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Slow Down for Turtles!

Children Inspire Town to Install Signs



Public Works Director Blair Crane and Animal Control Officer Hilary Cohen with the Olesen children and one of the new turtle crossing signs to be installed on Miller Street.

By GRACE ALLEN

Never let it be said that even the smallest voices can't make a big difference.

Earlier this summer, the Olesen children of Norfolk noticed a problem on a stretch of road near their home: turtles and amphibians were being struck by cars as they crossed Miller Street. Concerned for the animals' safety, the children decided to act.

With guidance from their mother, the siblings wrote a letter to the Conservation Commission, explaining the dangers turtles face during mating season and asking the town to install turtle crossing signs in both directions.

TURTLES

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Wrentham Wroad Wrace Kicks Off Wrentham Day Celebrations

By JOE STEWART

The annual "Wrentham Wroad Wrace," a tradition since 1982, will once again take center stage at this year's Wrentham Day on Saturday, September 6. The 5K race, sanctioned by USA Track and Field, begins at 9 a.m. at the Common, launching a day packed with family-friendly activities, food, and entertainment.

A Race with a Storied Past

The Wrentham Wroad Wrace traces its roots to September 18, 1982, when it debuted as a 10K race from the Town Common down South Street to Wampum Corner then looping back via Taunton Street. In its early years, the race attracted elite runners with prize money up to \$500 for the first-place finisher. Among

its most famous participants was Geoff Smith, a British marathon legend who won the Boston Marathon in 1984 and 1985 and who set the course record in Wrentham. Smith, a former Providence College All-American, later settled in Massachusetts as a teacher.

Sponsors like Charles River Sports, Town Pizza, Eagle Brook, and the old Tom's Tavern helped sustain the event, while volunteers—from Wrentham Boy Scouts to the KP High School cross country team to the girls volleyball team—kept it running smoothly. After a brief hiatus in 2004, the race returned in 2005 as a 5K, maintaining its place as a cornerstone of Wrentham Day.

WROAD WRACE

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TURTLES

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After receiving the letter, the Conservation Commission brought the request to Blair Crane, Norfolk's Director of Public Works.

"This was an unusual request for sure," Crane said. "I believed that their request was genuine and important, not just for themselves but for the turtles and other motorists. They thoughtfully observed a need, took the time to write a letter, and even though there was a chance the answer could have been no, they knew it was worth starting the conversation. That's a good reminder for us all."

On August 13, the Olesen children—Ella, Olly, Kody, and Abby--were recognized at a Conservation Commission meeting.

"The community is very proud of these children," said Conservation Commission Chairperson David Turi. "Their actions and concern for the environment are inspirational,



Wildlife rehabilitator Susan Siegel, left, and ACO Hilary Cohen presented the Olesen children with medals to thank them for their animal welfare advocacy.

and we hope they demonstrate to other children that they too can have a positive impact on animals and wildlife."

Norfolk Animal Control Officer Hilary Cohen provided the

children and other attendees at the meeting with turtle-themed sugar cookies she had baked for the occasion.

The children's advocacy also caught the attention of Return

Dear Conservation Commission of Norfolk,

My family lives on Leland Road and for many years we have been observing that a large number of turtles and amphibians are getting killed or critically injured after being hit by cars driving too fast along Miller street. Since Miller street runs over the Mill river, the turtles and amphibians have no choice but to use this road to cross between the two sides of the river. Thus, we would like to ask the Conservation Commission of the town of Norfolk to install turtle crossing signs (in both directions) to make motorists more aware of the turtles and amphibians crossing there.

We would like to thank you for your time and consideration on this matter.

Sincerely,

Ella (11), Olly (9), Kody (5), and Abby (1) Olesen

The Olesen children's letter to the Conservation Commission.

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Chuck Tashjian

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Grace Allen

Send Editorial to:
editor@norfolkwrenthamnews.com

Advertising Director
Jen Schofield
508-570-6544
jenschofield@localtownpages.com

Creative Design & Layout
Michelle McSherry
Kim Vasseur
Wendy Watkins

Office Address
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to Wild, a Norfolk-based wildlife rehabilitation organization. Susan Siegel, founder, presented "Wildlife Champion" medals to the children for taking action in support of animals.

"We love creating wildlife stewards," said Siegel.

Turtle crossings occur from mid-May to early July, the primary nesting season for turtle species, according to the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries & Wildlife. Roads bordered on both sides by ponds and wetlands are commonly used as crossing points.

Turtle crossing signs remind drivers to reduce their speed in vulnerable zones, since turtles move slowly and often blend into their surroundings. The signs also raise community awareness about the presence of vulnerable species and the importance of coexisting with wildlife.

Crane confirmed that the DPW will be installing the signs in the coming days.

"I hope they serve as a reminder for motorists to slow for the turtles in this area for years to come," he said.

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WROAD WRACE

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From Humble Beginnings to a Full-Fledged Festival

What started as a road race soon grew into a community-wide celebration. Recognizing the crowds the race drew, organizers expanded Wrentham Day to include activities for all ages. Over the years, highlights have included:

- A 100-foot banana split served by the Wrentham Jaycees
- The Lions Club’s Eye Mobile offering vision screenings
- Touch-a-Truck, featuring DPW equipment, police cruisers, and fire trucks
- Appearances by Wally the Green Monster and Patriots cheerleaders
- Face painting, magic shows, and wagon rides around the Common

Today, 60-75 vendors line the Common, offering everything from burgers by Wrentham Youth Baseball to popcorn and cotton candy. Nearly every town department and civic group participates, including the Senior Center, Board of Health, and local political leaders.

This Year’s Festivities and How to Join

The 2025 Wrentham Day promises another fun-filled lineup:

- Wrentham Wroad Wrace (<https://runsignup.com/wrenthamwroadwrace>)
- Pickleball tournament at the newly renovated Sweatt Park, with divisions for all ages and skill levels (<https://wrenthamma.myrec.com/>)
- Live music, food trucks, and community booths (9 a.m. to 3 p.m.)

Bill Rice: A Wrentham Pillar

No conversation about Wrentham Day is complete without mentioning Bill Rice, whose decades of dedication helped shape the town’s recreation programs and traditions. A Wrentham native, Rice often jokes, “I may

sleep in Plainville, but my home is Wrentham.” Born and raised in Wrentham, his service to Wrentham reaches back to 1967, when he began as a lifeguard for the Sweatt Summer Swim Program, which he later directed for years.

Rice’s career was a testament to his commitment to education and athletics. After teaching social studies and special education at King Philip Junior High, he pioneered the district’s alternative education program before serving as assistant principal (1980–1999), athletic director, and later the King Philip Middle School principal. Yet even while working in schools, he never stepped away from recreation, serving as part-time Recreation Director from 1980 until 2004.

Among his proudest achievements was securing the land for what’s now the Rice Recreation Complex—a project born out of necessity when King Philip High needed more athletic fields in 1981. Rice spearheaded the effort to lease part of a hayfield from the Wrentham State School (now the Wrentham Developmental Center), transforming it into a hub for sports and community events.

Rice’s impact extended far beyond constructing athletic fields—he fostered lasting relationships within the community. His former student and successor as Recreation Director, Jeff Plympton, notes that Rice recognized how events like the Wrentham Wroad Wrace served a greater purpose than mere competition, creating opportunities to unite the town’s residents.

Now, as runners line up for another Wrentham Wroad Wrace, Rice’s legacy lives on—not just in the course records or the park that bears his name, but in the spirit of a small New England town that still comes together, year after year, to celebrate its community.

Vendor registration is still open at Wrentham Recreation, <https://wrenthamma.myrec.com/>). With 2,000–2,500 attendees expected, this year’s Wrentham Day is set to be another unforgettable celebration of community spirit.

Harvest Fest Sept. 20 In Bellingham

Harvest Fest is making a comeback in Bellingham.

The event, a family-focused activity, is scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 20, at Bellingham’s Town Common from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. A rain date, if needed, is Sept. 27. The town’s two Baptist Churches — First Baptist Church and Bible Baptist Church — are organizing the day’s activities.

Harvest Fest began in 2017 and had a three-year run until Covid-19 forced the two churches to curtail the program. It’s being revived after a five-year absence.

For the youth, there will be pony rides, an obstacle course, gymnastics and karate exhibitions, and other exciting activities. A Christian concert is also scheduled.

Many vendors will be on hand to promote and sell their products. The churches are still seeking sponsors and vendors. If interested, contact Pastor Baron Rodrigues at 508 844-1843.

After expenses are paid (police detail, permits, entertainment costs, etc.), any funds remaining will go to area food pantries.

Charles River Chorale Invites Singers to Join 41st Season

The Charles River Chorale is pleased to welcome new members for its 41st season of music-making.

A non-audition, 100-member community ensemble, the Chorale will host open rehearsals on September 16, 23, and 30, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m., at the Church of Christ, 142 Exchange Street, Millis. These introductory sessions provide an opportunity for those new to choral singing—or

returning after time away—to experience the joy of making music in a welcoming, no-obligation setting.

Music Director Ashley Nelson-Oneschuk, now in her 11th year leading the Chorale, was recently elected to the Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Hall of Fame for 2025. Reflecting on her approach, Nelson-Oneschuk shared, “My focus is on cultivat-

ing a joyful community first, with excellent musical experiences as the vessel to achieve this.”

The season will culminate in a concert on Sunday, December 7 at 2 p.m. at Medway High School.

Those interested in exploring membership are encouraged to complete the no-obligation sign-up form by visiting www.charles-riverchorale.com and selecting the Join Us tab.

Experience One of New England’s Oldest Church Organs at Wrentham Day

On Saturday, September 6, as part of the town’s annual Wrentham Day celebration, visitors are invited to step inside Trinity Episcopal Church and hear the rich, historic sounds of one of the oldest church organs in New England. From 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., the sanctuary, which is located directly across from the town common, will be open for this special musical event.

Trinity Church, built in the 1870s, is home to a remarkable treasure: an organ crafted by renowned Boston builder William Marcellus Goodrich. Originally commissioned for the Universalist Church in Providence, the instrument was completed and installed in 1825. When that congregation later expanded and required a larger organ, it was sold to the Universalist Church in Attleboro. In 1915, the Attleboro church sold the instrument to Trinity Episcopal Church, where it has been played and carefully maintained for over a century.

Remarkably, the organ still operates with the same mechanical action it was built with two

centuries ago, aside from the addition of an electric motor to supply wind pressure to the bellows. Its authentic craftsmanship and enduring sound offer a rare opportunity to experience music as it was heard in the early 19th century.

On Wrentham Day, guests can hear this 200-year-old instrument in its current church home, celebrating its history and continued use. All are welcome to stop in, listen, and enjoy a piece of living musical heritage.



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Rep Auchincloss Presents Federal Funding; Town Cuts Health Insurance Costs

By JOE STEWART

Congressman Jake Auchincloss met with the Wrentham Select Board on Wednesday, August 13 at the Rice Complex to discuss federal support for local initiatives, highlighting a major win for the town: \$1 million in federal funding for the West Wrentham water project. Additionally, town officials celebrated a \$200,000 reduction in employee health insurance costs compared to last year, thanks to proactive negotiations.

Federal Funding for Water Infrastructure

The nearly \$1 million allocation, \$959,752, will reimburse Wrentham for land acquisition related to water quality improvements, a project approved at Town Meeting. Town Manager Mike King emphasized the importance of federal support for aging infrastructure, including roads and dams, while also out-

lining future visions for the Rice Complex, such as expanded multi-use fields.

Congressman Auchincloss noted that while federal earmarks are unlikely due to an expected Continuing Resolution (CR), the West Wrentham funding had already been secured. He also discussed potential long-term infrastructure upgrades for Route 1, suggesting that federal assistance could complement state, local and private efforts, such as those implemented by the Kraft Group.

Health Insurance Savings

Facing a proposed 17% rate hike from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIA), the town switched to the Southeastern Massachusetts Health Group (SMHG), securing a three-year deal with a \$200,000 cost reduction. Select Board Member Chris Gallo praised King's negotiations, calling the outcome a "phenom-



From left: Recreation Director Jeff Plympton, Select Board Member Roy Lamothe, Conservation Commission Chair Leo Immonen, Town Manager Mike King, Select Board member Michelle Rouse, Rep. Jake Auchincloss, Select Board member Bill Harrington, Select Board Chair Chris Gallo, Bill Rice (Rice Complex namesake), and State Representative Marcus Vaughn. (Photo courtesy Town of Wrentham)

enal" achievement. Auchincloss acknowledged the broader challenges of healthcare costs, citing pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) and insurers as systemic issues.

World Cup

The discussion also touched on the 2026 World Cup, with Auchincloss confirming that matches at Gillette Stadium will be Tier 1 security events, ensuring federal security funding. However, infrastructure upgrades—such as pedestrian overpasses and rail improvements—remain dependent on state action. Auchincloss emphasized that federal funding works best when it "plus-ups" local and state initiatives, helping to bring projects to 100% completion. Without stronger engagement from local and state leaders, he noted federal support for large-scale transportation improvements would be unlikely.

Representative Marcus Vaughn noted the inadequate transportation infrastructure and

lack of hotels in the surrounding areas as key challenges for a successful World Cup. Select Board members also raised traffic safety concerns on Route 1, noting ongoing fatalities and highlighting the urgent need for a permanent median barrier to reduce fatalities.

Rice Complex Future

The meeting also highlighted the Rice Complex, a cornerstone of Wrentham's recreational offerings. Jeff Plympton, Wrentham's first full-time Recreation Director (since 2004), and Bill Rice—the complex's namesake and a lifelong resident who served as part-time Recreation Director for decades—discussed its history and future vision.

Originally developed through community effort, the complex remains a hub for local athletics and is largely self-sustaining through rentals to large, multi-day tournaments. Looking ahead, Plympton outlined plans to expand its offerings, including:

Multi-use fields for lacrosse, soccer, and field hockey

- A cloverleaf baseball/softball complex to accommodate growing demand
- More than 2-mile accessible path, including connecting with the planned Metacomet Greenway

Select Board members expressed support for the upgrades, noting the complex's role in fostering youth sports and community engagement. Auchincloss listened to the proposals, reiterating that federal grants could play a role if aligned with town and state priorities.

Looking Ahead

With federal support for critical projects and significant cost savings, Wrentham continues to prioritize fiscal responsibility and infrastructure improvements. As Gallo noted, the town is actively exploring new revenue opportunities, particularly along Route 1, to sustain long-term growth.

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SOUR GRAPES

by Tim Jones

Preserving White Barn Farm Forest: A Legacy for Wrentham's Future

By JOE STEWART

In a move that could permanently protect 16 acres of forested land in the heart of Wrentham, the Metacomet Land Trust (MLT) is collaborating with the Raymond family, owners of the White Barn Farm (WBF) property, to secure matching funds from Wrentham's Community Preservation Committee (CPC) to protect the forest.

In 2024, the MLT was awarded a Forest Reserve Grant from the Commonwealth to preserve those 16 acres. The Forest Reserve Grant, part of Massachusetts' Forest as Climate Solutions Initiative, prohibits development and timber harvesting and lets forests mature naturally, sequestering carbon and preserving biodiversity.

A Collaborative Effort for Preservation

At a June 12 meeting of the Wrentham Conservation Commission, MLT Board Member Kelly Phelan outlined the proposal: MLT will purchase two Beach Street lots (totaling 2.53 acres) using a 50% grant (\$310,500) secured last year from the state's Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and 50% CPC funding. A Conservation Restriction (CR) will be held by the Conservation Commission on these two lots.

Meanwhile, the Raymond family will place a CR on the remaining 13.48 acres to be held by the Conservation Commission and the MLT. Combined, this will preserve 16 acres of land adjacent to Trout Pond and Knuckup Hill, creating a contiguous green space with 200 acres of town-owned open land.

In an interview, MLT President Lisa Moczymski said, "This project extends watershed protection, supports climate resilience, and enhances public access." Moczymski highlighted that these 16 acres will protect Wrentham's drinking water supply, wildlife habitat and travel corridors, and improve access to open space areas, eventually enabling a green corridor from

the Town Common, through Knuckup Hill and Trout Pond to Beach Street, perhaps even connecting with a future Metacomet Greenway.

Protecting Wrentham's Water

In a letter supporting the project, Wrentham's Conservation Agent Darryl Luce emphasized the ecological significance of the property, noting its role in filtering runoff from nearby development and protecting Desert Brook, a key tributary to Lake Pearl—Wrentham's primary drinking water source.

In a brief interview, Luce noted that the WBF forest includes land that the state has designated as "aquatic core," which are intact aquatic habitats (rivers, streams, lakes and ponds) supporting a diversity of aquatic species and important physical and ecological processes. Such areas are key to protecting both plants and wildlife and drinking water supplies. Without protection, the land could face development, further straining water resources.

Luce summarized existing and planned development of parcels that affect Desert Brook. The numbers correspond to the map.

1. The former Marra Property, which Wrentham sold last year, is now a gravel operation and the owner plans ten homes when the excavation is complete.
2. The former Redbird Farm is currently being permitted for a 12-lot subdivision.
3. Across the street from the Redbird Farm property a 66-unit senior living facility is being permitted.
4. A ten-home subdivision just down South St from WBF is being permitted.
5. Another 40-acre property next to the new gravel operation may be developed.
6. WBF itself could be developed into individual homes or even another subdivision.

Desert Brook Watershed into Lake Pearl. Lake Pearl lies just off the top left side of the map.



A Family's Legacy and a Community's Future

Eliot Raymond, whose family has owned the land since the 1800s, shared how farm succession planning led to this conservation effort.

"Preserving land in a family is hard," he said, reflecting on the challenges of ensuring the property's future.

The Raymond family's decision to pursue a CR aligns with their long-standing ties to Wrentham, including the legacy of Eliot's grandfather, Dr. C.

Stanley Raymond, who served as superintendent of the Wrentham State School, now known as the Wrentham Developmental Center.

Next Steps

MLT is seeking Town Meeting approval this fall to allocate CPC funds for half the purchase. However, CPC may not have sufficient funds and may instead recommend that Town Meeting approve a partial grant. With that in mind, MLT has begun a fund-raising effort.

With a deadline of June 2026 to finalize the grant, the clock is ticking. Supporters argue the investment is modest compared to the long-term costs of water treatment and lost open space. As Luce noted, "Preserving this watershed is as important as building a playground—it's an investment in Wrentham's future."

For more information, visit Metacomet Land Trust, visit <http://bit.ly/4lt200q>.

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Wrentham Girl Welcomes Diabetes Alert Dog

BY GRACE ALLEN

Nine-year-old Savannah Langford of Wrentham has a new ally in her fight against Type 1 diabetes. On August 15, Savannah and her family welcomed Dexter, a certified diabetes alert dog.

Local Town Pages first reported in October on Savannah's fundraising quest for a diabetic alert dog, detailing the challenges she faced managing her condition and her mother's determination to find a solution. Since then, donations from friends, neighbors, and supporters near and far have made that goal a reality.

"Dexter will provide Savannah with extra reassurance," said Jamie Domenica, Savannah's mother. "She is so anxious about her blood sugars, and Dexter should help."

The black Labrador arrived after months of specialized training through Diabetic Alert Dogs of America. According to Shelby Joachimi, client advisor and lead trainer with the organization,

Dexter was carefully matched to Savannah based on personality, energy level, and lifestyle.

"Dexter is outgoing, confident, and loves his job," Joachimi said. "He's a sweet dog with an incredible nose, which makes him a great match for Savannah. He works well in environments relevant to her life."

Dexter's ability to detect blood sugar began with personalized scent training. Savannah provided scent samples when her blood sugar was above 150 and below 80, allowing Dexter to learn her unique chemical changes.

"After completing the program, our dogs are able to alert everyone, but we teach them using their client's individual scent," Joachimi said.

The eight-month-old puppy is trained to break any command to alert Savannah, putting her safety above everything else, explained Joachimi. Dexter's alert signal is direct—he will approach and paw at Savannah until she responds. During training, each correct alert is rewarded with a

minimum of five treats, reinforcing the behavior.

Although Savannah uses a continuous glucose monitor, Dexter will provide a critical advantage.

"Dogs are able to catch changes in glucose levels instantly," Joachimi noted. "Our dogs are typically twenty to thirty minutes faster than continuous glucose monitors. That extra warning can prevent extreme ranges and critical levels."

For Domenica, that speed will provide extra reassurance in situations where technology can fail, such as swimming, one of Savannah's favorite activities, or device malfunction.

After placement, diabetic alert dogs go through a 30 to 90-day adjustment period, following what Joachimi calls the "3-3-3 rule" – three days to settle in, three weeks to learn routines, and three months to fully bond.

Savannah, a third grader at the Delaney School, named Dexter after her continuous glucose monitor, a Dexcom CGM. Dexter will accompany her to school



Savannah Langford received Dexter on August 15. The puppy is a certified diabetes alert dog.

and will wear a service vest, helping others quickly recognize he is on duty and should not be distracted. When the vest comes off, Dexter knows he can be a regular puppy.

For a family that has faced sleepless nights, medical device frustrations, and constant monitoring, Dexter is more than just a service dog, emphasized Joachimi.

"Once he bonds with the family and the relationship develops, it's very special," she said. "Our dogs provide medical support, but also provide companionship, love, and positivity during hard times."

The GoFundMe campaign for Dexter is ongoing, since the family is still incurring expenses related to his training. To contribute, visit www.gofundme.com and search for "Support Savannah's Journey with a Diabetic Alert Dog." Or mail a check to Diabetic Alert Dogs of America LLC, 5130 S. Fort Apache Rd., Suite 215-377, Las Vegas, NV 89148. Write "Savannah Langford" in the memo line.

Donations can also be made directly on the organization's website: www.diabeticalertdogsofamerica.com.

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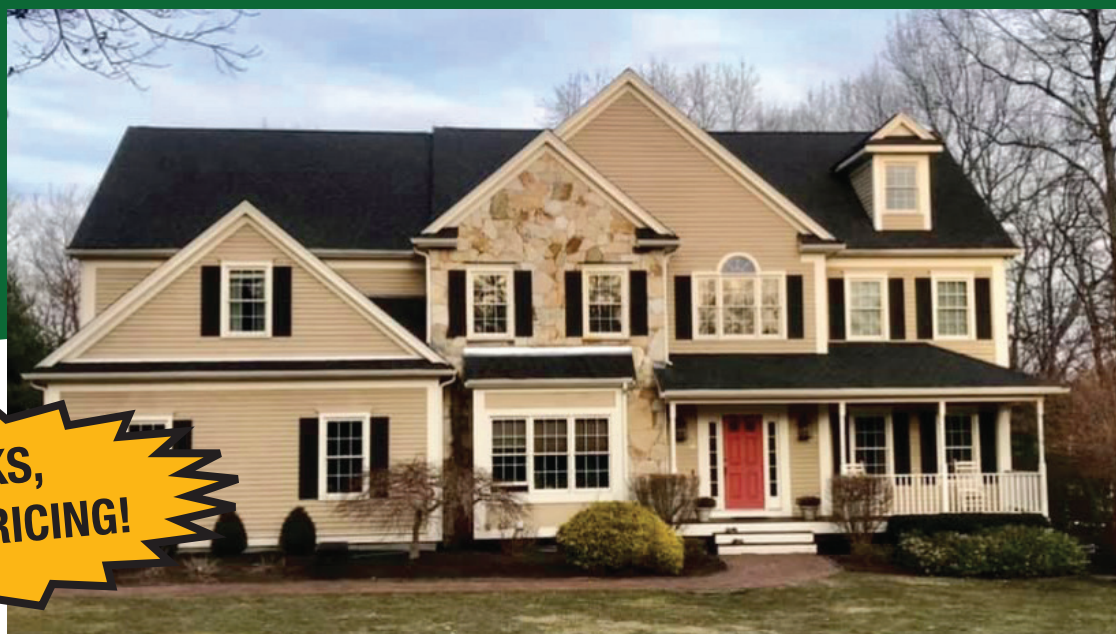
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Look at Your Financial Situation Holistically



Todd Miller

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When you plan a trip, you consider not only the destination but also the climate, activities that interest you, transportation needs, anticipated costs, best time to go and coverage for your work, home or pets. It's a holistic approach — looking at your trip from a variety of angles.

It's wise to apply that same holistic thinking when you plan for your financial future — that is, bringing into the picture all elements of yourself.

Here are some things that may affect your financial strategy:

Your views on helping your family – Your decisions about helping your family are clearly going to be a major part of your financial strategy, and this is true at virtually all stages of your life. When your children are young, you'll need to decide if you're going to save money for their college education, and if so, how much, and in what investments. When they're young adults, you may also need to decide how much financial support you're willing to provide for major expenses such as down payments on a new home or a new car. And when you're drawing up your estate plans, you'll need to consider how and when to distribute assets to your children, grandchildren or other family members.

Your personal beliefs – As someone with civic, ethical and moral concerns, you may feel compelled to make charitable gifts throughout your life and then make philanthropy part of your legacy. To accomplish these objectives, you'll want to include gifting techniques in your financial strategy today and your estate plans for tomorrow. Of course, for the estate-planning component, you'll need to work with your tax and legal advisors.

Your purpose in life when you retire – Having a purpose can bring fulfillment beyond financial security. Leading up to retirement, your purpose may involve providing for your immediate family, bringing value to your profession or contributing to your community. When you retire and step off your career path, you're entering a new world of possibilities. How will you define, and live out, your new sense of purpose at this stage of your life? Do you seek

to broaden your horizons by traveling around the world? Or spend more time volunteering? Can you pursue hobbies that give you a chance for self-expression? Each of these choices will carry different financial implications for how much you'll need to accumulate for retirement and how much income you will need to take out each year from your retirement accounts, such as your IRA and 401(k).

Your health – Your physical and mental health can play big roles in your financial plans and outlook. On the most basic level, the healthier you are, and the better you take care of yourself, the lower your health care bills will likely be during retirement, which will affect the amount you need to put away for health care. And you also may need to prepare for the costs of long-term care, which can be enormous — in fact, a private room in a nursing home in can easily cost \$100,000 per

year, according to Genworth, an insurance company.

It can be challenging to weave all these elements into a single, unified vision, so you may want to get some help from a financial professional. But, in any case, be prepared to look at your situation holistically because, when putting together a lifetime's financial strategy, every part of your life matters.

For more information contact:

Todd Miller
O: (781) 652 - 9573 call or text
Todd.Miller@edwardjones.com

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Metacomet Public Health Alliance Hosts Community Baby Shower

The Metacomet Public Health Alliance Nurses, serving the towns of Franklin, Norfolk, and Wrentham, invite new and expectant mothers to a Community Baby Shower on Monday, September 8 from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Fiske Public Library in Wrentham.

This free community event will feature a variety of resources and support for growing families, including complimentary diapers, formula, baby items, and

product samples. Attendees can also connect with local vendors and learn valuable infant safety skills through live demonstrations on choking prevention and CPR.

The Community Baby Shower is designed to provide both practical supplies and educational opportunities in a welcoming, supportive environment.

For more information, please contact the Metacomet Public Health Alliance at 774-847-5077.

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Family-run Affordable Junk Removal takes the stress out of cleanups

By CHRISTIE VOGT
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Whether it's one old fridge in the garage or an entire home of unwanted goods, the team at Affordable Junk Removal offers a cost-efficient, stress-free approach to waste management. "You don't lift a finger," says owner Jason Schadler, who started the company along with his wife Christine in 2005.

The business offers same-day service for both residential and commercial clients across eastern and central Massachusetts and northern Rhode Island. In addition to junk removal, the company rents 15-yard dumpsters.

As a family-owned and operated company, Schadler says Affordable Junk Removal has lower overhead costs and is more accessible than national competitors. "I answer my phone 24 hours a day," he says. "I was on vacation in Italy and Portugal, and I was still answering my phone on the beach. When you call us, you get me — not an automated machine!"



Schadler says the company has an environmentally friendly approach to disposal in which it recycles items when possible, properly disposes of non-recyclables and resells many items at the Schadlers' secondhand store, Resellables. "We opened that store in Bellingham because we hated to see things thrown away," Schadler says. "We have four kids and sustainability is extremely important to us."

During the business's early days, Schadler provided junk removal on nights and weekends when he wasn't busy working at

Business spotlight

a machine shop. Eventually, the business grew into a full-time endeavor, and the Schadlers invested back into the company with new equipment and techniques. "When I first started, for example, we didn't have any tarps. I'm driving around and things are flying out of my truck," Schadler laughs. "I'm like, 'Oh my god, I need a tarp.'"

Schadler says his wife Christine "was equally as involved" in getting the business off the ground. "She handled the back-end while I did the heavy lifting, all while she was working at EMC," he says. "Fast forward 17 years, and we both work full time managing the company as well



Christine and Jason Schadler, shown here with their children, started Affordable Junk Removal in 2005.

as other endeavors. Business is doing great; it has grown tremendously to a fleet of trucks and dumpsters, and we've also been able to buy a pizza place, The Corner Market in Holliston."

In addition to delivering an in-demand service to the community, Schadler is appreciative that Affordable Junk Removal has helped provide a work-life balance that suits his family. "It allows me to be able to do what I like doing and spend time with my kids," he says. "I'm home to see my babies play softball and do all that stuff. We are also able to give back to the communities we serve."

As for Norfolk and Wrentham in particular, Schadler says they are proud to have many repeat customers and friends in the

area. Christine spent her childhood holidays in Norfolk, where her aunt and uncle live, and she learned to blow glass at Luke Adams Glass Blowing in nearby Norwood. The Schadler family also frequents Supercharged in Wrentham, one of her son's favorite spots.

One of the best parts of his job, Schadler says, is meeting and getting to know new people and developing relationships with returning customers. "We are really grateful for the repeat business and the chance to form connections with residents across the MetroWest area," he says.

To receive a free junk removal estimate, call 774-287-1133 or visit affordablejunkremoval.com.

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Your Money, Your Independence

Navigating College Admissions with Financial Planning



Glenn Brown, CFP

The college admissions process can feel overwhelming for both students and parents. From understanding early application options to maximizing financial aid and planning for expenses, every decision matters. Let's break down key aspects to help families make confident, informed choices.

Early Action vs. Early Decision

These two common early application paths are typically due around November 1, but they work very differently: Early Action (EA): Students apply earlier and receive admissions decisions sooner, without any binding commitment. EA applicants can apply to multiple schools and compare offers before deciding.

Early Decision (ED): A binding commitment—if admitted, students must attend. ED can improve acceptance odds because schools see these applicants as highly motivated. However, families must request merit aid at the time of application; later financial aid concerns can jeopardize an acceptance.

Maximizing Merit-Based Aid

Merit aid is awarded for academic, athletic, or artistic achievements rather than financial need. To improve chances:

Look Beyond Trophy Schools. Highly competitive universities offer little merit aid because of their abundant applicant pools. Instead, consider niche colleges or specialized programs where your student's strengths stand out.

Build Recruiter Relationships. Merit decisions often hinge on personal connections. Encourage students to reach out to local recruiters, share interests, and stay in touch. These relationships can lead to introductions with faculty and admissions staff. When students apply, they should express enthusiasm directly—making their case for both admission and merit support.

Let Students Lead. Recruiters prefer authentic student voices. Parents should support, but avoid writing, editing, or speaking on behalf of the student.

Making the Most of 529 Plans

A 529 plan offers tax-free growth and withdrawals when used for qualified education expenses. To use funds effectively:

Adjust Investments Over Time: As college approaches, consider shifting a portion of funds into more stable investments—such as bonds or money markets—to reduce volatility.

Stick to Qualified Expenses: Withdrawals must cover costs like tuition, fees, books, and room and board. Non-qualified expenses can trigger taxes and penalties.

Understanding Loan Options

Loans can help bridge financial gaps, but terms vary widely.

Federal Student Loans: Typically lower interest rates and flexible repayment terms. Includes Direct Subsidized Loans (interest covered while in school) and Direct Unsubsidized Loans (interest accrues immediately).

Parent PLUS Loans: Federal loans taken by parents. They carry fixed interest rates and repayment flexibility, but parents assume the debt burden.

Private Loans: Offered by banks and lenders. Usually higher interest rates and fewer protections, making them a last resort.

Policy Update: Student Loan Reform

For the first time in years, Congress—not just executive

orders—has taken the lead on student loan reform.

The One Big Beautiful Bill (OBBB) changes the “blank-check” borrowing effect:

Parent PLUS Loans: Borrowing is now capped at \$20,000 per year and \$65,000 total for parents of undergraduates.

Graduate Loans: Master's/general graduate programs are now \$20,500 annually and \$100,000 lifetime, while professional programs (e.g., law, medicine) are \$50,000 per year and \$200,000 total.

Undergraduate Loans: Existing limits remain unchanged at \$12,500 annually and \$57,500 aggregate.

By placing borrowing caps, OBBS shifts responsibility back to universities to manage affordability, rather than allowing unlimited borrowing. It's a step toward addressing the root cause of rising education costs—not just the symptoms.

Final Thoughts

Families who plan ahead—

by understanding application strategies, targeting schools wisely, and exploring funding options—set themselves up for both financial stability and a smoother transition into college life. For tailored guidance, talk to your Certified Financial Planner.

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

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

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Wrentham Community Media Adapts to Financial Challenges

By JOE STEWART

As the landscape of media consumption shifts, local public access stations are feeling the pinch. Wrentham Community Media (formerly Wrentham Cable 8) is no exception, facing a 14% decline in funding since 2017 due to the nationwide trend of “cord-cutting” -- viewers abandoning traditional cable subscriptions for streaming services. In response, the nonprofit is reinventing itself, improving programming, and reaching out to the community for support.

Wrentham Community Media (WCM) operates four cable channels: Public (Channel 8 Comcast/39 Verizon), Educational (Channel 6 Comcast/37 Verizon), Government (Channel 22 Comcast/38 Verizon), and an upcoming HD/VOD channel. Additionally, the organization has expanded into audio broadcasting with Wrentham Radio 8, an internet radio station that streams local programming,

music, and event coverage. This multi-platform approach allows WCM to serve diverse audience preferences across both traditional and digital media.

A Struggle for Sustainability

Public access stations like WCM rely on franchise fees from cable providers—typically \$3 to \$4 per subscriber—which in WCM’s case generate around \$200,000 annually. But as cable subscriptions dwindle, so does funding. Executive Director Liz Harkins noted in an interview that while costs rise, revenue continues to drop, forcing many PEG (Public, Educational, and Governmental) access stations across Massachusetts to scale back or close.

A New Strategy: Quality Over Quantity

Rather than cutting services, WCM has revamped its approach, focusing on high-quality event coverage. A standout example was this year’s King Philip

Regional High School commencement, filmed with multiple cameras to create a polished keepsake for graduates. The station continues to broadcast town meetings free of charge while introducing modest subscription fees for specialized content, expected to launch by late August.

The station is expanding into podcasting, multimedia production, and educational programs, with Member Services Coordinator Rachel Bartlett assisting residents in production training and support. Harkins noted that a new partnership with King Philip High School will offer journalism and production internships this fall, further strengthening ties with the community.

Open House Fundraiser: A Call for Support

To raise awareness—and much-needed funds—WCM is hosting an Open House on September 20 from noon to 4 p.m., featuring Dance and Beyond at

1 p.m., live music, a dunk tank with local leaders (including State Rep. Marcus Vaughn, Police Chief Bill McGrath, Select Board Chair Chris Gallo, and Town Moderator Ed Goddard), and participation from Wrentham’s Department of Public Works and the Fiske Library.

Harkins emphasized that the open house offers residents a firsthand look at the station’s work and underscores the importance of public access media. She added that community support is vital for sustaining local programs, sports coverage, and engaging the community in its government.

Looking Ahead

This fall, WCM plans to continue coverage of municipal meetings, Town Meeting, and high school sports—football, soccer, volleyball, wrestling, and more—through a collaboration with NorthTV (North Attleboro’s public access franchise,

which also serves Plainville). By pooling resources and often deploying multiple cameras at events, the partnership aims to deliver higher-quality broadcasts.

Harkins encouraged residents to reach out to Bartlett for training and technical assistance for podcasts, video projects, and post-production work. Bartlett also helps residents develop their own programming ideas into broadcast-ready content, furthering the station’s mission to amplify local voices.

Harkins stressed that while the organization continues to adapt to financial challenges, long-term sustainability requires greater community involvement. She noted that public media institutions can only thrive with active public participation and support.

For details on the September 20 Open House, visit <https://wrenthamcable8.com/> or contact liz@wrenthamcable8.com. Wrentham Cable Access is located at 686 West Street.

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Norfolk Recreation Fall Registration Opens September 3

Norfolk Recreation will open registration for its 2025 Fall Programs on Wednesday, September 3 at 12:30 p.m. With activities for all ages—including music and sports for preschoolers, STEM and art for school-aged children, and exercise and enrichment programs for adults—there’s something for everyone.

In addition, registration for the 19th season of Norfolk-Wrentham-Plainville Youth Basketball begins in October.

For details and to register, visit NorfolkRec.com or call 508-520-1315.

Wrentham Lions Club Hosts 3rd Annual Trivia Night

The Wrentham Lions Club will hold its 3rd annual Trivia Night on Saturday, October 18 at the Wrentham American Legion, 592 South Street. Doors open at 6 p.m., and trivia begins at 7 p.m.

Teams of eight are invited to sign up for an evening of fun,

food, and friendly competition. Guests can enjoy pizza, snacks, and a cash bar, and outside food is welcome.

Tickets are \$20 per person in advance and \$25 at the door.

To register, email wrenthamlions33k@gmail.com.

Children's Museum of Franklin to Open

Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony September 17; Doors Open September 18

By JUDITH DORATO O'GARA

After two years of community collaboration, Franklin innovators and moms Erin Gallagher and Meg Hagen will finally be able to realize their dream, the Children's Museum of Franklin. The ribbon cutting ceremony for the family-friendly regional venue at 157 Cottage Street in Franklin will take place from 4 to 5 p.m. on September 17, with the museum welcoming families the very next day, from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m.

On September 19, exactly two years to the day the 501 (c)3 nonprofit was founded, adults are invited to a birthday bash from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tickets (\$100) will include a drink ticket, food, and live music by the Pub Kings.

Hagen and Gallagher expressed "joyful anticipation" at "being able to welcome all of those families who have wrapped their arms around us to be able to open a museum for the community and by the community," referring not only to financial

contributions from the community, but to local experts who contributed their talents to create the inclusive space, from an advisory committee of child-centric professionals to the exhibit builders themselves.

"Their talents have been so meaningful to this process, and they will be so valued by this community," said Gallagher.

The museum boasts features like an Imaginative Play Downtown with a custom gazebo, a dinosaur exhibit, Miss Money's Playroom, a Healthy Bodies area with a pumping heart, an 8-foot diameter Sensory Tree, a transportation area, a climbing structure with a step-down pit, nursing stations, a classroom makerspace and lab facilities. Exhibits are designed for children aged 0-10, with programming planned for elementary and middle-school aged children and leadership opportunities for older students.



The museum is expected to attract families and educators from up to an hour away, as the nonprofit's mobile museum events have drawn folks from 180 different towns. "We're really excited to be able to reach people on a daily basis and just offer so much more for families that come to visit us," said Gallagher.

Although a spring opening was planned, an extra financial

push was needed to finally open the doors. Hagen and Gallagher were thankful to Founding Families, corporations and organizations that came aboard. A Massachusetts Cultural Council grant for \$145,000 also helped them complete the renovation of the space, formerly owned by Agway.

"That absolutely was a game changer," said Hagen. Although the pair is still working to fund its A-Mazing Ways wind exhibit and a water exhibit designed by Science Kinetics and Vanderbilt University, "engaging and fun temporary exhibits with STEM and learning tables" will temporarily fill those spaces.

The two partners, who refer to their collective five children as "exhibit testers extraordinaire," said their work together has deepened their friendship. "Our ability to maintain our friendship and to grow and work together

throughout this process has been amazing," says Hagen.

"It just feels like such a milestone moment to be able to announce our opening," added Gallagher.

Admission to the museum, closed to the public Tuesdays and Wednesdays to allow for school field trips, will be \$14 per person, with discounted rates for WIC and EBT recipients and discounted passes available at local libraries. "We have also had someone step up to provide free passes for the Franklin Food Pantry and the SAFE Coalition," said Hagen.

Prior to the public opening, the museum will hold a registration-only pre-play event for social media family/parenting life influencers on September 14. In addition, a Scary Scurry 5K and Fun Run fundraiser is scheduled for October 19.

For more information, visit <http://childrensmuseumfranklin.org>.

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Living Healthy

Decades of Service to the Community and 2 New Offices

By: ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.

Milford-Franklin Eye Center has been serving the community with advanced, compassionate eye care for more than four decades. With a staff of 59, an award-winning surgery center in Milford, and offices in Milford, Franklin, and now two new locations in Hopkinton and Medfield, we are proud to be one of the leading eye care centers in Massachusetts. We are also one of the few ophthalmology practices in the state to own and operate our own surgical facility, the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford. This means patients can receive world-class cataract surgery close to home. Our team includes fellowship-trained ophthalmologists and five optometrists, offering eyecare for the entire family.

Meet Our Providers

Roger Kaldawy, M.D.

Dr. Kaldawy is an eye physician, surgeon, and corneal specialist. He trained at the University of Rochester and the University of Iowa, later serving as Assistant Professor at Boston University. With more than 32,000 surgeries performed, he pioneered corneal transplants, innovative glaucoma surgery, advanced implants, and bladeless femtosecond cataract surgery in the region. He has trained numerous physicians and has been featured in many news articles including on Channel 5. He also serves as Medical Director of the Cataract Surgery Center of Milford.

Mark D. Barsamian, D.O.

Dr. Barsamian is a vitreo-retinal specialist affiliated with UMass Memorial Medical Center. He earned his DO degree from the Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine and completed a two-year fellowship in vitreoretinal surgery at Ohio State University. With over 20 years of experience, he is board-certified and active in multiple professional societies. He also teaches as a Clinical Instructor of Surgery at Brown University. Patients value his expertise, compassion, and dedication.

Dan Liu, M.D.

Dr. Liu graduated from Northwestern University and Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, where she was elected

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to Alpha Omega Alpha. She completed residency at Albany Medical Center, where she was Chief Resident, and a fellowship in Cornea and Anterior Segment Surgery at Tufts. Her expertise includes cataract surgery with ORA, corneal transplants (DMEK, DSEK, PK), keratoconus treatment, glaucoma MIGS, ocular surface tumors, and pterygia. She is board-certified by the American Board of Ophthalmology.

Shalin Zia, O.D.

Dr. Zia earned her Doctor of Optometry from Indiana University. She provides care for patients of all ages, specializing in routine vision exams, contact lenses, and management of eye disease.

Michael Adams, O.D.

Dr. Adams graduated from John Carroll University, completed a Master's in Biochemis-

try at Ohio State, and earned his optometry degree from the New England College of Optometry. He has advanced training in corneal pathology, specialty contact lenses, and ocular disease.

Donald L. Conn, O.D.

Dr. Conn received his optometry degree from the New England College of Optometry and completed a residency in Ocular Disease and Primary Care at the Bedford VA. He provides care to both adult and pediatric patients.

Purvi Patel, O.D.

Dr. Patel earned her Doctor of Optometry at SUNY and completed a residency in Ocular Disease. A Fellow of the American Academy of Optometry, she has held leadership roles at Boston community health centers

EYES

continued on page 13

Living Healthy

Is Your Child’s Backpack Putting Them at Risk?

As technology is advancing, and children are carrying laptops, tablets, sports uniforms, and the typical school necessities in their backpacks, it is crucial to address the risk of musculo-skeletal symptoms. While back pain is an inconvenience in itself, it is also linked to poor academic outcomes, school absences, altered posture and gait, and further exacerbates the risk of skeletal deformities, like scoliosis.

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Jacob is a 15 year old high school student who presented to the office with complaints of mid back pain and stiffness 6 months into his sophomore year. Through education of weight distribution, proper carrying positions, and duration of backpack wearing, this student was able to make at home changes in conjunction with chiropractic in office care.

Chiropractic adjustments of the spine allows for built up gasses in the joint space to be replaced with fluid and move

more freely - ultimately, reducing painful symptoms. In conjunction with soft tissue modalities - ie. myofascial release, cupping, scraping, chiropractic care can restore proper position and movement of the spine.

Call the Holistic Center at Bristol Square (508)660-2722 located at 1426 Main Street in Walpole to book your appointment today. Dr. Molly, Dr. Bien, or Dr. Goldstein will be happy to assist you on your journey back to health.

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

EYES
continued from page 12

and focuses on diabetes, glaucoma, and community-based care.

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Love How You Glow: Our Favorite End-Of-Summer Beauty Services

BY GINA WOELFEL

It's time to fall back into your beauty routine and give your hair and skin the nourishing refresh they need after a sun-soaked summer.

We get it—summer never slows down. Beach days, pool parties, outdoor adventures, and endless activities can leave your beauty routine on the back burner. But as the leaves start to change and September settles in, it's the perfect time for a seasonal beauty reset. With the kids back to school and schedules returning to normal, you finally have that precious “me-time” you've been craving all summer long.

Why Your Skin and Hair Need Extra TLC This Fall

Summer's relentless sun, chlorine exposure, salt water, and heat styling can wreak havoc on your hair and skin. You might notice your complexion looking dull, feeling dehydrated, or showing signs of sun damage. Your hair may feel dry, brittle, or lacking its usual shine and bounce. These are all tell-tale signs that it's time for some serious beauty intervention.

Fall is nature's reminder to slow down and nurture our-

selves—and your beauty routine should follow suit. This seasonal transition period is crucial for repairing summer damage and preparing your skin and hair for the cooler, drier months ahead.

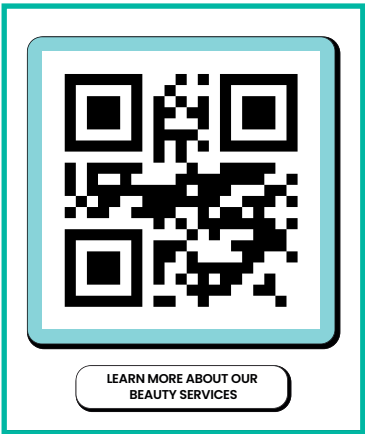
Our Top Fall Beauty Services to Restore Your Glow

We've carefully curated our favorite end-of-summer beauty treatments that will leave you feeling revived, radiant, and ready to embrace this cozy fall season.

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- Sun spots and hyperpigmentation
- Dehydrated skin
- Clogged pores from sun-screen buildup
- Fine lines from UV damage



The result? Instantly brighter, more luminous skin that glows from within. This treatment also helps prep your skin for richer fall moisturizers and serums.

Scalp Spa Revival - \$60

Your scalp needs just as much attention as your skin after summer's harsh elements (because remember...your scalp is your skin!) This deeply relaxing treatment combines gentle exfoliation, nourishing masks, and a therapeutic scalp massage to:

- Remove product buildup
- Restore moisture balance to soothe dry, flaky scalp
- Stimulate blood circulation for healthier hair growth
- Create the perfect foundation for gorgeous fall hair

Think of it as a reset button for your entire head—you'll leave feeling refreshed and your hair will thank you with improved body and shine.

Demineralizer Treatment - \$65

Hard water, pool chemicals, and environmental pollutants can leave mineral deposits in your hair, making it feel heavy, dull, and difficult to style. Our demineralizer treatment gently removes these stubborn buildup issues while:

- Restoring your hair's natural pH balance
- Improving color vibrancy and clarity
- Enhancing moisture absorption



- Leaving hair softer and more manageable
- Preps hair for better absorption on new color services

Color Balance

Perfect your natural or colored hair with a color balance, our professional toning service that delivers incredible shine for all hair colors and eliminates unwanted brassy or yellow tones for blondes and gray hair. By smoothing the hair cuticle, this gloss treatment creates a mirror-like finish that makes your existing color look fresh and vibrant. For the ultimate red carpet look, book a color balance and blowout!

This service delivers:

- Ultimate glossiness and shine for every hair color
- Enhanced color clarity for all hair types
- Clear or Toned Finish
- Smoother, healthier-looking results

The perfect finishing touch that leaves your hair looking radiant. Remember to add this service when you book your next appointment!

The Science Behind Seasonal Beauty Transitions

As temperatures drop and humidity levels decrease, your skin and hair face new challenges. Indoor heating systems

can further strip moisture, while cooler air means less natural oil production. Starting your fall beauty routine early helps you stay ahead of these seasonal changes rather than playing catch-up later.

Book Your Fall Beauty Reset Today

These seasonal self-care essentials are your secret weapon for transitioning into fall beauty. Don't wait for the leaves to change—your skin and hair benefit most from early intervention.

Step into 'sweatah weathah' feeling radiant and renewed this September! Our team of experts is here to help you create a unique fall beauty plan tailored just for you.

Contact us today to schedule an end-of-summer beauty refresh and discover why so many clients trust us with their beauty needs.

Step into your most confident fall look this season. Visit bluxe.com or call (508) 321-1624 to book your appointment or learn more about our complete menu of beauty services.

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Q & A With Healthy KP for Freshmen Parents: Supporting a Healthy Transition to High School

Q: What has Healthy KP been doing to support students before they enter high school?

A: Healthy KP has been actively involved in providing prevention education and fostering positive experiences for students throughout middle school. Through support for school dances, family events and fun, engaging activities, Healthy KP encourages healthy choices and helps students bond in safe, substance-free environments. These experiences help lay the groundwork for confident, informed decision-making before students even step into high school.

Q: What's the story behind the "graduation t-shirts?"

A: At the end of 8th grade, every student received a Healthy

KP Graduation Shirt as a celebration of their achievement and a reminder that they're entering high school with the support of a community that truly cares about their well-being and success.

Q: Is there anything being given to help them adjust to 9th grade?

A: Yes! As your student prepares to enter high school, the transition can feel exciting — and a little overwhelming. At the freshman orientation event, all 9th grade students will receive a Healthy KP Freshman Planner- a practical and supportive tool designed to help them stay organized and confident as they transition into high school. Inside they will find:

- Study and time-management tips
 - Staff contacts and school schedules
 - Wellness and prevention reminders
- Q: Why is freshman year such an important time for prevention?**
- A: Research shows that early high school is a critical time for substance use prevention. It's when peer influence intensifies and students are navigating greater independence. Having open conversations at home and reinforcing healthy choices can make a huge difference. Healthy KP provides parent resources to help — just visit healthykp.org for talking tips, facts, and tools to guide these conversations.

Q: What ongoing opportunities are there for students to get involved with Healthy KP?

A: Healthy KP has a growing Student Coalition that will be expanding this year. It's a chance for students to take the lead in prevention efforts, plan fun events, and make a positive impact in their schools and communities. Encourage your student to stop by the Healthy KP booth at the freshman orientation event to learn how they can get involved.

Please email your questions to info@healthykp.org. Questions will remain confidential and anonymous.

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



Correction

In our August story titled "Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary War Monument Ceremony at KP High," it was incorrectly stated that the battle of Yorktown took place in Pennsylvania. The battle actually took place in Virginia. We regret the error.

MERCURY RECOVERY PROGRAM

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Don't Leaf Your Dog Out - FALL into a New Routine where every day is the Most Exciting Day at Dogtopia!

By Jennifer Russo

Oh, do you feel that change in the air? As the crisp autumn air begins to settle over the area and the leaves transform the landscape into a vibrant canvas of color, leaving the sweltering summer behind, we can enjoy more walks on the trails with our pups and play more fun games of fetch in the yard!

Just like families enjoy the traditions of the season here in New England, our canine-kids can bask in the comfort and fun of a cozy, safe, and welcoming space! As pup-parents navigate the change in seasons, the new school year, fall cleanup projects, and other seasonal activities, their dogs can explore, learn, and hang out with their tail-wagging friends at Dogtopia!

Located in the Franklin Village Plaza, Dogtopia is the perfect fall retreat, with a state-of-the-art facility and a staff of certified, dog-loving team members ready to spoil your dog – making sure they have everything they need to have the most amazing time while you work, get some shopping done, have appointments to get to, or have a trip they can't join you for.

As pup-parents, it's important to know that our animals receive the very best care. Dogtopia has rigorous safety standards, with compressed rubber flooring that helps with long-term joint health, pet-safe cleaning products, and spacious, climate-controlled playrooms.

Each of the three playrooms is supervised, and dogs are grouped by similar size, temperament, and play style. Pups are socialized



safely, given basic behavioral education, have the opportunity for agility exercises and brain games, and provided with an open-play environment that will help them release all of their pent-up energy and stay fit.

There is even a Bark Bar – yes, you read that right! The bar has special treats available for parents to purchase for their companions, like chicken or salmon protein bowls, pupsicles, and a smoothie of the month.

Ultimately, Dogtopia is committed to giving the pups a happy, loving, and safe environment to play and learn in. Pup-parents can check in whenever they'd like, with live webcams in every playroom, and periodic report cards to keep them in the loop.

Is your family going on a vacation where your pup can't join? Give them a vacation of their own with Dogtopia's boarding services! It's a home away from home, where your four-legged friend will be well cared for and pampered. They will enjoy fun-



filled days with their friends, rest comfortably and safely, and can even enjoy spa services while you are away!

Dogtopia is all about community, offering not only the best in care, but also events that clients can take part in with their pups, like craft days, photo days, themed parties, and more!

September is NATIONAL SERVICE DOG MONTH !!

MONDAY, SEPT 1 • LABOR DAY
One last summer weekend with a photo shoot!

FRIDAY, SEPT 4 • ACTIVITY DAY
Keeping our pups healthy



by exercising with an obstacle course day – Get your DASH ready!

MONDAY, SEPT 8 • MINI MONDAY

This is a really BIG deal for our WEE dogs.

FRIDAY, SEPT 12 • BIRTHDAY/ GOTCHA DAY

Celebrate September dogs with a gotcha/b-day party!

WEDNESDAY, SEPT 17 • WELLNESS DAY

Focusing on your dog's health & wellness

FRIDAY, SEPT 19 • FOUNDATION FRIDAYS

Celebrate National Service Dog Month with a Foundation Day Photo of your pup with any donation!

ALL WEEK SEPT 21-27 • NATIONAL DOG WEEK

We'll have the pups lookin' good & feelin' good, & doin' good with our events this week!

TUESDAY, SEPT 23 • SPOIL YOUR DOG DAY

We'll be pampering the pups with spa services

THURSDAY, SEPT 25 • PHOTO SHOOT

Today we celebrate our dogs for the stars that they are!

Does your pup need a place for socialization, exercise, love, and endless fun? Curious about how to get started?

The Dogtopia staff understands that every dog is different and a one-size-fits-all approach is not what works best. New clients bring their dog in for a meet and greet with a trained evaluator, which helps determine their overall wellness and personality,



comfort level in the space (for fun and playtime), and a crate (for naptime or boarding), and how they interact with staff and other dogs.

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

"At Franklin Village Dogtopia, let us be your one-stop shop for all pup things! Between safety, extra snuggles, and lots of fun, we always strive to make it the most exciting day ever for you and your dog!" says Dogtopia District Manager Naomi Paige.

Learn more about Dogtopia of Franklin Village and their amazing services by visiting <https://www.dogtopia.com/massachusetts-franklin-village/> or check out their Instagram at @DogtopiaFranklinVillage. You can even see an interactive, virtual version of the facility on their website.

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Massachusetts Firefighting Academy

Career Recruit Class #BW35 Graduation • July 18, 2025

Wrentham firefighter Robert Saraf graduated from the Massachusetts Fire Fighting Academy’s Career Recruit Firefighting Training Program on July 18.

1776 Financial Services Awards 2025 Scott Dittrich Memorial Scholarships

1776 Financial Services awarded the Scott Dittrich Memorial Scholarships to Ella Mahoney of Franklin High School and Addison Lewis of King Philip Regional High School.

The scholarship is given in memory of 1776 Financial Services co-founder Scott Dittrich who passed away in March 2023. Throughout his lifetime, Scott demonstrated the extraordinary ability to regularly engage others and influence change. Ella and Addison submitted winning essays detailing an instance when they inspired someone to act which resulted in a positive outcome.

These annual scholarships are awarded to one Franklin High School senior and one King Philip Regional High School senior who will pursue a business-related major at a 4-year college or university. The scholarship is a progressive one that will be given out over the four years of study.

1776 Financial would like to wish Ella and Addison the best of luck as they attend New York University and Georgia Institute of Technology respectively.

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From left: Bill Dittrich, Addison Lewis, and Marybeth Stanton.



From left: Bill Dittrich, Ella Mahoney, and Marybeth Stanton.



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September News and Program Highlights at the Fiske Public Library

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

The Fiske Public Library will be closed Monday, September 1 for Labor Day. The Library's regular hours of operation are Monday and Friday 10 a.m. 5 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. 4 p.m. Saturday hours resume September 6.

September is Library Card Sign-Up Month

Fiske Public Library invites the community to celebrate Library Card Sign-Up Month this September and discover how a single card can open the door to limitless opportunities.

A library card provides access to more than books—it connects residents to free classes, job resources, homework help, streaming media, cultural events, and technology workshops. This year's national theme, "One Card, Endless Possibilities," highlights that libraries are for everyone, regardless of age, background, or goals. Whether you're exploring a new hobby, brushing up on tech skills, or supporting your child's education, it all starts with a library card.

To encourage participation, anyone signing up for a new adult library card in September will be entered to win six free audiobooks from libro.fm.

CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS

Music at the Blissful

Friday, September 19, 11 a.m. to noon

National Touring Musician Evan Haller of Music at the Blissful will host a fun-filled, interactive, movement-packed music performance for the whole family. Join the fun as we sing, jump, shake, laugh and go slow and fast as Haller plays songs off his new album, "Oh My Heaven Look It's Evan." Register at fiskelib.org.

Page Turners Book Club

Tuesday, September 23, noon to 1 p.m.

Kids in grades 4-6 are invited to this lunchtime book club meeting. Bring a lunch and enjoy a discussion of this month's book selection, along with accompanying activities. This month's book is "Four Eyes" by Rex Ogle. Register at fiskelib.org. Copies of the book will be available for check-out at the circulation desk.

ADULT PROGRAMS

The Theft of Dignity with Author Dennis Wise

Thursday, September 11, 6:30 p.m.

The Theft of Dignity is a lively, in-person presentation by YA novelist Dennis Wise that unpacks teen bullying through the lens of pop culture. From hit shows and movies to books—including Dennis's own novel "On Your Side"—we'll explore how bullying plays out. It's a fun, eye-opening way to dig into a serious topic, with practical ideas for building a more respectful and connected community. Open to teens, parents, educators, and anyone curious about peer bullying—and what we can do about it. This program is funded in part by a grant from the Wrentham Cultural Council, a local agency supported by the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency.

Mandala Ornament Workshop

Thursday, September 18, 6:30 p.m.

Learn a technique called "pointillism" to create beautiful mandala ornaments that can be hung around the house, from rear-view mirrors or saved for the holiday tree. Space is limited to

15 adult participants. Registration is required. Led by Mandy Roberge of Wicked Good Henna.

UFO Talk with Ronny LeBlanc

Thursday, September 25, 6:30 p.m.

Leominster, Massachusetts is known as MONSTERLAND™ because of multiple sightings of UFOs and Orange Orbs. What's so special about Leominster? Author and Researcher Ronny LeBlanc thinks that he might have the answers.

Fiske Public Library Book Club

Tuesday, September 23, 7 p.m.

"Remarkably Bright Creatures" by Shelby Van Pelt is this month's book. Copies will be available at the Circulation Desk. Contact Library Director Kim Shipala at kshipala@sailsinc.org or 508-384-5440 with any questions.

VIRTUAL EVENTS

The Fiske Public Library showcases a virtual author talk series several times each month featuring bestselling, award-winning, and highly acclaimed authors from around the world.

The featured writers and thought leaders will cover a wide range of fiction and nonfiction genres, and participants can ask questions of the authors. All events are free and open to the public. For more information or to register, visit <https://libraryc.org/fiskelib> or call 508-384-5440.

Author Talks for this month include:

- "On Writing Darkly Charming Villainous Love" with Hannah Nicole Maehrer, New York Times bestselling author and TikTok superstar, Wednesday September 3 at 7 p.m. ET.
- "Argue Less and Talk More" with communication expert Jefferson Fisher, York Times bestselling author and social media sensation, Wednesday September 10 at 2 p.m. ET.
- "Our Failed Attempts to Make English Easier to Spell" with author Gabe Henry, Simplified Spelling Historian and author of "Enough is Enuf" and "Eating Salad Drunk," Wednesday, September 17 at 2 p.m. ET.

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Wrentham Celebrates Completion of Sweatt Park Improvement Project

The town of Wrentham celebrated the grand reopening of Sweatt Park with a ribbon-cutting ceremony held on Thursday, July 24.

The event — featuring inaugural games played on four new pickleball courts, along with a cookout, complete with hot dogs, hamburgers and ice cream — celebrated the completion of the Sweatt Park revitalization after the project first broke ground in September 2024.

State Rep. Marcus Vaughn, Norfolk County Commissioner Richard Staiti, Select Board Chair Chris Gallo and Town Manager Michael King each delivered remarks to the crowd gathered at the ribbon-cutting ceremony to kick off the event.

Sweatt Park, located in the heart of Wrentham's downtown, serves as a vital community hub, offering a vast open space for recreation and relaxation.

The Sweatt Park revitalization project, funded through American Rescue Recovery Act Funds, involved site preparation, demolition, grading, and the installation of a variety of park amenities, including benches, concrete walkways, drains, renovated stairs, a renovated tennis court,



State Rep. Marcus Vaughn, the Wrentham Select Board, Norfolk County Commissioner Richard Staiti, Town Manager Michael King and community members celebrated a ribbon cutting at the newly revitalized Sweatt Park on Thursday, July 24.

(Photo Courtesy Town of Wrentham.)

the four new pickleball courts and added parking spaces. Other improvements to the park included the reconfiguration of paths to preserve the roots of 100-year-old trees in the area.

These upgrades provide a more inviting, enjoyable and handicap-accessible environment for residents and visitors.

The work to renovate Sweatt Park was completed by the Bedford-based Argus Construction, which was selected following a request for proposal process last year. Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) led construction oversight and design.

The park revitalization project was paid for with \$1.2 million in federal grant funding provided to the town through the American Rescue Recovery Act.

The completion of the Sweatt Park revitalization project marked a significant milestone in Wrentham's ongoing efforts to enhance the beauty and functionality of its public spaces, coming on the heels of the renovation of the Center School parking lot, which added more than 100 parking spaces at the site.

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2025 Second Quarter Real Estate Activity Report

Norfolk County real estate recordings for the second quarter of 2025 (April-June 2025) indicate a significant increase in overall real estate activity, with growth observed in both the total number of deeds and mortgages recorded compared to the second quarter of 2024.

According to Register of Deeds Willaim P. O'Donnell, the Norfolk County Registry of Deeds recorded 28,732 documents during the second quarter of 2025, representing an 8% increase compared to the 26,623 documents recorded in the same period in 2024. June was the busiest month in the second quarter of 2025 for real estate activity, with 10,433 documents recorded, marking a 15% increase from June 2024.

The number of deeds recorded in the second quarter of 2025, which reflect both commercial and residential real estate sales and transfers, was 4,493, marking a 6% increase during the same period in 2024. The number of deeds recorded for consideration (actual sales) also rose by 6% to 2,456 in the second quarter of 2025 compared to the second quarter of 2024.

"The overall number of deeds recorded in the second quarter compared to the same period last year reveals a consistent positive trend," noted Register O'Donnell. "This indicates a healthy level of activity in the real estate market and we hope to see similar increases in real estate sales and transfers as we move into the third quarter."

The total volume of commercial and residential sales for the second quarter of 2025 reached \$3,166,444,793, a 14% increase compared to the second quarter of 2024. The average sale price for commercial and residential properties climbed to \$1,289,269, reflecting an 8% increase from the same time period in 2024. April 2025 saw a notable increase, with the average sale price reaching \$1,381,678, up 33% from April 2024. However, June 2025 saw virtually no change in the average property price from June 2024.

"The average sale price of property which is a mix of commercial and residential sales increased over the second quarter due to Norfolk County's desirability as a place to both live and work," stated Register O'Donnell. "However, anecdotal reports suggest properties may have been staying on the market slightly longer in June, which could be an indication that prices will stay in check going into the next quarter, but only time will tell."

Overall lending activity was up in the second quarter. The total number of mortgages recorded was 4,692, marking a 16% increase compared to the same period last year. Total mortgage indebtedness also increased by 56% to \$4,226,032,103 in the second quarter compared to 2024. June 2025 recordings saw the largest increase in mortgages compared to the same month in 2024, up 22% from last year.

"The positive growth we have seen this quarter underscores the resilience and desirability of Norfolk County as it continues to attract residents and businesses," said O'Donnell. "While the national economy can affect the local property market, we hope to see this increased real estate activity continue its momentum into the next quarter and beyond."

Norfolk to Host 19th Annual Cactus and Succulent Festival on September 13

The 19th Annual Cactus and Succulent Festival will be held on Saturday, September 13 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Norfolk Public Library, 2 Liberty Lane. Admission and parking are free.

The event will once again feature a juried plant exhibition inside the library and a plant sale on the Norfolk Town Common. More than 20 vendors will participate, offering a wide selection of cacti, succulents, pottery, gardening tools, books, and related items. Hundreds of unique plants will be on display for the public to enjoy.

New for 2025, the Festival will include a Children's Booth, featuring plant-related activities designed to engage younger visitors.

For more information, visit <https://www.cssma.org/>.

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Public Universities: Still a Value, No Longer a Safety

For many years, families viewed their flagship state university as a “likely” or “safety” option. That is no longer the case. Here in Massachusetts, for example, UMass Amherst once was in the safety category on most students’ lists. Today, its average admitted GPA hovers around 4.07, making it competitive for even the strongest applicants. Across the country, flagship universities and well-known state schools are growing more selective- for both in-state and out-of-state students. Why? There are several factors:

Why Admissions Are Tightening

Rising costs at private colleges. As private tuition climbs at an average of 3–5% per year, many families, even affluent ones, can no longer justify paying \$75,000 to \$90,000 per year in tuition. Out-of-state public universities that cost in the \$40k–\$60K range suddenly look like a “value.” Ten years ago, merit aid at private colleges often brought them in line with public universities. Today, that gap has widened and are pushing students to public institutions.

Planning for graduate school. With private college costs climbing, many students who expect to pursue graduate or professional degrees- particularly in fields like health sciences, business, and psychology- are choosing more affordable public universities for their undergraduate years. They recognize that saving money now leaves them better positioned to

handle the tuition burden of medical school, business school, or graduate programs later on.

The southern migration. More students are applying to southern flagships drawn by football Saturdays, school spirit, Greek life, and warm weather. A Wall Street Journal headline even teased, “Sorry, Harvard. Everyone Wants to Go to College in the South Now.”

Test-optional admissions. Dropping testing requirements has increased applicant pools, especially at selective flagships. Students who might not have applied in the past now do.

In-state vs. out-of-state dynamics. For out-of-state applicants, many state systems hold quotas- sometimes admitting 80% or more from within state, which in turn lowers the acceptance rate for out of state students. Meanwhile, for some states declining state funding is pushing universities to admit more out-of-state and full-pay students. In-state families feel squeezed when spots shrink.

Yield management. Admissions offices use sophisticated modeling to admit the students most likely to enroll. Out-of-state applicants without demonstrated interest may be overlooked even with strong grades.

What Families Can Do:

- **Don’t assume a public university is a safety.** Even in-state flagships should be treated as targets- or sometimes reaches- depending on

major. Research admit rates by program, not just overall.

- **Look beyond the obvious.** Explore under-the-radar public universities with strong honors programs or specialized majors. For example, in Massachusetts, UMass Lowell and UMass Dartmouth can be excellent options for students interested in engineering, business, or health sciences. In the south, UNC Wilmington and UNC Charlotte may offer great pathways in business or health sciences compared to UNC or NC State.
- **Apply early.** Priority and Early Action deadlines matter, particularly for scholarships, honors colleges, and competitive majors. Rolling-admission schools fill quickly- early applications can provide a real edge.
- **Stay rigorous.** Students should not coast, assuming a state school will overlook a light schedule. Strong GPA, test scores, and rigorous senior year courses matter. Although rigorous is always defined by the individual student - not everyone can take or handle AP classes.
- **Visit.** Demonstrated interest counts at many public universities. Touring less competitive campuses can open students’ eyes to hidden gems.



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

- **Have a transfer plan.** Students could start at a branch campus or community college with a guaranteed transfer program. These can be smart pathways to a flagship degree.

Getting into college is not necessarily harder. But getting into many public universities has become much more competitive. Schools that once seemed like fallbacks- whether flagships or strong regional campuses- are now far from guarantees. Families should look beyond the obvious and resist the pull of bumper-sticker schools that attract the bulk of applications. By

casting a wider, more thoughtful net and pairing it with strong academics and preparation- students can discover public universities that offer both value and opportunity.

Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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Transforming Potential into Purpose at Dean College

In the heart of Franklin, Dean College has been shaping futures for more than 160 years. Stroll across its compact, tree-lined campus and you’ll see students headed to class, rehearsing in the theatre, or on their way to internships that put their classroom learning into action. For many, this is where raw potential is transformed into confidence, skill, and purpose.

“Every student walks onto Dean’s campus with unique strengths and aspirations,” says Dr. Scott Sibley, Provost. “Our role is to meet them where they are, challenge them, and guide them toward becoming confi-

dent, capable professionals.”

That philosophy is woven into every aspect of the Dean experience. With just 1,200 full-time undergraduates, small class sizes make it easy for faculty to know students by name. Advisors tailor an academic plan to each individual’s goals, while required internships ensure every graduate has a meaningful real-world experience. Partnerships with organizations like Kraft Sports + Entertainment and the Franklin Performing Arts Company connect students directly to industry networks.

The results speak for themselves, with 96 percent of grad-

uates employed or in graduate school within one year of earning their degree.

For recent graduate, Bree Gazeille ’24, that attention made all the difference. “Thanks to the incredible support from Dean, I’ve surpassed my academic expectations and achieved more than I thought possible,” she says. “Their guidance paved the way for two incredible internships, a job in my desired field post-graduation, and acceptance into grad school.”

In a higher education landscape often defined by large lecture halls and anonymous crowds, Dean offers something

refreshingly different with a close-knit community dedicated to helping students achieve their full potential. That kind of outcome is no accident. Alongside academic expertise, Dean students leave with the skills employers value most, including communication, collaboration, leadership, global awareness, and problem-solving. These abilities are practiced and refined through both coursework and campus life.

Performing Arts alumna, Gabrielle Fernandes credits Dean with giving her more than technical training. “Dean has been an integral part of

my professional success,” she says. “Through Dean, I have been able to grow my network by meeting and connecting with other alumni, which has led to jobs and bookings. Dean’s tight-knit community really is a family.”

For a growing number of students, Dean offers something rare in higher education: a place where talent is nurtured, ambition is matched with opportunity, and futures are built one experience at a time.

Sports

KP's Girls Soccer Team In 'Rebuilding Mode'

By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

Gary Pichel rarely uses the R-word when assessing how his King Philip girls soccer team will fare from season to season.

But, the Warriors coach, who's now in his 15th year at the helm, says without any hesitation that the 2025 season "will be a rebuilding year." The traditionally strong program finished 18-3 last year and advanced to the Division 1 state tourney. But, 10 seniors graduated and four of them were captains who now are competing for top-notch college teams. Of the 14 returnees, only four started last year.

"We're rebuilding but our goals will still include contending for the Hockomock League's Kelly-Rex Division championship," Pichel offered. "If we improve our skills, that's a realistic objective. Our other goals are to qualify for the playoffs and go as deep as possible."

KP will no doubt miss the leadership and talent that last year's captains displayed — striker Dani Lomuscio, forward Mikayla Thompson, and defenders Addison Lamothe-Vaughn and Rhianna Mason.

Lomuscio, who's now playing at Division 1 Stonehill, was the league MVP last year, an All-American and an Eastern Mass. all-star. She also was the Hockomock League's leading scorer with 27 goals and 22 assists (49 points). Thompson and Lamothe-Vaughan are competing for Division 1 Iona and Mason plays at Virginia Wesleyan, a Division 3 university.

"That quartet was one of the best group of captains I've ever had," Pichel said. "And, Dani is one

of the top five most versatile and talented players I've ever coached."

Although the current edition of the Warriors lacks experience and depth, it still has strengths, which include athleticism, a coachable nature, a team-first attitude and a willingness to achieve.

Four of the five girls who comprise the Warriors' nucleus are captains — seniors Lauren Obara (goalie) and Ella Lussier (midfielder), and juniors Ella McDonald (striker) and Donnelle Balunos (defender). Sophomore midfielder Claire Astorino rounds out the quintet.

O'Bara is a three-year starter and Lussier has started for two seasons.

"Lauren is one of the top goalies in the league," Pichel said. "She had a goals-against average of 1.05 and eight shoutouts last year. She focuses on making improvements to her game every year. She's our field commander in the backfield. Ella (Lussier) works hard to support the offense and defensive end of the field and maintains control of her side. Ella is an accurate passer whose shot on net is effective."

McDonald has started for two years and Balunos is in her third year as a starter. Last season, McDonald scored 10 goals and had 13 assists to finish as the third leading scorer.

"Ella (McDonald) is an incredible talent and she sets the standard for positional game excellence, for continuous improvement, tenacity and grit. Donnelle will take over leadership to rebuild our backline after our entire defensive corps was lost to graduation. She'll mentor and teach the needed skills to inex-



King Philip's soccer captains are, from left, Lauren Obara, Ella Lussier, Donnelle Balunos, and Ella McDonald.

perienced players and she'll provide the backbone, aggressiveness and intelligence to make our younger defenders a cohesive unit."

Astorino is beginning her first year as a starter. "Claire is a creative offensive player who's got great field vision," Pichel said. "A good student of the game, she's got a strong desire to be the best player on the field."

Other key players include senior defender Arianna Dubovsky, sophomore midfielder Ava Quinton, senior defender Alex D'Amadio, and sophomore Madison Howitt, a sophomore defensive midfielder.

"Ari is a versatile player who can

compete as a defensive midfielder or outside wing," Pichel said. "She's aggressive and skilled with precision passing. Ava is a first-year varsity player who's quick and a threat on offense as she approaches the box. Her shot from either side will provide a scoring punch from the wing position."

"Alex, who's regarded as one of the top female runners in the state, will use that gift to protect the defensive third of the pitch. Alex works hard with an aggressive style to defend against any offensive threats. Madison is a gifted defensive player who sees the field with much clarity. Her passes will split the seams and accurately find her targets."

The 67-year-old Pichel relies on an athletic philosophy that combines winning, reaching one's potential and having fun. "Those

ingredients are all related," he said. "If our players enjoy competing and are having fun, then they'll reach their potential and that leads to winning."

Life lessons can be learned in sports and Pichel hopes soccer has taught his players some valuable tenets going forward. "Sports teach athletes how to overcome adversity, how to be resilient, to be good teammates and leaders, and how to solve problems," he offered. "Other good lessons are how to build relationships, how to manage time and how to sharpen one's work ethic."

Pichel, a native of Springfield who was raised in Milford, favors an up-tempo, aggressive style. "We'll be aggressive no matter what our opponents' strategy might be," he said.

Pichel's best playoff advance came in 2017 when KP lost to Westford Academy in the state semifinals. When he coached at Nipmuc Regional, he led that program to a pair of state championships.

The Kelly-Rex Division title, which KP has won for the last two years, heads Pichel's objectives and he lists Franklin, Mansfield and Oliver Ames as the leading contenders. "Franklin has strong talent and tradition," he emphasized. "Mansfield has lots of returnees and is well-skilled, and Oliver Ames is another capable squad that will rely on skilled returnees."

KP will go from Division 1 to Division 2 this year, a move Pichel calls "acceptable."

"I believe we should have played in Division 2 last year," he said. "Massachusetts high school girls soccer is extremely competitive no matter what division you play in."

KP, which will start its season on Sept. 3 at Acton-Boxboro, will not be a breather for opponents no matter what division the Warriors compete in. Because their program is rich in tradition — in spite of rebuilding.

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Sports



The Norfolk U9 boys baseball team won the Hockomock Summer League Championship with a record of 10-3-2. Congratulations to the team on an outstanding season.

Back row, from left: Coaches Steve Cordo, Lee Margolis, John Semas, Tyler Pyburn, and Jared Ruggieri
Middle row, from left: Alex Margolis, Teddy Moses, Jack Curran, Connor Lockhead, Jake Pyburn, Sonny Ruggieri, and Paxton Price
Front row, from left: Declan Cordo, Thomas Iacono, Gus Semas, and Brayden Malone.
Missing: Tate McGrath



The 2025 Norfolk U10 Division 1 summer baseball team captured back-to-back Hockomock Championship titles with a 4-0 win over the North Attleboro U10 All-Stars. The team concluded an outstanding season with a 21-3-1 record. Congratulations to the players and coaches on a well-earned victory.

Top row, from left: Coaches Kevin Lonergan, Andy Fuller, and Matt Hebert.
Middle row from left: Cooper Buley, Cameron Connelly, Thomas Fuller, Brooks Lonergan, Andon Close, Connor Hebert, and Jackson Forlasto.
Front row, from left: Logan McGann, Peter Iacono, Tyler McKeever, and Weston Star.
Lying down: Finn Hanson



FUSF Welcomes Community to a New Year of Worship and Religious Education

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) invites the community to join in celebrating the start of a new year of Religious Education and Sunday Worship Services with Minister Rev. Bev Waring. The congregation gathers every Sunday at 10 a.m., embracing Unitarian Universalist values of Equity, Transformation, Generosity, Interdependence, Justice, Pluralism, and Love. Services are followed by coffee and conversation in the foyer.

Ingathering Sunday – September 7

The church year begins with Ingathering Sunday: Begin Again in Community. Whether attending for the first time or returning after many years, everyone is welcome. Participants are invited to bring water to share in the annual ritual of mingling and blessing the precious

resource for use at child dedications, weddings, and other sacred occasions throughout the year.

Upcoming Worship Themes – September 14 to September 28

This fall, worship services will explore how religion and spirituality can ground us in changing times, with reflections on influential figures in Unitarian Universalist tradition. Sermon titles will include “Create Your Own Bible Like Jefferson Did,” “WWJD: What Would Jesus Drive,” and “One Great Bundle of Humanity.”

Specific themes and dates will be available on our website (FUSF.org) and Facebook page.

Religious Education for All Ages

FUSF offers a comprehensive Religious Education program beginning September 14. The first service of the fall is multi-

generational, with nursery care available for the youngest attendees. Classes for children in Kindergarten through Grade 5 take place after 15 minutes in the sanctuary, and middle and high school youth participate in worship, help with younger children, and join youth groups outside of Sunday mornings.

All programs are grounded in UU values, and participation is open to all—no Unitarian Universalist affiliation required. For more information, contact Director of Religious Education Sara Allegretti at DRE@FUSF.org.

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

Summit Conference

Broad winged elder raven circles high,
Surveying hills and valleys below.
Sharp eyes check each cut by human scythe,
But soon its aging wings begin to slow.

Redwood pinnacle on a distant ridge,
Bids dear old friend alight and rest,
A chance to ponder a world unhinged,
Discuss those flaws they most detest.

One thousand years the redwood watched,
From towering vantage point unexcelled.
Sentinel raven too, long since he hatched,
Through the decades, his wisdom swelled.

“Friend raven, sir, what have you seen today?
Pray tell me the ominous tide has turned,
That the festering fever of our dismay
Will finally ebb, logic no longer spurned.”

“My brother”, spoke the raven, “I wish it were so,
But wherever I glide, cast my weary eye,
I see waste, carnage and my worries grow.
That the end be near, I cannot now deny.”

“Raven, there must be means to sway these fools.
Please serve as Mother Nature’s emissary.
Among us we can surely craft the tools,
To save the earth from total disarray.”

“Where do we begin this ominous task,
Born through millennia of benign neglect,
Fed by ignorance in deceptive mask,
Worn by creatures of tainted intellect?”

“They penetrate the oceans, air and plains,
In numbers overwhelming, escape denied.
Our planetary share does rapidly drain,
Yet in these evil deeds they take such pride.”

*

“A tired and tortured earth now in rebellion,
Will counter soon with weapons of defense,
Halting the pounding tread of human legion.
Climate, disease will thin their ranks immense.”

And so the raven assumed his vital role,
Brought proclamation across land and sea.
And on the doorstep of every leader bold,
Stiffly stood, delivering his urgent plea.

“Stupid avian! Be gone you brainless bird!
Your scrawny hulk does block the pathway,
Through which my growing riches herd.”
The raven shook his head and strode away.

In following decades, the spectacle unfolded,
As two friends watched from towering ridge,
Earth now scorched, infected and flooded,
Slowly cleansed as Nature builds her bridge.

G. GREGORY TOOKER C. JUNE, 2014

CITATION GIVING NOTICE OF CONSERVATOR’S ACCOUNT

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
The Trial Court
Probate and Family Court
Norfolk Probate and Family Court
35 Shawmut Road, Canton, MA 02021
Docket No. N018P0355PM

In the Matter of: Annabelle Grace Andre of Wrentham, MA
Protected Person/Disabled Person/Respondent

To the named Respondent and all other interested persons, you are hereby notified pursuant to Rule 72 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court, that the **Petition of Allowance on the Amended First Annual** account(s) of Marie-Lisa a/k/a Marie Andre Sobande of Wrentham, MA
Mobolaji Sobande of Wrentham, MA

You have the right to object to the account(s). If you wish to do so, you or your attorney must file a written appearance and objection at this court on or before 10:00 A.M. on the return date of **09/10/2025**. This day is NOT a hearing date, but a deadline date by which you have to object to the account(s). If you fail to file the written appearance and objection by the return date, action may be taken in this matter without further notice to you, including the allowance of the account(s).
Additionally, within thirty days after said return day (or within such other time as the Court upon motion may order), you must file a written affidavit of objections stating the specific facts and grounds upon which each objection is based and a copy shall be served upon the Conservator pursuant to Rule 3 of the Supplemental Rules of the Probate & Family Court. You have the right to send to the Conservator, by registered or certified mail, a written request to receive a copy of the Petition and account(s) at no cost to you.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The outcome of this proceeding may limit or completely take away the above-named person’s right to make decisions about personal affairs or financial affairs or both. The above-named person has the right to ask for a lawyer. Anyone may make this request on behalf of the above-named person. If the above-named person cannot afford a lawyer, one may be appointed at State expense.

WITNESS, Hon. Lee M. Peterson, First Justice of this Court
Date: August 7, 2025

Colleen M. Brierley
Register of Probate

September 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.

Saturday, September 6, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. **Norfolk Community Blood Drive** The American Red Cross is experiencing a blood shortage. Give the gift of blood and help save a life. Open to all. RSVP to 800-RED-CROSS or RedCrossBlood.org.

Tuesday, September 9 at 1 p.m. **A Visit With Paul Revere** Michael Lepage brings Boston's favorite patriot vividly to life. Learn details about Revere's midnight ride, his many children, and his work as a gold and silversmith. RSVP requested.

Wednesday, September 10 at 1 p.m. **Patrick Durkin Concert** Enjoy energetic piano playing and vocals by Patrick Durkin, an alumnus of Berklee College of Music and a published singer and songwriter. He has performed internationally in Norway, Amsterdam and Barbados. RSVP requested.

Monday, September 15 at 11 a.m. **Hearing Loss, Tinnitus Treatments, and Dementia** Dr. Dana Mario of Mario Hearing and Tinnitus Clinic in Mansfield will discuss hearing loss and tinnitus treatments, as well as hearing loss due to dementia. RSVP requested.

Thursday, September 18 at 1 p.m. **Older & Wiser Driver** A safe driving presentation for mature drivers by AAA Northeast. The discussion will include

major causes of crashes for older drivers, pedestrian and bicycle safety tips, advice for extending safe driving years, and how to plan driving cessation (plus resources for staying mobile!). RSVP requested.

Monday, September 22 at 1 p.m. **King Tut's Secrets: Uncovering New Clues Through Technology** This virtual presentation by ancient civilization expert and National Geographic photographer Kenneth Garrett via Road Scholars will explore how cutting-edge technology is revealing new insights into King Tut's world. From CT scans of Tut's mummy to DNA studies of his family tree and ground-penetrating radar used to examine his burial chamber, you'll discover how modern advancements are reshaping our understanding of ancient Egypt. RSVP requested.

Tuesday, September 23 at 1 p.m. **Solitary Man: Neil Diamond Tribute Concert** Bill Reidy brings Neil Diamond's hit songs to life. RSVP required.

Wednesday, September 24 from 1:30 to 4 p.m. **Norfolk Community Flu Clinic** Metacomet Public Health Alliance is hosting its annual flu clinic at the Norfolk Senior Center for residents 18 years and older. Online registration will be available at Norfolkmass.gov. Call the Center if you need help making an appointment.

Tuesday, September 30 at 1 p.m. **Norman Rockwell Remembered** Art historian Jill Sanford of Art For Your Mind will discuss Rockwell images in this presentation. For artists and non-artists alike. RSVP required.

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Franklin’s 23rd Annual Harvest Festival Expands for 2025

The Franklin Downtown Partnership will host the town’s 23rd Annual Harvest Festival on Saturday, September 27, from noon to 5 p.m. (rain date: Sunday, September 28). This year’s celebration will expand further up Main Street with activities at Dean College and the Franklin Library.

The Harvest Festival is Franklin’s largest annual event, drawing thousands of visitors and featuring more than 135 booths. Attendees will enjoy live music, food, children’s activities, arts and crafts, interactive exhibits, and opportunities to connect with local businesses and community groups.

Highlights include:

- **Live Music:** Critical Mass at noon and Padula Brothers Band with FSPA at 2 p.m.
- **Interactive Exhibits:** Science with the Children’s Museum of Franklin, games at the Franklin Library, and the YMCA’s Gaga Pit.
- **Dean College Lawn:** Fall foods, Power 88.3 FM radio, and a kid-friendly train ride.
- **Franklin Art Association Raffle:** Art, photography, and supplies benefiting student scholarships.



• **Community Favorites:** For updates, visit www.franklindowntownpartnership.org or follow the Franklin Downtown Partnership on Instagram and Facebook.

Touch-a-Truck at the fire station, cider donuts and treats from Dean Bank, public art portraits at the Cultural Hub, and popcorn and film clips at the Franklin Historical Museum.

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Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club Announces 50th Annual Craft Fair

Final Year Under Club’s Leadership

The Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club is pleased to announce that its 50th annual Craft Fair will take place on Saturday, November 8, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Tri-County High School in Franklin. Admission is \$3 for attendees over 12 years old.

This year’s craft fair will feature close to 70 artisans, offering a wide variety of handmade goods. Shoppers can also enjoy the club’s popular bake sale and raffle tables, located near the entrance. All proceeds from the event will be donated to local charitable organizations. In addition, attendees are encouraged to bring non-perishables for the Franklin Food Pantry.

Real Estate Corner

FUSF Receives Prestigious National Award for Social Justice Work

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is honored to announce that it is one of only four congregations nationwide selected to receive this year’s Unitarian Universalist Association’s (UUA) Bennett Award for Congregational Action on Human Justice and Social Action. The award recognizes FUSF’s longstanding commitment to Food Justice and its deep partnership with the Franklin Food Pantry.

In presenting the award, the UUA commended FUSF for “crafting a robust program that embodies solidarity rather than charity in the practice of mutual aid.” The UUA highlighted the congregation’s long-term collaboration with the Franklin Food Pantry, including waiving rent for Pantry activities, creating multigenerational opportunities for engagement, and addressing food insecurity through donations, legislative advocacy, and a community care campaign during a time of crisis. The state-

ment called FUSF’s efforts “a profound example of the impact congregations can have locally when they are attuned to the needs of their broader community.”

“While this is not why we do this work of social justice, it is an honor to be recognized by the national office of our denomination,” said FUSF President Caitlin MacDonald.

FUSF’s minister, the Rev. Beverly Waring, added, “This award represents our commitment to social justice as a congregation. We consciously work to put our faith into action in many ways. FUSF believes in giving back to the greater Franklin area community.”

The First Universalist Society in Franklin is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin. For more information, visit www.fusf.org, email info@fusf.org, or call 508-528-5348.

FAIR

continued from page 26

This year’s fair marks a bittersweet milestone. It will be the final event organized by the Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club. However, the tradition will live on — the Rotary Club of Franklin will take the reins of the annual event.

“Many of our members were heartbroken at the thought of this being the last craft fair,” said the club’s leadership. “We

are thrilled to pass the baton to another local charitable organization whose values and mission align so closely with ours. Many of us will likely continue to volunteer at future fairs.”

For more information about the Craft Fair, visit the Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersCraftFair/>.

For more information about the Rotary Club of Franklin, visit <https://franklinmarotary.org/in/home/>.



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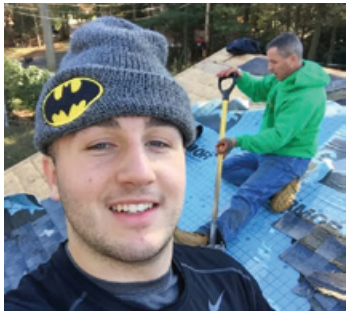


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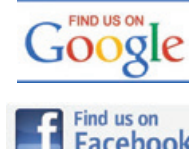
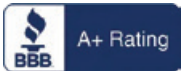
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