A. Powell Davis empha-

sizes: “None of our private worlds is big enough to live a wholesome life in. Love is what we need. To love and be loved.” FUSF member Peter Dennis will lead a discussion on how love fuels us and helps us find meaning, especially in times of uncertainty. We will make music together.

July 27 -- A Conversation on Healing

Dr. Priscilla Cogan, psychologist, and Duncan Sings Alone, Native American Medicine

Person, will explain and contrast their different approaches to healing the self and others through stories and conversation. There will be time for questions and some singing, too.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin MA. For further information about FUSF, visit fusf.org or contact Interim Minister Reverend Beverly Waring at 508-528- 5348 or minister@fusf.org.

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July News and Program Highlights at the Fiske Public Library

For a full list of programs, visit <https://fiskelib.org/>.

Summer Hours

The library will be closed Friday, July 4 for Independence Day. Summer hours are Monday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The library will be closed on Saturdays in July and August.

Summer Reading is Here!

The 2025 Summer Reading Program “Level Up at Your Library” is in full swing. Summer Reading Club is open to kids of all ages. If you have not registered yet, you can still stop by the library to sign up. Completed reading logs must be returned by August 8 in order to be eligible for prizes.

Thank you to our sponsors who have helped to “Level Up” our summer here at Fiske: Dervishi Masonry and Hardscapes, Omega Pizza, Lake Pearl, X-Treme Craze Foxboro, Level 99, R1 Entertainment, Regional Tire and Service, Wrentham House of Pizza, Menchies Foxboro, An Unlikely Story, Three Pugs Creamery, Absolute Health Chiropractic, Wrentham

Cooperative Bank, Scholastic, the Boston Bruins, Thermo-Fisher Scientific, Ritas of Walpole, Friends of the Fiske, Claudia Schumacher, Caron Ketchum, and Chris Cosimano “In Honor of Jim Soares’ Birthday.”

CHILDREN’S PROGRAMS

Rock, Paper, Scissors Tournament

Monday, July 14 from 1 to 1:30 p.m.
Kids age 5+ are invited to join us for a reading of the book “The Legend of Rock, Paper, Scissors” by Drew Daywalt. Following the story, kids can take turns facing off in an exciting RPS tournament. At the end of the event, crafts and other related projects involving rocks, paper, and scissors will be available. No registration required.

Reverse Painting with Pop-Up Art School (ages 10-18)

Wednesday, July 16 from 3:30 to 5 p.m.
Learn about the centuries-old art of reverse glass painting and create your own reverse painting. Reverse painting

techniques have been used since the 16th century. In reverse painting, the details are painted first and then the larger shapes. For tweens and teens ages 10+. This program is supported by a grant from the Wrentham Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Robot Obstacle Course with Mobile Quest

Thursday, July 31 from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.
Join Mobile Quest S.T.E.M. Center for their Robot Obstacle Course program. Participants will learn how to control a Dash robot and maneuver it through a series of obstacles. Each level will get more difficult. Ages 7-12. Registration required.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Spice Kits

Pick up one of the monthly Spice Kits. Each kit contains information about the spice, recipes, and a sample to try at home. July’s spice: sumac.

Adult Take & Make Craft

This adult craft kit contains materials and instructions to make a pinecone bird feeder. Craft kits can be picked up at the front desk while supplies last.

Paint A Pint Glass Night

Tuesday, July 15, from 6:30 to 8 p.m.
Create a unique (and functional) pint glass—a fun library date night! Registration is required.

Fiske Public Library Book Club

Tuesday, July 22 at 7 p.m.
This month’s book is “Funny Story” by Emily Henry. Contact Library Director Kim Shipala at kshipala@sailsinc.org or 508-384-5440 with any questions.

Canning, Freezing, & Dehydrating with Blackstone Valley Veggie Gardens

Thursday, July 24 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
Too many vegetables from your garden this year? No problem! We’ll show you the easiest and best ways to preserve them. No registration is required.

SAFE Coalition Receives Funding for Adolescent Wellness Center

SAFE Coalition has received a \$25,000 grant from Community Health Systems Foundation to break ground on its Adolescent Wellness Center. The Cen-

ter will be a central space for teens across southeastern Massachusetts to access resources that combat substance use and mental illness.

The space will be located inside SAFE headquarters in Franklin and offer a fully dedicated spot for teens-only support, hosting drop-in hours, referral services, mentorships, peer groups and classes as well as educational nights for area caregivers.

The Center is designed to directly address the high rates of mental illness and substance use among teens. Events like drama therapy, sobriety nights, and trauma-informed yoga will offer more ways to play, cope, and grow.

Supports will also be available for education, prevention and recovery from substance use. The Center will offer programs to help students build resiliency tools that combat the perceived need for substance use, while support groups and peer mentorship will give teens added ways to be heard, gain advice, and belong. Recovery plans, referral services, and accountability check-ins will offer additional touchpoints.

Research shows that offering teens neutral social spaces is essential to maintaining a sense of wellbeing. Such spaces decrease

social isolation and build a psychological sense of belonging. Regular visitors to these places report better overall mental health. Neutral social spaces are associated with higher levels of community cohesion and wider social networks, too.

The need for teen mental health and substance use support is greater than ever. Rates of teen depression and anxiety have remained high since 2020 and remain one of the Surgeon General’s top priorities. And teen overdose is at an all-time high, while the prevalence of vaping and other substance use persists.

Yet in-school and extracurricular programs across the region have shuttered due to cuts in school spending despite their success in preventing teen isolation, increasing touchpoints with supportive adults, and building self-esteem. Community-led programs are helping to close a critical gap in support by offering judgement-free, compassionate care to teens who need it most.


Community Health Systems (CHS) was established in 1994 to support nonprofit organizations

that enhance the community’s capacity to achieve optimal health, wellness, and quality of life.

SAFE serves over 55 communities in Massachusetts with programs for teens, support groups for loved ones impacted by others’ substance use, harm reduction education, resources for families in need like a community diaper bank, housing support, and more. SAFE’s services are free to recipients and no insurance is needed.

SAFE began in 2015 after a community discussion on the increasing deaths from opioid use and what could be done to combat the rising epidemic. Today, the nonprofit works with first responders, local and state politicians, municipalities, schools, other nonprofits, and concerned citizens across southeastern Massachusetts to fill gaps in substance use prevention and education, harm reduction, recovery, and mental health support.

Learn more about SAFE Coalition by calling (508) 488-8105 or emailing info@safecoalitionma.org.



TOWN OF

Wrentham

MASSACHUSETTS

The **Town of Wrentham** is currently seeking **volunteer members** to serve on the **Economic Development Commission (EDC)**. This advisory board to the Select Board works to promote balanced economic growth, support small businesses, and enhance the overall quality of life for residents and visitors.

What the EDC Does:

- Supports local business retention and expansion
- Attracts new businesses that align with the Town’s goals
- Recommends policies to enhance Wrentham’s economic base
- Partners with other boards and stakeholders on development initiatives

Ideal Candidates:

- Residents with experience in business, real estate, marketing, planning, or economic development
- Creative thinkers and problem solvers
- Individuals committed to the long-term success of Wrentham

Time Commitment:

The EDC meets once per month in the evening, with occasional additional meetings or project work as needed.

Interested?

Submit a **letter of interest** and resume to the **Town Manager’s Office** or email tmoffice@wrentham.gov or submit online via <https://www.wrentham.gov/623/Volunteer-Application>.

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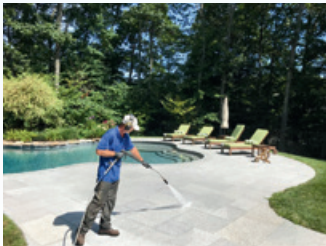


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Wrentham Teen Wins Top Prize at World's Largest Science Fair

Bishop Feehan Student Honored for 3D printer waste solution

Benjamin Davis, a 16-year-old student at Bishop Feehan High School, has been named one of the top young scientists in the world, earning the prestigious \$75,000 Regeneron Young Scientist Award at the 2025 Regeneron International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) for his groundbreaking invention of a compact desktop plastic recycling system.

Benjamin's device, which transforms 3D printer waste into reusable filament, stands to revolutionize how small-scale creators, classrooms, and hobbyists manage plastic waste. The machine—designed to be affordable, easy to use, and highly efficient—integrates pultrusion and extrusion technologies, making it 45% more efficient and 90% less expensive than standard recycling systems.

"I designed a machine to recycle 3D printer waste into usable filament through a novel combination of plastic processing technologies," Benjamin explained. "I went through over 50 iterations of components and many redesigns. Although the science fair took over my life at times, I will never forget the incredible experience I had and the number of things I learned."

Benjamin's journey began at his school's science fair and advanced through a regional competition and the Massachusetts Science & Engineering Fair (MSEF), where he won the AMD Engineering Excellence Award. That recognition propelled him to ISEF—the world's largest and most prestigious high school science competition—where he stood out among more than 1,600 global finalists.

Judges were particularly impressed with Benjamin's technical mastery and communication skills. "His innovative approach showed technical rigor and extraordinary resilience in problem-solving," said Jerome Smith, Head of Community Affairs for Amazon's New England Region. "His clear communication of his sophisticated project helped him stand out."

Benjamin's science teacher, Ms. Kelly Gomez, said his win is no accident. "He learned, adapted, and persevered through adversity. And he has an extraordinary ability to explain complex ideas clearly, which is rare at any age."

MSEF Executive Director Helen Rosenfeld called Benjamin's win "a powerful reminder that extraordinary innovation is possible at any age." She added, "His work exemplifies what independent research



The Regeneron ISEF attracts top high school scientists from across the globe, awarding nearly \$9 million in scholarships and prizes each year. Benjamin's achievement is a proud moment not just for Bishop Feehan and the town of Wrentham, but for STEM education across Massachusetts.

As for what's next, Benjamin plans to keep building and improving on his design. But for now, he's still taking in the magnitude of the experience. "ISEF was probably one of the best weeks of my life," he said. "It was amazing to be at an event with so many like-minded people who share my interest in science and engineering."

From his home workshop to the international stage, Benjamin Davis has proven that world-changing ideas can start at any age—and sometimes, in your own backyard.

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Dealing with Stress in the College Process in 2025

For many high school juniors and seniors, the college application process can feel like a pressure cooker. Today's students face not only the usual challenges, but also a landscape that's more complex and competitive than ever. Rising costs, competitive admissions, global uncertainty, and the nonstop comparison culture of social media all contribute to heightened anxiety.

Sources of Stress in 2025

- **The rising cost of college** and uncertainty about return on investment.
- **The complexity and competitiveness of admissions:** Students feel pressure to excel in every area — grades, course rigor, activities aligned with future careers, test scores, essays, and more.
- **The influence of social media,** where everyone seems to be accomplishing something extraordinary.
- **The political, social, and economic climate,** which can add background stress.
- **The lasting effects of COVID,** including disrupted learning and missed opportunities.

If this sounds familiar, your teen is not alone — and neither are you. The good news is that there are ways to manage the stress and help your teen move through the process with more confidence.

Stress-Reducing Tips for Students

- **Start somewhere, anywhere:** Don't let overthinking paralyze you. Draft an outline, jot down ideas, or complete one small task. Progress beats perfection. The key is to build momentum — once you start, the next step feels easier. Remember, there's no such thing as a perfect application, only an honest and well-prepared one.
- **Find your outlet:** Whether it's sports, music, video games, art, or baking — build regular breaks into your schedule. Even ten minutes of physical movement or creative activity can help reset your focus and lower stress levels. Instead of a coffee break - I walk around my neighborhood!
- **Celebrate small wins:** From creating your college list to drafting your first essay, every task you check off counts. Keep a visible list (on your wall or planner) and cross things off with pride. Small victories build confidence and make the big picture feel more manageable. And celebrate with something that will keep you motivated - an ice cream at Nicky's always works for me!
- **Work with your family on smart, affordable choices:** Reducing financial anxiety can ease the pressure of the whole process. Sit down to-

gether and create a budget, explore options like in-state or out-of-state public universities, honors colleges, private schools offering generous merit aid, and scholarship options, like Going Merry. Research tools like BigFuture, Big J Educational resources (awesome merit charts), and net price calculators on college websites. Building a list that fits academic goals, social fit, and your budget is empowering.

- **Put the process in perspective:** You don't have to be perfect in every category. Colleges are building communities — they want authentic, well-rounded people, not robots. Focus on what excites you and how you can contribute.
- **Manage your social media intake:** What you see online is often the highlight reel, not the full story. Consider unfollowing or muting accounts that trigger anxiety, and instead seek out positive, supportive voices — or take occasional social media breaks to clear your head.

Parents — How You Can Support Your Teen

- **Be a research partner:** Help your teen identify great-fit, affordable colleges and explore scholarship op-



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

tions. Sometimes knowing there's a plan can reduce anxiety. Together, create a balanced list that includes a mix of likely, probable, and reach schools that also make financial sense.

- **Schedule regular check-ins:** Avoid college talk every day. Weekly or biweekly family check-ins result in lower stress for everyone!
- **Ask thoughtful questions:** Instead of rushing to solve every concern, ask what excites or worries your teen. Listening is powerful. Questions like "What part of this is feeling hardest right now?" or "What's something about college that you're looking forward to?" can open meaningful conversations.
- **Keep perspective:** Reassure your teen that there's no single "perfect" college — and no one path defines

their future success. Remind them that many students find their place and thrive in schools they hadn't originally considered.

Final Thought

The process may feel overwhelming — but with open communication, thoughtful planning, and a focus on fit *and* affordability, your family can move through it with less stress and more confidence. There are so many paths where your teen can thrive.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

College 101 Admissions Consultants LLC. Website: www.mycollege101.com. Email: tracy@mycollege101.com. Phone: (508) 380-3845.

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SAFE Gala Highlights Group’s Reach to 55 Communities

By JUDITH DORATO O’GARA

“This night is incredible. It is a highlight of the year for us at the SAFE Coalition, and we know that so many community members have been impacted by substance abuse, and tonight we get to honor those we have lost and celebrate the opportunity our community has to honor (them) and provide education and recovery,” said Jennifer Knight-Levine, co-founder and CEO of the SAFE Coalition, which held its third annual fundraising gala on Thursday, May 8 at the Lakeview Pavilion in Foxboro. The event, which included a live auction emceed by Ken Cosco, met its fundraising goal of \$200,000.

“We’re pleased so many people are here to support such an incredible cause,” said Dr. Anne Bergen, President of the SAFE board of directors, prior to the dinner. “SAFE is such an important organization in our community. We really have to

do something about the mental health epidemic. It’s not going away, and SAFE is on the front lines.”

Many attended from the local community to support the cause.

“I’m here because of what this organization is doing and has done since its inception,” said Rep. Jeff Roy at the event, present years ago when Jennifer Knight and Jim Levine were pondering how to tackle substance use disorder in the Franklin community. “To think that that small group of people turned into what we are seeing here tonight, 400 people coming, and all the lives they’ve saved and the support they’ve provided to the community ... and now SAFE is supporting 55 communities,” said Roy.

Norfolk County Commissioner Richard Staiti was also among supporters at the SAFE Gala. “They do a great job in Franklin and surrounding communities in the county, and I al-

ways want to try to support them any way I can,” said Staiti, who added that the Norfolk County Commissioner’s office recently was able to give SAFE a \$1,500 award as part of the opioid settlement.

Dr. Anne Bergen opened the event, honoring the memories of those who struggled with mental health issues and substance abuse disorder who have passed on and introducing SAFE COO Carrie Asprinio, who told her personal story, addressing the need to reduce stigma surrounding sexual and physical abuse even among those in recovery.

Jim Derick followed, pointing out that, “We at SAFE know that when an individual or a family is impacted by substance abuse or mental health challenges, the entire family is impacted.” Derick then awarded the Jeffrey N. Roy Excellence in Community Service Award to Bill Fox.

Keynote speaker Jacob Haendel, co-creator of the pod-



SAFE CEO Jennifer Knight-Levine and SAFE Director of Family Recovery Jim Derick, co-founders of the SAFE Coalition, at the third annual SAFE Gala.

cast Blink, and sole survivor of a rare brain disease usually caused by inhaling the fumes from heroin heated on aluminum foil, moved the audience with his account of his experience, which included 18 months of Locked-in Syndrome, which, he said, caused him to shift perspective.

GALA

continued on page 21

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Notice is hereby given that the following application for an Individual Groundwater Discharge Permit is being processed and the following actions being proposed thereon pursuant to Section 43 of Chapter 21 of the General Laws, and 314 CMR 5.00 and 2.06:

CITY/TOWN:	Norfolk
PROJECT NAME:	Villages at River’s Edge WWTF
APPLICANT:	Villages at River’s Edge Condominiwn Association
FACILITY LOCATION:	Winterberry Way, Norfolk, MA 02056
TYPE OF DISCHARGE:	Groundwater discharge of sanitary wastewater
QUANTITY OF DISCHARGE:	32,000 gallons per day (GPD)
PERMIT NO:	798-2
TRANSMITTAL NO:	24-WP 12-0005-REN
PROPOSED ACTION:	Tentative detennination to issue individual groundwater discharge permit

A copy of the application, draft pe1mit, and statement of basis or fact sheet relative to the draft permit may be obtained from the MassDEP’s Wastewater Management Program at the above address and telephone number or online at: <https://hr.vw.mass.gov/service-details/massdep-public-hearings-comment-opportunities>

Comments on the proposed action or requests for a public hearing thereon pursuant to 314 CMR 2.07 must be filed with MassDEP at the above address within thirty (30) days of this notice. For information on the process for formally intervening in adjudicatory proceedings, please refer to 310 CMR 1.00: Adjudicatory Proceedings, Section (7) Intervention and Participation.
<https://www.mass.gov/regulations/310-CMR-100-adjudicatory-proceedings>

Daniel J. Kurpaska
Section Chief, Wastewater Program
Bureau of Water Resources

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Wrentham's Annual Town Meeting Decides Budget, First Right of Refusal, Zoning, Civil Service and Labonte Tax Relief

By JOE STEWART

Wrentham's Annual Town Meeting began at 7:30 p.m. on June 2 at the King Philip Regional High School. Voters considered 27 articles including the town's budget; selling a "first right of refusal" relating to 2095 West Street; updating the town's Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) zoning bylaw to conform with the state's Affordable Housing Act; replacing the town's Floodplain Overlay District zoning bylaw to adopt recent updates to flood maps; removing from civil service the police lieutenant; and a citizen's petition to ask the state legislature to pass a law exempting the spouse of the former deputy police chief George C. Labonte from property taxation on the family's Wrentham home.

Most warrant articles were passed with unanimous consent or by unanimous voice vote. What follows are summaries of

those articles that had at least some discussion.

Library Budget Increased by \$3,000

Article 6 related to Wrentham's operating budget. Several speakers supported increasing the Library's budget by \$3,000 and paying for the increase by decreasing the Town's annual reserve from \$200,000 to \$197,000. Proponents explained that the Sweatt Fund had provided the funding for several years but would no longer do so as the Sweatt funds are for exceptional requests, not operating needs. The amendment was approved unanimously as was the resulting amended budget.

Sell 2095 West Street First Right of Refusal

At last month's Special Town Meeting, voters decided to purchase 2095 West Street to preserve its 65 acres as conservation

land. The acquisition will be funded from several sources (e.g. Wrentham's Community Conservation Funds, a grant from the state Department of Conservation and Recreation, and \$600,000 from the Pawtucket Water Supply Board (PWSB).) The PWSB conditioned their \$600,000 on acquiring a "first right of refusal" for the property. The purpose of this article was to authorize selling the first right of refusal and, following a few questions, the article passed. Wrentham will next coordinate an auction to sell the first right of refusal, thus enabling the PWSB to bid its \$600,000 and, presumably, win the auction and the first right of refusal.

Remove Police Lieutenant from Civil Service

At the 2021 Fall Town Meeting, voters decided to remove the Chief and Deputy Chief of Police positions from civil

service. Likewise, at the 2023 Town Meeting, voters decided to remove full time members of the Fire Department from civil service. Article 15 would remove the Police Lieutenant position as well. Following brief discussion, the article passed.

Earliest Start Time for Town Meeting Set to 7 p.m.

Following brief discussion about when it would be best to start Town Meeting, voters approved an amendment to the article and set the earliest start time for Town Meeting to 7 p.m.

Property Tax Exemptions

Wrentham authorizes several property tax exemptions for groups in financial distress, including seniors, disabled people and veterans. The Board of Assessors recommended that voters approve increasing the income exemption levels and voters agreed unanimously.

Zoning Changes (Accessory Dwelling Units and Floodplain)

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) are an additional residential unit that can be built within an existing home or outside of it. Wrentham has had zoning authorizing ADUs; however, the state Executive Office of Housing and Living Communities recently published ADU regula-

tions. The purpose of this article was to adjust Wrentham's regulations to comply with the state regulations. An amendment was proposed to remove the requirement that the ADU and the primary residence share common utilities. Following discussion, the amendment was approved as was the amended article. Now Wrentham ADU regulations comply with the state regulations and ADUs may have separate utilities.

Following remarks explaining the high-level changes from Thomas Maloney, the chair of the Planning Board, voters approved the new floodplain zoning which now complies with National Flood Insurance Program regulations and which incorporates the latest Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

Labonte Property Tax Exemption

Wrentham Police Chief Bill McGrath spoke in support of exempting from real estate taxation the home owned and occupied by the surviving spouse of Wrentham Deputy Chief George C. Labonte, who passed away last year. Following brief discussion, voters approved the article. Wrentham will now need to petition the Legislature to pass a bill authorizing the exemption.

GALA

continued from page 20

"I'm speaking to you as a guy who is in chronic pain in a wheelchair, and I'm so much happier than I was back then..." said Haendel, who now appreciates "little things" he took for granted.

After an impact video focusing on teen Sarah Bakas, Knight-Levine explained how SAFE now reaches 55 communities, with diversion programs in 19 schools and communities, Narcan training sessions in 44 communities, and public presentations in 31 communities. She highlighted SAFE's many offerings, among them 1:1 peer support, clinical support, and support groups. Prior to the speaking portion of the program, Knight-Levine told Local Town Pages about a recent grant from Community Health Systems and upcoming plans for that funding.

"That means we can close off the space and create a real teen center. We'll run after-school programs and weekend programs, and this will be peer-to-peer support," she said.



Jacob Haendel, keynote speaker at the SAFE Gala, co-creator of the podcast Blink, (www.blinkthepodcast.com), spoke, and stood, briefly, before a sold-out audience of 400.

SAFE publicly thanks its major gala sponsors:

- **Champion Sponsors:** Direct Federal Credit Union, Healthy KP Substance Use Prevention Coalition, and Lampasona Concrete
- **Advocate Sponsors:** Ever-source Energy, Plainridge Park Casino, The Sacchetti Family, and Sentient Jet
- **Ally Sponsors:** 1776 Financial Services and Arbella Insurance Foundation

- **In-Kind Donors:** Allegra Franklin-Marketing & Print Solutions, Earth and Sun Co., Franklin TV, Hope in Handfuls, Jaqueline-Gundberg Photography, Lakeview Pavilion, Only Prettier Design, Revelation Productions, The Candle Man, Unique Melody Events & Design, and Vicario Studio

For information on the SAFE Coalition, visit <https://www.safe-coalitionma.org>.

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Sports

KP's Petrillo Should Excel For PC's Softball Team

Captain, All-star a Well-rounded Student-Athlete

By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Liv Petrillo would definitely be in the running to win an election if voters were asked to select the most well-rounded student-athlete in the Hockomock League.

The 5-foot-6 Petrillo, who graduated from King Philip Regional on June 8, played three infield positions during her four-year career for the Warriors' softball team. She also was a captain as a senior and was a Hockomock League all-star twice (honorably-mentioned choice as a sophomore).

Petrillo's academic achievements were dynamic, too. She was a two-time National Honor Society student who finished her senior year with a 3.9 GPA. This fall, the 18-year-old will be attending Providence College on an athletic scholarship and will major in nursing.

A native of Cumberland, R.I., Petrillo was also active at KP devoting time to help students, especially special-needs underclassmen, as a peer tutor and peer mentor.

Petrillo, whose nickname (Liv) is short for Olivia, obviously is very special. During a week in mid-April last spring when KP faced Milford, Oliver Ames and Bishop Feehan, she took "special" to a new level. She hit six home runs and had 16 RBIs, leading the Warriors to a sweep of the three games. She hit a trio of three-run HRs against Milford, a two-run blast and a solo shot against Oliver Ames, and a grand slam against Bishop Feehan.

That achievement earned Petrillo the Player of the Week Award in the Boston Globe, and Extra Inning Softball, a national organization, selected her for Hitter of the Week.

She earned those accolades by "doing her homework."

"Before that week, my dad helped me with my hitting and fielding," Petrillo said. "He was a very good athlete at Bishop Feehan — a pitcher and a quarterback. The practice was good preparation for those opponents."



Liv Petrillo enjoys playing shortstop where she's not afraid to take risks to make key plays.

Petrillo said that week no doubt was her top thrill in her four years of softball at KP. "It was so rewarding and the extra work paid off," she emphasized. "Our fans provided lots of support and my teammates were all fired up."

KP coach Kate Fallon-Comeau was quick to congratulate Petrillo. "She was smiling and gave me some high-fives," Petrillo offered. "That's a memorable moment that I'll never forget and will always cherish it."

Petrillo started playing softball as a six-year-old in Cumberland's youth league and continued playing at that level in Wrentham. When she began her varsity career, she started as a freshman at third base then moved to second base as a sophomore. She later handled the chores at shortstop as a junior and senior.

"I love playing shortstop," she said. "That's where the action is and you have to cover lots of ground. I enjoy turning a grounder in the hole into a force-out at second. I'll take risks trying to make plays. It's a position where one can lead and there's never a dull moment."

Where Petrillo will play at Providence College will be determined later but the Friars know they're getting a top-quality athlete. She's played club softball for eight years and has an abundance of strengths.

"Liv has been the kind of player every program hopes to have — a fierce competitor and a steady presence on and off the field," Fallon-Comeau said. "As a senior captain, she stepped up in every way, leading by example and guiding our younger players with the same care and encouragement she once received from the great role models before her. Providence College is getting not just an outstanding athlete, but a true student of the game who's ready to make an immediate impact."

Petrillo has a high softball IQ, she's technically sound and is a team-first player. She's also athletic and displays plenty of leadership. "I rely on an aggressive style," she said. "I'll take risks trying to make plays and I'll swing at pitches out of the strike zone, hoping to advance runners."

Petrillo's style as a captain involves a combination of traits. "I lead by example, I'm vocal and I strive to be supportive and encouraging," she emphasized.

Petrillo was disappointed that KP, which usually advances in the playoffs to the final four or to the state final, didn't win a state crown. The Warriors lost to Lincoln-Sudbury, 4-1, in the Division 1 quarterfinals and their only run came on a home run by Petrillo.



Liv Petrillo accepted a scholarship to Providence College "because PC just felt like home."

"A state title would have been a great way to end my days at KP," she said. "I was down after the loss but we gave 100 percent and battled hard all season. Lincoln-Sudbury's pitching and hitting were strong."

Playing all four years for Fallon-Comeau, Petrillo has a high regard for her coach.

"She's a great motivator, always pushing us to reach our potential," Petrillo offered. "She's an excellent X's-and-O's strategist and she's very supportive."

Statistics don't always tell the story but Petrillo had a memorable senior year. She batted .370, hit 10 HRs, had 33 RBIs and scored 22 runs. The classy captain, however, was quick to praise KP's other captains for their roles in leading the Warriors to an 18-3 regular season record.

The other captains were senior Allison Cere at first base and juniors Ali Gill at second base and McCoy Walsh on the mound. "They all were supportive and stepped up at the plate and in the field," Petrillo said. "Allison is a top-notch first baseman who's a consistent hitter. Ali was versatile, able to play the outfield or second base and McCoy is a pitcher who was simply spectacular and consistent."

Relying on a competitive philosophy that focuses on reaching one's potential, Petrillo always strived to improve. "I also felt that enjoying your sport was important and if potential and enjoyment are present, then winning is the by-product."

Athletics can teach valuable life lessons and Petrillo says she's

SOFTBALL

continued on page 23

Sports

SOFTBALL

continued from page 22

learned about a half dozen. “Sports teach how to overcome adversity and to be resilient,” she noted. “I’ve also learned how to lead and how to be a better teammate. And, realizing that you have to assume responsibility and be accountable are very important lessons.”

Calling her parents (James and Jennifer) role models for their support and encouragement, Petrillo is comfortable with her decision to attend Providence College. She had five other Division 1 schools offering scholarships.

“PC’s offer was very good, its academic standing is solid and its nursing facility is top-notch,” she said. “PC just felt like home and the players and coaches were down to earth. Coach Kelsey Christensen said she was excited that I was joining the Friar family.”

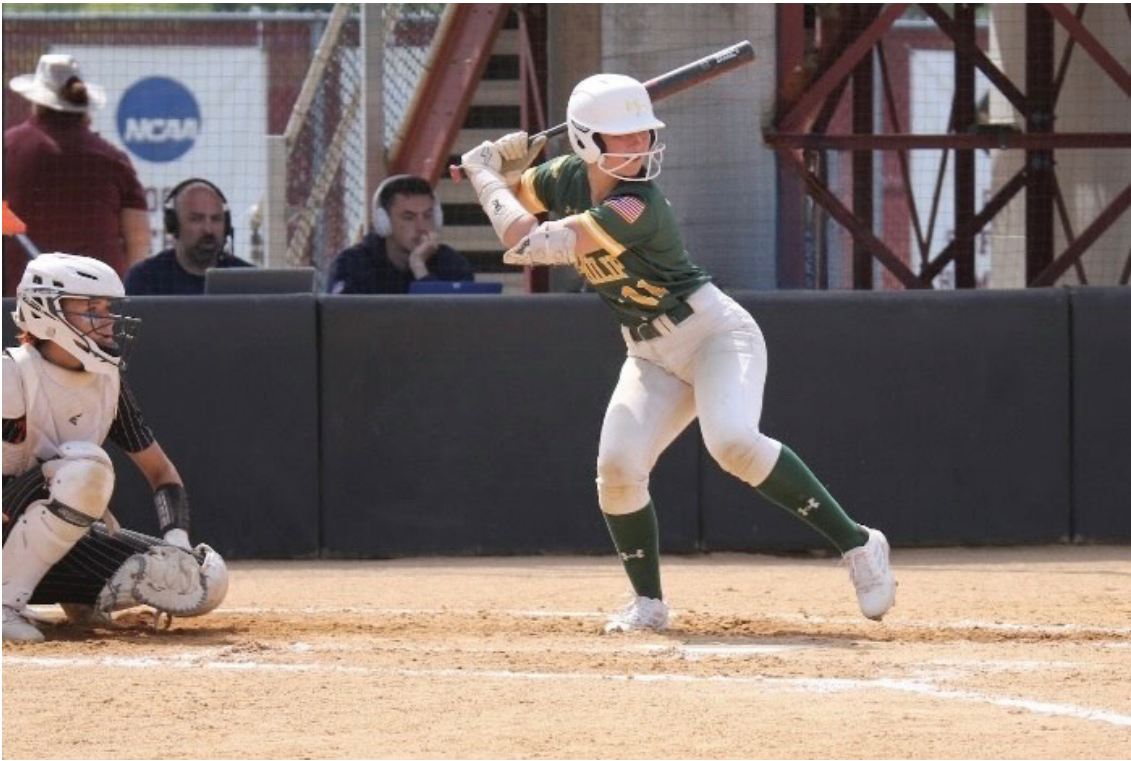
The transition from KP softball to Big East competition no doubt will be challenging. “The key,” Petrillo said, “is to be flexible, adapt and handle the ups and downs effectively. There’ll be a transition academically, too. If I’ve got questions, I’ll rely on the coaches and my teammates. My dad stresses that hard work will be the key to success.”

For the summer, Petrillo will prepare for her future by playing for her third club team (KP Pride) and working intensely on strength and conditioning drills. “PC sent a workout packet that should help with my transition,” Petrillo said.

The personable Petrillo will be devoting plenty of time sharpening her power skills. That means honing her swing.

“I try to swing level and quickly,” the right-hander said. “And, I always attempt to drive the ball hard as often as I can.”

When she finds time to unwind, Petrillo enjoys being with her family (two sisters and one



Liv Petrillo had a dynamic senior season, hitting .370, smacking 10 home runs and driving in 33 runs.

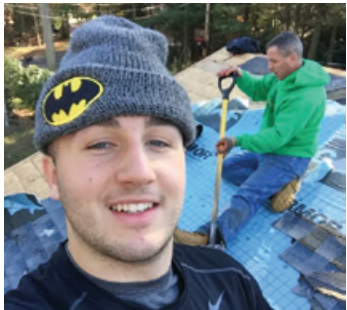
brother). And, the family’s four dogs.

Liv Petrillo has all the attributes to succeed at PC — in

academics and as a college softball player. And, if she ever duplicates the week she had against Milford, Oliver Ames

and Bishop Feehan, then look for her to pile up a fair share of Big East Player of the Week accolades.

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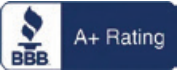
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King Philip Regional Middle School announces its 2024-2025 Term 3 Honor Roll:

7TH GRADE - HIGH HONORS

Anderson, Brooke; Anzalone, Benjamin; Aragao, Alexis; Astin, Adam; Barnard, Christopher; Barton, Evelyn; Batafarano, Reece; Bonaceto, Christopher; Borst, Kinley; Brooks, McKenzie; Brown, Seraphina; Burke, Maya; Cady, Jasper; Camara, Abigail; Cardona-Ortez, Kamila; Chatham, Emm; Chen, Daniel; Chisholm, Liam; Cohn, Eli; Corcoran, Benjamin; Curry, Malcolm; Dang, Jaxon; Dempsey, Olivia; Dolan, Madeleine; Elias, Madelyn; Ferreira, Jesse; Fienberg, Aiden; Francisco, Mia; Fritz, Jaclyn; Garrity, Cole; Gavin, Colin; Gilbert, Jace; Godoi, Milena; Gonzalez, Isabel; Gulino, Laurel; Hanf, Sophie; Hartford, Lily; Hartwell, Jackson; Hawley, Sebastien; Hennessy, Sophie; Holmes, Lilly; Houlding, Aubrey; Insogna, William; Jain, Siyona; Jerome, Violet; Joy, Keneth; Kazorek, Sawyer; Lambrenos, Mackenzie; Lamothe-Cotter, Ainsley; Lonergan, Declan; Machettira, Aryan; Manley, Jeremy; McGourthy, William; Miller,

Emma; Mollica, Phoebe; Montanaro, Bradley; Morris, Peyton; Mudulodu, Neha; Munsinger, Jaxson; Newell, Jacob; Oliver, Viola; Pollender, Calla; Quinn, Anthony; Quinn, Riley; Richard, William; Sachdev, Brycen; Sorel, Scott; Sullivan, Gary; Todd, Abigail; Wainwright, Vera; Weeman, Lola; Weeman, Zoe.

7TH GRADE - HONORS

Anderson, William; Andrade, Zoey-Rae; Asprinio, Braylen; Atakian, Chris; Barradas, Josimar; Beaulieu, Ursula; Bellico, Madeline; Blakesley, Henry; Bluhm, Anne; Brabants, Isabella; Brooks, Meredith; Brunelli, Lucca; Burnham, Sophia; Callahan, Richard; Canina, Jack; Carew, Alexis; Carone, Giada; Ceren, Saraphina; Collins, Ryan; Conidi, Olivia; Connor, Jorie; Corneliusen, Brooke; Costa, Colin; Darling, Samantha; DeAngelis, Joseph; DePillo, Emilia; DePillo, Sophia; Donovan, Saoirse; Dorcil, Addison; Faille, Olivia; Fenore, Marshall; Finnerty, Molly; Flaherty, Violet; Ford, Jack; Fre-

geau, Mason; Gillis, Arianna; Gogineni, Rana; Green, Ryan; Halloway, James; Hasson, Liat; Hawes, Robert; Huyler, John; Iannino, Tess; Jacques, Colin; Johnson, Addison; Johnson, Declan; Jost, Ava; Joughin, William; Kairouz, Eliana; Kalkut, Colin; Kelly, Hadley; Kembler, Megan; Kennedy, Lillian; Kerner, Dakota; Labonte, Sadie; Laliberte, Connor; Lallier, Cheyenne; Lamothe-Vaughn, Anderson; Laplante, Brielle; Leclair, Isabella; Libetario, Ema; Lombard, Diya; Lopes, Sara; MacEachen, Thomas; McCabe, Mackenzie; McDonagh, John; McDonald, Aidan; McGann, Brady; McGowan, Brendan; McGuckian, Caitlin; McKechnie, Mia; McManus, Patrick; McRell, Hunter; Medina Gudiel, Evelyn; Mehrotra, Karysa; Moore, Hudson; Morley, Harper; Mucciarone, Wes; Mui, Anna; Nepris, Vienna; Noonan, Logan; Panda, Rivan; Paralta, Ella; Parker, Mason; Perreault, Kaiden; Pettit, Nathan; Pollard, Lilyanna; Prater, Harper; Quintin, Connor; Ruiz,

Keira; Sanford, Ella; Scarsciotti, Gianna; Shehu-Khalifa, Ameera; Siddiqui, Sophia; Silva, Abraham; Small, Patrick; Small, Owen; Smith, Nathan; Spitzer, Julia; St. Laurent, Cameron; Tezber, Charlotte; Thomson, Sarah; Vasseur, Isla; Visser, Paige; Wambolt, Wyatt; Weake, Jainith; Weaver, Francis; Weiblen, Gavin; Wenstrom, Courtney; Wetmore, Sophia; Xu, Cameron.

8TH GRADE - HIGH HONORS

Alexander, Isabella; Almeida, Lillian; Bailer, Zachary; Barry, Georgia; Beaupre, Emerson; Beaupre, Charles; Bell, Katherine; Bostrom, William; Bourdeau, Lilyana; Brathwaite, Giovanni; Bright, Chase; Cataldo, Gabriella; Chacon Castillo, Marcela; Ciavola, Brooke; Cleverdon, Jeffrey; Coen, Molly; Conley, Nathan; Cooney, Aiden; Courrier, Madelyn; Crotty, Braeden; D'Amelio, Nicole; Davis, Alexandra; Desrosiers, Gavin; Diamond, Anna; DiFiore, Karlie; Dow, Paige; Durniok, Lyla; Egan, Quinn; Fabiano, Lucy; Flaherty, Emma; Flanagan, Riley; Francoeur, Natalie; Gallerani, Abrianna; Gill, Samson; Gonzalez, James; Hambelton, Benjamin; Hayes, Mason; Herman, Quinn; Jarvis, Emery; Johnson, Jessica; Jordan, Landon; Kelly, Nyla; Kenney, Bridget; Kohler, Daxin; Kurt, Derin; Lanza, Carah; LeBlanc, Riley; LeBlanc, Stephanie; Loehfelm, Quinn; Lopes, Theodore; Lyons, Mia; MacDonald, Emily; Mastro, Olivia; McCarthy, Rowen; McCreedy, Grace; Menneni, Medha; Miles, Evelyn; Morris, Matthew; Murk, Mae; Noonan, Aoibhe; Noonan, Saoirse; O'Brien, Thomas; O'Leary, Rowen; Oxley, Emma; Passafaro, Leah; Pennini, Isabella; Pitman, Jackson; Poklemba, Jonah; Pompei, Nicholas; Poska, Ryan; Pradeep, Misha; Richard, Emma; Rizzo, Sophia; Rosier Gedeus, Taychuna; Rudsit, Alexander; Russas, Riley; Sanderson, Ceanneidigh; Sharris, Grace; Smolak, Nathan; Spiller, Lylah; Stavris, Emmett; Stevens, Cameron; Tessier, Iris; Thomas, Madison; Todd, Madalyn; Valia, Hiya; Vierekant, Bryan; Waldner, Abigail; Ward, Chase; Wells, Avery; Wiggins, Olivia; Yanni, Hannah.

8TH GRADE - HONORS

Albert, Edward; Aldridge, Eliyanah; Alley, Emily; Anzalone, Olivia; Babbitt, Luella; Bacon, Joseph; Barboza, Charles; Batt, Parker; Batt, Alexandra; Bautista, Graham; Bitados, Eleni; Blake, Delaney; Brumbaugh, Alanna; Burrows, McKinley; Burt, Sophia; Caruso, Amber; Cecko, Mia; Chavers, Genevieve; Clancy, McKenna; Cleary-Fallon, Olivia; Clough, McKenzie; Clough, Maile; Da Silva, Luana; Dacko, Sarah; D'Aiello, Christopher; D'Andrea, Cameron; DaSilva, Cooper; De Melo, Gabriellalina; DeAngelis, John; Desrosiers, Ava; DeVasto, Norah; DiMare, Mason; DoRosario, Kelton; Duffy, Caroline; Dunfey, Connor; Dwomoh, Quinn; Esteime, Savannah; Evans, William; Ferguson, Mason; Frye, Noah; Fuller, Vanessa; Gately, Connor; Gilmore, Kailey; Gove, Kayden; Grazado, Jack; Griffin, Paul; Hunt, Maxwell; Hutchins, Lucas; Jacobs, Graham; Kassay, Alexandra; Keleher, Owen; Kelly, Catherine; Kelly, Rylan; Kennedy, Grace; Khouri, Mason; Kilroy, Teagan; Kissell, Chloe; Kollu, Anjali; Lacana, Macy; Lawrence, Thomas; Leardo, Owen; LeBlanc, Cameron; Lussier, Jack; Makrin, Stella; Mangini, Lucia; Marcil, Piper; Marrero, Orlando; Mastro, Owen; McCormick, Mason; McDuff, Hayden; McKillop, Fia; McNulty, Adam; Medeiros, Caleb; Mehrotra, Karyna; Milici, Zachary; Monti, Nicholas; Moon, Colby; Morrissey, James; Murphy, Madelyn; Natan, Lucas; Nayyer, Daniel; Ohkagawa, Kai; Ohlson, Jaxon; Pelkey, Elizabeth; Preite, Catherine; Reda, Hadley; Ritchie, Juliana; Robinson, Shawn; Rogoff, Lainey; Rose, Isabella; Russas, Michael; Salguero, Jackson; Salinger, Benjamin; Saraf, Logan; Schmier, Rebecca; Sheerin, Ivy; Shook, Declan; Signes, Adam; Silva, Emily; Silva, Ava-Marie; Smith, Nathaniel; Smith, Brooklyn; St. Laurent, Casey; Stafford, Tyler; Stefanelli, Jack; Taylor, Eden; Tillson, Cole; Tomes, Anthony; Uriarte, Justin; Varey, Cecelia; Walker, Christian; Walsh, Evelyn; Ward, Tiernan; Werdann, Zackery; Wilson, Haylie; Winer, Justin; Woodall, Richard; Yanosick, Patrick.

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Wrentham Community Electricity Launches July 9, 2025, with Rate of 13.670 ¢/kWh

The Town of Wrentham will launch its electricity supply program, Wrentham Community Electricity, this month. The program is a municipal aggregation, a model already offered by more than 200 cities and towns in Massachusetts.

Wrentham Community Electricity will offer two electricity supply options to all Wrentham residents and businesses. The Town's primary offering, Wrentham Standard, will cost less than the current National Grid Residential Basic Service rate. Although future savings cannot be guaranteed, Wrentham's program follows a model with a strong track record of delivering long-term electricity savings in many Massachusetts communities. Wrentham residents and businesses also have the option to choose Wrentham Plus, a product with 100% renewable energy.

Wrentham Community Elec-

tricity will provide long-term price stability, with prices fixed for 29 months until December 2027. The program will also support the growth of renewable energy in New England because all additional renewable energy in the Wrentham Plus product will come from "Class I" sources. These sources are primarily wind and solar, located within or imported into New England.

The program was authorized by Town Meeting in 2023 and approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Utilities in January 2025.

Wrentham residential and business electricity customers using National Grid Basic Service supply are eligible for automatic enrollment in Wrentham Standard as of their first meter read on or after July 9, 2025. In May 2025, all eligible customers will receive a Notification Letter on behalf of the Town from

	National Grid Basic Service (Residential)	Wrentham Standard (automatic for eligible customers)	Wrentham Plus
Price	14.672 ¢/kWh	13.670 ¢/kWh	15.154 ¢/kWh
Voluntary Renewable Energy*	No additional renewable energy (63% in 2025)	No additional renewable energy (53% in 2025)	Adds renewable energy to total 100% (100% in 2025)

The program cannot guarantee savings beyond the current term of Basic Service, as stated in the table above, because future Basic Service rates are unknown.
*Voluntary Renewable Energy is in addition to the State's required renewable energy content for all electricity supplies. The State's required renewable energy content is 63% in 2025. For more detail, see resources on WrenthamCommunityElectricity.com.

025056

The table shows the prices for Wrentham Community Electricity, compared to National Grid Basic Service. Wrentham Community Electricity prices apply to all Residential, Commercial and Industrial customers.

Dynegy, the electricity supplier for the program. The letter will notify them of the upcoming enrollment and provide instructions on how to choose a different program option from Wrentham Standard or how to opt out of the program (i.e., not participate) before the program starts.

Participation in Wrentham Community Electricity is vol-

untary. Anyone who does not want to participate may opt out without penalty, either before the program begins or at any time during the program.

Electricity customers who are currently enrolled with a third-party supplier will not receive the Notification Letter and will not be automatically enrolled. These customers can voluntarily join

the program but are advised to check with their current supplier in case it may charge penalties or early termination fees if they leave that supplier during the term of their contract.

Participation in Wrentham Community Electricity will only change the "Supply" portion of your National Grid electricity bill. National Grid will continue to manage electricity billing, maintain poles and wires, and respond to storm outages. Customers using budget billing or receiving low-income rate discounts will continue to receive those discounts without interruption. Similarly, customers receiving net metering or other solar benefits will continue to receive those benefits.

For more information about Wrentham Community Electricity, visit WrenthamCommunityElectricity.com or call (508) 722-2304.

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Real Estate Corner



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First Quarter Top Real Estate Sales in Norfolk County

During the first quarter of 2025, ten properties, a mix of commercial and residential, sold for a total of \$272.4 million, with an average price of \$27,240,000. These high-value transactions highlight the strength and diversity of the local real estate market, reflecting continued economic activity across various sectors, according to Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell.

The following prices pertain to real estate sales from January 1, 2025, to March 31, 2025.

The ten properties were:

10. 42 Cranmore Road, Wellesley – A 6-bedroom, 7-bath, 8,200-square-foot mansion built last year, sold in January for \$7,800,000.

9. 44 Vanderbilt Avenue, Norwood – A 44,406-square-foot industrial manufacturing facility built in 1980, sold in March for \$7,875,000.

8. 20 Sears Road, Brookline – A 7-bedroom, 9-bath, 9,300-square-foot mansion built in 1930, sold in March for \$8,000,000.

7. 121 Grove Street, Franklin – A 6-bedroom farmhouse and 26.26 acres of land, sold in January for \$9,100,000.

6. 1199 West Central Street, Franklin – In March, Dairy Farmers of America bought the 300,000-square-foot milk processing facility, formerly owned by Garelick Farms, which sold for \$9,611,188.

5. 9 Andem Place, Brookline – Extra Space Storage purchased a six-floor self-storage facility, the oldest full-service self-storage property in Brookline, in January for \$11,250,000.

4. 40 Industrial Drive, Canton – A 59,400-square-foot industrial warehouse renovated in 2005, sold in February for \$11,775,000.

3. 200 Grossman Drive, Braintree – In February, the 34-acre shopping plaza known as The Marketplace at Braintree sold for \$29,900,000.

2. 2 Presidential Drive, Quincy – The 276-unit Garden-style apartment complex, built on 12 acres of land and known as Presidential Estates, sold in March for \$74,000,000.

1. 200 Trotter Road, Weymouth – In January, the 298-unit apartment community known as The Commons at SouthField sold for \$103,100,000.



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Real Estate Corner

Rep. Vaughn re-appointed to Gaming Policy Advisory Committee

SUBMITTED BY THE OFFICE OF
REP. MARCUS VAUGHN

House Minority Leader Bradley H. Jones, Jr. (R-North Reading) has re-appointed State Representative Marcus S. Vaughn (R-Wrentham) to serve another two-year term as a member of the state’s Gaming Policy Advisory Committee (GPAC).

Created as part of the 2011 Expanded Gaming Act, the GPAC advises the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) on gaming policy issues, including community mitigation funding, addiction services for compulsive gambling, and the public safety impacts associated with the state’s gaming establishments. The committee also assists the MGC with the development of its annual gaming research agenda.

Representative Vaughn was first appointed to the GPAC in April of 2023, shortly after the state authorized legal sports betting, including online sports betting. On March 20, the MGC reported that gross gaming revenue at the state’s three casinos – Plainridge Park Casino, MGM Springfield and Encore Boston Harbor – totaled approximately \$93.40 million in February, while taxable sports wagering revenue, including mobile and online betting, totaled approximately \$65.57 million.

“With the continued growth of the Commonwealth’s gaming and sports betting industry, it’s important that proper safeguards remain in place to protect consumers and assist those who are struggling with compulsive gambling,” said Representative Jones. “Marcus has done a terrific job over the last two years

helping to advise the Massachusetts Gaming Commission on the many critical issues impacting the industry, and I am confident he will continue to play an active role on the Advisory Committee to ensure that proper oversight and regulations are in place.”

In addition to his work on the GPAC, Representative Vaughn is also a member of the Special Working Group on Youth Sports, which is exploring potential changes to the regulations governing youth sports in the Commonwealth, including improved player safety standards, concussion protocols, and limits on the maximum number of hours youth athletes can participate in each sport during a specified time period. The working group is expected to file a report with its recommendations later this year.

For the 2025-2026 legislative session, Representative Vaughn is serving as a member of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies. He also serves as the Ranking Minority Member of the Joint Committee on Public Safety and Homeland Security, the House Committee on Post Audit and Oversight, and the House Committee on Operations, Facilities and Security.

Representative Vaughn is currently serving his second term as a member of the Massachusetts House of Representatives. He represents the 9th Norfolk District, which consists of Precincts 3 and 4 in Medfield; Precinct 1 in Millis; Precinct 5 in Walpole; and the towns of Norfolk, Plainville and Wrentham.



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