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Free to Every Home and Business Every Month

October 1, 2025

A New Generation Takes the Reins at The Big Apple in Wrentham

By BRITTANY AMALFI

Wrentham's well-known farm and orchard, The Big Apple, has entered a new era. As of May 2025, the next generation of the family — Rebecca Tyo, her husband Stephen Tyo, and cousin Nathaniel Morse — officially took

over operations, continuing a legacy that began more than 70 years ago.

For decades, The Big Apple has been a beloved staple in the community. It has been a place where families come to pick apples, enjoy cider and baked goods, and take part in

community events. Now, as the older generation steps back, the farm's new leaders are working to keep the traditions alive while also making updates to help it grow.

"We knew we wanted to keep it open for the community," Rebecca said. "The farm has always been about more than just apples. It's about giving people a place to come together."

A family history rooted in hard work

The Big Apple's story goes back to the 1950s when Rebecca's grandparents bought the original 35-acre property. At the time, it was a poultry farm.

BIG APPLE

continued on page 2

New Wrentham DPW Facility Slated for 2027

By JOE STEWART

After nearly three years of study and planning, a proposal for a new Department of Public Works facility is set to go before Fall Town Meeting on November 3, with officials citing critical structural failures, safety concerns, and operational inefficiencies at the current 47-year-old building.

The project, overseen by the Select Board-appointed Public Works Building Committee (PWBC), aims to replace the outdated structure at 360 Taunton Street with a modern, energy-efficient building designed to support the town's needs for the next half-century.

A "Prohibitively Expensive" Problem

According to the committee's

FAQ, the existing building, constructed in 1977, suffers from major issues with its structural integrity, mechanical systems, and code compliance. A 2020 feasibility study conducted by Weston & Sampson determined the facility was "lacking basic services, undersized, and unable to efficiently support current operations."

The committee states that renovating and upgrading the existing structure is not a viable option. Engineers found that addressing the deficiencies "would be prohibitively expensive," leading the PWBC to unanimously vote for constructing a new building while retaining the old structure for unheated storage.

John Murphy, Jr., the PWBC Chair, provided context during a

DPW

continued on page 3



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BIG APPLE

continued from page 1

Over the years, with a lot of hard work and help from family members, the farm grew into a 220-acre orchard and one of Wrentham’s most visited spots each fall.

Rebecca’s father, Peter, and her uncles John and Tom all grew up working on the farm. “My grandma made sure they were always busy,” Rebecca recalled. “She kept them out of trouble by putting them to work as soon as they were old enough.”

Rebecca’s father even went to the University of Massachusetts to study farming, and Uncle Tom stayed involved with the business off and on through the years, helping to buy land and equipment as the farm grew.

Last year, Rebecca’s uncle John retired, marking a major change. “I was working as an ER nurse at the time,” Rebecca said. “When my uncle retired, we had to make a decision. We didn’t want to see the farm close, so we decided to take over.”



Photos courtesy of Jim Wojdylak.



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Taking over in a time of transition

When the new owners officially took the reins in May, they had to act quickly. Some equipment had been sold before the handover, and the family had to start rebuilding.

“We’re taking it day by day,” Rebecca said. “There’s a lot to do, but the customers and the community have been amazing. They’ve supported us through the whole transition.”

Keeping the farm open and running has been a top priority, especially since The Big Apple has always played a big role in

the community. School tours have long been a part of the farm’s mission, and Rebecca and her family hope to expand that with group home visits and possibly even senior tours in the future.

“The community has given so much to us over the years,” Rebecca said. “We want to give back in every way we can.”

Events and activities for everyone

The Big Apple is known for its fun activities, and the new owners are keeping that tradition going. One of the most

popular events is the annual Truck Show, which this year will be held on October 26.

“It’s free to the public, and we get everything from tractor trailers to dump trucks,” Rebecca said. “Local police and fire departments usually join us too. It’s a great day for families.”

During the week, visitors can pick their own apples, and the farm offers a variety of baked goods, including fresh pies, apple cider, and even slushies from the in-house machine. And in September, a brand-new cider mill will open to expand the farm’s offerings.

“Just to keep growing,” Rebecca said. “We have a cider mill coming in September to keep growing and evolving with the community. Thank you to the community for all your support and for hanging in there with us. People have been so supportive and keep coming back. It’s part of their family traditions.”

Looking to the future

While the family is focused on maintaining traditions, they’re also looking ahead. Reacquiring equipment, organizing events, and keeping the farm running smoothly are all part of their daily routine now.

“It’s been a lot of work since May,” Rebecca admitted. “But we want to keep the farm alive for future generations. We’re not changing what The Big Apple is about — we’re just building on what’s already here.”

The Big Apple has always been a place where hard work and community spirit come together. With Rebecca, Stephen, and Nathaniel leading the way, the farm’s future looks promising. They plan to keep offering the same experiences locals have loved for years while finding new ways to bring people together.

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DPW

continued from page 1

September interview. He stated that considerations for keeping the old building included its value as cold storage and that tearing it down would cost more than \$200,000. The committee is “always looking to save money, to secure the biggest bang for the buck,” Murphy said.

Murphy, whose background includes serving on facilities boards and designing electrical systems for over 20 DPW facilities, emphasized the committee’s focus on fiscal responsibility. He also noted that an important criterion for pre-qualifying contractors was a proven history of delivering projects “at or under budget” and a commitment to cost control.

Project Timeline

The project has advanced through a multi-year process, according to the PWBC’s history. It began with a feasibility study by Weston & Sampson in 2020. Following that study, the 2023 Fall Town Meeting voted to appropriate \$1.6 million to fund the design phase. In the summer of 2024, the committee hired Construction Monitoring Services (CMS) as the Owner’s Project Manager.

This was followed by the selection of Helene Karl Architects

(HKA) for design and engineering services in the winter of 2024. Most recently, in the summer of 2025, the concept designs were finalized and presented to the Select Board, and the PWBC began the process of pre-qualifying construction contractors.

According to the project status update, the finalized concept design from HKA considered all “civil/site, environmental, and structural investigations which highlighted building and site deficiencies as well as safety concerns.”

Why a New Building?

The current 8,500-square-foot facility is described as inadequate in nearly every area, with a layout too small for modern vehicles that forces equipment to be stacked and slows emergency response times, especially in winter. There are significant safety risks, including poor ventilation that creates health concerns, and tight, unsafe spaces between vehicles. The building also does not meet current accessibility standards.

Environmental and code compliance issues are a major concern, as well as the rapid deterioration of the town’s multi-million-dollar vehicle fleet due to a lack of indoor storage.

In a subsequent interview, Director of Public Works Brian Antonioli illustrated some less obvious shortcomings highlight-



Concept rendering of the new DPW facility (HELENE-KARL Architects, Inc., 8 July 2025).

ing the Town’s use of connexes for equipment storage, explaining that connexes leak and even components like municipal water pipe fittings, which are designed for water and temperature exposure, have deteriorated.

Planned Features

The new facility will include energy-efficient systems, such as a super-insulated building envelope, heat recovery ventilation, and a solar-ready roof design. The design aims to be approxi-

mately 40% more energy efficient than required by the Massachusetts Energy Stretch Code.

The proposed 25,920-square-foot facility is designed to accommodate up to 32 employees and will last 50 years or more, which officials state will provide long-term value and reliability for a department responsible for a wide range of critical services—from water supply and snow removal to road maintenance and emergency response.

Next Steps: A Vote and a Timeline

The PWBC plans to bring the proposal to the November Town Meeting to seek approval to proceed with construction. If approved, the goal is to begin the project in January 2026, with an estimated construction period of 18 months.

For more information, visit <https://www.wrentham.gov/326/Public-Works-Building-Committee>.

New England Equity Collective Receives \$5,000 Grant from Mass Cultural Council

The New England Equity Collective (NEEC) has received a \$5,000 grant from the Mass Cultural Council, a state agency, through its FY26 Creative Experiences Program.

This grant affirms that NEEC provides significant public value through its mission to build inclusive, affordable housing communities that center equity, accessibility, and cultural engagement. The funding will support the launch of an Artist/Musician-in-Residence program within NEEC’s Inclusive Communities Initiative—a housing model designed for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) that integrates wraparound services such as job training, wellness programs, and creative experiences.

The Creative Experiences grant will enable NEEC to reach over 20 residents annually, offering therapeutic arts programming, community events, and opportunities for creative expression. It also leverages an additional \$25,000 in private seed funding from the Boston Foundation and supports NEEC’s broader fundraising efforts to expand inclusive housing across the state.

“This investment allows us to integrate the arts as a central pillar of healing and community-building,” said Taiese Bingham-Hickman, Founder of NEEC. “We believe that inclusive housing must support the whole person—not just through shelter, but through joy, connection, and cultural expression. We’re grateful

for the Mass Cultural Council’s support of this vision.”

For FY26, the Mass Cultural Council adopted a \$34 million spending plan, awarding more than 2,200 grants totaling approximately \$26.2 million to the Commonwealth’s creative and cultural sector. This funding is made possible through the Agency’s \$26.9 million state appropriation and support from the National Endowment for the Arts.

The Mass Cultural Council’s mission is to advance the Commonwealth’s creative and cultural sector by celebrating traditions and talents, championing collective needs, and equitably investing public resources. Its grants reach every city and town in Massachusetts

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Upcoming Events at Gilly's House

Gilly's House in Wrentham, a sober home for young men, plans two fundraising events this fall.

Giggles for Gilly's

The annual comedy show will be held on Saturday, November 1 at the BSV German American Club, 8 County St., Walpole. Doors open at 6 p.m. The event will include a dinner buffet, raffles, an auction, and door prizes.

Tickets are \$65. The show has sold out each year, and only 200 tickets are available. Visit www.gillyshouse.com to purchase a ticket.

Comedians Howie Mason and Michael Petit are the event's headliners. Mason has performed at some of the biggest venues in the area, including the Xfinity Center in Mansfield and Mohegan Sun in Connecticut. Petit has performed comedy shows across the country and on cruise ships.

Mother's Luncheon

Women who have lost a child due to any circumstance are invited to a free luncheon on Monday, November 10 at the Chabad Jewish Center, 34 Cedar St., Milford. The event starts at noon.

The annual luncheon brings together grieving mothers to gather, reflect, and learn how to move forward after the death of a child. The event features a speaker who demonstrates ways to cope and find new purpose. Vivi Deren, Co-Director of Chabad-Lubavitch of Connecticut and Western Massachusetts, is this year's guest speaker.

Register at www.gillyhouse.com to save a seat for this event. Contact Maureen Cappuccino at maureen@gillyshouse.com with any questions, or for information about sponsorship opportunities.



Michael Petit



Howie Mason

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Federated Church of Norfolk Brings Back Monthly Pancake Breakfast

Fall Events Announced

The popular Pancake Breakfast returns to the Federated Church of Norfolk on Saturday, October 4 from 8 to 10 a.m., kicking off a series held on the first Saturday of the month from October through May.

Admission is \$10, \$7 for seniors and children, with a maximum of \$40 per family (for families of five or more).

Beyond the pancake breakfast, the church has a busy fall schedule:

- Installation of Rev. Dan Woodman on Sunday, October 19, at 3 p.m.
- Southern Rail on Sunday, October 26, at the 10 a.m. service
- Pumpkin Decorating Night on Thursday, October 24 (all are welcome)
- Holly Fair on Saturday, November 22 featuring local vendors, Bountiful Baskets, Bake Sale, Grandma's Attic, a catered lunch, and a

"secret shopping" opportunity with Santa's Workshop where kids can buy or make gifts and get them wrapped

The church also offers youth service opportunities throughout the year, including helping prepare food or assembling 170 bags of groceries for delivery to a soup kitchen in Attleboro.

Worship is held every Sunday at 10 a.m., year-round. The Federated Church of Norfolk welcomes everyone to share in music, prayer, and fellowship. For details and updates, visit www.fcon.org.

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Norfolk Welcomes New Police Chief James Barrett

Chief Timothy Heinz Retires After 38 Years of Service

Norfolk's Police Chief Timothy Heinz has retired after 38 years of service, and James Barrett is now the new Chief of Police.

Chief Barrett began his tenure on Sept. 1, bringing with him more than three decades of law enforcement and leadership experience.

A decorated veteran of the U.S. Army and a career law enforcement leader, Barrett most recently served as Police Operations Lieutenant for the Holliston Police Department, overseeing detectives, school resource officers, patrol, traffic enforcement, and court prosecution. He also commanded the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council's Investigative Services Unit and Child Abduction Response Team.

Previously, Barrett spent nearly 30 years with the Wrentham Police Department, serving as a detective sergeant, patrol sergeant, and officer. His extensive career includes leading multi-agency investigations, managing evidence, and prosecuting in Massachusetts Trial Courts. Beyond policing, Barrett has served as an adjunct professor at Dean College, a certified state police instructor, and co-founder of the Holliston Coalition Against Hate and Bias.



James Barrett officially began serving as the Chief for the Norfolk Police Department on Sept. 1. (Photo courtesy Norfolk Police Department.)

"I am deeply honored to have been chosen to serve as Norfolk's next Chief of Police," Barrett said in a statement. "I look forward to getting to know and working closely with the dedicated men and women of the department, town leadership, and our community members to continue building on Norfolk's strong tradition of public safety."

While Barrett begins his new chapter, Norfolk is also celebrating the distinguished career of Chief Heinz, who has dedicated

his professional life to public safety in Norfolk and beyond. Heinz began his career in 1987 as a dispatcher before becoming a full-time police officer in 1989. Over the years, he rose through the ranks, serving as sergeant, lieutenant, and ultimately being named Chief of Police in 2022.

As Chief, Heinz advanced the department by enrolling Norfolk in the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Program, expanding traffic enforcement, strengthening officer wellness initiatives, and establishing operational planning for major community events.

Heinz's service extended beyond Norfolk, with more than three decades as a firefighter and EMT in Wrentham. Over his career, he was recognized for acts of bravery and public service, including rescuing a fire victim, assisting in childbirth during a blizzard, locating endangered individuals, and helping save lives during emergencies. He was honored with numerous commendations, including the Mass-Cop Union President's Award for heroism during a condominium explosion.



Chief Timothy Heinz retired after 38 years of service to the Norfolk Police Department. (Photo courtesy Norfolk Police Department.)

Pond Home & Pond Meadow Welcome New Board Member



Pond Home and Pond Meadow are pleased to announce that Ann Marie DeCoff has joined their Boards.

DeCoff, Vice President and Chief Lending Officer at Wrentham Cooperative Bank, brings nearly 25 years of financial services experience. "Ann Marie's roots in Wrentham and her expertise make her a highly valuable addition," said Board President John Michelmore.

Board members volunteer their time to provide oversight

and guidance. Current members include Lorraine Brue, William Casbarra, Sharon Nery, Mary Peterson, Faina Schwartz, Peter Tullock, Dave Wikland, and Michelmore.

Pond Home offers residential and nursing care, while Pond Meadow provides 66 independent living units. Both non-profits are managed by Rogerson Communities. Learn more at www.pondhome.org or www.pondmeadow.org.



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Open Enrollment 2026: Medical Plans & HSAs



Glenn Brown, CFP

Open enrollment is your annual opportunity to review and select the benefits that best fit your health and financial needs. Beyond medical insurance, you'll choose dental and vision coverage, life and disability insurance, tax-advantaged accounts (dependent care, commuter benefits), and retirement savings plans.

One area that often causes confusion is deciding between traditional medical plans and High Deductible Health Plans (HDHPs), along with their powerful partner: the Health Savings Account (HSA). Understanding how these work together can help you make smarter choices for 2026 and beyond.

Choosing the Right Medical Plan

Selecting a medical plan comes down to two basics:

- **Provider comfort:** Make sure you're satisfied with the in-network doctors and hospitals.
- **Cost expectations:** Review your historical annual medical expenses and consider whether you anticipate major changes.

If your expenses are generally low and predictable, an HDHP paired with an HSA can be especially attractive.

Why Consider a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP)?

Lower premiums, higher deductibles: HDHPs typically have lower monthly premiums, but you'll pay out-of-pocket until you reach your deductible.

Potential cost savings: For healthy individuals and families who don't expect large medical bills, the premium savings plus HSA advantages often outweigh the higher deductible.

HSA eligibility: You can only contribute to an HSA if you are enrolled in an HDHP. This makes the plan an entry point to one of the most tax-efficient tools available.

Health Savings Accounts (HSA): Triple Tax Advantage

In 2026, contribution limits have increased:

- Individual: \$4,400
- Family: \$8,750
- Catch-up (age 55+): \$1,000

Why do HSAs stand out? Three reasons: contributions being federal, state, and FICA tax-free; withdrawals for qualified healthcare expenses are tax-free; and balances can be invested for tax-free growth. No other account offers this "triple tax advantage."

Don't Miss the Free Money

Shockingly, more than half of eligible employees don't open or fund an HSA. That's surprising because many employers contribute \$500–\$2,000 per year to jump-start employee accounts. Contributing even \$1 per pay period can unlock hundreds or thousands in employer dollars.

Some companies reward healthy habits: for example, \$400 added to your HSA when you and your spouse complete annual physicals. Skipping this is like leaving free money on the table.

Real-World Tax Savings

Consider a family in the 24% federal tax bracket who spends around \$4,000 annually on out-of-pocket medical expenses. By funding those expenses through an HSA, they save about \$1,480

in taxes (federal, state of MA, and FICA combined).

Families in higher brackets gain even more. A household in the 32% bracket contributing the 2026 family maximum could save nearly \$3,900 in taxes.

HSAs as a Retirement Strategy

HSAs aren't just about today's medical bills—they can be a powerful long-term planning tool. Some families pay current medical expenses out of pocket and allow HSA funds to stay invested. Over time, this can compound into a substantial tax-free pool of money.

In retirement, HSA dollars can cover Medicare premiums, dental, vision, hearing aids, nursing services, and long-term care insurance. For early retirees, HSAs can even pay COBRA premiums to bridge coverage until Medicare eligibility.

The Bottom Line

Open enrollment is one of

the most important financial planning windows of the year. If you're eligible for an HDHP and HSA, weigh the trade-offs carefully, run the numbers, and don't overlook the employer contributions and long-term tax savings.

Learn more by connecting with your benefits coordinator or 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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Dean College Opens Doors for Transfer Students This January

Each year, thousands of college students across Massachusetts decide their first choice wasn't the right fit. Some discover that being far from home is harder than expected; others find the campus culture isn't what they hoped. For those looking for a fresh start closer to home, Dean College in Franklin has increasingly drawn interest from students seeking a better fit.

Founded more than 160 years ago, Dean is now a competitive four-year college offering programs in business, the arts, dance, and liberal arts and sciences. The College has earned multiple Colleges of Distinction recognitions, including national awards for career preparation, affordability, and student support.

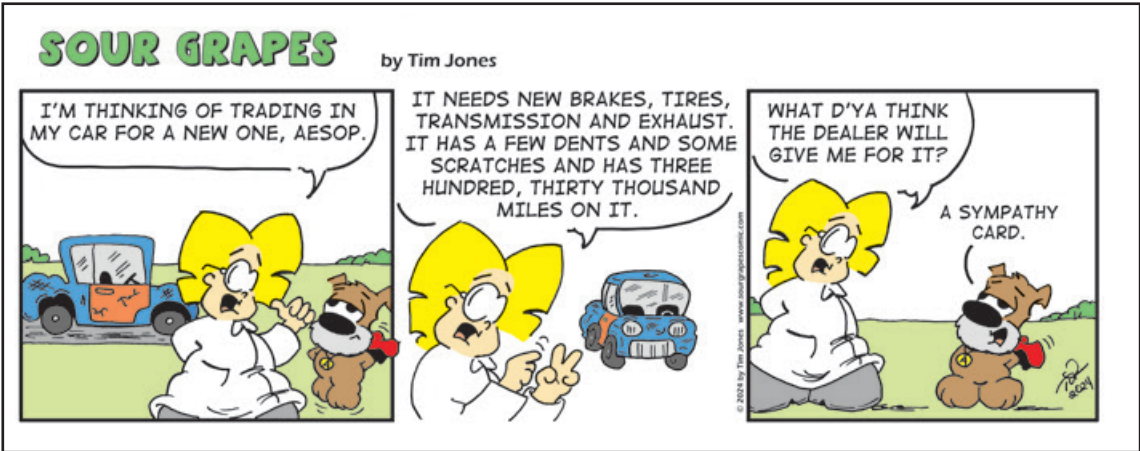
seamless. Dean accepts up to 90 credits toward a bachelor's degree, guarantees housing, and provides transfer scholarships of up to \$35,500 per year.

visors work with students from their first semester through graduation to ensure they stay on track and graduate prepared for the workforce. Career prep is built into the experience through the Dean Career Advantage program, which includes internships, networking opportunities, and professional development.

Many students who began college elsewhere find that Dean offers both the community they've been seeking and the preparation they need for life after college.

Life outside the classroom is equally full, with more than 40 student clubs and organizations, 16 Division III athletic teams, and a wide range of performing arts productions each semester.

Dean is currently accepting transfer applications for the January semester. More information is available at dean.edu/transfer.



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Making the Most of Medicare Open Enrollment



Todd Miller

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When you turn 65, Medicare becomes a vital part of your health care coverage. But signing up is just the beginning. Many people don't realize that Medicare isn't a "set it and forget it" program. In fact, you have the opportunity — and often the need — to review and adjust your coverage every single year.

The annual Medicare Open Enrollment period, which runs from Oct. 15 through Dec. 7 each year, is your chance to take a fresh look at your health care needs and make sure your Medicare plan still fits your life. Then you can determine whether your medical and prescription plans need to be switched or dropped.

Just like your health can change from year to year, so can Medicare plans. Insurance companies may adjust their coverage and costs or even discontinue certain plans entirely. By taking time during the open enrollment period to compare your options, you might discover a plan that saves money, offers better coverage or both.

As a reminder, you have several options when it comes to your Medicare coverage.

Original Medicare (Parts A and B) covers hospital stays and medical services such as doctor visits. Part A typically comes with no monthly premium if you've worked for at least 10

years. Part B requires monthly premiums — \$206.50 or more in 2026, depending on your income. They may also be copays and deductibles.

Medicare Advantage (Part C) offers an all-in-one alternative to Original Medicare. These plans are offered by private insurance companies. They often bundle together hospital, medical and prescription drug coverage. They may also include extra benefits like vision, dental and wellness programs that Original Medicare doesn't cover.

Medicare Part D provides standalone prescription drug coverage for those who stick with Original Medicare.

Medicare Supplement (Medigap) policies help cover the out-of-pocket costs that Original Medicare doesn't pay, such as copayments and deductibles.

When shopping for Medicare plans, there are several important areas you should consider to determine which options are right for you:

Out-of-pocket costs such as monthly premiums, deductibles, copayments and any other expenses Medicare doesn't cover. Sometimes a plan with a higher premium saves you money overall because of lower copays.

Prescription drug coverage deserves special attention. All Medicare plans for 2026 will include a \$2,100 cap on what you pay out of pocket for covered prescription drugs, up from \$2,000 in 2025. However, this cap only applies to drugs that your plan covers, making it crucial to verify your medications are included.

Your health care needs for the coming year matter too. Do you have surgeries planned? New health conditions to manage? You'll want to make sure your potential plan covers the care you expect to need.

Travel plans can also influence your choice. Original Medicare typically doesn't cover services overseas, so frequent travelers might want supple-

mental coverage for emergencies abroad.

If you don't make any changes during open enrollment, you'll likely be automatically reenrolled in your current plan for the following year, as long as it's still available and you continue paying required premiums.

Don't let your Medicare plan run on autopilot. Take advantage of the annual open enrollment period — between Oct. 15 and Dec. 7 — to ensure your coverage continues to serve you well in the year ahead.

For more information contact:

Todd Miller

O: (781) 652 - 9573 call or text
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New Traffic Signal Coming to Wrentham

By JOE STEWART

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) will hold a public hearing in Wrentham on October 14 to present a proposal aimed at improving safety at the crash-prone intersection of North and Winter Streets and Route 1A. The design hearing concerns a plan to install a new traffic control signal at the intersection. The project is currently at the 25% design phase.

The project was initiated in December 2019 following a road safety audit conducted with the Town of Wrentham. The process has advanced through several stages, including an alternatives analysis in November 2021 and an intersection control evaluation in June 2022. The 25% design was submitted to MassDOT in August.

In addition to the traffic signal, the proposal includes infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists:

- Along Route 1A, the plan calls for the installation of 5-foot-wide sidewalks and 5-foot-wide on-street bicycle lanes that will include a 3-foot buffer from vehicular traffic.

- For North Street and Winter Street, the proposal is to construct six-foot-wide, one-way shared-use paths in each direction.

Acquisition of right-of-way from private or public landowners may be necessary and MassDOT's policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented at the hearing.

In an email exchange with John Goggin, MassDOT Communications, Goggin explained that the project is expected to reach the 75% design stage in the spring of 2026 and is programmed for funding in the Federal Fiscal Year 2028, with construction expected to begin by the end of 2028.

The hearing will serve as a formal opportunity for the public

to review the plans and provide feedback. According to the public notice, "All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible."

The hearing is scheduled for Tuesday, October 14 at 6 p.m. in the Joseph F. Botaish, II Conference Room in Town Hall.



Looking south at the Intersection of Route 1A and Winter St. (on the left) and North St. (on the right). (Photo courtesy MassDOT.)

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History Students Eligible for New Barbara Bartholomew Scholarship

The Norfolk Historical Commission is pleased to announce the Barbara Bartholomew NHC History Scholarship. The scholarship is for students who lived in Norfolk while attending Norfolk Public Schools: H. Olive Day, Freeman-Kennedy, King Philip Middle and/or King Philip High School. Applicants must have successfully completed two years of an accredited four-year college or university and majoring in history or a history related subject.

Barbara Bartholomew was raised in Norfolk, Massachusetts and became a life-long resident. She attended Norfolk's Center School through eighth grade; she graduated from Walpole High School as Norfolk did not have a high school. It can be said that Barbara was an early advocate for women in education and sports. She went on to earn a bachelor's degree from the University of Massachusetts in Amherst and a Master of Arts in Teaching from Harvard University. Barbara was one of the first women to attend Harvard. She studied history and brought her love of history to the classroom,

spending her career as a high school history teacher in Ashland where she served as Head of the History Department. While at Walpole High School, she was responsible for starting a girls' softball team, and later she coached girls' softball and field hockey in Ashland.

After Barbara retired from teaching, she joined the Norfolk Historical Commission and was a devoted board member for many years. Upon her passing in 2024, she left an endowment to the Town of Norfolk for educational purposes including funds for the scholarship and for the elementary schools to create a teaching unit on local history.

The Town of Norfolk appreciates her generosity, and the Norfolk Historical Commission is pleased to offer this scholarship opportunity. In order to apply, candidates must follow the application process and meet all qualifications. Applications are available on the Town of Norfolk Website: www.norfolkmass.gov. For additional information, please contact the Norfolk Historical Commission via email: nhc@norfolkmass.gov.

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Roderick School Project Moves Into Feasibility Phase

By JOE STEWART

Two years ago, Wrentham embarked on a major planning process for the future of the Roderick Elementary School, a project that will reshape elementary education and represents a significant long-term investment. The initiative, which has secured support from the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) for funding, is currently in the feasibility study phase, with a final proposal expected to go before Town Meeting in June 2026.

According to the district’s detailed Educational Program document, the core educational vision for the new school is to support a modern, flexible learning environment. A key architectural feature proposed is the organization of classrooms into “grade-level neighborhoods.” These hubs would include seven general education classrooms, a special education resource room, four small group breakout rooms, and a shared extended learning area designed to facilitate collaboration and differentiated instruction.

Roderick to Serve Grades 3 through 6

A significant decision the Wrentham School Committee has already made is a change in grade configuration. The new school is planned to house grades 3 through 6. Currently, Delaney Elementary School serves pre-kindergarten through grade 3, while Roderick serves grades 4 through 6. This re-configuration is intended to alleviate overcrowding at Delaney Elementary School and create a more balanced distribution of students between the two schools.

Why a New Building?

The need for the project is driven by the age and limitations of the current building, which was constructed in 1968 with an addition in 1988. The Roderick Building Project website (<https://www.wrentham.k12.ma.us/subsites/Roderick-School-Building-Project/>) cites numerous deficiencies, including an inefficient heating system, outdated windows and doors and classrooms that are too small for contemporary learning.

A major issue is that the gym and cafeteria share a single space, which creates noise disruptions for surrounding classrooms and limits availability for physical education and events. Furthermore, student support services, such as speech and occupational therapy, are currently delivered in converted closets and other inadequate spaces.

Gilpatrick Design Selected

In April, the RSBC decided to focus on a new building at Gilpatrick field. This location is preferable because the new building is the least expensive of the options and has the least impact on Town fields. The Gilpatrick design also offers a well-defined drop-off point with high visibility for the gym while its proximity to the Delaney School and the Fiske Public Library fosters a strong campus feel.

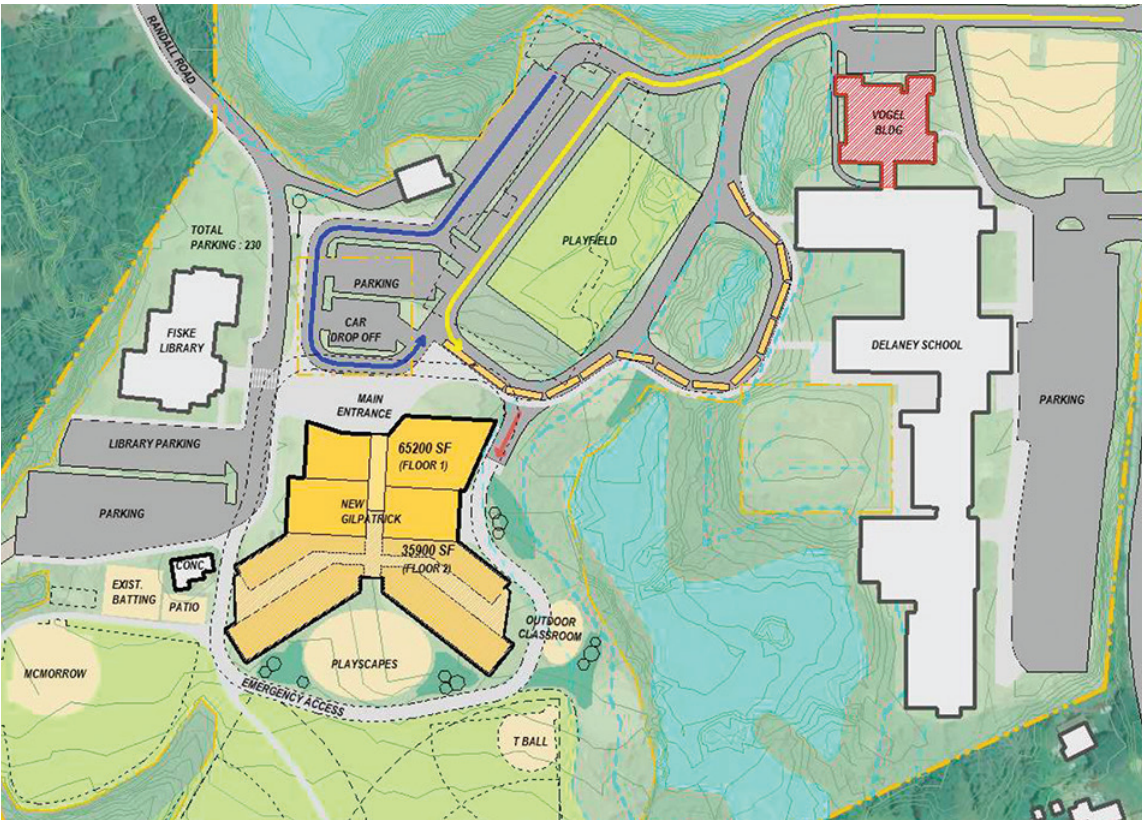
In an interview with Phil Jordan, RSBC chair, he explained that the District is negotiating with the MSBA to use funds typically allocated for restoration of sites used during construction to instead build new ball fields at the Rice Complex. Jordan explained that this approach is aligned with the town’s Recreation Committee and is consistent with the Rice Complex’ long term plan.

Other improvements for the new building include dedicated spaces for art, music, and technology instruction, a larger cafeteria to reduce lunch cycles, and a secure main entrance vestibule.

Timeline

The project timeline, as described by Jordan, anticipates a Town Meeting vote on a debt exclusion for the project in June 2026. If approved, the project would go out to bid, with negotiations and permitting leading to a projected start of construction in 2027 and a school opening in the fall of 2029. Jordan emphasized the committee’s focus on long-term value for taxpayers and the importance of community engagement throughout the process.

For more information, visit <https://www.wrentham.k12.ma.us/subsites/Roderick-School-Building-Project/>.



Site plan of the proposed Roderick Elementary School at Gilpatrick Field.

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Living Healthy

Top 10 Myths in Eye Care Debunked

By ROGER M. KALDAWY, M.D.

When it comes to eye health, misinformation can be more harmful than helpful. Many long-held beliefs about vision and eye care are based on outdated science or pure myth. Let's debunk 10 of the most common misconceptions to help you make smarter decisions about your eyes.

1. Carrots Will Fix Your Vision

Carrots contain vitamin A, which is essential for maintaining healthy vision—especially night vision. However, eating more carrots won't sharpen blurry eyesight or reverse vision problems like nearsightedness or farsightedness. A well-rounded diet with leafy greens, fruits, and fish is better for long-term eye health.

2. Reading in Dim Light Will Damage Your Eyes

Reading in low light may cause eye fatigue or temporary

discomfort, but it won't permanently harm your vision. Your eyes are working harder in dim lighting, which can lead to headaches or strain, but not lasting damage. A well-lit environment simply helps reduce fatigue.

3. Sitting Too Close to the TV Will Hurt Your Eyes

This myth has been around since the days of old box TVs. Sitting close to the television can lead to temporary eye strain, but it doesn't cause permanent eye damage. Children often sit closer because they can focus up close better than adults—but it's not a cause for alarm.

4. Wearing Glasses or Contacts Makes Your Eyes Dependent on Them

Glasses and contact lenses correct your vision; they don't change your eyes themselves. You may feel more dependent on them once you start see-



ing clearly, but the prescription doesn't "weaken" your eyes. Vision can naturally change over time, but that's not due to corrective lenses.

5. Blue Light from Screens is Damaging Your Eyes

The concern around blue light has led to a surge in "blue light glasses." But current research

doesn't support the idea that blue light from screens causes permanent eye damage. What people often experience is digital eye strain—caused by staring at screens too long, not blue light itself. The 20-20-20 rule (every 20 minutes, look 20 feet away for 20 seconds) can help reduce eye fatigue.

6. Eye Exercises Can Cure Vision Problems

While exercises may improve focus or coordination in some rare eye conditions (like convergence insufficiency), they can't correct structural issues like myopia, hyperopia, or astigmatism. No amount of eye rolling or focusing drills will replace the need for glasses, contacts, or surgery when needed.

7. You Don't Need an Eye Exam if You See Fine

Even if your vision is perfect, regular eye exams are crucial. Eye diseases like glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, and macular degeneration can develop silently, without noticeable symptoms. Early detection through routine check-ups is often the key to preserving sight.

8. Only Older Adults Need to Worry About Eye Problems

Age increases the risk of certain eye conditions, but eye health matters at every age. Children, teens, and young adults are increasingly affected by screen-related strain and dry eyes. Preventative care—like UV protection, a healthy diet, and

annual eye exams—should start early and continue for life.

9. Sunglasses Are Only for Sunny Days

UV rays can penetrate clouds, meaning your eyes are exposed even on overcast days. Prolonged UV exposure is linked to cataracts and other serious eye issues. Look for sunglasses that block 100% of UVA and UVB rays—and wear them year-round whenever you're outdoors.

10. You Have to Wait Until a Cataract is "Ripe" to Remove It

This outdated notion comes from older surgical methods. Today's advanced cataract surgeries allow removal whenever the cataract interferes with daily life—no need to wait for it to "mature." In fact, early intervention can often lead to quicker recovery and better visual outcomes.

Misinformation can lead to unnecessary worry—or worse, delayed treatment. The best way to protect your vision is by staying informed, getting regular eye exams, and speaking directly with a trusted eye care professional. Clear vision is about more than just 20/20 sight—it's about making smart, evidence-based decisions to preserve your eyesight for life.

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Marla P. was frustrated dealing with her 8 year old son. He had difficulty finishing school work and difficulty completing his daily tasks at home. She would ask him repeatedly to get dressed, brush his teeth and put his toys away. He would start but not finish these tasks because he became distracted easily. At first, she thought he was just lazy, but very quickly realized there was something wrong. The behavioral patterns of inability to focus, complete tasks or sit still for any length of time “set off

bells” in her head. She realized that something was not right and that he might have ADHD. She didn’t want to put him on meds and decided to take a holistic approach. A dear friend suggested she call The Holistic Center at Bristol Square in Walpole.

Within 2 weeks of beginning treatment, Marla noticed that her son could sit to do his homework and complete the assignment without screaming, yelling and tears. Within 4 weeks, he was completing his daily tasks at home easily and happy to do so. Within 2-3 months her son was happy and more confident because he was finishing his assignments in school as well as at home in a reasonable time frame.

If you or someone you love is suffering from Add or ADHD don’t hesitate to contact us at The Holistic Center at Bristol Square, 1426 Main Street in Walpole.

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WELCOME KEN SPERBER, MD Now Accepting New Patients

Milford Regional Physician Group is pleased to welcome Ken Sperber, MD to Franklin-Wrentham Family Medicine.

Board certified in family medicine, Dr. Sperber earned his medical degree from the MCP Hahnemann School of Medicine, Allegheny University of the Health Sciences in Philadelphia, PA, and completed his family practice residency at Virtua Memorial Hospital Burlington County in Mount Holly, NJ.

With more than 20 years of experience in primary care, Dr. Sperber has been a trusted physician with Brown Health Medical Group, Hillside Family Medicine in Pawtucket, RI, where he cared for patients of all ages. In addition, he has served as clinical faculty at both Brown University Medical School and Dartmouth University Medical School, helping to train the next generation of physicians.

Dr. Sperber looks forward to bringing his compassionate, comprehensive approach to patient care at Franklin-Wrentham Family Medicine.



Ken Sperber, MD

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The b.LUXE *beauty beat*

Color Me Autumn: Fall Color Trends Inspired by the Season

By GINA WOELFEL

Can we just talk about how gorgeous it is outside right now? Walking through Choate Park in Medway or driving through any of our MetroWest neighborhoods is spectacular! The trees are on fire! Deep red sugar maples, oaks mixing chocolate and gold, and birch trees glimmer like perfectly placed highlights.

It's the kind of beautiful that makes you slow down and actually notice. And honestly? It got us thinking about this fall's hottest hair color trends.

At b.LUXE Hair and Makeup Studio, our clients are falling hard for autumn-inspired hair color, with the rich, dimensional tones that make our New England autumns so legendary. These seasonal hues feel both on-trend and authentically you.

The Brunette Takeover

This season, brunettes are absolutely having their moment! The **"Expensive Brunette"** trend is all about adding depth, dimension, and high-gloss shine to darker tones; a perfect choice for clients seeking that luxurious, high-end look without the high-maintenance upkeep. This movement towards more natural shades has inspired some irresistibly cute names along the way - think favorite drinks, desserts, and yes, even stuffed animals! Haven't you heard of **Teddy Bear Brunette**? This popular twist on the modern **"bronde"** trend combines a deeper brunette base with honey blonde babylights. This technique balances warm tones and gives a subtle glow and brightness to brown hair without crossing into blonde territory.



Brown Sugar Brunette is like your favorite fall latte - warm, inviting, and absolutely irresistible. This gorgeous mid-toned brunette delivers all the cozy vibes with its rich blend of caramel and maple highlights that glow like late autumn sunlight. It's sophisticated yet effortless, and will leave people asking what you've done to look so good.

Brownie Batter Brunette is the richest of our fall favorites - think molten brownie batter in all its deep, chocolatey glory. This stunning shade goes darker and more dramatic than Brown Sugar Brunette, with a luscious chocolate base that's pure indulgence. Warm caramel highlights are delicately woven throughout, creating a subtle glow rather than dramatic contrast, giving you that perfect low-maintenance luxury. Unlike the honey-kissed lightness of Teddy Bear Brunette, Brownie Batter embraces the deeper, more decadent side of brown hair. Its warm undertones radiate sophistication with just enough dimension to keep things interesting.

The Redhead Renaissance

Redheads are absolutely stepping out this season with shades that are anything but basic! What's really exciting is how dimensional red hair has become with multi-tonal effects that blend warm and cool undertones. No more flat, single-shade colors! The reds we're loving right now are all about complexity. And **Cherry Cola** is "the red" of the moment with a rich chocolate base and deep cinnamon highlights for a sophisticated,



edgy look. **Sun-Kissed Copper** gives classic ginger a luxurious upgrade with richer, warmer, more wearable tones that stand out without being overwhelming. And **Strawberry Blonde**? It's the sweet spot between blonde and red, with golden undertones that help warm and soften fair complexions.

Going For Gold (And Silver!)

Now, don't think our golden girls are sitting this autumnal party out! Even our most devoted blondes are embracing deeper roots and effortless grow-outs that stretch appointments longer - a total blessing during the holiday rush. Take for instance, **Butter Blonde**. This warm, creamy shade mimics the richness of melted butter - soft, dimensional, and naturally radiant. **Honey Blonde** gives you that perfect "just back from vacation" vibe without ever leaving town. Then there's **Bronde** - the holy grail of low-maintenance color that blends brown and blonde so beautifully, it looks like you were born with perfectly luminous hair. And if you're feeling adventurous, **Golden Silver** brings just enough edge with its gorgeous metallic shimmer.

Our gray clients can get in on the low-maintenance trend too! Instead of covering your grays, ask your stylist about **Gray-Blending**, a technique that blends lowlights and highlights with your gray hair. Think tortoise shell or mosaic tiles - beautiful hues working in harmony.

Here's a trend that's always in style: Healthy Hair! Have your stylist recommend shampoo, conditioner, and styling products that will keep your hair looking great longer.

Celebrate the Season

There's something so magical about the season ahead of us. Let's embrace the cozy vibes, keep things simple, and soak up all the fun these next three months have to offer.

Brunette, Red, Blonde or Silver, we're here to help you find your perfect shade!

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Park Street Bridge Replacement Project Moves Forward, Albeit Slowly

By GRACE ALLEN

The Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) has confirmed that it is moving forward with the initiation of a bridge replacement project for Norfolk's Park Street bridge.

MassDOT has approved the Park Street bridge and assigned it a project number. However, the project has not yet been programmed for funding, and no design or timeline information has been developed at this time, according to the office of Rep. Marcus Vaughn (9th Norfolk).

Since the partial reopening of the bridge, MassDOT has worked with the Town of Norfolk to address safety issues and has installed signage to alert motorists of the vehicle restrictions and traffic patterns. The current traffic management plan will remain in place, according to spokesperson John Goggin, but MassDOT will continue to work with the town to address any safety concerns.

Numerous residents have complained of cars traveling the wrong way on the one-way bridge. In response, Norfolk police have increased surveillance to deter violators.

The Park Street bridge, which crosses the MBTA commuter rail tracks at the northern end of Park Street, was downgraded from Fair to Poor condition in 2020 due to structural issues, prompting increased inspections. Ongoing corrosion of exposed steel reinforcement and deterioration of prestressing strands were cited as concerns. In December 2024, the bridge was closed to vehicular traffic out of caution but has since reopened in a limited capacity. MassDOT is responsible for all work on the bridge.

Rep. Vaughn's office noted that more updates will be available in the coming weeks.

Hear One of the Oldest Church Organs in New England!

This year, the William Goodrich organ at Trinity Episcopal Church in Wrentham is 200 years old.

Originally built in 1825 for the Universalist Church in Providence, Trinity Church has been the organ's home since 1915.

To celebrate this milestone, the church is presenting three opportunities to hear this amazing instrument. All three events will be held at the church on Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m. Following each event, refreshments will be served in the church parish hall. There is no admission charge, but a donation to support the maintenance of the organ is requested.

First, on October 26, Music Director Rick Duthe will give a presentation called "How Does This Thing Work?" demonstrating how old technology still keeps this remarkable instrument's voice alive.

Other than an electric motor that keeps the wind pressure supplied to the bellows, the instrument uses the same mechanical action with which it was first built. The demonstration will include a look into the organ's pipe chamber.

Next, on November 9, prominent Boston-area organist Peter Sykes will present a recital illustrating the organ's full potential as a solo instrument. Mr. Sykes is a well-known performer on keyboards of all types and has been Director of Music at First Church in Cambridge since 1986. He is a teacher and recording artist and is currently Associate Professor of Music and Chair of the Historical Performance Department at Boston University. The recital will be preceded by a presentation about the organ's history and its builder, William Marcellus Goodrich. The presentation will be given by Matthew Bellocchio of An-

dover Organ Company, which has maintained the instrument since 1968.

Finally, on November 16, there will be a Four-Person Organ Recital. This recital brings together four musicians with strong connections to Trinity Episcopal Church "back home" to celebrate their associations with this instrument. The performers are Lorna Russell, former Director of Music at Trinity Church, Philip Hall, pianist and substitute organist at the church, David Burnham, currently Director of Music at St. Gabriel's Church in Marion, Massachusetts, and Rick Duthe, current Director of Music at the church.

Please join us for these events as we celebrate an instrument that has been making good music for 200 years! We look forward to seeing you there.



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Wrentham Voter Registration

An in-person voter registration will take place on Friday, October 24 for the Special (Fall) Town Meeting scheduled for Monday, November 3. Any Wrentham resident who is not registered and/or will become 18 years of age on or before November 3, 2025 may register to vote.

The registration will be held from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Fiske Public Library located at 110 Randall Road.

Residents can also register online at <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/OVR>.

Please call the Town Clerk's office at (508)384-5415 with any questions.

Wrentham Knights of Columbus to Host 8th Annual 5K Run/Walk

The Wrentham Knights of Columbus will host their 8th Annual 5K Run/Walk on Sunday, November 2 at 9 a.m. The race will start and finish at La Familia Restaurant, 263 Shears Street, Wrentham.

The event is open to runners and walkers of all levels and promises a fun, family-friendly atmosphere. The 5K course is a flat, USATF-certified route, making it ideal for both competitive runners and casual participants.

To date, the Knights of Columbus races have raised more than \$34,000, all of which has been donated back to support charitable causes within the community. This year's event continues that tradition, with all proceeds benefiting local organizations and initiatives.

Participants will have the chance to compete for cash prizes for the top three male and female finishers, as well as awards for the top performers in each age group. Additional highlights include DJ music, sponsor tents, and activities for the whole family.

Registration is now open online at <http://wrenthamkofc.racewire.com>.

Are you looking for a job with school hours and the school schedule? We have the job for you!

The Medfield Foodservice Department is now hiring! Substitute worker positions available with flexible hours, as well as full time, benefited positions.

For more information please contact: Caitlin Fahy at cfahy@email.medfield.net or 508-242-8897

Wrentham Senior Art Group Presents 14th Annual Exhibition at Norfolk Public Library

The Wrentham Senior Art Group is proud to announce its 14th Annual Exhibition, showcasing the creativity and talent of local senior artists. The community is invited to view the exhibit at the Norfolk Public Library, 139 Main Street, Norfolk, from October 1 through October 30.

This is the second year the show will be held at the Norfolk Public Library. The group paints together at the Wrentham Senior Center.

To celebrate the exhibition, the group will host an Artists' Reception on Saturday, October 4, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Guests are welcome to meet the artists, enjoy light refreshments, and browse a variety of original works on display. Both artwork and cards will be available for purchase.

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25th Annual Haunted Train Ride Set for Oct. 18

Presented by the Norfolk Lions and Norfolk Community League



Get ready for thrills, chills, and family fun as the Norfolk Lions and Norfolk Community League host the 25th Annual Haunted Train Ride on Saturday, October 18 at Holmes Field, 22 Myrtle Street, Norfolk. The event will run rain or shine from 5 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Attendees must be in line by 8:30 p.m.

At press time, tickets were still available: www.norfolkmlions.org/events.

Designed especially for children from kindergarten through middle school, the Haunted Train Ride grows scarier as night falls. Families can enjoy a festive evening filled with chills and community spirit.

All proceeds from ticket sales will directly benefit local groups and organizations, with past events providing vital support to schools, the Norfolk Public Library, Stony Brook Wildlife Sanctuary, the food pantry, and the Senior Center.

To learn more, visit the Norfolk Lions or Norfolk Community League websites.

Check out the short documentaries produced by NCTV highlighting past Haunted Train Rides: <https://tinyurl.com/3h4uwsj7> and <https://tinyurl.com/2zwhk65h>.



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This Month at the Fiske Public Library

The Fiske Public Library will be closed Monday, October 13 for Columbus Day and Indigenous Peoples Day. The library’s regular hours are Monday and Friday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Tuesday-Thursday 10 a.m. to 8 p.m., and Saturday 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For a full list of programs or to register, visit www.fiskelib.org.

CHILDRENS PROGRAMS

Halloween Costume Swap

It’s that time of year again—time to pick out a Halloween costume! We’re thrilled to bring back the Halloween Costume Swap at Fiske.

From September 22 through October 3, families are invited to drop off gently used, clean children’s Halloween costumes for donation.

Starting Saturday, October 4, everyone is welcome to come “shop” for a new-to-you costume. The swap will remain open throughout October, while supplies last.

Read to Sophie the Library Dog

Wednesday, October 15 from 3:30 to 5 p.m.

Kids age 5-10 are invited to read to Sophie, a therapy dog from Dog B.O.N.E.S. of MA. Register for a fifteen-minute time slot on the calendar page at fiskelib.org.

Halloween Magic Show with Tommy James

Wednesday, October 22 from 6 to 7 p.m.

Kids and adults of all ages are invited to join us for this fun, Halloween-themed magic show with Tommy James. Register at fiskelib.org beginning 9/22.

ADULT PROGRAMS

Free Drop-in IT Help Office Hours

Tuesdays, 5 to 7:30 p.m.

The Fiske Public Library is hosting Free IT Help Office Hours with IT expert Ben Elliot who will be available to help with personal technology related issues in an informal setting. Ben is available at the Fiske Public Library on a first come, first served basis.

Spice Kits

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

Paint Night

Wednesday, October 8 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Come express your creativity! Space is limited to fifteen adult participants. Registration is required.

Fiske Public Library Book Club

Tuesday, October 28 at 7 p.m.

We will discuss “Weyward” by Emilia Hart. Copies of the book will be available at the Circulation Desk. For more information, contact Library Director Kim Shipala at kshipala@sailsinc.org or 508-384-5440.

Travels Through the Heart and Soul of New England with Ted Reinstein

Wednesday, October 29 from 6:30 to 8 p.m.

For 25 years, journalist and author Ted Reinstein has told the stories of New Englanders—people whose grit, humor, and resilience capture the spirit of this region. In his latest book, he brings together unforgettable tales from all six states: from a surfer on New Hampshire’s seacoast to Maine’s one-man museum, to a Vermonter building treehouse havens for those in need. Through these voices, Reinstein reveals New England with candor, heart, and humor.

This free program is open to the public. Register at fiskelib.org or call 508-384-5440.

THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION – HIGHWAY DIVISION

NOTICE OF A DESIGN PUBLIC HEARING

Project Description: Wrentham – Intersection Improvements on Route 1A at North and Winter Street

Project File No. 610676

A 25% Design Public Hearing will be held to present the design for the proposed project in Wrentham, MA.

WHERE: Wrentham Town Hall, Select Board Meeting Room
79 South Street
Wrentham, MA 02093

WHEN: Tuesday, October 14, 2025 @ 6:00pm

PURPOSE: The purpose of this hearing is to provide the public with the opportunity to become fully acquainted with the proposed project. All views and comments submitted in response to the hearing will be reviewed and considered to the maximum extent possible.

PROPOSAL: The proposed project consists of improving safety at the project location with the installation of a new traffic control signal. Along Route 1A, pedestrians will be accommodated with 5-foot sidewalks and bicyclists will have 5-foot on-street bicycle lanes with 3-foot buffers. Along North Street and Winter Street, a 6-foot one-way shared-use path will be provided in each direction.

A secure right-of-way is necessary for this project. Acquisitions in fee and permanent or temporary easements may be required. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts is responsible for acquiring all needed rights in private or public lands. MassDOT’s policy concerning land acquisitions will be presented in the hearing.

Project inquiries, written statements and other exhibits regarding the proposed undertaking may be submitted to Carrie E. Lavallee, P.E., Chief Engineer, via e-mail to MassDOTProjectManagement@dot.state.ma.us or via US Mail to Suite 7550, 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116, Attention: Project Management, Project File No. 610676. Statements and exhibits intended for inclusion in the public hearing transcript must be emailed or postmarked no later than ten (10) business days (14 calendar days) after the hearing is hosted on the MassDOT website listed below.

This hearing is accessible to people with disabilities. MassDOT provides reasonable accommodations and/or language assistance free of charge upon request (e.g interpreters in American Sign Language and languages other than English, live captioning, videos, assistive listening devices and alternate material formats), as available. For accommodation or language assistance, please contact MassDOT’s Chief Diversity and Civil Rights Officer by phone (857-368-8580), TTD/TTY at (857) 266-0603, fax (857) 368-0602 or by email (MassDOT.CivilRights@dot.state.ma.us). Requests should be made as soon as possible and prior to the hearing, and for more difficult to arrange services including sign-language, CART or language translation or interpretation, requests should be made at least ten business days before the hearing.

In case of inclement weather, a cancellation announcement will be posted on the internet at <https://www.mass.gov/orgs/highway-division/events>.

JONATHAN GULLIVER
HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR

CARRIE E. LAVALLEE, P.E.
CHIEF ENGINEER

First Universalist Society in Franklin Welcomes New Youth Group Advisor

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is pleased to announce that Emily Steltzer has joined its staff as Youth Advisor.

Emily brings a strong background in education and leadership to her new role. She holds a master’s degree in history from the University of New Hampshire and currently teaches high school history. Originally from the United Kingdom, Emily has international teaching experience and is known for her curiosity, creativity, and intellectual rigor. She is also deeply committed to Unitarian Universalist values.

This past summer, Emily led a church service that highlighted her love of improvisation as a tool for teaching and learning. As Youth Advisor, she will coordinate activities for FUSF’s middle school and high school youth groups, helping young people build friendships, explore their values, and develop their voices.

Emily lives in Franklin with her husband and two children. In addition to her classroom



work, she has spent recent summers leading camp programs that emphasize teamwork, creativity, and joy. She looks forward to combining her teaching experience with her camp leadership background in her work with FUSF youth.

Colleagues describe Emily as someone who “laughs easily and loves learning,” qualities she will bring to her new position at FUSE.

The First Universalist Society in Franklin (FUSF) is a Unitarian Universalist Welcoming Congregation located at 262 Chestnut Street, Franklin. Our Minister is Reverend Beverly Waring. For more information about FUSF please visit our website at fusf.org or contact us at info@fusf.org; call 508-528-5348.

October 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.

Wednesday, October 1 at 1 p.m. **Meet & Greet Select Board Kevin Roche** Norfolk Select Board Vice Chair Kevin Roche will talk about various happenings in Norfolk and answer your questions. RSVP requested.

Monday, October 6 at 11 a.m. **Discover the Unknown World of Beavers with Mass Audubon (Virtual)** Few animals can change entire landscapes like beavers can. The American beaver is an incredible wetland engineer and can be found throughout Massachusetts transforming their habitats. This online presentation will cover beaver family life, range, lodge and dam maintenance, and how they contribute to the biodiversity of open spaces. Led by Maura Genova, Director of Mass Audubon's Ipswich River Nature Camp. RSVP requested.

Tuesday, October 7 at 11 a.m. **Birds & Birdwatching** Do

you enjoy seeing the birds that visit your garden or that you see around town? Have you ever wondered what birdwatching is all about? Cliff Cook, president of the Brookline Bird Club, will offer a short presentation about birds, birding, and the Brookline Bird Club and answer your questions about all things ornithological. RSVP requested.

Thursday, October 9 at 1 p.m. **Meet & Greet Select Board Anita Mecklenburg** Norfolk Select Board Chair Anita Mecklenburg will discuss Norfolk news and answer your questions. Dessert will be provided. RSVP required.

Tuesday, October 14 at 11 a.m. **Notes: Your iPhone's Built-In Notepad** Learn how to use the Notes app to jot down ideas, make checklists, scan documents, and keep your thoughts organized. KevTech will cover everything from creating simple notes to sharing and collaborating with others using iCloud. Limited to 15 people. 12 iPads available at the Center. RSVP required.

Tuesday, October 14 from 1 to 2:30 p.m. **A Tour and Sa-**

fari in South Africa Through photographs and stories, we will explore the vibrant heart of South Africa. Highlights include breathtaking views of the stunning countryside, trips to Soweto and to an authentic Zulu village, an up-close visit to a lion preserve, and a thrilling wildlife safari featuring the majestic Big 5. This Beyond Borders program is hosted by Foxborough resident and world traveler Ed Sweet who has been to all 50 U.S. states, more than 140 countries, 2,800 cities, and flown north of 7 million miles. RSVP requested.

Thursday, October 16 at 11 a.m. **Introduction to Meditation** Beginner-friendly meditation to focus on breathing and settling your mind, observing non-judgmentally, and redirecting attention when thoughts wander. Led by senior center member Diane Fleming. RSVP requested.

Thursday, October 16 at 1 p.m. **Witchy Wanda's Halloween Spooktacular Variety Show** This interactive variety show is a great way to celebrate Hal-

loween. Music and song, jokes, and ghoulish fun presented by Witchy Wanda and her strange, fun-loving friends. Costumes optional. RSVP requested.

Tuesday, October 21 from 1 to 3 p.m. **Tarot Card Readings** Psychic Lydia Dustin returns, offering 10-minute private tarot card readings. Light refreshments before and after readings. Cost: \$10. RSVP required.

Wednesday, October 22 at 1 p.m. **Joey Voices** The only master singing impressionist comedian on the East Coast, Joey imitates the voices of Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Cher, Louis Armstrong, Neil Diamond, Joe Cocker, Al Pacino, Ray Charles, Al Green, Dave Matthews, John Mayer, The Bee Gees, Tom Jones, Elvis Presley, Rodney Dangerfield, Bobby Darin, Robert DeNiro, Tony Bennett, Joe Pesci and many more. This 60-minute performance will have you laughing, singing and dancing in your seats! RSVP requested.

Tuesday, October 28 at 11 a.m. **Close Encounters: Alien**

Abductions Join podcaster and paranormal researcher Chris Torres for a thought-provoking exploration of alien abduction phenomena, including some of the most intriguing stories, evidence behind the claims, and theories attempting to explain these encounters. Whether you are skeptical or curious, delve into the mystery and decide for yourself what to believe. RSVP requested.

Wednesday, October 29 at 12:30 p.m. **Halloween Party** Enjoy a frightfully fun Halloween party with dessert, games, and laughter. Wear a costume and possibly win a prize! RSVP requested.

Thursday, October 30 at 1 p.m. **Halloween Traditions and their Origins** Dead ringers, graveyard shifts, vampires, and werewolves! Come hear the scientific basis for these phenomena and learn about the origins of other Halloween traditions with resident and Board member Dawn Poirier. RSVP requested.

How Your Fall Cleaning Can Help the Norfolk Library

Doing some fall cleaning? If your bookshelves are on the list, consider donating your gently used books to the Friends of the Norfolk Public Library. Your donations help support library programs and resources all year long.

There are two convenient ways to donate: drop books in the Friends closet in the adult fiction section during regular library hours, or use the Friends shed at the Transfer Station on Medway Branch Road. (Note that books left in the metal bins don't benefit the library.)

Please donate items in good shape — no old encyclopedias, textbooks, or musty books. The Friends also accept DVDs, CDs, and puzzles.

Proceeds from the April Book Sale and the Ongoing Book Sale near the circulation desk go right back into the library.

Want to get more involved? The Friends meet on the first Monday of the month, September through June, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. The next meeting is Monday, Oct. 6 in the Schoolhouse room of the Norfolk Public Library.

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Norfolk and Wrentham Residents Participating in the 37th Annual Jimmy Fund Walk

Fifteen residents from Norfolk and 17 residents from Wrentham will participate in the 2025 Jimmy Fund Walk presented by Hyundai on Sunday, October 5. They will join thousands of other walkers in the iconic annual event to raise funds to support all forms of adult and pediatric care and research at Dana-Farber Cancer Institute.

Norfolk walkers: Brenda Barton, Sandy Butler, Larissa Hewitt, Cheryl Hogan, Keith Joseph, Elizabeth Manning, Theresa O'Connor, Paul O'Connor, Laura Sarkar, Tim Sullivan, Kristie Sullivan, Gayle Sweetman, Samantha Sweetman, Brian Sweetman, Michael Sweetman.

Wrentham walkers: Jenny Akins, Hannah Balquist, Chloe Calligan, Jeff Calligan, Samantha Calligan, Renee Chase, Hadli Farrand, Jason Lawton, Julie Lawton, Nicole Maguire, William McGrath, Christine Morander, Ligia Morales, Jody Sears, Anthony Tatarouns, Trish Vickery, and Ruthann Wright.

The Jimmy Fund Walk has set a goal to raise \$9.5 million this year in the effort to prevent, treat, and defy cancer.

“For 36 years, the Jimmy Fund Walk has been a cornerstone of support for lifesaving cancer research and patient care at Dana-Farber,” said Caitlin Fink, vice president of The Jimmy Fund. “Every participant contributes directly to advancing lifesaving research and critically important cancer care. Walk Day is more than just an event—it’s a celebration of hope and the shared commitment of the Jimmy Fund community.”

One Walk, Four Distances, For All Cancers

The Jimmy Fund Walk takes place along the famed Boston Marathon® course, and participants have the flexibility to choose from four distance options: 5K walk (from Dana-Farber’s Longwood Medical Campus); 10K walk (from Newton); Half Marathon walk (from Wellesley); and Marathon

walk (from Hopkinton). Walkers who prefer to participate virtually can complete their chosen distance from any location.

Whatever route participants choose, they will be supported by hundreds of volunteers and treated to refueling stations with refreshments throughout the course. Walkers will be motivated by poster-sized photographs of Walk Heroes that appear along the course as inspiration. All routes will conclude at the Jimmy Fund Walk Finish Line Powered by Schneider Electric at Boston Common, by the corner of Charles and Beacon Street. Finish line activities will include a celebration with food, entertainment, and more.

To register for the Walk (#JimmyFundWalk) or to support a walker, visit www.JimmyFundWalk.org or call 866-531-9255. Registrants can enter the promo code NEWS for \$5 off the registration fee. All registered walkers will receive a bib, medal, and a Jimmy Fund Walk T-shirt. You can also sign up to volunteer on Walk day.

Norfolk Cultural Council Hosts Song and Poetry Circle at Norfolk Library

The Norfolk Cultural Council invites community members to attend a Song and Poetry Circle on Thursday, October 23, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. at the Norfolk Public Library.

This free, creative gathering offers poets, songwriters, and music lovers a chance to share original work, listen, and connect in a welcoming environment. Writers and performers of all levels are encouraged to attend. Participants are invited to bring their lyrics, poems, guitars, or simply an open ear.

The evening promises to be a supportive, inspiring, and fun experience for all who enjoy the power of words and music. Light snacks will be served, and a sound system and keyboard will be available for use.

For more information, please contact the Norfolk Cultural Council at ncc@norfolk.ma.gov.



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Need Based Financial Aid for College

The fall is a busy time of year if you have a high school senior- so many exciting plans and opportunities! But with this excitement comes an important question: how will you cover the cost of college? This month's focus is on need-based financial aid.

Financial aid is usually divided into two broad categories:

- **Need-based** aid is money awarded to students based on a family's financial circumstances, not on grades or test scores. This aid comes from the following:
 - Federal: Pell Grants, subsidized loans, work-study.
 - State: grants, scholarships (based on FAFSA info).
 - Institutional: colleges give their own need-based aid packages.
- **Merit aid (non-need-based)** is awarded by individual colleges based on GPA, test scores, a specific major, special talents, or residency- not on family income.

FAFSA: The Key to Need-Based Aid

To be considered for need-based aid, families must complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). It provides access to the largest source of federal financial aid. However, states and colleges also use a family's Federal FAFSA information to award their own need-based grants, scholarships, and loans to eligible students.

The 2026-2027 FAFSA (for students starting college in fall 2026) will open October 1, 2025 and close June 30, 2027. However, state and college FAFSA deadlines are much earlier- often in October or November of se-

nior year. Always check each college's financial aid page for exact dates. High school seniors entering college in fall 2026 should file as soon as possible.

Why file early? More aid dollars- federal, state, and institutional- are often distributed to families who submit early.

Why file at all, even if you think you won't qualify?

1. Students may be eligible for unsubsidized federal loans, which often have lower interest rates than private loans.
2. It will provide a safety net if any unexpected family financial changes occur, such as loss of income or change in family circumstances.
3. Many schools have endowment programs, grants, and scholarships to help students who have demonstrated need. You can't apply to these without submitting the FAFSA.
4. Some colleges require the FAFSA for awarding merit academic scholarships.

You can list up to 20 colleges on the FAFSA form. Always list any college you're considering, even if you're unsure about applying- you can remove it later, but missing it may mean losing aid.

What is the CSS Profile?

The CSS Profile (College Scholarship Service Profile) is a separate financial aid application used by approximately 250 private or selective colleges to award their own institutional aid. Unlike the FAFSA, which is free, the CSS Profile requires a fee and asks more detailed financial questions. The colleges that

require the CSS Profile can be found on CollegeBoard.org.

Deadlines vary by school, but usually close to the college application deadline, so check each college's website. **Colleges that require the CSS Profile still want the FAFSA filed as well.**

Key Tools to Understand College Costs

- **Cost of Attendance (COA):** The "sticker price," including tuition, room & board, fees, books, transportation, and personal expenses. Every college lists its COA online.
- **Net Price Calculator (NPC):** Estimates your true cost after grants and scholarships. Each college provides one, but quality varies. Use it early to compare affordability.
- **Loan Simulator:** Found at studentaid.gov, this tool projects monthly repayment costs for both students and parents. Working through it together is a smart family exercise.



Maryline Michel Kulewicz and Tracy Sullivan of College 101 Admissions Consultants

Final Thoughts

The financial aid process can be complex, but there are plenty of resources to help. The Federal Student Aid website (studentaid.gov) is an excellent resource. And remember: while the COA may seem daunting, need-based and merit aid can significantly reduce costs.

Planning ahead, filing forms early, and using tools like the NPC and Loan Simulator can make the process clearer- and the

path to college more affordable. Good luck and enjoy the journey!

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SAFE to Strengthen Local Substance Use Support

SAFE Coalition has been awarded contracts through Opioid Abatement Funds from the towns of Franklin, Medway, Medfield, Millis, Norfolk, and Wrentham. SAFE will utilize the funding to deliver comprehensive substance use and mental health support to residents experiencing substance use and related concerns.

These contracts will allow SAFE to provide services free of cost to thousands of residents across all six towns, regardless of circumstance. SAFE's programs and services will be aimed at addressing the increase in opioid overdose-related deaths in Norfolk County. The number has continued to rise despite opioid overdose rates and dispensing rates declining in the rest of the state.

"We're grateful for the opportunity to continue and expand the vital work SAFE has been doing for nearly a decade," says SAFE CEO Jen Levine. "We have been providing wrap-around, zero-cost services since 2015, and these opioid abatement funds ensure we can maintain that commitment to our community while reaching even more families who need support."

Opioid fund expenditure plans require addressal of several key strategies, including treatment and recovery support, harm reduction (Narcan and safe syringe programs), family support, and prevention education.

SAFE's response across all six communities will include:

- Community Narcan training
- 90-day support plans with service referrals, offering support with substance use
- and mental health needs
- School partnerships and events to bring prevention and early intervention to
- students and caregivers
- Perinatal support group with referral services
- Families Anonymous group for families of those struggling with substance use
- Medication take-back
- Support groups and grief counseling

As part of the funding, SAFE will also launch a First Responder Support Group to facilitate conversation and community regarding the opioid epidemic. "We often forget that first responders are our community members at the frontline of this crisis," says CEO Jen Levine. "They deserve dedicated space to process their experiences and be seen and heard."

SAFE's existing partnerships with dozens of organizations and agencies across the state also enable clients additional access to targeted support.

Founded in 2015, SAFE is the only nonprofit in southeast Massachusetts offering wrap-around, zero-cost substance use and mental health services to individuals and families. SAFE works directly with communities to support individuals at every stage of their recovery journey, from individual and family support groups to youth education initiatives, peer-led programs, mediation, and counseling services.

Pumpkin Patch Season is Sept. 28 to Oct. 31 at St. John's Episcopal Church

The pumpkins are here! Come visit the 6th Annual Pumpkin Patch at St. John's Episcopal Church, 237 Pleasant Street, Franklin. It will be open through Oct. 31.

A huge selection of pumpkins, gourds and colorful mum plants will fill the front lawn of St. John's Church. Kids will have fun picking out their favorites. It's a cute photo opportunity for families and a good time to start decorating for autumn.

The Pumpkin Patch is open seven days a week:

- Monday to Friday from 4 to 6 p.m.
- Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Sundays Noon to 4 p.m.
- Monday October 14, open all day from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

These pumpkins are cultivated using sustainable farming practices that support the environment. They are grown in a New Mexico region facing 42% unemployment, helping provide meaningful jobs for members of the Navajo people.

Proceeds from the pumpkin and plant sales benefit the Navajo Nation in New Mexico as well as St. John's Church and its service in the Franklin community.

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.

SAFE Coalition Hosts Drive-Thru Drug Disposal Stations

The SAFE Coalition is partnering with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) to host drive-thru drug disposal stations as part of National Prescription Drug Take Back Day on Saturday, October 25, from 10 a.m. to noon.

Community members are encouraged to bring unwanted, unused, or expired medications to one of the following convenient drive-thru locations:

- SAFE Coalition Headquarters, Franklin
- Wrentham Fire Department
- Norfolk Police Department
- Medway Town Hall
- Millis Fire Department

Accepted items include tabs/pills, lotions, patches, and liquids. Sharps (needles) cannot be accepted.

National Prescription Drug Take Back Day provides a safe, convenient, and responsible way to dispose of prescription medications, helping to prevent misuse while protecting the environment.

For more information about the SAFE Coalition and its ongoing work to support substance use recovery and prevention in the community, please visit <https://www.safecoalitionma.org/>.

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By KEN HAMWEY
STAFF SPORTS WRITER

When Kristen Geuss was asked about her 11 consecutive state-tourney berths in volleyball, she responded by saying: “I hope No. 12 is in our future.”

That shouldn’t be too difficult for King Philip’s varsity coach, who’s now in her 12th year at the Warriors’ helm. Her 14-player roster, which has nine seniors, one junior and four sophomores, has a plethora of strengths.

“We’ve got experience, depth (a next-person-up mentality), a high volleyball IQ, and players who have speed and quickness,” she noted. “We’re also strong on technique and skills. And, I like our scrappy nature. We’re also fundamentally sound, coachable and promote team chemistry on and off the court.”

Geuss lost eight seniors from last year’s team that finished 13-8 after a first-round playoff loss to Chelmsford. But, seven experienced competitors have returned and she labels her four sophomores as “high potential players who are willing to work hard for success.”

A native of Saugerties, N.Y., Geuss has set three goals for this season and it’s no surprise that a tourney repeat heads her list.

“We want to qualify for the playoffs and strive for a deep run,” she said. “We also want to improve daily in practice and matches and compete for the Kelly-Rex Division title in the Hockomock League.”

At Local Town Pages deadline, the Warriors had a 2-3 record.

A coach who knows the value of defense, Geuss, rates her squad’s offense and defense as “balanced” and “equal in skills and performance.”

KP’s captains are all seniors — Cece Mullen (setter), Shayne Dugan (outside hitter) and Caleigh Shore (defensive specialist/libero) — who personify quality leadership. “They’re a mix of leading



King Philip’s volleyball captains are, from left, Shayne Dugan, Cece Mullen, and Caleigh Shore.

by example, and being vocal, supportive and communicative,” said Geuss, who played volleyball in high school and at State College of New York at Cortland.

“Cece is a high energy player who’s got a high volleyball IQ, speed and quickness,” Geuss said. “The quarterback of our offense, she’s a very effective setter. Shayne is an aggressive attacker, a top-notch server and a very good blocker. Caleigh is a great leader in the back row. She’s consistent on serve-receive and has excellent defensive instincts.”

Senior Cece Kilroy is an experienced right-side hitter who’s in her third varsity campaign. “Cece has a powerful swing and a high volleyball IQ,” Geuss offered. “She’s also

talented and well-skilled.”

Geuss likes Mya McCormick’s instinctive style as a defensive specialist/libero. “Mya does a great job anchoring the back row and she has a highly effective serve,” she said.

Seniors Alli Cleasby (right-side hitter) and Kelsey Lynch (middle hitter) rely on a strong work ethic. “They work hard and are ready to contribute when called on,” Geuss said.

Two other seniors — setter Leah Hayes and hitter Greta Mischley — are talented and their coach likes their approach. “Both are talented and consistent,” Geuss said. “And, they compete intensely.”

Junior Amie O’Neil plays middle hitter but competed in only

three matches last year as a sophomore. A shoulder injury limited her availability. “Amie is a very dominant middle hitter,” Geuss said. “She can jump and is an intense blocker.”

Sophomore Molly Sweeney also is a middle hitter who played on the varsity as a freshman. “Molly finds the gaps in our opponents defenses and can finish the point,” Geuss said. “She’s an effective hitter.”

Three other capable sophomores are setter Charlotte Bailey, defensive specialist Mia Keays, and hitter Nora O’Brien.

“Charlotte is in her first year of varsity play,” Geuss said. “She’s a hard-worker, has a high volleyball IQ and is talented. Mia is quick and scrappy and has good court vision. Nora can play both outside hitter or on the right side. She’s versatile, coachable and willing to learn. She’s also an aggressive player who’s got a good swing.”

KP’s sub-varsity coaches include Cam Corey (javees) and Lily Carlow and Emily Diulis are leading the freshmen. Geuss, who works as a para-professional at the Jackson School in Plainville, likes the trio’s approach, saying: “The staff is united and we’re all on the same page — we want the best for the players.”

Relying on an athletic philosophy that focuses on reaching one’s

potential and enjoying competition, Geuss believes if those two aspects are in play, then winning will be the by-product.

She also is aware that her players can learn valuable life lessons while they compete. “Some examples are how to work as a team, how to set goals, how to be leaders and how to overcome adversity and become resilient,” Geuss emphasized. “I also want our players to set good examples, be accountable, accept responsibility, and be quality people on and off the court.”

KP isn’t far removed from its best season during Geuss’ tenure. In 2022, the Warriors completed their regular season with an 18-2 record, advanced to the state final where they lost to Westboro and ended that campaign with a 22-3 record.

Some of those former players could be returning to KP on Saturday, Oct. 18, at 5 p.m. for an alumni game. “I’ve coached most of the alumni,” Geuss said. “It’ll be great to see them all come together to compete at KP again.”

That time will be nostalgic and it’ll be trip down memory lane.

As for KP’s current contingent, Kristen Geuss isn’t sure where or how her squad will finish this season but it seems very likely that the Warriors will be in the playoffs for the 12th straight year.

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Massachusetts DPH Opens State-of-the-Art Emergency Supply Warehouse in Franklin

On September 4, the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) unveiled its new, interoperable emergency supply warehouse, a critical resource that strengthens the state's ability to respond quickly and effectively and provide the equipment, supplies, and medical resources needed to deliver care during public health emergencies and disasters.

State and local officials, emergency preparedness leaders, and community health partners gathered with DPH representatives to mark the occasion, touring the bright and

expansive space – which has been operational since July 1, 2025 – and learning about its many capabilities and features.

The new DPH warehouse is strategically located in Franklin, offering easy access to major highways. It is adjacent and directly connected to the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) warehouse, which will facilitate rapid, coordinated statewide response during times of crisis. Spanning 75,000 square feet, the facility houses more than 21 million individual items – from personal protective equipment

to bandages and dressings to refrigerated medical products.

“This warehouse is so much more than just shelves of materials, equipment, and supplies – it represents resilience, readiness, and a collective commitment to respond quickly and fully to care for our communities when disaster strikes,” said Secretary of Health and Human Services Kiame Mahaniah, MD, MBA. “Today we mark an important investment in the safety, health, and well-being – and peace of mind – for those who live in, work in, and visit Massachusetts.”

“Massachusetts has faced many public health crises over the years – from the Great Molasses Flood in 1919, to the Cocoanut Grove Nightclub fire in 1942, to the Blizzard of '78, and more recently the Boston Marathon Bombing and the COVID-19 pandemic,” said Public Health Commissioner Robbie Goldstein, MD, PhD. “We have learned critical lessons from each of these disasters and other emergencies, large and small. And we have taken all those lessons to heart and turned them into action. This warehouse embodies that action – that commitment – and it allows us to stand with our health care and public health partners and be ready for the next crisis we will inevitably face together.”

The DPH warehouse provides more than 4,000 pallet storage positions across three levels, with 1,000 square feet of cold-chain storage for refrigerated products. A 10-door

loading dock supports the facility's high-throughput operations. State-of-the-art security and video monitoring technology protects staff and products, while advanced data-logging systems help maintain inventory integrity.

“We are thrilled to be in this wonderful new location that strengthens our capacity to support the greater health care system during times of crisis, said Kerin Milesky, Director of the DPH Office of Preparedness and Emergency Management. “This new facility enhances our need to adjust our approach and processes based on the latest science and best practices and respond to the nuances of different kinds of emergencies. This warehouse is our promise to every resident that when the next emergency comes, we will be ready to respond, safeguard health, and help our communities recover.”

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Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club to Host 50th Annual Craft Fair

Get your shopping lists ready! The Franklin Newcomers and Friends Club is proud to announce its milestone 50th Annual Craft Fair, taking place on Saturday, November 8, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Tri-County High School in Franklin.

This juried craft fair will feature nearly 70 artisans offering a wide variety of handmade items, including jewelry, fine art, textiles, holiday décor, photography, body products, specialty foods, and more. Shoppers will find unique gifts perfect for birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, or any special occasion.

In addition to the artisan booths, visitors can enjoy the always-popular bake sale and raffle tables, located near the entrance. Admission is \$3 for attendees over the age of 12, with all proceeds benefiting local charitable organizations. Guests are also encouraged to bring a donation for the Franklin Food Pantry, which will be collected at the entrance.

For more information about the Craft Fair, please visit the official Facebook page: www.facebook.com/FranklinNewcomersCraftFair/.

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Real Estate Corner

New Interactive Climate Resilience Playbook Offers Strategies, Resources for Communities

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC), Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC), and the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) have launched the Climate Re-

silience Playbook, an online tool to help municipalities identify and prioritize actions to address climate impacts such as sea level rise, flooding, and extreme heat.

The Playbook includes:

- **Actions Tool** – a searchable database of about 120 municipal project ideas, filterable by climate threat, project type, or resilience theme.
- **Implementation Blueprints** – detailed roadmaps for high-impact actions identified through extensive community input.
- **Planning Resources** – downloadable guides on topics like equitable engagement, partnerships with Indigenous communities, and tailoring solutions for small or rural towns.

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs Rebecca Tepper said the Playbook will “help level the playing field and

increase the capacity of communities across the state,” and will be incorporated into the state’s Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness grant program.

Developed with feedback from representatives of 87 municipalities and many community partners, the Playbook emphasizes equity and practical implementation. “It captures local lessons and makes them available statewide, so communities of every size can take practical steps toward climate resilience,” said Kimberly H. Robinson, Executive Director of PVPC.

The Playbook was created with support from the Barr Foundation and aligns with state efforts such as the Resilient-Mass Plan and ResilientCoasts Initiative. A recorded webinar introducing the Playbook is available at <https://youtu.be/2r9DO9dz1Ow>. Feedback can be submitted through the Playbook’s website.

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Real Estate Corner

Norfolk County Real Estate Market Stays Strong in August

Norfolk County Register of Deeds William P. O'Donnell reported steady real estate activity in August 2025, highlighted by increases in deeds and mortgages compared to last year.

The Registry recorded 10,035 documents in August, a 7% increase from August 2024. Deeds rose 3% year-over-year, with 881 property sales—up 5%. Mortgage recordings also grew 6% from last year.

“Despite broader economic challenges, buyers and sellers remain engaged, and lending activity remains strong,” O'Donnell said.

The average sale price was \$1,028,482, down 18% from last year, with total sales volume at \$906 million. O'Donnell noted that lower prices may cre-

ate new opportunities for buyers.

Foreclosure activity declined, with four foreclosure deeds recorded versus ten in August 2024, and 26 notices to foreclose compared to 34 last year.

“The market continues to show resilience,” O'Donnell said. “We remain committed to assisting residents, particularly those facing foreclosure.”

The Registry partners with groups including Quincy Community Action Programs, NeighborWorks Housing Solutions, and the Massachusetts Attorney General's CARD division to provide support.

For more information, visit www.norfolkdeeds.org or follow @norfolkdeeds on social media.



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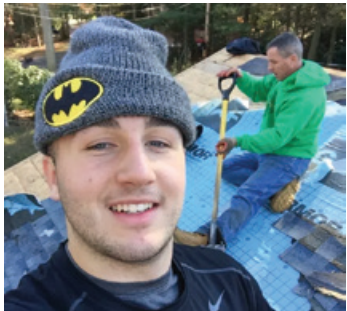


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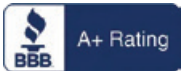
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